



24 % Female Opinion Writers in Print

Male-Female Byline 7:1 in Online Media

A REPORT ON GENDER CONTENTS MONITORING

January-March 2018



GENDER CONTENT MONITORING REPORT

24 % Female Opinion Writers in Print Male-Female Byline 7:1 in Online Media

With more than one year monitoring of women's representation in major print media in Nepal, Freedom Forum presents the first report for 2018. The report consists of findings of monitoring media contents from January to March 2018. This time, FF has added six online news portals in its regular monitoring in view of the growing presence of online media with the expansion of internet in Nepal.

In this context, this report presents a representative picture on presence of men and women in the media contents along with their portrayal in the stories. The media outlets monitored are- Nagarik, Kantipur, Annapurna Post, Gorkhapatra, Nayapatrika, The Kathmandu Post, The Himalayan Times, The Rising Nepal, and Republica dailies. Similarly, online portals monitored are- www.setopati.com, www.ratopati.com, www.onlinekhabar.com, www.lokaantar.com, www.pahilopost.com and www.baahrakhari.com.

The report is prepared after scanning main news and op-ed's from each media once in a week for their bylines, news sources, and analysis through gender perspective. The activity is carried out with the financial support of the Free Press Unlimited (FPU), a foundation based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, working on freedom of expression issues across the world. This evidence-based report, prepared by following the tools and methodologies provided by FPU, is published every three months.

Methodology

As done in the previous study and analyses, the contents are picked from the nine national dailies and six online news portals. Eight news stories from main pages (1, 2, 3, 4 or 6) of each newspaper and two each from Op-Ed section were randomly selected and scanned once in a week (different days in different weeks); however, stories with named bylines were given first priority. The variables were recorded into a coding sheet provided by FPU. Figures derived in the coding sheet were then entered into Microsoft Excel and processed for presentation and tabulation. Data were processed for comparing male versus female presence in news byline and sources, topic-wise distribution and their analysis.

Names of the selected print media have been abbreviated as Kantipur (Kan), Nagarik (Nag), Annapurna Post (AP), Naya Patrika (NP), Gorkhapatra (GP), The Himalayan Times (THT), The Kathmandu Post (TKP), The Rising Nepal (TRN) and Republica (Rep).

Furthermore, five main news published on the home page of each selected online news portal were scanned once in a week (4 times a month) for their byline, news sources, topics category and analysis through gender perspectives (if any). While selecting such news from the portal, diversity of the story was taken into account. Data generated through monitoring were coded into coding sheets and then, analyzed using MS-Excel.

Key findings (Jan-Mar 2018)

- For Op-ed pages of national dailies, women writers comprise 23.98% while, their presence in online and print are 4.14% and 5.2% respectively.
- From print media, Nagarik (15) and Kantipur (11) contained maximum number of female bylines, while www.lokaantar.com and www.setopati.com among online portals contained highest (5) female bylines.
- There is however, a significant increase (3%) on women's presence as news source compared to 2017 in the print media. It is 11.61% on online media in the recent three months.
- Report says majority of female bylines and sources come from news related to social and legal issues.
- Notably, news with female bylines accommodate more women as news sources.
- Number of stories about women (14) is provided more space on the first page of the dailies than before however, majority of the stories about women still perpetuate stereotypes.
- 38.25% and 28.41% of the total news titles fall under Politics and Government category in the print and online media respectively.

Findings from Oct-Dec 2017

- Male bylines (53.94 %) outnumbered female (5.84%), while unknown (40.22%).
- Nagarik daily scored the highest (101) male bylines among others, while Annapurna Post daily contained 17 female bylines (highest of all).
- Among total 1,076 news monitored, 79.75% contained men, 10.38% women and 9.88% secondary sources.
- Among total females, Annapurna Post and Kantipur contributed to the maximum reporters (26.98%) and quoted sources (20.08%) respectively.
- 53.06% news titles fall under Politics and Government followed by 27.32% social and legal news.
- Nine news stories with female bylines and stories about women (9) were published on the first pages of monitored broadsheets.

