

ANALYZING ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS
IN LOCAL INTERNET JOURNALISM: A STUDY ON ENERGY NEWS



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PLAGIARISM

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ABSTRACT

Defined by Turkish public as “Anatolian press” or “provincial press”, local press includes an understanding of journalism, which is able to convey the issues of the region, effectively relay the economic, political, social and cultural developments there and form a public opinion.

Local press also feeds national press by relaying a notion or an event in the region to the country in general. Also, the memory of the region in question, local press is able to closely follow whether or not the local administration in the region fulfills the demands and wishes of the local people, in addition to having access to more details by placing emphasis on the notions or events in its own region and covering said details in news stories, thus helping local people have further access to information regarding their environment. As such, local press ensures the establishment of the culture of democracy, vitalizing the country’s democracy too. The press also determines and shapes the behavior, attitude or opinions of people, who are influenced by the information or knowledge that is produced by the press. Therefore, the press undertakes a significant responsibility towards the public and the press with such social responsibility must relay accurate information to the society and ensure social development. The ideas and interests of the ruling class in the society is always prioritized. With respect to the political economy, the ruling class that has the material means of production also has control of the means of intellectual production. Within the scope of a political economy approach, the press injects the ideology of those, who support it financially, to the target audience. Controlled by the ruling ideology, the press is a means that produces commodities with the function of spreading this ideology. As such a means, the press reveals the ideological structure

of the ruling class, especially in news regarding energy; however, such news that are served through internet journalism in local press often emphasize negative factors for the region and the local people, besides the positive factors and even more so. Thus, local press paves the way for the advancing of democracy by taking into consideration public interest. This study focuses on the approach of internet journalism towards energy news in local press within the framework of environmental news and the factors that influence news content. Interviews were conducted with local media representatives, selected from regions, where energy investments are intensive and these investments were ill-received by the public, regarding the approach of internet journalism in local press and the relevant issues. The responses were later assessed within a theoretical framework.

Key words: Local Press, Environmental News, Internet Journalism, Energy News

ÖZET

Türk kamuoyunda “Anadolu basını” ve “taşra basını” olarak tanımlanan yerel basında, bölgenin sorunlarını iletebilen, o bölgedeki ekonomik, siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel gelişmeleri verimli bir şekilde aktarabilen, kamuoyu oluşumunu sağlayan bir habercilik anlayışı söz konusudur.

Yerel basın, o bölgedeki bir olgu veya olayı tüm ülkeye aktararak, ulusal basını da beslemektedir. Aynı zamanda, bölgenin belleği olan yerel basın, o yöredeki yerel yönetimin bölge halkının taleplerini ve arzularını yerine getirip, getirmediğini yakından takip edebilmekte, kendi bölgesindeki olgulara veya olaylara önem vererek daha fazla ayrıntıya erişebilmekte, haber metinlerinde bu detaylara daha fazla yer verilmekte ve bölge halkının kendi çevreleriyle ilgili daha fazla bilgiye ulaşabilmesine yardımcı olmaktadır. Böylelikle, yerel basın demokrasi kültürünün kökleşmesini sağlayarak ülke demokrasisine hayat vermektedir. Basın tarafından üretilen bilginin veya enformasyonun etkisi altında kalan insanın davranış, tutum veya kanaatlerini basın belirlemekte ve şekillendirmektedir. Bu nedenle, basının kamuoyuna karşı önemli bir sorumluluğu vardır ve toplumsal sorumluluğa sahip basının temel işlevi topluma doğru bilgi aktarabilmek ve toplumsal gelişimi sağlamaktır. Toplumda egemen sınıfın düşünceleri ve menfaatleri her zaman ön planda tutulmaktadır. Ekonomi politik bakımından, maddi üretim araçlarına sahip olan egemen sınıf, zihinsel üretim araçlarını elinde bulundurmaktadır. Medya ekonomi politiği yaklaşımı kapsamında basın kendisini mali açıdan destekleyenlerin ideolojisini hedef kitleye enjekte etmektedir. Egemen ideolojinin denetimi altında olan basın, bu ideolojiyi yayma işleviyle metalar üreten bir mecraadır. Böyle bir mecra olan basında mecrasındaki enerji haberlerinde özellikle egemen sınıfın ideolojik yapısı hakim

olmaktadır, fakat yerel basındaki internet haberciliğinde servis edilen enerji haberlerinde ise, bölgeye ve bölge halkına sağladığı olumlu ve genellikle olumsuz faktörlere vurgu yapılmaktadır. Böylece, yerel basın kamu yararını gözeterek demokrasinin gelişimine öncü olmaktadır. Bu çalışmada ise, çevre haberleri çerçevesinde yerel basındaki internet haberciliğın enerji haberlerine yaklaşımı ve haber içeriğini etkileyen unsurlar ele alınmıştır. Kamuoyunda tepki gören enerji yatırımlarının yoğun olduđu bölgelerden seçilen yerel medya temsilcileriyle; yerel basındaki internet haberciliğın konuya yaklaşımı ve yaşanan sorunlar konuşulmuş ve sorulara verilen yanıtlar kuramsal çerçevede değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yerel Basın, Çevre Haberleri, İnternet Haberciliğı, Enerji Haberleri

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1. INTRODUCTION

Defined as the public memory, local press acts as a bridge between local administrations and local people by covering the problems and demands of the local people. Thus, the culture of democracy is established and improved. Contrary to national press, local press covers in news stories events or notions that attract interest from the individuals, while simultaneously looking out for the public's interest. With the advancing technology today, the platform called internet received quite the attention from the target audience. The press industry also faced certain differences with the emergence of the internet.

A concept known as online journalism surfaced along with the changes in techniques in news making and reporting units. Target audiences have faster and more efficient access to information, thanks to internet journalism. The individual can also directly be in contact with the members of press, regarding the notion or events covered in the news and share their opinions or ideas about them with personal comments. Moreover, the audience can reach news content at any given time, thus being informed about the social, economic and political developments across the world. Internet journalism also reveals certain changes in the way in which news and energy news in particular, are covered due to the different technical characteristics than those of national and local press and those concerning target audiences. Within internet journalism in national press, energy news is often shaped by the political ideological structure, whereas the region and the local people are on the forefront in internet journalism in local press. Since the audience of local press is more limited, internet journalism relays the news about that region in greater detail. Internet journalism in local press overlooks the ideological structure with respect to energy news, in order to contribute to the culture of democracy and considers an

understanding of making news in light of principles such as rights, justice and truth for public interest. Depending on the structure of media ownership in national press, the mode of production of news texts and the process of their delivery to the target audience often reveal that an understanding of journalism that seeks public interest is secondary. At the same time, the political ideology, which is dominant in media ownership structures, can convey the message it wishes to impose upon the audience within the discourse, used in energy news. Still, the dominance of media ownership structure is not as effectively observed in the internet journalism of the local press as in the national press. Since local press targets the people of a particular region and adopts an understanding that is focused on local matters or topics, the political ideology, which is common in the media ownership structure, does not really affect the modes of production of news stories in the local press. Internet journalism in the local press is able to convey information, rapidly and effectively, to its audiences to generate public benefit. Internet journalism in the local press acts as a bridge between the local society and the local administration by looking out for the interests of local people, covering the events in energy news within the scope of the principle of truth of journalism. Thus, internet journalism in local press ensures that democracy comes to life by inclusion of news content for public benefit in the region.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nurşah Köseoğlu investigates the effect of internet journalism on press enterprises in Kocaeli in her work, *Changing Journalism with New Media and Its Effect on Local Press: Kocaeli Example*. In this work, Köseoğlu observes the type of journalism that is preferred by the target audience, the effects it has on traditional newspapers and developments regarding the circulation numbers of local newspapers. Meltem Dudu Çınar observes in her work, *Local Internet Journalism: Çorum Example*, that the locality factor did not experience changes with regards to the content of news in local newspapers, they try to keep up with technological developments, but do not fully benefit from the advantages internet bestows upon the profession of journalism and in this context, covers the local press in Çorum. In addition, in her work *Environmental Communication: Structural Analysis of Environmental News and Reader Awareness*, Şule Yüksel Özmen aims to reveal the position of environmental news and journalism in Turkey and how the target audience evaluates environmental news. Büşra Akman Yüceil discusses the ethical and political responsibility of media around concepts of environment and media and covers environmental journalism in light of this discussion in her research study *A Critical Analysis on Environmental Journalism in Turkish National Press*. Furthermore, Nilüfer Tunalı investigates how environmental issues are portrayed in Turkish written press in her research study *Environmental Journalism in Highly Circulated Newspapers*. Selahattin Çavuş explains the ethical purposes, uncovered by local press practices, through the local press example in Konya and with the help of concepts such as ethics and local media, illuminating the way for ethical dilemmas for all other types of press in *New Media and Ethics (The Example of Konya)*. Finally, Aydın Alper İrvan, in *Environment and Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of*

Environmental News in Turkish Newspapers, analyzes news discourse regarding environmental news in newspapers with the method of critical discourse analysis. Consequent to the literature review, no similar studies with the same research question was found.



