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City, University of London

Department of Journalism

The BBC's Portrayal of India

**An Analysis of how the International News Coverage of India
Changed in the Digital Era**

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February 2021

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of:
Journalism PhD

Table of Contents

Introduction	13
Contextualising the Research.....	14
The Objective and Research Questions	16
Research Overview	17
Thesis Structure	18
Justification for this Research.....	19
Conclusion.....	20
Chapter 1: The Development of International News Coverage	22
Introduction.....	22
The History of International News Coverage	22
The Pursuit of a New World Information and Communication Order	29
News Coverage of the Global South by the Global North	34
Post-Colonial News Coverage.....	42
Conclusion.....	45
Chapter 2: Media Representation of India in Foreign Media	48
The International Media Coverage of India.....	48
The Visual Representation	54
The BBC's Relationship with India	58
The Complexity of the BBC's News Coverage	67
The Changes in Indian Media Ecology since the 1970s.....	71
The Changes in Indian Media Ecology and the BBC in India	74
Conclusion.....	75
Chapter 3: The BBC, Online Journalism and the Social Media	76
Introduction.....	76
The Emergence of Online Journalism	76

The Rise of User Generated Content (UGC).....	78
Twitter and Journalism	80
Social media and India	83
BBC's Digital Broadcasts.....	85
The Influence of Twitter in BBC's News Coverage.....	87
Conclusion.....	89
Chapter 4: Gatekeeping Theory in the Digital Era	92
Introduction.....	92
Gatekeeping Theory.....	93
Levels of Analysis in Gatekeeping.....	95
The Relevance of Gatekeeping in the Digital Era.....	97
Sociology of News.....	99
Conclusion.....	101
Chapter 5: Methodology	103
Introduction.....	103
Research Overview	104
Data Collection: Mixed Methods.....	105
Data Collection: Quantitative Content Analysis	107
The Duration, the Sources and the Sample.....	110
Coding	115
Qualitative Method -- Interviews	118
Ethical Considerations.....	123
Chapter 6: Results.....	124
Introduction.....	124
Data Analysis: BBC Radio World News Service.....	124
Sources	132

Significant Topics of BBC Radio Indian News Coverage	139
Major Featured Topics–Detailed	143
A Comparative Analysis of BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019	147
Sources	150
BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Significant Topics in the Indian News Coverage	156
Data Analysis of Online Indian News in BBC, CNN and AJE	160
Sources	168
BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Significant Topics in the Indian News Coverage	176
Major Featured Topics–Detailed	181
Conclusion.....	188
Chapter 7: The Indian News Coverage of BBC Radio World News Service	189
Introduction.....	189
BBC Radio World News Service news coverage of India in 1977, 1997 and 2019	191
The comparison of the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio WNS and BBC Online 2019	205
BBC Online News Coverage of India compared to CNN and AJE in the year 2019	212
Chapter 8: The BBC Journalists Reporting India in an Era of Digital Technology	218
Introduction.....	218
Digital Media Opens New Horizons	218
Digital Media Changed the Newsroom Environment	225
Conclusion.....	230
Chapter 9: Findings and Conclusion	232
Major Findings.....	232
Digital Technology, Journalistic Practices and Gatekeeping Theory	238
Limitations and Recommendations	243
Recommendations for Further Study.....	245
Concluding Summary	245

References	248
<i>Appendix 1: Data Sources.....</i>	<i>265</i>
<i>Appendix 2: List of Interviewees.....</i>	<i>285</i>
<i>Appendix 3: Comparison between the BBC Online pages accessed from India and the UK</i>	<i>286</i>
<i>Appendix 4: Codebook</i>	<i>290</i>
<i>Appendix 5: Semi-structured Interview Guidelines</i>	<i>302</i>
<i>Appendix 6: Consent Form.....</i>	<i>303</i>
<i>Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet</i>	<i>304</i>

Table of Tables

(Table 1: The total number of units featured on BBC Radio in 1977, 1997 and 2019)	125
(Table 2: BBC Radio WNS 1977, 1997 and 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)	126
(Table 3: The total number of days of Indian news coverage on BBC Radio in 1977, 1997 and 2019)	126
(Table 4: Number of Indian news items covered by BBC Radio WNS in 1977, 1997 and 2019)	128
(Table 5: BBC Radio World News Service–Duration of news items)	129
(Table 6: BBC Radio World News Service–Placement of Indian news items)	131
(Table 7: BBC Radio World News Service–Name of the Correspondent)	132
(Table 8: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian Official Government Agencies)	133
(Table 9: BBC Radio World News Service–Views of experts and those involved)	136
(Table 10: BBC Radio World News Service–Significant Topics)	140
(Table 11: BBC Radio World News Service–Human Welfare Issues)	143
(Table 12: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian Government Policies)	144
(Table 13: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian politics)	145
(Table 14: : BBC Radio World News Service–Law and Order)	146
(Table 15: BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC Online 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)	148
(Table 16: BBC Online news and Radio WNS 2019–The total number of days of Indian news coverage)	148
(Table 17: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Number of Indian news items)	149
(Table 18: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Name of the Correspondent)	150
(Table 19: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)	151
(Table 20: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)	152
(Table 21: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)	154
(Table 22: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Media Sources)	155
(Table 23: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–First Source)	155
(Table 24: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Social Media)	156
(Table 25: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Geographical Focus of Indian News Items)	156
Table 26: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Significant Topics)	157
(Table 27: BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)	161

(Table 28: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The total number of days of Indian news coverage).....	161
(Table 29: The BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The total number of Indian news)	162
(Table 30: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The Type of Indian News Coverage)	163
(Table 31: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The Length of online news items).....	163
(Table 32: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Placement of Indian news items).....	165
(Table 33: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Name of the Correspondent).....	167
(Table 34: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)	168
(Table 35: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)	170
(Table 36: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved).....	172
(Table 37: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Media Sources)	174
(Table 38: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Social Media).....	176
(Table 39: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Geographical Focus of Indian news items)	177
(Table 40: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Significant Topics)	178
(Table 41: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Human Welfare Issues)	182
(Table 42: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Indian Government Policies)	183
(Table 43: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Politics (Indian domestic politics).....	184
(Table 44: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Law and Order)	185
(Table 45: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Business and Economy)	186
(Table 46: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–International Conflict).....	186
(Table 47: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Science, Environment and Information Technology)	187

Table of Figures

(Figure 1: BBC 1977–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India).....	127
(Figure 2: BBC 1997–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India).....	127
(Figure 3: BBC 2019–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India).....	127
(Figure 4: BBC Radio World News Service 1977–Duration of news items)	129
(Figure 5: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Duration of news items)	129
(Figure 6: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Duration of news items)	130
(Figure 7: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Indian Official Government Agencies)	133
(Figure 8: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Indian Official Government Agencies)	133
(Figure 9: BBC Radio World News Service 1997– Views of Experts and those involved).....	136
(Figure 10: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)	136
(Figure 11: BBC Radio World News Service 1977–Significant Topics)	140
(Figure 12: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Significant Topics)	141
(Figure 13: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Significant Topics)	141
(Figure 14: BBC Online 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies).....	151
(Figure 15: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)	151
(Figure 16: BBC Online 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)	152
(Figure 17: BBC Radio WNS 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats).....	152
(Figure 18: BBC Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)	154
(Figure 19: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Views of Experts and those involved).....	154
(Figure 20: BBC Online 2019–Significant Topics)	158
(Figure 21: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Significant Topics).....	158
(Figure 22: BBC Online 2019–Length of news items)	164
(Figure 23: CNN Online 2019–Length of news items).....	164
(Figure 24: AJE Online 2019–Length of news items)	164
(Figure 25: BBC Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item)	165
(Figure 26: CNN Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item).....	165
(Figure 27: AJE Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item)	166

(Figure 28: BBC Online–Indian Government Official Agencies).....	169
(Figure 29: CNN Online–Indian Government Official Agencies)	169
(Figure 30: AJE Online–Indian Government Official Agencies)	169
(Figure 31: BBC Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)	172
(Figure 32: CNN Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved).....	173
(Figure 33: AJE Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)	173
(Figure 34: BBC Online 2019–Significant Topics)	178
(Figure 35: CNN Online 2019–Significant Topics).....	179
(Figure 36: AJE Online 2019–Significant Topics).....	179

Table of Images

(Image 1: Example of BBC PasBs of 15 August 1977, news at 13.00 hours).....	108
(Image 2: 'Home page' of the BBC accessed from India)	286
(Image 3: 'Home page' of the BBC accessed from UK)	286
(Image 4: 'World page' of the BBC accessed from India)	287
(Image 5: 'World page' of the BBC accessed from UK)	287
(Image 6: 'Asia page' of the BBC accessed from India)	288
(Image 7: 'Asia page' of the BBC accessed from UK)	288
(Image 8: 'India page' of the BBC accessed from India)	289
(Image 9: 'India page' of the BBC accessed from UK)	289

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Abstract

Digital technologies continue to transform journalism practices worldwide. The emergence of digital technologies have similarly transformed the BBC's news coverage of India, with whom it has a longstanding relationship. In this context, this thesis examines the BBC's international news reporting of India in a digital era and assesses how new technologies have changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India. A mixed-methods approach is followed in this research, which includes content analysis and semi-structured interviews. The content analysis examines Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) of BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts of 1977 and 1997, which are compared to BBC Radio World News Service news broadcasts of 2019. It also examines online Indian international news broadcasts of the BBC, CNN and AJE in the year 2019. These content analyses explore: the frequency of news, the sources used in news reports, the time/space dedicated to the Indian news, the range of news reported and comparisons with other news platforms. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews with current and former BBC journalists in India are used to research the changes in journalistic practices on account of digital technologies. Additionally, this study looks at the significant similarities and differences in online news reporting of India between the BBC, CNN and *Al-Jazeera* English. This has served as a benchmark to analyse the global standing of BBC online against other major media houses reporting from three different viewpoints, i.e., the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE).

The research results show that, as communication technology changed, there were more international news stories about India, a wider range of news topics were addressed, and a greater range of news sources were included. The interviews suggest that digital technologies are a core reason for this more diverse and broad coverage, but variables such as geographical proximity, regional and national interests and business prospects still play a significant role in the scope of news coverage and broadcast, as do individual editorial policies.

The research demonstrates that in India, the BBC journalists adapted themselves to the emerging digital technologies that changed the journalistic practices from the reception of news information to dissemination of the news. The adaptation of digital technologies enabled them to be forewarned of an emerging news story, facilitated them to approach news stories from various dimensions or viewpoints, and empowered them to access sources remotely while sitting in their offices with the possibility of broadened scope of reachability. The journalists had to bear in mind that the dissemination of news happened on multiple platforms in different formats, and so the featured news item had to cater to different platforms through which it was disseminated. When traditional journalism blended with digital technologies, journalism's scope was redefined, and it empowered the journalists with a wider range and newer feasibilities.

This research contributes to a body of literature examining the BBC's contemporary reporting of India and the impact of new digital technologies on the BBC journalists reporting on India. It also reinforces the earlier findings of Harcup and O'Neil (2017) and Singer (2014) that journalists continue to be information gatekeepers even in a digital media environment, with altered roles and duties.

Introduction

The image of a country presented in the international sphere is of paramount importance. The perceptions created through international news coverage have manifold implications. For instance, it can challenge negative stereotypes, create business opportunities, make new allies, alienate nations or bring them together. International news coverage of a country plays a vital role in creating these perceptions. The arrival of digital technologies has ensured faster and wider dissemination of news to a large mass instantaneously. More than ever, as the various news outlets have embraced using digital communication the international news coverage of a nation has come under closer scrutiny, as the reach of news coverage increases.

From the traditional form of print, radio and television, news broadcasting and journalism practices have undergone tremendous transformation brought about by developments in communication technology (Thussu 2007a). For instance, digital technologies have revolutionised journalism practices worldwide, and have opened up newer possibilities and noteworthy outcomes. Subsequently, news broadcasts and journalism practices have embraced digital formats that provide some profound technical and multiple advantages. This fast-paced digital climate continues to grow and could continue to have myriad implications for news broadcasting and journalistic practices. Given these possibilities, this study attempts to determine to what degree these digital developments have impacted the British Broadcasting Corporation's (henceforth BBC) international news reporting of India, and whether these developments have diversified the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India.

A mixed-methods approach is followed in this research, which includes content analysis and semi-structured interviews with the BBC journalists who either were part of BBC reporting on India or are still working for BBC reporting on India. The content analysis examines BBC news coverage of India in its various platforms and makes comparison with other news platforms. This analysis includes Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) of BBC Radio World News Service (WNS) broadcasts of 1977 and 1997, BBC Radio World News Service news broadcasts of 2019, online Indian international news broadcasts of the BBC, Cable News Network, Inc (henceforth CNN) and *Al-Jazeera English* (henceforth AJE) in the year 2019. Meanwhile, the semi-structured interviews focus on the changes in journalistic practices on account of digital technologies.

Contextualising the Research

The BBC has a long-standing relationship with India, which began back in 1924 during the British colonial era when its then general manager John Reith wanted to establish a centralised system of broadcasting in India to connect the Indian Empire. However, his dream was realised only in 1932 when the BBC finally launched its own English-language Empire Service on shortwave radio, broadcast from London but with global reach including India (Webb, no date). During the Second World War, the BBC's services in India were boosted and broadened. The BBC launched a Hindi Language service in 1940, followed by broadcasts in Bengali and Urdu (ibid.). Until recently, the BBC's operations in India were done by a handful of people, including British expats, with a network of stringers across India. For instance, there were only 27 journalists working for the BBC in India in the year 1997. However, the number has risen to more

than 200 in 2019 (*Interview: Loyn, 21 February 2020*) with additional language services added to the BBC's services in India.

BBC Online was officially launched in December 1997 (Crisell, 2002, see *also* Ramsey, 2018), which marked the beginning of the BBC's entry into the digital broadcast, redefining the borders of traditional journalism. This was an early beginning as the high-speed internet and accessibility were still a dream for many around the globe. It was only a matter of time before journalists widely adopted digital technology. It was during one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in the year 2001 — the destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York — that online news sites were flooded with service requests or news queries, which in a way marked the beginning of online journalism (Belair-Gagnon, 2015).

By the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, social media began to be used widely, including breaking news and news updates. Added to this, a series of events such as the London bombings of 2005, the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar in 2006, the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, the Iranian election of 2009, and the Haiti earthquake of 2010 (Belair-Gagnon, 2015) forced journalists to look for news sources on social media as physical access to sources was not easy. In short, digital technologies have transformed journalism practices around the world, and this fast pace of changes is continued today. The media ecology has been changing drastically, and it is in this context that this research is carried out to analyse how the BBC reports on India.

Previous studies have analysed the long-standing relationship between BBC and India. For instance, Suzanne Franks (2012), in her study "BBC Reporting in India in the 1970s and 1980s: Globally Connected Media Ahead of Its Time", assessed the

Indian news reporting of the BBC in the 1970s and 1980s. Franks (2007), in her study on “Famine, politics, and the media”, did a comparison of how the BBC covered two developing parts of the world, i.e., Africa and India, differently. Daya Kishan Thussu (2013b) in his work “India in the international media sphere” examined the changes in the Indian media on account of the liberalisation of the Indian economy, privatisation and deregulation of the media and communication sector, and the emerging digitisation of media content. Moreover, Thussu (2013a) narrated in his book, *Communicating India's soft power: Buddha to Bollywood*, the power of culture and communication in which India's vibrant and pluralist media system had a significant role to play. Studies have also explored news coverage of developing nations more generally, finding that they often focus on negative topics and frames, as in the study “‘Suit, Tie and a Touch of Juju’—The Ideological Construction of Africa: A Critical Discourse Analysis of News on Africa in the British Press” by Heather Jean Brookes (Brookes, 1995). But there was a ray of hope as Bunce *et al.* (2017) found in their study, *Africa's media image in the 21st century: from the 'heart of darkness' to 'Africa rising'*. Bearing in mind all these aspects and the changing media environment, it is worth exploring if there have been major differences in BBC's Indian news coverage compared to its earlier news coverage of India.

The Objective and Research Questions

This research aims to examine if new media platforms have changed the BBC's reporting of India. It explores this question by analysing BBC Radio WNS broadcasts of 1977, 1997, 2019, and online Indian news coverage of 2019. It also focuses on digital technologies, especially social media, in the BBC's Indian news reporting. The research does a comparative analysis to find out the similarities and differences in

online news reporting of India in the BBC, CNN and AJE. This gives an overview of Indian news coverage from different viewpoints such as the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE). It also aims at determining if the changing media environment and newsroom practices have increased the range of topics and sources within the BBC's news coverage of India compared to the past. Therefore, the questions asked in this research are:

RQ 1. How does BBC report India in the digital era?

RQ 1a. How does BBC Radio World News Service reporting of India differ between the years 1977, 1997 and 2019?

RQ 1b. How does BBC Radio World News Service 2019 reporting of India differ from that of BBC Online in 2019?

RQ 1c. How does BBC Online report on India compared to CNN Online and AJE Online in 2019?

RQ 2. How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India?

Research Overview

This research has examined through its content analysis and interviews the pattern in BBC's Radio World News Service and BBC Online reporting of India over the years. This includes the frequency of news, the sources used in news reports, the time/space dedicated to the Indian news, and the range of news reported. It has also investigated the use of digital technologies in the news coverage of India and the changes this has prompted in the journalistic practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India. Additionally, an attempt has been made in this study to see the significant similarities and differences in the online news reporting of India in the BBC, CNN and AJE. This has served as a benchmark to analyse the global standing of BBC online against other

major media houses. This was an opportunity to look at the Indian news online coverage from three different viewpoints, i.e., the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE).

Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into nine chapters.

Chapter 1 outlines the development of international news coverage. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the history of international news coverage, and the second describes the media representation of the global South by the global North.

Chapter 2 examines the media representation of India in foreign media in general and BBC in particular.

Chapter 3 provides details of online journalism, social media, and how new media technologies have changed BBC news production and its dissemination.

Chapter 4 introduces the theoretical framework in which the research is situated, drawing on literature to describe gatekeeping theory, as explained by Lewin (Lewin, 1947).

Chapter 5 outlines the methodology, which details the process of data collection, including quantitative content analysis and qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

Chapter 6 elaborates on the quantitative analysis of the data collected. It is divided into three parts: a) the analysis of BBC Radio World News Service of 1977, 1997 and 2019, b) the comparison between BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC online 2019, and c) the analysis of BBC, CNN and AJE online news.

Chapter 7 presents a discussion on how the BBC reported India in the digital era and is divided into three sections. The first section combines what has been learned in this research about BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997, and 2019. The second section's focal point is on the similarities and differences of BBC's Radio World News Service 2019 and Online News Service 2019. The third section looks at the Indian news reporting of online services of the BBC, CNN and AJE. In addition, Chapter 7 critically discusses the findings from the analysis of Chapter 6 and looks into how overall research is in agreement with existing literature connected to the area of study.

Chapter 8 draws on the interview findings to answer the second research question: 'How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India'? This is examined on the basis of data analysis and from the interviews conducted as part of this research.

Chapter 9 (The Findings and the Conclusion) is divided into two sections. The first section draws on the major findings and the second section reflects on the limitations of the research and further recommendations for future study.

Justification for this Research

There were significant changes in the media environment over the past two decades. These changes have greatly influenced the way that newsgathering and dissemination take place. The BBC's operations in India also underwent some significant changes in terms of the number of its language services, the number of personnel working for it, the use of social media in its news coverage, and the multiple media platforms through which the news is disseminated. Journalistic newsroom practices have also undergone notable changes with the arrival of digital technology, which have blended

with traditional newsgathering and diffusion. Earlier, due to a lack of technological innovation and development in communication technology, it was not easy to reach across a subcontinent like India. This was one of the reasons for such limited Indian news coverage on the global stage. This was evident in the words of Mark Tully¹, who played a predominant role in establishing the BBC Bureau across India, “We were largely concerned inevitably with the main running story of the day, whatever that was” (*Interview: Tully, 14 May 2020*). Satish Jacob² (*Interview: 19 June 2020*) and David Loyn³ (*Interview: 21 February 2020*), in their interviews which were done as part of this research, reconfirm that lack of technology and personnel have limited the news coverage of India by the BBC to a large extent. However, with the advancement of communication technology, the non-reachability is currently non-existent to a great extent. Therefore, a study on India's international news coverage by the BBC would provide insights into the major changes in the news coverage in the new media environment.

Conclusion

This research contributes to knowledge about the BBC's contemporary reporting of India and the impact of new digital technologies on journalism practice. This thesis has evaluated how BBC's Indian news coverage has progressed as the communication technology developed over the years. The research has found that as the communication technology advanced, the scope of news coverage broadened and

¹ Sir William Mark Tully was the former Bureau chief of the BBC Delhi. He worked for the BBC for 30 years beginning 1964.

² Satish Jacob worked for the BBC Indian bureau for 20 years.

³ David Loyn joined BBC as a correspondent in India in 1993 and continued to report for the BBC for the next 20 years.

that the digital technologies have enhanced the Indian news coverage of BBC with its instant reachability and broader coverage.

The research has also delved into the changing nature of the BBC journalistic practices in India. It has found that the BBC journalists in India have adapted digital technologies that enabled remote access to sources, increasing the range of viewpoints within news stories. In other words, the arrival of digital media has transformed the mediascape of journalism. The comparative study of online news reporting of the BBC, CNN and AJE found that their reporting pattern was similar except for the total number of stories and the prominence given to the Indian news coverage.

This introduction has given an overview of the main objectives of the thesis, its overall structure, and the data collection methods. As mentioned earlier, the thesis focuses on the BBC's international news coverage of India and the changing journalistic practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India. In order to have a better understanding of these, it is important to have a glimpse of earlier developments related to the BBC reporting of India and the changing journalistic practices on account of the arrival of digital technologies. The literature review gives a preview of the historical development of communication, the media representation of the global South by the global North which provides an overview of how developed countries have covered developing countries, including India, and it looks into BBC's relationship with India from its earlier days and the emergence of influence of social media in journalistic practices. All these themes are addressed in the following literature review chapters (Chapters 1–3).

Chapter 1: The Development of International News Coverage

Introduction

The international news system has evolved significantly since the Western 'discovery' and colonisation of distant lands. This chapter explores this evolution of news coverage and is divided into two sections: the history of international news coverage and the media representation of the global South by the global North.

Section 1

The History of International News Coverage

This section briefly examines the historical background of international newsgathering and reporting, the link between trade, colonial expansion and international news reporting.

The History of International News Reporting

The quest for information sowed the first seeds of news reporting. People began to seek information for various reasons such as commercial, political, and religious. During the medieval period, the mode of news transmission was through a trusted messenger; and "regular access to news was the prerogative of those in circles of power" (Pettegree, 2015, p. 3). The primary reason for gathering information from distant lands was to boost commerce. In the "fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, merchants were both the principal consumers of news and its most reliable suppliers"

(ibid.). Since it was meant for commercial purposes, the connectivity mostly linked the commercial cities. This helped shape the future of newsgathering and its dissemination. Commercial centres of distant lands were often more connected than the cities within one region. The link between commerce and news flows is still evident today, as Pietiläinen (2006, pp. 217–220) indicated in his study based on the data collected on thirty-three countries. According to him, "trade between nations has been found to be one of the most conducive factors in augmenting press coverage in foreign countries".

However, the acquisition of information was not for commerce alone; it was also motivated by political and religious factors. For instance, in the late Middle Ages, safe routes were established to guarantee that the Church and the monarchs obtained the information they required to pursue their affairs. In this period, foreign news sources were mainly the political elites, diplomatic communiqués, and war news from officers and commanders in the field. However, this was not yet a fool proof system as the news inflow could still be disrupted by bad weather or inaccessibility.

The European nations' pursuit of colonial expansion gave a firm footing to the organised gathering and the dissemination of international news. It was accompanied by the realisation, that, "The acquisition of information could ultimately lead to power and wealth, and information gathering was an element in the economic and industrial exploration of the world by the Europeans" (Williams, 2011, p. 47).

The earlier accounts of the foreign lands came from the seafarers who ventured into the distant lands for various reasons. However, these reports were not entirely reliable as they contained exaggerated and sensationalised accounts which were gathered in an unsystematic and unverified manner.

It was essential for political, religious and commercial reasons to receive reliable news from trustworthy sources (Arblaster, 2005, p. 21). By the sixteenth century, the news market was "humming with conflicting reports, some incredible, some all too plausible: lives, fortunes, even the fate of kingdoms could depend on acting on the right information" (Pettegree, 2015, p. 3). The rapid flow of information or news did not make things simpler, and many believed it exacerbated the situation. The commercialisation of news, where it was exchanged for profit, sabotaged the trustworthiness of news sources.

The News as a commodity

With the realisation of the commercial value of news, individuals began to trade news for a price. This was a gradual development over the years. In the initial years, hand-written news pamphlets were marketed for a price (Chalaby, 2002). However, the invention of printing technology enabled the production in multiple copies, the news that was the privilege of the rulers and the wealthy, became affordable to the ordinary folks. "The printed news pamphlets of the sixteenth century were a milestone in the development of the news market, but they further complicated issues of truth and veracity" (Pettegree, 2015, p. 8). The arrival of printing technology paved way for multiple copies of news pamphlets and these had to be sold. Therefore, in the efforts to increase the commercial value of news pamphlets, exaggerated news accounts were included which compromised reliability. Nevertheless, those involved business and politics needed reliable information from afar, so they set up 'private postal networks', and in the second half of the sixteenth century 'private newsgathering' (Williams, 2011, p. 48; also see Pettegree, pp. 96-97) had been set up which ensured a more reliable news flow. Over the years the newspaper industry evolved gradually.

Manuscript newsletter service was mechanised in 1600s, causing the birth of the newspaper (Arblaster, 2005, p. 22). Despite these developments, it took well over a hundred years since the beginning of the first newspaper (Raymond and Moxham, 2016, p. 7) before it became part of routine life which increased the political and social consciousness.

Newspapers of the seventeenth century achieved a double broadening of political consciousness: they increased the numbers of the politically aware, and expanded their worldview. Newspapers also began to build in their readers a habit of news. Great events would still unleash a storm of pamphlets full of engaged advocacy, but readers came to value the steady miscellany of information that arrived with the newspapers in quieter times. For many in the seventeenth century, and for the price of two pence a week, it was an affordable habit. In the years ahead, it would increasingly become an addiction (Pettegree, 2015, p. 207).

As the newspaper industry became more established, some publishers began to employ stringers to gather information and set up more network of communication and postal networks for news flow (Schobesberger *et al.*, 2016, pp. 19–23). Domestic and political factors gave rise to more consistent international newsgathering. In the 1850s, reporting foreign affairs was less risky for the correspondent than covering the domestic ones. Europe was under the rule of monarchs, and the dynastic order did not want the information about their affairs reaching the public unless it was screened. Those printers and the publishers who went against their norms were severely punished (Williams, 2011, p. 45). As a result, it was safer for them to report about foreign affairs which they did vigorously. The commodity that was in the elites' private domain and was influential in the fourteenth century had gone to the public realm at the end of the eighteenth century. The developments in travel and postal networks ensured that more information was shared and exchanged. The hunger for information

from around the world for various reasons only increased, and the news service industry looked for easier and faster ways to satiate it. The readers valued the newspapers because "the newspapers offered readers a glimpse into a world far beyond the experience every day" (Pettegree, 2015, p.361). The realisation that information is power, the rulers, the business people and the news industry itself looked for ways and means to have the edge over others. Hence, the process of gaining and sharing information was ever evolving, resulting in innovative information technologies over the years.

The Professional and Technological Advancement in Newsgathering

The technologies enhanced the international newsgathering systems, including the arrival of cable technology, telegraph and telex (Williams, 2011, p. 46). Newspapers and Reuters were among the first and most significant recipients of transmitted correspondence such as telegraphic communication globally (Bonea, 2014, p. 388). Newspapers relied on news agencies for the foreign news, and these organisations were dependent upon the extension of the telegraph net. The motto of Julius Reuter, who established the Reuters, was to "follow the cable" (Rantanen, 1997, p. 613). Bonea (2014, p. 389), in her study, reaffirms that there was a close link between cable business and news agencies, and Julius Reuter was a vital proponent and beneficiary of telegraphic expansion. The undersea cables linked Europe and America, and later, in the 1860s it was extended to Africa and India, and then in the 1870s to China, South America and Japan; Reuter followed the cable and started his agency in all these places (Rantanen, 1997, p. 613). This was important not only for geopolitical and commercial reasons but also for the global flows of news. In the words of Bonea (2014, p. 389), "although London was very much the centre of telecommunications during

this period, the telegraph could facilitate the transformation of 'geographic peripheries' into 'information centres' and vice versa". According to Carey (2009, p. 186), the telegraph allowed messages to be separated from the physical movement of objects facilitating greater control over the flow of the message from the sender to the receiver. He continues, "The telegraph, then, not only altered the relation between communication and transportation; it also changed the fundamental ways in which communication was thought about. It provided a model for thinking about communication—a model I have called a transmission model" (ibid.).

In the early nineteenth century, foreign news began to be collected professionally, particularly in the UK and the US. Newspapers began to appoint specialised correspondents in foreign lands. For example, *Times* appointed Henry Crabb Robinson as the first correspondent who was sent abroad with the specific purpose of covering the news (Hohenberg, 1995, p. 4). Robinson was instrumental in persuading *Times* to set up a network of regular foreign correspondents which initiated 'the era of great reportage' (Williams, 2011, p. 49) in the latter part of the nineteenth century. However, the newspapers, especially the smaller players in the newspaper industry, found it challenging to employ a large number of foreign correspondents to gather news for them, and consequently they began to rely on the news agencies for the news. In the year 1832, Charles Havas established one of the first major private news agencies, named *L'Agence Havas*. It was only a matter of time that others followed suit and established private news agencies. The most developed countries in Europe had news agencies by the 1870s (Rantanen, 1997, p. 609). Some of the major ones which commenced in the following years were Reuters, Associated Press, Wolff and Telegraphisches Bureau (Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen, 1998, p. 5).

It is important to remember that the initial motivation for connecting distant lands was to gain information for commercial purpose. The news agencies who were partly funding the laying of cables across the continents limited the connectivity to the important centres of the continents such as capitals or big industrial cities (Rantanen, 1997, p. 612; see *also* Thussu, 2006). Therefore, the connectivity was mainly between major commercial capitals or big cities. Later on, when the commoditisation of the news happened, the news providers who were initially dealing only with the commercial information began to include more news about politics, wars and major events as part of their transmission. However, the news reports were still often limited to the commercial capitals or the main cities.

International communication played a crucial role in the imperial project. As pointed out by Carey, "It was the cable and telegraph, backed, of course, by sea power, that turned colonialism into imperialism: a system in which the centre of an empire could dictate rather than merely respond to the margin" (Carey, 2009, p. 193). The communication networks and the transport infrastructure developed between 1870 and the First World War served mostly the political, military and commercial interests of the colonial powers. The colonies were seldom connected to one another, and as a result, even after decolonisation, the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America had more difficulty communicating with their neighbours and one another than they did with Europe's capital cities. In short, the international information order was monopolised or customised by the interests of European traders, people in business and colonial administrators (Williams, 2011, pp. 54–55; see *also* Thussu, 2006).

As the European colonies expanded across the world, large numbers of Europeans too settled in those colonies. The European settlers in these places established their own newspapers that served the interest of the European community and the native elites who adapted the European culture (Williams, 2011, p. 55). The natives in some of the colonies were actively discouraged from launching a newspaper, as it might inflame anti-colonial sentiments. For instance, the French colonies in Africa up to the 1930s prevented anyone but a French citizen from starting a newspaper (Mytton, 1983, p. 52).

The uneven development of the colonial press left a 'discontinuity in communication' between the elite and the masses in many parts of the world which remains even today (Mytton, 1983, p. 41). Even the disintegration of the western empires did not eliminate the values, perceptions, and understanding of the colonial era (Williams, 2011, pp. 61–62). Even after the decolonisation, the international news coverage continued to concur with colonial perceptions. As a result, demand for a more balanced news flow grew stronger and stronger.

The Pursuit of a New World Information and Communication Order

A campaign for a balanced flow of information was initiated in the 1960s, on account of the considerable misrepresentation of the Third World countries by the Western media. It got its momentum in the mid-1970s, and the nations of the then Third World expressed several concerns about the imbalance in international news flows, which eventually led to the demand for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) (Frau-Meigs *et al.*, 2013, p. 3).

In 1974, during the Cold War, the Non-Aligned nations led by India managed to convince the UN General Assembly to pass a resolution to establish a New International Economic Order to create a more equitable global economic system, followed in 1978 by the endorsement by the UN of a New World Information and Communications Order, sponsored by UNESCO to reduce the imbalances in the 'one-way flow of information' from the West to the rest of the world (Thussu and Nordenstreng, 2020, p. 1).

NWICO was an important step in the history of the communication field as it highlighted the relationship of media to the geopolitical struggles between the American-led 'West' and the Soviet-led 'East' on the one hand, and the industrialised 'North' and the developing 'South', on the other (Nordenstreng, 2013, p. 348; Nordenstreng, 2013b).

The primary concerns raised at that time were the "concentration in the global structure of newsgathering and dissemination, which more or less followed the global flow of economic and political power" and the domination by four big Western news agencies (AP, AFP, UPI, TASS), which could in a way set the international news agenda (Paterson and Sreberny, 2004, p. 7; Tupper, 2013; Thussu, 2015).

The study commission found that the media flows were not fair, and they often imposed stereotyped and biased reports on developing countries. The commission called for a free, open and balanced approach in the communication of information, and it also recommended that the world communication be decolonised and democratised (MacBride, 1981). MacBride made a number of specific recommendations to even out the flow of information between developed and developing countries. Among the 82 suggestions that covered the scope of worldwide communication issues included "democratisation" of communication. This advocated

"horizontal communication" and upheld "counter-information" to significant suppliers of information and communication (Thussu, 2015, p. 254). The report encouraged more national news agencies, supporting public service media, limiting the concentration of media ownership and delivering a right of reply to misreporting (Williams, 2011). As the foreword to the MacBride Report states:

It is essential that all men and women, in all social and cultural environments should be given the opportunity of joining in the process of collective thinking thus initiated, for new ideas must be developed, and more positive measures must be taken to shake off the prevailing inertia. We hope that these discussions will continue and will resonate among and between nations and peoples (MacBride, 1981, p. xv).

In Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen's (2004, p. 42) view, since the 1981 International News study, there had been significant changes in the relationship between national and international news agencies. Together they have formed a nexus mainly based on the exclusive exchange of news services. The UNESCO's international news study may have succeeded to bring about greater awareness of the international news reporting, but it has not fully democratised the news flow between the developed and the developing nations. Denis Wu (2004, p. 106), in his study on international news coverage of 44 countries, found that the most covered nations in the press are countries with political and economic clout. Other than being a world power, the only alternative way to be cast in the world's spotlight is to have large-scale disruptive incidents. Franks (2006, p. 91), in her study on foreign reporting after the Cold War, seems to confirm the existing trend or practice that "some areas of the globe are bathed in light and regularly reported upon" (see *also* Cottle, 2009). However, this was not the case all across the globe. In another study, Franks (2007, pp. 223–224) negates the general notion that all the developing nations were inadequately reported

in 1960 to the late 1990s. For instance, South Africa received an extensive reporting in the 1970s and 1980s. Hence, some elements in the communication order were changed, but not to the extent it had hoped for.

The MacBride Commission Report was published at a time of media and communication inadequacy across the globe, particularly in the developing world. The geopolitical shift and the arrival of digital media brought about major shifts in the communication environment globally. In the words of Padovani and Nordenstreng (2005, p. 264), "Much has changed in the last quarter of a century, with the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union: the Third World as we knew it has ceased to exist -- the Non-Aligned Movement".

Besides, the emergence of newer media houses provided alternative narratives to the global events. This was in addition to the existing one-way 'vertical flow' of international media, and the emergence of multiple and 'horizontal traffic' provided a 'subaltern' (Thussu, 2015, p. 254) media content. The diversity of voices in the global media sphere emerged with the arrival of new international news broadcasters such as Al Jazeera English, CCTV News (state-run Chinese television news in English) and Russia Today with its broadcasts in English, Spanish and Arabic (ibid., pp. 256-257). These news channels have broadened the international communication flow, with some of them providing alternative narratives to the Western narratives about some of the international events.

In addition to the alternative international news channels, the growth and expansion of entertainment material emanating from non-western countries such as the Indian film industry, Brazil and Mexico's telenovelas, music and dramas from South Korea, and films from Nigeria have given rise to the alternative media narration to the

global media arena which for long has been dominated by the West (Thussu, 2015, p. 257).

Unlike in the past, the non-western countries are less dependent on western countries for communication technology, and at the same time, developing countries' communication technology has increased media content flow between non-western countries and western countries. With the convergence of mobile communications technologies and content, the flow of media from non-western countries is likely to increase exponentially via a multilingual internet (Thussu, 2015, p. 260; Mansell and Nordenstreng, 2007).

The increased financial stability and independence of some developing countries have made them less reliant on the West. Besides, non-western countries like China and India became the largest donors from the developing countries (ibid., p. 259). The rise of non-Western countries, together with the international political alliance of major developing countries such as BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) (Thussu and Nordenstreng, 2020, p. 2; Thussu, 2015) caused significant changes not only in the information sphere but also in the political and economic arena. In the words of Thussu and Nordenstreng (2020, p. 4), "The BRICS states comprise approximately three billion people (40 per cent of the global population) and, in terms of GDP, they account for nearly \$17 trillion (22 per cent of the world's economy)".

However, despite all these developments, the continued dominance of the western media, though to a lesser degree, is here to stay. For instance, social media networks, sports and entertainment media, news and current affairs, and online news networks are even today under western domination (Thussu, 2015, p. 255). The

influence of the West may have weakened, but they still play a significant role in the global information flow.

Even after many years of McBride report, many issues that it raised remain significant despite the political, economic and technological transformation of the world. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003 and 2005 acknowledges that the worldwide communication landscape has changed, but there is a substantial disparity in communication capacities worldwide (Modoux, 2013, pp. 144–145). However, in this volatile media environment, "in a digitally connected, more open, even democratised and poly-centric media globe, many more voices—some faint, some vociferous—can be heard in 'one world'" (Thussu, 2015, p. 261). In the age of internet and the increasingly digitised neoliberal environment, the global information flow has changed and is changing, posing new challenges and opportunities both for the developed and the developing nations.

After having briefly touched on the historical development of international reporting, the next section explores the global North's media representation of the global South. This section draws on examples from Africa, China, Brazil, and Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Section 2

News Coverage of the Global South by the Global North

The discussion in section 1 shows that the news flow between the North and the South was not mutual or reciprocal in terms of its quantity and quality. Most people agree that global journalism is important and influences the people, yet in the same breath,

they also acknowledge that the international news coverage appears to be imbalanced. “Research from the 1970s through to the 1990s demonstrated that international representations of Africa were narrow, laden with stereotypes, and highly dependent on Cold War frames and portrayals of an impoverished, often savage, “other” (Bunce, Franks and Paterson, 2017, p. 1). The one-way flow of information coupled with an outlook of “Afro-pessimism” (Bunce, Franks and Paterson, 2017, p. 2) did portray a negative view of Africa both for the researchers and for the international audience across the globe.

Peterson (1980, p. 88), in her study on 'Third World news coverage by the Western News Agencies and *The Times*' (London), claims that although the Western news agencies tended to report a higher proportion of conflict-related events from the Third World than those in the First World, there were also a good number of events from the Third World countries which were reported. Other scholars have reaffirmed the existence of a higher proportion of conflict-related reports about the developing countries. Hawk (1992, p. 6) too points out that most of the time the stories covered by Western media about Africa were about “racial stories, coups and wars, and famine and disease. Stories communicating African history, culture and values never reached the American public”. Brooks (1995, pp. 462–465), in her study about the Western media reporting of Africa, reconfirms that the news stories were mostly about violence, helplessness, human rights abuses and lack of democracy resulting in the construction of a 'stereotypical' representation of Africa in the minds of news consumers. Nevertheless, Scott (2009) points out that considering a large number of conflicts in Africa, journalistic ethics requires one to report more conflicts in the region.

There is also a tendency among Western journalists to consider Africa as one entity, although it consists of many countries. Nothias (2016, p. 7) in his study confirms the propensity of Western journalists to relate an event located in one country as events happening in another, or even to relate it to the continent as a whole. In his study, Martin (1994) too illustrates that such a tendency persisted among Western journalists. Moreover, people tended to see Africa, "not just as a real place, but as a vast, blank mythic canvas onto which foreigners can project their personal dreams. The correctness of Africa and its mosaic of peoples give way to the yearnings of the writers" (Martin, 1994, p. 183).

The tendency to portray the developing countries in poor light was not limited to Africa alone. Graeffet *al.* (2019), in their study of media portrayals of Brazil in nine international media outlets during 2014 football World Cup, found that in general, these acclaimed the 2014 football World Cup a success. However, apart from this, the selected media outlets empathised with natural splendours and social problems such as violence, inequality and social injustice. The issue of economic inequality was mentioned regularly. The study concluded that the approach taken by the news outlets studied "was consistent with traditional international constructions of Brazil's overall image as an underdeveloped country" (Graeffet *al.*, 2019, p. 807).

Another concern that scholars have raised in their study of the North reporting the South is the fact that there was an inclination among the Western reporters to consider the South as the 'other' and the North as 'us'. For instance, in the coverage of human rights issues by the North for Northern audiences "foreign matter that concerns developing countries rarely applying human rights principles to their own societies" (Paterson and Sreberny, 2004, p. 4). Having such a trend towards the

developing countries results in inaccurate reports with superficial claims and is often subject to bias. For instance, in a study conducted on 'The pictorial image of Pakistan in *Newsweek* and *Time*: pre-and-post 9/11', a total of 280 images published in *Newsweek* and *Time* during pre- and post-two years of 9/11 were evaluated by Durrani and Sheikh (2010). The study indicated that the visual narrative's dominant theme included political and religious extremism and terrorism with a strong flavour of Orientalism and Islamophobia (ibid., p. 26). In other studies, too, the propensity to consider the South as 'other' by the North was evident. Leung and Huang (2007, p. 675), in their study 'The paradox of journalistic representation of the other', found that the "western news coverage on China corroborated the image of 'the other' in an unfavourable light". According to them, one of the reasons for this distorted reporting of the 'other' arises from the journalist's unfamiliarity with the foreign contexts. In another study to analyse the media coverages in the US and Chinese media of Chinese swimmer Ye Shiwen in the 2012 Olympic games, Bie and Billings (2015, p. 785), found the existence of a "us versus them" dichotomy which implies that the news coverages of both countries were persuaded by the hostile ideologies beyond mere Olympic performances.

However, such a tendency was not alien to the South as they themselves at times were guilty of such practices as demonstrated by Angela and Stella (2011, pp. 20–21) in their examination of CNN and Channels TV on the news coverage of World News. According to their study, it was found that both the Western and the Third World nations were equally guilty of imbalanced news reports of foreign countries and biases in their coverage of World News.

Many factors shape news content. Mandira Banerjee (2001) has studied how Asian countries were represented in the Asian news segment of the global channels—BBC World and the CNN. Her research sample considered the Asian news segment on BBC and the CNN for five weeks in which BBC World broadcast 102 stories and CNN 118 stories. The study indicates that there are differences in how a country, or an issue was portrayed depending on various factors. These include the national interests, business prospects, diplomatic and cultural relations with a country. It was also proved that the elements such as the mindset, definite lifestyle and political values of the reporter influence the international news reporting. Moyo (2010) confirms this in his study on 'The global citizen and the international media'. In his words, "Despite the misleading belief in neutrality and objectivity, international journalists have a mindset, definite lifestyles and political values which define the worldviews in their stories" (Moyo, 2010, p. 204). National policies often determine the change in the international news narratives of a country. For instance, the news narratives of China by the American media outlets varied significantly over the years in accordance with America's policy towards China. The narratives in American media about China sometimes shifted rapidly and dramatically. In harmony with the changing U.S policy towards China, the media coverage of China by U.S. media shifted from hostile to friendly ally and vice versa (Carpenter, 2020, pp. 714–715). A similar study, 'Media and Intervention: Examining Representations of Afghan Women in The New York Times' (Hatef and Luqiu, 2021), suggested that the overall news coverage or theme highlighted by The New York Times dominantly consisted of oppression and violence experienced by Afghan women. Apart from this, the study also highlighted, "Beyond highlighting the injustices Afghan women experience, media coverage in The New York Times, we argue, support larger U.S. interests" (Hatef and Luqiu, 2021, p. 694).

It was also found that there is an apparent influence of the news media coverage in shaping national or international policy within or between countries (Zhang, 2010).

Nothias' (2016) study analysis about Africa reconfirms this trend. According to him, "the representations of Africa are entangled in complex structures of production, where competing, even conflicting, values interact to shape sometimes reductive representations, but also more empowering ones, or representations at odds with one-sided negative ones" (Nothias, 2016, p. 5).

Nothias (2016) in his study points out that although there are different types of news events happening throughout Africa, they are often reduced to an "Africa specific system of linguistic, semiotic and symbolic" reference. He elaborates it further,

... metaphors and expressions such as "Dark continent", "in darkest Africa", "out of Africa" or "heart of Darkness" have been regularly observed in contemporary journalistic writing (Hawk, 1992; Spurr, 1993; Brookes, 1995)." These phrases directly refer to the colonial literature of the nineteenth-century travellers and colonisers and inscribe journalistic discourse in a discursive continuum where literary and journalistic styles collide. This process, as Fair (1993, 5) perfectly puts it, shows how 'fact' and 'fiction' constantly reinforce each other in the construction of Africa and Africans as the undifferentiated 'Other' (Nothias, 2016, p. 7).

Most often, the developing country received prime news coverage when there is a major disaster or violence. Such reports were short and often remained in the public span only for a short term. Besides, "the fireman-style reporting" wherein an experienced reporter, who prepares and sends the report for various bulletins, is often asked to cover a disaster that may have taken place in a remote area in a developing

country. Such a reporter can only cover the event scantily as he/she has limited time, leaving very little room to find out more about the story. Franks elaborates it further,

The absence of sustained interest by the media in the developing world, and Africa in particular, has been a subject of regular concern and fits into an overall pattern. The problem is a recurrent one that where poorer, developing countries are concerned, the news coverage is generally episodic stories about war and disaster, (with the exception of royal or celebrity visits) (Franks, 2006, p. 163).

Although there were many African expatriate communities in the West in the 1970s and 1980s, they did not exert their influence or voiced their concerns about the way Africa was reported. For example, the African staff who worked within the BBC did not coordinate among themselves to draw in all the available resources for the news or the programmes presented (Franks, 2007).

Scott (2009, p. 534) argues that negative news reports about Africa originate from 'circumstantial and natural' factors rather than human intervention. Scott asserts that the different types of content indicate that the Western media's approach to developing countries is not a 'homogeneous' one (Scott, 2009, p. 535) and is not resulting from a collective mindset of journalists as it is generally perceived. Again, "the use of negative frames does not necessarily support the argument that Western media coverage of Africa is racist" (Scott, 2009, p. 554). It may be that the negative events that occur compel the journalists to report the events. As pointed out by Martin (1994, p. 186) "parts of Africa are places of famine and disease and not to report on such topics would itself be a distortion". For Nothias (2016), African voices are "not as marginalised" as it is often argued in the literature. Nevertheless, a closer examination of "African voices are given the most space, and how they are framed through quoting

verbs" shows the subtle biased approach in their frames and linguistic approach (Nothias, 2016, p. 18). A related study, 'The two-way flow of news: A comparative study of American and Chinese newspaper coverage of Beijing's air pollution' by Duan and Takahashi (2017), reaffirms the increase in two-way news flow between China and the USA despite the different media system prevailing in both countries.