Analysis

1. News Byline: Monitoring of the 1060 news from print media revealed 503 named bylines from main news and 197 bylines from op-ed pages were recorded. Among these, 52.95% and 5.20% bylines were of male and female in case of main news, whereas 76.02% opinion articles were by male and 23.98% by female.

Among the dailies, NP (86) contained the highest number of male bylines and Nagarik (15) as usual contained the highest number of female bylines. But no any female byline was recorded from TKP's main news. On the other hand, TRN (84) again contained maximum number of unknown bylines (Figure 1).

Similarly in case of opinion articles, Kantipur witnessed maximum number of female writers (11) followed by The Kathmandu Post (9). TRN (21) contained maximum number of male writers followed by NP (20) whereas; GP contained all male-written articles in opinion pages and no females.

News found on the first viewing of each news portal was selected as main news. Monitoring of the 360 news from six online portals revealed 4.14% female and 28.45% male bylines. Online portals Setopati.com and Lokaantar.com contained the highest and equal number of female bylines (5), whereas Pahilopost.com (21) and Ratopati.com (21) topped the list for male bylines.

Similarly, Pahilopost.com and Onlinekhabar.com did not have any female byline. Baahrakhari.com (46) contained the highest number of unknown bylines. Unknown bylines in this report are taken as the bylines with unspecified names such as onlinekhabar, setopati, ratopati, etc.

Nine female bylined stories were published on the first page of print dailies.

The news stories quoting persons directly or indirectly were further scanned for male/female sources and for those quoting written documents were coded under secondary sources or both.

FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF MAIN NEWS BYLINES FROM NINE NATIONAL DAILIES

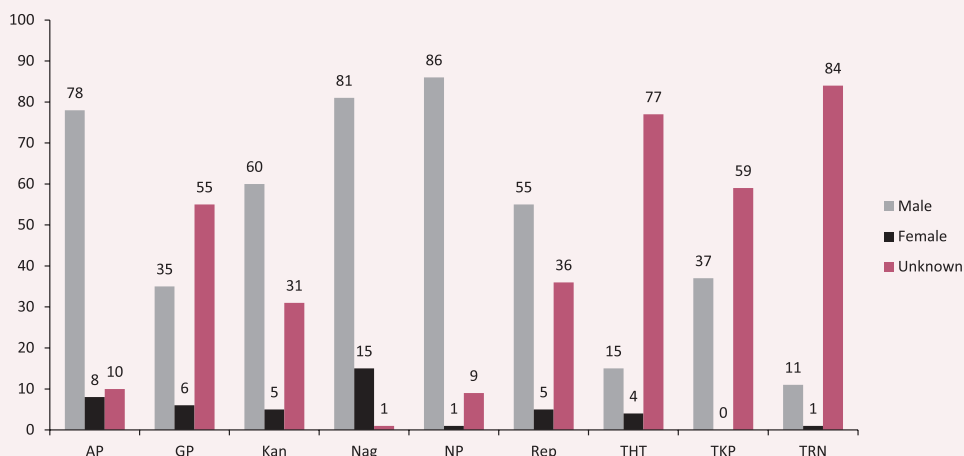
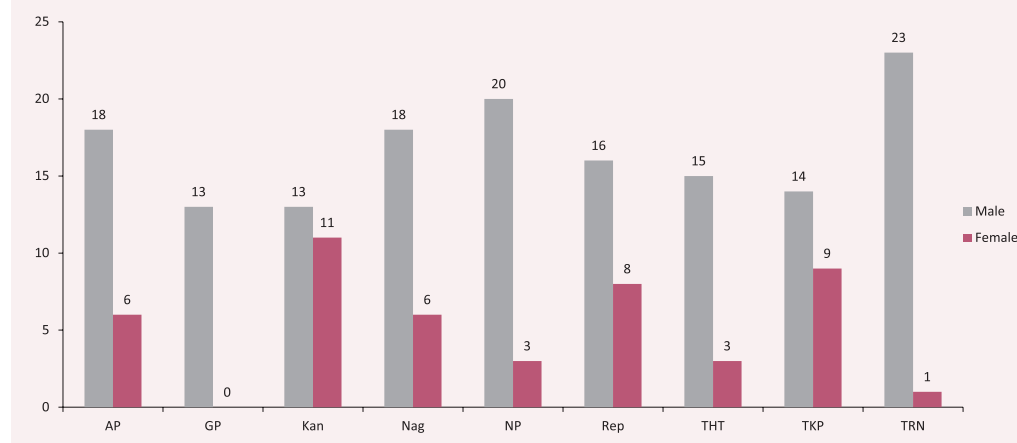
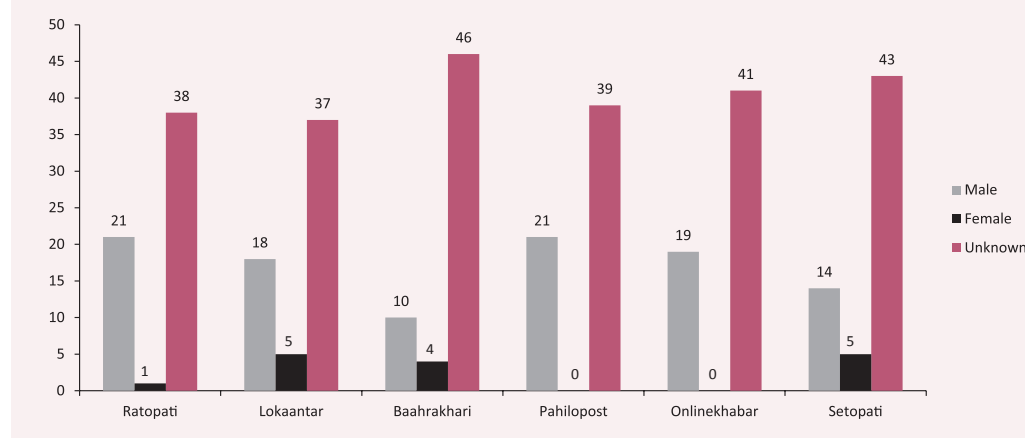