3. NEWSWORTHINESS IN LOCAL PRESS AND INTERNET JOURNALISM

3.1. Definition of News

Assumed to consist of the initials of North, East, West and South in English language, the word news is basically defined as “events that occur in all directions”. From this point of view, there are various definitions such as: “Everything that happens is news”, “what we did not know yesterday is news”, “what people are talking about is news” and “news is what readers want to learn” (Girgin, 2013: 3). Today, there are many different definitions of news. Some of these definitions are listed below:

1. “It is information received or delivered about an event”
2. “It is a report of an event”
3. “It is information obtained on a phenomenon”
4. “It is today’s event”
5. “It is summary of a real event”
6. “It is information on expected or unexpected developments”
7. “It is the story form of events that individuals are interested in”
8. “It is everything that we did not know yesterday”
9. “It is what people are talking about”
10. “It is conveying events that concern people and society”
11. “It is interesting stories in mass media”
12. “It is information about an event that has recently occurred or has just been uncovered and is important for readers, viewers or listeners” (Girgin, 2013: 3-9).

According to a definition centered on contents that form news, “news is the latest, newest and intriguing information about events, individuals or things that happen somewhere in the real world” (Dursun 2003: 63, as cited in Ünlüer, 2016: 140). News is generally defined as something ‘new, interesting and true’ (Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002: 5).

Journalists and organizations, they work for produce news texts. Thus, news is expressed as both an individual and organizational product (Jorgensen and Hanitzsch, 2009: 59). Journalism is completely focused on producing a product. Sometimes, commodification discussions are held, and it is expressed as a social structure. In this context, journalism is created and limited by the dominant ideology of a society, consisting of a series of views that are assumed to be “normal” and “common sense” (Rudin and Ibbotson, 2002: 8).

According to another definition of news that emphasizes how the event or problem that constitutes the content of news occurs and what is important to its recipient, “news is a breakdown of an event, a fact or an opinion. The best news is what can attract the interest of most people” (Harriss 1981: 26, as cited in Ünlüer, 2016: 140).

As a general definition, news is the storification of actual or assumed actions or discourses and some comprehensible elements in a cause-and-effect relationship. According to Tokgöz (1994: 128), news is usually based on an event, idea or a problem. Without these elements, news cannot be created. In other words, events, ideas or problems constitute the raw material of news. In this context, events, ideas or problems are summarized to report as news in the form of stories. Today, summarizing can be done verbally, in written or video talk. During the summarization process, the point to note is how the newsperson re-established the event, idea or

problem within its original framework. The relationship between news and reality must be evaluated when summarizing or narrating the event, idea or problem, establishing a relationship between facts to place the event within the original framework (Tokgöz, 1981: 55).

In order to attract readers' attention, the event, idea or problem that constitute the news must be in the present time. News belongs to now and looks back on the recent past, however, it is generally oriented towards the future. In order not to remain as dream, it is imperative that the event, idea or problem—which is the raw material of the news—be transmitted or conveyed from person to person continuously. In order to attract interest and gain meaningfulness, it is necessary to summarize and construct the news story within the original framework.

In the context of the difficulty in defining news, the question “What is news?” directed researchers and journalists to ask another question: “When and with what features an event can be newsworthy?” In the face of this question that constitutes new expansions in the definition of news, similar results were reached and thus, the concept of “newsworthiness” emerged (Tokgöz, 1994: 137).

3.2. Newsworthiness and Its Elements

Some of the key elements contained in news stories, newsworthiness demonstrates the basic principles of journalism. Newsworthiness is not about defining news, but rather an effort to explain the concept of news. The purpose of this approach is to evaluate or discuss the understanding of news aimed at attraction people's attention. “If a dog bites a man, it is not news; if a man bites a dog, that is news.” Taking into account newsworthiness as the main elements contained in news, this approach can reveal what is and can be found in news (Tokgöz, 1981: 62).

Newsworthiness that makes up the basic elements of journalism can be found in seven major topics (Tokgöz, 1981: 63):

1. Reality (Truth)
2. Clarity (Making Sense)
3. Immediacy
4. Proximity
5. Prominence
6. Consequence
7. Human Interest

Reality:

News should be based on facts or accurate data. This is the must-have basic principle of news. In this regard, news is conveyed through reported speech based on personal perceptions. Therefore, it is natural that news includes the personal values of the newsperson. The reality of the news story is based on the credibility of the news source as well as the journalist's experiences, social expectations and ethical values. In case the newsperson is hesitant about the news source, he/she must confirm the reality of his/her news by different sources. The news story will not contain the reality element unless verified (Girgin, 2013).

In other words, news reports must be prepared in accordance with the reality principle. A news report that is based on the currency principle also includes the cultural and personal values of the newsperson. At the same time, the reality of the news story depends on the credibility of the news source.

When evaluating the information he/she obtained about an event, the journalist should consider everything "possible". In fact, the journalist should get to the root of

the problem and look for the truth. According to a common understanding accepted by journalists, it is vital to “Get the news first, but get it right” (Girgin, 2013: 9-11).

Clarity:

One of the basic characteristics of news is “clarity” or “making sense”. Language use is important in order to ensure the clarity of the news. Within this framework, the language used in news must be clear and brief. Sentences that are easy to understand must be used when reporting news. In addition, the news text must consist of understandable words and must be simple. Particularly inverted sentences should not be included in news language, and unnecessary details should be avoided. At the same time, unknown and unclear words should not be used in news language (Girgin, 2013: 15-16).

In other words, the news language needs to be simple, explicit and short for the reader to understand. Thus, the reader receives the answer to all questions about the event or phenomenon expressed in the news, while content integrity in explicit news makes sure that the event or phenomenon in the news reaches all readers with different values, education, culture and social structure.

When shaping, i.e., building the event which is newsworthy, utmost attention must be paid to ensure that the news makes sense as a whole in addition to coherent words and sentences. So much so that after the news has been read, listened or watched, it must be processed in such a way that there are no questions left to ask about it thanks to the adequacy of information. The newsperson should also avoid unnecessary details during telling the news story in order not to make the audience distracted or disinterested. Furthermore, the news must include all elements relating to the event or discourse as well as different information and opinions while being versatile, precise and complete (Girgin, 2013: 15-16).

Immediacy:

While the element of immediacy dictates that news should be timely, it also answers the question, “When did it occur?” The element of immediacy in news is the main factor in determining the publication and broadcasting of the news. Therefore, adverbs of time used in news such as “yesterday, today, an hour ago, at night” highlight how long ago the event or the phenomenon that created the news occurred (Tokgöz, 1981: 64).

There are three main components showing the element of immediacy in news.

These components are:

1. Recency
2. Immediacy
3. Currency

News is generally divided into three categories:

1. In action news, there is more action, less discourse. For instance, homicide or traffic accident news.
2. In discourse news, there is more discourse, less action. For instance, open sessions, conferences, scientific meetings, etc.
3. In action-discourse news, there is equal amount of action and discourse. For instance, ceremonial news (Girgin, 2013: 11).

In this context, recent or up-to-date news is evaluated from two different perspectives: Action or discourse has just taken place. Or, even if the news is old, it has been just noticed and discovered. In other words, recency refers to reporting the

event or phenomenon as new. It reveals a forgotten or neglected event or phenomenon (Girgin, 2013: 11).

When the event or phenomenon is recent and up-to-date, this also brings innovation to a neglected event or phenomenon by reformulation. An up-to-date and recent event or phenomenon attracts the attention of the reader. Therefore, the principle of recency may contribute to keeping the event or phenomenon in the news on the agenda, while awakening the interest of readers who want to know about all events and phenomena in the world.

On the other hand, currency is associated with immediacy. According to American author Bernard Roscho, “immediacy connects the most recent events to mass media that makes them news, whereas currency keeps events linked to various segments of society. While recency transforms a piece of information into a news form, currency that is based on human interests gives news its value”. While recency and immediacy are at the forefront for radio news, currency is at the forefront for newspapers. For television, on the other hand, recency, immediacy and currency vary depending on the situation (Girgin, 2013: 11.-12).