The two-way news flow between the developed and developing nations may have marginally increased since the arrival of digital technologies. However, the equity in global communication, one of the major issues raised in the MacBride report, is far from materialised due to social and economic structures. Even after many years since the McBride report, many issues that it raised remain significant despite the world's political, economic, and technological transformation. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003 and 2005 acknowledges that the worldwide communication landscape has changed, but there is a substantial disparity in communication capacities worldwide (Modoux, 2013, pp. 144–145). A decade later, Vincent and Nordenstreng (2016, p. xiii) reaffirm further in their study that, "While 'imbalance' as the overall theme since the 1970s has been replaced by 'digital divide' in the 2010s, the fundamental question is still equity". Because one half of the world's population reside in areas where 3G mobile technology is accessible, while about 2.4 billion people live in the least connected countries (Vincent and Nordenstreng, 2016a, pp. 209–210). In short, the initiative began with MacBride report for global communication equity made some progressive movements but fell short of its actual goals as it is mired in the complexities of global politics, economic policies, and technological accessibilities.

Post-Colonial News Coverage

In the post-colonial era, former colonies continue to receive news coverage, but the type of coverage, flow, and frequency vary significantly. Considering the African news coverage after decolonisation, the news coverage of the continent has been diminishing except on those occasions when there is a "western or white angle to the story" (Franks, 2014, p. 161), or when there is a severe natural or human-made calamity. Even on those occasions when the continent gets covered in the news, it is inadequately covered.

The logistical complications and the considerable expense involved in having someone to operate from Africa for a long time may have contributed to the isolation of the African Continent. Therefore, the major media enterprises managed to send a few special reporters who, lacking the background and the context of the event, ended up covering only the events per se (Franks, 2014, pp. 161–166). In other words, they end up reporting what has happened without really exploring why it has occurred. The "episodic" international news is sometimes meaningless as it lacks contextualisation (Franks, 2006, p. 98).

The isolation and the apathy towards the African Continent may have contributed to the escalation of some of the tragic events in its history. For example, the Rwanda genocide, the fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which claimed four million lives, the fighting in Northern Uganda where over a million people were displaced into camp (Franks, 2014, pp. 162–165), are but some of the occurrences that had their genesis over a long time and were mostly ignored by the western media till they did happen.

However, there are signs of positivity, and the winds of change have begun with the information explosion era at the beginning of this new century. Bunce narrates in her study that there has been a substantial increase in business reporting, sports, travel and adventure (Bunce, 2017, p. 26). Her comparative analysis of newspaper reports on Africa from two different years (1994 and 2013) illustrates this further. According to her,

The tone of newspaper articles was substantively and consistently more positive in the 2013 sample than it was in 1994. Between the two samples, there was also a substantive rise in positive reporting: from only 10.8 per cent of stories in 1994 to 29 per cent in 2013. All the newspapers had a higher portion of positive stories in 2013 than they did in 1994 (Bunce, 2017, p. 23).

The findings of Hawk in the year 1992 about Africa's media portrayal in the mainstream international media were bleak and cynical. However, in the year 2017, Hawk wrote, "Technological advances in communication are transforming information about Africa and consequently the image of Africa around the world" (Hawk, 2017, p. xvii). Now the content of news is produced not only locally (Africa), but also abroad by the African Diaspora. In addition, there has been "the introduction of technologies that allow local audiences to reclaim their representation" (Bunce *et al.*, 2017, pp. 5–6).

Reclaiming the Lost Voice

The emergence of new media helps Africa "reclaim its voices in the global public sphere", claims Jacobs (2017, p. 190). The new media gives the voiceless a platform to voice their opinions fearlessly and effectively. It was not only the advancement in the information technology that caused this shift; formerly traditional news outlets had

their Western foreign correspondents posted abroad to report the news or send a special envoy to report a particular event, but now in their place, local journalists were employed for the same (Bunce *et al.*, 2017, pp. 4–5). This had a definite impact in the gathering, framing and disseminating of the news. It is also due to the greater awareness of criticism among the journalists about their reporting of Africa. "As the criticism of Africa's image has become more widespread—both within and beyond academia—it might be that foreign correspondents are increasingly attentive to the issues of post-colonial representations" (Nothias, 2016, p. 18).

Besides, the monopoly enjoyed by the major international media houses has been reduced due to the emergence of new players in the field, especially *Al-Jazeera English* and the Chinese news agency *Xinhua*, which began to add different dimensions to events in Africa (Bunce *et al.*, 2017, p. 5). The geo-political shift too, has caused these changes as Wasserman (2017) indicated in his study. For instance, the formation of BRICS countries (namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) shifted Africa's international media coverage. As a result of this geo-political shift, the Chinese media firms are establishing themselves in Africa for political and economic reasons. Critics say this is an act of extending China's 'soft power' in the African Continent (Wasserman, 2017, pp. 194–195), and that it may change the way the content is reported. "The coverage of Chinese involvement in Africa in the Western media has frequently been negative. It could be argued that the way that the Sino-African relationship has been portrayed also displays a certain paternalistic attitude towards Africa" (Wasserman, 2017, p. 195).

Moreover, there has been a considerable shift in the approach of researchers to the international reporting of Africa. It has become clear that when the researchers

study only the hard news content, the results can reaffirm the finding that news coverage is negative.

Scott (2009, pp. 465–467), in his study on the UK press coverage on Africa, argues that while considering the total news coverage, 70 per cent of the news coverage consisted of news items (hard news), and 30 per cent took other formats (non-news articles). The hard news primarily consisted of news coverage on civil war, conflict, terrorism, natural disasters, deplorable living conditions, health and disease, human rights violations, and so on. The non-news articles included topics on the wildlife, natural beauty, travel and tourism. Scott (2009, p. 550) goes on to say,

First, the UK press does not contain a significantly higher percentage of negative news stories, the percentage of articles covering the civil war and civil conflict are approximately the same as in the *All Africa* sample, and the UK press even contains a far higher percentage of articles on culture, religion and tourism. Second, far from being a deliberate and systematic process, the disproportionate number of soft news stories suggests that UK coverage is a product of financial and time constraints, and the pressure from advertisers to deliver a certain audience size and demographic, rather than any deliberate, process (Scott, 2009, p. 550).

Conclusion

International news reporting has gone through many evolutions in recent years. The gathering of information, which was begun as a means to improve commercial purposes, soon turned out to be a vital tool for establishing authority over distant lands. The quest for political power and the desire to reinforce political and military strength over the conquered land cemented the need for the systematic gathering of information. The information system was mainly meant to pass information to and from the colonial centres. It was also meant to communicate between the 'colonial diaspora'

and their native lands. However, as years passed the services were made available to the general public as well, and as a result, the general audience became more informed of news from distant lands. There were many factors that may have contributed to the one-sided flow of information about developing countries. All of which was not deliberate; the circumstances, geo-political factors and the economy, seem to be the contributing factors.

Historically, gathering and disseminating news from abroad was very expensive. Most of the media organisations could not afford to have their own news reporters on the ground. Hence, they depended heavily on the news agencies for the inflow of news. These news agencies which were primarily set up for commercial newsgathering had their offices mainly in the commercial capitals or major cities. As a result, the news from the rural areas often went unreported. In the eventuality of a major incident or event, the foreign correspondents often did parachute reporting of the developing countries, resulting in a cursory and inadequate report of the news. Even after decolonisation, developing countries have continued to receive news coverage through these sources.

It is also true that when the developing countries did receive the news coverage very often, they largely consisted of hard news which was focussed mostly on humanitarian issues consisting of violence, poverty and natural calamities resulting ultimately in the negative portrayal of the same. Africa's news coverage is a typical example, as Brooks (1995) pointed out in her study. This trend continued until the end of the 20th century when the focus of both media reports and research began to change. In the 2010s, Bunce *et al.* (2017) found significant changes in the news reporting and the type of media coverage Africa received. Scott elaborated that the

earlier studies were mostly focussed on hard news which was negative in themselves; nevertheless, in reality, when the full coverage is considered, the outcome was not as bleak as it was made out to be. Franks (2007), in her study, affirms that not all the developing nations were under-covered.

Historically, the international news coverage of developing countries was controlled by the Northern media as they had the money and the technology. With the arrival of new technologies in the early 21st century, however, the monopoly that the North held over the South has been reduced, as the new technologies facilitated new international and local players in the field. The reclamation of media space by developing countries is a step towards an equal information order. Although it may still be a long way off there has, at least, been some movement towards this goal.

Having discussed the international news coverage of developing countries generally, the next chapter deliberates more specifically on the international media coverage of India.

Chapter 2: Media Representation of India in Foreign Media

This chapter is divided into two sections: the international news coverage of India and the BBC's Relationship with, and Portrayal of, India. It primarily focuses on the US and the UK media outlets as they have played a major role in the international news coverage of India from earlier days.

Section 1

The International Media Coverage of India

The early stages of international media coverage of India began during the British colonisation era. As mentioned earlier, the international newsgathering system was strengthened with the arrival of cable technology, telegraph and telex (Williams, 2011, p. 46), and the news agencies made use of the cable technology. The undersea cables linked Europe and America, and later on, in the 1860s, it was extended to Africa and India (Rantanen, 1997, p. 613). A few decades later, India witnessed the rapid growth and expansion of print and broadcast media, which let the Indian audience view foreign media and vice-versa. The deregulation of the Indian market in the year 1992 accelerated the growth and expansion of the Indian media further. The emergence of new technologies like the internet enabled the digitalisation of the media, which has ensured a multi-directional flow of information. The opening of the Indian markets and globalisation created new opportunities and avenues for the broadcast industry and the digital revolution further ensured an easy, smooth and

consistent dissemination of information across the globe on multiple platforms (Thussu, 2007, p. 1; see also Banerjee, 2002; Singhal and Rogers, 2001; Thussu, 2013b; Ranganathan and Rodrigues, 2010).

The US and the UK Media Coverage of India

Long before digitalisation, English-language international news coverage of India was mostly done by the US and the UK newspapers. Therefore, a brief analysis is done on India's various media representation in these leading international newspapers, magazines and, as technology evolved, movies made by Westerners about India, as this has been a particular area of scholarly interest.

The relationship between India, the American News Agencies and the media coverage of India in the US go back to the pre-independence era. In the early 1900s, the American News coverage of India was very supportive of the Indian freedom struggle. Chandrika Kaul (2014, p. 92), who is one of the leading researchers of the history of press coverage of India, argues that *The Chicago Tribune*, for instance, although it acknowledges the benefits of imperial rule, was nevertheless “critical of specific policies and supported Indian demands for future self-government”. *The Chicago Tribune* considered the nationalist movement by the Indians as 'revolutionary', and it supported the 'Gandhian nationalism'. Whenever there were incidents in India relating to the Indian freedom struggle, *The Chicago Tribune* tended to prefer to use the word 'revolution' while the British press preferred to describe such incidents as 'civil disobedience' and 'riots' (Kaul, 2014, p. 93).

The Tribune did not hesitate to describe British repression as 'atrocities' and the word 'war' was also repeatedly used to analyse the state of affairs between colonisers and colonised—for example, Shirer's (one of

The Tribune correspondent for India) piece entitled 'War to Finish! Gandhi Rejects British Terms' (6 September 1930), or another entitled "Gandhi Hushes his 'Liberty for India' War Cry" (20 August 1931) (ibid., p. 94).

The Chicago Tribune's approach was designed to appeal to a popular readership in the American Midwest that was mostly ignorant of India. The approach taken by *The Chicago Tribune* helped to popularise support for the Indian freedom struggle. The audience could identify themselves with the Indian freedom struggle as they had undergone similar struggles a century ago. *The Chicago Tribune* repeatedly, through its columns, narrated the images of violence the British rule inflicted on the Indians (Kaul, 2014, p. 94).

UK newspapers took different approaches. *The Times (London)* had its own correspondents reporting from India and sent special correspondents to cover important events in India, and its reports were highly respected among Indians. The *Morning Post's* reports reflected its preference for aristocratic government and monarchy, and as a consequence, the colonial reporting was strongly imperialistic in tone. *The Guardian*, published from Manchester, had its own views on Indian affairs. Although the paper often offered its readers only editorial opinion with inadequately supported facts, the paper staunchly advocated constitutional reform for India and shared many Indian sentiments (Kaul, 2003, pp. 61–72).

The Daily Mail was distinctively supportive of the British Empire as its reports most often reflected such an approach. As Kaul (2003, p. 80) describes it, "*The Mail* was confident of the benefits of British rule and optimistic for the future. ... In general the paper assumed that British rule was a necessary condition for Indian progress,

reflecting which it welcomed the steady, but slow, moves to extending political rights to Indians and criticised heavy-handed display of military force”.

The International Media Coverage of Indian Independence

The media coverage of Indian Independence by foreign media, especially the British media, is worth mentioning here. According to Kaul (2008, p. 681–682), the British press was able to portray Independence as a British achievement. In most local British newspapers, the overarching theme during the Indian Independence coverage was the self-congratulatory tone. It portrayed the transfer of power as the fulfilment of the British mission. For example, *The Guardian* reported that the purpose of Britain going to India was for trade, and it was also to facilitate Indians to have contact with the outside world, and to enable the recovery of their lost confidence. Having achieved these aims, the Empire was returning India’s power back to them. *The Observer* was convinced of the “moral and material benefits” that the Raj had brought to India. *The Express*, *Daily Mail*, *Telegraph* and *Herald* focussed mainly on the gratitude expressed towards Britain by Indian leaders. "The imagery of the grateful imperial subject/student and the wise and benevolent colonial master/ teacher was a recurrent underlying motif in many newspaper accounts" (ibid., p. 682).

The absence of any detailed discussion of Indian nationalism or the freedom struggle during the Indian independence coverage was notable except for a few references mentioned in the liberal and labour papers. The local papers in the UK held India responsible for its partition and the creation of Pakistan. *The Guardian*, one of the long stalwarts of Indian nationalism observed, "We have handed over India to the Indians: they have chosen what seems a second best— a divided India. But it is their choice; if they come together, well and good, but their destiny is in their own hands"

(Kaul, 2008, p. 683). Most papers were unanimous in highlighting the role British played to unify India into a nation from its many princely kingdoms (ibid., p. 683–691).

India's Non-Alignment Policy and the Media Response

The international news coverage of India changed during the cold war. The *Time* magazine's cover portraits and articles from 1951 to 1962 featuring the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, narrate the US media's mixed responses towards India and its non-alignment policy, especially during the Cold War. When India got its freedom in the year 1947, the US expected India to be its natural ally on account of the historical similarities and shared political values. Singh (2014, pp. 525–526) writes: "As a fellow secular democracy and former British colony, India's support in the ideological tussle between communism and democracy had seemed inevitable. It is possible that the US also saw in India's push for freedom elements of her own revolution against Britain in the eighteenth century and expected India to feel a similar kinship". But India, after years of colonisation, was wary of entangling itself with other countries' foreign policies. And India dreaded a "new kind of imperialism" by the "powerfully expansionist" post-war American economy (ibid., p. 525). The non-alignment strategy adapted by the new Indian government sent out conflicting signals to the US administration.

Although the *Time* was especially attentive to India and its affairs, India's non-alignment move led to the former aligning itself with the US administration's scepticism towards India. Forty years later, India's foreign policy towards US administration began to change in the first decade of the 21st century, and so did the media representations. In its reports, *Time* indicated that America and India sought to "define a new sort of

relationship" (Singh, 2014, p. 523) and recognised India as a crucial partner to the US' strategic relationship.

In the year 2011, the "*New York Times* launched its first-ever country-specific site: "India Ink," (Singh, 2014, p. 523) a blog by journalists from the paper and writers from India seeking to produce "unbiased, authoritative reporting on the country and its place in the world" (ibid.). *The Economist* released a special report on India in September 2012 followed by an online debate on India's economy in October 2012" (ibid.).

The News Coverage of the 2010 Commonwealth Games

Although digital technology transformed news production processes, in the 1990s and 2000s, news content continued to have negative depictions of India. In a study which examined the news coverage of the Commonwealth Games in India in 2010 by the major newspapers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK, Mishra (2012) points out the heavy use of negative stereotype narratives and the bias in the news reports of the event. The study analysed 144 news articles published in 2010 in five newspapers, namely, the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia), the *New Zealand Herald*, *The Globe* and *The Mail* (Canada), *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* (UK). According to Mishra (2012, p. 882), "The coverage of the Games reflects the general 'bad news' bias of the media; however, a close examination of the text shows more than just a bad news bias. In the selection of the stories and how the stories were told, the coverage reflects a cultural and at times racist ideology that emphasises the inferiority of 'others' and the superiority of 'us'". Mishra acknowledges that the problems stated in news reports were present during the game preparations;

furthermore, he contends that the media disproportionately focussed on the negative news and prejudicial coverage. In the words of Mishra:

... the Western press functioned to re-establish the hegemony of the West through its coverage by highlighting the deficiencies and problems in India. In some ways the press helped maintain the old, social and symbolic order established during colonial times. Through subtle strategies that involved a polarisation of 'us' and 'them', and through the focus on social, economic and cultural problems, negative topics, and positive self-presentation, the Western press highlighted the difference between India and the West (Mishra, 2012, pp. 883–884).

The international perception of a country is not only influenced by the international news coverage but also the visual media representation. The visual narration of a country through documentaries, films, or any visual medium has more significant implications when these become the main channels of representation of the country. For India, as for any other country, its international visual representation through visual media is of paramount importance. The mass media, culture, and popular cinema help generate awareness of India globally (Thussu, 2020, p. 193). Therefore, along with the international news narratives of India, a glimpse into the Indian visual representation would be valuable in providing a better representation of India globally.

The Visual Representation

Other cultural products, such as films, photography and novels, reinforced the stereotypes about India for an international audience. Ramasubramanian (2005, pp. 244–248) studied randomly selected films about India from 1930-2000 in the US and the UK to analyse how India and its people were represented. Her study disclosed that

people from India were often portrayed in condescending, negative, and stereotypical ways. The stereotypical representations of India date back to the colonial rule, but are still carried on in the post-colonial narratives. Some movies portray India in condescending ways, showing "clashes of civilisations" where the Western characters "saved" India from uncivilised practices and social injustices. Often the Indian adult characters take villainous and anti-Western roles. However, Indian children are presented as innocent and pro-Western.

The few films presented to the American audience added further dimensions to the already existing image of India "not just as a country of confusing dualities, but one with a dangerous capacity for deceit" (Singh, 2014, p. 526). Therefore, India's image in US' popular literature and films was of a country difficult to comprehend, surrounding several inconsistencies, and possessing a scary likelihood for violent betrayal. India's non-alignment during the Cold War only reiterated the perceptions prevailing in popular literature and films. The American public in the 1950s had minimal knowledge of India, which came mainly through books and a few films. These presented India as a "country with its dual identity as a secular democracy with deeply religious customs, its public worship of female deities alongside systematic gender discrimination against women and its juxtaposition of immense wealth with abject poverty" (ibid., p. 526).

Ananda Mitra (1999), in his book *India through Western Lens*, analyses the films produced on South Asia, especially on India by Western film-makers for six decades beginning from 1930. According to Mitra, most of the films produced during this period have portrayed India and its people in the backdrop of either the colonial times or the post-colonial period. The images created through films remain longer in the people's minds, and the audience tends to associate the people of the place as depicted in the

film. For example, the movies *A Passage to India*, *The Jungle Book*, and *The Man Who Would Be King* depict the exuberant landscapes and India's natural beauty. However, the film *City of Joy* directed by Roland Joffe evokes an image of a poverty-stricken people who struggle for their livelihood and the deplorable living conditions of Calcutta's slums. Meera Nair's film *Mississippi Masala* mimics the South Asian who has been placed into the niche of Western societal structure—an outsider attempting to integrate into the Western public sphere. Meera Nair's film tells the story of a love affair between an Indian-American woman and an African-American man. (Mitra, 1999, pp. 205–206).

The images of religion presented in some of the earlier movies would have the viewers believe in widow burning (*Sati*), human sacrifice and other similar strange rituals although this is not the actual image of the religion in its entirety. In movies like *Gunga Din*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* and *Around the world in 80 days*, religious practices are depicted as a cause of paranoia and fear. However, in the movie *Gandhi* it is the celebration of Hinduism (Mitra, 1999, pp. 161–163).

In the movies such as *City of Joy* and *Salaam Bombay*, the people are portrayed as living in extreme poverty. *Calcutta* is a 1969 French documentary film about Calcutta (now Kolkata), directed by Louis Malle, which explored Calcutta's extremity and vivacity. Although Malle tried to present the life he saw in Calcutta in its entirety, it failed to be a comprehensive and balanced view of Calcutta. "Malle's eye lingered on the poor and the destitute languishing in the city's slums, while largely avoiding the city's industrious working classes" (Pinkerton, 2008a, p. 539). It is also true that some of the Indian movies created in India by the Indians propagated the images as mentioned above. For example, the Hindi movie *Padmavat* released in

2018 has shown the practice of *Sati* (wife immolating herself in the pyre of her husband).

The international acceptance of Indian movies is growing. "The Indian films are increasingly being watched by international audiences, shown in more than 70 countries - from Egypt to Nigeria and from Russia to Thailand" (Thussu, 2013b, p. 157). New Indianised programmes are being produced around the world with a multi-national media partnership. For example, with the Bollywood collaboration, a Beijing-based film group is to produce China's first Bollywood film, and "the famous Brazilian opera, *India—A Love Story*" was screened in prime-time on TV Globo. This winner of the 2009 International Emmy Award for Best Telenovela was set in both India and Brazil and dealt with Indian themes, including caste, gender and class, with Brazilian actors playing the Indian characters" (Thussu, 2013b, p. 157). The *Slumdog Millionaire* directed by the British director Danny Boyle won eight categories at the 81st Oscar awards, and is one of the best examples of working beyond national borders in cinema (Jaikumar, 2010, p. 23).

The Indian tolerance towards accepting the different perceptions about its life has increased over the years or has a critical approach. For instance, the celebrated feel-good film the *Slumdog Millionaire* portrays India's urban poverty (in Mumbai) in a bad light endorsing the West's existing perceptions about India. The Indian audience and the Diaspora were divided in their views on the movie. At the same time, some were appreciative of the movie, while on the other hand, some criticised it for portraying India's urban poverty and life in a slum in an unrealistic manner. However, Danny Boyle did not face a severe criticism compared to Joffe, who had directed *The City of Joy*. *The City of Joy* had to face stern criticism and opposition alleging that it

had portrayed the slums and the life in Calcutta (now Kolkata) in a bad light. Ironically, both movies had portrayed urban life in a similar fashion (Sengupta, 2010, pp. 603–613).

Having examined India's international media representation, the next section looks at the BBC's relationship with, and media portrayal of, India.

Section 2

The BBC's Relationship with India

The British Broadcasting Corporation (the BBC) is one of the most influential media organisations in the world. As Kavanagh (1999, p. 82) writes: "The BBC has been a unique element in twentieth-century British society, (and globally) not only in reflecting aspects of that society but also as a player in its own right". Over the years, it has played a significant role in reaching out to the masses in Britain, Europe and British colonies. It has served as a bridge to connect those in the Diaspora with their motherland. This section considers the relationship between the BBC and India, and the BBC's representation of India in both the pre- and post-colonial period.

BBC Radio Services and India

Radio services are a crucial part of the relationship between the BBC and India. From the 1920s through the 1970s, radio services were a major part of BBC's overseas services. Recognising the reach and the impact of radio services, the Government of India (British Raj) in the 1920s began to make efforts to have its own local radio stations in India. After many years of struggle, the Indian Broadcasting Company's

(IBC's) Bombay station began its transmission on 23 July 1927 (Pinkerton, 2008b, p. 167).

The BBC's plan to establish radio broadcast across India was not a smooth one. There were financial, political and administrative hurdles to be addressed. In the year 1932, the then Director-General of the BBC John Reith saw the radio broadcast as a means to foster friendship and relationship between the people of India and Britain; the British Raj or the colonial Government of India (GoI) at that time saw it as a medium of threat which would consolidate masses against its colonial rule. It took yet another decade for the Government of India to realise the vast potential of radio broadcast and its influence on the masses, while the Russian and German radio broadcasters were already exploiting the vast Indian population for their own interests (Gillespie *et al.*, 2010, p. 7). "With the foundation of BBC services in South Asian languages, starting with Hindustani (the Urdu/Hindi hybrid used as the language of imperial command in British India) in May 1940, the period between 1939 and 1945 might be regarded as the initiation proper of an active relationship between the BBC and its South Asian audiences" (Gillespie *et al.*, 2010, p. 8).

Radio broadcast in India was both an opportunity and a challenge for the BBC. The geopolitical opportunity that existed in India and the sheer size of the potential audience was too big to be ignored. Nevertheless, the fear of the government of India (British Raj) that the spread of radio services would cause the national movements to explode could not be ignored (Pinkerton, 2008b, p. 167). In other words, the authorities did not want the nationalist voices to be heard far and wide using radio for their propaganda purposes (Thiranagama, 2010, p. 41).

BBC broadcast, especially the radio world service, was initiated as a medium to connect Britain with "the Diaspora of Britons overseas" (Gillespie *et al.*, 2010, p. 7; see also Hill, 2010) who either was working as part of the Empire or independently. The aim was to take British radio programmes to white British people scattered across the colonies and dominions, and foster reciprocal links that would strengthen the imperial community (Robertson, 2008, p. 460). As Gillespie *et al.* (2010, p. 6) point out, "The BBC Empire Service was constituted and financed around a doubly, not to say duplicitously, 'imperial' as well as diasporic mission".

It was not merely the desire to reach out to Britain's Diaspora that reinforced the act of an Empire Service, but also other media organisations' presence. Because, by the time of the Empire Service's launch, the Netherlands was already operating an international service (the first such service, active since 1927), along with the Soviet Union and a few companies from the United States whose short-wave broadcasts possessed an international reach (Hill, 2010, p. 29).

For the Indians, in remote villages, the entertainment opportunities after their daily hard work were very scarce. The arrival of radio provided them with much-needed entertainment and a mode to connect them with the outside world. The radio service also became a source of entertainment and information for those households, "whom social custom debar[s] from taking part in recreation outside their own homes" (Pinkerton, 2008b, p. 167). For the remote villages in India, the radio service was not merely a source of news and information, but also it was their window to the rest of the world, an exposure to the outside world from their 'cocooned' village life. Recognising this demand, the BBC in South Asia, increasingly broadcast news material generated in local languages like Urdu, Bengali or Hindi, which initiated more

significant localisation of BBC coverage in the years to follow (Crawley, 2010, p.77).

As part of this research in an interview with Satish Jacob who worked for the BBC Indian Bureau for 20 years beginning from 1975 has this to say,

...the BBC service although it was primarily in the English language, there were also broadcasts in a few Indian languages, and Urdu, which is also a common language between India and Pakistan. But there were a huge number of Indians who used to listen to BBC broadcasts in their own languages. English language broadcast was translated by the Hindi broadcasters who are professionals – exactly the replica of the script in English, whether they were Hindi or Urdu, or any other language, even Tamil and Nepalese (*Interview: Jacob, 19 June 2020*).

Mark Tully spoke of the influence of the BBC among the Indians as it turned out to be one of the primary sources of both local and international information. Mark Tully stated this during his interview which was conducted as part of this research,

I was working and reporting for the BBC, which was basically from 1970 to 1994. It was a historic time for the BBC anyway because transistor radios had come in and there was a big increase in short-wave radio listening. Television was just coming in and had not really come in, and there was no radio other than *All India Radio*, the Indian based radio. And so, people turned to foreign stations to follow the news. And although we had rivals, I can say that most people turned to the BBC. So we were in a way a local broadcast that influenced the sort of stories created and that made us much more interested in stories in India itself and stories about South Asia and in much more detail than otherwise would have been the case (*Interview: Tully, 14 May 2020*).

The localisation of the BBC services, especially in South Asia, reaffirms that the BBC was not merely a mouthpiece of the British Empire as the general public believed it to be. In the words of William Crawley⁴ who worked for BBC in India for 12 years,

As far as the language services are concerned, fabulous bulletins were written centrally in the BBC newsroom, taking account of the interests of the region. There were also current affairs programmes in Hindi and Urdu and equivalent programmes in Bengali and other Asian languages available from the region, with the contribution of stringers both in English and in regional languages (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

Throughout the history of the BBC, it has been under intense scrutiny from various groups. These include governments of India over the years, the Diaspora, and indeed audiences from across the globe. Time and again the BBC's neutrality was questioned and at times alleged to be the 'mouthpiece of Empire'. In the words of Crawley,

Questions were asked about whether the BBC was essentially a reformed - or unreformed - 'colonial' organisation. Were its staff and contributors simply mouthpieces of the machine in which they had no input, or were they seen as committed broadcasters whose viewpoints mattered or whose own political and ideological inclinations may have clashed with BBC concepts of 'impartial' reporting? (Crawley, 2010, p. 77).

The BBC, being aware that they were being watched by many agencies, mostly from South Asia, took extra care when it came to broadcast news items in India and Pakistan, ensuring that the news was accurate and authentic. One way to ensure the accuracy of the information was to cross-check the information by a "two-way

⁴ William Crawley had worked for BBC in India for 12 years.

exchange of information" between Western journalists and British diplomatic sources in India and Pakistan and to check the authenticity with other news organisations (Crawley, 2010, p. 85).

The communication revolution with the arrival of the transistor enhanced the reach of the BBC, especially in India, where the communication system was in its infancy stage. William Crawley in his interview reconfirmed about the BBC's expedited growth in India on account of the technological advancement and some of the events that accelerated the BBC's wider acceptance in the subcontinent.

The technology has changed, of course, so rapidly since the BBC began and in the 1930s, and through the 1950s, right up to the time what we call the transistor revolution in the 1960s. The transistor revolution took roots from the mid-60s onwards, so, by the mid-70s, the actual audience of BBC broadcast in English and in Indian languages was very much greater than it had been ten years earlier. And I think from the 70s onwards a number of events gave a great boost to BBC listening, such as the India-Pakistan war, the establishment of Bangladesh which brought about a huge increase particularly in the BBC Bengali service audience (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

The technological changes helped the BBC reach out to its larger public both as news providers and reach out to the different sources for their news coverage. The quality of transmission improved, and the technology helped to have more sources added to the news coverage. The BBC with its improved technology had the advantage of in-depth news coverage, and at times it helped them to be the foremost in breaking major news events as indicated by William Crawley in his interview,

Technological changes which have contributed to BBC audiences have been particularly the improvement in quality in transmission lines and

interview lines between India and Britain. Suppose that what used to be reporting largely on telex or equivalent dispatches from India were sent by telex and they were voiced by someone else in the studio in London. Through the 1970s and 1980s, there was much more direct contact between producers in London and correspondence in India. Not just the established BBC correspondents in Delhi, but the whole network of what we call stringers in different parts of India, who had long been supplying information basically by telex to the correspondent in Delhi, who would then sort of put it together and send dispatches for transmission to London. And that, of course, has continued. But increasingly giving both speed and accuracy and credibility to the BBC, there was the possibility of an actuality of correspondence on the spot providing reports way ahead of others. So it gave the BBC a big sort of advantage in being first, which is always one of the prime considerations in a radio broadcast or any journalism when one gets there first. In 1984 when Mrs Gandhi was assassinated, the news was heard by Rajiv Gandhi, who was in Calcutta on the BBC quite a time before it was confirmed that she died. And people were listening to the BBC then, and they did give it considerable credibility (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

It was not merely based on the technological advancement that gave the BBC strong footage in India. Along with technological advancement, there was a strong network of stringers which gave the BBC a strong presence in India. David Loyn in his interview (as part of this research), confirmed this further:

Mark Tully had set up a network of really good quite senior journalists right around India. And so, if I wanted to go to Lucknow to meet the chief minister, I phoned up Tripathi, who was the then BBC man in Lucknow. He was a senior journalist who could get me in to see the chief minister. So, we had this really strong network of journalists and who were our eyes and ears. We could phone them up and ask what is going on (*Interview: Loyn, 21 February 2020*).

More importantly, there was this compelling reason for the spread of the BBC. During the 1970s and subsequent years, the Indian news channels were mostly controlled by state-run machinery adhering to the government policies. Lack of independent private channels propelled the Indians to rely on the BBC for independent news, especially during wars (Crawley, 2010). The BBC's credibility, especially during a crisis coverage, is very high from the BBC's early news coverages. Crawley. maintained this during an interview:

In times of crisis, I think the BBC has had great credibility. I mean, the enormous boost to the audience brought by the 1970-1971 Bangladesh crisis was one example. Of course, there was a lot of scepticism in Pakistan about the reporting of events at that time and a lot of anger, which after it was over, people recognise that the anger should have been turned on their own military regime because it was they who were distorting the news rather than the BBC. Secondly, the emergency in India was an enormous boost to the BBC audience because the Indian media were openly censored at that point in time. I am sure that it provided a balance to the weight of public information in India itself, which will always be dominated by the government. But it can provide a voice which is not just an external voice, but as I say, a reinforcement within India itself, which you have not necessarily heard at that time (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

The reliable information that the BBC provided to the Indian audience both from within and outside India was accepted across the Indian subcontinent. In the words of Mark Tully, "I think we had a reputation for reliability. We have a big audience because we were thought to be reliable news sources. That was a very important aspect of our standing in the country and our work. The credibility of the BBC was high for various reasons. We were credible because we had some monopoly and fewer other channels" (*Interview: Tully, 14 May 2020*).

Such confidence of the general public in the BBC is not limited to the BBC's historical past, but rather it is prevalent even in the digital era. Whenever there is an international crisis, the BBC is looked up-to as one of the major news platforms where credible news is provided. This was evident in an interview with Ayeshea Perera⁵, the head of the digital operations in India, who said,

When a major incident happens, the traffic of BBC digital has seen a massive uptick in Indian audiences because I think, primarily, the one thing that has not gone away is the fact that people think that the BBC is a brand they can trust, that it is authoritative, that it will give both sides of the story. So, for instance, when there was a tension between India and Pakistan over Kashmir in February 2019, we had record India audiences visiting our online English platform for news. So many Indians say that they were coming to us because they felt they could get both sides of the story. So, I think when it comes to big news events or big geopolitical events, people still come to us (*Interview: Perera, 23 June 2020*).

The presence of the BBC journalists across different parts of the world provides the opportunity to have varied sources of information from different perspectives and views. This gives the BBC the opportunity to have balanced and reliable news of various events or news. For instance, in an event involving India and Pakistan, as Samanthi Dissanayake⁶ in her interview for this research puts it, "Our *Urdu* service gives us accessibility to sources in Pakistan, and likewise the Hindi service provides access to connections with the Indian government and sources from India" (*Interview: Dissanayake, 20 February 2020*). It is this balanced and reliable news sources which make the BBC acceptable to many. In the words of Satish Jacob, "The most important

⁵Ayeshea Perera is the Digital Editor of BBC for India.

⁶Samanthi Dissanayake is the Asia Editor-BBC Online.

thing the Indians appreciated about the BBC broadcast was that in BBC broadcast, no matter what language, there was no political slant. It was not anti-government or pro-government" (*Interview: 19 June 2020*).

The BBC's centralisation in India with its Bureau in New Delhi may have given face to the BBC Indian bureau much-needed recognition which has many Indian regional language services under it. However, the BBC's institutionalisation like any other media platform or reorganisation of the operations in India of late may have caused the BBC to rob itself of its long-established quality network of journalists and stringers. David Loyn has this to say, "...So what happened in the mid to late 1990s was that this really strong group of regional stringers, people who were on — some of them on salary, some of them just on an ad hoc basis, were paid by the BBC. They were let go because the decision was made that you could do it all from a core newsroom. And actually, I think the coverage of it reduced in quality because of that" (*Interview: 21 February 2020*). This has resulted in homogenised news service like any other news provider or a media platform.

The Complexity of the BBC's News Coverage

As a global broadcaster, the BBC sometimes finds itself in complex and controversial situations. For instance, as Gillespie *et al.* (2010, p. 10) illustrate, "in occupied Europe, BBC's Overseas Services were revered as voices of liberation; in India, by contrast, BBC voices appeared to herald a continued 'alien domination' of the subcontinent".

There are people of different nationalities working within BBC in various capacities because of its multi-ethnicity and linguistic broadcasts. There existed a cordial working relationship among the BBC's staff, even among those whose native

countries were fighting each other. As indicated by Crawley (2010, p. 76–77), "The relationship between the BBC's broadcast staff from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, their British colleagues and the 'machine' at Bush House was one of 'collegiality'". Thiranagama (2010) reaffirms the genuine collegiality and friendship between the British and Indian staff in the BBC:

On the eve of Indian and Pakistani Independence, broadcasters, engineers, writers, technicians and propagandists were all asked who and what they were, Indian or Pakistani? Their decisions were consequential. Such decisions profoundly shaped the development of state broadcast cultures in India and Pakistan. There was a large redistribution of staff from AIR and the BBC, who opted for one country or another. AIR was left with most radio stations, infrastructure and equipment, but lost many prominent staff, given that a large number of the most talented broadcasters in AIR had been well educated Muslims who then migrated to Pakistan (Thiranagama, 2010, p.45).

The vast geopolitical area and different languages would further escalate the difficulties of reaching the masses on a practical level. BBC radio service also had to tread a tight path to avoid the 'discourse of the master' (Hill, 2010, p. 25). However, being aware of the BBC's influence and presence as one of the major media players in the world, the organisation has taken extra care to be impartial in its reporting of the events.

As a global media actor, especially in South Asia, the BBC had to do a tightrope walk with its contents broadcast on multiple platforms, speaking to 'power relations across national and transnational cultural and social spaces' (Gillespie *et al.*, 2010, p. 5). The organisation also had to be careful in its approach not to be heard as an imperialist voice. Despite all these policies, the BBC is sometimes alleged to be

imperialist in its approach. Some of these allegations are confirmed in studies conducted by Alasdair Pinkerton (2008a). He describes a new kind of imperialism by the BBC through its media coverage as 'claimed' by the Indian authorities. When the 'territorial logic of power' ceased, there emerged the 'capitalist logic of power' (Brenner, 2006). When this move too began to vanish, giant media houses began to exert power through its media coverage. But this had a wider impact than what it was imagined to be. Therefore some of the questionable approaches taken by the BBC over the years came under the scrutiny of the Indian government. Some of these approaches taken by the BBC, especially during the Goa crisis in 1961, the Ahmadabad riots in 1969, and the Indo-Pak conflict in 1965, propelled the government of India to think that the BBC was not genuine and authentic in its reports (Pinkerton, 2008a, p. 541).

The Louis Malle episode in 1970 (the BBC broadcast the UK première of *Calcutta*, a documentary film by French director Louis Malle, which was shot in and around Calcutta between 1968 and 1969) impelled the government of India to expel the BBC from the country. Although the BBC was not directly accountable for the Louis Malle films, firstly, it was held liable for broadcasting it on BBC, and for the South Asian Services' 'hostility' towards India in its news reporting.

From the history of the BBC's reporting of India, it is evident that there are stark differences in the BBC's treatment of Indian issues between pre- and post-independence era. For instance, in 1943 when India was still under the reign of the British Empire, the Bengal famine caused the death of nearly three million people but was largely ignored by the BBC because Britain in a way had allowed this to happen by delaying the food supply (Polya, 2011; Sites.google.com, 2017). But the 1965-1966 famine in Bihar was portrayed by the BBC as the most tragic and significant disaster

in India during that era, although as compared to the Bengal famine it was much smaller (Magan, 2013). Later on, when the BBC produced 'The Story of India' (Hindustan Times, 2013), it failed to mention one of the biggest tragedies—the 1943 Bengal famine—which happened during the British rule in India, a clear indication that the BBC had been partial when it was faced with protecting its own interest.

It is also true that some of the post-independence foreign policies of the Indian government and some of the events that followed during the era fuelled the differences between the BBC and the government of India. When India gained its independence after many years of colonisation, Indian leaders were resolute that the new nation evaded the predicaments of other countries' foreign policies. In other words, the fear of a "new kind of imperialism" (Singh, 2014, p. 525) by the powerful countries led them to adopt their foreign policies that would steer them away from the web of other countries' interests. Translating the Gandhian principles of non-violence into foreign policy agendas, such as Non-alignment or Principles of Peaceful Co-existence (or Panchsheel) (Mahapatra, 2016, p. 6), made some countries and media outlets weary of India, because some of them considered India their natural ally, but it was not to be so. The Indian government was extra-cautious about the news coverage of India at international news outlets, particularly in UK and by the BBC, for its colonial legacy. When Morarji Desai was Prime Minister of India, he monitored the permissions granted for documentaries/films and "defended the right of developing countries to restrict filming, e.g., where it was thought it might cause a riot" (Franks, 2012, p. 208). On another occasion, when the BBC refused to withdraw Louis Malle documentaries (documentary series about India), its operations were suspended, and correspondent Ronald Robson was expelled from India.

In the BBC's overseas operations, the threat of expulsion from the country was always a possibility, especially if the news coverage/programme offended the authorities (Walker, 1992, p. 103). When the BBC was allowed to operate again in India in 1972, the government laid out strict guidelines in the treatment of news and other programmes. All non-news programmes were strictly monitored, and previews were held before the transmission for amending the factual errors, if any. During Indian emergency (Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared state emergency from 1975 to 1977) foreign news coverage came under tight restrictions and censorship (Aikat, 2019). For refusing to comply with the proposed new code, the BBC was forced to withdraw from India until the emergency was lifted. There were a few other events that further escalated the row between the Indian government and the BBC. These include the BBC coverage of the death of Sanjay Gandhi, the film on Muria tribal people, the increased restrictions on visiting film crews who were required to sign an undertaking for a film shoot (Franks, 2012, pp. 210–216). The news coverage of BBC World News Service covering many nations across the globe, the news coverage has to be finely balanced, especially in times of conflict/wars between nations, as it has the potential to turn a country friendly or hostile to the BBC and its operations (Walker, 1992, pp. 114–115).

The Changes in Indian Media Ecology since the 1970s

Broadcasting in India has been growing and evolving since it first began in the 1920s ranging from radio and television to digital broadcast. The shift from the government-owned and controlled media system resulted in a multi-channel system in India. "Broadcasting, building on the telecoms infrastructure developed in the 1980s, including satellites, technological developments were rapid and, after liberalisation

and privatisation in the 1990s, the broadcasting system grew exponentially, from one state-owned broadcaster, *Doordarshan* (Indian state-owned public television broadcast) into a vast network of both public and private radio and television stations" (Sanjay, 2020, p. 109). Since the opening of the Indian economy in the 1990s for foreign investment, India's media arena changed to a large extent. Today in India, more than 800 television channels (ibid., p. 116) offer various genres, including news channels, movies, music, sports, kids, lifestyle and devotional, and more than 80,000 registered newspapers (Rao, 2019, p. 2).

Two decades later, with the emergence of digital technology, India's media ecology was up for further exponential expansion. In the words of Thussu and Nordenstreng (2020, p. 7), "in 2000, only 5.5 million Indians (with a penetration rate of 0.5 per cent of the population) were online; by 2019, that figure had climbed to 600 million (and the penetration rate had crossed 45 per cent of the population) (KPMG Report, 2019)". The Indian government, to expand the digital connectivity to the rural masses, subsidised the setting up of 'Communication Information Centres' in each of the 600,000 villages across the country (Arora, 2019, p. 34), which expedited the surge in internet penetration. However, Rao (2019, p. 4) asserts that only 8 per cent of the Indians have reliable connectivity to the internet, and about 19 per cent of them have occasional connectivity. Urban India has close to 60 per cent internet penetration, mirroring a substantial level of saturation, but still, there are 750 million users in rural India who remain disconnected from the digital sphere. In the words of Rao (2019, p. 4) "India may be an information technology powerhouse for the rest of the world, but its projects under successive governments to bridge the gap between digital haves and have-nots have fallen woefully short of stated targets".

Another reason for this surge in digitalisation is the easy availability of low-cost smartphones with internet data which played a significant part in making rural India connected. In the words of Arora (2019, p. 74), "In March 2016, India launched the world's cheapest smartphone, selling for less than US\$5". Till the arrival of mobile phone in India, telephone connectivity was a complex service to attain. In 1980, India had only 2.5 million telephones to serve 700 million people or one phone for every 280 people. There were only 12,000 public telephones across the country. However, by the mid-1990s, the numbers grew dramatically to 20 million telephone services. By 2012 India welcomed 3G mobile technology, which ensured faster connectivity. By 2015 4G technology arrived in India, and millions of Indians were already using online services for various purposes (Agrawal, 2018, pp. 195–198). For the cash-starved Indians who could not afford to have personal computer or laptops, the arrival of smartphones provided the medium to connect and embark themselves to the world of the internet. In the words of Arora (2019, p. 33), "There has been an exponential rise in the demand for cell phones among people with scarce resources, making mobile one of their most prized assets. They use their phones for utilitarian purposes, such as transferring money, texting with clients and business partners, and checking health information, but they mostly use them for leisure".

This was a digital revolution because in the West, where the transformation to 'smartphones and wearable technology' (Agrawal, 2018, p. 3) has been a gradual one, beginning with internet connections in the 1990s with personal computers and phone lines. Then came broadband technology with faster and more reliable speeds followed by routers and wireless internet. Nevertheless, most Indians, who did not possess personal computers or telephone landlines, leapfrogged straight to the smartphone internet era. As Agrawal (2018, pp. 3-4) points out,

In 2000, only 20 million Indians had access to the internet. Ten years later, that number grew to 100 million. However, 1.1 million Indians were still offline. Smartphones and cellular data became mainstream. By 2015, 317 million were online, rising to 462 million in 2017, when three Indians were discovering the internet every second. By 2025 nearly a billion Indians are expected to have used the internet.

Another visible reason for transforming internet accessibility in India was the massive growth in content on the web in Indian vernacular languages. "From 42 million Indian-language internet users in 2011, the number has grown to an estimated 234 million in 2016, a compound annual growth of 41 per cent. This massive growth of internet users in Indian languages is higher than that of English-language internet users, which has grown from 68 million in 2011 to 175 million in 2016" (Neyazi, 2019, pp. 95–96). The Indian digital market cannot be overlooked, and the transformation it brings and the opportunities it provides cannot be ignored.

The Changes in Indian Media Ecology and the BBC in India

The colonial origins and experience significantly shaped the Indian media system and media structures. The broadcasting system of the British administration played a major role in the foundation of India's government-owned media systems. The post-independence media system was influenced by political and economic factors of that time, which played a major factor in the Indian media until the economic liberalisation in the 1990s (Sanjay, 2020, pp. 108–119). This caused a wave of changes in the Indian mediascape. Till then, there were very few channels operating in India and the BBC as an international broadcaster had some monopoly in the Indian airwaves. For many Indians, the BBC broadcasts were their windows to the world. Nevertheless, with the termination of radio shortwaves, the arrival of cable and satellite channels and

the digital boom, the media terrain changed substantially. There were many 24x7 news channels, other foreign news channels, and now Indians have a wide range of media platform options, ranging from live news, radio broadcasts, print and digital platforms. The digital connectivity of the Indian villages and easy accessibility broadened the news reach and improved news reporting. The increased smartphone density in the Indian villages empowered them to access news and entertainment programmes easily. In other words, their dependency on the radio for news and entertainment reduced as they had various digital platforms providing these to them. Further, Indian language internet content availability, including social networks (Neyazi, 2019, p. 104) and mobile apps for news (Chattopadhyaya, 2019, p. 195), provided them with further options. The BBC, which had a dominant role in the Indian airwaves during the radio era, now needs to make its digital presence felt, not only in English and Hindi but also in the major Indian languages.