FIGURE 2: NUMBER OF OPINION AUTHORS FROM NINE NATIONAL DAILIES**FIGURE 3: BYLINES OF NEWS MONITORED FROM SIX ONLINE NEWS PORTALS**

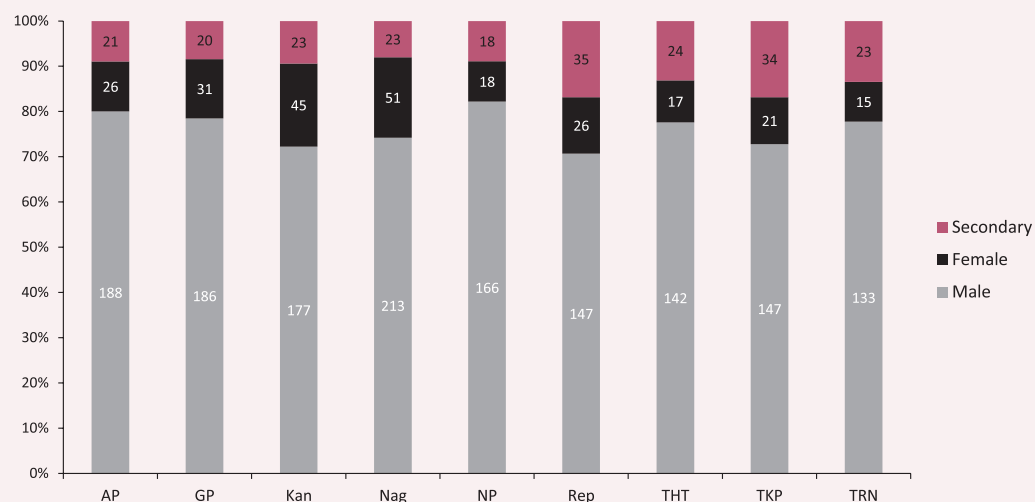
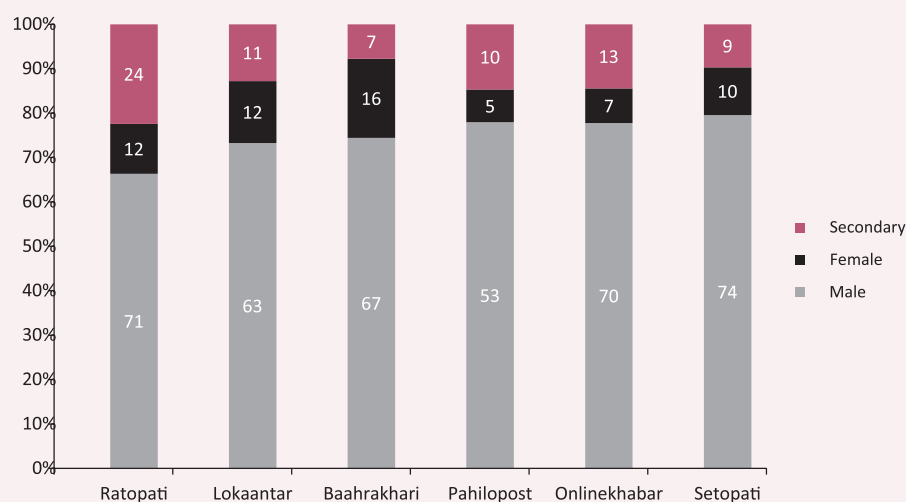
2. News sources

