

**LOCAL MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND PERCEPTION:  
A FIELD STUDY FOR ELAZIĞ PROVINCIAL SPECIAL**

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**Abstract**

Receiving news is one of the essential needs of human beings. The 19th article of the universal declaration of human rights refers to this basic requirement. Historically, documents became common with the invention of the printing press, and later, the mass media varied by the industrial revolution became popular in the life of human being. As the world has globalized, the national and international information has become a priority, but the public facts and developments have come later. It is a fact that the roles of media and local organizations cannot be ignored in the process of the States' democratization and being awareness since the local has profound impact. And we saw this impact during The National Struggle when Anatolian Press showed great effort.

Emerging technology and computing conditions directs the modern-day People to the national and international developments. However, we shouldn't forget the great impact of the local media. It is always a necessity. The local Medias usually have limited opportunities. Those limited opportunities are big problems for them. So they should be supported. Survey Management has made a survey about the local media in Elazığ, and it has reached crucial results about the local media's problems during this research.

**Keywords:** Local Media, Perception, Consumption

**Özet**

Haber alma insanoğlunun elzem ihtiyaçlarından biridir. İnsan Hakları Evrensel Bildirgesinin 19. Maddesi de bu temel gereksinime atıfta bulunmaktadır. Tarihsel olarak bakıldığında matbaanın icadı ile birlikte yaygınlaşan matbuat ve akabinde sanayi devrimi ile birlikte çeşitlenen kitle iletişim araçlarının insanoğlunun hayatında yaygın şekilde yer görülür. Ancak Dünya küreselleştikçe ulusal ve uluslararası enformasyon başat konuma gelmiş, buna karşın yerel olgular ve gelişmeler adeta tali konuma gelmiştir. Ancak ülkelerin demokratikleşme ve bilinçlenme sürecinde yerel oluşumların ve medyanın rolü artık yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. Zira müstakil anlamda yerel medyanın nasıl bir etkiye sahip olduğu Anadolu basınının milli mücadele sürecinde vermiş olduğu gayretlerle ortadadır.

Gelişen teknoloji ve bilişim koşulları günümüz insanını her ne kadar ulusal ve uluslararası gelişmelere yönlendirse de yerel medyanın eksikliği kendisini hep içkin şekilde hissettirmiştir. Diğer bir anlatımla yerel medya bir ihtiyaç olarak şüphesiz hep var olmaya devam edecektir. Ancak kısıtlı imkânlarla yayınlarını

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sürdürmeye çalışan yerel medyanın toplum tarafından hangi ölçüde gerekli görüldüğü, yayın içeriklerinin ve çalışanlarının yeterlilikleri gibi hususlar açık uçlu sorular ve sorunlar olarak görülmektedir. Survey yöntemi ile desteklenen bu saha araştırmasının amacı söz konusu sorulara cevap bulmaya yöneliktir. Elazığ ili özelinde yürütülen araştırma sonucunda bu yönde geliştirilen hipotezler test edilmiş ve yerel medya hakkında oldukça manidar bulgulara ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yerel medya, Algı, Tüketim

## INTRODUCTION

Technology in today's World has been rapidly moving further. Now, the individuals can instantly reach not only to the local, regional and national but also access to international information and news. The political and sociological events in the World induce today's human being to follow furtherly the international developments naturally, in particular. The media organizations, being aware of this subject matter, can reach all the developments for all over the world to their followers by their agencies.

It is no doubt that this will lead to the local ignored; however, it is observed that the individuals who wish to be free from the grip of globalization cycle has headed for the local in recent years. Therefore, the individuals need to be informed about what goings-on in their environments. That has promoted the media privatized. The local media perception continues its existence as an indispensable result of all these developments on the world in our day. Today, more than one media companies exist almost in each province. When considered not only within the context of only television but also over newspaper, radio and web pages called as mass media, it has been observed that this number of media outlets has notably increased. Both being named the present-day as "Internet Age" and dramatically dropping of antenna broadcasting usage have affected the local media negatively. The expansion of satellite and other types of it and rendering of services in high quality for ill-pay by most of them have been one of the significant causes of this increase. However, although the television channels are possible to be able to provide satellite broadcasting for some organizations, it is unlikely to tell the same thing for local media. The same situation is also valid for local newspapers. Declining of the percentage of reading 'newspaper' and giving its place to the internet newspapers and social media journalism have affected the reading of newspaper in a negative way.

The radio that has been penetrated into the human being's life after 1920 and played an active role especially in political history has become one of the most significant mass media. Even though the radio is now playing its part as an instrument (for listening), it still maintains its importance. The local radios whose names are not mentioned with those that provide a

national broadcasting service continue to their existence with limited audiences. A problem brings about how long the local media will be able to survive because both economic and technological developments shining out in its responsibilities and importance.