Conclusion

The UK and the US media played a major role in the international news coverage of India. The BBC had many dedicated staff who had been reporting on India for a long time and who had known India and its culture well. For the BBC, reporting on India was not easy as it often reported issues which were considered controversial in India. As a result, it has been a love-hate relationship between India and the BBC until the 1990s.

The next chapter will outline how the new media technologies influenced online media practices and their impact on the BBC's Indian news production and dissemination.

Chapter 3: The BBC, Online Journalism and the Social Media

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the online journalistic practices and their influence on the BBC. The practices of journalism have been evolving as new technologies kept creeping into the communication system. In recent years, with the arrival of the internet, especially social media, newsrooms underwent rapid changes, and so too the journalistic practices. The rise of Twitter and User Generated Content (UGC) opened up new possibilities for both the journalists and the general public. The first part of this chapter discusses the emergence of online Journalism and the latter part examines the influence of social media on BBC online news reports.

The Emergence of Online Journalism

This part of the paper reviews the emergence of online Journalism and its impact on journalism and journalistic practices. Ever since the advent of the internet, the way humans interact and communicate with one another has changed. Over the years, the gradual development of the internet facilitated the addition of new features in its services. Lee (2012) points out in his study that in the new interactive media environment, the online news media have changed significantly and they have propelled newer platforms for citizen participation in the gathering and the dissemination of the news. Lee continues, “The demarcation between communicators

and receivers is no longer distinct. The clear-cut classification of professional content and amateur content in news pages is softened” (Lee, 2012, p. 216).

The new interactive media environment has altered the nature of storytelling and the presentation of news online. In the words of Pavlik (2000, p. 233), “The once basic inverted news-writing style is becoming obsolete in the online news world. It is being supplanted increasingly by immersive and interactive multimedia news reports that can give readers/viewers a feeling of presence at news events like never before”.

The internet changed the newsroom environment. The journalists are required to familiarise themselves with newer and advanced communication technology. The social media require journalists to cope with a digital and high-speed, distributed and networked environment "where knowledge and expertise are more fluid, dynamic, and hybrid" (Hermida, Lewis and Zamith, 2014, p. 495).

Scholars have shown that adapting to the changing new ecology of the media was easier for some journalists than others. In a study conducted by O'Sullivan and Heinonen (2008, pp. 358–360) among the 239 journalists in 40 news outlets from eleven European countries, it was found that the journalists had adapted themselves so quickly to the changing work situation to cope with the new work environments. The study endorsed that the internet is deep-rooted in the newsgathering and news-processing practices and has transformed relationships with news sources. The study continues to argue that the newsroom has become a digital hub in the communication arena, which ensures speed and efficiency. In this study 72 per cent of the respondents agreed that the internet was useful and valuable in accessing sources and was in agreement that the internet allowed journalists to get more information into their stories (ibid., p. 362).

Broersma and Graham (2013, p. 447) term this as the convenient marriage between journalism and social media. With the arrival of the social media and the UGC, the role of the journalist itself is being reshaped as newer skills are required to meet the emerging demands (Johnston, 2016, p. 901). This has only become even stronger as more and more news organisations began to employ social media as a source of their news and disseminate the same. The rush to be the first to report the news in a digital world required skilled and tech-savvy journalists in the newsrooms (Johnston, 2016, p. 901; see *also* Belair-Gagnon, 2015).

The Rise of User Generated Content (UGC)

New communication technologies ensured the growth of both social media and User Generated Content (UGC). The easy accessibility of social media and technological advancement led to high volumes of UGC. The number of journalists who began to use social media as news sources multiplied, especially when they could not be present on the scene to report it. Nevertheless, the news sourced from social media needed to be verified.

The verification process is not an easy task considering the high volumes of UGC created and published on social media. In the words of Brandtzaeg *et al.* (2016, p. 325), "The verification process in social media is arguably rather complex due to large amounts of user-generated content, real-time information flow, and various forms of sources and content modalities, such as videos and images".

Hence, journalists are required to navigate these social media platforms for the accessibility of the content. Their role is not merely to navigate and identify the news, but they need to understand and identify the context and the newsworthiness of the

events. The task of journalists becomes even more challenging if the content involves longer videos. The journalists are required to continually update themselves with new social media tools (Johnston, 2016, pp. 901–903). Johnston goes on to say,

For journalists now and in the future, digital tools have become more important for tracing information, forensic examination and disseminating UGC to the audience while depicting events on the ground. As technologies for checks and platforms used to showcase UGC evolve, journalists must continually develop their skills to keep apace. As news becomes more social, so too, it seems must the journalists (Johnston, 2016, p. 908).

This is because social media platforms have become newsgathering sources for media houses. This is an enormous task considering the sheer volume of UGC on social media. To verify the authenticity of the information, journalists need skills to navigate different sources and media tools to explore and examine social media content. This becomes even more complex if the sources are not known or from a conflict-related area or a war zone.

Some of the Twitter messages amount to unsubstantiated rumours and wild inaccuracies at times, mostly when there is major breaking news. To name a few instances, it has occurred during the Mumbai terror attacks, Iranian protests, and Michael Jackson's death. Often in the aftermath of a crisis, false news circulates in the online space which calls for strict verification of the newsfeeds from social media. For example, the photograph depicting the Houla massacre in Syria was taken somewhere in Iraq in 2003. After 90 minutes into the broadcast when the BBC was alerted of the mistaken photograph, it was taken off from their website, but the damage was already done (Turner, 2012).

Considering the media connectivity and the wide scope of media reach today, the volume of news' impact could be very high. Hence, global news events require special efforts in the digital era when assessing news sources to verify the news. The journalists most often combine the new and the old journalistic methods to verify the sources in social media through the contact details and cross-checking with available reliable news sources. Some of the journalists use the computer-assisted tools for photo and video verification (Brandtzaeg *et al.*, 2016, pp. 330–333). “Everyone has access to potential newsworthy sources and content through social media, yet to curate, authenticate, cross-check, and turn unruly and fragmented bits of information into news stories might very well partly constitute the *raison d'être* of future journalism” (*ibid.*, p. 337). As social media became the hub for breaking news and news sources, more and more journalists have begun to access it for news and newsfeeds.

Twitter and Journalism

Here the thesis briefly considers how Twitter made its entry into the newsrooms and how it has influenced the news reporting and consumption. From among the new social media technologies, Twitter “facilitates the instant, online dissemination of short fragments of information from a variety of official and unofficial sources” (Hermida, 2010, p. 299). This was one of the reasons for Twitter to become popular among journalists. Twitter allows users to send and receive short text-based posts, known as “tweets”. Besides, the technological features such as “re-tweet” and “hashtag” allow Twitter to be like broadcaster of breaking news. Therefore, news organisations often access Twitter looking for newsfeeds and, simultaneously use it as a platform to propagate their news (Ahmad, 2010, p. 151). Twitter has a flexible system that transmits messages sent from an array of devices to a selected audience who have

chosen to receive them in the medium of their choice (Hermida, 2010, p. 299). For most of the journalists, Twitter has become a “convenient, cheap and effective beat for journalists in search of news and information. Reporters today increasingly aggregate information online and embed it in journalism discourse” (Broersma and Graham, 2013, p. 447).

Belair-Gagnon (2015) highlights in her book that up to 2006, journalists used the social media scantily in their news reports. However, from 2006 to 2010, a number of events or crisis news led to the use of social media in news reports more than ever. The journalists could get more news through social media for various reasons about several crises news events during this period, such as the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar of 2006, the London bombings of 2005, the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, the Iranian election of 2009, and the Haiti earthquake of 2010. It could be on account of their inability to be physically present in some of these places immediately, either because of the travel restrictions or on account of economic constraints that forced them to rely on Twitter for news sources. Moon and Hadley (2014) point out in their study, “Twitter is a useful and, in special cases, a unique tool available to cover unplanned events such as disaster, crime or political turmoil” (p. 302). Twitter seems to be the immediate news source for journalists when they have limited accessibility to the news. The studies conducted by Rauchfleisch *et al.* reconfirm this:

For journalists, crisis events such as terrorist attacks, catastrophes, or accidents are cases of heightened uncertainty. In such situations, journalists must gather information about the events quickly and without preparation, and tell their audiences what has happened, where, why, and how. At the same time, journalists have to make sure this information is accurate. Twitter can be a useful tool for journalists in such situations

to gather information and cross-validate judgements with other users (Rauchfleisch *et al.*, 2017, p. 10).

Twitter has the capacity to foster diverse voices, and to accommodate different viewpoints. Broersma and Graham (2013, pp. 461–462) point out in their study that the practice of citing tweets has effects for journalism in general and journalists' source relation in particular. Tweets are used to flavour news stories with quotes that express the opinions or experiences of a range of sources. It can also trigger new stories because of their newsworthiness. As a news source, Twitter gives early warnings about trends, people and news (Hermida, 2010, p. 303) about which both the media houses and the public are alerted. Depending on the significance of the news, Twitter feeds are sometimes used in the mainstream news to authenticate their claim, even to give a different angle to the story at times. Twitter, to some extent, levels the playing field. Whereas in the past, some journalists and newspapers based on their status, experience and long-term association with influential people had better access to valuable sources and information, on social media all content is available to everyone.

It is also a platform for minorities to express themselves and be heard, creating a channel for diverse opinions and voices. When the majority (or those in power) refuse to heed the voice of the minority, social media can act as a springboard to inform and mobilise the masses. Some of the recent mass revolutions like the Arab Spring, the Libyan revolution and the Ukrainian revolution bear witness. In short, it is a platform that gives an equal opportunity for everyone, a tool which could be used by different segments of society (Broersma and Graham, 2013, p. 462).

When the newsfeed from Twitter is used in the mainstream media, it is framed within the context of established journalism norms and values (Hermida, 2010, p. 300).

Brandtzaeg *et al.* (2016, p. 331) rightly point out that it is a race against time for the journalists as the tension between the need to report breaking news as it unfolds, and a simultaneous verification becomes a real challenge. Although to corroborate newsfeeds' veracity from Twitter is difficult, the same is used most often to disclose the breaking news.

Social Media and India

The spread of social media in the early 21st century in India added a new digital dimension to the Indian media system. The affordability of smartphones, low data and voice rates have enhanced the broader use of social media among Indians (Sanjay, 2020, p. 108). Further to this, the Indian government made it obligatory that the new smartphones launched in the Indian market have to offer text-reading services in all 22 official Indian languages besides English. Message-typing facility is offered in English, Hindi and one regional language as per the user's choice. This enabled the semi-literate Indians to access the internet (Neyazi, 2019, p.103). As a result, many Indians could avail themselves of internet services. "For a billion Indians who do not read English, the internet is suddenly accessible. One can go a step further: with a voice-activated smartphone, the internet is also available to the people who cannot read or write in any language at all" (Agrawal, 2018, p. 4; see *also* Tenhunen, 2018). The internet-enabled smartphones empowered millions in India not only to be mere consumers of mobile digital content but also producers of digital content (Thussu, 2019, p. 67). The internet-enabled smartphone has become one of the most potent means of creating news structures, eliminating barriers and generating newer opportunities. Agrawal (2018, p. 7) elaborates it further,

Hundreds of millions living in poverty, many of whom are completely illiterate; 800 million under the age of thirty, hungry for opportunities; a country with dramatically unequal access to telephony, electricity, transport, education, healthcare and water; a democracy that is home to so many different religions, languages, communities and cultures. In no other country will access to the internet bring about a change so vast and deep, for so many people and so quickly.

The major social media platforms which could not ignore the vast Indian market (Arora, 2019, p. 201) made them available in Indian languages. According to Neyazi (2019, p.104), "Facebook is available in 11 Indian languages, and Twitter in 6 Indian languages, Yahoo has now extended email services in 8 Indian languages while Gmail providers support 9 Indian languages". The popularity of social media, especially Twitter and Facebook, is rising among the masses in India. As Mishra suggests (2019, p. 153), "While those who speak the English language continue to dominate social media in India today, people are starting to tweet and post messages on Facebook in local languages. Social media is becoming popular in small towns as well". The increased smartphone density and the availability of social media in Indian languages had their implications in Indian journalistic practices. More and more news stories began to be broken in social media as Indian political leaders began to break major decisions on Twitter (Mishra, 2019, p. 149). This was also done to engage with their Twitter followers, as some of them had a massive following on social media. Therefore, it was crucial for journalists to be vigilant on social media for breaking news. With the arrival of social media, most journalists at first tweet the breaking news in real-time and then follow the news story details for detailed news coverage. As a result, journalists had to create stories for multiple platforms and handle various social media accounts updating and following the stories (Mishra, 2019, pp. 146–148). For the BBC

in India to reach out to its target audience today, besides its broadcasts in English and Indian languages, it also needs to have social media accounts in each of those Indian languages in which it has news coverage. For a journalist, especially in a subcontinent like India, to connect with the masses, to broaden the news reach and coverage, to know the pulse of a story (trending or not trending), for different sources and views for a story, it is important to be digitally connected particularly on Twitter. The easy verifiability of Twitter makes it more acceptable among journalists. To increase the authenticity of a news story, journalists sometimes use tweets as part of their news coverage.

BBC's Digital Broadcasts

The digital broadcasting in the UK began with the 1996 Broadcasting Act which relaxed the cross-media ownership rules. In the year 1997, the BBC launched its News 24 Channel and BBC News Online (bbc.co.uk) which allowed a free-to-access internet news service (Crisell, 2002, p. 298; see also Ramsey, 2018). Smith and Steemers (2007) divide digital television into two distinct phases, the first from the early 1990s until the collapse of ITV Digital in early 2002, and the second phase from 2002 with the re-launch of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) as a free-to-air service under the banner of Freeview.

The royal charter in 2006 gave BBC online service an equal footing with radio and television (Ramsey, 2018, p. 155). The BBC's digital strategy in the first phase began with the launch of *bbc.co.uk*, and was a precursor to the convergence between broadcasting and the internet. This was a response to the technological changes that threatened to outdo the existing ones. This phase was mostly focussed on linear niche

TV channels, digital radio and a largely text-based website with limited opportunities for interactivity or user participation. The second phase of the BBC's digital strategy incorporated Web 2.0, the second generation of internet services that allowed an active participatory world of online activities. It allowed consumers to design and plan their media consumption from a variety of media devices. It also enabled greater audience interaction and sharing of media content. In other words, the BBC's adaption to the new technology facilitated personalised media consumption. Furthermore, it was freed from the tyranny of schedules (Smith and Steemers, 2007, pp. 47-50). In the words of Phil Ramsey (2018, p. 153), "One large shift has been from linear broadcast television to the provision of audio-visual 'content', endlessly reproducible across a number of platforms and endlessly available for repurposing, from long-form traditional television formats through to myriad short forms of content".

The BBC's multiplatform approach refers to a strategic approach where the products and the services are put together to converge the mass media products. For the BBC, this was part of its strategy to gain more audience share and increase viewing hours. The BBC is required through its governance framework to focus on audience reach and appreciation. Technological development accelerated the efforts of the BBC, and it became one of the leading media organisations in leading the UK into the digital media era.

The BBC's online activities were more efficient and elaborate with the arrival of newer technologies in communication. The rapid technological developments not only enhanced the media activities, but it also empowered the audience to create opportunities for immediate media feedback and potential news content. The possibilities of potential news or additional news information through UGC and social

media compelled the journalists to look into these sources of newsfeeds. The BBC responding to this new arising media ecology, created the UGC Hub in the year 2005 (Wardle and Williams, 2010, p. 794). The UGC Hub at the BBC would look into the UGC and social media for newsfeeds and verify the newsworthiness and authenticity of the news using the lens of traditional journalistic techniques and values. "The BBC has always looked for audience footage of major news stories, looked for witnesses to talk about their own experiences, and received tip-offs for story ideas" (ibid.).

The Influence of Twitter in BBC's News Coverage

This section focuses on how the BBC adapted Twitter into its newsroom. The open accessibility of Twitter is causing it to make waves in newsrooms. For instance, even if one is not connected to the person who is tweeting, the information is accessible to everyone. Additionally, the tweet could be re-tweeted and shared further, or even it could be used as a source or quote in the news coverage.

The Online Journalism allows for the continuous updating of stories (Anderson and Egglestone, 2012, p. 928) and BBC Online has been in the forefront with their updates, be it in its Online news, the Television broadcast or the Radio transmission. The BBC, to a large extent, has used the services of UGC to keep itself updated, especially the World News Service, to cover crises and conflicts. In the words of Belair-Gagnon:

Since the London bombing attacks on 7 July 2005, the scale and the extent to which journalists have used social media in crisis reporting have increased exponentially. Since 7/7, social media have changed the journalistic practices and norms, structures of the newsroom, and discourse regarding reporting of crisis events. The BBC journalists have

learned to use Twitter, Facebook and other social networks to report stories such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the 2009 Iranian elections, and the 2011 Tunisian uprisings. The emergence of social media in news production has thus influenced the nature and the representation in the news of global crisis reporting. Since the London bombing attacks of 2005, BBC journalism has experienced substantial transformations. Moreover, the incorporation of social media into BBC journalism has been crafted around existing journalistic practices and norms (Belair-Gagnon, 2015, p. 108).

Taking advantage of the reach and scope of social media, BBC Online began to use the User Generated Content (UGC) to interact with the audience. In 2008 the BBC journalists were struggling with Twitter as one of its sources of news, but by 2011 journalists were working in the digital hub of the BBC. It appears that by 2011 the use of Twitter appeared to be normalising both in terms of using it as a micro-blogging tool and as a way of sourcing information from Twitter (Bennett, 2016, p. 870).

The adaptation of journalistic practices in BBC newsroom included using the information from social media to tell stories across TV, radio, online and social platforms. "At the BBC, since the London bombing attacks, social media have been centralised in the UGC Hub" (Belair-Gagnon, 2013, p. 483). To coordinate the flow of newsfeeds between UGC content and main news stream, one UGC producer was appointed by the BBC. "The 'Live and Social' producer role involved scouting social media for potential stories, working with newsgathering if there was breaking news by searching for UGC and social media content relevant to the story" (Johnston, 2016, p. 906). Social media's prominence has led many news organisations to hire social media editors, full-time staff members and sometimes several full-time staff members completely dedicated to the rapidly growing phenomenon (Gleason, 2010).

Although the ways of acquiring and presenting the news may have changed significantly in the recent years, BBC's journalists' "understanding of what 'news' is and from whom it should be sourced appears to have remained relatively unchanged—at least in the context of 'hard' news stories such as terror attacks" (Bennett, 2016, pp. 872–873). At the moment, UGC is managed and edited at the BBC Hub as a supply of news content designed to enhance the BBC's own news provision without undermining the BBC's core values.

Conclusion

The arrival of the internet guaranteed a broader and faster reach of information across places. It helped journalists to enhance their stories with more resources. The new communication technology not only changed the newsroom environment, but it also ensured the easy availability of resources. Moreover, if possible, the journalists still prefer to have a face-to-face and telephone conversation to source their reports. It will leave no room to doubt the authenticity of the sources. Expectedly, the journalists raised their concern over the quality of information available online, and they are of the opinion that online interactivity engenders more accountability (O'Sullivan and Heinonen, 2008, pp. 368–369).

The information gathered from social media is now often used by journalists in mainstream news organisations, helping them tell stories across TV, radio, online and social platforms (Hermida, 2012, p. 660). At the same time, the consumer is empowered to publish their own stories on social media. Online news media facilitates much flexibility both to the publishers and to the recipients. The new social media environment has broken the monopoly of traditional news media blurring the

boundaries between the reporter and the reader, between the producer and the consumer.

Scholars agree that the internet has transformed the existing system in the newsroom and the media's working environment. The UGC made inroads into media reports, and Twitter took over as one of the main sources for breaking news and newsbeats. Although Twitter is the same for everyone, different media outlets used it differently. With the help of UGC, the BBC expanded its news coverage and created a new section within their newsroom to be 'digitally first' in their news coverage.

The examination of some of the existing literature affirms that there has been significant development in the communication system and changes in the news coverage across the globe. The Indian scenario was no different either. Therefore, drawing on the existing literature, the research examines the following hypotheses:

H1: Over the years, communication technologies have developed, paving for faster and easier communication between places and people. In the past decade, the development of digital communication has changed the Indian media environment. Therefore, the BBC's Indian news coverage between the pre-online era (1977 and 1997) and digital era (2019) may have undergone significant changes in its Indian news coverage and may have influenced the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India.

H2: Media platform/outlet plays a crucial role in the news coverage. Therefore, there may be differences in the Indian international news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online news coverage.

The next chapter on theoretical perspectives focuses on the gatekeeping theoretical framework within which the research is situated.

Chapter 4: Gatekeeping Theory in the Digital Era

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the gatekeeping theory that is used and examined in this study. Theories are developed by scholars to make sense of the world around them. As suggested by Williams (2003, p. 15), the purpose of the theory is to “explain, comprehend and interpret phenomena and put forward propositions suggesting why such phenomena occur in the manner they do”. The theory helps us to answer the question, ‘what is going on?’. Besides, the theory can help us predict the future course of action (Williams, 2003, p. 16). Scholars have developed media theories to narrate and comprehend the complex and varying media environment and behaviour in this vein. The rapid technological change in the field of communication is a challenge for the media scholars to keep pace with the changing social, cultural and transnational media space.

In a rapidly changing media environment, newsgathering methods have undergone significant changes as a result of new technologies. The audience no longer consumes the news passively, but rather they are empowered to play a greater role in the current media environment. With the arrival of social media, there have been changes in the relationship between media producers and consumers. The easy availability of digital tools has empowered the consumers to be producers of news and post them to the media houses (Belair-Gagnon, 2015, pp. 24–57). People use social media to break the news. For instance, Twitter is a news source that gives early

warnings about trends, people and news (Hermida, 2010, p. 303). Depending on the significance of the news, the Twitter feeds are sometimes used in the mainstream news to authenticate their claim, and at times also to give a different angle to the story.

Although social media enables one to publish news online, it is still the journalist who decides whether to use it as a news source or re-tweet it in their media space, depending on its significance. Therefore, the journalist acts as a gatekeeper of the news; the journalist is a mediator who decides what type of news is promoted and further disseminated across various media platforms. The gatekeeping theory refers to the control of information as it passes through a gate (journalists) before it is disseminated through the media.

Gatekeeping Theory

This section elaborates on the gatekeeping theory, how it operates, and its relevance to this research project. The original idea of gatekeeping theory originated from the field theory of Kurt Lewin, who was a pioneer in applied psychology. However, David Manning White, Lewin's student, was the first to relate the notion of gatekeeping to mass communication (Deluliis, 2015). The gate is guarded by gatekeepers who decide what information to let through and what to keep out (Lewin, 1947, p. 145). Shoemaker *et al.* define gatekeeping process as:

Gatekeeping is the process by which the vast array of potential news messages are winnowed, shaped and prodded into those few that are actually transmitted by the news media. It is often defined as a series of decision-points at which news items are either continued or halted as they pass along news channels from source to a reporter to a series of editors (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2001, p. 233).

In other words, the gatekeeping theory refers to the control of information as it passes through a gate, and it is "The process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people each day" (Shoemaker and Vos, 2009, p. 1). Deluliis goes further with Lewin's field theory.

There are four levels of analysis in Lewin's field theory: microsystem, or immediate context; mesosystem, or collection of immediate contexts; exosystem, or external institutional standards; and macrosystem, or culture. Gatekeeping occurs in a microsystem, in a mesosystem as the product of competing interests among news outlets, in an exosystem of journalistic standards and organisational policies, and in a macrosystem of cultural influences (Deluliis, 2015, p. 9).

Despite the changes in the media environment, the studies indicate that the key values attributed to the news items by the media house seem to be constant, and they play a vital role in the gatekeeping process. The News Value Model was initially proposed by Galtung and Ruge (1965), who analysed the factors that influenced the flow of news. The News Value Model gives details of the process by which world events are changed by media organisations into a media representation of the world and disseminated to the audience. This study identified 12 factors of newsworthiness (in 9 categories) which influenced the news selection. These nine categories are Time Span, Intensity or Threshold Value, Clarity, Meaningfulness, Consonance, Unexpectedness, Composition, Reference to Elites and Negativity. Harcup and O'Neil (2001) conducted a study to analyse this further and reaffirm if these values still influence the selection of the news, and they found that some of the key elements still influence the selection process of the news.

Further to their 2001 study on news values, Harcup and O'Neil (2017) revisited their own study from 2001 on news values and reaffirmed that some of the key elements remain valid even today, and they have recognised additional values as a result of the emergence of the digital news era. According to them, the news values attached to a news item depend on several factors such as the journalist who covers the news item and the medium for which it is covered. Besides, journalists while selecting the news are required to fulfil at least some of the following elements like exclusivity, bad news, conflict, surprise, shareability, entertainment, drama, the power elite, relevance, magnitude, good news, good audio-visuals, and the news organisation's agenda. It was also found that some journalists were in a better position than others, and their assessment about what made a story newsworthy would win out over other journalists' decisions. The news values might differ from medium to medium, which in turn would either increase the possibility of a particular news item being published or rejected. For example, shareability and entertainment are important features in deciding the newsworthiness of news for an online news medium (Harcup and O'Neill, 2017, pp. 1474–1483).

Levels of Analysis in Gatekeeping

What audiences come to understand as 'news' goes through many channels before it is eventually disseminated as news to the public. Shoemaker *et al.* (2001) affirmed that an individual reporter's personal and professional background influences the acceptance or rejection of a news item to the next level. "The prestige or previous success of an individual reporter might facilitate the flow of a news item through the editorial gate, even if the story seems of doubtful credibility to the editors, just as inexperience on the part of a reporter might act as a negative force in getting the same

story accepted" (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2001, p. 235). The initial inquiries into gatekeeping theory were limited to individual gatekeepers. However, subsequent studies revealed that there were other factors which influenced the gatekeeping process such as professional routines of the journalists, their personal and professional background, attitudes, values and beliefs, the influence of news organisations, and cultural and ideological factors (Cassidy, 2006, pp. 6–8).

In the gatekeeping model, events are selected and turned into the news by editors at different levels of the organisation who produce news items for their audience following particular criteria. Muscat (2015, p. 429) affirms, "The image of the world presented in the international news of every country's media is inevitably lacking information or distorted in a way that people, events and countries are often unequally represented and stories restructured" (see also Hun Shik Kim, 2002). Even in an environment of full media freedom, there are unwritten restrictions or norms in place. Therefore, the news that is broadcast may be very often a tailored one in conformity with the existing norms and practices. "Gatekeepers represent their organisation and their profession; both limit their decisions through the exercise of routines, norms and structural constraints. Societal and ideological factors also shape the journalistic product" (Singer, 2010, p. 129). Harcup and O'Neill (2017) highlight in their study that the elements of newsworthiness could also be influenced by practical considerations such as the availability of resources, time, the characteristics of the journalists, the work environment, and economic, social and cultural factors.

In a study conducted by Joanne Muscat (2015) on the gatekeeping process of foreign news by public broadcast television, it was found that the international news selected at national broadcast stations were tailored for a specific audience depending

on the social and cultural contexts of the audience and the news producers. In Muscat's own words, "A homogenisation of world audiences through mass media is met with different filters including news values or influences or even other factors that affect the gatekeeping mechanisms" (Muscat, 2015, p. 432).

Muscat (2015) further points out that the Gatekeeping Model of 1991 by Reese and Shoemaker has five levels of influences. The innermost layer characterises the individual decision-maker; the second layer includes the media routines level; the third is the organisation level; the fourth is the extra media level, and the fifth is the ideological level. At each level, some influences presumably have an impact on decisions leading to news content. Reese and Shoemaker (2016) revisited their own work on the levels of analysis in the hierarchy of influences and the factors that shape media content. According to these authors, the hierarchy of influences helps "disentangle the relationships among individual-level professionals and their routines, the organisations that house them, the institutions into which they cohere, and the social systems within which they operate and help maintain" (Reese and Shoemaker, 2016, p. 391). Reese and Shoemaker (2016, p. 408) argue that although technology has shifted the media terrain, and has redrawn the boundaries of organisation and media professions, the hierarchy of influences remains a useful organising model and benchmark for measuring the decline and repositioning of media forces as a means to incorporate explanatory power.

The Relevance of Gatekeeping in the Digital Era

Examining the relevance of gatekeeping theory in a digital environment, Cassidy (2006, p. 18) through a combined study on print and online newspaper, confirms a

similar gatekeeping pattern in both media. It also reconfirms Singer's view that gatekeeping roles are only evolving rather than disappearing in an online news era. Singer (2014) in one of her recent studies 'User-generated visibility: Secondary gatekeeping in a shared media space' explored the implications of an online environment in which users have become secondary gatekeepers of the content published on media websites. She pointed out the emergence of a 'two-stepped gatekeeping process' (Singer, 2014, p. 55) wherein the primary editorial decision to make an item part of the news product is followed by user-decision to enhance or reduce the visibility of that item for a secondary audience. However, while pointing out the two-step gatekeeping process, Singer asserted that the roles played by primary and secondary gatekeepers are not the same. In her own words, "the new 'user-generated visibility' is not the same as a reporter's concentrated effort to gather fresh information; nor is it typically undertaken with the same amount of thought as an editor's decision about what to place on the front page" (Singer, 2014, p. 57). Singer continues,

Traditionally, journalists decide what content to publish based on a generalised conception of a relatively undifferentiated mass audience. The journalist serves as a gatekeeper for this mass audience, selecting a subset of items to make visible; the role has newly intensified public feedback loops today but otherwise has changed little over the years. However, individual members of that audience now serve as secondary gatekeepers for a different group of people, perhaps among the media outlet's original audience and others likely not (Singer, 2014, p. 58).

With the arrival of the online news and social networks, gatekeeping has further evolved. "On social networks, users can participate in the gatekeeping process by offering feedback and comments on a particular selection, even if they do not post

content themselves, and by forwarding, sharing and posting links to news stories” (Deluliis, 2015, p. 15). For example, Twitter allows its users to act as network gatekeepers by channelling news through the site.

The arrival of new digital technology did not eliminate the process of gatekeeping, but rather it adapted itself to the changing media ecology. Gatekeeping theory began with individual gatekeepers and extended to organisational and institutional routines, and then to the entire social field in which gatekeeping occurs. This thesis examines gatekeeping at individual, organisational and social network level. This will be carried out through conducting interviews of reporters and editors and examining the use of social media through the content analysis of the BBC’s news reports on India as discussed in the methods section.

News and sources may be available, but journalists decide whether to incorporate them into a news broadcast. Gatekeeping theory is useful to elaborate on the process through which journalists make editorial decisions about the newsworthy events and news broadcasts. Therefore, news broadcast has been filtered, selected and constructed based on the available information. Hence, there is an element of the sociology of news based on which journalists put it together with the information they received. The sociology of news could vary depending on the news item. The next section briefly describes the sociology of news.

Sociology of News

This study looks at the BBC’s international news coverage of India and how this has evolved as a result of the arrival of new media technologies. The news coverage necessitates editorial decisions on newsfeeds that are flowing into the newsroom.

When news is reported, it may not reflect the entire reality, but instead, they are filtered and moulded from the newsfeeds the journalists provide. In his study 'The Sociology of News Production', Schudson (1989) argues that news is constructed from information to which the journalists had access, and it may have come from different sources. The sociology of the generation of news could differ depending on the news item. For the 'creation' of news, the journalist needs some criteria based on which the news is shaped and framed (Schudson, 1989, pp. 263–266). The routine methods of gathering news determine the ideological character of the product or the news (Fishman, 1980). Tuchman (1978) argues that the act of making news is the act of constructing reality itself rather than a picture of reality beyond any dispute (see also Gans, 1980). In other words, journalists do not just discover news, but instead, they construct the news based on different pieces of information they receive or come across.

Therefore, the process of news selection is not merely a simple act of discrete decision made by a few individuals, but rather it involves a complex process of routine and organisational, cultural, social, economic and ideological factors. Competition with all these factors at one or different levels, determines if a news item as it passes all the gates becomes a news item, to be disseminated to the public and further redistributed among the public through various platforms. So, the decision-making is both at the individual level and institutional level. The moment a reporter decides to report or ignore a news item, a decision is already taken in the very initial stage itself. Furthermore, when it goes to the institutional level, many more factors decide on the publishing of the news items provided by the reporter. Alternatively, even if the news is published, it may have undergone changes following the policies of the media house and the values attributed to the news item by the same. In short, the news is shaped

in accordance with the media house policies in line with the political, economic, social and cultural factors. When the news is broken on social media, the verification process is changed accordingly resulting to some changes in the journalistic practices. It is for all these reasons that sociology of news goes in line with the gatekeeping theory. The process of gatekeeping of the news is still relevant even in the digital era.

Conclusion

Even in the digital era as people look for credible and authoritative news in the trusted media outlets, the journalists working in these media houses still control the flow of the news content into their media outlets. The BBC, as a media house has its own editorial policies and based on them, the reporter/editor, chooses to publish the news accordingly. Additionally, factors such as politics, economy and culture influence the selection and framing of the news. In other words, the journalist/editor decides on the selection and the content of the news — a gatekeeper who decides on the flow of information in an organised media space. The gatekeeping theory is relevant, considering that this study is also looking into the evolving journalistic practices on account of the emergence of digital technology.

Journalists in their daily routine still engage in acts of newsgathering and gatekeeping concerning their news products. Indeed, the newsroom structure and hierarchies greatly influence the process of decision making. The gatekeeping theory and sociology of news help to examine the process of news production and assist in answering the research questions asked in this study. How much of these have affected the BBC's news reporting and the news content today? Having seen how

gatekeeping theory will be applied in this research, it is apt to revisit the research questions. The two research questions being asked in this research are:

RQ 1. How does BBC report India in the digital era?

RQ 1a. How does BBC Radio World News Service reporting of India differ between the years 1977, 1997 and 2019?

RQ 1b. How does BBC Radio World News Service 2019 reporting of India differ from that of BBC Online in 2019?

RQ 1c. How does BBC Online report on India compared to CNN Online and AJE Online in 2019?

RQ 2. How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India?

The next chapter will outline how this research has been approached in terms of methodology. This includes the different data collection processes and modes of analysis.

Chapter 5: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used for this research. It elaborates on the research design, an overview of the research, the data collection method, the coding and analysis, and the ethical considerations.

The research used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, which include semi-structured interviews and content analysis. The literature review showed that the news flow between the global North and the global South was not mutual or reciprocal in terms of its quantity and quality. Even the scant international news coverage which existed, it consisted mostly of hard news focussing on the negative portrayal of developing countries (Franks, 2006; Bunce *et al.*, 2017; Cottle, 2009; Brookes, 1995; Hawk, 1992). However, later studies have suggested that there are signs of improvement regarding developing nations' coverage (Scott, 2009). Based on the existing research, this thesis explores whether there have been significant changes in the BBC's international news coverage of India. Additionally, this research analyses whether the emergence of new technologies in communication has facilitated improved international news coverage of India, and if there are changes in the journalistic practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India.

This research has sought to determine if there were significant changes in the BBC's pre-online and digital era international Indian news reports. In this research, the BBC's international news coverage of India is divided into two sections, namely BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online. For BBC Radio World News Service, the

data was collected from the pre-online era (1977 and 1997) and digital era (2019). For BBC Online, the data was gathered from the news reports of BBC Online 2019.

In November 1997 the BBC launched its online news opening new frontiers in the international news coverage. As communication technologies emerged, more international media organisations launched themselves into international news coverage across the globe. Hence, this research, in addition to its pre-online and digital era international Indian news analysis of the BBC, also does a comparative analysis of Indian news coverage of the BBC with CNN and AJE in the year 2019. The next section outlines the research overview, which conceptualises the research.

Research Overview

This research examined the pattern of the BBC's international news reporting of India over the years through content analysis and interviews. This included the types of news reported, the sources used in news reports, the frequency, and the time/space dedicated to the Indian news. It also sought to investigate the use of new communication tools such as social media in the international news coverage of India. With this end in view, this research examined the BBC reporting from different time frames. Accordingly, for the pre-online BBC radio, Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) of 1977 and 1997 was chosen, and for the digital era, the Radio World News Service 2019 of the BBC was selected. As indicated earlier, the BBC began its online news services in the year 1997. Therefore, the BBC's news reporting of 1997 and the BBC's news reports of two decades earlier and two decades later provided a snapshot or an insight into the BBC's international news reporting of India. The comparative analysis of BBC World Service Radio with BBC Online helped to know if there has been a shift

in the approach and the treatment of the Indian news in the pre-online and the digital era.

This study also included a comparative study of Indian news reports of the BBC with CNN and AJE, which helped understand how some of the major world media organisations report on India in the digital era. The BBC and CNN have long held a dominant position in the flow of international news, while *Al-Jazeera English* has gained the status as a leading global news source and the trust of an international, non-Western audience. The comparative study of BBC Online with CNN Online news and *Al-Jazeera English* Online news sought to analyse if there were significant differences in the international media coverage of India among them.

The interviews helped to understand the ways in which the roles and the practices of journalism have changed since the beginning of the digital era and shed light on the use of social media in the reporting and the presentation of the news content. This study was aimed to discover if there had been any significant change in the portrayal of the international Indian news and the approach and the practices of the BBC journalists/editors working for the Indian bureau.

The following section of this chapter deals with quantitative and qualitative data collection analysis.

Data Collection: Mixed Methods

This study has used both quantitative and qualitative methods for its data collection. For the quantitative content analysis of the BBC Indian news reports, this research has relied on the 1977 and 1997 PasBs of BBC Radio World News Service

broadcasts, the 2019 Radio World News Service broadcast and 2019 online news reports of the BBC, CNN and AJE on India. The qualitative method used the interviews as part of its data collection. As Weber (1990, p.10) points out, "The best content-analytic studies use both qualitative and quantitative operations on texts. Thus, content analysis methods combine what are usually thought to be antithetical modes of analysis". Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, p. 129) define mixed methods as "an intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research; it is the third methodological or research paradigm (along with qualitative and quantitative research). It recognises the importance of traditional quantitative and qualitative research but also offers a powerful third paradigm choice that often will provide the most informative, complete, balanced, and useful research results".

Mixed methods was used for the 'broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration' (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007, p. 123). This would help validate and explicate comprehensive, consistent, meaningful and richer findings or answers to research questions (ibid., p.122). By using the mixed methods approach, it has helped to "gather both quantitative (closed-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data, integrate the two and then draws interpretations based on the combined strengths of both sets of data to understand research problems" (Creswell, 2015, p. 2).

Another reason for using mixed methods was for 'offsetting strengths and weakness' (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016, p. 3), that is, using the strength of the quantitative methods to offset the weakness of the qualitative methods and vice versa. In other words, it complements each other to obtain refined conclusions (ibid., p. 3). For this research, the quantitative method (content analysis) was employed to

describe general trends occurring in the international news coverage of the BBC on India while the qualitative methods (interviews) were used to get more details on the BBC journalistic practices. In other words, the mixed methods are in 'complementarity' (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016, p. 7) with each other.

Data Collection: Quantitative Content Analysis

As Bryman (2016, pp. 302–303) explains, the process of content analysis is transparent and flexible. What Bryman means with 'being flexible' is that it can be applied to a wide variety of different kinds of structured and unstructured textual content. In this research, as indicated earlier, the quantitative content analysis was classified into pre-online and digital era based on the existing available data, making data "unobtrusive" (Robson, 2011, p. 356). This, therefore, amplifies the genuineness of the collected data. As indicated in the sources below, the data used in this research is in permanent form, and therefore the "reanalysis is possible" (ibid.).

The research included quantitative content analysis of BBC's international news reports related to India in its website (www.bbc.co.uk), BBC PasBs of Radio World News Service of 1977 and 1997, and BBC Radio World News Service 2019 broadcast. Further, it also compared and analysed the 2019 online news coverage of the BBC, CNN and AJE.

Since 1977 and 1997 BBC radio broadcasts were not available, I had to depend on BBC Radio PasBs of this time. Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) are the official records of what was broadcast on any given day. This includes the contributor's names, music details and timings, sources, and the news summary. The PasBs are held on microfilm and are open for research. The archived copies of the PasBs of

Radio World Service were collected from the BBC's Written Archive Centre at Caversham near Reading, UK. I visited the Written Archive centre at Reading for a few days and accessed the microfilm materials, and the relevant pages were saved as pdf files. A sample pdf of PasBs is given below (image: 1).

OVERSEAS PROGRAMME:		MONDAY: 15.8.1977	page 16
<u>WORLD SERVICE</u>			
12.15	7B40Q203G	CLOCK CHIMES: LETTER FROM LONDON (Repeat of the recording broadcast in the World Service at 08.45 on 13.8.1977)	
12.25	7B964H144	ALBUMLEAF (Repeat of the recording broadcast in the World Service at 08.55 on 13.8.1977) A PROGRAMME OF GRAMOPHONE RECORDS (Details to follow)	
12.30	7B424514G	CLOCK CHIMES: SCIENCE IN ACTION (Repeat of the recording broadcast in the World Service at 17.15 on 12.8.1977)	
13.00	RADIO NEWSREEL (News Division)		
		Narrator John Touday	
		Duty Editor Edgar Brennan	
		Producer Roy Underwood	
	BBC RECORDING		
		Signature tune (Beg. and end)	
		Imperial Echoes (Saffroni arr. Ord Home)	
		Band of the Royal Air Force	
		Conductor Squadron Leader R.O'Donnell	
			FILE 6 dubbed on 23.11.1965 (from HMV B 8846) 00'19" 00'30"
	BOB FRIEND (S) URANIUM QUESTION M/N Tel. Sydney 1130 15.8.77		1'20
	<u>XN.33.055</u>		
	MARK TULEY (S) THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE N.322 Tel. Delhi 0617 15.8.77		1'30
	<u>XN.33.050</u>		
	DAVID SMERTON (S) SOUTH KOREA PARK SPEECH/DISSIDENTS N.219 Tel. Tokyo 0644 15.8.77		1'14
	<u>XN.33.053</u>		
	DAVID SMERTON (S) VIETNAM/JAPAN N.220 Tel. Tokyo 1040 15.8.77		1'25
	<u>XN.34.052</u>		
	GORDON MARTIN (S) STRIKE N.460 Tel. Madrid 1140 15.8.77		2'12
	<u>XN.33.056</u>		

(Image 1: Example of BBC PasBs of 15 August 1977, news at 13.00 hours)

Pilot Study

Prior to the full-fledged data collection, a pilot study was done for a month to understand the quantity of the international Indian news coverage by the BBC. The data was collected for every alternate day for a month. Likewise, the data was collected of BBC Radio PasBs of January 1997, of BBC Radio World News Service of January 2019, and BBC Online news coverage of January 2019. I had gathered for BBC Radio news, one hour of the news broadcast of World Service (English) per day. This pilot study was done only to find out the frequency of the BBC's international news coverage of India. Therefore, the following results indicate only the number of days the Indian news was featured by the BBC and not the number of news items it covered. The result for BBC Radio PasBs of January 1997 showed that 53.4 per cent of days India was reported in the news. However, in January 2019, BBC Radio World News Service news coverage of India was only 33.34 per cent. BBC Online in its January 2019 news coverage of India resulted in 80 per cent days the Indian news featured in its online platform.

After the pilot study, the data collection was extended to 1977 to have a more comprehensive understanding of the pattern of the BBC's reporting of India and how it has changed over time. It was decided to collect data for six months using a stratified sampling method of constructed dates of six days per month. However, after three months of data collection in April 2019 when the frequency of Indian international news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service was analysed again, it was found that it required more days of data collection to have justifying and sufficient data. Hence, the number of days was increased to eleven days per month for the radio news coverage while online news segments remained six days per month. And so, the data collection

was restarted from May to October 2019. The online segment was retained six days per month because BBC online news coverage frequency was higher than the radio segment.

Initially, the research included the analysis of the Indian news coverage by BBC World News Television Service as well. However, during the pilot study, it was discovered that I could not get access to the news broadcast in India by BBC's World News Television Service since I was in the UK at this point of time. Therefore, this study was limited to BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online news coverage of India.

During the pilot study, it was discovered that the website of BBC Online (English) has four front pages or home pages for different regions of the world. For example, to access from the UK, the web address is www.bbc.co.uk, while to access from India, the web address is www.bbc.com. Nevertheless, there were more similarities than differences between the UK front page and BBC's Indian English web page. A set of screenshots of the web pages accessed from London and Mumbai at the same time, are provided in the appendix to illustrate this further (*appendix:3 on page 286*). The pilot study helped to understand the roadblocks of research and altered accordingly. After considering these elements, the time frame, sources and the sample size were finalised for the study. The next section explains these decisions.

The Duration, the Sources and the Sample

The Duration and the Sources: As pointed out earlier, this research's time-frame included the pre-online and digital era of the BBC. For the pre-online era, the 1977 and 1997 PasBs of BBC Radio World News Service from BBC archives were included,

and for the digital era, the 2019 Radio World News Service broadcast was included as part of the data.

It was in November 1997 that the BBC launched its News 24 Channel and BBC News Online. Therefore, for the pre-online era, the data was gathered from the PasBs from 1977 and 1997. For the pre-online era, the 1977 radio PasBs from 1 May to 24 December was collected. I had to extend the duration to 24 December 1977 as Radio PasBs from 16 September to 8 November 1977 was missing in the BBC's Written Archives at Reading, UK. For the Radio PasBs of 1997, they were from May 1997 to October 1997. For 1977 and 1997, I have collected the 13.00 BBC Radio Broadcast for the data analysis. For the digital era analysis, the 14:06 BST news broadcasts of BBC Radio World News Service beginning from May 2019 to October 2019 were gathered as much as possible.

It is to be noted that BBC Radio World News Service (English) on some days had a different set of programmes, especially in its weekend programmes or when it had a special live programme. Either the news hour was shifted or cancelled on such occasions. In such cases, when the 13.00 BST or 14.06 BST news slots were not available, I have chosen an equivalent available news slot of the day as part of the data.

Online news data of the BBC, CNN and AJE, were collected from May 2019 to October 2019. Online news data from these web pages were gathered after 21.00 hours BST to ensure that no news of the day was missed out. Since the time-zone was different for CNN and AJE, I have followed up any earlier news of the day with the following morning content from these websites.

The data for the digital era for both radio and online news was originally planned from January 2019 to June 2019. As indicated earlier, the low rate of reporting of India on BBC radio broadcast necessitated the need to increase the number of days from 6 days to 11 days per month. And this was initiated at the end of April 2019. However, the unavailability of 2019 radio news for an increased number of days necessitated collecting the data from May 2019 for the next six months. This was because I was collecting the 2019 BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts or data from Box of Broadcaster (BoB) where the accessibility to the older news broadcasts was limited to 30 days only.

Furthermore, India held its general elections in February 2019 and ended on 23 May 2019 when the final results were declared. In this scenario, it was highly possible that the news reports on India could be highly skewed. Considering all these factors, the data collection duration for the research was rescheduled beginning from May 2019 to October 2019.

The Sample

The sampling of the data was based on the stratified sampling method of constructed dates, i.e., to use BBC World Radio World News broadcasts that included news on India on the 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27 and 30 of every month (11 days per month) beginning from May 2019 to October 2019. A similar method was followed to collect 1977, 1997 radio PasBs data beginning from May to October/December. As mentioned earlier, the low rate of radio news broadcast on India necessitated the increase in the number of days per month for the radio segment to have sufficient data for the research.