All the news contents monitored were thoroughly scanned for their sources to ascertain whether they are persons or the secondary ones. The news stories quoting persons directly or indirectly were further scanned for male/female sources and for those quoting written documents were coded under secondary sources or both.

After scanning through 1,060 news from nine national dailies, 12.69% female, 76.09% male and 11.22% secondary sources were identified.

As per figure 4, Nagarik daily this time too contained the highest number of male as well as female sources and Republica contained the highest number of secondary sources among others.

On the other hand, online news depicted 11.61% female sources against 74.53% male sources. Amongst all six online portals, Baahrakhari.com quoted maximum female sources, whereas Setopati.com quoted maximum male sources (Figure 5).

FIGURE 4: SOURCES QUOTED IN THE NEWS CONTENTS OF NINE NATIONAL DAILIES**FIGURE 5: SOURCES QUOTED IN THE NEWS CONTENTS OF 6 ONLINE**

3. News Topics

During three months, 1,060 news stories from all nine broadsheets were monitored including main news and opinion articles. Monitoring data still showed that political news dominated main pages of almost all broadsheets. Comparatively, news related to Politics, Economy and Social Issues occupied significant space on the main news pages.

Government run newspaper Gorkhapatra contained the highest number of political news.

FIGURE 6: TOPIC WISE DISTRIBUTION OF NEWS MONITORED FROM 9 BROADSHEETS

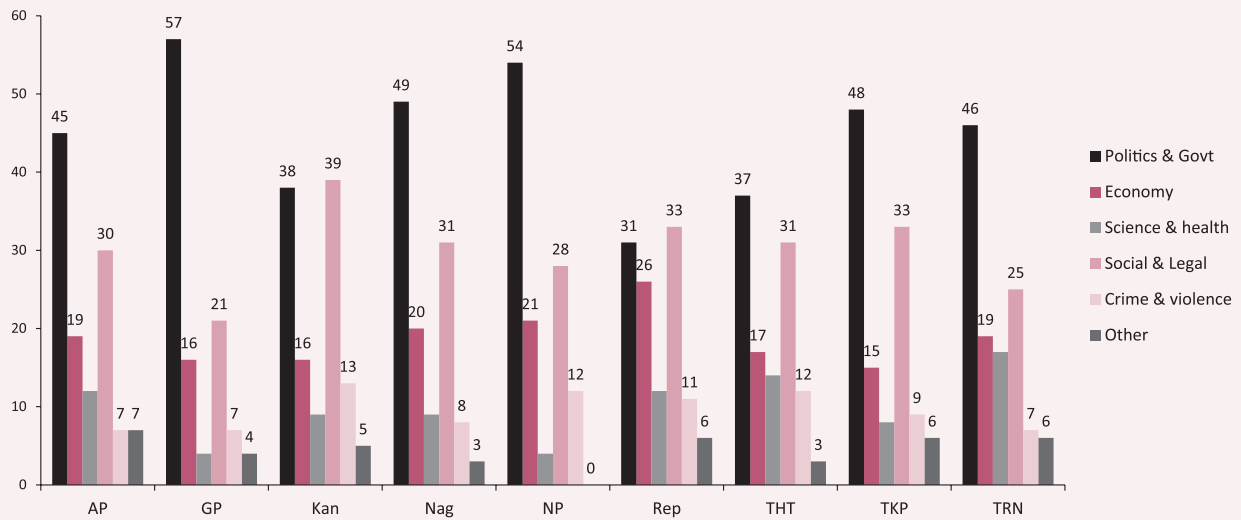


FIGURE 7: TOPIC WISE DISTRIBUTION OF NEWS MONITORED ON ONLINE NEWS PORTALS



FIGURE 8: NEWS TOPICS VERSUS FEMALE BYLINES AND SOURCES IN PRINT MEDIA

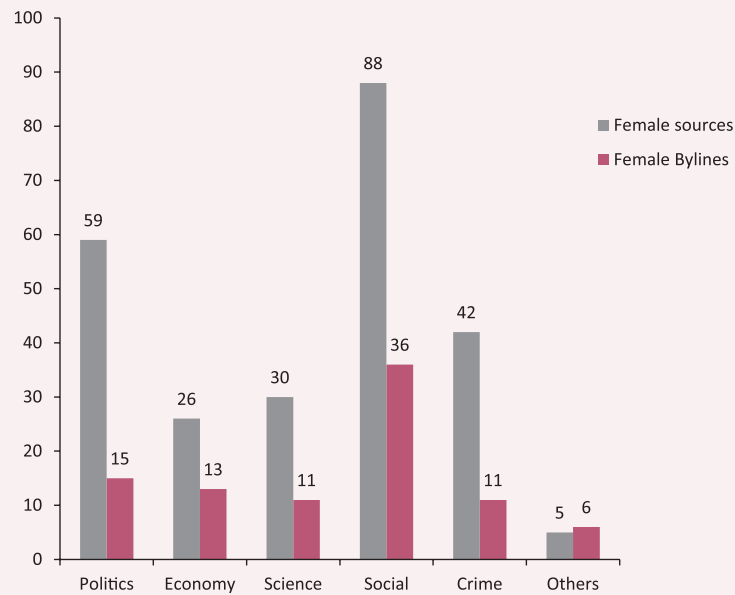
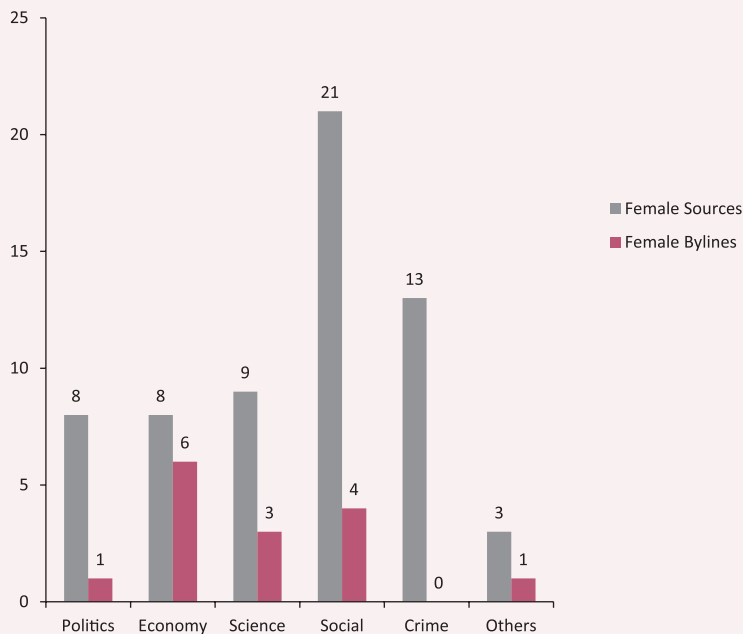


FIGURE 9: NEWS TOPICS VERSUS FEMALE BYLINES AND SOURCES IN ONLINE MEDIA



Likewise, Kantipur, Republica and The Himalayan Times dailies covered equivalent number of Political and Social/ Legal news. In almost all the newspapers, news on celebrity, arts, media and sports were least covered on the main pages. Among private owned, Naya Patrika published more political news in comparison to others.