## **I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **I.1. Global and Local Definitions**

“Küreselleşme” using as Turkish meaning for “globalization” has been emerged as an economic-oriented concept (Balay, 1996, s. 187). In this respect, though the term includes uncertainty, the relations, and life-styles which appeared across the world in recent years provide certain ideas about the clarity of globalization. The people and societies have come into activities by going beyond the borders of the countries as the days pass. Travel, communication, financing, sports competitions, professions and even well-known music have not any longer confined to the borders of a single country. Many suchlike relations and activities have obtained an international qualification. When considered from this point of views, it can say that the globalization, as a historical phenomenon and process, mostly enriches the relationships between the people and societies.

It is hard to develop a criterion for defining the global and the Local terms. Both of these concepts refer to a place/geography/space In the meaning of their etymological roots. In this case, the notion of global which defines the object that has a global size can be designed as the largest space incorporating the quite different localities (large and small, various geographies showing a Meaningful cultural homogeneity). However, this design will not benefit us regarding understanding global and local one since a global showing an exact homogeneity has not been existed and will never exist as we have tried to explain in different forms. In this sense, instead of designing the global as the largest space, designing it as a culture having hegemony on the biggest location (globe/earth) and indicating an exact uniformity will be more illuminative. Accordingly, when the term used in its proper meaning, it is not the global but the West which continues now its hegemony on a larger world geography economically, politically and culturally representing the global. That defining the current (effective) object globally is West or Western paradigm. Starting from this point of view, capitalism and political liberalism as its political system and consumption culture as a cultural system represent the current globally. The political unit representing the dominant as global still today is a nation state. Each of nation states with caving from bottom and top acts as one each worldwide including localities not equaling to the geographical borders as a small copy of the hegemonic one. Namely, they represent the “effective” one (Alankuş, 2011, s. 3).

## **I.2. Locality and Democracy**

The democratization processes of central and local governments (administrations) in the countries governed by democracy also show different stages. “Centralization” is practiced in England as the cradle of democracy about local governments (or authorities or administrations). This sample indicates that the democratization can be, as required, executed in the countries governed by centralization. Unitary state structure and centralism reveal that the local governments can develop their democratization process positively. The, more importantly, things are the points of view of the governing and governed as well as facts such as development, stability, and sense of the rule.

It is natural that the national media organizations taking on a task for making the society use the right of information in national level remain incapable of using this claim in local level. However, recognition of what the current issue exists in a local region or what the agenda should be in that local territory can sometimes become more significant for those locals. When viewed from this aspect, the phenomenon of local media is progressing rapidly in recent years gradually comes into prominence. The development of local media considered as a criterion of democratization in western societies. Then, local media also performs a locomotive task for national media. However, the opportunities that the national media possesses are above of the normative values. This task strengthens the media and positions it to develop and change positively. Notwithstanding, local media tries to come through with limited advertising revenue. Non-formation of competition factors poses an obstacle to the developments, and attempts to carries on their broadcastings unprofessionally. Girgin (1977) classifies the primary features of today’s fast-growing local media into three main topics (national, structural and political properties) and summarizes the major issues as follows: lack of interest, troubles, artificial staffs, lack of infrastructure, official advertisement pastry, inadequate equipment pool, lack of technology, lack of professional staff and so on.

## **I.3. Local Media, Local Media’s Facilities and Content Issue (Problem)**

Local media raises a feeling to the individual towards “the place where he lives” and an idea about being a part of the place of living by its newscast, photographs, issues at hand, the needs of the city, information transferred to cultural and social Activities in the province for 24 hours. This idea forms Possessiveness on media readers of local media. Local media performs a service by announcing issues such as local activities, cinema programs, pharmacies on duty, regional weather condition, and time, place

and content of various indigenous social, political and natural events in an easy way excepting the local news, issues and interpretations. These approaches also present the function of local media. Within this scope, the local media organizations can be defined as “mass media broadcasting in a particular region, revealing the local characteristics and issues, attracting the attention of local directors by the news and interpretations to the problems, serving as the bridge between locals and local governments, informing the people about the local issues, creating local public opinion and contributing to democracy development to be developed” (Kurtbař and et al., 2009, s. 3).

When considered the local channels, it is not all difficult to say that the initial issue is the content problem. It is doubtlessly a real that the media outlets exist in the eternal rivalry (competition) and develop their policies by rating. Also, the reliability of the news is a question of debate. Also, the inadequacy of the local newspapers in this regard is often criticizing. Therefore, it can be said that the news/reports including in those may not concern the locals (community) (Temel and et al., 2012, s. 132).