A similar approach was made for online news data collection but with fewer days of data collection. The stratified sampling method of constructed date gathering of the news items that were featured on India on the 1,6,12,18,24 and 30 of every month (6 days per month) was gathered beginning with May 2019 to October 2019. It is to be noted that the number of days per month for online news data is only six days per month primarily because of two reasons: firstly, the number of news items covered on online was higher than that of the radio segment on account of its greater feasibility of featuring more news items and availability of space; secondly, in the case of the radio news, even though it has more number of days, the data covered was for 54 minutes per day, whereas for the web the time span was for the entire day. Therefore, the possibility of having a greater number of news items featured on online news on a single day was greater than that of the radio.

Data was collected from the websites of BBC (bbc.co.uk), CNN (<https://edition.cnn.com>) and AJE (<https://www.aljazeera.com>) from May 2019 to October 2019 in order to compare the Indian international news featured on them. Only those news articles that contained references to either 'India' or 'Indian' were gathered from the BBC, CNN, and *Al-Jazeera* English websites. Therefore, this data represented the articles that appeared on AJE, BBC, and CNN online platforms that gave salience to India or Indian.

“Stratified random sampling involves dividing the population (data) into a number of groups or strata, where members of a group share a particular characteristic or characteristics” (Robson, 2011, p. 272). In this case, the common factor to be selected as part of the research data was India or Indian's reference in the news item. The stratified sampling method of constructed dates had the advantage of systematic

content variations by dates of the month. This was an appropriate sampling method because the BBC had different sets of programmes for the weekend compared to the weekdays. For instance, the weekend news coverage might be a lean one compared to that on the weekdays. But the stratification sampling methods provided an equal chance of being covered irrespective of weekends or weekdays. Besides, by choosing the dates of the month, it also had the advantage of spreading itself to different days of the week which would not have been possible if, for example, every Monday or Thursday of the week were chosen.

After seeing the data collection details, the research now moves on to the next section of content analysis. However, it is important that the study clarifies on the unit of analysis employed in this research at this stage. The next section explains about this unit of study.

Prior to Content Analysis

It was essential to make clear before starting the content analysis what made a unit of the analysis. In this research, each news item that had the reference to India or Indian was selected and considered as a single unit. For example, in the 54 minutes of Radio World News Service news bulletin, if two news items were referring to India, each of these news items was considered a separate unit. In another instance, if a single news package included news, interviews, opinions and additional information about the news covered, the whole news package would be considered as one unit. Similarly, this was applied for the radio PasBs data as well.

Regarding online news coverage, it was decided that each of the news articles with reference to 'India' or 'Indian' was to be considered one unit. If there were more

than one news article on a particular day, each of these articles was considered as a separate single news unit or item for the analysis. For online Indian news items, it was considered as a unit of the data when it appeared either on the 'Home page', 'World' segment page, 'Asia' segment page, or on the 'India' specific page of the websites of the BBC, CNN and AJE. Videos and images published on the websites of the BBC, CNN and AJE on India during the time of this study were not included in this research. After clarifying the data units of the research, it is now necessary to explain the coding process.

Coding

Content analysis is the decoding of the content in a systematic way for in-depth and objective knowledge of the content. Weber (1990, p. 12) explains content analysis as "A central idea in content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories. Each category may consist of one, several, or many words. Words, phrases, or other units of text classified in the same category are presumed to have similar meanings".

In order to formulate valid inferences from the text, the classification procedure must be reliable and consistent. These inferences are about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message (Weber, 1990, p. 9). To be consistent different people should code the same text in the same way, and the coding of the news content was to be done systematically. In line with this, a codebook was created to help with the analysis.

Preparing the Codebook

The first draft of the codebook was created based on the basic information available on BBC Online. This was further revised, and additional fields were added to the codebook to elicit more details about the data which would help answer the research questions. The data collected as part of the pilot study was analysed based on the codebook, and a few discrepancies were found in the codebook. Accordingly, it was further revised and used for the data analysis. With the results yielded from the data using the codebook, additional checks were done if the codebook helped answer the research questions. The final revision was done after receiving the feedback from experts on coding after which the list of variables was finalised. For the codebook, see *appendix 4* on page 290.

Mode of Analysis

As mentioned above, this study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods for its data collection. The quantitative content analysis included the 1977 and 1997 PasBs of BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts, the BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts of 2019, the BBC Indian online news reports, and the CNN and AJE online Indian news reports. The qualitative method used semi-structured interviews as part of its data collection. Since this study has used mixed methods in its data collection, the data were analysed manually using the codebook. The quantitative data had Indian news broadcasts from BBC Radio World News Service and some of these Indian news items were too small for computation-based analysis. Moreover, considering the data from 1977 and 1997 PasBs of BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts, one of the best options was to analyse it manually as against a computational one. Besides, the

manual analysis was employed as the study had used semi-structured interviews, and therefore, the flexibility of having different topics covered during the interview based on the interviewee's response was higher. With manual analysis of the interview, the best way to decode some of the elements mentioned in the interviews was doing it manually rather than going for a quantitative computational approach.

Intercoder Reliability

Intercoder reliability is widely used in order to assess the extent of agreement between or among the coders. "Intercoder reliability is the widely used term for the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artefact and reach the same conclusion" (Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken, 2002, p. 590). In the words of MacPhail *et al.* (2016, p. 199), "Intercoder reliability is a measure to assess the agreement among multiple coders for how they assign codes to text segments; it also evaluates the extent to which these coders make similar coding decisions in assessing the characteristics of text". The Intercoder reliability assessment process helps to confirm to a certain extent, valid variables and guarantees that the study could be replicated at a later stage if necessary. This is achievable only if the ambiguity in the coding is eliminated. As Weber (1990, p. 12) puts it, "Reliability is important to check that the classification procedure is reliable in the sense of being consistent". This would also safeguard the research against possible "substantial bias" (ibid.).

For this research, I have used Cohen's kappa to calculate Intercoder reliability, since only two coders are employed here. After preparing the codebook, a fellow researcher did the test for me, and the coefficient was only 0.68. After clarifying and detailing the variables further, the test was redone, which obtained a coefficient of

0.913. “Coefficients range from .00 (agreement at chance level) to 1.00 (perfect agreement), and a value of less than .00 again indicates agreement less than chance” (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 176).

Limitations of Quantitative Method

Despite the transparency that the quantitative method provides, it also possesses a few elements of limitations. The document's availability may be limited or partial, which sometimes can hinder the process of research. The researcher may not fully conceptualise the context of the text in which it was written or in this case published (Bryman, 2016; see *a/so* Robson, 2011). The most significant limitation is that the content analysis can only compare the obvious, manifested meaning of the content and not the subtle things like irony.

One of the limitations of this research was that some of the data evaluated had limited details in it. For example, the radio PasBs used in this research did not contain all the details like that of the contemporary radio news data or the data collected from the website. The next section describes the qualitative method used in this research.

Qualitative Method -- Interviews

The second mode of data collection was semi-structured interviews which were used to determine if there have been significant changes in the journalistic practices of the BBC's journalists reporting on India on account of digital media. Eliciting the responses from those involved in the BBC reporting from India during this period was also an important way of explaining and understanding some of the elements in quantitative data.

The interview, according to Bryman (2016, p. 198), “entails the administration of an interview schedule—a collection of questions designed to be asked by the interviewer”. In this research, a semi-structured interview method was employed, which helped obtain better results than the structured interviews, as it enabled one to go beyond the initial questions and get more details where and when required. Robson narrates the semi-structured interviews as,

The interviewer has an interview guide that serves as a checklist of topics to be covered and a default wording and order for the questions, but the wording and the order are often substantially modified based on the flow of the interview, and additional unplanned questions are asked to follow up on what the interviewee says (Robson, 2011, p. 280).

A few semi-structured interviews were conducted at the Indian BBC bureau in New Delhi before finalising the interview questions and approach. New Delhi hosts South Asia's bureau headquarters from where Indian and Asian news segments are planned and reported.

To elicit the best from these interviews, the researcher ensured a good rapport between the interviewee and the interviewer. Accordingly, during the interviews, I introduced the topic to the respondent and explained the background and the nature of the study. “In order to have better understanding between the respondents and the interviewers, it is important to introduce issues and topics into the conversation” (Brennen, 2012, p. 29). Such an approach ensured that the respondent was comfortable, at ease and was prepared for the forthcoming questions, because as Warren (2001, p. 83) states, “The purpose of most qualitative interviewing is to derive interpretations, not facts or laws, from the respondent talk”.

Prior to the interview, the respondents were briefed about their freedom to cease the interview if they felt uncomfortable. The consent of the interviewee too was sought before the commencement of the interview. The consent of the interviewee is of paramount importance in a semi-structured interview. The consent should be acquired in writing. However, while acquiring the consent the interviewee needs to be informed of the exact nature of the study for which the interview is taken, and how the acquired information will be used (Brennen, 2012).

For the recruitment of participants for the research interview, the snowball sampling method was employed. In snowball sampling, research participants recruit other participants for a test or study. Although it was through snowball sampling the participants were chosen, it was done based on their work experience with the BBC. They were to have at least five years of work experience with the BBC. To ensure a seamless and unbiased response from the interviewees, they were given the option of anonymity, and strict confidentiality with regard to the data collected unless the interviewee expressively gave his or her consent to be identified.

The semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face were recorded on 'voice memos', and those which were done via skype were video recorded with the participants' permission. The recorded interviews were transcribed later. The participants were given the option of anonymity if they preferred to remain so. Given the option, some of the participants chose to remain anonymous during the interview. Those who opted for anonymity were given code names, and their confidentiality was maintained throughout this study. The majority of those who preferred to remain anonymous during this study were journalists/editors currently working with the BBC

Indian bureau. Their interviews were given code names as given below. The complete list of interviewees is on page 285.

File Name	Reference Name
BBCC-1	BBC Correspondent 1
BBCC-2	BBC Correspondent 2
BBCE-1	BBC Editor 1
BBCE-2	BBC Editor 2
BBCE-3	BBC Editor 3
BBCNA	BBC News Anchor

A total of 13 interviews were conducted, of which eight interviews were done in a face-to-face interaction. The remaining five interviews were done via skype as I could not meet them due to distance and on account of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Although challenging, it was worth making the effort as the interviews obtained detailed information that threw light on the BBC reporting of India from its earlier days to the present age. It also narrated in detail the emerging newsroom practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India since the advent of digital media. Many of the interviewees, except two of them, were forthcoming with their responses to the questions. The two interviewees seemed to be cautious and were limited with their responses during the interview as this study was carried out from London.

A semi-structured interview was preferred as this allowed greater pliability than structured interviews, and more flexibility was given to the interviewee's point of view. This was a critical aspect to be kept in mind as the interview was intended to look into the emerging journalistic practices in the newsroom. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer can depart to some extent from the interview guide. "Interviewers may vary the order of the questions and may also ask follow-up questions to delve more deeply into some of the topics or issues addressed, or to clarify answers given by the respondent" (Brennen, 2012, p. 28). It allows the researcher to have rich and detailed answers. The nature of the semi-structured interview is that it has the ability to provide insight into the topic under investigation (Bryman, 2016). However, the success of this type of interview depended a lot on the interviewer and the cooperation of the interviewee.

Limitations of Interviews

Since some of the interviews were conducted at the BBC's New Delhi office, and those interviewed came during their office hours, time constraints were inevitable. As the interviews were conducted in the office premises, it might have prevented the interviewees from expressing their opinions freely.

As mentioned earlier, five of the interviews were done via Skype, and consequently, there were occasional audio disturbances, and the conversations had to be repeated. On a few occasions, external disturbances caused less clarity and the interview was slightly disrupted.

The next section of this chapter deals with the ethical considerations associated with this research and the ethical clearance, which is very important.

Ethical Considerations

In this case, the qualitative research was the semi-structured interview involved dealing with human subjects, and therefore it required clearance from the City University's *Ethical committee*. I had received the City University's ethics committee's approval after detailing how the subjects would be treated, the scope of the research, and how the information obtained would be treated. "All qualitative interviewers have a moral responsibility to protect their respondents from physical and emotional harm" (Brennen, 2012, p. 29). Equally important is to bear in mind that each respondent has a right to privacy, and it is important to protect each person's identity when he or she requests it (ibid.). Each interviewee also has the right to quit the interview if he/she feels uncomfortable (Creed, Langstraat and Scully, 2002). I have taken care to protect their identity of those who participated in the interview and those who wanted to remain anonymous.

This chapter has given an overview of the methodology used in this research. It has provided a detailed enumeration of the process involved in the data selection, collection, analysis, and has considered the aspects of ethical issues surrounding the research. The next chapter deals with the analysis of the data gathered for this research.

Chapter 6: Results

Introduction

This research is an attempt to find the BBC's international news coverage of India in the digital era. The research has also been conducted to determine whether digital technologies, online and social media, have changed BBC correspondents' practices on India. Additionally, it has sought to find out how similar or different the BBC is in its reporting of India compared to CNN and AJE.

This chapter includes the descriptive frequency statistics for the sample, the data analysis of BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997 and 2019, BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019 news reporting of India.

It is divided into three sections: a) the analysis of BBC Radio World News Service, b) the comparison between BBC Radio WNS 2019 (digital era) and BBC Online news and c) the analysis of the BBC, CNN and AJE Online news in the year 2019.

Section-1

Data Analysis: BBC Radio World News Service

The opening section covers the analysis of BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997 and 2019 to assess if there have been significant changes in the BBC's reporting of India due to changing media environment.

Descriptive Frequency Statistics

As indicated in Chapter 5, this study's time frame includes the BBC's pre-online and digital era. The data collected for BBC Radio includes the Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) of 1977 and 1997, of BBC Radio World News Service, and the Broadcasts of 2019 BBC Radio World News Service. Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) are the official records of what was broadcast on any given day. This includes the contributors' names, music details and timings, sources, and the news summary. An example of PasBs is on page 108 (*image: 1*).

The data was collected in each of the three years (1977, 1997 and 2019) for six months employing the stratified sampling method of constructed days. The BBC Radio World News Service data was collected for 11 days per month (one-hour news bulletin per day) for six months. Therefore, 198 days of radio news were included in BBC World News Service radio sample. If there were more than one news item in the same broadcast, they were considered separate news items. In 1977, there were 20 news items about India on BBC Radio World News Service 1977. In 1997 there were 22, and in 2019 there were 39.

		Number of news items
Years	BBC Radio1977 (N=66)	20
	BBC Radio1997 (N= 66)	22
	BBC Radio 2019 (N=66)	39
	Total	81

(Table 1: The total number of units featured on BBC Radio in 1977, 1997 and 2019)

Descriptive analysis of frequency is done to determine if the BBC's news reporting on India has changed due to easy accessibility to the new media platforms of communication.

BBC Radio WNS 1977, 1997 and 2019

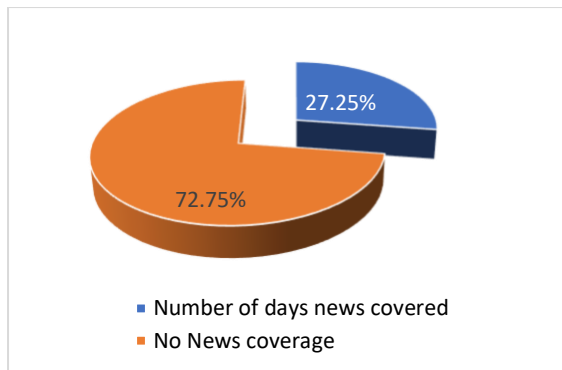
Medium	Number of Days	Number of News Items	Name of the correspondent/Agency	Sources								Type of News											
				Indian govt agencies	International Politicians or diplomats	Multi-national institutes	Non-Governmental organisations	Views of experts and those involved	Media Sources	First Source	Social Media	Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economy	International conflict	Science, Evnt & IT	Travel, Tourism & Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Radio WNS 1977 (N=66)	18	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	1	6	0	9	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
BBC Radio WNS 1997 (N=66)	19	22	15	15	3	0	2	25	35	22	0	2	7	3	1	1	3	3	0	1	0	0	1
BBC Radio WNS 2019 (N=66)	32	39	12	27	3	1	1	37	39	32	0	8	6	1	3	1	12	2	2	2	0	0	2

(Table 2: BBC Radio WNS 1977, 1997 and 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)

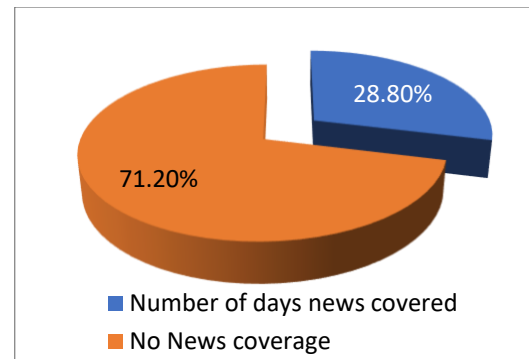
BBC World News Service: The Number of Days of Indian News Coverage

	The Number of Days of radio news coverage	Percentage
BBC Radio 1977 (N=66)	18	27.25
BBC Radio 1997 (N=66)	19	28.80
BBC Radio 2019 (N=66)	32	48.50

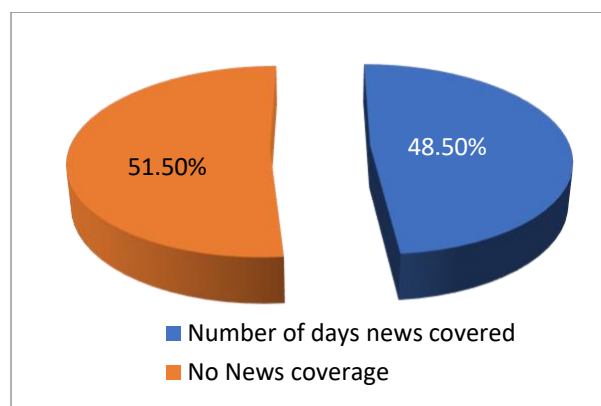
(Table 3: The total number of days of Indian news coverage on BBC Radio in 1977, 1997 and 2019)



(Figure 1: BBC 1977–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India)



(Figure 2: BBC 1997–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India)



(Figure 3: BBC 2019–Proportion of days in the sample when there was a news item about India)

The data shows a significant difference in the number of days the Indian news items were featured between the pre-online era and online era in BBC Radio World News Service coverage of India. The advent of the internet and advancement in communication technology may have caused this change.

BBC Radio World News Service: Number of News Items

The number of Indian news items that BBC Radio featured in its broadcast in 1977, 1997 and 2019 is analysed here. For this section, the analysis is based on the number of news items broadcast by BBC Radio World News Services (*Table 4*).

	Number of days	Number of news items
BBC Radio WNS 1977	18	20
BBC Radio WNS 1997	19	22
BBC Radio WNS 2019	32	39

(Table 4: Number of Indian news items covered by BBC Radio WNS in 1977, 1997 and 2019)

The data demonstrate an increase in the number of news items between the pre-online era (1977 and 1997) and the digital era (2019).

Type of Indian News Coverage

This variable would help us assess the types of Indian news that BBC Radio World News Service covered in 1977, 1997 and 2019. Additionally, this also helps investigate any changes in the type of coverage as the communication system changed over the years. Therefore, news articles were coded as:

a) News Reports: This includes the factual news report, report of events, reporting of facts, numbers, declarations, happenings and events, etc.

b) Analysis: Longer article which not only includes factual reporting but also looking behind scenes and analytical.

c) Interviews: This applies to those stand-alone interviews only, and the short interviews that were done as part of the news coverage and are not considered interviews.

d) Other

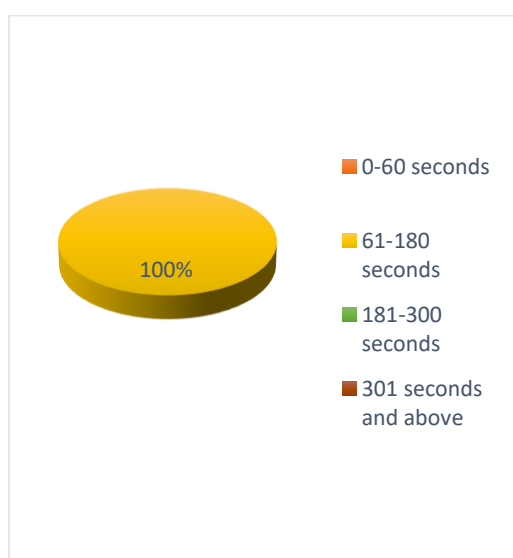
The majority of items on BBC Radio World News Service were news reports. It is to be noted that there were short interviews which were part of the news coverage, but they were not considered as separate interviews but as part of a news item.

The Duration of Radio News Items

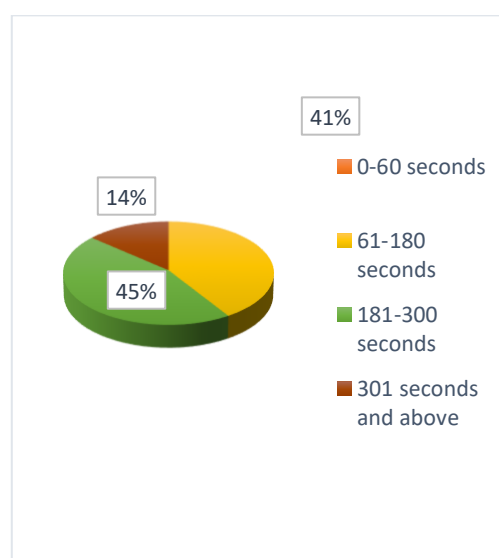
Under this variable the duration of Radio news items is categorised into a) 0 – 60 seconds, b) 61 – 180 seconds, c) 181 – 300 seconds, and d) 301 seconds and above.

		0 - 60 sec	61 - 180 sec	181 - 300 sec	301 sec & above
BBC Radio 1977	Number	0	20	0	0
	Percentage	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio 1997	Number	0	9	10	3
	Percentage	0.0%	41.0%	45.0%	14.0%
BBC Radio 2019	Number	27	1	6	5
	Percentage	69.0%	3.0%	15.0%	13.0%

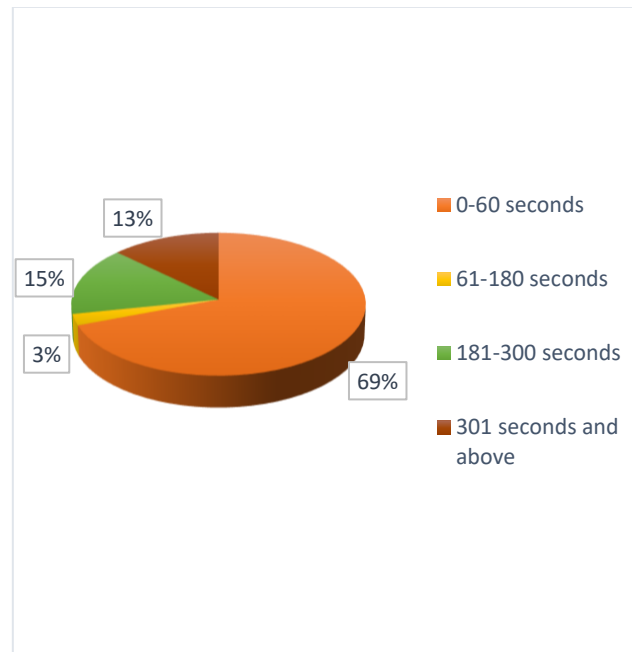
(Table 5: BBC Radio World News Service–Duration of news items)



(Figure 4: BBC Radio World News Service 1977–Duration of news items)



(Figure 5: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Duration of news items)



(Figure 6: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Duration of news items)

The duration of the Indian news items covered by BBC Radio World News Service varied over the years. This could also be on account of the change in the news structure of broadcasts over the years (see *Table 5 and figures 4-6*). In 1977 and 1997, news items were longer on average than in 2019; indeed, none of the news items in those years was shorter than 60 seconds.

BBC Radio World News Service: Placement of the Indian News Items

This variable examines the importance given to a news item by its placement within the news broadcast. If the news is of much value and importance, it is found at the beginning of the news itself (Lee, Lewis and Powers, 2014). The news placement is one way to determine the prominence given to a news item in a broadcast.

This variable is sub-divided into a) Beginning (within 15 minutes), b) Middle (15 to 30 minutes), and c) End (after 30 minutes).

		Beginning	Middle	End
BBC Radio 1977	Number	7	6	7
	Percentage	35.0%	30.0%	35.0%
BBC Radio 1997	Number	4	6	12
	Percentage	18.0%	27.0%	55.0%
BBC Radio 2019	Number	4	29	6
	Percentage	10.0%	74.0%	16.0%

(Table 6: BBC Radio World News Service–Placement of Indian news items)

The placement of the Indian news items featured in 1977 seems to be evenly distributed across the news bulletin. The year 1997 had more of Indian news items placed towards the end of the news bulletin. In 2019, it was found that the majority of the Indian news items were placed in the middle segment, i.e., the 15-30 minutes news category, and one of the major reasons for this shift could be on account of the change in the news structure.

Name of the Correspondent

This variable aims to determine if the Indian news reports had the correspondent's names or the news agency from which the news was sourced. Under this category, the sub-variables include a) Name of the correspondent, b) Name of the News Agency, c) Correspondent and News Agency, and d) Unspecified. If the name of the correspondent or the agency is not mentioned, then it is counted under the category of the 'Unspecified'.

		Correspondent	News Agency	Agency & Correspondent	Unspecified
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	20	0	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	15	0	0	7
	Percentage	68.0%	0.0%	0.0%	32.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	12	0	0	27
	Percentage	31.0%	0.0%	0.0%	69.0%

(Table 7: BBC Radio World News Service–Name of the Correspondent)

The analysis of the name of the correspondent and the news agencies mentioned in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio World News Service revealed that the vast majority of the news items covered had the correspondents' names mentioned in them. However, when this variable was compared across the years, it was found that the mentioning of the name of the correspondent was on a descending graph. In the year 1977, all the Indian news reports had a named correspondent. In 1997 this decreased to 68 per cent, and in 2019, it further decreased to 31.0 per cent. This may be on account of the changes in the editorial policy, or it could also be that the BBC was not keen about giving credit to the Indian journalist reporting for it.

Sources

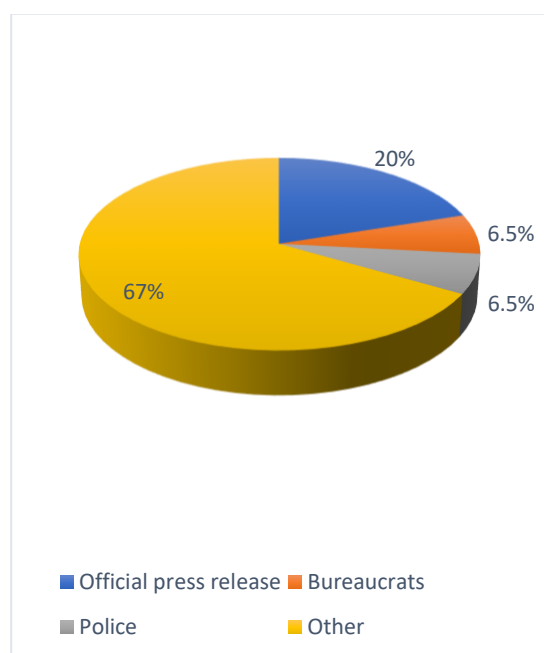
This research has examined the sources that appeared within news coverage of India by BBC Radio World News Services in 1977, 1997 and 2019. This has been done to analyse and see if there were major differences in the number of sources used and the range of sources used in the Indian news coverage over the years.

Sources: Indian Official Government Agencies

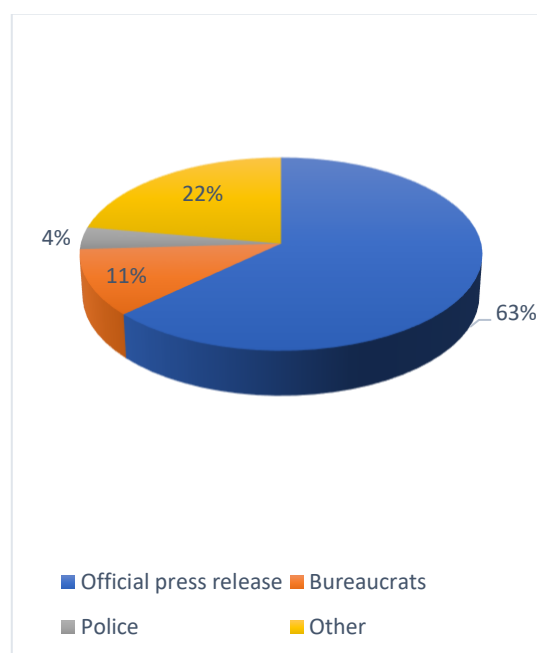
This variable is sub-divided into a) Official Press Release, b) Bureaucrats, c) Police, and d) Other. When BBC Radio World News Service in its reports mentions or has a direct or indirect quote/comments in them, it was counted as one of the news sources.

		Official Press Release	Bureaucrats	Police	Other
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	0	0	0	0
	Percentage	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	3	1	1	10
	Percentage	20.0%	6.5%	6.5%	67.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	17	3	1	6
	Percentage	63.0%	11.0%	4.0%	22.0%

(Table 8: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian Official Government Agencies)



(Figure 7: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Indian Official Government Agencies)



(Figure 8: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Indian Official Government Agencies)

The analysis here is on the sources used in BBC Radio World News Services of Indian news coverage, particularly 'Government Official Agencies' employment. In the year 1977 BBC Radio World News Service did not have any official sources used in its Indian news reports. However, the year 1997 depicted an upward swing in the use of Indian government official agencies in the Indian news items of BBC Radio World News Service. The index of BBC Radio's use of official government news agencies went up further as evident from the 2019 BBC Radio Indian news reports.

When compared in the years between 1997 and 2019, there is an increase of 43.0 per cent in the use of Indian 'Official Press Release' as a source in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio World News Service. Therefore, the use of Indian government official agencies as news sources has been on an upward swing in the digital era compared to the pre-online era.

Sources: International Politicians and Diplomats

The study has examined the use of 'International Politicians and Diplomats' used as a source in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio World News Service. Thus, this variable was sub-categorised as a) Pakistan, b) China, c) America, d) Europe, e) Africa, f) Asia (other than China and Pakistan), and g) Other. Pakistan and China are mentioned separately from the rest of the Asian countries as these countries share with India a lot of unsettled issues compared to other Asian countries.

Results: Out of the 81 Indian news items covered by BBC Radio, only 6 times it had used international politicians and diplomats as sources for their news coverage.

Sources: Multi-national Institutions

The study here has examined if BBC Radio had used either direct or indirect quotes/comments of representatives of multi-national institutions such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Health Organisation, etc., as sources for their Indian news reports.

Results: The analysis of Indian news reports of BBC Radio found that out of its 81 news items only once used multi-national institutions to source its news coverage. This was used in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio, the only instance which occurred in the year 2019.

Sources: Non-Governmental Organisations

The study has observed if BBC Radio World News Service had used either direct or indirect quotes/comments of the representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in its Indian news reports. This includes both national and international non-governmental organisations.

The analysis reveals that BBC Radio out of its 81 news items only 3 times had sourced from the NGOs in its news reports. All these NGOs were international ones. 1977 did not have any NGO source used in its Indian news reports, while 1997 had 2 occurrences, and 2019 had used NGO once as a source in its reports.

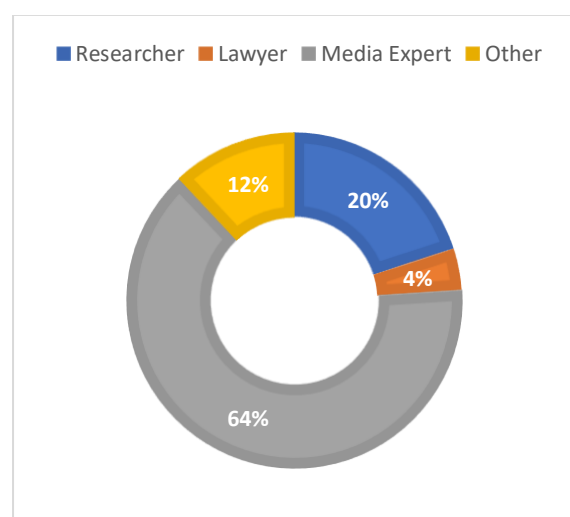
Sources: Views of experts and those involved

The study has investigated BBC Radio World News Service's Indian news coverage of 1977, 1997 and 2019 to see how many news item/s had views of experts or those

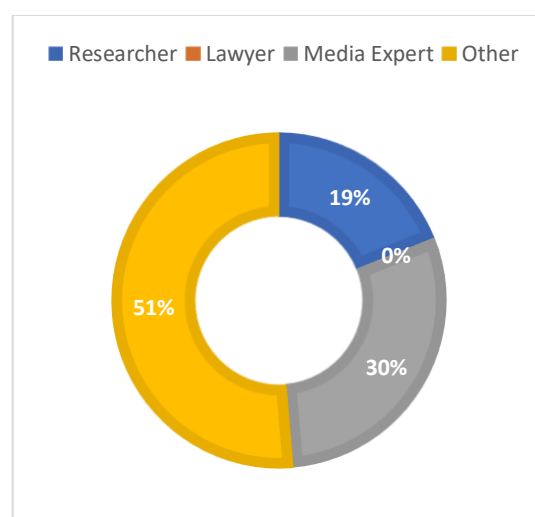
involved or connected with the news item/s. For this purpose, the variable was sub-divided into, 'views of experts and those involved' into a) Researcher, b) Lawyer, c) Media Expert, and d) Other. Under this variable, each of the used quotes is counted even if they are from the same person.

		Researcher	Lawyer	Media Expert	Other
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	0	0	0	0
	Percentage	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	5	1	16	3
	Percentage	20.0%	4.0%	64.0%	12.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	7	0	11	19
	Percentage	19.0%	0.0%	30.0%	51.0%

(Table 9: BBC Radio World News Service–Views of experts and those involved)



(Figure 9: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 10: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)

The analysis of the variable 'Views of experts and those involved' found that BBC Radio World News Coverage of India varied across the years. In 1977 it did not have any 'Views of Experts or those involved' in its news coverage. There were 62 sources used in the news reports of BBC Radio World News Service in 1997 and 2019. Out of these 62 sources used, 25 of them were of 1997, and 37 belonged to 2019. Therefore, there is an increase of 19.35 per cent in the usage of experts and others views in 2019 compared to 1997.

Sources: Media Sources

Under 'Media Sources' category, the analyses are about the type of media sources used in BBC Radio World News Service's Indian news coverage of India. To determine if BBC Radio World News Service had used its own media sources or had relied on other media for sources in their Indian news coverage, the 'Media Sources' are subdivided into a) BBC's Sources, b) Indian News outlets, and c) International News Outlets.

It has been found that BBC Radio for the vast majority of its Indian news reports, had used its own media sources. In 1977 the BBC relied entirely on its sources, and in 1997 it relied on a few external media sources for its reporting. However, in 2019 for the vast majority of the Indian news, the BBC depended on its media personnel for its news coverage.

Sources: First Source

This variable inspects to find out the 'First Source' names mentioned in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio World News Service in 1977, 1997 and 2019. This is further sub-categorised into a) National, b) International, and c) Unspecified.

The data indicated that out of its 20 Indian news items broadcast in 1977, BBC Radio did not specify about the first source mentioned in any of its 20 news items. However, in the years 1997 and 2019, the majority of the first sources that was used belonged to an Indian national.

Sources: Social Media

This study has considered the use of 'Social Media' in BBC Radio World News Service in the Indian news reports. As mentioned earlier, social media as a source of news considered only, if the 'actual post' is quoted within the Indian news report. This being a radio broadcast it may not be possible to consider the 'actual post'. Therefore, for the radio news reports, social media was considered a source when they were mentioned 'as sourced from social media or quoted from social media'. This variable had the sub-categories as a) Twitter, b) Facebook, c) Instagram, and d) Other.

It is also to be noted that this category 'Social Media' is not applicable for the years 1977 and 1997. This medium was non-existent in 1977 while in the year 1997 the internet was in its earlier years, and social media did not have its entry yet. However, social media was already part of the communication system in the year 2019. But BBC Radio World News Service has not sourced anything from the 'Social Media' in its Indian news coverage.

Significant Topics of BBC Radio Indian News Coverage

The study now focuses on finding out the significant topics covered by BBC Radio in its Indian news coverage.

Geographic Focus of News

This variable deals with the geographical focus of the news items covered by BBC Radio World News Service in 1977, 1997 and 2019. The emphasis here is to determine if the Indian news items covered were predominantly focussed on the Indian domestic news or connected to international affairs. This variable was sub-divided into a) Indian domestic news, and b) International news.

Results: The Indian domestic issues have dominated the Indian news items broadcast by BBC Radio World News Service in all the three years, i.e., 1977, 1997 and 2019.

News Topics by BBC Radio

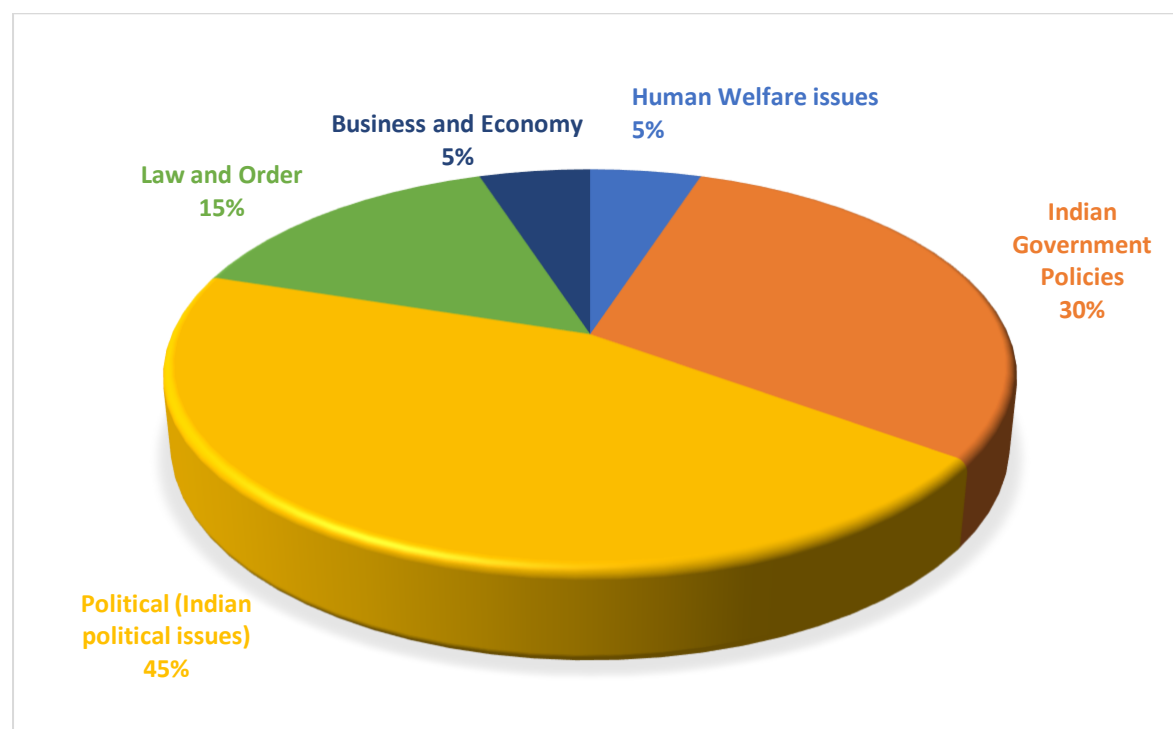
The research has evaluated the topics or range of Indian news items featured by BBC Radio World News Service. This has been done to examine the type of the Indian news items featured by the BBC Radio World News Service in its broadcasts.

Accordingly, the major topics were categorised into a) Human Welfare Issues, b) Indian Government Policies, c) Religion (positive stories only), d) Politics (Indian Political Issues), e) Social, f) Law and Order, g) Business and Economy Issues, h) International Conflict, i) Science, Environment and Information Technology, j) Travel, Tourism and Literature, k) Indian Judiciary (only of legislative and executive matters

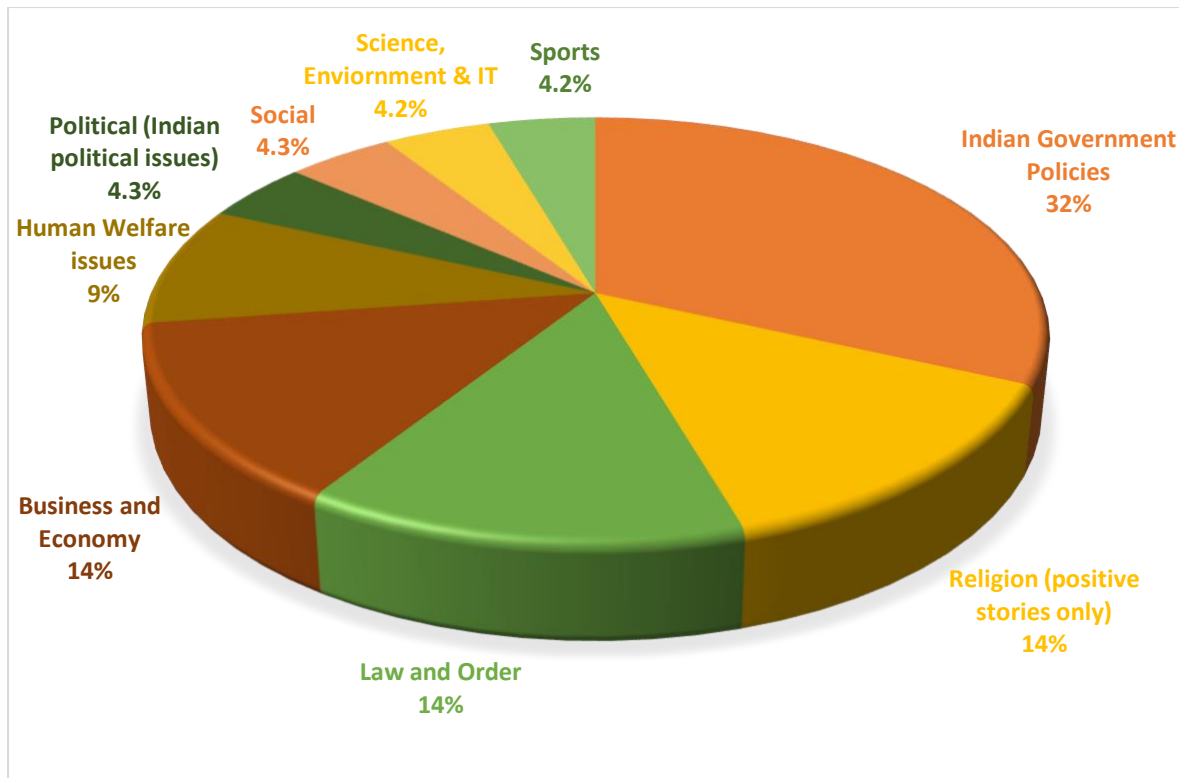
and not crime), and I) Sports. In all, there are 12 categories, which have their sub-categories under them. The sub-categories are detailed when analysing each category individually. Given below is a panoramic view of the major topics categorised in this study.

		Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economy	International conflict	Science, Evt & IT	Travel, ... & Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Radio 1977	Number	1	6	0	9	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
	%	5.0%	30.0%	0.0%	45.0%	0.0%	15.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio 1997	Number	2	7	3	1	1	3	3	0	1	0	0	1
	%	9.0%	32.0%	14.0%	4.3%	4.3%	14.0%	14.0%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%
BBC Radio 2019	Number	8	6	1	3	1	12	2	2	2	0	0	2
	%	20.0%	15.0%	3.0%	8.0%	3.0%	31.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%

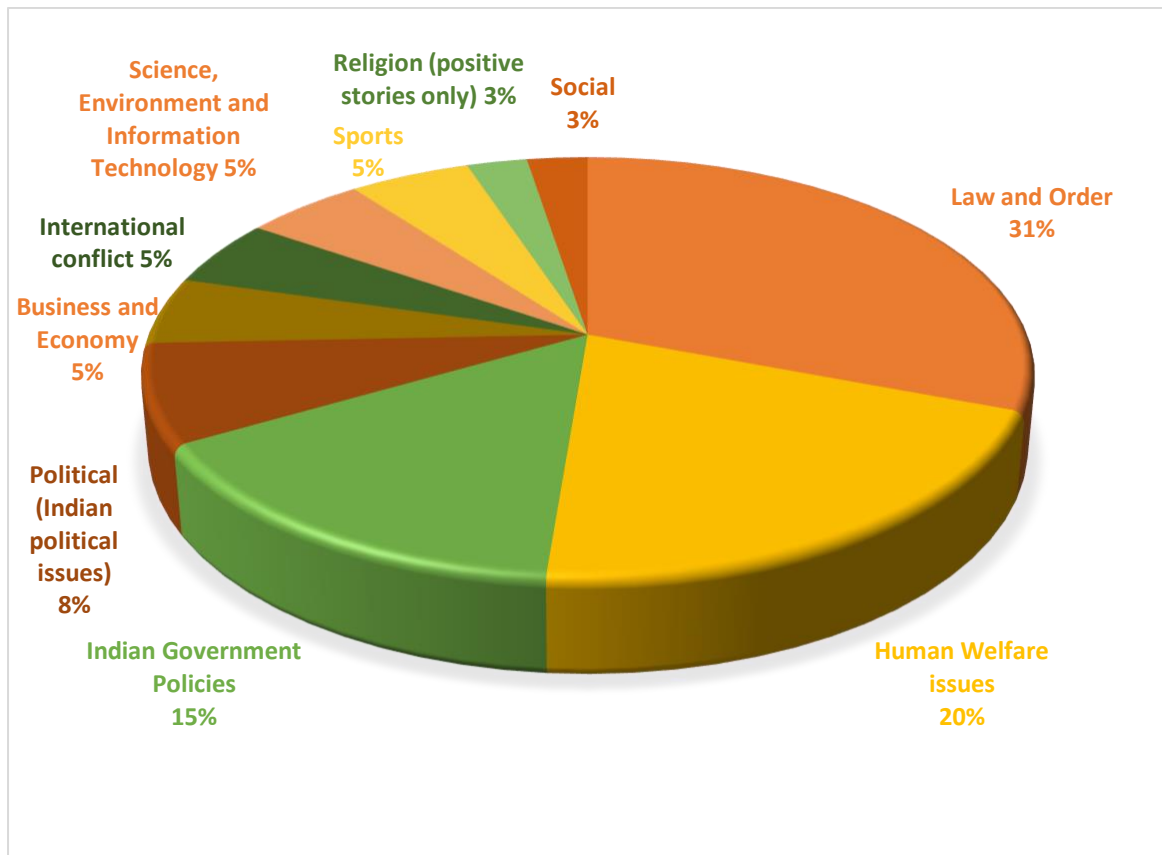
(Table 10: BBC Radio World News Service–Significant Topics)



(Figure 11: BBC Radio World News Service 1977–Significant Topics)



(Figure 12: BBC Radio World News Service 1997–Significant Topics)



(Figure 13: BBC Radio World News Service 2019–Significant Topics)

In all three years together, there were 81 news items featured by BBC Radio World News Service in 1977, 1997 and 2019. Although Indian news items were categorised into 12 major topics, only 10 types of topics were found in the Indian news coverage. The two categories, namely, Travel, Tourism and Literature category and Indian Judiciary (only of legislative and executive matters and not crime) did not find their place in any of the news featured in all three years.