During this period, news on sports published on the front page of all the dailies monitored also contributed to the visible bar for Other category where sports is incorporated.

But in case of online news portals, Pahilopost and Onlinekhabar (Figure 7) contained more social/ legal news than political ones, and among the six online portals, www.lokaantar.com contained maximum number of Political News. Comparatively, online news portals showed more diversity in news topics than the print media outlets as main news.

4. Topic wise distribution of Gender

Bylines and news sources derived from the three months long monitoring were again analyzed for their relation to news titles. The analysis resulted majority of male bylines (41.12%) under Politics and Government category whereas, majority of female bylines (39.13%) under Social and Legal category in print media (Figure 8).

Among total 250 women sources quoted in the monitored newspapers, the highest 35.2% came from news under Social and Legal category followed by 23.6% under Politics category.

According to data, the highest number of female byline and sources from print media are recorded from the news related to Social and Legal issues (Figure 8).

Gender content monitoring in the selected online media revealed maximum number of female bylines on the economic news. However, in terms of sources, social and legal news revealed the highest number of female sources (Figure 9).

5. Analysis of stories through Gender perspectives

Next dimension of the study is to analyze the news stories through different four questions:

- When and how women become newsmakers?
- To what extent does the news increase public understanding of inequalities between men and women?
- Are male and female stereotypes reinforced or challenged in the new stories?

Based on these questions, only 24 among 57 stories about the women recorded in the print media challenged stereotypes. In the news challenging stereotypes, women are presented as President, social activists, political representatives, survivor, volunteer, change makers in society, breadwinner in family, player, etc.

Among the news monitored in print media, 68 stories highlighted inequality in terms of news sources as well as gender lens. Likewise, thirty-five news stories contained equal number of men and women as news sources.

Similarly, from among 23 online media stories about women, 14 challenged stereotypes; 22 stories highlighted inequality and 8 news stories contained equal number of sources.

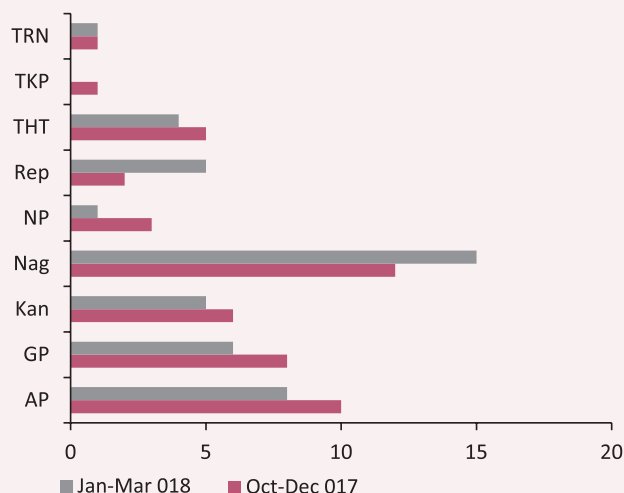
“Coming to the headlines, both online and print media showed diverse news contents. However, political news still dominated the space. It is worth noting that news category containing more female byline accommodates more women as news sources.”

Some Examples

A news story published on Pahilopost.com (March 8) is about an independent woman earning livelihood on her own. Married at 16 year of age and losing husband at 24, she works as a cobbler and earns money for her family. The way the story is presented clearly challenges stereotypes, as it subverts submissive role of women in Nepal society.