## **II. RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY**

### **II.1. Problem Status**

The mass media has reached a level related to a necessary need in this day and age. Therefore, continuous development of technology and internet's the top of the list certainly necessitate making changes. The variety of media, rising circulation of social media, accessibility of it from anywhere and increasing of its usability may subordinate the local's. In this sense, social media especially has considerable influence at least as other media sources. Despite all these developments, it can say that the local's still preserves its necessity and increases its significance. However, it is also difficult to say that the necessity and rating are parallel. It has been attempted to test about how the subjects consider the local's, whether they watch or not, find it sufficient or not and what they expect from the local media in the hypotheses developed within this cope of this research specific to local media of province belonging to Elazig.

### **II.2. Purpose and Importance**

People know that the media is the 4<sup>th</sup> power of the legislative, executive and judicial organs in today's democratic societies. Gökçe, who has especially emphasized that the basic function of the mass media is socialization, points out that the mass communication system should consider as sub-step of social system within its theory (1998, s. 172-176). The printed media maintains and seems to continue this mission with the knowledge sources picking speed by advancing technology and television and its long historical background.

As Brodeur mentioned (1997, s. 23-24), the media integrated with the newspaper and television concepts has a function to give information and

also substantial tasks such as molding audit-criticism and Public opinion. On the other hand, people use the media as the essential tool for education, culture, socialization, art, politics, entertainment and many more activities.

Despite being aware of the effects of national media on the society, the reflections of the local are clearly unknown. The purpose of this study is to measure the perception and necessity of local media by the mentioned hypotheses. Also, the research is substantial regarding contributing to the limited scientific studies about analyzing of the local broadcasting organizations.

### **II.3. Hypotheses of the Research**

In this research which is carried out under the title of Consumption and Perception of the Local Media ( A Field Research Of the Province of Elazığ); hypotheses developed; (1) the (human) subjects have not followed the local media (Newspaper, Radio, TV), the subjects (2) do not consider the local media necessary for a province (Elazığ), (3) they have not find that the local media has not succeeded or is not adequate to create the current issue or reflect the problems of a city (Elazığ), (4) they do not think that the local media has contributed to development of a city (or contribution of the local media of Elazığ to the province of Elazığ), (5) and do not consider that the local media of a city (Elazığ) has contributed to local democratization, (6) and they are not of the opinion that Elazığ local media is objective or acts impartial, (7) the subjects have not found the educational and Professional levels of the producers and publishers (News reporter-Director- Presenter etc.) of the local press, they do not find the broadcasting content of the local media (News, Coverage, Program etc.) sufficient, (9) if the subjects are following or going to pursue the local media, they have preferred or will prefer the television rather than the mass media, (10) if they are following (or going to follow) the local newspaper, television or radio, they mostly prefer or will prefer the local news, (11) if the subjects follow the local newspaper (or going to follow), they shall not read it, (12) if the subjects are following (or going to follow) the local radio, they will listen to it, (13) if the they are following (going to follow) local television, they have watched or will watch from time to time, (14) when it comes to the necessity of local media, the choice of “to be informed about the agenda (current issue) in Elazığ” form the basis for the subjects, (15) the general ideas of the subjects about the local media (Elazığ) are negative.

### **II.4. Research Model**

The Survey model has been carried out and by this purpose, the questionnaire technique has been applied in this Research (Kaptan, 1993, s. 150). It is foreseen that the questionnaire has been conducted by at least 384 individuals regarding the predicted conditions (stipulated for the surveys between 75 thousand and a million) and has been carried out to the current ones (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970, s. 607-610). The Random (chance-draw)

method has been deemed suitable and the participants have been randomized as per the layering technique (Kaptan, 1993, s. 120-122). The questionnaires enabling the society to reflect its concept objectively can perform a feedback function. In this respect, Erdoğan has described the follower's surveys called "rating survey" of the capitalist communication colleges as the most influential feedback (1997, s. 260).

### **II.5. Population, Sample, and Limitations**

Since this research carried on within the scope of field study with the title of Local Media Consumption and Perception (A Field Research Specific To the Province of Elazığ) have the characteristics of overall generalizability within the context of local media, Turkey Has been considered as Population. The Province of Elazığ has been designated as a sample. The reason is that the mentioned province has a Deep-Rooted structuring and tradition of local media. The questionnaire chosen has been conducted to 18 and over the age of 18 Subjects inside the sample group. The total number trisected and it equal to the outgoing number (384) has been carried out to the participant groups in the class of sample. Besides, all television organizations, local radios broadcasting in Elazığ (excepting the districts) and daily newspapers have been included in the scope of survey questions prepared for this research.