The predominant topic featured by BBC Radio in 1977 was 'Politics' (Indian Political Issues) followed by 'Indian Government Policies'. Considering the political chaos which prevailed during this time, the BBC, with its limited resources, focussed on the main topics of the time. The predominant topic among the news stories featured by BBC Radio World News Service in the year 1997 was 'Indian Government Policies'. The Indian government had undertaken many economic reforms, and the media attention was steered towards it. In the year 2019, BBC Radio's Indian news coverage had 'Law and Order' as its most featured topic in its Indian news coverage. The Indian government's decision to repeal the special status of Kashmir, and the introduction of the controversial Citizen Act, sparked law and order issues considerably in the year 2019.

In the combined analysis of the Indian news items in all three years featured by BBC Radio WNS, it was found that the Indian government policies topped the table followed by law and order, Indian political issues, and human welfare issues respectively.

Major Featured Topics–Detailed

After analysing the major topics in its entirety, the study now analyses some of those variables with a higher number of news items among the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service. Here the detailed analysis was done only of those prominent topics featured across all the three years or at least across two years of BBC Radio's Indian news coverage.

Human Welfare Issues

This variable was further sub-divided into a) Natural disasters, b) Human-caused Disasters, c) Health, d) Poverty, and e) Other.

		Natural Disasters	Human-caused Disasters	Health	Poverty	Other
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	1	0	0	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	0	0	0	1	1
	Percentage	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	6	1	1	0	0
	Percentage	75.0%	12.5.0%	12.5.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(Table 11: BBC Radio World News Service–Human Welfare Issues)

The total number of 81 news items featured in the Indian news reporting of BBC Radio had 11 news items under 'Human Welfare Issues'. Within the category of 'Human Welfare Issues', the sub-category 'Natural Disasters' had the most number of news items under it.

Indian Government Policies

This variable has its sub-categories as a) Education, b) Social Welfare Policies, c) Economic Policy, d) Information Technology Policy, e) Policies related to Religion, f) Foreign Policy, and g) Other.

		Education Policy	Social Welfare Policies	Economic Policy	Information Technology Policy	Policies related to Religion	Foreign Policy	Other
BBC Radio 1977	Number	0	0	2	0	0	3	1
	%	0.0%	0.0%	33.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	17.0%
BBC Radio 1997	Number	0	1	1	1	0	3	1
	%	0.0%	14.2%	14.2%	14.3%	0.0%	43.0%	14.3%
BBC Radio 2019	Number	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
	%	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.6%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%

(Table 12: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian Government Policies)

Of all the Indian news coverage categories within this study, the 'Indian Government Policies' topped the chart with 19 out of the 81 news items. The common pattern observed here among the three years' coverage is that of the Economic Policy which had its coverage in all the three years of BBC Radio World News Service' Indian news coverage in 1977, 1997 and 2019.

Politics (Indian Political issues)

This variable has four sub-divisions: a) Party politics, b) Election, c) Government Formation, and d) Other.

		Party Politics	Election	Govt Formation	Other
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	5	2	2	0
	Percentage	56.0%	22.0%	22.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	1	0	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	0	2	1	0
	Percentage	0.0%	67.0%	33.0%	0.0%

(Table 13: BBC Radio World News Service–Indian politics)

BBC Radio had 81 Indian news items covered in the years 1977, 1997 and 2019. Among these 81 news items, the 'Indian Political Issues' news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service had 13 news items under this category. The subdivision of these 13 news items across three years found that the year 1977 had 9 of them, 1997 had 1 political news coverage, while 2019 had 3 of them. In the year 1977, the sub-category 'Party Politics' dominated the Indian political coverage. There is no common pattern found in the political Indian news reports of BBC Radio across the years.

Law and Order

The Law and Order variable was sub-categorised into a) Social unrest, b) Violent Demonstrations, c) Sexual Harassment, d) Domestic Violence, e) Communal Violence, f) Crime Against Minority, g) Terrorism, h) Fake News, and i) Crime Other.

		Social Unrest	Violent Demonstration	Sexual Harassment	Domestic Violence	Communal Violence	Crime Against Minority	Terrorism	Fake News	Crime Other
BBC Radio WNS 1977	Number	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
BBC Radio WNS 1997	Number	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	%	33.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	7	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1
	%	59.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	17.0%	0.0%	8.0%

(Table 14: : BBC Radio World News Service–Law and Order)

The 'Law and Order' category analysis revealed 18 news items under it out of the 81 total Indian news items covered in the years 1977, 1997 and 2019. Out of these 18 news items the years 1977 and 1997 had 3 each and 2019 had 12 of them. Within this, the sub-category of 'Social Unrest' topped the chart with 8 news items under it. There is no common pattern in the Indian news reports of BBC Radio across the years within this category.

The first part of this chapter, i.e., BBC Radio Indian news analysis, is now completed. The next section compares BBC Radio with BBC Online news reports of the Indian news coverage.

Section 2

A Comparative Analysis of BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019

The first section of this chapter analysed BBC Radio World News Services (WNS) of 1977, 1997, and 2019. This section investigates the similarities and differences in the Indian news items of BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019. However, in this comparison of BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019, it is important to note that although the data gathered for both were from the same duration (May 2019 to October 2019), the number of days differed for each of them. The data was collected for six months using the stratified sampling method of constructed days. For BBC Radio WNS 2019 the total number of the days of data collection was 66, whereas it was only 36 days for BBC Online. It is also to be noted that two variables were not considered in this comparison between two platforms of BBC as they differed significantly in their nature and mode. They were, namely, 'the placement of news on the website' and 'length of news item' within BBC Online 2019 and the categories of 'placement of radio news' and 'duration of radio news' from within BBC Radio WNS 2019. The rest of the variables are compared between the BBC platforms by their percentages under each variable.

BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC Online 2019

Medium	Sources											Type of News											
	Number of Days	Number of News Items	Name of the correspondent/Agency	Indian govt agencies	International Politicians or diplomats	Multi-national institutes	Non-Governmental organisations	Views of experts and those involved	Media Sources	First Source	Social Media	Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economy	International conflict	Science, Evnt & IT	Travel, Tourism & Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Radio WNS 2019 (N=66)	32	39	12	27	3	1	1	37	39	32	0	8	6	1	3	1	12	2	2	2	0	0	2
BBC Online 2019 (N=36)	31	79	30	116	21	6	0	274	109	75	56	13	8	3	9	5	17	3	2	8	1	0	10

(Table 15: BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC Online 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: The Number of Days of Indian News Coverage

The emphasis here is on the actual number of days of news coverage out of the total duration of the study. It is possible that BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019 may not have Indian news coverage on all the days.

	The No. of days of news coverage	No news coverage
BBC Online 2019 (N= 36)	31 (86.0%)	5 (14%)
BBC Radio WNS 2019 (N= 66)	32 (48.00%)	34 (52%)

(Table 16: BBC Online news and Radio WNS 2019–The total number of days of Indian news coverage)

The comparison between BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019 revealed that BBC Online 2019 had more days of Indian news coverage compared to BBC Radio WNS 2019.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Number of News Items

Going forward, the comparison of percentage between BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019 is based on the number of news items broadcast.

	Number of days	Number of news items
BBC Online 2019 (N=36)	31	79
BBC Radio WNS 2019 (N=66)	32	39

(Table 17: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Number of Indian news items)

The comparison between BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS revealed that BBC Online had a greater number of days of coverage and Indian news items covered than BBC Radio WNS 2019.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Type of Indian News Coverage

Results: The comparison between BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019 demonstrated that BBC Online out of its total Indian news items had 82.0 per cent as 'News Reports' and 18.0 per cent under the category of 'Analysis'. On the other hand, BBC Radio WNS 2019 had all of its Indian news items under the category of 'News Report'.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Name of the Correspondent

		Correspondent	News Agency	Agency & Correspondent	Unspecified
BBC Online 2019	Number	30	0	0	49
	Percentage	38.0%	0.0%	0.0%	62.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	12	0	0	27
	Percentage	31.0%	0.0%	0.0%	69.0%

(Table 18: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Name of the Correspondent)

The comparison of BBC Online with BBC Radio WNS 2019 showed that both media platforms shared a similar pattern in mentioning the name of the correspondent. For both, the majority of the news items were under the category of ‘Unspecified’ with a difference of 7.0 per cent between them and both did not have any mentioning of the ‘News Agency’.

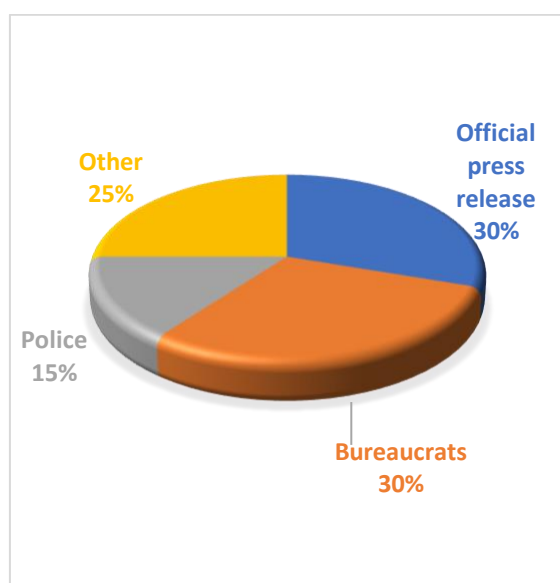
Sources

This research has examined the sources that were used in the international news coverage of India by BBC Radio World News Services 2019 and BBC Online 2019. This has been done to see if there were major differences between the platforms in the use of news sources.

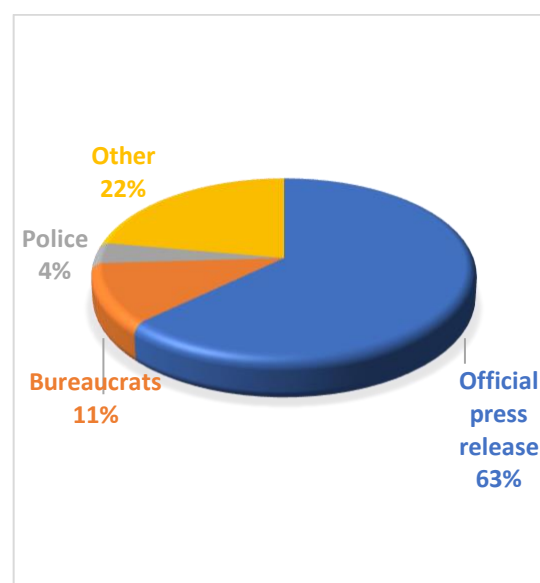
BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Indian Govt Official Agencies

		Official Press Release	Bureaucrats	Police	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	35	35	17	29
	Percentage	30.0%	30.0%	15.0%	25.0%
BBC radio WNS 2019	Number	17	3	1	6
	Percentage	63.0%	11.0%	4.0%	22.0%

(Table 19: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)



(Figure 14: BBC Online 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)



(Figure 15: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)

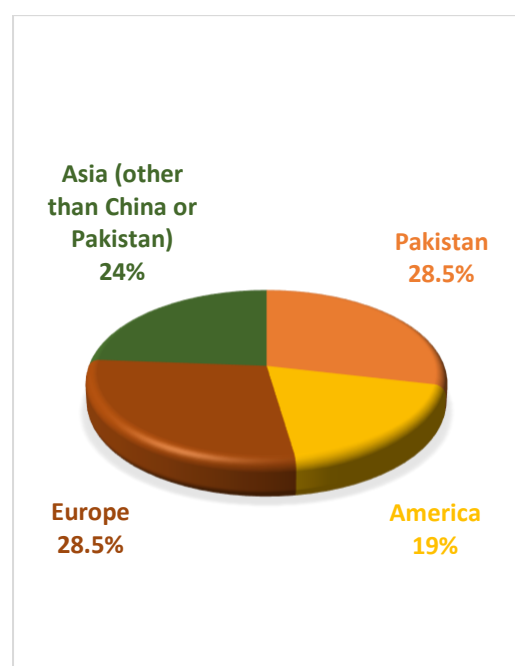
In using the Indian government officials as sources in their news items, both BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019, have a similar pattern except for their differences in the percentages in each category. BBC Online has fewer sources from 'Official

Press Release' compared to BBC Radio. But in sourcing 'Bureaucrats' and 'Police', BBC Online has greater percentages than BBC Radio WNS 2019.

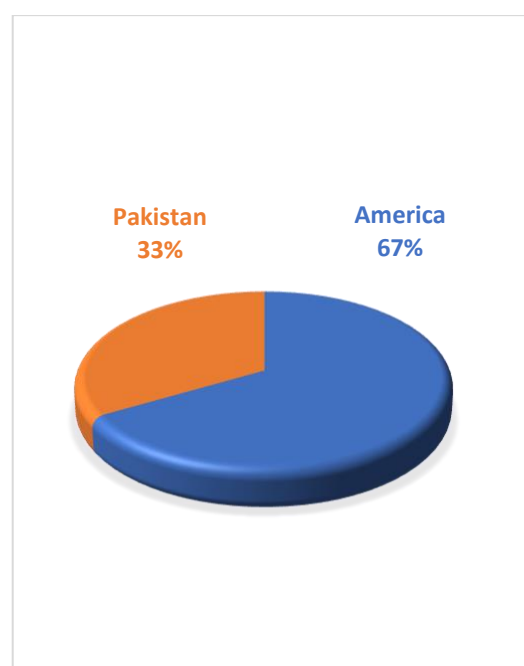
BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: International Politicians and Diplomats

		Pakistan	China	America	Europe	Africa	Asia ⁷	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	6	0	4	6	0	5	0
	Percentage	28.5%	0.0%	19.0%	28.5%	0.0%	24.0%	0.0%
BBC Radio 2019	Number	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
	Percentage	33.0%	0.0%	67.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(Table 20: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)



(Figure 16: BBC Online 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)



(Figure 17: BBC Radio WNS 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)

⁷ Asia (other than Pakistan or China).

When compared between BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019, it was found that BBC Online had sourced 'International Politicians and Diplomats' from Pakistan, Asia (other than Pakistan and China), Europe, and America. BBC Radio WNS 2019 in its Indian news items sourced international politicians and diplomats only from America and Pakistan and no other. Hence, BBC Online 2019 uses more international sources in its news coverage than the BBC Radio WNS 2019.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Multi-national Institutions

Results: The comparison between BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 revealed that they are homogenous in using the officials from 'Multi-National Institutions' as sources for the Indian online news coverage with very few sources being used in the news items.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: NGOs

Results: BBC Online 2019 did not source any of the views of the representatives of 'Non-Governmental Organisations' in their Indian news coverage. BBC Radio WNS 2019 had sourced only 3.0 per cent in its Indian news items from the NGOs' representatives.

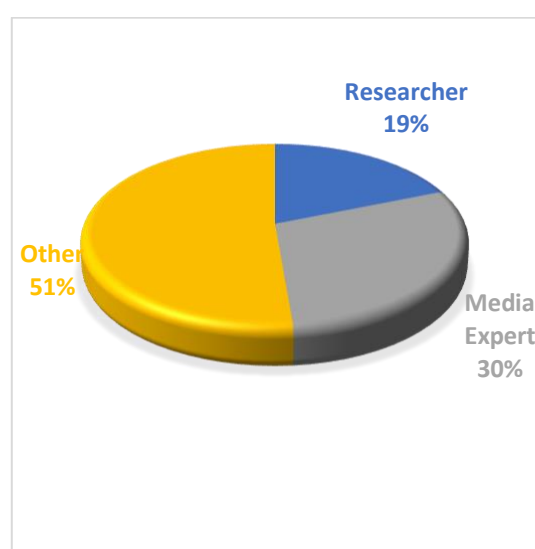
BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Views of experts and those involved

		Researcher	Lawyer	Media Expert	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	73	7	15	179
	Percentage	27.0%	3.0%	5.0%	65.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	7	0	11	19
	Percentage	19.0%	0.0%	30.0%	51.0%

(Table 21: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 18: BBC Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 19: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)

In the analysis of BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019, it was found that BBC Online had used fewer 'Media Experts' as sources than BBC Radio WNS 2019. The difference between the two platforms in the use of 'Researcher' was only 8 per cent. BBC Online 2019 did have some sources from 'Lawyer' while BBC Radio WNS 2019 did not have any in them. Overall, BBC Online 2019 has used a lot more of 'Views of Experts and those involved' compared to BBC Radio WNS 2019.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Media Sources

		Own Source	Indian News Outlet	International News Outlet
BBC Online 2019	Number	78	17	14
	Percentage	71.0%	16.0%	13.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	38	1	0
	Percentage	97.0%	3.0%	0.0%

(Table 22: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Media Sources)

The Analysis between BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 suggested that both have used their own 'Media sources' to report Indian news items. There are some differences in the use of 'Indian News Outlets' as media sources in both platforms of BBC. However, BBC Online 2019 has sourced from 'International News Outlets' while BBC Radio WNS 2019 did not use any sources from any of the international news outlets.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: First Source

		National	International	Unspecified
BBC Online 2019	Number	59	16	4
	Percentage	75.0%	20.0%	5.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	29	3	7
	Percentage	74.0%	8.0%	18.0%

(Table 23: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–First Source)

The evaluation of the use of 'First Source' used in the Indian news reports of BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 disclosed a consistent use of Indian 'National' as the first source in their news reports. BBC Online has a greater number of sources of international persons compared to BBC Radio WNS 2019.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Social Media

		Twitter	Facebook	Instagram	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	53	3	0	0
	Percentage	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BBC radio WNS 2019	Number	0	0	0	0
	Percentage	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(Table 24: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Social Media)

BBC Radio WNS 2019 did not use any sources of 'Social Media' in its Indian news items. But BBC Online 2019 took sources from 'Social Media' as part of their news items, and most of them were from Twitter.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Significant Topics in the Indian News Coverage

Here the research has examined the significant topics featured by BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 in their Indian news coverage.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Geographical Focus of News

		Indian	International
BBC Online 2019	Number	55	24
	Percentage	70.0%	30.0%
BBC Radio WNS 2019	Number	32	7
	Percentage	82.0%	18.0%

(Table 25: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Geographical Focus of Indian News Items)

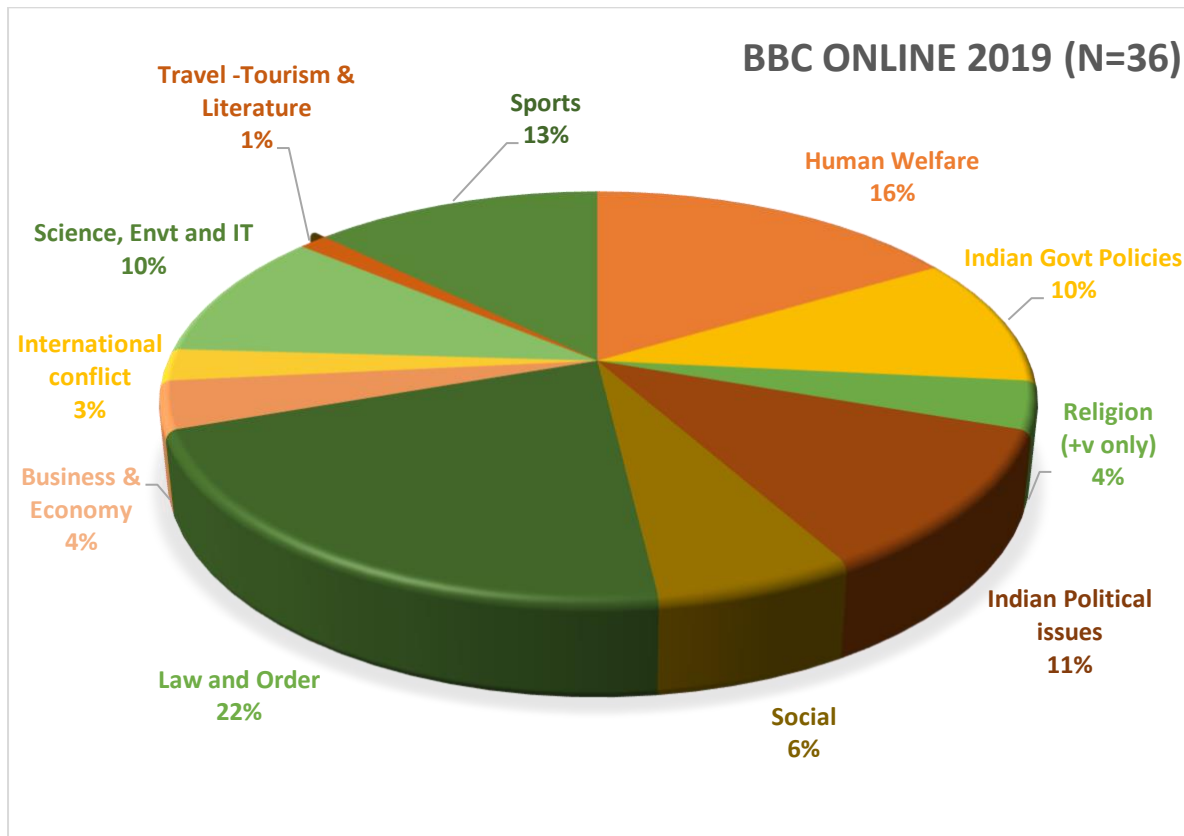
The comparison between BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 disclosed a similar pattern between them with the majority of the news focussed on Indian domestic issues.

BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019: Major Indian News Topics

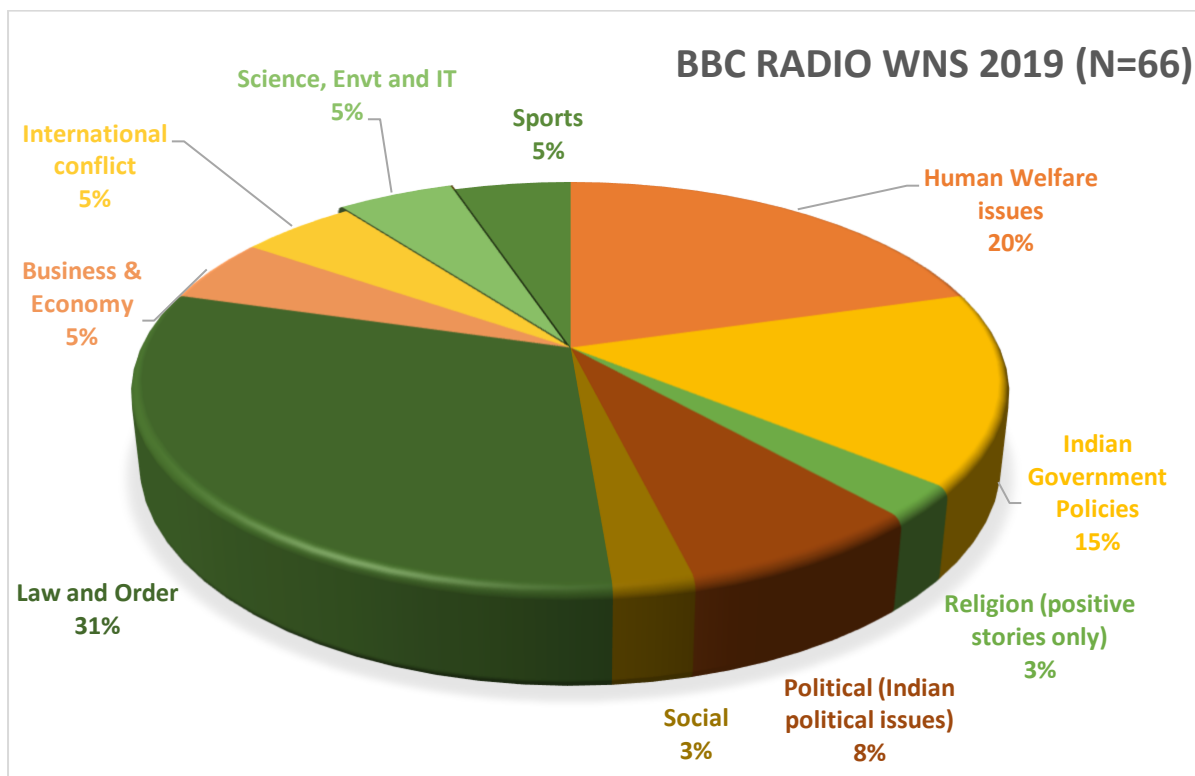
The major topics of the Indian news items featured by BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019 in its Indian news coverage are analysed now.

		Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economy	International conflict	Science, Evt & IT	Travel, Tourism & Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Online 2019	Number	13	8	3	9	5	17	3	2	8	1	0	10
	%	16.0%	10.0%	4.0%	11.0%	6.0%	22.0%	4.0%	3.0%	10.0%	1.0%	0.0%	13.0%
BBC radio WNS 2019	Number	8	6	1	3	1	12	2	2	2	0	0	2
	%	20.0%	15.0%	3.0%	8.0%	3.0%	31.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%

Table 26: BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS 2019–Significant Topics)



(Figure 20: BBC Online 2019–Significant Topics)



(Figure 21: BBC Radio WNS 2019–Significant Topics)

Investigating the important topics that were featured both by BBC Online 2019 and BBC Radio WNS 2019, it was revealed that they both have a similar pattern of reporting Indian news items. Although the total number of stories differs between the platforms, on account of the differences in the number of days and each platform's different approach to reporting the news items, the striking similarity in the reporting of Indian news items is worth making a reference. The similarities were looked at in terms of the percentages only for the reasons mentioned above.

Going by the similarities between BBC Online and BBC Radio WNS, it was found that both platforms had Indian news topics in common and in the same order in terms of its percentage. Among the significant topics, the greatest number of Indian news items was related to 'Law and Order'. This was followed by 'Human Welfare Issues', 'Indian Government Policies', 'Indian Politics', 'Science, Environment and Information Technology', 'Business and Economy', 'Social Issues', 'International Conflict' and 'Religion'.

The significant differences between these two platforms were in the reporting of 'Sports' and 'Travel, Tourism and Literature'. For the news items related to Travel, Tourism and Literature, BBC Online had 3.0 per cent of its total coverage while BBC Radio WNS 2019 did not have any under it. Both platforms did not have any news items on Indian Judiciary. BBC Online 2019 had a greater number of news items compared to BBC Radio WNS 2019.

The second part of this chapter, i.e., the comparison between BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC Online 2019 is now completed. The next section compares and analyses BBC Online with CNN Online and AJE Online Indian news items in the year 2019.

Section 3

Data Analysis of Online Indian News in BBC, CNN and AJE

This section attempts to see the significant similarities and differences in online news reporting of India in the BBC, CNN and AJE. This also serves as a benchmark to analyse the global standing of BBC Online against other major media houses. This is also an opportunity to look at the Indian news online coverage from three different viewpoints, i.e., the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE).

Descriptive Frequency Statistics

The data was collected for six months using the stratified sampling method of constructed days. The data for BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online was gathered six days per month for six months from May 2019 to October 2019. Therefore, a total of 108 days of online Indian news was included in the sample. Out of 258 radio news items, BBC Online news service had 79 news items, CNN Online had 59 of them, and AJE Online had 120. Descriptive analysis of frequency is used to examine the coverage of Indian news by BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019.

BBC Online, CNN. Online and AJE Online 2019

Medium	Number of Days	Number of News Items	Sources										Type of News										
			Name of the correspondent/Agency	Indian govt agencies	International Politicians or diplomats	Multi-national institutes	Non-Governmental organisations	Views of experts and those involved	Media Sources	First Source	Social Media	Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economic	International conflict	Science, Evt & IT	Travel, Tourism & Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Online 2019 (N=36)	31	79	30	116	21	6	0	274	109	75	56	13	8	3	9	5	17	3	2	8	1	0	10
CNN Online 2019 (N=36)	27	59	55	109	24	9	9	243	85	59	42	17	5	0	9	3	6	10	2	3	3	0	1
AJE Online 2019 (N=36)	34	120	79	199	88	24	5	416	162	111	40	20	24	1	16	3	26	9	14	5	0	0	2

(Table 27: BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019–A panoramic view of analysis)

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: The Number of Days of Indian News Coverage

The emphasis here is on the actual number of days of news coverage out of 108 days on BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online.

	The number of days of online news coverage	Percentage
BBC Online (N = 36)	31	86.0
CNN Online (N = 36)	27	75.0
AJE Online (N = 36)	34	94.0

(Table 28: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The total number of days of Indian news coverage)

The comparison of all three online news portals revealed that AJE Online has the greatest number of days of Indian news coverage followed by BBC Online and CNN Online, respectively.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Number of News Items

After having seen the number of days of online Indian news coverage by the BBC, CNN and AJE of the year 2019, the study now analyses the number of Indian news items in these online news portals. The total number of Indian news items could be higher than the number of days of news coverage. This could be on account of the possibility that there may have been more than one Indian news item featured on some days of news coverage. Going forward, the analysis will be based on the number of news items broadcast by BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online.

	No. of news items
BBC Online 2019	79
CNN Online 2019	59
AJE Online 2019	120

(Table 29: The BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The total number of Indian news)

When BBC Online was compared against AJE Online, BBC Online had fewer number of news items. However, the comparison between BBC Online and CNN Online found that BBC Online had a greater number of days of coverage and Indian news items covered than CNN Online. The difference between BBC Online and CNN Online in the number of news items is 36.3 per cent. It was found that AJE Online had a higher number of Indian news covered both in the number of days and the number of Indian news items. If the total number of stories covered is divided against the total number of days, on an average, the BBC had 2.19 news stories a day, CNN had 1.63 news stories a day, while AJE had 3.33. news stories a day.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Type of Indian News Coverage

		News Report	Analysis	Interviews	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	65	14	0	0
	Percentage	82.0%	18.0%	0.0%	0.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	52	4	0	3
	Percentage	88.0%	7.0%	0.0%	5.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	106	13	0	1
	Percentage	88.0%	11.0%	0.0%	1.0%

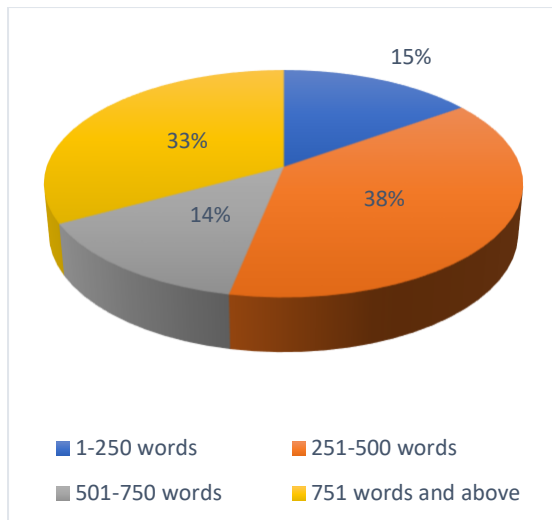
(Table 30: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The Type of Indian News Coverage)

The comparison between BBC Online and CNN Online reveals that both media outlets were akin to each other in terms of news reports in their pattern of Indian news items with an almost equal share in this category. The association of BBC Online with AJE Online indicated a similar pattern in the percentages shared among different categories. What is common among all three media outlets is that none of them had Indian news items under the category of 'Interview'.

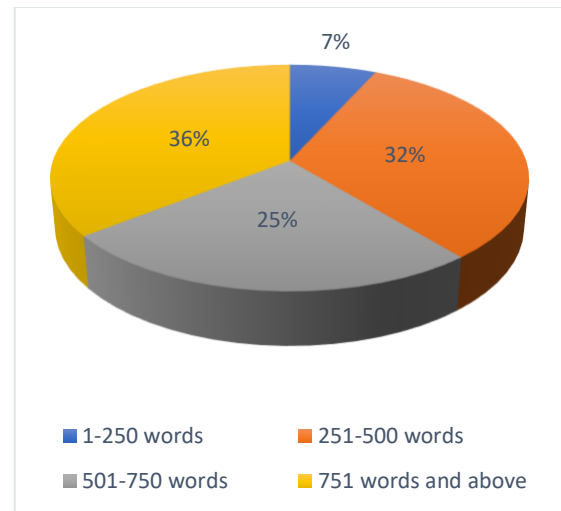
BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Length of Online News Items

		1-250 words	251-500 words	501-750 words	751 words & above
BBC Online 2019	Number	12	30	11	26
	Percentage	15.0%	38.0%	14.0%	33.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	4	19	15	21
	Percentage	7.0%	32.0%	25.0%	36.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	22	27	29	42
	Percentage	18.0%	23.0%	24.0%	35.0%

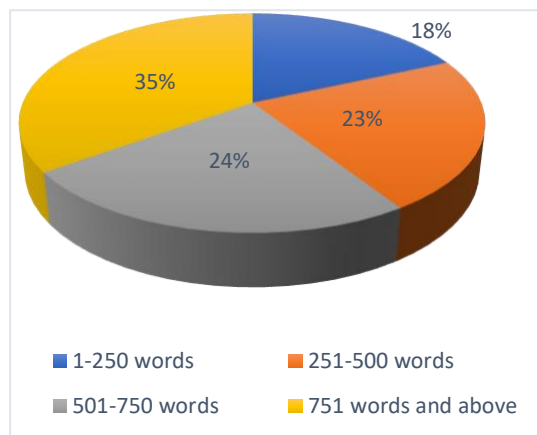
(Table 31: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–The Length of online news items)



(Figure 22: BBC Online 2019–Length of news items)



(Figure 23: CNN Online 2019–Length of news items)



(Figure 24: AJE Online 2019–Length of news items)

The data reveals that all three online platforms have a similar approach in the duration of the Indian news items.

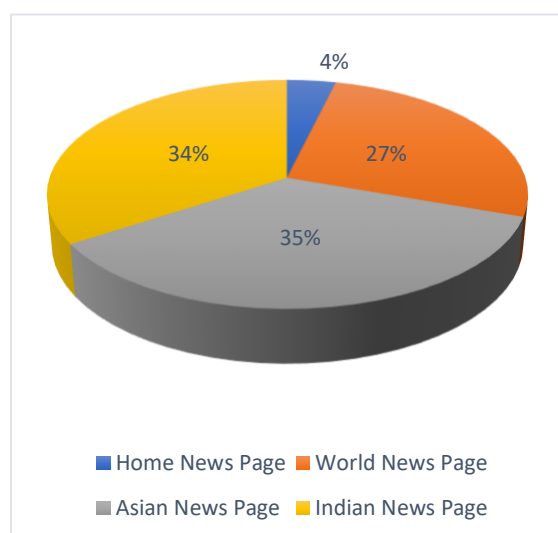
BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Placement of the Indian News Items

This variable was intended to find out the importance given to a news item by its placement within the websites of the BBC, CNN and AJE in the year 2019. If the news is of much value and importance, it was found in the 'home page' itself. The placement of the news is one of the ways to find out the prominence given to a news item in a

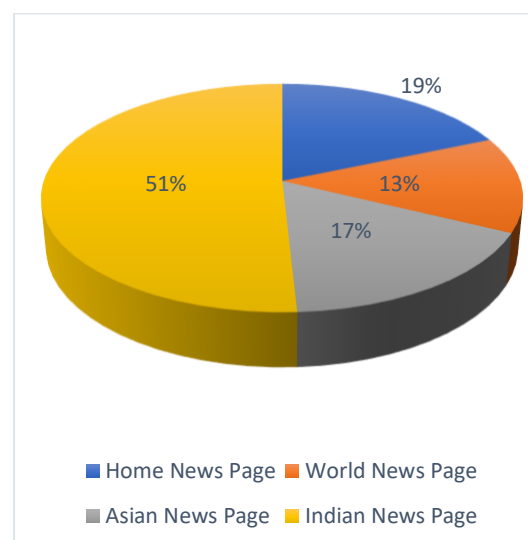
news outlet. If the news is important, it usually found its (place) way into the 'Home Page' of a news website. The 'World Page' of a news website mostly has the news placed in this section of global importance. The third is the regional news section which has more regional news and regional implications. In this study, it is the 'Asia Page'. Finally, the national news mostly concerns matters related nationally and, here, it is the 'India Page'. However, it is to be noted that the structure of a news website may be designed differently.

		Home page	World page	Asia Page	India page
BBC Online 2019	Number	3	21	28	27
	Percentage	4.0%	27.0%	35.0%	34%
CNN Online 2019	Number	11	8	10	30
	Percentage	19.0%	13.0%	17.0%	51.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	36	2	56	26
	Percentage	30.0%	2.0%	46.0%	22%

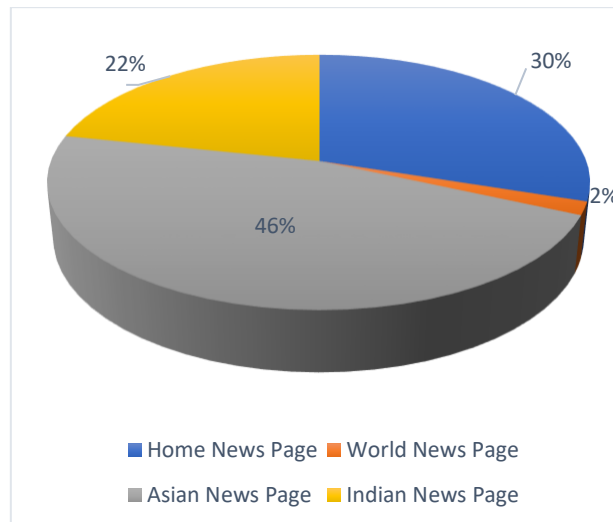
(Table 32: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Placement of Indian news items)



(Figure 25: BBC Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item)



(Figure 26: CNN Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item)



(Figure 27: AJE Online 2019–Placement of Indian news item)

In the analysis of BBC Online and AJE Online, it was discovered that AJE gave more prominence to Indian news as the difference of news placed in the 'Home Page' is 26.0 per cent between these two websites. In terms of the regional news coverage, both websites had narrowed their differences to 11.0 per cent. However, when the news published on 'India Page', both websites were almost on an equal footing having only a difference of 1.0 per cent between them.

The comparison between BBC Online and CNN Online revealed that CNN Online, although had fewer Indian stories covered in its news portal, gave more prominence to the Indian news compared to BBC Online. The difference in terms of the news placed on 'Home Page' between these two media platforms is accounted for 15 per cent. There is a difference of 14.0 per cent in terms of news placed on 'World Page' between these two news websites. However, BBC Online had twice the number of stories placed under 'Asia Page' than CNN Online. Moreover, both websites have the majority of Indian stories placed under 'India Page'.

BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Name of the Correspondent

The purpose of the investigation into this variable was to find out if the Indian news reports had published in them the 'Name of the Correspondent' or of the 'News Agency' from which the news was sourced.

		Correspondent	News Agency	Agency & Correspondent	Unspecified
BBC Online 2019	Number	30	0	0	49
	Percentage	38.0%	0.0%	0.0%	62.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	55	0	0	4
	Percentage	93.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	47	31	1	41
	Percentage	39.0%	26.0%	1.0%	34.0%

(Table 33: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Name of the Correspondent)

The assessment of BBC Online and CNN Online in mentioning the 'Name of the Correspondent' shows that CNN Online had mentioned the 'Name of the Correspondent' 55.0 per cent more than BBC Online. The common factor between these two media houses in this variable is that both did not have any news mentioning the 'News Agency's' name in their reports.

The comparison of BBC Online with AJE Online disclosed that both media houses shared a similar pattern in mentioning the 'Name of the Correspondent' with a difference of only 1.0 per cent between them. However, when it came to the sub-category 'News Agency', BBC Online did not have any under it, but AJE Online had 26.0 per cent of the Indian news items in the sub-category of the 'News Agency'. Under

the sub-category 'Unspecified', BBC Online had 28.0 per cent more of the news item under it compared to AJE Online.

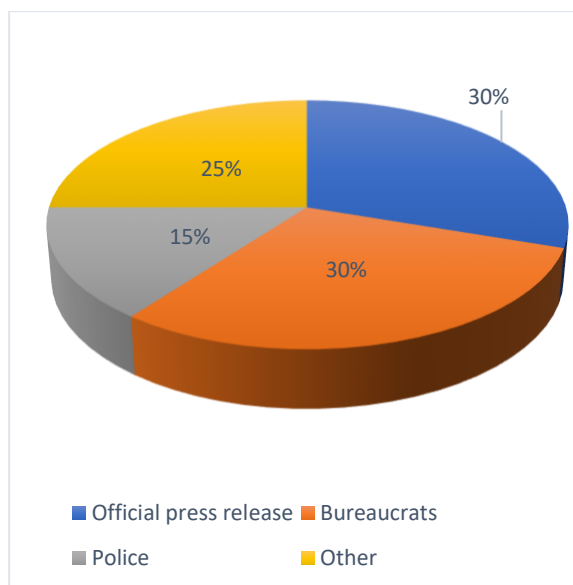
Sources

This section considers the types of sources employed in the news coverage of BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in their 2019 news coverage of India.

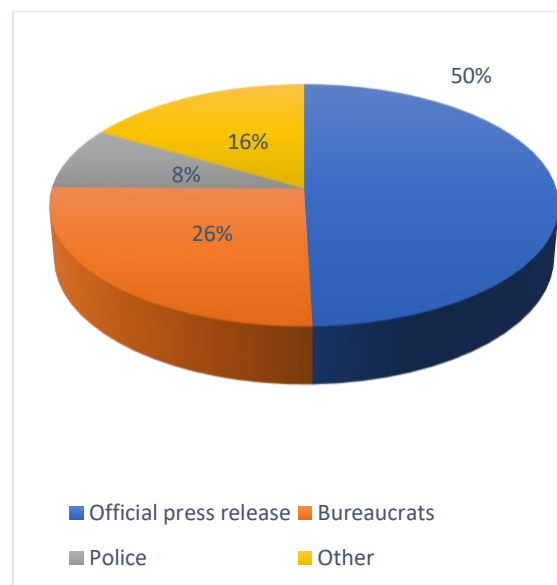
BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Indian Government Official Agencies

		Official Press Release	Bureaucrats	Police	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	35	35	17	29
	Percentage	30.0%	30.0%	15.0%	25.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	54	28	9	18
	Percentage	50.0%	26.0%	8.0%	16.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	51	51	41	56
	Percentage	26.0%	26.0%	20.0%	28.0%

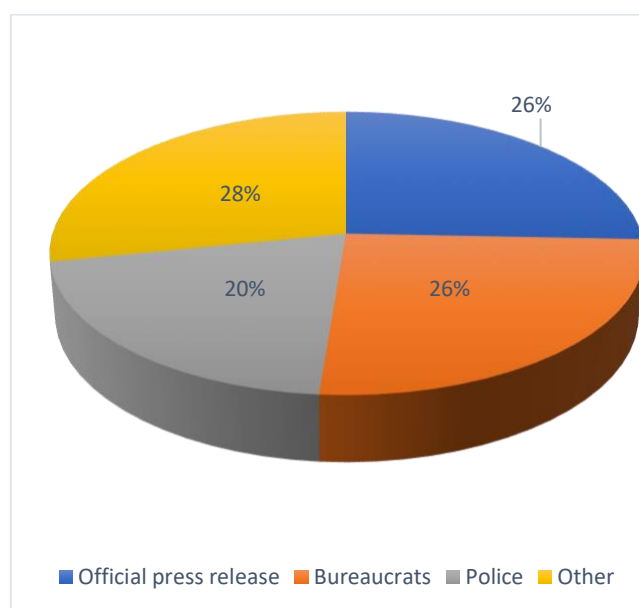
(Table 34: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Indian Government Official Agencies)



(Figure 28: BBC Online–Indian Government Official Agencies)



(Figure 29: CNN Online–Indian Government Official Agencies)



(Figure 30: AJE Online–Indian Government Official Agencies)

The study about the use of Indian government official agencies as news sources in news reports found that BBC Online in its 79 news items had used 116 Indian government sources. CNN Online in its 59 news items had sourced 109 Indian government sources. Going over the 120 Indian news items published by AJE Online, it was found that AJE Online had 199 government sources used in them.

The comparison of BBC Online with CNN Online and AJE Online in the use of Indian government sources for their online Indian news coverage appears to be homogeneous. All three media houses had the greatest number of sources in 'Official Press Release' and 'Bureaucrats'.

BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: International Politicians and Diplomats

Here the study investigated the use of 'International Politicians and Diplomats' as sources in the 2019 Indian news reports of BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online.

		Pakistan	China	America	Europe	Africa	Asia ⁸	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	6	0	4	6	0	5	0
	%	28.5%	0.0%	19.0%	28.5%	0.0%	24.0%	0.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	11	2	7	1	0	3	0
	%	46.0%	8.0%	29.0%	4.0%	0.0%	13.0%	0.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	48	5	21	4	0	6	4
	%	55.0%	6.0%	24.0%	4.0%	0.0%	7.0%	4.0%

(Table 35: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–International Politicians and Diplomats)

The evaluation of BBC Online and CCN online showed that they have a similar pattern in using 'International Politicians or Diplomats' as sources for their news coverage except for European politicians or diplomats. Between BBC Online and CNN

⁸ Asia (other than Pakistan and China).

Online in sourcing European politicians or diplomats, BBC Online had sourced 24.4 per cent more than CNN Online.

When BBC Online and AJE Online are linked together, it is evident that they share a common pattern in sourcing Pakistan and American politicians or diplomats. In fact, AJE Online in its Indian news coverage sources had twice as much of Pakistan politicians or diplomats as sources compared to BBC Online Indian news coverage. Notably, neither BBC Online nor CNN Online or AJE Online had any sources from the African politicians or diplomats.

BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Multi-National Institutions

Moving further with the investigations, the study now considers, if BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online have used either the direct or indirect quotes/comments of representatives of multi-national institutions such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Health Organisation, etc., as sources for their Indian news reports.

Results: The comparison between BBC Online and CNN Online disclosed that CNN Online had sourced 7.0 per cent more compared to BBC Online. Moreover, the comparison between BBC Online and AJE Online unveiled that AJE Online had sourced officials from 'Multi-National Institutions' twice as much compared to BBC Online in its Indian online news coverage. The BBC has only 8 per cent of sources from 'Multi-National Institutes', while AJE had 20 per cent of it.

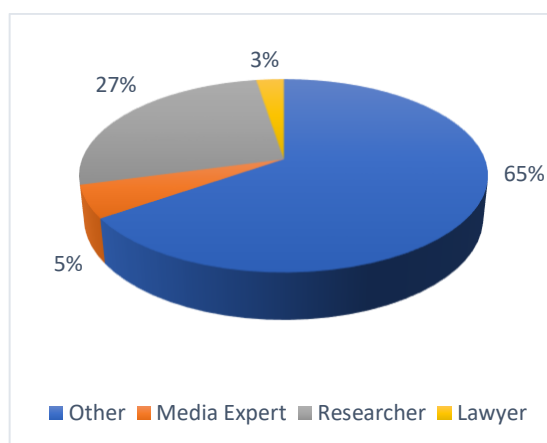
BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Non-Governmental Organisations

Results: BBC Online 2019 did not source any of the views of the representatives of 'Non-Governmental Organisations' in its Indian news coverage. CNN Online 2019, on the other hand, had sourced 7 of national non-governmental organisations and 2 international non-governmental organisations as sources for its Indian news coverage. AJE Online 2019 used only 5 times the national non-governmental organisations as sources for its news coverage. It did not have any source from the international non-government organisations.