A news story about a group of women published on The Kathmandu Post (January 1) says they are spearheading a cultural revolution against the patriarchal tradition known as 'Ghumto Pratha' where married women are customarily required to veil their faces before men. They have also become proponents of women's rights and empowerment after gaining financial independence. The story also challenges the stereotypes.

FIGURE 10: TREND OF FEMALE IN NEWS BYLINE



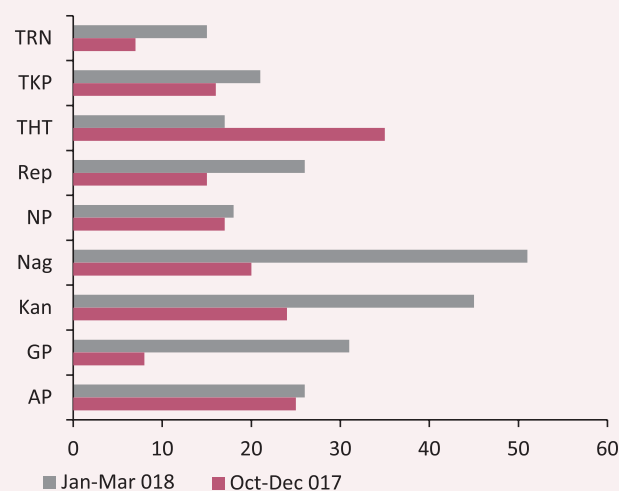
Comparative Analysis

Looking back into content monitoring from October to December 2017, Nagarik and Republica showed significant increase in the number of female bylines on Jan-Mar 2018 (Figure 10). Remaining media contents failed to show any increments on number of bylines on the main news.

Similarly, in terms of sources all the monitored print media outlets except for THT showed visible increase in number of women as news sources on Jan-Mar 2018 (Figure 11).

Percentage of female byline is somehow similar to the previous 3-month but women quoted as news sources have increased by 2.93% this 3-month.

FIGURE 11: TREND OF FEMALE AS NEWS SOURCES



Conclusion

Women's participation in Op-ed is found significantly higher than in main news of the national dailies monitored in three months.

Three months data showed 1 among approximately 4 males is female writer on the Op-Ed pages of the national dailies while 1 among every 10 male bylines is female on the main news of the dailies. On the other hand, 1 among every 7 male bylines is of female in case of the online media. In case of the print media, maximum number of female bylines was observed under Social and Legal news, whereas their maximum presence in online media was found under financial news.

Likewise, online media contained most of the unknown bylines compared to the print media. Number of female bylines was also found less than those of print media.

Furthermore, this 3-month monitoring resulted in 5.2% female bylines against 5.5% in the previous three months (Oct-Dec 2017). However, over all percentage for female byline is similar in comparison to the last one: Nagarik and Republica show significant increase in their number of female bylines. Nevertheless, percentage of women quoted as news sources on the monitored national dailies shows increase by approximately 3% from the last 3-month (Oct-Dec 2017). Sources quoted in the news from online portals are also observed to be positive in comparison to print media.

Amongst all, Gorkhapatra, Kantipur and Nagarik show substantial (almost double) increase in the number of female sources followed by Republica in this monitoring period (Jan-Mar 2017). According to the data, maximum female inclusion as news sources was found in the social/legal news for both online and print media. Coming to the headlines, both online and print media showed diverse news contents. However, political news still dominated the space. It is worth noting that news category containing more female byline accommodates more women as news sources. Conclusively, increasing participation of female as news sources in the contents of the monitored dailies is a significant change recorded in this monitoring period. 🌸

Freedom Forum is an independent, non-governmental and not-for-profit civil society organization working for the cause of social accountability, democracy and human rights focused on press freedom, freedom of expression and right to information in Nepal. Incepted in 2005, Freedom Forum has emerged as a prominent national organization in promoting access to information and freedom of expression through dialogue, research, training, public advocacy and campaign and programme implementation. Currently, the organization is working on the issues of public finance management, budget transparency, open data and aid governance, political and parliamentary accountability, freedom of expression online and open government partnership (OGP) based on its on-hand experience and learning.

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