Proximity:

Immediacy and proximity, as the main elements that make the news, begin to make sense for the newsmen after the events and phenomena that make up the news reveal. The question “When?” shows the principle of immediacy, while the question “where?” refers to the principle of proximity. People are particularly focused on issues or problems they assume are of their primary interest. People are physically and psychologically related to their immediate environment. The event reported in the news may have occurred at a place that was physically close to the person. The reader

may also have emotional ties to the people in the event reported by the news (Girgin, 2013: 12-13).

In other words, human beings, by their very nature, are interested in events in their immediate vicinity, and they are curious about these events. People are interested in places and names they are familiar with; they wonder and want to know what is going on in their immediate vicinity. For example, a person is particularly interested in the news about a fire in the neighborhood where he/she lives. At the same time, people seek information about other people or places they know. An example may be the news that an internationally famous actor/actress or artist visits the person's neighborhood (Tokgöz, 1981: 65-66).

Significance:

Important persons, contradictions or numbers are a few of the factors that make the news significant. People follow the news about famous people with curiosity and interest. Besides famous people, countries, institutions and organizations can be important in terms of newsworthiness (Tokgöz, 1981: 66).

In this context, the questions “why?” and “how?” determine the significance of news. The principle of significance is the basis of descriptive and interpretive news writing. Significance is as essential as the principle of consequence in terms of the journalist judging the news (Tokgöz, 1981: 66-67).

An event is important if it directly affects social, political, economic, social or cultural life and causes any change in these areas. These types of news are often described as “hard news”. New laws, decrees, prohibitions are important for individuals to comply with. In addition, recommendations that individuals may want to comply with (information on roads that are not intended to be used due to traffic

congestion, necessary measures to take against certain diseases) are seen important (Girgin, 2013: 14).

In addition, there are two subheadings of the element of significance: “Measure of the event” and “consequences of the event”. An example of the measure of the event can be given as a traffic accident that results in a large number of dead and injured. A natural disaster affecting a society can also be considered an example. For the consequences of the event, the positive or negative effects of a new law on society can be given as an example. The intensity of the influence of an action or discourse or both, i.e., the high number of readers interested in the subject reflects significance. The problems that society is sensitive to are also considered “interesting” or “significant” over time. For example, a news story can be considered significant when it affects individuals’ feelings and thoughts in a positive or negative way (such as the Turkish National Football Team winning or losing a game or too many children getting trapped under debris) (Girgin, 2013: 14).

Consequence:

One of the basic principles that makes stories newsworthy is the consequence of the news. The principle of consequence is reflected by the questions, “What, When, Where?” about the event/s in the news. The newsworthiness of the principle of consequence stems from conflicts, developments or accidents. Evaluation of the event or issue in the news determines the significance or magnitude of the consequence. Considering these qualities, it should be decided how much time and space should be allocated to a news story when reporting the news. Thus, this enables the journalist to make the right decision at the right time (Tokgöz, 1981: 66).

This principle demonstrates the magnitude and significance of the consequence of the event or phenomenon mentioned in the news. Hence, it is

determined how long the news text will stay. Depending on the significance of the news text based on the principle of consequence, it attracts the attention of readers. This also allows the newsperson to decide whether to keep the news on the agenda.

Human Interest:

It is possible to define *interest in events* that concern people as events that arouse interest or attract attention. Watching the lifestyle, sadness, happiness or challenges faced by others as news leads to sympathy, hatred or interest in them. An example can be the interest in people who were left homeless as a result of the earthquake in Albania as well as the efforts to save the earthquake victims. Each news content has an appeal or attraction that varies depending on the person. Some draw more human interest than others. In this context, the event involved in a news appeals to the senses of people to draw their interest. Notions such as desire, hatred, fear, conflict, adventure or thrill are among the topics that draw human interest. In other words, conflict, suspicion, confusion and unusualness often make the event mentioned in the news interesting (Tokgöz, 1981: 67-68).

In this regard, attracting attention responds to personal or social needs. People often pay attention to issues or events that they think are of paramount interest. One aspect of interestingness is the concept of “place” i.e., proximity or distance. The physical or psychological position of an action or discourse or both according to the reader is the main factor of interest or disinterest. The reason for this is that individuals are more closely related to their physical and psychological immediate surroundings (Girgin, 2013: 12-13).

When it comes to “place”, the first thing that comes to mind is “geographical proximity”. In other words, it indicates that the event in the news occurred somewhere physically close to the individual. Nevertheless, “place” is also understood as

“psychological affinity” in other circumstances. The event that is subject of the news report this time takes place physically far away, yet, the reader has emotional ties to individuals in that region (e.g., Turks- Pakistanis) (Girgin, 2013: 13).

In events and cases that everyone may encounter, it is possible to define the interest in events that concern everyone as events that draw human interest. In this line, others’ happiness, health, challenges that they face, and the entire development of humanity makes us watch them as news and feel interest, sympathy or hatred about them. An example is the interest in the rescue efforts for people who were left homeless by the earthquake in Southern Italy or Iran (Tokgöz, 1981: 63).

Unusualness, adventure, thrill, phenomena worth seeing and love are often seen among subjects that attract the attention of individuals. On the other hand, gender differences between men and women bring a different dimension to the subjects that are of human interest. While women often read news about love adventures, marriages and divorces, men prefer to read news contents about murder, politics and sports. At the same time, children and animals are considered among the issues that draw human interest. For instance, news on a child left at the door of a mosque or in an empty land, or the broken foot of the horse pulling the car that sells water. Therefore, conflict, suspicion, confusion and unusualness are found in matters that draw human interest making them more appealing (Tokgöz, 1981: 67-68).

3.3. News in Local Press and Newsworthiness

Local press ensures that the local people are informed and enlightened in a more detailed way, since it covers a limited area. Carrying the cultural, social and historical values of the local area, the structure of its identity also influences local press. It is known that the social, cultural and historical characteristics of a region are the elements that directly affect the press and, in this respect, they have an impact on

the region's identity as well as the press identity and functionality. Within this framework, news, photographs, events, and information on social and cultural activities of the region in the local press reflect the idea that its readers are a part of this region where they live. Thus, local press shows or defines a place for its readers as opposed to delocalization or deterritorialization that reveals in different forms with an extensive effort to promote these moves. In other words, local press, which is also known by Turkish public as '*local press*', '*Anatolian press*' or '*provincial press*', is comprised of various publishings, which are published outside of Istanbul, able to convey the voice and issues of its locality with its journalism, effectively relay social, cultural, economic and political developments in its field to its reader and play a significant role in forming public opinion in its locality (Erdoğan, 2006:52).

Local press provides the feeling and consciousness of belonging to its readers. According to Ünsal Oskay (2001:84), "reading the news in the newspapers, published where they live in the big city, gives readers the feeling of knowing this urban setting that is full of unknowns, diminishing the fear they have before the city". Moreover, local press offers its readers suggestions or creates a frame of reference to ensure that they build relations with other individuals who have similar events, problems, and targets, share the same experiences or thoughts and intend to produce common solutions.

Local press plays an important role in conveying problems, events, opinions and thoughts in the region to the local people and in the functioning of social, cultural, economic, social and political activities. The press both communicates news and information to the masses and serves as a public opinion body. Endeavoring to perform the tasks and functions of democracy, mass communication and press activities, local press, on the other hand, contributes to the formation of the local

public opinion as the most important mass media instrument as the eyes, ears and voice of that region. Local press appeals to a narrow scope of audience and the target audience has a homogeneous structure. Since the local press is intertwined with the locals and is very close to the events or developments that occur in the region, it can inform local people about all local issues and events. According to Cangöz (2003: 106), the most important point to pay attention in local press is that a fair and objective understanding of journalism with local people and their problems should prevail, rather than the understanding of journalism, which includes only those who have social, economic or political power.

According to Mutlu (2004), news reports in local press constitute the mechanism to understand and criticize different opinions or ideas in the region. In this way, individuals in that region can hear their own voices and see their images. This paves the way for forming the idea that “I exist in this society; I am a part and citizen of this society”. At the same time, the local press provides an infrastructure that can make it easier for the local people to get involved in the problems or events of that society.