### **II.6. Implementation of Questionnaire, Data Collection, Method of Analysis**

By the purpose of the research in the execution of the questionnaire, by being entered into the stores with single door number, and also asked the one out of every ten to become a participant in the area of Gazi Street and University Campus where the population density exists, then accordingly they have handed out the questionnaires to the shopkeepers and all the customers standing in the stores at that time, and to the participants mentioned above respectively, so ultimately asked them to fill those questionnaires. The required directions have been conducted for the subjects and the questionnaires that they conducted have been immediately collected. During the implementation of the survey, they asked questions to the requestors from the participant subjects one to one and the answers have been written in the survey form. Because of the fact that their names may be unfavorable regarding the anonymity of the research, it has been asked and reminded that their names should not be Specified (Bodur, 1997, s. 14). The implementation of it has been simultaneously conducted in the regions selected on the Date of 18.03.2016. The data obtained by the implementation of the questionnaire have been entered into the SPSS program, and their frequencies and percentiles have been obtained. The results have been tabularized and tried to be interpreted. The fundamental reason why the analyses such as X<sup>2</sup> and T test have not been required excepting the

percentage slices and frequency distributions of the data is that the possibility to reach to meaningful data finding between the variables is low.

### III. FINDINGS (DATA ANALYSIS)

The demographic information obtained as a result of the implementation of the questionnaire and the perceptions towards the local media have been indicated in the tables below with their forms From the SPSS program. As a result of the questionnaire implementation conducted by random sample method, the distributions of the subjects according to their genders are as follows: it is seen that a general mean to reflect the opinions of each gender between the genders of *'male'* and *'female'* has reached (despite the dominance factor of the number of male subjects slightly). This result can be assessed as a sufficient percentage regarding the variable of the genders related to the local media. When considered the findings related to the age ranges of the subjects participated in the field research; it occurs that the 18-25 age range is dominant with the rate Of 58,1 %. When considered the 26-35 age range with 22,1 % , it can be said that this research rather reflects the ideas of a young population. The findings that the participants consist of young population, who has been shown in the previous age range table, the education statues of the subjects confirm that. The choice of *'university'* takes place on the top with 79,2 % of the data concerning the its position of the subjects. By the data related to the occupational groups of the subjects, the subjects mainly consist of the students (48,2 %). The percentage of the employees in *'Private Sector'* and *'Government Agencies'* bears close values. By the data about levels of income of the subjects participated in the research, it has precipitated that 54.2% of the subjects either have not income or have income in the minimum wage.

It can be said that the constitution of the participants from young or student mass predominantly have had an effect on reaching to this result. In respect to the data for testing of the hypothesis focusing whether the subjects follow the Local media or not, it has been precipitated that the participants predominantly have followed the local media (54,4 %). When discussed with the choice of *'Partly,'* the mentioned percentage reaches to 89.0%. These results include data that that a person can assess positively, which refers that the local media is intensely followed.

It has been obtained meaningful findings in the subject's ideas which related to whether they regard the local media in general, and the local media of Elazığ in the private sector as necessary or not. According to the data, 79,7 of the subjects have considered the local media essential for a province with the option of *'yes.'* With the choice of *'partly,'* this percentage increases to 92,7 %. These data can be evaluated that the society has attributed a substantial value to the local media. In the question addressed to



the subjects whether the local media deemed successful in creating an agenda of a city or reflect the province's issues or not, and its broadcastings are considered adequate or not, the findings that may be assessed negatively has been obtained. Accordingly, 39,6 % of the subjects, with their 'no' answers, find the local media insufficient. In spite of this, the percentage of the subjects who have said 'yes' is only 13,5 %. Positive answers (38,5 %) have been dominantly received towards the questions related to what extent the local media, which has reached to the extremely high rating, contributes to the development of a province at the same rate. In other words, the subjects form an opinion that the local media mainly has made a substantial contribution to a province (to Elazığ in private). According to the data about the testing of the hypothesis at what rate the local media has an impact on the democratization, it is not seen possible to obtain a clear result. Then, it has been obtained results close to and showing parallelism to each other between the choices. In other words, it can be said that the subjects have a perception in the way that they have not dominantly opined about the contribution of the local media to the democratization and undecided.