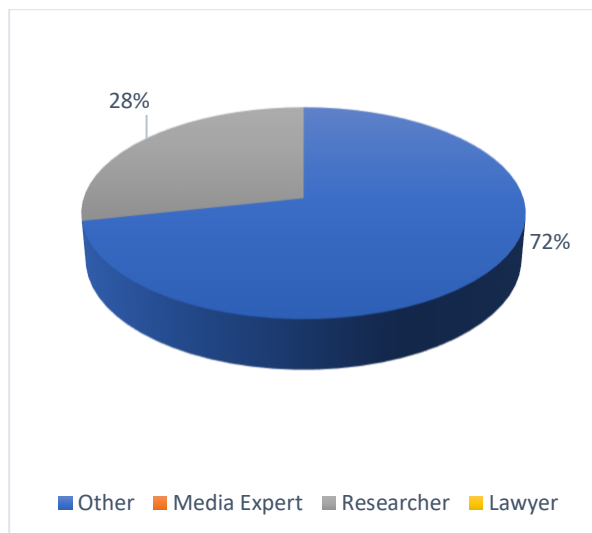
BBC, CNN & AJE Online 2019: Views of Experts and those involved

		Researcher	Lawyer	Media Expert	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	73	7	15	179
	Percentage	27.0%	3.0%	5.0%	65.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	69	0	0	174
	Percentage	28.0%	0.0%	0.0%	72.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	106	16	32	262
	Percentage	25.0%	4.0%	8.0%	63.0%

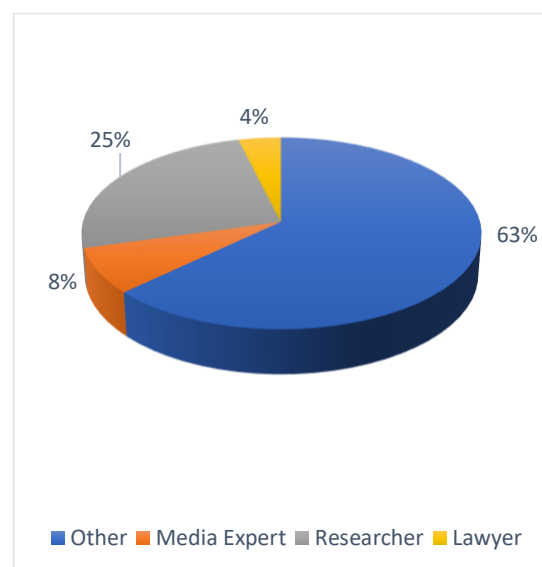
(Table 36: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 31: BBC Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 32: CNN Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)



(Figure 33: AJE Online 2019–Views of Experts and those involved)

The study of ‘Views of Experts and those involved’ found that BBC Online 2019 had a total of 274 views in its 79 news items. CNN Online 2019 in its 59 Indian news items covered had 243 ‘Views of Experts and those involved’ or related to the news item. AJE Online 2019 had 120 Indian news items featured on its website, which had 416 sources under the variable ‘Views of Experts and those involved’.

The comparison between BBC Online 2019 and CNN Online 2019 revealed that both media houses have a very close pattern in sourcing the first sub-category of the

'Researcher'. The major difference between BBC Online and CNN Online was in their sourcing of 'Media Experts'. BBC Online had 5.0 per cent of 'Media Experts' views, while CNN Online did not have any.

The analysis between BBC Online and AJE Online showed a very similar pattern when it came to using the source of the 'Researcher'. When the use of 'Researcher' views is examined, the difference between these two media firms was only 2.0 per cent. The difference in using the views of the 'Lawyer' in Indian news coverage by each of the media houses was only 1.0 per cent. The difference in the Media Experts' view between the two media platforms was 3.0 per cent.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Media Sources

		Own Source	Indian News Outlet	International News Outlet
BBC Online 2019	Number	78	17	14
	Percentage	71.0%	16.0%	13.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	59	21	5
	Percentage	69.0%	25.0%	6.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	91	23	48
	Percentage	56.0%	14.0%	30.0%

(Table 37: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Media Sources)

The investigation of BBC Online 2019 for the use of 'Media Sources' found that in its 79 Indian news items it had used 109 'Media Sources'. In the Indian news coverage CNN Online 2019 had 59 news items which sourced 85 'Media Sources' in its news reports. AJE Online 2019 had used 162 media sources in its 120 Indian news items.

The Analysis between BBC Online and CNN Online indicated that there were similarities between them rather than differences. For instance, in using one's own media sources for Indian news items, the difference between these two media outlets was only 2.0 per cent. In their online Indian news reporting, both media houses, after their 'Own Media Sources', relied more on 'Indian News Outlets'. The only difference between these media houses under this variable was that BBC Online had trusted more on the 'International News Outlets' compared to CNN Online with a difference of 7.0 per cent between them.

The comparison between BBC Online and AJE Online had shown that BBC Online had depended more on its own sources. The difference between BBC Online and AJE Online was 15.0 per cent. However, in the use of 'Indian News Outlets', the difference between both media houses was only 2.0 per cent. Regarding the use of 'International News Outlets' in their news items, AJE Online depended more on the 'International News Outlets' than BBC Online. AJE Online had used 17.0 per cent more of 'International News Outlets' in their Indian news items than BBC Online.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: First Source

Results: Under this variable, the comparison of BBC Online with CNN Online and AJE Online shows a homogeneous pattern. All three media houses for the majority of their news items had Indian 'National' as their first source.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Social Media

The media houses could not stay away from the evolving media techniques and trends. Social media had already made its entry into the newsrooms even before 2019.

Therefore, this study included social media as a source in the Indian news reports of BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in the year 2019. Here 'Social Media' as a source of the news item was considered only if the 'actual post' was quoted within the Indian news item. The sub-categories in this variable are a) Twitter, b) Facebook, c) Instagram, and d) Other.

		Twitter	Facebook	Instagram	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	53	3	0	0
	Percentage	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	39	3	0	0
	Percentage	93.0%	7.0%	0.0%	0.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	40	0	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

(Table 38: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Social Media)

The investigation of three media houses showed similarity in their use of 'Social Media' as sources in their Indian news coverage. The vast majority of social media posts were taken from 'Twitter', followed by 'Facebook'. No other social media was used in any Indian news items reported by BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in the year 2019.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Significant Topics in the Indian News Coverage

The study now seeks to find out the significant topics featured by BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019 in their Indian news coverage.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Geographical Focus of News

This variable centred on the geographical focus of the news items published by BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in the year 2019.

		Indian	International
BBC Online 2019	Number	55	24
	Percentage	70.0%	30.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	42	17
	Percentage	71.0%	29.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	87	33
	Percentage	72.0%	28.0%

(Table 39: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Geographical Focus of Indian news items)

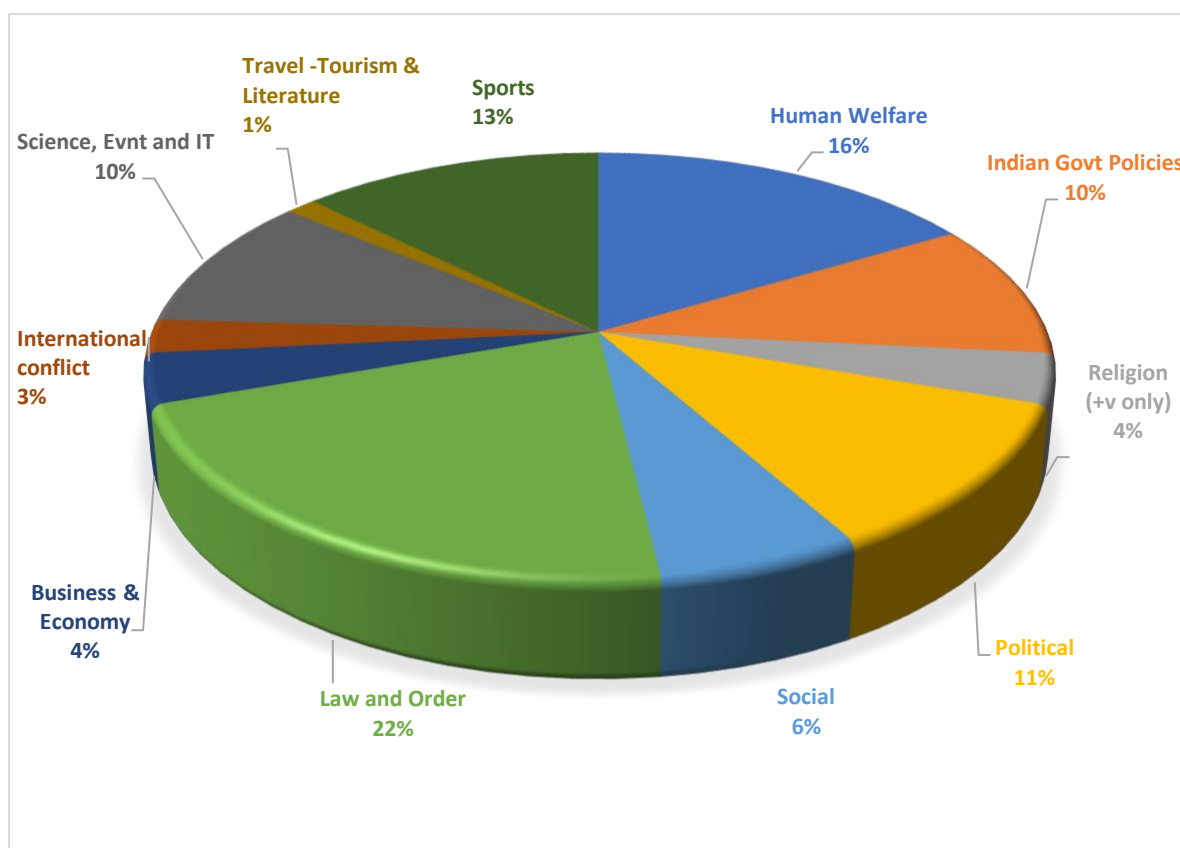
Results: The comparison of this variable indicated a substantial similarity in the news reporting pattern among the three media houses. The average difference between the three media houses for this variable was only 1.0 per cent.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Major News Topics

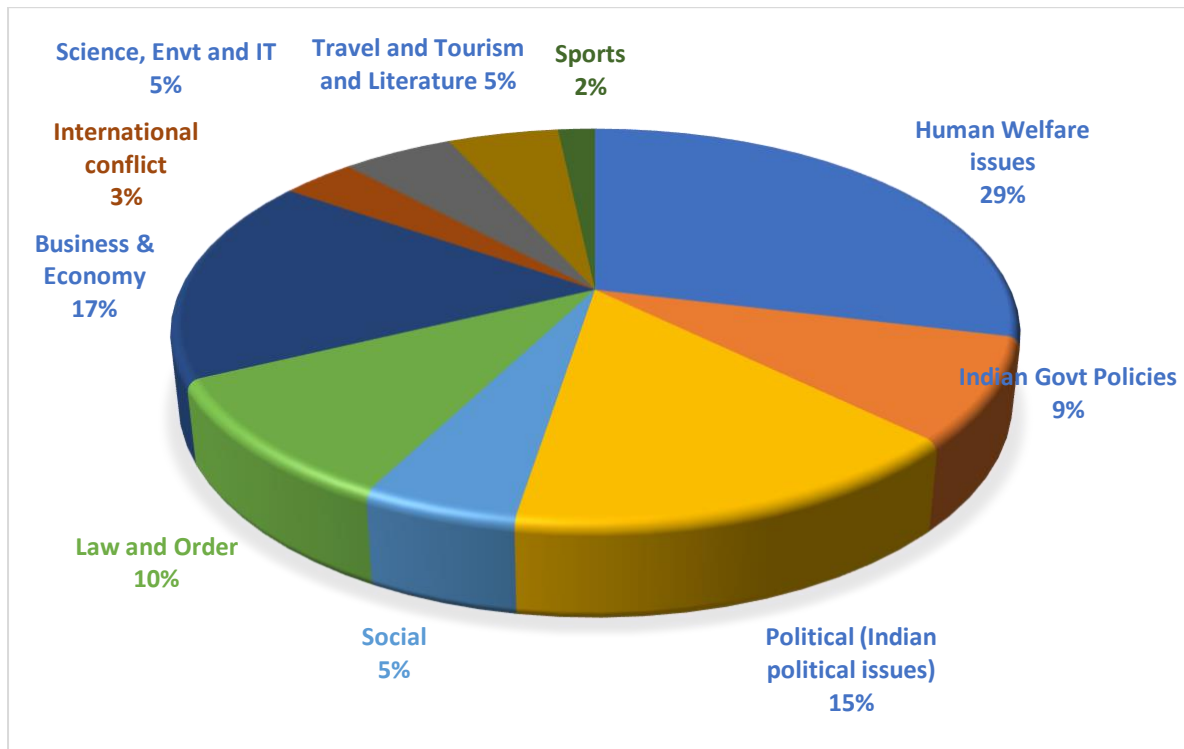
As indicated earlier, the study also included the major topics of the Indian news items featured by BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019 in its Indian news coverage. Given below is a panoramic view of the major topics inclusive of the sub-categories under them.

		Human Welfare	Indian Govt Policies	Religion	Indian Political Issues	Social	Law & Order	Business & Economy	Intl conflict	Science, Evnt& IT	Travel, Literature	Indian Judiciary	Sports
BBC Online 2019	Number	13	8	3	9	5	17	3	2	8	1	0	10
	%	16.0%	10.0%	4.0%	11.0%	6.0%	22.0%	4.0%	3.0%	10.0%	1.0%	0.0%	13.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	17	5	0	9	3	6	10	2	3	3	0	1
	%	29.0%	9.0%	0.0%	15.0%	5.0%	10.0%	17.0%	3.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	2.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	20	24	1	16	3	26	9	14	5	0	0	2
	%	17.0%	20.0%	1.0%	13.0%	2.0%	22.0%	7.0%	12.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%

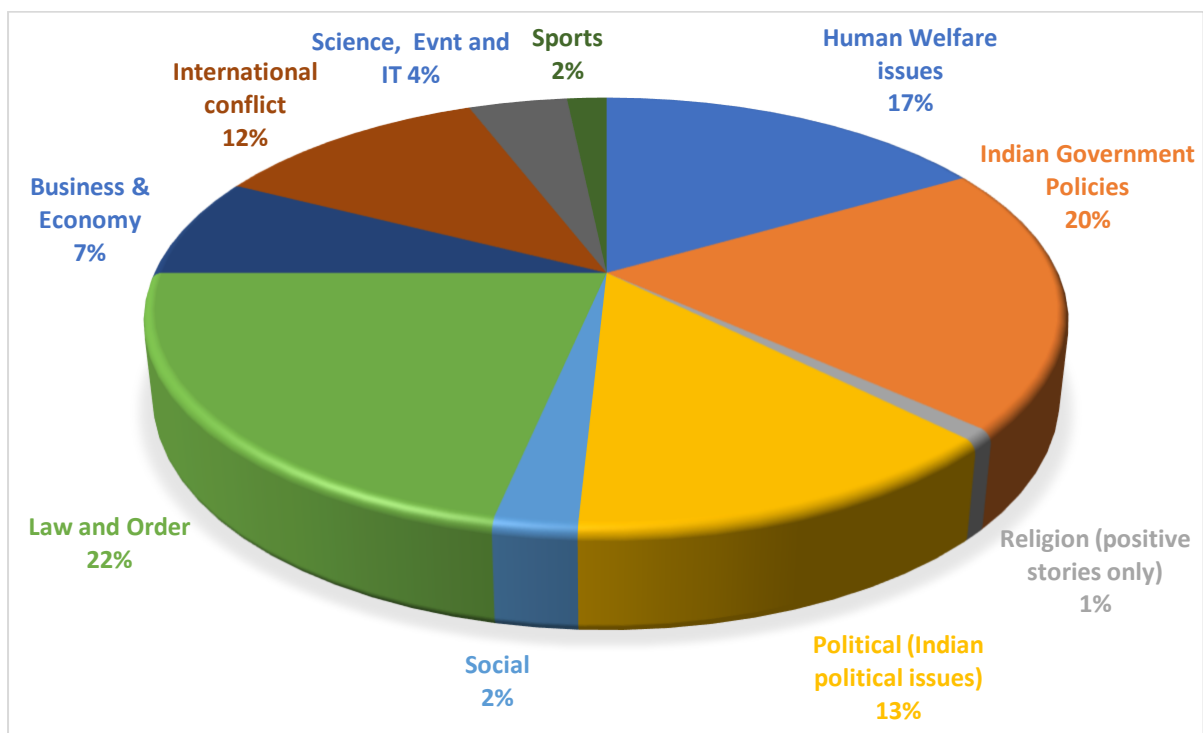
(Table 40: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Significant Topics)



(Figure 34: BBC Online 2019–Significant Topics)



(Figure 35: CNN Online 2019–Significant Topics)



(Figure 36: AJE Online 2019–Significant Topics)

The significant topics of the Indian news published by BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in 2019 were classified into 12 categories. Out of these 12 defined topics, 11 of them were featured at least once by one of the media houses. The only category that did not make its way into any of the Indian news items featured by BBC Online, CNN Online or AJE Online was the category of 'Indian Judiciary' (executive and legislative matters only).

In comparing and contrasting BBC Online with CNN Online in their Indian coverage, it was found that among the topics BBC Online had 'Law and Order' as the highest number of news items featured. At the same time, for CNN Online, it was the 'Human Welfare Issues' that had the greatest number of news items. The other major differences included those in the percentages of some of the topics covered. For instance, CNN Online had a greater number of 'Human Welfare Issues' covered compared to BBC Online with a difference of 13.0 per cent between them. CNN Online had more 'Political Issues' and 'Business and Economy' stories featured in 2019 compared to BBC Online. The difference in the coverage of Politics' was 4.0 per cent. The 'Business and Economy' had 13.0 per cent of the difference between the two media houses. The stories related to 'Travel and Tourism' were featured more frequently in CNN Online than those in BBC Online. But, BBC Online had more stories of 'Law and Order', 'Science, Environment and Information Technology' and 'Sports'. BBC Online had 4.0 per cent of stories related to 'Religion' (positive stories) while CNN Online did not have any under it. Now, speaking of similarities between BBC Online and CNN Online, it was found that both media houses had an almost similar percentage of 'Indian Government Policies' with a difference of 1.0 per cent between them. In the category of 'Social Issues', the difference was only 1.0 per cent between

these two media houses. They had an equal share of percentage when it came to the coverage of the 'International Conflict'.

Discussing the similarities and differences between BBC Online and AJE Online, it was found that both media houses had an equal percentage of the coverage of 'Law and Order'. Other topics which had a close to equal sharing of percentage were the 'Human Welfare Issues' and 'Indian Political' issues. AJE Online had more stories on 'Indian Government Policies', 'Business and Economy', and 'International Conflict' compared to BBC Online. AJE had 9.0 per cent more of international conflict stories compared to BBC Online. On the other hand, BBC Online had more stories on 'Religion' (positive stories), 'Social' issues, 'Science, Environment and Information Technology' and 'Sports'. BBC Online had 11.0 per cent more of sports stories compared to those of AJE Online.

Major Featured Topics–Detailed

The study now delves more deeply into some of those topics with a higher number of news items among the Indian news coverage of BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in the year 2019. Here the detailed analysis is done only on those dominant topics with at least 10.0 per cent of news items out of the total news covered either in BBC Online, CNN Online or AJE Online.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Human Welfare Issues

		Natural Disasters	Human-caused Disasters	Health	Poverty	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	4	5	3	0	1
	Percentage	31.0%	38.0%	23.0%	0.0%	8.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	6	3	6	0	2
	Percentage	35.0%	18.0%	35.0%	0.0%	12.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	7	3	5	3	2
	Percentage	35.0%	15.0%	25.0%	15.0%	10.0%

(Table 41: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Human Welfare Issues)

The investigation of 'Human Welfare Issues' disclosed that it was one of those topics with substantial news items under it in all three media houses. BBC Online 2019 had 13 Indian news items under this category out of its 79 Indian news items. CNN Online out of the 59 Indian news items had 17 of the news items under the category of 'Human Welfare Issues' in the year 2019. AJE Online's scrutinising has shown that it had 20 news items under the variable 'Human Welfare Issues' out of its 120 Indian news items.

The comparison between BBC Online with CNN Online and AJE Online revealed a common pattern in reporting news items related to 'Human Welfare Issues'. All three media houses' online platforms had the greatest number of news items under either 'Natural Disasters' or 'Human-caused Disasters'. In reporting the Indian news items related to 'Health' too, there was uniformity among BBC Online, CNN Online and AJE Online in their 2019 news reports. The only difference found under this category was that AJE Online had news reports of Indian news items related to 'Poverty' which was not found in BBC Online and CNN Online Indian news reporting.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Indian Government Policies

		Education Policy	Social Welfare Policies	Economic Policy	Information Technology Policy	Policies related to Religion	Foreign Policy	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	0	0	1	1	1	0	5
	%	0.0%	0.0%	12.3%	12.4%	12.3%	0.0%	63.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	0	0	4	1	1	0	18
	%	0.0%	0.0%	17.0%	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%	75.0%

(Table 42: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Indian Government Policies)

The news reporting for this variable was similar for BBC Online and CNN Online. However, there existed a difference between BBC Online and AJE Online Indian news reporting under this variable. AJE Online had a lot more of Indian stories under this variable compared to those of BBC Online. BBC Online did not have any particular dominant sub-category under this variable. In contrast, AJE Online had the sub-category 'Economic Policy' with its 17.0 per cent share and the category 'Other' with its 75.0 per cent share of the total share of this particular variable.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Politics (Indian Political Issues)

		Party Politics	Election	Govt Formation	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	0	7	1	1
	Percentage	0.0%	78.0%	11.0%	11.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	0	5	2	2
	Percentage	0.0%	56.0%	22.0%	22.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	2	9	2	3
	Percentage	13.0%	56.0%	12.0%	19.0%

(Table 43: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Politics (Indian domestic politics))

The news coverage of the 'Indian Politics' by BBC Online had 9 news items under it out of the 79 news items it broadcast in 2019. In its 'Indian Politics' news coverage, CNN Online had 9 news items out of its 59 news items featured in 2019. AJE Online 2019 had 16 news items covered under 'Indian Politics' out of the 120 news items.

The comparison showed that BBC Online and CNN Online had followed similar patterns in their news reporting of Indian politics. The comparison of BBC Online with AJE Online showed some substantial difference in terms of the number of news items and sub-categories. BBC Online did not have any Indian news covered under the sub-category of 'Party Politics', while AJE Online had 13.0 per cent of news items under this category. The common factor in all three media houses is that they have 'Election' as their dominant sub-category in their Indian political news reporting.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Law and Order

		Social Unrest	Violent Demonstration	Sexual Harassment	Domestic Violence	Communal Violence	Crime against Minority	Terrorism	Fake News	Crime Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	5	0	4	1	0	2	1	0	4
	%	29.0%	0.0%	23.5%	6.0%	0.0%	12.0%	6.0%	0.0%	23.5%
CNN Online 2019	Number	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1
	%	33.0%	0.0%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.0%	0.0%	0.0%	17.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	18	0	1	0	0	2	3	1	1
	%	69.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	11.0%	4.0%	4.0%

(Table 44: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Law and Order)

Under the category 'Law and Order', BBC Online had 17 news items out of the 79 Indian news items it featured in 2019. CNN Online had only 6 "Law and Order" Indian news items out of the 59 Indian news items published. There were 26 'Law and Order' related news items out of 120 Indian news items published by AJE Online in 2019.

A comparison of all three media houses' online reporting of India found that the overriding common factor existed with the sub-categories such as 'Social Unrest', 'Sexual Harassment' and 'Crime Against Minority'. The only difference was found in AJE Online reporting of news item related to 'Fake News', which was not found either in BBC Online or in CNN Online.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: Business and Economy

		Economic Crisis	Economic Offence	Investments
BBC Online 2019	Number	2	0	1
	Percentage	67.0%	0.0%	33.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	4	0	6
	Percentage	40.0%	0.0%	60.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	4	0	5
	Percentage	44.0%	0.0%	56.0%

(Table 45: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Business and Economy)

Out of the 79 Indian news broadcasts by BBC Online in 2019, there were only 3 'Business and Economy' related news items. But CNN Online business and economy-related news reporting was robust as it had 10 news items related to 'Business and Economy' category out of its 59 news items. AJE Online had 9 Indian news items connected to 'Business and Economy' out of its 120 news items featured in 2019. The common factors reported across all media platforms were 'Economic Crisis' and 'Investments'. There was no Indian news report connected to the 'Economic Offence'.

BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019: International Conflict

		Conflict with Pakistan	Conflict with China	Other
BBC Online 2019	Number	2	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	2	0	0
	Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	13	0	1
	Percentage	93.0%	0.0%	7.0%

(Table 46: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–International Conflict)

Under the category of 'International Conflict', BBC Online 2019 had 2 news items out of its 79 Indian news. Furthermore, on both occasions, it belonged to the sub-category of 'Conflict with Pakistan'. CNN Online too had only 2 news items under this category out of its 59 news items. This too belonged to the sub-category 'Conflict with Pakistan'. However, under this category, AJE Online 2019 had 14 news items out of its 120 Indian news items in 2019. Of these 14 news items, 93.0 per cent belonged to the sub-category 'Conflict with Pakistan'. The common factor among the Indian online news reporting of BBC, CNN and AJE is that they all reported news related to the sub-category 'Conflict with Pakistan'.

Science, Environment and Information Technology

		Science & Technology	Environment	Information Technology
BBC Online 2019	Number	4	4	0
	Percentage	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
CNN Online 2019	Number	2	0	1
	Percentage	67.0%	0.0%	33.0%
AJE Online 2019	Number	3	2	0
	Percentage	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%

(Table 47: BBC, CNN and AJE Online 2019–Science, Environment and Information Technology)

In the category of 'Science, Environment and Information Technology', BBC Online had 4 news items related to it out of the 79 Indian news items. CNN Online had 3 news items under this category out of its 59 Indian news items. AJE Online under this category had 5 Indian news items out of its 120 Indian news items in total in the year 2019.

The common factor under this variable among online media reports is that all reported news related to 'Science and Technology'. The majority of the Indian news items were reported under the sub-category of 'Science and Technology'. Compared to BBC Online with CNN Online, BBC Online did not have any Indian news related to 'Information Technology' in its 2019 Indian news items. CNN Online in its Indian news reporting did not have any news related to 'Environment'. The comparison between BBC Online and AJE Online revealed that both had Indian news items related to 'Environment' (besides Science and Technology) and did not have any Indian news items connected to 'Information Technology'.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed and compared between BBC Radio WNS 1977, 1997 and 2019, and between BBC Online 2019, CNN Online 2019 and AJE Online 2019. It has also made a comparison of BBC Online 2019 with BBC Radio WNS 2019. In short, analysis has been done on the BBC's pre-online era and online era news reporting of Indian news items, and it has shown how Indian news items were reported by other major media houses like CNN and AJE.

The next chapter discusses the first research question 'How does BBC report India in the digital era?' based on the analysis chapter.

Chapter 7: The Indian News Coverage of BBC

Radio World News Service

Introduction

This chapter discusses and evaluates the findings from the ongoing research. This is divided into three sections. The first section consolidates what has been learned in this research about BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997 and 2019. The second section focuses on the similarities and differences of BBC's Radio World News Service 2019 and Online News Service 2019. The third section looks at the Indian news reporting of online services of the BBC, CNN and AJE. In addition to what is already mentioned, all the three sections look into how overall research is compatible with existing literature connected to the area of study. For a comprehensive understanding of this research, an overview of the context and the research aims is included in the introductory section.

Research Aims and Context

This research has examined whether new media platforms and better communication system have changed the BBC's reporting of India. Further, this study has sought to determine the influence of digital technologies, especially social media, in the BBC's Indian news reporting (Chapter 8). This research project has also outlined a comparative analysis to determine the significant similarities and differences in online news reporting of India in the BBC, CNN and AJE. This would serve both as a benchmark and as an analysis of the global standing of BBC Online against other

media platforms in their news coverage of India. It also gives an overview of Indian news coverage from different viewpoints such as the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE). Therefore, a quick recap of the research questions would be beneficial at this juncture.

RQ 1. How does BBC report India in the digital era?

RQ 1a. How does BBC Radio World News Service reporting of India differ between the years 1977, 1997 and 2019?

RQ 1b. How does BBC Radio World News Service 2019 reporting of India differ from that of BBC Online in 2019?

RQ 1c. How does BBC Online report on India compared to CNN Online and AJE Online in 2019?

RQ 2. How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India?

This study has used both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The Indian news items broadcast on BBC Radio News Service were collected in each of the three years of 1977, 1997 and 2019 for six months using the stratified sampling method of constructed days. BBC Radio World News Service data was collected for 11 days per month (one-hour news bulletin per day) for six months. The data gathered for BBC Radio includes the Programmes as Broadcast (PasBs) of 1977 and 1997 of BBC Radio World News Service and the news Broadcasts of 2019 of BBC Radio World News Service.

For online platforms of BBC, CNN and AJE, the data was gathered for six days per month for six months employing the stratified sampling method of constructed days beginning from May 2019 to October 2019. The combination of radio and online found 339 Indian news items were broadcast or featured during the research time frame.

Additionally, 13 interviews were carried out with the BBC journalists or editors who have either worked for the BBC or still work for the BBC in the news coverage of India.

The research aimed to contribute to the knowledge of the BBC's reporting of India over the years and the impact of the changing media environment in the Indian news coverage of the BBC. It sought further to see if the changing media environment has helped with a better and more in-depth Indian news coverage of the BBC compared to the past.

The first section deals with what has been learned in this research about BBC Radio World News Service's news coverage of India in 1977, 1997 and 2019. As mentioned in the Methodology (Chapter 5), 13 interviews were done with the present or former BBC journalists/editors, and their views are merged with the discussions. The interviewees had five or more years of work experience with the Indian bureau of the BBC. Some of those interviewed were past employees, and others are still part of the BBC. Some of those who took part in the interview preferred to stay anonymous.

Section 1

BBC Radio World News Service news coverage of India in 1977, 1997 and 2019

This research involves the content analysis of BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997 and 2019 to answer the question, 'How does BBC Radio World News Service reporting of India differ between the years 1977, 1997 and 2019?' The easy and faster communication system (Williams, 2011) resulted in increased Indian news

coverage of the BBC. This research found that there was an increase in Indian news coverage at the BBC.

Increase in the Indian News Coverage

When BBC Radio World News Service broadcasts between 1977, 1997 and 2019 were compared, the overall finding was that there was an increase in the frequency of news coverage in the digital era. Between 1977 and 1997 the increase in the number of Indian news items broadcast by BBC World News Service was only 1.32 per cent, whereas between 1997 and 2019 it rose to 11.22 per cent. In other words, in 1977 BBC Radio World News Service reported on India an average of once every four days. In 1997, it reported on India once every three and a half days. In 2019, it was once every two days. Therefore, from a slow increase in 1977 and 1997, there was a substantial increase in Indian news coverage in 2019.

Although there is an increase in the broadcast of the Indian stories globally, it is a real challenge to get the stories across as it would need to have a global perspective to have an appeal for a global audience. In the words of David Loyn who was a BBC correspondent in India from 1993 to 2013, "It is quite hard to get real stories about things that are happening in India on the main channels in London. The stories like myths about tiger, lost British backpackers, or controversial issues like Ayodhya, etc., are easier to get across" (*Interview: 21 February 2020*). This echoed Franks' (2014) earlier findings that developing countries' news coverage is generally episodic about war and disaster. William Crawley, who worked in the BBC Indian bureau for many years, ascertained the existence of such a trend even after many years. In his words, "Disaster coverage is certainly something that is always being given a priority. And the

ability to get to and report on disasters quickly is considered as a mark of the excellence of any broadcast organisations, and in this regard, the BBC has done quite well" (*Interview: 12 June 2020*).

It is not the development in the communication technology alone that has influenced the BBC's news coverage of India, but also a few other factors which have to be considered. This includes the early establishment of the Indian bureau, which was later expanded to many Indian local languages. If the Indian news coverage of BBC World News Services in 1977 and 1997 was done by a handful of reporters with stringers' help, lately things began to change with the extension of language services.

With the extension of Indian language services, more reporters were on the ground, which resulted in the larger influx of news items. This, in turn, may have resulted in having more Indian stories broadcast on BBC Radio World News Service. One of the BBC editors corroborated the reason why there was a surge in the Indian news coverage of the BBC, especially in the digital era. According to him, the expansion of BBC reporters on the ground coupled with the technology has increased Indian coverage.

The increase in the Indian news coverage of BBC World News Service may also be due to India's changing global position or status. Racine (2008, p. 66) suggests,

From 1947 to the 1980s, it was a post-colonial country, cast in the mould thoughtfully crafted by Jawaharlal Nehru and set on its way, though in slow motion. Today, India is a post-colonial country, whose decision-makers believe that the Nehruvian paradigm has to be adjusted to new realities. They have not forgotten the past or its legacy, but they have

begun to look with a renewed confidence to the future of a 'resurgent India' (Racine, 2008, p. 66).

Echoing a similar pattern Sinha and Dorschner (2010) reinforced further the changing global position of India. According to them, India is no longer perceived as a poor, low-income country, but has taken on the role of spokesman for the Third World in international organisations. Today, India refuses international aid, pursues a UN Security Council seat, and negotiates with the US as an emerging power. On account of India's changing global position, more Indian stories are broadcast at the global level. Samanthi Dissanayake, the Asia Editor of BBC Online, substantiated this when she said, "India is a news hub where you have a lot of scope for interesting stories both nationally and internationally" (*Interview: 20 February 2020*).

The geopolitical situation in a region influences both its national and international news coverage. For instance, some of the significant global events reposition a region or a nation at a global level. In their study, Sinha and Dorschner (2010) observed that the collapse of Soviet Union in 1990, the emergence of the U.S. as a unipolar power, India's nuclear test in 1998, and the rise of China resulted in a strategic shift in policies of the international community towards India. The rise of India has resulted in the transformation of the geopolitics of the region. This transformation caused one of the reasons for India's increased international news coverage. Racine (2008) confirmed the region's geopolitical transformation in his study, "The rise of India is therefore transforming the geopolitics of Asia, and Japan has not missed the point. The 'strategic and global partnership' between Tokyo and New Delhi was upgraded in 2006, for Japan, like other East Asian countries, is not averse to a more powerful India to counterbalance the rise of China" (Racine, 2008, p. 72). The geopolitical shift of a

region or country affects its global news coverage, and in the case of India, it was no different either.

Any border dispute or tension in two countries' borders could escalate the news coverage from that region as it affects the international community. For example, during the dispute at Gaza, the tension at Mexico and America's borders, the border dispute between India and Pakistan, or between India and China intensified the international news coverage from these regions. This reiterates Wasserman's (2017) findings that the geopolitical shift changes the news coverage of a particular country or region. There was a more comprehensive news coverage by the BBC during the recent border tension (February 2019) between India and Pakistan. Because of its status as an international media organisation, the BBC is looked upon for credible and reliable news coverage on occasions such as geopolitical volatility in the region.

The global interest regarding India deepened further because no media could easily ignore the economic reasons. There is a link between commerce and press coverage in foreign countries (Pietilainen, 2006). Kaushik Basu (2008) outlines that if the growth of India's per capita income in the 1950s and 1960s was at just over 1 per cent per annum, in the year 2008, it was over 7 per cent per annum. The economic reasons paved the way for a greater interest in the Indian stories globally resulting in more news items being covered. BBC Radio World News Service was no different in its approach, which resulted in its increased Indian news coverage. In the words of David Loyn, "It is also because of the scale of India, which has one-fifth of the world population and potentially a huge market. India is one of the world's sorts of a rather intriguing conundrum, so the interests are high in the global market" (*Interview: 21 February 2020*).

If in the past, the Indian market was one of the primary reasons for the BBC to establish itself in India, even today it continues to be one of the major factors in anchoring it further. This reconfirms with the earlier study that the news reports are influenced by business prospects (Mandira Banerjee, 2001).

The development of faster and easier communication systems coupled with the expansion of the BBC's Indian bureau, the presence of more reporters at the ground level, the changing global equations of India, and the potential of Indian market ensured an increase in the number of Indian stories by BBC Radio World News Service, over the years.

Shorter News Items in 2019

In the years 1977 and 1997 all the news items broadcast by BBC Radio World News Service belonged to the category of 61-180 seconds or above, resulting in a longer duration of the news items. In 1977 there were only 20 Indian news items, and in 1997 there were only 22 news items, but the duration of the individual Indian news items broadcast by BBC Radio World News Service was longer compared to the news items of 2019. Although the individual duration of the Indian news was shorter compared to 2019, the number of news items were more in the year 2019 compared to the years 1977 and 1997. The Indian news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service in 2019 was increased to 39, but the duration of individual Indian news items featured saw a descending drift.

An important aspect to be considered here is the structure of the news broadcast. Over the years, BBC Radio WNS has changed its structure hence the style and duration of the news items may have changed.

Broadened Indian News Stories

In this research, we had done a comparative study of the major topics featured by BBC Radio World News Service in its Indian news coverage of 1977, 1997 and 2019. We had categorised the topics into twelve categories with subcategories under each of the main category. The comparison revealed that the year 2019 in its broadcasts BBC Radio World News Service had a greater diversity of topics than 1977 and 1997.

For instance, in the year 1977, BBC Radio World News Service broadcast five categories of Indian topics in its news items. Out of these five categories, the major share of the news broadcast was Indian political issues with 45.0 per cent of the 20 news items. In the year 1997, BBC Radio World News Service had broadcast nine topics of Indian news items in its broadcasts. This time the focus was on the Indian government policies, which had the major share of 32 per cent of the 22 news items it had broadcast. When it came to 2019, BBC Radio World News Service broadcast ten topics of Indian news items in its broadcasts. Out of these, law and order had 31 per cent out of the 39 news items.

Indian news stories broadcast on BBC Radio World News Service broadened for various reasons. In 1977 when the resources were limited both in terms of personnel and technology, the focus was limited to the day's major stories. In the words of Mark Tully, who played a predominant role in establishing the BBC Bureau across India, "We were largely concerned inevitably with the main running story of the day, whatever that was" (*Interview: Tully, 14 May 2020*). Satish Jacob went on to add,

Mark Tully and I were working together. We had a small office, only two of us for the report. Every morning when he came to the office, we would quickly have a conference. We would sit down and look at the

newspapers. And then we both discuss; these are the stories we should follow. Obviously, we cannot follow many stories. We used to pick about maximum two or three stories depending on the significance of the story (*Interview: Jacob, 19 June 2020*).

According to David Loyn, in the year 1997, when both the communication system improved and the number of people working for the BBC in India increased, various Indian news items began to be featured (*Interview: 21 February 2020*). In 2019, although there was only a marginal increase in the topics of the Indian news items broadcast by BBC Radio News Services compared to 1997, what is to be noted is the increment in the number of stories featured under various topics. Therefore, the development of the communication system and the increased presence of people on the ground have increased the types of Indian news stories broadcast by BBC Radio World News Services in 2019.

The research revealed that in 1977, 1997 and 2019, the focus was on the prevalent topic or situation that arose that year. Such was the case from the early days of the BBC itself. For instance, in the year 1977, it was Indian political issues that were at the forefront. This was underlined by Mark Tully when he said, "It was a very important political time, and then it was an election year. There was all the political instability under the *Janata* government after the election. And that was what our listeners wanted" (*Interview: 14 May 2020*). The people looked for political news, and the BBC went along with the emerging trend providing political news, which was much sought after at that time. In 1997 the government policies topped that chart, as it was a time of liberalisation of Indian economy. Hence, the focus was on government policies related to it. "After the liberalisation, the Indian market has opened up a lot, and India is a huge market for everyone. It is a young audience which is untapped.

There was a lot of attention on India, the stories from India,” said one of the BBC journalists who has been working with the BBC in the last 12 years (*Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018*).

The focus was on law and order in 2019 as there was much social unrest in India for various reasons. The Hindu right-wing party was in power with an absolute majority which amplified the crime against minorities, the removal of the special status of Kashmir led to violent demonstrations in the Kashmir valley, and the controversial Indian Citizen Act led to law and order issues across India. The BBC stimulated by the happenings in India, ended up doing a lot more stories related to law and order. In the words of William Crawley,

People do not expect the BBC to be a cheerleader for populist views. They do not expect it to be a major leader in public opinion, but they do expect it to be aware of the issues of concern in India, the changes that are taking place, the worries that people have, the concerns that people have about these changes, the issue of minorities. These things are legitimately part of an international broadcaster’s perspective, and some of them are controversial and not always easy to get right (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

Therefore, BBC Radio World News Service featured predominantly India’s domestic issues, which had a global interest. It is not surprising that any national event with a broader implication within India also becomes of global interest with the existing communication system across the globe. The Indian demography, population, Indian market, and the Indian Diaspora across the world could not be ignored. The comparison between 1977, 1997 and 2019 revealed an increase in the range of topics covered by BBC Radio World News Service. There was an increase in the number of news items under each news topic compared to 1977 and 1997. The topics like Indian

economic policies, human and natural disasters, Indian politics and law and order have been consistently featured by BBC Radio World News Service, although they varied in their frequencies.

The increase in the number and the range of sources

The study into the news sources used by BBC Radio World News Services of 1977, 1997 and 2019 revealed an increase in the number of sources used in the Indian news items in 1997 and 2019.

In the year 1977, there was no mentioning of the sources used in the Indian news items. Although there was no mentioning of the sources used in the PasBs of 1977, Mark Tully mentioned during the interview that the deployment of stringers across India by the BBC helped them connect with the sources.

We had agencies as sources of our news. What was particularly helpful to us was that we had a network of locals or stringers in town, not just in the big cities, but in smaller towns as well. And they were an invaluable source for us. And of course, on the whole, India is quite an open country except during an emergency. So, you have politicians talking to you, or sometimes bureaucrats and you had other sources (*Interview: Tully, 14 May 2020*).

William Crawley added, “In the 1970s and the 1980s the building up of a network of high-quality correspondents in every major centre in India was, I think, a huge development and huge advantage not only to BBC Indian language services and BBC World Service in English but also in providing a source of news and a source of information” (*Interview: 12 June 2020*).

By 1997 the communication system became easier, and the accessibility was faster with a strong network of stringers across India. As a result, the sources of different types were employed in BBC Radio World News Services' news coverage of India. There were 45 sources employed in the 22 Indian news items by BBC Radio World News Service in 1997. In the year 2019, the numbers of sources used in the Indian news items rose to 69. The development of communication system and easy accessibility had enabled the BBC to have more sources in its Indian news items.

Although the numbers vary between 1997 and 2019, what was significant in both these years was their use of Indian government official and experts' views as sources in the Indian news items. David Loyn explained how access to government agencies and experts' views were possible for the BBC.

Mark Tully had set up a network of really good quite senior journalists right around India. You know, so if I wanted to go to Lucknow to meet the chief minister, I phoned round-up Tripathi, the BBC man in Lucknow. And he was a senior journalist, and he could get me in to see the chief minister. So, we had this really strong network of journalists who were our eyes and ears. We could phone them up and ask what is going on. During the '96 election, I travelled all over pretty well to every state. I was impressed by the quality of the individuals we had met to call on
(Interview: Loyn, 21 February 2020).

Evidently, in the year 1997 the BBC relied more on the known and verifiable sources like media personnel when the verification was not easy compared to 2019. This was evident from the fact that 64.0 per cent of the experts' views used in 1997 were 'media experts.' However, in 2019 when the verifications became easier, the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service had 51.0 per cent of views from 'other', and the media experts' views were only 30 per cent.

More journalists in the field for gathering information added greater authenticity and transparency to the news report. The news sources could be obtained from different sources, depending on the topics that were being covered. As one of the BBC correspondents affirmed, "It depends on the nature of the news. If it is a disaster or an attack, then you have to rely on what the police or what the authorities are saying. Sometimes it is eyewitnesses. Sometimes it is your reporters on the ground" (*Interview: BBC Correspondent 1, 5 December 2018*). This has resulted in having views from different experts or people involved or connected with the event and added various viewpoints and dimensions to news items. This was further confirmed by Rupa Jha⁹, the head of BBC's Indian languages Services at New Delhi, in the interaction about the sources of Indian news coverage.

We have been investing quite a lot on newsgathering. Going out and reporting from the ground is something which has no substitute. More and more you realise that people or audiences are interested in getting the real reason for this or that or what was going on and about them. Our sources are our reporters, our stringer network reporters, network agencies, news agencies and social media platforms (*Interview: Jha, 5 December 2018*).

The increased presence of the BBC journalists across India gave them the advantage of acquiring the nuances or the nitty-gritty of the news that was covered. The 'local journalists' presence had a definite impact on gathering, framing, and disseminating the news (Bunce *et al.*, 2017). Understanding the local culture, practices and social system makes it easier to report an event within its context, which the BBC is able to do in a better way than before. However, the newsfeeds that come

⁹ Rupa Jha is the head of BBC's Indian languages Services at New Delhi.

through the network had to be cross-checked. In the words of another BBC journalist, "Because with the BBC, everything has to be verified even if it's published two hours late, but the sources have to be cross-checked. As a reporter, if I have seen something I would still verify it from the local administration, the police, the hospital, and the local people" (*Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018*). Thus, the more sources used, the greater the reliability. This gave the BBC a twofold result: first, the verification became easier, and second, the news coverage became more credible.

The rise of anonymity in the News

The frequency of mentioning the correspondent's name in the radio news items between the years of 1977, 1997 and 2019 declined. The analysis revealed that in the year 1977, all the news items featured had the names of the correspondents mentioned in them. However, twenty years later in 1997, it came down to 68.0 per cent, and in 2019 it was further down to 31.0 per cent.

The Indian news reports were fewer in number in earlier years, so too the number of correspondents who worked for the BBC in India. As the organisation grew larger over the years, the number of people working there increased as well. However, despite having a better communication system and the possibility of having access to the reporters and their details, most news reports, especially in the year 2019, remained anonymous. One of the possible reasons was that the BBC bureau in New Delhi had grown in volumes, both in terms of the number of staff and its Indian news coverage, including vernacular services. There were only 26 staff working for BBC in the year 1997. However, there were more than 200 staff working at the BBC Delhi bureau in 2019 for all of its Indian services combined (*Dissanayake-Interview: 14*

September 2020). As a result, the number of stories has increased compared to the past. In this context, only a few news items carried the correspondents' names in them, unlike in the past, when the stories and BBC personnel were fewer. In the past, it is also possible that the BBC may have held the credentials of the news in high esteem when a foreign correspondent reported Indian news, and now it no longer feels the necessity to do so.

BBC relies on its original content

Most of the times, BBC Radio World News Service did not depend on other media for its Indian international news coverage but instead relied on its own reports. In the year 1977 BBC World News Service relied entirely on its personnel for its Indian news coverage. In the year 1997 out of the 35 media sources, BBC World News Service used only 54.0 per cent of its own media personnel, and for the rest, the BBC relied on other media sources like news agencies or other media organisations. In the year 2019 out of the 39 media sources it had sourced, 97.0 per cent were of the BBC's own journalists. BBC Radio World News Service depended for the majority of the times on its own journalists for its Indian news coverage.

Although the number of news items was higher in the year 2019 compared to 1977 and 1997, it used its own sources for the Indian news coverage for the vast majority of the time. The expansion of language services in India may have helped the BBC to have its own personnel on the ground reporting for it. Samanthi Dissanayake authenticated this further:

We have our own reporters. Because we have access to all the language services in Delhi, we use reporters in those language services as and when it requires. We also have people who are stringers around the

country to report for us. Besides, we make use of Wire services. However, in India, we are less reliant on the Wires than in other parts of the world. We are so well established in India; we have lots of stringers, and we have lots of our contacts. We have got a well-established contact system in India. For instance, if we see something in the *Times of India*, and we think that it is an interesting story, we are not going to take it from the *Times of India*. We want to find out for ourselves and do a story if necessary (*Interview: Dissanayake, 20 February 2020*).

In other words, the BBC was less reliant on other media sources for their Indian news items, and even if they come across an interesting piece of news information in other media platforms, they would instead source with their own media sources.