In the same vein, local press plays an important role in ensuring that democracy takes root. Peer to peer communication between local governments and the public is provided correctly, and if the public has the right information about the political powers that will govern the local region, they will make the right political preferences. With news in the local press, the public can practically convey demands, problems and events to local governments. It is important that local press impartially and independently delivers accurate information to the public. In addition, news in local press includes existing subcultures-values, cultural developments and new cultures. Local press performs an important function in promoting local culture and

transferring it to future generations. News in local press allows local people to “reconsider” events or phenomena by seeing before and after these events. As Rigel (2004) points out, local press can closely follow local people’s problems since it is close to individuals in that region. In addition, it is easier to follow events or phenomena until they reveal since news source in local press is the public rather than local authorities.

Since local press is the social communication institution and mass media of a region, news in local press helps formation of local public opinion aiming at contributing to certain activities, opinions and ideas in that region. According to Cangöz (2003: 106), who underlines that local press should have a journalistic approach that adequately recognizes the problems of local people, it is necessary to develop, discuss or criticize solution suggestions for the problems or events of local people besides giving voice to these problems. This can be actualized by news in local press easily reaching and interacting with the target audience.

The local press constitutes the memory of the region where it is located by closely following whether the local government fulfills its commitments or not, reaching more details by focusing on events or phenomena in its region, and thus, providing local people with more information about such events in their immediate surroundings.

Local press performs attributed public service in its region such as positive progress of relations between individuals, supporting individuals to solve their problems or events, ensuring the formation of local public opinion and overseeing local authorities. With the news content generated in the local press, local people are informed about problems of the region in detail, while the local press makes the voice of local people heard, serves as a bridge between the state and the public and plays an

important role in conveying local demands or problems to the public opinion or local governments. It is one of the most important tasks of the local press to ensure that public functions are fulfilled properly in the context of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled and to correctly reflect public service to people. At the same time, one of the most important responsibilities of the local press is to oversee or criticize administrators on behalf of the public and form local public opinion based on the events or phenomena included in news contents. In this context, announcing services offered by local governments through news in the local press paves the way for the relations between the local government and citizens. The main function of the local press is to disclose the news about the region in question to the public opinion. Since news contents in the local press inform local people about the social, cultural, and economic developments, they also reflect the economic, social, cultural and political characteristics of local people. Through local press organs, local people have information about the problems, events, facts, economy, and decisions taken by local governments in the region. Thus, the local press forms the basis of democracy and is a source of information. Furthermore, local people gain sensitivity to problems as a result of their knowledge of the events or phenomena in their location. Sensitivity gives rise to unity, togetherness and solidarity in solving problems or events (Yazıcı, 2014: 63-64).

Local press is also a source where individuals can announce events or phenomena in their location. Through its nature that feeds national press, local press is an instrument that can transmit an important development or news in that region to the whole country. It is essential in democracies to have polyphony, freedom of thought and control of governments by local people. The way to establish democracy culture and make sure it takes root passes through local units. The democracy culture

taking root in local units also gives life to the country's democracy. With polyphony and the fulfillment of local government control, democracy works soundly.

Local press has a pivotal function in the survival and dissemination of local democracy by serving as a bridge between local people and local governments, and providing a flow of news and information. In this regard, while local press informs local people about the areas of interest in local public opinion as well as local political developments and the work of local government, it also contributes to the flourishing of the democracy culture by conveying the demands and problems of people to local governments. Local press further performs a very important function for democracy by overseeing local governments and authorities to determine whether they fulfill their functions or duties as required on behalf of the public. Providing mutual communication between local authorities and the ruled, local press enlightens individuals and helps them form opinions (Yazıcı, 2014: 65-66).

Due to their nation-wide distribution and field of activities, national newspapers are expressed as “newspapers, which publish in a way that would be distributed to a very large mass of readers, including all types of news from the world and the country on their pages” (Bodur, 1997:29). National press often possesses the feature of being the voice of large areas of settlement, big cities and centrally located regions; events or phenomena, which occur in highly populated areas, are hence covered more frequently on national press. Considering the political agenda of the national press, a political/economy centered and narrow understanding of journalism is often encountered (Gürkan, 2003:164). In short, national press is expected to be objective, democratic and egalitarian and in line with ethical principles, as news texts that concern all of the society (Erdoğan, 2006:52-53).

Local press has an import place as the counter-ideological instrument of those, who are marginalized before the monologism of national press with commercial features and its partiality, favouring the de facto and dominant majorities; have social, cultural, political and economic issues regarding life and cannot make their voices heard. This way, it is claimed that sustaining the culture of democracy in the field of national press and the balancing of the bias in this field will be possible with the balancing of the bias of local press, favouring the “others”. Provided by local press to its readers, the possibility is to show a place to the readers, who attempt to make their voices heard before the displacement/rootlessness, which occurs in various forms. This place is not necessarily limited to a geographical location; it can be religious/spiritual, sometimes cultural-social and sometimes an actual place/location. In such cases, local press allows its readers to communicate with others, who have the same objectives, problems and experiences, share their experiences and produce common solutions. Thus, local press fills a gap that was thought to be impossible to be filled by the national press with its commercial qualities (Alankuş, 2003:115).

While providing communication among local people, local press can also send more sincere and one-on-one messages to its target audience. Thus, on the one hand, it allows local people to socialize by feeling like a part of the society, and on the other hand, local press ensures their participation in the environment these locals live in. Another important element of local press is that it has a function to preserve cultural heritage and diversity and is often assigned with such a duty. In this context, local press makes news of local cultural values, which the mainstream press has difficulty reaching, cannot see or ignores, while local press can also reflect these values at the national level (Yazıcı, 2014: 67).

4. INTERNET JOURNALISM AND LOCAL PRESS

4.1. Definition of Local Press and a Brief Historical Overview

Referred to as ‘Anatolian Press’ or ‘Provincial Press’, local (regional) press conveys the demands, events and problems of people in provinces, districts and towns to relevant authorized people or units and it is the medium that is used to create local public opinion by offering informative, educational and entertaining content to the local people (Girgin, 2009: 235, as cited in Yazıcı, 2014: 11).

In other words, local press is also defined as “newspapers that are published and read only in a particular region containing local news and subjects different from national news” or “newspapers published only in a certain town or city with news that only concern people living in this town or city”. In terms of the understanding of journalism, it is also expressed as a whole of newspapers that convey the problems of the region and reflect social, cultural, economic and political developments to its readers in a sound and accurate way and aim to create public opinion in its region. Therefore, local press often operates in a geographically narrow area and brings local events or phenomena at the forefront in terms of subject matter and content. The issues addressed by the local press are generally related to the local environment. Thus, local press largely processes regional news, social life issues, innovations or changes in the region (Yazıcı, 2014: 10-11).

The word local refers to a limited narrow area. In this sense, local press has an understanding of journalism describing the region’s unique characteristics and geography in its content (Girgin, 2001: 169, as cited in Köseoğlu, 2017: 35). In other words, local press is a media organ, the limits of which were set before, reporting local news to inform, entertain local people and become their voice and ears. Besides providing political news across the country, local press also functions as printed or

visual broadcast mass media with information about the region in which it is located. According to Girgin, local news content is observed to contain only events or problems of a particular region and an understanding of journalism that arouses the curiosity of only local people contrary to the mainstream press (Girgin, 2009: 235, Köseoğlu, 2017: 34-35). At the same time, local press is referred to as the most important media organ reminding us that readers are a social entity in terms of protecting and sustaining social values via a proper understanding of journalism since local press aims to ensure unity and integrity of local people (Öztürk, 1992: 152, as cited in Köseoğlu, 2017:35).

Definition of local press in conceptual terms and scope is that it is an instrument or a whole of instruments used in publishing activities to inform, educate, entertain local people in a limited region with previously defined borders, create public opinion in this region and also enable local people to communicate (Vural, 1998: 161). People are usually more sensitive to news and events related to their inner circle. News made by the local press is more effective and convincing to readers, as the vast majority of local press employees such as journalists, editors, typographers and printers are the inhabitants of the region. As a matter of fact, the journalist has the opportunity to add his/her own observations when preparing local news (Köseoğlu, 2017: 36).

Local press produces news, ideas and opinions about society, aims to convey this information to local people and has less capital than the mainstream press as a media organ. Since its target audience is limited, local press has the opportunity to obtain and evaluate more in-depth information about the region where it reports news. In addition, local press ensures democratization of the region where it is located as well as contributing to the formation of public opinion and clearly expressing

opinions or ideas. It expresses the demands and desires of a limited area of the majority and has a mission to protect the interests of the people in the region. Nonetheless, local newspapers are as important as the mainstream press (national press) with their duties, characteristics and position that make them the voice and ears of the region where they operate (Girgin, 2009: 236-237). Hence, the sensitivity of local people to the events and problems of the region increases through the local press. As a result of sensitivity, events or problems reach a solution more easily with unity and integrity and contribute to the development of the region (Köseoğlu, 2017: 35-36).