The data obtained from the answers to the survey question developed to reflect the opinions of the subjects about whether the local media become objective or neutral or not are considerably meaningful. Regarding this, almost half of the participants (44,5 %) Have indicated positive opinions. Considering with the choice of 'Partly,' it can be said that the perception 'objectivity/neutrality' of the local media are negative in the presence of society with 60,9 %, which has been obtained. When considered the subjects' opinions about the educational and occupational levels of the local media producers and publishers (Reporter-Director-Presenter etc.), it can be seen that it has been reached to the findings which can be assessed negatively as is in the previous data. More clearly, when taking into consideration of 45,8 % of the subjects with the choice of 'partly,' 76,3 % reveals that they have found the professional levels of the employees insufficient. These results are extremely challenging in the sense of the local's. It is unlikely seen that the results which the hypothesis about whether the subjects consider the broadcasting contents of the local media (News, Interpretation, Program, etc.) tested are positive regarding local media. Therefore, when taking into consideration 53,1 % of the subjects with the choice of 'partly,' it has been obtained a result that 84,4 % of the subjects has found the broadcasting content of the local media insufficient. It is known that the television preserves its dominant position in terms of followability among mass media in the greater part of communication studies conducted empirically. In also this field research; in the event that the subjects have followed or will follow the local media, rather, when considered their opinions about the preference of mass media, it is seen that the same results have been obtained. The data obtained shows that the

'television' has taken place on the top with 53,1 %. After the choice of 'television', it has been determined that *the 'newspaper'* has ranked two with 14,1 % and the 'radio' has ranked number three with 4,9 %. According to these results, the *television* has conserved or will continue to maintain its dominant position in proportioning of preferability in local level.

It is known that the 'news' has taken place on the top in general in the choices of the program or newspapers in national or mainstream media considering the order of preference. It is seen possible to say that it has reached to the similar data in this Research that the dimension of local media analyzed. However, considering the data in this context, it is seen that the choice of 'news' has taken place on the top in a big percentage and by a wide margin (72,1 %). When considered the views related about how often the subjects have read or going to read the local newspaper if they are following (or may follow), it is seen that the choices of '*from time to time*' and '*when possible*' have low percentages close to each other. It is possible to say that the data obtained within this context have given favorable clues about the reading habits of the society. However, it should specify that the percentage of the choice of '*when possible.*' include data that cause the local media managers to question themselves regarding accessibility to the newspaper.

When considered the views about how often the subjects have listened or are going to pay attention to the local radio if they follow (or going to follow) it, it is seen that the choice of '*when I get a chance.*' Has taken place on the top with weighted percentage (51,8). These results can be linked to the ambient state of the '*radio*'. When considered the views about how often the subjects have watched or may watch the local television if they are following or going to watch the local TV; it sees that the choice of '*when I get a chance.*' Has taken place first with a weighted percentage (57,4 %). The other issue drawing attention in the data obtained is the local television Habits of the subjects for -2 hours in a day with 31,5 %. When comes to the necessity of the local media, and considered the findings of what choices in the questionnaire form have formed the basis for the subjects, regarding the necessity and followability of the local media,

It has precipitated that the option of '*I want to be informed about the agenda in our province*' has taken place first with 48,2 % and the choice of '*our province has not been brought to the International agenda*' has taken place second with 21,9 %. According to these Results, it can say that the subjects want to predominantly be informed about the diary of their province (Elazığ). The final data of the research is to reflect the ideas of theirs towards the Local media in general. By the data obtained, it is possible to state that the subjects, who participated in The questionnaire, have almost 'neutral' perception of the local media with 50,8 %, however, the subjects, who stated

the adverse opinion, have considerable percentage of 22.9 %.

#### IV. RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

According to these results obtained, it has determined that the subjects have followed the local media, considered it necessary for a province (Elazığ), and they have found insufficient/unsuccessful to create the agenda of the local media or mention the issues, and they have thought that the local media has made a contribution to the province (or the local media of Elazığ to Elazığ), the subjects have been undecided whether the local media has made a contribution to the regional democratization or not, not thought that the local media had not acted objectively or neutrally, not considered the educational and occupational levels of the local media producers and publishers (News Reporter-Director-Newscaster etc.) sufficient, regarded the broadcasting content of the local media (News, Interpretation, Program, etc.) inadequate, if they are following or going to keep up with the local media, they have preferred or will prefer the television rather than mass media, or if they follow up (or are going to follow) local newspaper, television or radio, they have preferred or will prefer the news mostly, or if they are following (or going to follow) the local newspaper, they will not read it, or if they are following (or going to follow) the local radio, they will not listen to it, or if they are following (or going to follow the local television), they, from time to time, have watched or will watch the TV when it comes to the necessity of the local media, the choice of *'to be informed about the agenda of Elazığ'* will form the basis for them, and they are undecided that the general views about the local media are in a negative way.

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