We have completed our discussion on BBC Radio World News Service news report on India in the years of 1977, 1997 and 2019. Our next section discusses the comparison of BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019.

Section 2

The comparison of the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio WNS and BBC Online 2019

The BBC 2019: Number of News items

The comparison between BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019 (digital era) revealed that the new media platforms had enabled an increase in the BBC's reporting of India. However, in the comparison of BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019, it is important to note that since the total number

of data collected differs for each of the media, the comparison is proportional to the sample.

More Indian news items were featured on the BBC Online platform in the year 2019 compared to the BBC Radio World News Service 2019. In proportion to the sample collected, BBC Online had 79 news items featured in its 36 days of news coverage whereas BBC Radio World News Service 2019 had only 39 news items in its 66 days of news coverage. The greater quantity of reporting on BBC Online, as compared to BBC Radio, shows how the nature of the medium enables wider news coverage on its platform. The radio broadcasts had time constraints and were time-bound whereas online had none of these limits. Compared to the radio, online had the possibility of updating itself with news items as and when it was required. Online journalism allows for continuous updating of stories (Anderson and Egglestone, 2012) and therefore, the online platform had the advantage of having a greater number of stories in it compared to the radio. The focus on the digital platform and the possibility of having more stories on a digital platform resulted in having more extensive news coverage of India by BBC Online 2019.

The BBC 2019: The range of Indian news stories

The comparison between BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online in the year 2019 has shown that there was only a marginal difference between the platforms in the range of Indian topics featured. BBC Online had only the additional topic of 'Travel and Tourism' in its platform compared to the radio. Although the range of topics featured was similar to that of BBC Radio 2019, BBC Online 2019 featured more detailed Indian news coverage than the BBC Radio World News Service 2019. With

the nature of the online platform, it was easier for the BBC Online to have varieties of Indian news stories as Rupa Jha said, "Earlier the range of stories consisted mostly of typical hardcore journalism. Now it is beyond that and which is very important because the new audience of young people and women are interested in everything, and we have to cater to that" (*Interview: Jha, 5 December 2018*). Information explosion era has caused a substantial increase in the various types of news topics being covered (Bunce, 2017).

The change in the way the news is consumed with the arrival of online platforms forced the BBC to go beyond the traditional news coverage in its Indian news coverage. As a result of this approach, BBC Online 2019 featured many more stories beyond the traditional news reporting. New interactive media environment altered the nature of storytelling and the news presentation (Pavlik, 2000). "I think BBC now gives 360-degree view of India—what's working and not working at the same time. We also report now extensively on change makers" (*Interview: Jha, 5 December 2018*).

It was not only on account of the consumer that BBC Online broadened its scope of Indian news items, but also its unique status. Unlike the Indian based media, the BBC being an international broadcast media, had the advantage of reporting specific Indian news stories that others may not report or highlight with details as the BBC did. Having this advantage, BBC Online has been propelled to have more varieties of Indian stories in its platform. "Stories which probably in all the Indian media may not be covered because of various reasons. I think the BBC is getting into those stories. They can be something which is unique or of human interest or it can be something which topics probably other media may not be touching upon," (*Interview: BBC News*

Anchor, 4 December 2018) added one of the journalists from the Indian bureau of the BBC.

Besides, the BBC as an international news organisation has both national and international news reporting. However, this research focussed on the global outreach of the BBC, i.e., the World Radio World News Service and BBC Online English. Thus, BBC Online had included stories which might be of interest to the global interest, and this could have widened the range of Indian stories. “Our strengths lie in putting India into a global perspective—where does India stand with the rest of the world and how does the rest of the world view India as a country” (*Perera: Interview: 23 June 2020*). Another BBC journalist who works at the Indian bureau reaffirmed, “I think what BBC is trying to do is that they are trying to bring India to the world and bring the world to India. So that is in one line if I can define the BBC’s reporting of India” (*Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018*).

The scope and range of Indian stories featured by BBC Online have increased. However, there is a common pattern both in BBC Radio World News reporting and BBC Online 2019. The common pattern found in the BBC’s reporting of India was that both had the same popular topics with the maximum number of news items, i.e., ‘law and order’ and ‘human welfare stories’. Under the human welfare stories, the news items with many stories belonged to ‘natural disasters’ and ‘human-caused disasters.’ Developing countries receive prime news coverage where there is a major disaster or violence (Franks, 2014). In spite of having an increased number of Indian news items on the online platform, this pattern did not change. When asked about negative Indian news items being reported, one of the BBC correspondents said, “Our focus is on true stories which sometimes seem to be negative stories, but still need to be done”

(Interview: BBC Correspondent 1, 5 December 2018). Another journalist added, “There are two things. News is what you report what it is. If there is something that is not what it should be then if you are reporting it, it does not mean that you are painting a negative picture. For example, there have been a couple of issues around women's safety. And obviously, if you report them does it mean that you are painting the negative picture” (Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018).

Ayeshea Perera added further,

If a natural or human disaster happens and if we do not cover it that is going to make us look stupid. Stories like this are, unfortunately, that makes the news, and that is what people like to know. In one of the content researches on what our audience consume on our online platform, we found something very interesting. The inspirational stories and exotic Indian stories had takers among the global audience, but the Indian audience looked for aspirational stories (Interview: Perera, 23 June 2020).

News is negative, and at times, the media organisation is forced to report, which might be negative in nature, and the BBC is no different. Adverse events that occur compel the journalists to report such events (Scott, 2009). According to William Crawley, it is inevitable to report negative news, and no media organisation can ignore this. In his words,

I think the prominence for human rights stories is something that has been consistently given priority by the BBC over the years. Law and order is probably something that is being caught up in the human rights debate that if the demonstrations were being suppressed in ways that concern human rights, the people are more worried about it. And it is more likely to get coverage in international broadcasters including the BBC. Law and order are issues, in themselves. If riots are going on anywhere in the

world, in this country or in India, they are news (*Interview: Crawley, 12 June 2020*).

The BBC 2019: Number and kind of sources used in the Indian news items

The number and kind of sources employed in the news items have risen in BBC Online 2019 compared to BBC Radio World News Service 2019. The possibility provided by the online platform to have in-depth news coverage has enabled BBC Online 2019 to have various kinds or levels of sources used in its Indian news coverage.

The comparison of BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019 found that BBC Online 2019 in its 36 days of Indian news coverage had sourced 89 more Indian government agency sources compared to the 66 days of BBC Radio World News Services 2019. The space available on an online platform coupled with easy accessibility of the government officials or agencies enabled it to have more quotes in the news coverage. For the radio coverage too in terms of the accessibility is similar, but on account of the time constraints of a news bulletin, the radio cannot have many sources used in its news coverage. Similarly, looking at the sourcing of the international politicians or diplomats, it was found that online platform had used additional 18 sources than the radio.

The significant difference between BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online 2019 was sourcing 'experts and those involved views' in their Indian news coverage. Under this category, BBC Radio World News Service in its 66 days of Indian news coverage had only 37 sources under 'experts and those involved views' while BBC Online in its 36 days of news coverage had 274 sources under this category. So,

the chances of sourcing 'experts and those involved views' in BBC Radio World News Service was 0.94 times in a news item while for BBC Online 2019 it was 3.44 times in a news item.

The increased presence of local journalists reporting for the BBC contributed to the increased sources in the Indian news reports. The words of one of the editors of the BBC confirmed that having locals to report for the BBC has, in a way, increased not only the richness of the BBC's Indian news coverage but also increased easy accessibility.

There are a large number of Indians based in India working for the BBC who bring further nuance and for whom this is not bizarre, they will present an Indian reality in a way that cannot be understood by somebody looking in from the outside. So, I think that at the moment in the BBC's presentation of India there is a huge amount of local understanding which is essentially bringing India to the rest of the world. I think there is a certain richness of understanding which comes into that. And it hugely supplements, and maybe, it has overtaken the coverage of India by reporters based outside (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*).

BBC Online 2019 had more news reports on India compared to BBC Radio World News Service 2019. It also had more in-depth news items on India compared to the radio. Online news service freed the news consumption from the tyranny of schedules (Smith and Steemers, 2007).

The third section of this chapter discusses the comparison of the BBC with CNN and AJE. This will serve both as a benchmark and as an overview of the global standing of BBC Online against other major media platforms in their news coverage of India.

Section 3

BBC Online News Coverage of India compared to CNN and AJE in the year 2019

The discussion in this section is about the similarities and differences in online news reporting of India in the British Broadcasting Corporation (the BBC), the Cable News Network, Inc. (CNN) and the *Al-Jazeera English* (AJE). This also helps to situate the global standing of BBC Online against other major media platforms such as CNN and AJE. It also enables to have a look at the Indian news online coverage from three different viewpoints, i.e., the European (the BBC), the American (CNN) and the Asian (AJE).

The Indian News Coverage of the BBC, CNN and AJE

The comparative study of online reporting of Indian news covered by the BBC, CNN and AJE proved that in proportion to the sample considered, AJE Online had the most extensive coverage of India—both in terms of the number of days and the total number of Indian news items. When the three online platforms are compared, AJE topped the chart with the most number of news items with longer Indian news items, with the most number of news items placed in its homepage, with the most number of news items mentioning the name of the correspondent, and the greatest number of sources in their Indian news items. The BBC has the most number of sources used from social media

in its Indian news coverage. However, all three online platforms were similar in the range of Indian topics they featured in their online platforms.

When compared the 36 days of Indian news coverage between the BBC, AJE and CNN, AJE has the highest number of days in which at least one Indian news item was covered, followed by the BBC. In terms of the number of news items, AJE had the most number of Indian news items followed by the BBC and CNN. Therefore, when compared, AJE had the most number of days covered and the Indian news items in its online platform. However, for BBC Online news coverage, there are certain aspects which are to be borne in mind.

The news coverage of BBC's global English language news coverage needs to be of global interest. When it comes to the global news coverage, the BBC editors consider the global perspective or the global impact of the news. One of the senior BBC editors added, "The selection of a news item will depend upon the audience being served. If the audience is international, then the criteria are whether this is a nationally or internationally significant story and the impact of developments that decides whether something is big enough to become news" (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*).

In the case of BBC Online, international news coverage has different front pages. For BBC Online, there are four front pages for different audiences. This research considered the UK front page of the BBC, which is different from the Asia front page of the BBC. Therefore, the UK front page's priorities of the BBC online platform may differ from that of the Asia-specific front page. Thus, BBC UK front page has fewer stories from India. Ayeshea Perera, the digital editor for the BBC in India confirmed this in her interview: "Basically, the homepage that you see in the UK is not controlled

by anybody who works on the Asia desk. It is very difficult to get anything onto the UK front page because of the UK audiences. The curators of UK pages are mostly interested in local UK stories, unless there is something really big and important news that happens in other parts of the world” (*Interview: 23 June 2020*). This reconfirms the earlier finding by Frank’s (2006, 2014) studies that getting Indian stories to the worldwide audience has always been a challenge unless it is a disaster or war-related news story or if the story has a western angle to it.

The geographical proximity of a media networks operation to the place or events influences the coverage. A comparative study of ‘Newspaper coverage of the 2011 protests in Egypt’ between six newspapers by Al Maskati (2012) revealed that geographic proximity of the media house to the place in which the events took place was a major factor determining the intensity of coverage provided. AJE having its primary operations from the Middle East is geographically closer to India. The Middle East’s geographical proximity to India is one of the reasons for the larger number of Indian news items featured by AJE.

Apart from the geographical proximity of AJE headquarters with India, another possible reason could be the culturally and politically aligned audience whom the media house serves. For the increased number of Indian news coverage by AJE could be on account of the ‘social unrest’ that occurred in Kashmir as a result of the removal of the special status of Kashmir by the Indian government in the year 2019. This was not surprising as *Al-Jazeera English*, a subsidiary of Qatar’s *Al-Jazeera Arabic* network, has its own special interest in Kashmiri people’s issues. This goes in line with Powers and el-Nawawy’s (2009, p. 173) earlier findings that the news contents are tamed to serve the interests and concerns of specific culturally and politically aligned

audience rather than for a global audience. The increase in the number of Indian news items by AJE may have resulted from the 'social unrest' in the Kashmir valley on account of the Indian government decision to withdraw the special status of Kashmir in the year 2019. Besides, the large presence of the Indian Diaspora in the Gulf region could not be ignored by AJE.

In the Indian news items on the online platform, the BBC had the least number of news items on its UK home page (UK front page) whereas AJE had the highest number of stories in its home page. There could be a technical reason behind this. For BBC Online, there are four front pages for different audiences across the globe. In the words of Ayeshea Perera, "We have four curated editions of BBC. One for the UK audiences, the second one for Asia Pacific audiences, the third for the US and then for everybody else which they call the International Facing Site" (*Interview: 23 June 2020*). Therefore, the likelihood of an Indian story placed on the BBC's UK front page is most unlikely, unless it is very important.

When the lengths of the Indian news items (according to the total number of words) are compared, the BBC had very few long stories compared to CNN and AJE. AJE had the highest number of news items which were longer with at least 501 words and above. This could be because of the large number of sources used in the Indian news coverage.

The BBC had the lowest number of news items in which the correspondent's name was cited, and CNN had the most. The comparison had shown that the difference between the BBC and CNN was 55.0 per cent in the category 'unspecified' and between the BBC and AJE it was 28.0 per cent. According to Ayeshea Perera, the BBC's digital team in India is very small. Moreover, when there is a big story that

happens, they also rely on language services for the sources to avoid duplication of the work. This may have caused BBC Online news reports not to mention the correspondent's name in its reports.

In terms of employing different sources in the news coverage, AJE had the most sources in their news reports compared to CNN and BBC Online. In all, the BBC had 373 sources used in its Indian online news coverage. CNN had 427 sources used, and AJE had 712 sources in its Indian news coverage. A major part of these sources came from the 'Indian government agencies' and 'views of experts and those involved'. These total numbers exclude sources from other media networks that were used in the Indian news coverage. The BBC had the least number of sources used in its Indian news coverage. The shorter news items featured on the online platform could be the reason for a low number of sources. Ironically, in spite of having large numbers of BBC reporters on the ground including those from the Indian language services, it is also to be noted that CNN had more sources in its Indian news coverage even though it had 20 Indian news items less than BBC Online.

The range of Indian news topics featured by online platforms of the BBC, CNN and AJE was similar in their coverage. All three online platforms had eleven topics covered out of the twelve in each of their online platforms, and all three of them did not have any news covered under the topic of 'Indian judiciary' (executive and legislative matters only). The range of Indian news coverage was similar, but the number and depth of the coverage varied as indicated earlier. Samanthi Dissanayake from the BBC had this to add, "I think there has been a broadening of the agenda to include a wider kind of range of stories that we can sort of readily include on a daily basis" (*Interview: 20 February 2020*).

The BBC and AJE had the most number of news items under the topic 'law and order'. However, for CNN, the human welfare stories had the maximum number of Indian news items. As indicated earlier in the analysis of BBC Radio World News Service, the maximum coverage on 'law and order' topics could be because negative news gets much more attention than other types of news. And they need to be reported.

The BBC used Twitter as a source more than CNN and AJE. The other social media platforms, as sources of news, were scarcely used by all three platforms. The BBC uses social media sources to give in-depth Indian news coverage. It is one of the places where one can access an instant quote/view of a person involved in an event. The BBC upon verifying uses social media as a source for its Indian news coverage.

The comparative study of the Indian news coverage of the BBC, CNN and AJE revealed that AJE covered India more than the BBC and CNN. The news coverage of a country depends on many factors such as national interests, business prospects, diplomatic and cultural relations with a country. Mandira Banerjee (2001) and Nothias (2016) in their studies have already indicated that when it comes to covering a nation by an international media, a lot of complex factors come into play. In the Indian news coverage of the BBC, CNN and AJE it is not different either.

The next chapter discusses the influence of digital technology like social media in the journalistic practices of BBC correspondents reporting on India.

Chapter 8: The BBC Journalists Reporting

India in an Era of Digital Technology

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the influence of digital technology, especially online and social media. The emphasis here is on the changes the digital technology has brought in the Indian BBC journalists' working environment, its influence on Indian news coverage, its role in getting news, how it has been used as sources for the news coverage, and how it has accelerated the accessibility and the dissemination of the Indian news. This chapter tries to answer the second research question, 'How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India'? This study tries to answer this question from the data analysis and the interviews conducted as part of this research. Some of the significant changes that the digital media has brought about in the Indian bureau of the BBC are discussed here.

Digital Media Opens New Horizons

The digital technologies have made newsgathering and dissemination a lot easier and faster compared to the period before the arrival of digital technologies. In the words of David Loyn, "In the 1990s, the International phone calls were very complicated. There were work issues in the early days. However, technology has transformed the capacity of broadcast organisations to operate today" (*Interview: 21 February 2020*). The comparison of BBC Radio World News Service of 1977, 1997 and 2019 raises possible evidence of the influence of technology in the newsgathering and dissemination. For

instance, the difference in the number of Indian news items broadcast between 1977 and 1997 was minimal with 1.32 per cent. However, the difference between 1997 and 2019 (during major digital innovation) increased to 11.22 per cent. This indicated that digital media might have been one of the influential factors for the acceleration and diversification of the range of Indian news coverage.

Additionally, the new platforms emerging on account of the digital technologies may have boosted the Indian news coverage. In proportion to the samples collected from BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online in the year 2019, the data has shown that BBC Online had more news items featured on its platform than the radio. BBC Online had 79 news items featured in its 36 days of news coverage, whereas BBC Radio World News Service 2019 had only 39 news items in its 66 days of news coverage. The digital media may have helped the BBC journalists to find and disseminate more Indian stories which would have been far harder to achieve in the era before the advent of digital technology.

The BBC's then director-general John Birt realising the digital media's potential reach, had begun to focus on the online platform more vigorously in the mid-nineties (Webb, no date). In December 1997 BBC Online was officially launched (Crisell, 2002; see *also* Ramsey, 2018) which marked the beginning of the BBC's entry into digital broadcast redefining traditional journalism's borders.

The online platform provided both a challenge as well as an opportunity for the journalists. It was an opportunity because of its reach and scope. It was a challenge because of the platform's open nature, and therefore, subjected to broader scrutiny. The online platform broadened the scope of the news' reach and facilitated wider

dissemination of the news (Lee, 2012). The BBC recognising the great prospect of the digital platform, oriented itself to the changing media platforms.

The BBC's adaptation to the newer communication technologies not only resulted in more Indian news broadcasts, but it also gave greater visibility and opportunities for the BBC journalists reporting on India. For instance, in 1977 and 1997, the reporting of Indian news items was limited to the day's main news. This was on account of both technological limitations as well as lack of personnel. However, the arrival of digital technologies provided the journalists both opportunity and a platform to report on various topics. As stated above the nature of the online platform has enabled the BBC to have wider news coverage.

Broadened the Range of Indian News Topics

The digital technology provides an opportunity to have news stories with different focus and dimension. The stories or events otherwise could not have been noticed or highlighted, or found their way to the realm of public domain. The Indian stories or situations were no different. The digital era, therefore, has opened wide the floodgates of information to the public domain. David Loyn echoed a similar thought pattern when he said,

The nature of the information that we receive has changed on account of the development of communication technologies. And inevitably that has changed the kinds of stories that people cover because some of the events become big stories because of the exposure to new media. Therefore, you end up doing stories of different genre and kind which otherwise you may not think about or was not aware of (*Interview: Loyn, 21 February 2020*).

The digital media may have caused easier accessibility resulting in an increased possibility of reporting more stories of India. If one of the reasons for fewer news stories and more limited coverage was the lack of easy communication system earlier, the digital media has substantially removed such barriers. The comparison of the type of Indian news items broadcast on BBC Radio World News Service in the years 1977, 1997 and 2019 revealed this further. In the year 1977 out of the 20 Indian news broadcasts, the range of Indian stories was limited to 5. In the year 1997 out of the 22 news broadcasts, the range of Indian stories increased to 9. In the year 2019, there were 10 of them out of 39 featured news. The comparison between BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019 has shown that on the online platform the range of Indian stories rose to 11 as against 10 on BBC Radio World News Service. The easy accessibility facilitated by the digital media has enabled BBC Indian journalists to expand Indian news coverage beyond the traditional news broadcast. In the words of Samanthi Dissanayake,

In terms of story selection, the advent of new and social media enabled us to have lots of things open to us and has quite broadened our agenda. It has opened this up to the variety of life and humanity out there. There are some tragic and powerful stories behind them, which tell you something about the Indian story or the Indian experience that maybe we would not have had such ready access to before that. It gives us more access to stories about what we would like to call underserved audiences—the audiences that are not just your traditional ones. It goes all over the world online (*Interview: Dissanayake, 20 February 2020*).

Thus, the comparison of BBC Radio World News Service between 1977, 1997 and 2019 revealed an increase in the Indian news broadcast by BBC Radio World News Service as the communication system developed. The comparison between

BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019 showed that the online had more types of Indian news items featured.

More Sources and Accessibility

The BBC's adaptation of digital technology enabled it to have newer and deeper nuances to its Indian news coverage. The easier communication system available in a digital era provided greater accessibility which accelerated the possibilities of having more sources employed in the Indian news coverage of BBC. The easy communication system has made accessibility to different sources possible which otherwise could have been difficult.

A glimpse into the sources employed in BBC Radio World News Service coverage of 1977, 1997 and 2019 shows that more sources were used as the communication system became faster and easier. For instance, the 1977 PasBs of BBC Radio World News Service did not mention any of the sources used in its Indian news coverage. In 1997, there were 45 sources used in the 22 Indian news items by BBC Radio World News Service. In the year 2019, 69 sources were employed in the Indian news coverage by BBC Radio World News Service. The comparison between BBC Radio World News Service 2019 and BBC Online 2019 has shown that the online platform had used a lot more sources than the radio. Although the possibility of accessibility was equal for both BBC Radio and online, online had the advantage of unrestricted space, unlike the radio. Therefore, the digital platform, like the online platform, helped journalists have news items from various sources. For instance, the Indian government sources used in the BBC's news coverage of India in BBC Radio

World News Service 2019 were only 27, whereas in the BBC Online 2019 news platform there were 116 of them.

Similarly, if we compare the sourcing of international politicians and diplomats in the 2019 Indian news coverage of the BBC, we find that BBC Radio World News Service had only 6 sources under this category, while BBC Online had 21 of them. Likewise, if we compare the sourcing of 'experts and those involved persons' we find that under this category BBC Radio World News Service 2019 had only 37 of them, while BBC Online 2019 had 274 sources. The digital technologies have been one of the reasons for more sources used in its Indian online news items. The nature of the online platform allows it to have more sources integrated into the news coverage.

The online platform allows journalists to have views from different experts or people involved or connected with the event and added various viewpoints and dimensions to news items. Therefore, compared to the past, a journalist could approach a news item from various angles or dimensions in the digital era. The digital technology has changed the news coverage in terms of gathering information, news package and the dissemination of the news.

Digital media has enabled the journalist to access different sources even remotely. Even if a journalist is not physically present, one can still have access to the government official press releases or contact a government official via phone or social media. The instant connectivity, on account of new media, with people on the ground enabled the BBC to have instant statements from different sources and shared experiences which sometimes become the central part of the storytelling.

According to the interviewees, digital media has undoubtedly influenced the content produced and the types of stories featured. One of the BBC editors had this to say, "We keep track on what people are reading or following or what is trending. And we try to ride those waves" (*Interview: BBC Editor 1, 5 December 2018*). For example, some of the topics would not have been in the limelight if it was not on account of a Tweet. If the Tweet was interesting enough to catch a wider audience's attention, it was re-tweeted, and the topic was discussed a lot and eventually got the attention of the media person who may feature, or broadcast news items related to it. This could also happen in the reverse order. However, the end product is an interesting topic which has come to the limelight seeking further action. A few examples from BBC Online would elaborate it further.

"Nesamani: Who is he, and why is the world praying for him?" was the title of a news story featured on BBC Online on 30 May 2019. It was based on a social media trend 'Pray for Nesamani'. Nesamani was a film character in one of the Tamil movies which got linked to another Tweet from where it all began. This news story circled several Tweets and re-Tweets. Another story was published on the same day by BBC Online with the following title "Miss India contest: Why do all the finalists 'look the same'?" This was a story about the Indians' obsession with fair skin. This was started with a Twitter post, and the news used many sources from different sections of people related to this event.

BBC Online featured a news story titled, "Pakistan ad 'mocking' India pilot ups ante ahead of World Cup clash" on 12 June 2019. The news story was concerning an advertisement which Pakistan released ahead of India-Pakistan World Cup match in 2019. This was a story based on a video circulated in social media and based on

Tweets which followed it condemning the advertisement. The video in circulation was related to the release of an Indian Pilot Abhinandan Varthaman by Pakistan.

On 24 June 2019, BBC Online broadcast a news story "Five murders, six men and 16 years of stolen lives." It was a report on a miscarriage of justice that devastated the lives of six men and their families, and the state of the criminal justice system in India. The story sourced itself from the men who lived on death row for 13 years in prison. The news had also included sources or views from their family members in a remote village in Maharashtra, India.

After the 2019 Cricket World Cup match between India and England, on 1 July 2019, BBC Online news did a coverage titled "World Cup 2019: Dhoni's slow batting against England angers fans." The news was based on and unfolded around angry 'Tweets' of the Indians who criticised Mahendra Singh Dhoni and team for their slow batting especially in the last overs of the match.

Digital Media Changed the Newsroom Environment

India being a subcontinent with multiple languages and ethnicities, it is not possible for a news organisation to have its news reporters in all parts of India and with access to all communities. For the BBC too despite its considerable resources the situation is no different. However, the advent of social media has opened additional ways to get sources apart from the traditional ways. Social media as a platform enables the journalists to gather sources of information for a possible news item; sometimes it also provides additional information to complement the news coverage, or at times it provides merely additional verification of an event. Ayeshea Perera explained this further, "We track social media. Sometimes, if we see something on data mining or

something is popping up on Twitter, we might make a few calls to check it out. However, mostly we know what the news stories are, then we will look to see what the conversation is on social media or we will kind of use it" (*Interview: 23 June 2020*).

The arrival of social media has changed the BBC's journalists. The accessibility which earlier was possible only through personal or official contacts became easily accessible now due to social media. Sometimes, the official press releases of events or big announcements are done through social media, primarily via Twitter. As one of the BBC editors said, "Twitter generally has become a platform of newsmakers. Much news is generated on Twitter. So, I think it is a big source" (*Interview: Jha, 5 December 2018*).

BBC Radio World News Service 2019 did not have any social media sources in its Indian news items. However, BBC Online 2019 had sourced 56 sources from social media in its Indian news coverage in the items studied. The large majority, 95 per cent of it, was from Twitter and the rest from Facebook sources. Social media technologies facilitated instant and online dissemination of short fragments of information from various sources (Hermida, 2010). The online platform provides space and opportunity to source from social media. With the arrival of social media, the new trend is that the people break the news at one of social media platforms. Upon verifying the authenticity of the news, the BBC journalists at times now use social media itself as a source in their Indian news coverage. Samanthi Dissanayake in her interview confirmed this further when she said, "When we see things flagged on social media, we verify it using our normal modes of sourcing. We use social media as a source if it is Tweeted from an officially verified account by a government account or a minister" (*Interview: 20 February 2020*).

Twitter sometimes works as an immediate news source for journalists, especially when they have limited accessibility. The earlier study conducted on this topic by Moon and Hadley (2014) and Rauchfleisch *et al.* (2017) has indicated a similar pattern. For instance, during a terrorist attack or a natural calamity, it is not always easy to physically get to the sources. In such eventualities, the journalist looks for official tweets from the government agencies to confirm for the latest updates. "All news organisations are trying to get better and better at sourcing the best type of stories from social media because they tell us something about society" (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*), said one of the journalists. Twitter also gives diverse views on the same topic by different persons (Broersma and Graham, 2013).

The verified information from social media (Hermida, 2010) has not only the potential to add further nuances to a news story, but it can sometimes save much time (Brandtzaeg *et al.*, 2016). "I think it is all about the timing if you can get your timing right and if you can add to the growing interest of your audience in a particular story by giving them angles, by giving them new ideas, by giving them perspectives they would be interested in" (*Interview: BBC Correspondent 2, 4 December 2018*). Social media updates you regularly with the latest developments across the globe. "Social media is also an excellent resource for journalists and excellent tool by which we can be alerted to developments as they are happening" (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*), reaffirms one of the BBC editors.

Social media, in a way, also forewarns you of a possible news story or development. This helps the journalist to look for other sources or possible news coverage related to that particular story. This becomes an early source of information. In the words of a BBC editor, "There are many credible sources which put their content

out on Twitter. From my team's point of view, if we are monitoring news from a given country, then much before the news might arrive on the website let us say of a newspaper it might be able to tweet out before that. So, in terms of being timely with our understanding of what is happening today, it is a useful source" (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*).

Digital media has changed the news environment, the way some of the news is broken, the sources gathered, and the news disseminated as evidenced in the interviews from the various newsroom participants. Digital Media has, in a way, both increased and decreased a journalist's work. It has increased a journalist's work to verify and authenticate the news on digital media before it could be used as a source in a news item. This is particularly hard in India because of the large amount of false news circulating in digital media (Sharma and Aggarwal, 2019; Rodrigues and Xu, 2020). It is a challenge to verify the news' authenticity and broadcast it on time before it becomes too late. The challenge is too big for the BBC journalist, especially when the credibility of credentials in question is too high. In the words of an Indian BBC editor, "I think social media has changed us significantly. It has become very volatile because what is real and what is fake has become difficult to ascertain. So, the job is channelled to you easily, but to react in good time, to understand and sift through this whole thing is another big challenge" (*Interview: Jha, 5 December 2018*). The intensity of the journalist's work in the digital world's environment, where the possibilities of being on the wrong side are very high (Turner, 2012).

The reach of social media in India and across the globe is so fast that one tweet can break or make anyone. At the same time, the journalist also has the advantage of getting news sources channelled to one's own office or desktop, via social media. It

also provides an opportunity to update oneself with the latest trend or happening, be it politics, business, sports or any other (Belair-Gagnon, 2015). "Sitting in my office, I am getting stories which I would never get. However, the onus is on me to verify them", said one of the BBC journalists from the BBC India bureau (*Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018*).

Looking at the trend in social media sometimes can help with a potential story. Social media is used to see what the latest news trend is. In the words of Ayeshea Perera, "...So, if something is trending on social media perhaps it might look into doing an explainer on it or like trying to look at a new angle into something or to do something around why this particular topic is trending and what is significant about it" (*Interview: 23 June 2020*). India being a multi-lingual country, it is not always possible to have reporters covering every language or region. But with the arrival of social media, the journalist can monitor news trends and look for potential news stories even across different regions where the BBC has its regional language services.

A major change in the Indian BBC newsroom is the creation of the news items for various mediums. If it was a single strategy for a single story earlier for the BBC journalist in India, the scenario has changed to multiple strategies for a single story for various platforms including the style of the news item, the duration or length of the news item and so forth, because there are multiple platforms in which a single news item can be disseminated. "Now, when we devise the strategy even of a single story, then there is a strategy for TV, a strategy for social media, online strategy, and radio strategy. It has changed my work. It is the way I work, the way I conceive a story that has changed," said one of the BBC journalists (*Interview: BBC News Anchor, 4 December 2018*).

The changes that social media brought about were not so easy for everyone. (O'Sullivan and Heinonen, 2008). For some, it was a challenging learning process. So too, it was with the BBC journalist working in India. As one of them said, "It is a learning process, and not every journalist is good at it. It depends very much on the individual's interest with social media. But I think there is a certain expectation that you cannot ignore social media, and there is a growing expectation that one will eventually develop the skills" (*Interview: BBC Editor 3, 4 December 2018*). Social media require journalists to cope with a digital and high-speed and networked environment. This is supported by the conclusions from an earlier study conducted by Hermida *et al.* (2014) and Johnston (2016), which asserted that journalists are to familiarise with newer and advanced technology. In a subcontinent like India, it is impossible to have journalists across every region. However, accessibility to social media could help to get news sources even remotely. The new trend of breaking news on social media would mean that a journalist adapts oneself to the changing technology and environment.

Conclusion

Digital media, especially the arrival of online platforms, and social media, have changed journalism's mediascape. The online platform provided the space for easier accessibility to news across the globe and instant audience response if need be. This has enabled wider news dissemination by the media houses and greater news consumption across the globe. "I think that online platform has given journalists, academics and everyone, access to a much wider range of public opinion" (*Interview: 12 June 2020*), observed William Crawly. Among digital media, social media seems to have greatly influenced the BBC journalists (Broersma and Graham, 2013) reporting on India. This phenomenon is not limited to India alone. However, India being a

subcontinent, with its multi-lingual and multi-cultural milieu, is not easy to cover. But the platforms like social media reduce this distance and inaccessibility to a certain extent. The accessibility, for example, of sources becomes a lot easier. Therefore, digital media has helped to increase coverage of the Indian news with more sources in it and a wider range of topics covered on BBC platforms.

The next chapter, which will be the concluding chapter of this thesis, will focus on the theoretical relevance of gatekeeping theory related to this study, the findings, and limitations of this study.

Chapter 9: Findings and Conclusion

This concluding chapter is divided into two sections. The first section elaborates on the major findings based on the discussions conducted in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, and it also dwells on the relevance of gatekeeping theory even in a digital media environment. The second section reflects on the limitations of this research and further recommendations for future study.

Section 1

Major Findings

The first research question sought to answer how the BBC reported India in the digital era. This was answered through a comparative study of BBC Radio WNS between the years of 1977, 1997 and 2019; and a comparative study of BBC Radio WNS 2019 and BBC Online in 2019. In addition, the first research question was explored through a comparative study of the news coverage of BBC Online 2019 with AJE Online 2019 and CNN Online 2019. The second research question examined how digital technologies have changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India.

Increase in the News Items

The research showed that the BBC's news coverage of India, though sporadic, has been consistent since the 1970s. However, despite the early establishment of the BBC Indian bureau, the technological progress in the communication system and a well-knit network of reporters and stringers across India, the Indian news coverage continued

to be sporadic, occasional, episodic and intermittent (Franks, 2014) to a large extent until the arrival of digital technology. The digital era saw an increase in the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio WNS compared to the yesteryears when digital technologies were absent. As the digital technologies were setting in, the BBC Indian bureau expanded its Indian languages services which ensured more journalists and reporters on-ground reporting for the BBC. Besides, the global repositioning of India on various fronts, the geopolitical compulsions of the region (Wasserman, 2017), the business prospect (Banerjee, 2001), and the vast Indian market also have contributed mainly to the increase in the Indian news report.

Range of Indian Stories Increased

The advent of digital technology changed the communication system making it easier and faster even across the continents (Singhal and Rogers, 2001; Thussu, 2013b). As the accessibility and the communication became easier than earlier times, this, in turn, had a positive effect on BBC's Indian news coverage. For instance, the comparison between 1977, 1997 and 2019 BBC Radio World News Service revealed an increase in the range of topics covered by BBC Radio World News Service. In the 1970s, when resources were limited both in terms of personnel and technology, the BBC's focus was limited to the day's major Indian stories. However, in the late 1990s, when the communication became a little easier and faster, there was a marginal increase in the Indian news coverage, and along with this, the range of stories began to be varied. In 2019, with the expansion of digital technology, the picture became more vivid with a varied range of Indian stories by the BBC at a global level.

Negativity Prevails

What gets covered in a news broadcast is very often negative events (Chaudhary, 2001). The purpose of broadcast news is to inform the public. In this process, the predominant topics featured on a news platform may likely have negative news content because that is what news consists of (Scott, 2009). This study has revealed that it was no different in the BBC global news coverage of India. Although there was an increase in the range of Indian stories covered in the digital era, the majority of the news items covered by the BBC at the global level were in the categories of human and natural disasters and law and order.

Notwithstanding the increased range of topics, the majority of the Indian news covered by the BBC for its global audience was negative. This research supplements the earlier findings that the international representations of developing countries (in this case, India) continue to be crisis reporting to a large extent (Brooks 1995; Bunce *et al.*, 2017). Neither the number of media personnel involved in reporting the news, the nationality of the news reporter, nor the advanced communication system has brought about a significant change in this aspect. In spite of the increase in the number and range of stories featured, the dominant topics continued to be negative in nature.

This finding is reflected in other news outlet's international news coverage of India. In the Indian news coverage by the BBC and AJE, the predominant topic was 'law and order'. For CNN, the dominant topic was 'human welfare stories', but under this topic, the most featured subtopics belonged to human and natural disasters. This is in line with the earlier studies which showed that the news coverage of developing countries is often negative and disparaging. In this regard, the conformity of Asian

(AJE), European (the BBC), and American (CNN International) perspectives to the dominant Indian topic featured was evident except for their differences in their total number of such stories.

Use of Sources

When verification of sources was difficult, the BBC relied more on known and easily verifiable sources like the media personnel for their Indian news coverage. But in the digital era when the accessibility became easier, the BBC's Indian news coverage included many sources from different fields of expertise or the people connected with the news covered compared to the past, i.e., pre-online era. In other words, the BBC used a wider and more diverse range of sources in its Indian news coverage in the digital era.

The BBC may have increased its range of using sources in their Indian news coverage, but it was not enough to surpass other media platforms in the same era. When the BBC was compared to AJE in the digital era, it was found that the number of sources was lower in the Indian news coverage. An increased number of journalists, a wider network of stringers and easy accessibility may not always necessarily guarantee an increased use of sources in news coverage. In this research, it was found that the BBC despite having a good number of BBC reporters on the ground including those from the Indian language services, had the least number of sources used in its Indian news coverage with shorter Indian news items. Therefore, it is not only the presence of the network of journalists across a region that matters in the news coverage of a region, but also the approach and the outlook of a media organisation towards the region both of which influence the scope of news coverage.

The Mode of Medium Matters

The type of media platform used in news broadcast matters both in the amount of content and in the dissemination of news items. Even though there was an increase in the number of Indian stories by BBC Radio WNS, the news stories' duration was shorter compared to the pre-online era (1977 and 1997). In the digital era, the majority of the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio WNS was shorter, condensed and at times lacked details, unlike the pre-online era when there were fewer but longer Indian news stories.

The easy accessibility and communication do not necessarily guarantee an increase in the duration of news coverage of a developing country over others if the medium used to broadcast like radio has its conventional limitations like time or space availability within a news-hour. Therefore, the Indian news coverage of BBC Radio World News Service stayed short, and the possibility of even the shorter Indian news featured at a global level still remained a big challenge.

The online news platform allows greater possibility and provides news broadcast and disseminating news items than the radio. Therefore, in the year 2019, BBC Online had more Indian news items on its platform compared to BBC Radio World News Service. With the possibility of additional space and scope, BBC Online also had many more sources in its Indian news coverage, making the coverage more reliable, credible, and richer. It also enabled the journalists from India with greater awareness of the norms, culture and context to cover in-depth news coverage of certain events and detail it with various dimensions, nuances and nitty-gritty.

The Missing Correspondent's Name

In its Indian news coverage, the BBC relied most of the time on its own media personnel for its Indian news coverage. Despite having their own media personnel to cover the news, compared to the late 1970s and up to the present times, there has been a gradual decline in mentioning the correspondent's name in BBC's Radio WNS and online news coverage of India. In 1977, when the British expats or foreign nationals were reporting for the BBC from India, most news reports had carried their names. When the Indian journalists began to report for the BBC, very often, the correspondents' names were not included despite the possibility of better and direct access to the correspondents.

Geographical Proximity Influences

The geographical closeness of a media organisation to a region or country, the cultural and political affinity of the audience it serves, the national interests (Banerjee, 2001; Nothias, 2016), its business prospects and the interests in the region have a great influence on the extent of news coverage about that region or the country. This research revealed that AJE has proximity to India on many fronts as has been mentioned above, it had the most number of days of Indian news coverage and had the highest number of Indian news items in its platform compared to the BBC and CNN. Besides, AJE gave prominence and priority to several Indian news stories for the reasons mentioned above by placing them on its home page compared to the BBC and CNN. Additionally, the research also found that AJE had longer Indian stories than the BBC and CNN due to its proximity in the regional matters. AJE's Indian coverage was detailed with a lot more sources added in it.

Digital Technology, Journalistic Practices and Gatekeeping Theory

Digital media, especially the onset of online platforms and social media, has transformed the mediascape of journalism. The online platform has allowed easier access to news across the globe and instant audience feedback. The possibilities of various digital platforms also meant that a single news item must have different news packages for different platforms through which it could be disseminated.

The advent of digital technologies has added new dimensions to newsgathering, news dissemination and news consumption (Thussu, 2013b; Banerjee, 2002; Ranganathan and Rodrigues, 2010). In line with this development, digital technologies have changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India. For a subcontinent like India with its multi-linguistic, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic character, the arrival of digital technologies has accelerated the accessibility of different parts of India. As a result, the BBC Indian news broadcasts in 2019 saw an increase in the number of news items, in the range of Indian stories and the sources that were employed. It enabled the Indian news coverage of the BBC to have newer and deeper nuances from various viewpoints or dimensions, but not without a series of processing. The BBC journalists /editors had to choose from among the number of news items and sources they received.

Digital technologies, especially social media, have changed some of the newsroom practices of BBC in India. They have widened the scope of newsgathering and accessibility to news sources in addition to the existing traditional ways. Digital technologies have enabled journalists to access sources remotely via phone, social

media, and official websites through official press releases of events (Rauchfleisch *et al.*, 2017). In the eventuality of failing to physically get the sources, like in a terrorist attack or natural calamity, the journalists looked for relevant tweets to get updates and identify additional information. Although social media sources reached the journalists' desktop and they could access them from their offices, verification continues to pose a challenge. This, in a way, has increased the workload of the journalists and hence they have looked for easily verifiable social media sources such as official tweets or official websites for the press releases. Indeed, the BBC news coverage had 95 per cent of its social media sources taken from Twitter in 2019. The journalists sitting in their newsroom were able to gather information, verify it, complement with additional information in news coverage and even get alerted of a possible news story through social media trends, because social media technologies assisted instantaneous dissemination of information (Hermdia, 2010) as more and more people, have been using it to break the news.

Thus, at this point, it is also important to acknowledge that all the sources and news items that were received by the BBC underwent the process of gatekeeping. Therefore, gatekeeping (Lewin, 1947; Shoemaker and Vos, 2011; 2009) was a relevant theoretical approach to this study, which has focussed on the BBC journalistic practices and issues arising from them while reporting on India. Chapter 4 of this thesis outlined the nature of this theory and the implication of applying it to this study.

The BBC in India expanded over the years, and its journalists embraced new techniques for news sources and dissemination, but they still had to adhere to the BBC editorial standards, such as journalistic objectives of truth, accuracy and impartiality. Lewin's theory of 'exosystem' (Deluliis, 2015) points out that gatekeeping occurs on

account of the journalistic standards and organisational policies in operation. Hence, from the moment of receiving a source of information at the BBC, the process of gatekeeping begins both at the individual level and institutional level. The BBC journalist at the Indian bureau first analyses it on his/her own and does a process of analysis of the proposed news item followed by the institutional norms of process and selection. 'Gatekeepers represent their organisation and their profession' (Singer, 2010). Even in full media freedom, there are unwritten norms and practices in place that influence or shape the news flow. The news presented to the public audience by the BBC was in conformity with its own norms and practices. The BBC being both a public broadcaster and a foreign broadcaster in India adds an additional layer of gatekeeping when Indian news items are broadcast globally. BBC Radio World News Service and BBC Online UK front page are oriented towards a global audience. Therefore, the selection of the Indian news item depends not only on global perspectives, but it also considers the 'social and cultural contexts of the audience' (Muscat, 2015).

Therefore, in spite of the technological advancement in the newsgathering and dissemination, the gatekeeping theory is still valid in the journalistic practices and is relevant as before. The influx of possible news events to the BBC India bureau is so large (*Jha, December 2018*) that the BBC editor had to make important choices regarding the news items for broadcast. Thus, the process of gatekeeping was reaffirmed, and it was necessary concerning the news selection, the angle of the story and its prominence. Accordingly, the news item was processed and proceeded with. The fact that there were differences in the Indian news items featured on BBC World News Service in the years 1977, 1997 and 2019 and on BBC Online in the year 2019 affirms the validity of gatekeeping. Gatekeeping is the process by which many potential

news messages are sorted and formed into those few transmitted by the news media. It is often seen as a series of decision-points at which news items or sources are either proceeded or ended as they pass along news channels from source to correspondent to a progression of editors (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2001). The range of Indian topics that varied over the years reconfirmed the process of gatekeeping. For instance, in 1977 and 1997 BBC Radio World News Services, the range of Indian topics was fewer than the 2019 BBC Radio World News Services. Besides variation in the number of sources used in the Indian news coverage indicated that there was a process of selection in the use of sources used in the news coverage.

Despite the changes in the media environment, the gatekeeping roles remained in a number of important ways at different levels of the news production process. The BBC received several potential news sources from social media and other platforms, but their editorial decision made an item part of the news product and enhanced the visibility of that news source. A selection of sources from social media was already done to determine which one was to be featured or highlighted and which one disposed of. The gatekeeping at the BBC Indian bureau is prevalent even today. The arrival of social media networks has not changed the process but only altered it (Singer, 2014). The gatekeeping process, which began at the individual level, was extended to the institutional level and further broadened to the social network level.

Compared to the past, the difference is in the type and range of processing of news and sources. If it was more of individual processing in earlier years, as the institutions grew, explicit norms and regulations were laid down, leading to the institutionalised gatekeeping in the contemporary newsroom. With the arrival of social media, gatekeeping went further to a 'two-stepped gatekeeping level' (Singer, 2014)

with the difference of primary gatekeeper and the secondary gatekeeper of a news item or event. Ultimately, it is only the form and the process that have changed, but the concept remains valid even today. The gatekeeping theory, which has been tested in other countries, holds good for the BBC Indian bureau. For instance, when an Indian international news item is being prepared, the news reporter chooses among the available sources. The editor decides which aspects or elements are to be highlighted in a particular news item, including the headlines, intro and audio-video materials to be used. The designer decides on the layout of the news item. Whether it is for radio, online, or social media, the news item goes through different 'gatekeeping' layers. At the level of production of a news item, different personnel play different roles, each having specific control over the news package prepared.

To summarise the relevance and applicability of the gatekeeping theory in this study, it was found that digital media has changed journalism and journalistic practices globally. However, what remained unchanged was the journalists' role as gatekeepers of news but in newer ways, changing according to the situations. Despite the developments in communication technology, journalists are expected to follow media outlets' editorial standards and policies. The BBC journalists in India were not devoid of their editorial responsibilities; hence, gatekeeping has continued to exist even today. From the reception of a news or a possible news item, the journalist makes his/her choice whether to proceed with the story/information received or not and goes at par with the organisational level decision on the news story whether to proceed with it any further. The differences in the number and types of Indian news covered by the BBC over the years indicated that deliberations were held on the number of stories and the types of stories to be featured. The differences in the sources used and the length of the news story in the digital era indicated that there was a control of information flow

at the editorial level. The use of social media too differed as journalists decided which social media to be included or excluded from news coverage. For instance, in the 2019 BBC online Indian news coverage, the differences in the use of social media in the news coverage showed the individual/organisational level decision to include or exclude tweets or other social media sources from news coverage. Accordingly, even in a digital era where the information may be out on social media, the journalists could still play a vital role in enhancing or discarding a social media post, indicating the role of primary and secondary gatekeeping. The placement of the news or its layout was again decided by the editorial team, who played a significant role in the exposition of the news item/s on different platforms. All these suggested that the developments in communication technology may have changed for the better over the years, but gatekeeping continues in different formats and ways. The gatekeeping theory is valid even in the digital era, just as it was in the earlier days of journalism.