When the concept of local journalism in Turkey is taken into consideration, the first element that needs to be examined is the Ottoman Press. With the development of the first newspapers during the Ottoman period, the provincial newspapers, which were pioneers of the local press, began to be published. It is known that the first newspaper published in Turkish during the Ottoman period was “*Takvim-i Vakayi (Calendar of Facts)*” (Koloğlu, 2008: 39), however, Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, published the first Turkish-Arabic newspaper, “*Vakayi-i Mısriye*” in 1828 to reflect Mehmet Ali Pasha’s work, formal announcements and legal practices. Later, the state-sponsored semi-official first Turkish newspaper, which was issued by private effort and capital, “*Ceride-i Havadis (Journal of News)*” was published. In 1860, the first Turkish newspaper, “*Tercüman-ı Ahval (Interpreter of Conditions)*” was published by a private initiative and with the help of the treasury. In short, Turkish journalism emerged with the official newspaper, *Takvim-i Vakayi*, and the semi-official newspaper, *Ceride-i Havadis*, and developed with *Tercüman-ı Ahval* and *Tasvir-i Efkâr* (Description of Thoughts) In the history of Turkish press, criticism of administrations by the press as well as bringing the issues

caused by the relevant administration to the readers led that administration to impose various restrictions on the press. Therefore, press was not able to internalize democracy. Turkish press and media activities started during the Tanzimat Reform Era, however, literary issues often featured in the newspapers in the Tanzimat press. During this period, the main task of the press was to translate news texts about external events from foreign newspapers, to partially give news about the country, and to convey news about appointments or promotions by the Sultan (Duman, 2007: 77-82).

As stated before, local press has an important role in uttering the problems of individuals in the local region where it is published, uncovering local elements and creating public opinion. In the Ottoman State, the state system was abolished, and the provincial system was adopted in the 19th century as part of the efforts to improve and regulate the local governments. For transition from the state to the provincial system, the Vilayet Law (Provincial Reform Law) was issued in 1864. With the transition to the provincial system in the Ottoman Empire, provincial newspapers started to be published. Printing houses were established in each province. The aim was to publish and share news and information in each province (Erdem, 2007: 113).

In this regard, provincial newspapers were a part of the state's new structure. These newspapers were published for senior executive staff. This allowed senior administrators to learn about new regulations or amendments. Rather than supporting individuals against the state or conveying individual demands or wishes, the first newspapers in the Ottoman State aimed to consolidate the state power as opposed to the idea of journalism being the fourth power in addition to the executive, legislative and judicial powers. Provincial newspapers led and guided the Anatolian press. Periodical publications started in many local areas through provincial newspapers.

In addition to Turkish language, provincial newspapers were published in the second language spoken in the region where they were issued. This allowed easier and faster understanding of the message by minorities living in a particular region. Provincial newspapers were usually published weekly and irregularly, and the number of pages of newspapers varied between 2 and 4. Visual materials such as pictures or caricatures were not used much. The content section of provincial newspapers was usually composed of official news and discourses, while news about the Sultan, appointments, assignments and new legal regulations were prioritized. At the same time, other important issues covered by provincial newspapers included the work of the state or a relevant province, railway, road and telegraph line construction, as well as social and health issues. Poems, reviews, researches and historical studies were rarely included. Allowing the press to break the monopoly of Istanbul, provincial newspapers had an important place in the spread of journalism in the local regions that were under the tutelage of the Ottoman Empire. With provincial newspapers, the central system informed and guided provinces, thus, contributing to the emergence of local journalism thanks to bringing newspapers and printing in the Ottoman provinces and creating public opinion. This, in turn, rendered an important function by building communication between the rulers and the ruled.

In his book, *Türkiye’de Basın (Press in Turkey)*, Orhan Koloğlu states that the first provincial newspaper published as the official spokesperson of the local government in Turkish and Arabic was “*Hadikat al Akhbar*” issued in Beirut in 1860. The second example of provincial newspapers was the Danube (Tuna) newspaper started to be published by the governor of Danube, Mithat Pasha in Turkish-Bulgarian on March 14, 1865. Another important provincial newspaper was “*Envar-ı Şarkıyye*

(Lights of the East)” published in Erzurum in 1867. In addition, it was the first Turkish newspaper published in Anatolia.

Emerging in the Tanzimat Reform Era and continuing to develop under the influence of the First Constitutional Era, the Turkish press underwent a stagnation during the term of Abdulhamid I. In this context, censorship was applied to the press before and after publishing. During this period, there was a significant reduction in the number of newspapers and journals. At the same time, it was prohibited to publish fictional narratives or information about the Sultan’s health and commercial developments. Furthermore, it was prohibited to publish negative articles about senior executives while it was also banned to write too long articles. In addition, the use of certain words was prohibited during this period as well. These are: Kanun-u Esasi (the Ottoman Basic Law), revolution, anarchy, freedom, persecution, homeland, nation, republic, nose, notables, brotherhood, crown prince, reform, etc. Such prohibitions prevented the public from being properly informed.

On July 24, 1908, the army led an uprising against the Ottoman rule and declared the Second Constitutional Era. Therefore, the years of Abdulhamid II’s oppression and censorship, referred to as the “Period of Autocracy”, came to an end. At the time of the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Era, several newspapers were issued in Istanbul: *İkdam*, *Sabah*, *Tercüman* and *Saadet* newspapers¹. These newspapers published articles defending constitutionalism and freedom. After the declaration of the Second Constitutional Era, there was a large increase in the number of newspapers and journals with the abolition of censorship, while periodicals emerged although they were short-lived. During the constitutional monarchy period, a

¹ *İkdam*: Zealous Work.
Sabah: Morning.
Tercüman: Translator.
Saadet: Felicity.

provision banning censorship was added to article 12 of Kanun-u Esasi (the Basic Ottoman Law) which regulated that “There is freedom of press within the limits of law”. The added provision was that “It cannot be inspected or examined before printing under any circumstances.” Thus, freedom of the press was constitutionally guaranteed.

When the Ottoman Empire signed the Armistice of Montrose on October 30, 1918, a significant portion of the territory began to be occupied by the Entente States as per the armistice clauses. During the occupation process, serious resistance movements began in Anatolia. Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, the Ankara government had made plans for the War of Independence. On May 15, 1919, the Greeks attempted to invade İzmir. Mustafa Kemal took the first step of the Anatolian Liberation Movement when he set out to Samsun on May 19, 1919. Hence, there were two governments in the country: The Ottoman government based in Istanbul and the Turkish Grand National Assembly government based in Ankara. The Ottoman government was cooperating with the occupation forces, while the Ankara government was waging the War of Independence. In this context, an alternative press was established against the Istanbul press. The aim of this press was to inform and encourage the public opinion to take part in the struggle of independence by means of guidance. The alternative press was planned to operate outside Istanbul in an area far from the oppression and censorship of the occupation forces and the Istanbul government. Thus, a press activity called the “Anatolian Press” or the “National Struggle Press” began in many provinces of Anatolia. With these developments, the press polarized in two centers as the Istanbul press and the Anatolian press. Some newspapers in Istanbul, on the other hand, supported the War of Independence, which began with Mustafa Kemal’s departure to Samsun and was successfully managed,

however, they failed to publish articles impartially or without fear due to the decree of the Ottoman Empire dated February 5, 1919. The Tevfik Pasha Government was established for the second time due to the pressure of the Entente States. With the decree in 1919, this government applied censorship on newspapers published in all the places that were under the martial law. On the other hand, the Anatolian press turned into a structure that endeavored to publish newspapers under the control of the Entente States in the regions occupied by them. Nevertheless, the importance of the Anatolian press increased, trying to announce the National Struggle movement to the whole country (Kılıç, 2019: 60).

To successfully conclude the War of Independence, it was necessary to create public opinion by raising awareness and persuasion to ensure people's active participation in the national liberation struggle. Therefore, Mustafa Kemal led in the publication of the newspapers, *İrade-i Milliye (National Will)* first and then *Hakimiyet-i Milliye (National Sovereignty)* to promote the public's support and trust to those who started the national liberation movement during the period of the Erzurum and Sivas congresses. *İrade-i Milliye* was the first official spokesperson of the National Struggle Movement in Anatolia. The newspaper published the reports of the Sivas Congress as well as Mustafa Kemal's declarations. With the publishing of *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* in Ankara, the *İrade-i Milliye* newspaper remained in the background and was closed in 1922. The *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* newspaper was the second most important newspaper of the National Struggle. It was beginning to be published on January 10, 1920 for the public announcement of the decisions taken by the Association for the Defense of the National Rights, or the countrywide resistance organization, established in Anatolia. While newspapers such as *İleri (Forward)*, *Yeni Gün (New Day)*, *Öğüt (Advice)*, *Zaman (Time)*, and *Akşam (Morning)* supported the

National Struggle, the Alemdar (Leader), Istanbul and Peyam-ı Sabah (Morning News) newspapers took a stand against the National Struggle. On the other hand, the Yeni Gün newspaper was acting like a semi-spokesperson for the Ankara government. Although the circulation of the Yeni Gün and Öğüt newspapers was low in the Anatolian Press, they carried on publishing under difficult circumstances. The local press in different parts of Anatolia generally pursued a policy that supported the National Struggle, working to gather local people under one roof. In this context, the period in which the local press in Turkey effectively integrated with the public was the years of the War of Independence. Defined by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the “Virtue Islands”, local newspapers both pioneered the National Struggle movement and became the voice of Anatolia’s resistance against the occupation forces. After the victory of the War of Independence initiated by the Ankara Government and Istanbul’s liberation from the occupation, the Istanbul press and local press organizations in Anatolia adopted different publishing policies with the establishment of the Republic. Mustafa Kemal was elected as the first President after the proclamation of the Republic on October 29, 1923; however, the caliphate had not yet been abolished. In the meantime, the Istanbul press consistently published articles criticizing the new regime on issues such as the declaration of the Republic and the caliphate, and in this process, the Independence Tribunals were established to silence the Istanbul press. To intimidate the press, the editors and columnists of the Tanin, İkdam and Tevhid-i Efkar newspapers were tried in the Independence Tribunals (Kılıç, 2019: 61-64).

Nevertheless, dissenting voices started to emerge in the press in addition to publishing critical texts with the effect of the Sheikh Said Rebellion in the eastern provinces in 1925. In consequence, the Law on the Maintenance of Order was

adopted on March 4, 1925 to remain in force until 1929. This law granted the government extraordinary powers in that the government could restrict freedom of the press at any time and abolish newspapers. Within the framework of the powers given by the law, many opposition newspapers and journals in Istanbul and Anatolia were closed. In this regard, the government managed to create an authoritarian rule all over the country via the Law on the Maintenance of Order. In 1925, the press turned to a government-led freedom with the transition to the one-party system.

Between 1946 and 1957, the local press continued its publishing activities in Anatolia and experienced a short period of growth. As a matter of fact, the number of local newspapers in Turkey increased during the Democratic Party era. A government-sponsored press emerged during this period, since official announcements were made according to political views. (Erdem, 2007, s.124) Local newspapers in Anatolia, which received economic aid from the state budget and supported the Democratic Party and party employees, were published all over the country. The newspapers running against the Democratic Party, on the other hand, were under economic pressure since their publishing activities were intervened or stopped. At the same time, due to the economic support given by the government, people who were not journalists but owned printing houses and served in the party's provincial and district organizations started to publish newspapers. The newspapers trying to publish in order to benefit from the financial supports provided by the government deviated from the goal of working for the public interest with their content and information. This situation made the Anatolian local press ineffective after the year 1950. With the DP coming to power in 1950, the one-party era ended, and the multi-party system was adopted. The democratic environment in the country did not last after the DP came to power due to the ruling party's anti-democratic

practices as well as the imbalance in the field of economy (Erdem, 2007: 121). It is important to note that there had been a positive development in the national press (mainstream press) during the term of the Democratic Party. In this regard, efforts to build an infrastructure started in order to ensure the press reaching more readers more quickly. The construction of highways under the transportation policy implemented between 1950 and 1960 allowed the national press distribute newspapers in Anatolia on a daily basis. However, this situation caused certain problems for the local press. Newspapers containing bad printing techniques, articles written in poor Turkish, began to lose power in the face of colorful newspaper pages of the national press. Moreover, the local press had difficulty resisting against the provincial pages and regional supplements in the national press, thus, many newspapers were closed as a result of economic issues (Kılıç, 2019: 64-66).

On May 27, 1960, the Turkish Armed Forces seized power with military intervention. The Government of the National Unity, established by the military government, abolished the Law No. 6334 and Law No. 6732 regarding “Certain Crimes Committed through Publication or Radio” and related laws as well as the Law No. 94, which were enacted during the period of the Democratic Party and imposed pressure on journalists. At the same time, all anti-democratic articles of the Press Law No. 5680 and Law No. 143 were abolished on November 29, 1960. In addition to the improvement of the press, the Government of the National Unity also issued the Law on Measures to restrict news of the 1960 coup. Furthermore, the government was to decide on the newspaper to issue press releases by the law during the single party and the multi-party period until 1960. Due to the practices in this process, newspapers called “feeding press” emerged, and approaches to gradually remove freedom of the press led to the establishment of the Press Release Authority on January 2, 1961. The

press regulations made after May 27 also affected the local press and the number of local newspapers in Anatolia increased significantly. Between 1970 and 1980, on the other hand, there were significant developments in the field of mainstream (national) press. The offset technique (a flat printing technique) started to be used and this increased the print quality of newspapers. Using the letterpress printing technique (the highest printing technique), the local press had difficulty in keeping up with technology and struggled in competition due to its poor capital structure. Newspapers were also distributed to Anatolia with the technology renewed by the mainstream press. After 1970, however, there were significant increases in the number of local newspapers due to official distribution. During this period, it was observed that some local press organizations continued to publish to receive official releases, however, their circulation was very low. Furthermore, some initiatives were taken during this period to improve the publishing quality of local press organizations. Until the 1960s, when the mainstream press began distributing newspapers to provinces, local newspapers had an important role in the formation of public opinion in the regions where they were published, and function as the first source of news to the local population. As a consequence, what political forces aimed in the Turkish society that had internalized democracy was to reinforce their authority. In order to achieve this goal, they applied pressure on any mechanism, particularly the press, that put their authority at stake (Erdem, 2007: 113-123).

4.2. Definition and Development of Internet Journalism

With the developments in printing in the 19th century, the use of telephones, typewriters and photography in journalism transformed newspapers into a mass media benefitting from different technologies (Tokgöz, 2003). In the 20th century, journalism became a very expensive industry with the use of computers in printing, allowed by

many innovations in the journalism profession (Tokgöz, 2003: 12). Opportunities brought by new communication technologies such as computers provided various conveniences in the transition of journalism profession into practice. The Internet is one of the new communication technologies that facilitate the practical implementation of the journalism profession. The Internet has given impetus to the journalism profession, and a new type of journalism has emerged as news content started to be published on the Internet. This type of journalism is called online, electronic or virtual journalism (Gürcan 1999, as cited in Çoban, 2006: 12).

With the emergence of Internet newspapers, it has been possible to access news contents of traditional newspapers on the Internet as well as new websites reporting on the Internet. Many of the news sites receive news from news agencies and post them on their websites. Additionally, Internet journalism can also be observed in personal websites where individuals publish news contents compiled by their own efforts. Thus, in addition to journalist organizations, there are personal newspapers on the Internet publishing news contents without censorship or control (Yüksel and Gürcan, 2005).

Internet journalism can be characterized as informing people through the Internet using the practices of collecting and producing news as part of the journalism profession. The Internet is becoming a platform where information is reproduced and presented in a new format. Hence, Internet journalism provides a wide range of news options as well as easy access to information in the depths of traditional newspapers (Karaduman 2003). With the use of the Internet, journalists aim to access any information, photographs and documents that they can benefit from for news contents or articles without travelling across cities as well as to check the authenticity of the information they obtained via the Internet. As opposed to the economic dimension of

the obligation to have correspondents in different cities or countries in traditional newspapers, the importance of the Internet increases ever more with its opportunity allowing to compile news from different parts of the world. As stated before, the Internet is transforming into an environment where information can be reproduced and presented in new formats and delivered to the audience within the framework of its unique features. Thus, the use of the Internet has paved the way for the emergence of a new type of journalism called electronic journalism or Internet journalism. According to Gürcan, it is defined as online journalism or applied journalism on the Internet (Gürcan, 1999).