Section 2

Limitations and Recommendations

This thesis contributes to the existing literature by focusing on the BBC's news coverage of India in the digital era in particular and news coverage of the global South by the global North in general. The findings complement some of the earlier studies about the BBC's Indian news coverage (Banerjee, 2001; Franks, 2006; 2014), the news coverage of developing countries (Brooks, 1995; Bunce, 2017), the influence of the news coverage with the arrival of digital technologies (Hermida *et al.*, 2010; 2014; Moon and Hadley, 2014), and change in the journalistic practices on account of digital technologies (Broersma and Graham, 2013; Belair and Gagnon, 2015; Rauchfleisch

et al., 2017). Although this study tries to give a comprehensive evaluation of the BBC reporting of India, it is important to acknowledge some of its limitations on account of various reasons.

The first major research question explored how the BBC reports India in the digital era. A comparative study of BBC Radio World News Service broadcast between 1977, 1997 and 2019 was carried out to probe this. However, the data collected for 1977 and 1997 were radio PasBS and not the actual news broadcasts. Although it provided details about the news broadcast, it is possible that it may not be as comprehensive as the actual news broadcast. The actual news broadcast was used for the year 2019 Radio WNS broadcast. Therefore, the comparison of 1977, 1997, and 2019 may have some downsides in their details.

This research was also designed to identify the differences between radio and online international news coverage of India. As mentioned earlier, the radio broadcast has a few disadvantages compared to the online platform. The nature of both platforms differs, and therefore, this was given due consideration during the research. Taking into account the differences in the nature of radio and online, the data for radio was collected for 66 days per year while for online, it was only for 36 days.

It is also to be noted that under the first research question, a comparison was made among online Indian news coverage of the BBC, CNN and AJE in the year 2019. For this, the international front pages (webpage) for CNN and AJE online were used while for the BBC, its UK front page (webpage) was accessed to compare online platforms. Although the BBC has an international web page for its online platform, I could access only the UK front page of the BBC online because of my being in the UK.

The BBC being a global broadcaster, has four front/home pages for different regions and web pages with particular sections. So, it was not feasible to access and analyse all these four front/home pages of the BBC. This research has restricted itself to the UK front web pages accessed from the UK and the Indian news that appeared on its home page, world page, Asia and India specific pages. The research has not gone into other particular web section pages like sports, weather, arts, health, science, etc. This study has not included BBC television news coverage of India due to technical reasons.

Recommendations for Further Study

Since the BBC website has four front/home pages, it would be worth exploring BBC English online platform and assess it from within India against one or two other leading English online platforms operated from India. Such an approach would indicate if there are major discrepancies or similarities in the Indian news coverage by an international news organisation. Then that study would help determine if there are differences in the type and the range of Indian news, the style and the approach, and the sources used in the Indian news coverage. It would also help to make clear or assert the 'otherness' of the BBC as an international news organisation and how much it differs compared to Indian media organisations operating from within India. Additionally, it would also help evaluate the Indian press freedom, considering India's changing scenario today.

Concluding Summary

The Indian news coverage of the BBC has changed with the arrival of digital technology. This thesis has sought to demonstrate how BBC's Indian news coverage

has evolved as the communication technology developed over the years. The research has found that as communication technology became easier than earlier years, the scope of news coverage broadened in terms of the number of news items, the range of news coverage, and the news sources. The digital technologies have boosted the news coverage to a newer dimension with its instant reachability and wider coverage. Digital technologies have enhanced news coverage to a newer level, but various elements such as geographical closeness, regional and national interests and business prospects play a significant role in the news coverage and broadcast. Therefore, the journalists and the editorial policies of a media house still play a vital role in the broadcast of a news item from a region or country. In spite of the developments in the communication system, the news coverage of developing countries still looms largely around negative stories.

The research has also delved into the changing nature of the BBC journalistic practices in India on account of digital media. Often the BBC is one of the first media houses to adapt newer technologies for its broadcast. Accordingly, at the beginning of the digital era, the BBC began to incorporate the newer digital communication technologies into its newsroom and broadcast. It was no different also at the BBC Indian bureau. In India, the BBC journalists had to adapt to the new technologies to keep pace with emerging digital technologies. Digital technologies, especially social media, enabled the journalists to be forewarned of an emerging news story, facilitated them to approach news stories from various dimensions or viewpoints, and empowered them to have access to sources remotely sitting in their offices with the possibility of broadened scope of reachability. Unlike in the past, the dissemination of news happened at multiple platforms in different formats, and so the featured news item had to cater to different platforms through which it was to be circulated. When

traditional journalism blends with digital technologies, the scope of journalism is redefined, empowering the journalists with a wider scope and newer feasibilities.

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Appendix 1: Data Sources

BBC Radio World News Service PasBs 1977

May 1:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 1 May 1977
May 9:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 May 1977
May 12:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 12 May 1977
May 21:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 May 1977
June 9:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 June 1977
June 15:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 15 June 1977
June 18:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 18 June 1977
June 21:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 June 1977
July 1:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 1 July 1977
July 3:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 3 July 1977
July 15:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 15 July 1977
August 3:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 3 August 1977
August 6:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 6 August 1977
August 9:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 August 1977
August 15:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 15 August 1977
August 24:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 24 August 1977
September 9:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 September 1977
November 21:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 November 1977

BBC Radio World News Service PasBs 1997

May 6:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 6 May 1997
May 9:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 May 1997
May 12:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 12 May 1997
May 18:	BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 18 May 1997

May 21: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 May 1997

June 9: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 9 June 1997

June 15: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 15 June 1997

June 21: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 June 1997

July 27: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 27 July 1997

July 30: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 30 July 1997

August 15: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 15 August 1997

August 21: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 21 August 1997

August 27: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 27 August 1997

September 12: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 12 September 1997

September 30: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 30 September 1997

October 12: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 12 October 1997

October 18: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 18 October 1997

October 24: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 24 October 1997

October 27: BBC Radio World News Service PasBs, 27 October 1997

BBC Radio World News Service 2019

May 1: Newshour, 14:06 01/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/13785E3C?bcast=129031751> (Accessed: 31 May 2019)

May 3: Newshour, 14:06 03/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/137A1B8D?bcast=129043881> (Accessed: 25 May 2019)

May 6: Newshour, 14:06 06/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/137FF867?bcast=129079774> (Accessed: 31 May 2019)

May 12: Newshour, 13:06 12/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/138930C1?bcast=129109701> (Accessed: 31 May 2019)

- May 24: Newshour, 14:06 24/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/139D6CB0?bcast=129196925> (Accessed: 31 May 2019)
- May 30: Newshour, 14:06 30/05/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/13AF9065?bcast=129235719> (Accessed: 31 May 2019)
- June 1: Newshour, 13:06 01/06/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/13B7ECC6?bcast=129255218> (Accessed: 03 Jun 2019)
- June 6: Newshour, 14:06 06/06/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/13C4A1F6?bcast=129284276> (Accessed: 13 Jun 2019)
- June 15: Newshour, 13:06 15/06/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/13D3D5CF?bcast=129407416> (Accessed: 29 Jun 2019)
- July 9: Newshour, 14:06 09/07/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1400B8C9?bcast=129678022> (Accessed: 10 Jul 2019)
- July 12: Newshour, 14:06 12/07/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1405737C?bcast=129697033> (Accessed: 18 Jul 2019)
- July 15: Newshour, 14:06 15/07/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/140AB968?bcast=129720325> (Accessed: 18 Jul 2019)
- July 27: Newshour, 13:06 27/07/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/141F1F98?bcast=129802290> (Accessed: 12 Aug 2019)
- July 30: Newshour, 14:06 30/07/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/14242541?bcast=129816589> (Accessed: 12 Aug 2019)
- August 1: Newshour, 14:06 01/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/142692E7?bcast=129834197> (Accessed: 12 Aug 2019)

- August 3: Newshour, 13:06 03/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/142A8A3C?bcast=129847230> (Accessed: 02 Sep 2019)
- August 6: Newshour, 14:06 06/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/14302607?bcast=129863030> (Accessed: 02 Sep 2019)
- August 9: Newshour, 14:06 09/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/143424B1?bcast=129881086> (Accessed: 02 Sep 2019)
- August 12: Newshour, 14:06 12/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1439FAD5?bcast=129903398> (Accessed: 02 Sep 2019)
- August 15: Newshour, 14:06 15/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/143E19BD?bcast=129922887> (Accessed: 02 Sep 2019)
- August 24: Newshour, 13:06 24/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/144E95E9?bcast=129988501> (Accessed: 03 Sep 2019)
- August 27: Newshour, 14:06 27/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1451D17F?bcast=129999008> (Accessed: 03 Sep 2019)
- August 30: Newshour, 14:06 30/08/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1451D35D?bcast=130015894> (Accessed: 03 Sep 2019)
- September 9: Newshour, 14:06 09/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1474388B?bcast=130221217> (Accessed: 28 Sep 2019)
- September 15: Newshour, 13:06 15/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1474D190?bcast=130224572> (Accessed: 28 Sep 2019)
- September 18: Newshour, 14:06 18/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1478EC21?bcast=130244231> (Accessed: 28 Sep 2019)

- September 21: Newshour, 13:06 21/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/147BD1DD?bcast=130257585> (Accessed: 28 Sep 2019)
- September 24: Newshour, 14:06 24/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/1482ECAf?bcast=130287750> (Accessed: 28 Sep 2019)
- September 30: Newshour, 14:06 30/09/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/148CCA0E?bcast=130323787> (Accessed: 01 Oct 2019)
- October 1: Newshour, 14:06 01/10/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/148F08A6?bcast=130325083> (Accessed: 25 Oct 2019)
- October 3: Newshour, 14:06 03/10/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/149089FC?bcast=130335957> (Accessed: 25 Oct 2019)
- October 24: Newshour, 14:06 24/10/2019, BBC World Service Radio, 54 mins.
<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/14B72C01?bcast=130487468> (Accessed: 02 Nov 2019)

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- May 1: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/maoist-rebels-kill-indian-policemen-maharashtra-state-190501092921368.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/04/bjp-rise-political-eminence-lies-temple-town-190425090431381.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/puts-pakistani-armed-group-chief-masood-azhar-terror-list-190501152953396.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/cyclone-fani-strengthens-east-coast-india-190501110504164.html>
- May 6: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-election-87m-states-vote-190506044150246.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-shelling-kills-people-pakistan-administered-kashmir-190506083017472.html>

	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-poverty-child-malnutrition-rife-west-singhbhum-190506123916595.html
May 12:	https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bollywood-politics-hate-190512120818857.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-elections-2019-voting-penultimate-190512044847266.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-votes-2019-hindu-nationalist-bombing-suspect-ballot-190512053421706.html
	https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/listeningpost/2019/05/modi-money-india-elections-190512091538453.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/5/12/isil-claims-province-in-india-officials-call-it-propaganda
May 18:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/uttar-pradesh-state-key-prize-india-election-190518082052108.html
May 24:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/southasia/2019/05/india-fire-tutoring-centre-kills-17-students-190524172851411.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/modi-vows-india-new-heights-190524140743735.html
	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/indian-general-elections-2019-latest-updates-190521080547337.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-elections-rahul-gandhi-congress-190524092951629.html
	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-votes-modi-landmark-mandate-190523122306435.html https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/14-trillion-india-spending-push-tops-modi-20-agenda-190524083725856.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/pakistan-pm-khan-seeks-peace-talks-modi-election-win-190524073158445.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/zakir-musa-tensions-kashmir-killing-top-rebel-190524092820067.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/indian-climbers-die-nepal-mount-everest-190524074535262.html

May 30:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/india-modi-sworn-term-prime-minister-190530141633546.html https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/indian-democracy-threat-modi-190530084556960.html https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/modi-20-india-elected-pm-deliver-economy-190530065014507.html https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2019/05/delhi-deadly-air-190529055623225.html
	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/indian-army-man-assam-declared-foreigner-190530103723300.html
June 12:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/india-unveils-chandrayaan-2-spacecraft-moon-landing-mission-190612110619499.html https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/world-day-child-labour-bigger-impact-190610114721290.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/cyclone-vayu-threatens-india-pakistan-190611090703282.html
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June 24:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/religious-hatred-muslim-man-india-lynched-video-190624141020360.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/india-rejects-critical-religious-freedom-report-190623065422842.html https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2019/6/24/indian-central-bank-deputy-governor-acharya-resigns-early https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/zara-indian-partner-building-cheaper-fashion-chain-190624015023237.html
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July 12:	https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/07/india-bjp-revive-hindu-settlement-plan-kashmir-report-190712111627296.html
	https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/india-officials-meet-resolve-trade-issues-190712050159768.html
July 18:	https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/received-patients-young-kashmir-drug-problem-190718100740330.html https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/india-launch-lunar-mission-july-22-delay-190718063938714.html https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/07/indias-monsoon-floods-kill-dozens-displace-thousands-190718152149185.html https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/101east/2019/07/india-women-warriors-190718071647785.html
July 24:	https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/indian-female-farmers-womb-boost-productivity-190723201905906.html https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/india-running-time-cash-demographic-dividend-190724064429092.html
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September 18: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/18/health/india-e-cigarette-ban-intl/index.html>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/18/tech/alexa-hindi-amazon-india/index.html>

<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/bees-delay-flight-air-india-kolkata/index.html>

October 1: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/01/business/ford-india-mahindra-joint-venture/index.html>

October 6: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/05/asia/india-modi-open-defecation-free-intl-hnk-scli/index.html>

October 12: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/10/india/china-india-xi-jinping-modi-khan-intl-hnk/index.html>

October 18: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/18/asia/delhi-marathon-pollution-intl-hnk-scli/index.html>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/17/tech/india-facial-recognition-intl-hnk/index.html>

October 24: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/23/business/paytm-vijay-shekhar-sharma-risk-takers/index.html>

Appendix 2: List of Interviewees

BBC Correspondent 2 (2018) 'Research Interview, 4 December 2018'.

BBC Editor 3 (2018) 'Research Interview, 4 December 2018'.

BBC News Anchor (2018) 'Research Interview, 4 December 2018'.

BBC Correspondent 1 (2018) 'Research Interview, 5 December 2018'.

BBC Editor 2 (2018) 'Research Interview, 5 December 2018'.

BBC Editor 1 (2018) 'Research Interview, 5 December 2018'.

Crawley, W. (2020) 'Research Interview, 12 June 2020'.

Dissanayake, S. (2020) 'Research Interview, 20 February 2020'.

Jacob, S. (2020) 'Research Interview, 19 June 2020'.

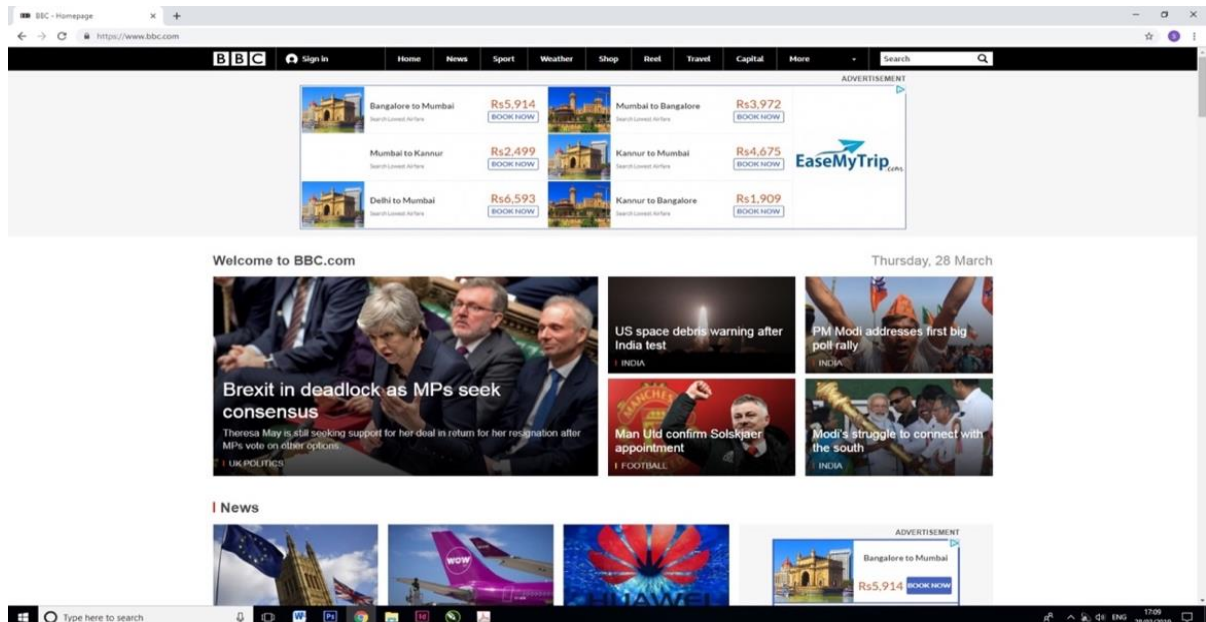
Jha, R. (2018) 'Research Interview, 5 December 2018'.

Loyn, D. (2020) 'Research Interview, 21 February 2020'.

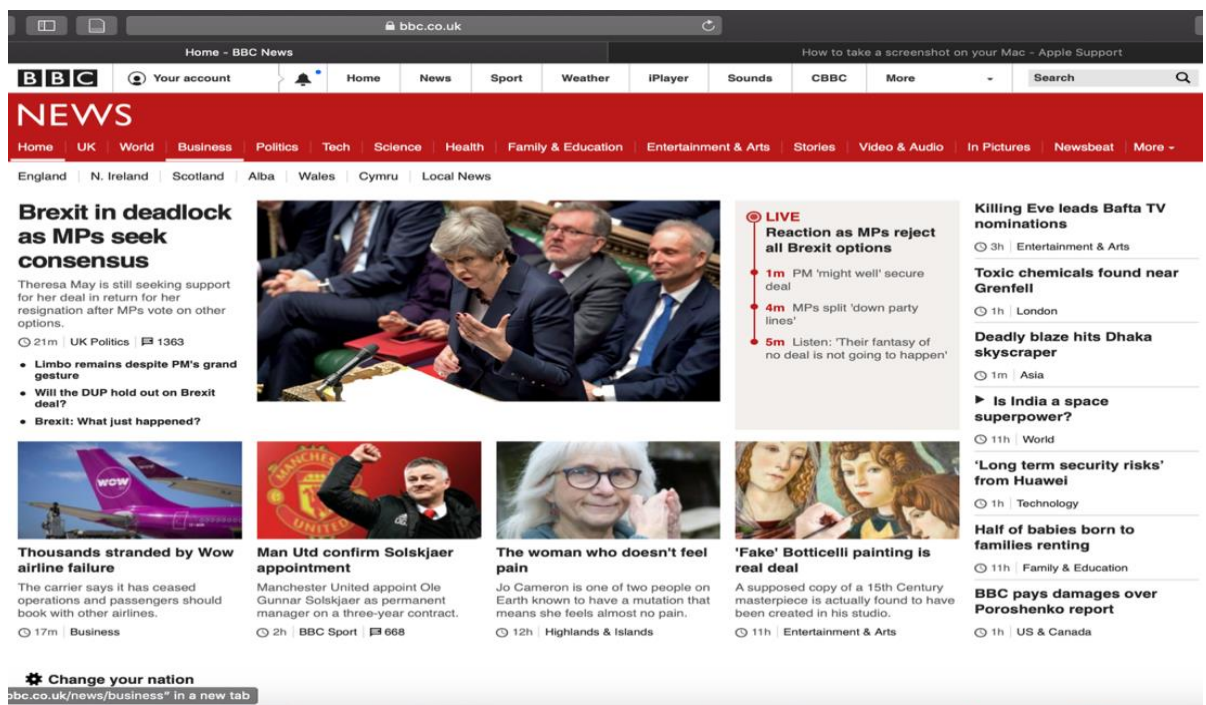
Perera, A. (2020) 'Research Interview, 23 June 2020'.

Tully, M. (2020) 'Research Interview, 14 May 2020'.

Appendix 3: Comparison between the BBC Online pages accessed from India and the UK



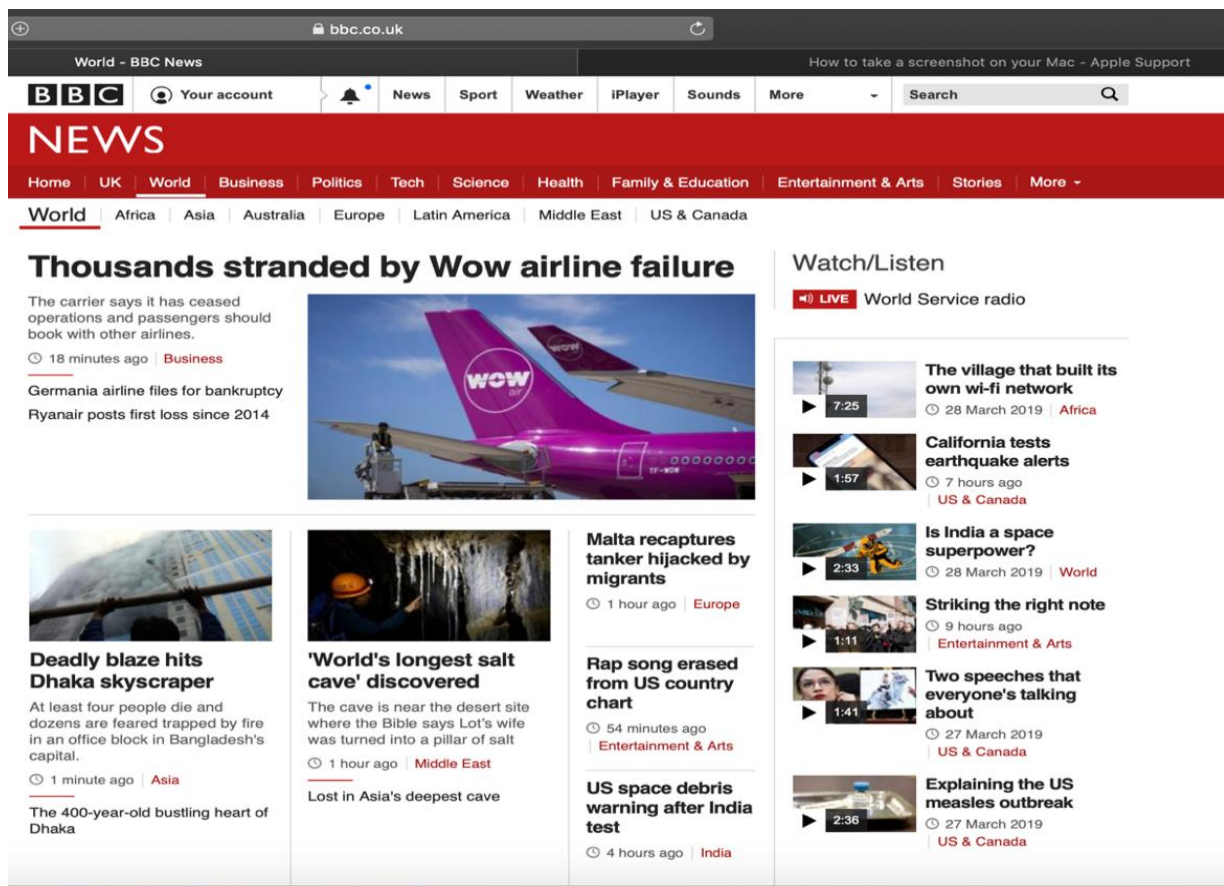
(Image 2: 'Home page' of the BBC accessed from India)



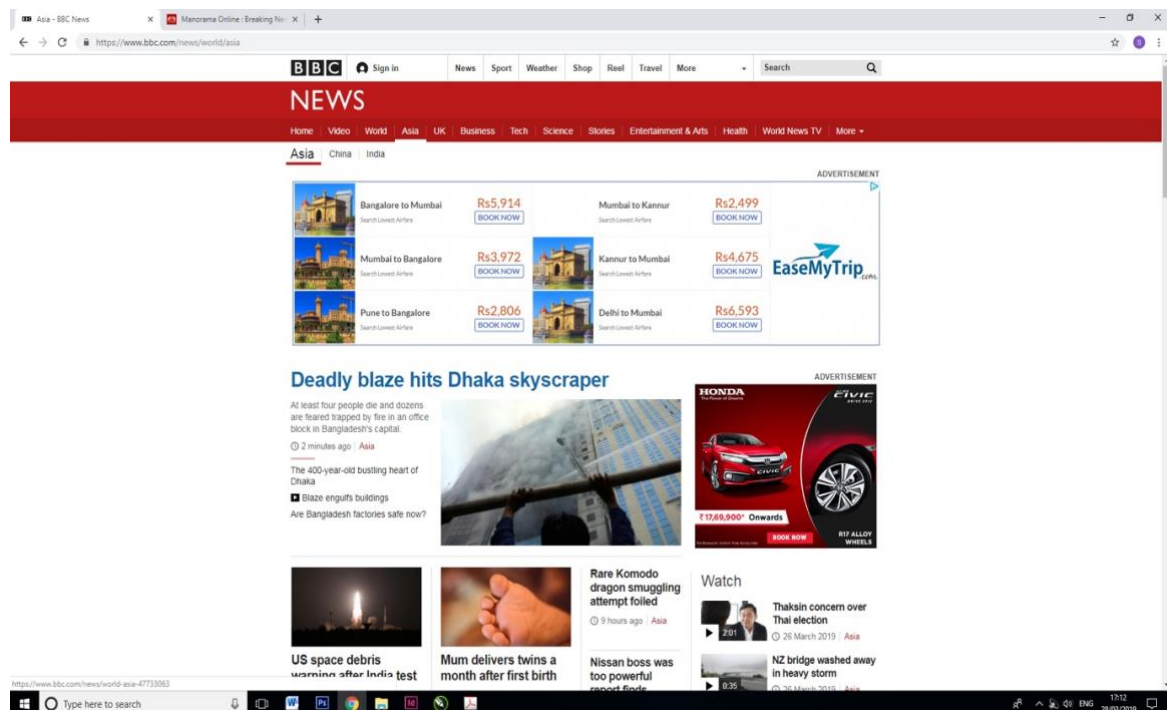
(Image 3: 'Home page' of the BBC accessed from UK)



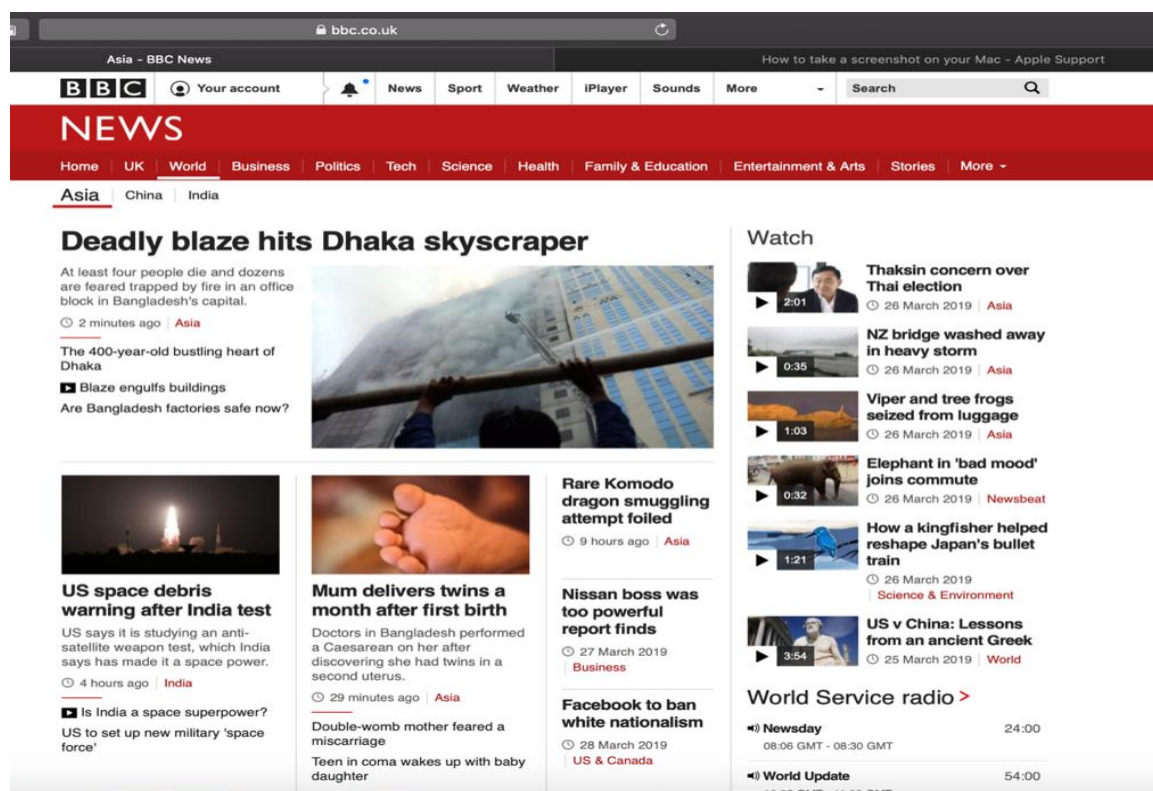
(Image 4: 'World page' of the BBC accessed from India)



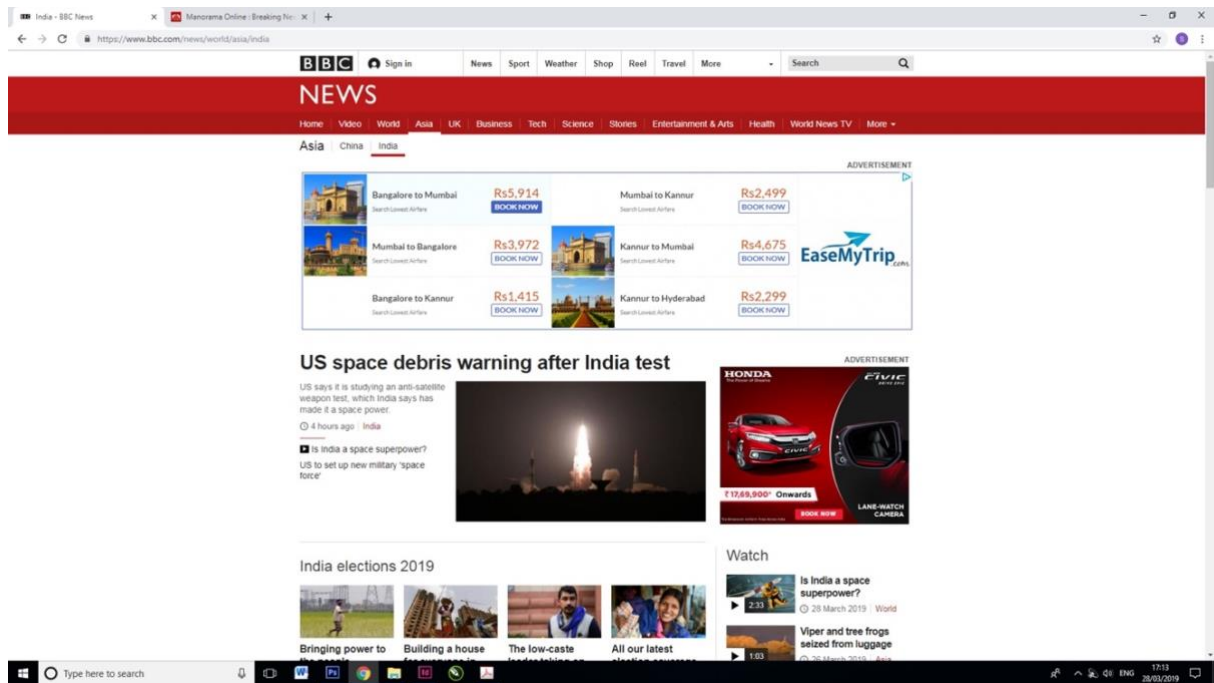
(Image 5: 'World page' of the BBC accessed from UK)



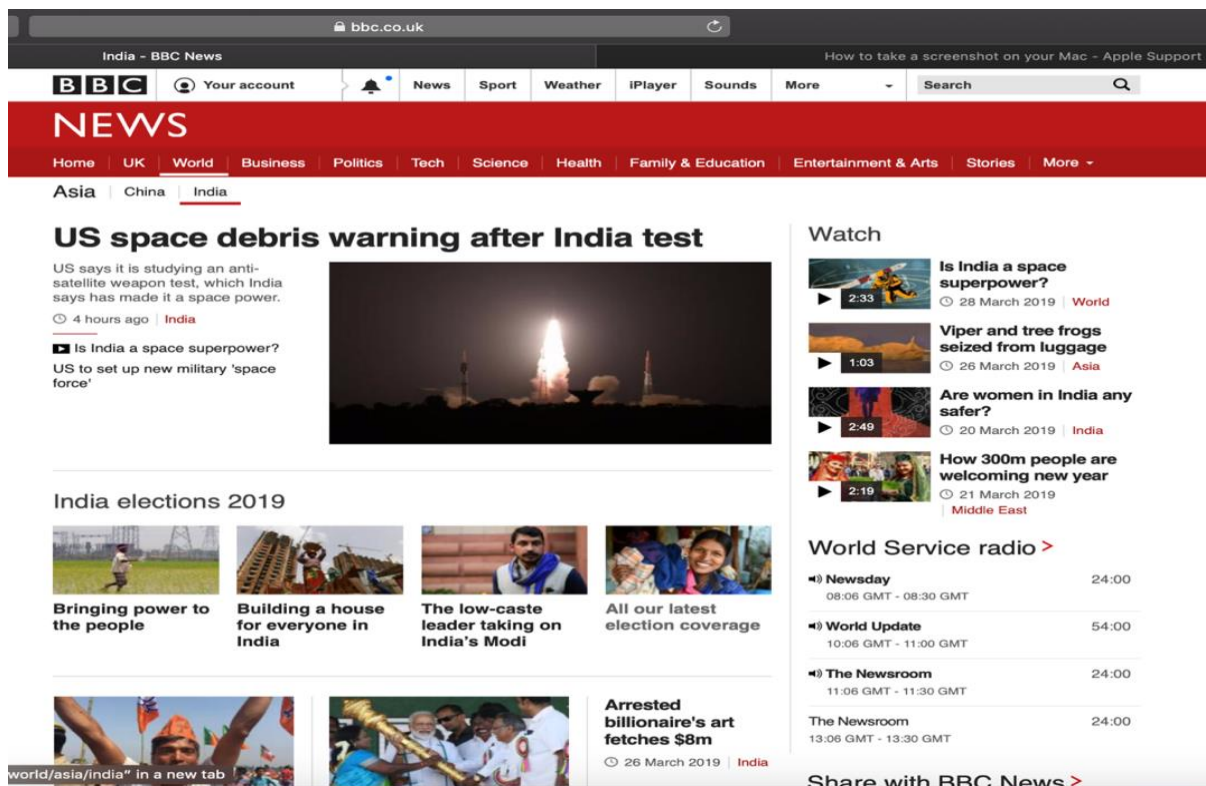
(Image 6: 'Asia page' of the BBC accessed from India)



(Image 7: 'Asia page' of the BBC accessed from UK)



(Image 8: 'India page' of the BBC accessed from India)



(Image 9: 'India page' of the BBC accessed from UK)

Appendix 4: Codebook

Title: The BBC's Portrayal of India

An analysis of how the International News Coverage of India changed in the Digital Era

RQ 1. How does BBC report India in the digital era?

RQ 1a. How does BBC Radio World News Service reporting of India differ between the years 1977, 1997 and 2019?

RQ 1b. How does BBC Radio World News Service 2019 reporting of India differ from that of BBC Online in 2019?

RQ 1c. How does BBC Online report on India compared to CNN Online and AJE Online in 2019?

RQ 2. How have digital technologies changed the practices of the BBC journalists reporting on India?

The major aspects considered in this study

The emerging themes in the news coverage

The sources that are used

The extent of news coverage

The use of Twitter in the news Coverage

Note: For the online news article one unit of study refers to one article referring to India or Indian, while for the radio news coverage it consists of each of the news broadcast referring to India or Indian. Each news item in this study is considered as a single data unit.

1. Date of issue?

2. The name of news outlet? (name the news outlet from where the data unit is taken)

2.1 BBC Online News (English)

2.2 BBC World News Service Radio (English)

2.3 BBC Radio PSBs (pre-online - English)

2.4 CNN Online News (English)

2.5 *Al-Jazeera* Online News (English)

3. Type of article? (Each of the Indian news item is treated as one unit of data in this study.)

3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4

3.1 News Report

(Factual news report, report of events, i.e., of what has happened (when, where, who what, why). Reporting of facts, numbers, declarations, happenings, events, etc.)

3.2 Analysis

(Longer article which includes not only factual reporting but also looking behind scenes and analytical.)

3.3 Interviews

(short interviews done as part of the news coverage is not considered as interviews, this applies to those stand-alone interviews only.)

3.4 Other

4. Length of the Online news item (Applicable for Online news only.)

(categorize according to the number of words in each of the news item.)

4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4

- 4.1. 1 - 250 words
- 4.2. 251- 500 words
- 4.3. 501 – 750 words
- 4.4. 751 words and above

5. Duration of Radio news item (Applicable only for Radio news only)

Categorized according to the duration of the news item. Each news item covered needs to be counted as a separate news item.

5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4

- 5.1. 0 – 60 seconds
- 5.2. 61 – 180 seconds
- 5.3. 181 – 300 seconds
- 5.4. 301 seconds and above

6. Placement of the Radio News (Applicable only for Radio news only)

6.1	6.2	6.3

- 6.1. Beginning (within 15 minutes)
- 6.2. Middle (15 to 30 minutes)
- 6.3. Later (after 30 minutes)

7. Placement of News on Website? (Applicable for Online news only)

7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4

7.1 Home News Page (Main News home page of the website)

7.2 World News page (World News page of the website)

7.3 Asian News (Asia News page of the website)

7.4 India News page (India News page of the website)

8. Name of correspondent (if the names of correspondent/agency mentioned in the news.)

8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4

8.1 Name of the correspondent

8.2 Name of News Agency

8.3 Correspondent and News Agency

8.4 Unspecified

SOURCES

9. Indian Official government agencies

(If the news report has used in its news coverage direct or indirect quotes/comments).
Indicate the number of quote/sources which refer to different aspect related to the news item.

9.1	9.2	9.3.	9.4

9.1 Official press release

9.2 Bureaucrats

9.3 Police

9.4 Other

10. International Politicians and Diplomats

(If the news report has used in its news coverage direct or indirect quotes/comments.)

Indicate the number of quotes/sources.

10.1	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5	10.6	10.7

10.1. Pakistan

10.2. China

10.3. American

10.4. European

10.5. African

10.6. Asian (other than Chinese or Pakistan)

10.7. Other

11. Multi-national institutions

(For example, the representatives of the UN, IMF, World Bank quoted directly or indirectly in the news coverage)

11.0	11.1

11.0 No News Coverage

11.1. Present

12. Nongovernment agencies (NGO)

(If the representatives of the NGOs quoted/commented directly or indirectly in the news coverage and if they are national or international NGO). Give the number of times the NGOs are sourced.

12.1	12.2

12.1 International

12.2 National

13. Experts views and those involved or affected person's view

(Indicate the number of times the views (direct or indirect) are used in the news if they are making a different point on the related news item.)

13.1	13.2	13.3	13.4

13.1 Researcher

13.2 Lawyer

13.3 Media Expert

13.4 Other

14. Media Sources

(One's own and if the news coverage is sourced from other media outlets. Indicate the number of times the source is used in the news item.)

14.1	14.2	14.3

14.1 Own sources

14.2 Indian news outlet

14.3 International news outlet

15. First Source

(the first source name mentioned in the news item)

15.1	15.2	15.3

15.1 National

15.2 International

15.3 Unspecified

16. Social Media

(Here it is mentioned as a source only if the news reports has the 'actual post' within the news report). Record the number of times social media is used in the news.

16.1	16.2	16.3	16.4

16.1 Twitter

16.2 Facebook

16.3 Instagram

16.4 other

SIGNIFICANT TOPIC OF THE STORY

17. Geographic Focus of News?

17.1	17.2

17.1 Indian – Domestic News

(Articles talking specifically about internal affairs of India including natural disasters.)

17.2 International

(news reports that involves international community)

18. Human Welfare issues

18.1	18.2	18.3	18.4	18.5

18.1 Natural Disasters

18.2 Human caused Disasters

18.3 Health

18.4 Poverty

18.5 Other

19. Indian Government Policies

19.1	19.2	19.3	19.4	19.5	19.6	19.7

19.1 Education Policy

19.2 Social Welfare Policy

19.3 Economic Policy

19.4 Information Technology Policy

19.5 Policies related to Religion

19.6 Foreign Policy

19.7 Other

20. Religion (positive stories only)

20.1	20.2	20.3

20.1 Festivals

20.2 Religious Harmony

20.3 Other

21. Political (Indian political issues)

21.1	21.2	21.3	21.4

21.1 Party Politics

21.2. Election

21.3 Government Formation

21.4 Other

22. Social

22.1	22.2	22.3	22.4

22.1 Cast

22.2 Gender

22.3 Cultural Diversity

22.4 Sexuality

23. Law and Order

23.1	23.2	23.3	23.4	23.5	23.6	23.7	23.8	23.9

23.1 Social Unrest

23.2 Violent Demonstrations

23.3 Sexual Harassment

23.4 Domestic Violence

23.5 Communal Violence

23.6 Crime against Minority

23.7 Terrorism

23.8 Fake News

23.9 Crime Other

24. Business and Economy Issues

24.1	24.2	24.3

24.1 Economic Crisis

24.2 Economic Offences

24.3 Investments

25. International Conflict

25.1	25.2	25.3

25.1 Conflict with Pakistan

25.2 Conflict with China

25.3 Other

26. Science, Environment and Information Technology

26.1	26.2	26.3

26.1 Science and Technology

26.2 Environment

26.3 Information Technology

27. Travel and Tourism and Literature

27.1	27.2

27.1 Travel and Tourism

27.2 Literature

28. Indian Judiciary

(this relates to the legislative and executive matters and not crime)

28.0	28.1

28.0 No News Coverage

28.1 Present

29. Sports

29.0	29.1

29.0 No News Coverage

29.1 Present

Appendix 5: Semi-structured Interview Guidelines

Title: The BBC's Portrayal of India

Name:

Gender:

Job title:

Number of years working/worked for the BBC:

1. How do you evaluate the BBC reporting on India?
2. What are the criteria for the selection and dissemination of a particular event or news?
3. Which are the main sources of news that you rely on to report on India?
4. Which are the main sources of your breaking news?
5. Do you think that the BBC reporting on India has changed over the years? If so, what are those significant changes that have occurred?
6. As a journalist, do you think that the social media has changed your working environment? Has it helped you in your work or has the workload increased?
7. How often do you access Twitter for news source and quotes?
8. Do you think that the emergence of the social media has significantly changed the reporting on India?
9. How has been your working for the BBC India? What are/were the possible difficulties you encounter reporting on India?
10. How has the BBC online changed the reporting on India?
11. Do you think that the BBC reporting on India still has the tone of imperialism?

Appendix 6: Consent Form



City University London
 Northampton Square
 London EC1V 0HB
 T +44 (0)20 7040 5060
www.city.ac.uk

Title of Study: **The BBC's Portrayal of India**

1.	I confirm that I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the participant information sheet (date and version), which I may keep for my records. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.	
2.	I understand this will involve • be interviewed by the researcher • allow the interview to be videotaped/audiotaped • Make myself available for a further interview, should that be required	
3.	This information will be held and processed for the following purpose(s): as part of PhD research project. I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation. I understand that should I wish to be anonymous during this research, coding will be put in place to protect my identity from being made public. Otherwise I understand that I have given approval for my name and/or the name of my workplace to be used in the final report of the project, and future publications.	
4.	I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.	
5.	I agree to City, University of London recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose(s) set out in this statement and my consent is conditional on City complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.	
6.	I agree to the arrangements for data storage, archiving, sharing.	
7.	I agree to take part in the above study.	

 Name of Participant

 Signature

 Date

 Name of Researcher

 Signature

 Date

Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheet



City University London
Northampton Square
London EC1V 0HB
T +44 (0)20 7040 5060
www.city.ac.uk

Title of study: The BBC's Portrayal of India

Name of principal investigator: Joshy Joseph Thumpakattu (Student)

Professor Suzanne Franks (Supervisor)

Dr Melanie Bunce (Supervisor)

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of the study is to assess if there are any changes in the BBC's international news coverage of India on account of the changing media environment. The study particularly will look if the arrival of the BBC online has had any implications on the international news coverage of India by the BBC. The research will also examine if the emergence of the social media has had a major influence on the content and the practices of the BBC's reporting of the Indian news.

Why have I been invited?

You are chosen to be part of this study, because you are/were reporting India for the BBC at least for seven years or more.

Participant Information Sheet -1/4

Do I have to take part?

Participation in the project is voluntary, and you can choose not to participate in part or all of the project. You can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. *However, once the data has been published participants will no longer be able to withdraw their data.*

What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview which may last for 45-55 minutes. It's a onetime participation in the interview, unless the situation demands for a second interview. The data collected is used for PhD research studies, and the findings will be published. However, if you prefer to remain anonymous, your identity will be protected. The interviews will be conducted in your office or at a café if it suits your convenience.

What do I have to do?

You will be expected to share your work experience of reporting India for the BBC.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

No risks involved, the data will be protected, unless it is stolen or hacked.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The study aims to contribute to the knowledge of BBC's reporting of India. To analyse if there has been any significant changes in BBC's reporting of India over the years, especially on account of the evolving media ecology.

What will happen when the research study stops?

If the project is halted or abandoned on account of any unforeseen reasons, the Information will be stored safely or destroyed.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Any information you provide will be confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation.

If you wish to be anonymous during this research, coding will be put in place to protect your identity from being made public.

It is only with your consent that your name and/or the name of your workplace will be used in the final report of the project, and future publications.

Data stored in computer files with password protection and storage on an encrypted device.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If the participant is willing to be part of the study, he/she will be contacted via email.

What will happen to results of the research study?

The study findings may be published in media/communication journals. When the article is prepared for journals, it could be shared with the participants, should they request for it. In all the publications, the anonymity of the participants will be maintained, if they have requested to remain anonymous.

What will happen if I do not want to carry on with the study?

The participation in the study is voluntary and that the participant can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been approved by City, University of London **Journalism Departmental Research Ethics Committee**

Further information and contact details

Name: Professor Suzanne Franks

Email: Suzanne.Franks.1@city.ac.uk

Phone: 0207 040 3314

What if there is a problem?

Local contact details (India): Rev Fr Joby Mathew, Society of St Paul, TPS III 23rd Road, Bandra West, Mumbai – 400 050, INDIA.

Ph: +91 7045340899

Email: jobyssp@gmail.com,

If the research is undertaken in the UK if you have any problems, concerns or questions about this study, you should ask to speak to a member of the research team. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this through City's complaints procedure. To complain about the study, you need to phone 020 7040 3040.

Participant Information Sheet -3/4

You can then ask to speak to the Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is: **The BBC's Portrayal of India**

Anna Ramberg
Research Governance & Integrity Manager

Research & Enterprise
City, University of London
Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0HB

Email: Anna.Ramberg.1@city.ac.uk

City holds insurance policies which apply to this study. If you feel you have been harmed or injured by taking part in this study you may be eligible to claim compensation. This does not affect your legal rights to seek compensation. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, then you may have grounds for legal action.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.