Tokgöz accentuates that Internet journalism has gone through three periods. The first period is when the news content in traditional newspapers is transferred directly to the Internet environment. The second period is when journalists produce original news content to publish in on the Internet. Finally, the third period is marked by interactive communication, which allows journalists to produce news contents on the Internet and grants users the opportunity to audit the news. These three periods are experienced simultaneously in the field of the Internet (Tokgöz, 2003).

The concept of online journalism or electronic journalism first emerged with teletext broadcasting on television. Developed by the BBC in 1971, teletext was broadcast on television. The information gathered on social-cultural issues was entered into the computer and published with the television transmitter. The publication of collected news by electromagnetic waves paved the way for the emergence of electronic journalism. Developments in computer networks in the 1980s were the result of the merger of computer networks under the Internet in the 1990s. Within this framework, a new communication medium was added to the traditional mass media thanks to the Internet, leading to the globalization of communication. As

a result of technological developments, electronic newspapers on the Internet started to serve readers as a new and different type of newspaper (Gürcan, 1999: 15-16).

Internet newspapers first appeared in the United States. In the early days, the websites of printed newspapers were supported by wide-ranging contents, although they were similar to printed newspapers (Onursoy, 2001). Alternative ways were sought for original publishing with the effect of the ever-evolving nature of Internet newspapers (Karaduman, 2003). In Turkey, on the other hand, the first organization to transfer its publication activities on the Internet was the journal of Aktüel on July 19, 1995. The journal of Aktüel was followed by the Leman journal in 1995. In this regard, traditional newspapers in Turkey began to publish online in 1997 (Gürcan 1999, as cited in Çevikel, 2004: 16-17).

Internet journalism can provide the most important advantages of television and newspaper. Readers do not have to wait for the television news bulletin or the newspaper to be printed the next morning to gain access to news contents, but can access the news on the Internet at any time frame from any source they wish to use. In addition to written texts in online websites, audio and video news content is published, and both fast and comprehensive news contents can be produced as there is no time or space restriction on the Internet. Unlike other mass media, the Internet readers can have participatory and interactive communication on the Internet, and access the news from numerous sources. Readers can easily access information they seek by taking advantage of the archiving feature of websites (Karaduman, 2002).

4.3. Principles of Internet Journalism and Production Process of News

The formation of a flow of information between individuals and between generations, remaining in communication and relaying feelings and thoughts are only possible via communication. Communication does only occur between individuals,

but also between other living creatures in nature. There are various methods for communication to occur. For individuals, a certain method that would relay a piece of information, idea or a similar incident from the sender to the receiver. In general, relaying information or in other words, notifying one of news represents the foundation of journalism. In order for a piece of information to be newsworthy, education is required in the vocation of journalism; accordingly, individuals are informed about the news. At the same time, it is a prerequisite that the relayed information is impartial and conveys the truth (Etkeser, 2015:37-40).

Taking hold of the world and physically converging, but sociologically diverging individuals by causing a rapid change, technological developments gave way to the formation a notion called globalization. The quickly occurring changes also affected communication – a directly fundamental need of human beings. This, in turn, caused media to evolve as one of the most important methods of communication. As of the process of emergence of media, significant changes occurred, and individuals tried to find new means to receive information (Karaduman, 2012:17).

As one of the new methods, the common use of the internet platform rendered communication stronger and faster; this caused the press to reemerge and the drastic changes in the field of communication were combined with journalism (Geray and Aydoğan, 2010). Archiving and collecting news, preparing a news story to be published with computer-aided devices and acquiring images from everywhere became possible with the advances in technology. As the news sources enhances, individuals also found the acceleration to have access to news they look for. On one hand, this development facilitated journalism as a vocation and on the other hand, caused anyone to become a journalist (Etkeser, 2015:44-69).

One of the affected areas by technology, internet journalism supports multiple environments, in comparison with traditional journalism. Also possessing the feature of interaction, online journalism includes written forms, images, video and sound. The readers can communicate among themselves and interact with journalism. In addition, the field of internet also changes the definition of journalism as it changed the functionality of the news today. Journalists, who carry out their occupational activities on internet, are called internet journalists. The specific features of internet journalists are expressed; the internet editor is more equipped and when needed, has the capability of making decisions as an editor, reported or an executive editor. Since there is a constant flow of news, matters such as analysis of news content, presentation to readers and placement on the news site must be solved as soon as possible by the internet editor and just as accurately so, before being included in the publishing process (Çetin and Akar, 2012:268).

The most important factor for internet journalism is reporting. Brief, clear and fluent statements are preferred in internet journalism, rather than the long and complex sentences in traditional journalism. It is important that news is immediately reported to readers in internet journalism; they also have to be updated constantly. Since the reader has the possibility of making immediate comparisons in internet journalism, the aforementioned statement carries quite the importance. This comparison is closely related with how the news content is presented. Simultaneously, the images and sound, included in newspapers on the internet platform, provides convenience to the readers, attracting their attention. In other words, online journalism or internet journalism, has different qualities than traditional journalism (Çetin and Akar, 2012:268). These qualities are listed below:

- “Very quickly presenting the news and constantly updating it”,

- “Readers having access to news content at any time they want, 24/7”,
- “Using sound-graph-image files on a multimedia basis”,
- “Easily accessing news content in archive files and storing requested news content”,
- “Interacting with the readers, seeking feedback with comments”,
- “Including the links to the news texts regarding the matters covered in the news content, so that information in the background is easily accessed”.

As technology kept developing in the Information Age, social media sites and multimedia sharing sites caused other changes in the lives of individuals. Individuals tend to find a place for themselves within events or phenomena, instead of merely watching and listening (Aydoğan, 2012:25).

In addition to the convenience, offered by internet journalism with respect to access and diversity, the lack of large investment demand renders this field preferable from the perspective of practitioners and investor. According to Kutlu and Bekiroğlu, the method and techniques, used by enterprises to reach their targets in the market, reveals the entirety of their marketing strategies. Theoretical components of modern marketing, which are served to the disposal of enterprises today, consist of product, distribution, price and promotion policies. This also causes traditional journalism to be transformed into internet journalism. Furthermore, internet journalism does not require large investments, which gives way for both written press and visual media to take place in the multiple media environment with very low costs. Internet journalism has a different position than the structuring of traditional journalism. The main reason as to why this happens is that news stories are able to be immediately published, so that events and phenomena can quickly be reflected onto readers. Easy access of

readers to internet newspapers affects them and almost all of the readers can have access, free of charge, being able to reach the news stories whenever they want with internet journalism (Kutlu and Bekiroğlu, 2010:254-269).

In other words, news content within the scope of traditional journalism is conveyed to readers unilaterally and directly, whereas the readers can immediately click on the links in the field of internet, revealing their reaction as such. Geographical boundaries that exist in written newspapers, radio or television broadcasts, are not present in internet journalism. The difference of readers of internet journalism can be considered in two aspects, compared to those of traditional journalism. Some of the readers can wander around the internet, while some others can do research. Moreover, internet ensures the formation of various interest groups, strengthening them, and in this case, broadening the target audience of news site. On the other hand, traditional newspapers have fixed or certain target audiences. Readers can have access to almost all of the internet (online) newspapers free of charge. For written newspapers, readers have to purchase them in exchange of a certain fee. It is not possible to have access to print newspapers outside of certain hours; however, it is possible to reach internet (online) newspapers 24 hours on every day of the week. In addition, internet journalism can measure the reaction of its readers momentarily, thanks to questionnaires on websites, added via e-mail, or forum pages. Internet (online) journalism can directly collect comprehensive information (sound, image and so on) from the news source or witnesses for any news story and publish it (Aydoğan, 2012:19-41).

Along with internet journalism, occupational principles may be forsaken from an ethical perspective, for the target audience has faster access to information and events covered in news stories are not always fact-checked as per the principle of

truth and news stories are presented very quickly. Furthermore, the oppression on press, which is defined as yet another force of democracy, prevents the possibility of actualization of the vocation, while it also causes individual rights to be restricted with the coexistence of discourse that aims to change individuals' minds, influence and direct them. At this point, ethical principles emerge and the limits of freedom of press are shaped within the scope of ethical rules (Etkeser, 2015:39).

The principles of journalism developed by professional organizations are the principles that guide journalists, lead to the right behavior and allow them to avoid misbehaviors. Evaluating these principles in detail, it can be observed that two important objectives come to the forefront. The first is the journalistic mission. Indeed, these principles consist of provisions that explain the duty of journalists as serving to provide the public with accurate and complete information. The second objective of these ethical principles is to ensure the credibility of the journalism profession, i.e., to turn the journalism profession into a more respectable, dignified and reliable profession. The profession of journalism is evaluated based on two different ethical approaches. These two approaches are defined as the functional ethical approach and the pragmatic ethical approach. The functional ethical approach sets the universal rules that must not be violated under any circumstances, and is concerned with the purpose of producing news in journalism expressing that not any purpose can justify the use of any unethical instrument. The pragmatic ethical approach, on the other hand, focuses on results rather than predetermined principles or rules. According to this ethical approach, what determines the right or wrong is consequences rather than purposes. This understanding is also expressed as "The behavior that provides the greatest happiness for most people is ethical behavior". Therefore, this approach requires that strict rules be ignored, that each event be

evaluated within its own terms or conditions, that the possible consequences be considered in advance and that the decision be made in accordance with this framework (İrvan, 2003: 52-55).

With the proliferation of the Internet, definitions such as online journalism (Internet journalism), digital photography journalism, blogging, social media and citizen journalism have become part of a social reality. Thus, it is seen that different pre-existing ethical problems have arisen (Dedeoğlu, 2016: 49). In particular, media ethics and new media ethics examine these issues and are interested in the practices and norms involved in this field. These issues also answer questions about how to use new media as well as texts and visuals received from individuals (Dedeoğlu, 2016: 50). Within this scope, media ethics is a sub-branch of professional ethics. In other words, it is the rules and principles that media employees or journalists have to comply with when performing their professions. For this reason, it is necessary to address the concept of ethics in order to create a general framework of media ethics. Ethics is briefly defined as “philosophy of ethics”. Ethics is referred to as the moral characteristics, habits and the total of willed behaviors resulting from these habits that define whether a person is good or bad. Thus, ethics investigates these behaviors from the perspective of conditions of morality (Etkeser, 2015:28).

As a consequence, ethics investigates these behaviors in terms of morality conditions. Ethics, or “philosophy of ethics” is defined as a branch of philosophy that investigates, defends or criticizes the behaviors, judgments, rules and principles of individual conduct on the basis of morality (İrvan, 2003: 51-52).

Ethical principles for journalists, on the other hand, are generally positive principles that help them fulfill their social responsibility by “providing accurate and complete information, enabling the representation of different opinions or ideas and

conveying the goals of social change”. In this context, the notion on ethics underlines that journalism is a public-oriented profession aiming at public interest. From this perspective, the notion of ethics dictates that journalism in the media must be applied as a professional practice according to the principles of journalism that were previously set out (Çambay, 2016: 110). Furthermore, it is stated that the ethical rules applicable to traditional media tools must also apply to digital fields (Demirel, 2016: 99).

It is observed that Internet journalism has a structure that has more ethical problems than the traditional media. One of the important features of Internet journalism, which is different from traditional press, is that it allows interaction. The interaction feature allows different users on the interface to communicate with each other. Another feature of Internet journalism is hyper- textuality, which provides access to other alternative media or texts through the interface or the network. Internet journalism offers an area where consumers (readers or viewers) can archive, interpret, customize, and recirculate media content. Given that the source of income for news sites is ads, being able to deliver ads to more users has become one of the main purposes of many news sites. With the hyper-textuality and interaction features of Internet journalism, it has also been possible to use some words in news texts to encourage users to take interest in ads. In this regard, individuals have become commodities or consumers rather than citizens. Thus, it can be observed that contents and news are given by commodification in the field of Internet. The commercialization trends in the field of Internet journalism lead to the seizure of personal information due to commercial interests.

According to Atabek, two points must be considered when evaluating Internet journalism and the concept of ethics from the perspective of political economy: The

first is privacy and the second is copyrights (Atabek, 2006, as cited in Demirel, 2016: 96). The area of private life includes parts of an individual's life where they share only with certain people to a certain extent. However, the right to privacy is generally violated in various ways in Internet journalism. An example to this is sharing audiovisual materials, unauthorized use of posts in social media, or the use of the tagging feature. Some sites that publish news content can benefit from other news sites through linking from one webpage to another. When the websites that produce news content are examined, it is seen that the majority of them are the same in terms of content. As a matter of fact, many news contents are seen to be shared in sites by the copy-paste format sometimes with reference and sometimes without any reference as if they were produced by the site itself. If the news content was produced by a reporter of that news site or received for a paid price, the uses of news in such a site by others raises the copyright issue. At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of citation and copy-paste content due to the rapid access to information about almost everything in the Internet journalism environment. The lack of specifying the source that produces free news where the information is quoted is the most common form of plagiarism in Internet journalism. Sharing content in the form of "copy-paste" in Internet journalism also reflects that the news has the issue of accuracy and credibility. With the Internet accelerating the circulation of information, being the first to publish information is of great importance compared to traditional media. The information that is provided for fast access might be published without confirmation, and this will cause misinformation to circulate quickly on the Internet. In particular, the majority of commercial news sites find it commercially more efficient to rearrange and circulate "Breaking News" produced by other news sites instead of producing news content themselves (Binark and Bayraktutan, 2013: 57-71).

With the rapid development of new communication technologies, social problems have arisen regarding the misuse of information, inequality in information and providing social control (Bal, 2013: 239-240, as cited in Demirel, 2016: 97). In this context, the Internet has the potential to spread false information as well as accurate information. The accuracy of information is directly proportional to the effort of providing the right individual and institutional information as well as the quality of doing business. The existence of an understanding of ethics based on this effort, on the other hand, is based on many social-economic-cultural qualities. The accuracy of information has an important place in the formation of a democratic structure of society. The peculiar participation criterion of democracy can be fulfilled only when individuals are properly informed about events and phenomena to form their opinions and use these opinions to choose, suggest or recommend. Individuals can perform these practices when they are properly informed.

When summarizing the basic problems experienced in the field of Internet journalism in terms of ethics, the following ethical issues can be observed: The boundaries of private life have completely disappeared; accuracy is questionable; while resources are proliferating, reliability is reduced; biased unrealistic texts are easily circulated; there is unauthorized access to photos and other visual texts as well as easy access to information that is the subject of news content and this information is not verified (Çambay, 2016: 110).

4.4. Internet Journalism Practices in Local Press

Emerging as a new type of journalism on the Internet with the development of new communication technologies among journalism practices, Internet journalism has its own peculiar characteristics and presents transformative qualities in the local press as much as the national press.

It is uttered that new communication technologies and the opportunities of Internet journalism have become important for the local press, as well. In this sense, Internet journalism can provide opportunities for all individuals with alternative media while also allowing the local press to take its place on the Internet and raise its voice outside its location reaching more audiences crossing the boundaries of that region by means of raising the local issues.

In other words, the qualities of the Internet technology reveal significant potential for the media. Its ability to realize these potentials is based on the media being in line with its own opportunities and the information habits of its target audience in a holistic way. Thus, Internet journalism also has the same potential and characteristics as the local press, and it is stated that some features have a special significance in terms of the local nature of the local press. The general characteristics of Internet journalism are as follows:

- “It is able to deliver news very quickly and to update them continuously”,
- “Readers can access news at any time within 24 hours”,
- “Internet journalism uses audio-graphics-video files based on multimedia”,
- “It allows easy access to news in the archive and store the desired news”,
- “It offers interactive communication with readers and can instantly share reader comments”,
- “It offers easy access to background information via links to websites related to specific news”,
- “It offers the opportunity to find news that cannot be found in other media”

(Karaduman, 2003: 143).

The Internet, a technology ready everywhere, has a global feature that covers the world through networks. This new communication technology with instant communication is defined as the fastest communication medium with transmission and development of information and news (Wendland, 2001). In addition to this, another important feature of Internet journalism in terms of local press is the change of the concept of geographical boundaries with an extension. In this context, news in local newspapers can reach all over the world if it is shared on the Internet, raising awareness about any particular local event or phenomenon (Atabek, 2003:65). In this case, the concepts of immediacy and proximity change in terms of newsworthiness along with Internet journalism and thus, it is understood that the Internet is an effective new communication technology for local press and facilitates disseminating local news to a large group of audience (Gürcan and Bayram, 2005: 53). Local newspapers in the Internet media may have the opportunity to inform society about the events, local cultural values and developments in their own region. This removes the limits of printed local press and extends the access to individuals. Therefore, local news on the Internet can be delivered to individuals, who live at home or abroad and need information about their own regions (Gürcan, 2002: 114). At the same time, the local press can reach individuals living far from their hometown through Internet journalism, providing a sense of belonging through information from their regions. As a result, the Internet can offer alternative areas of use and opportunities for local media.

Another point to consider is that the Independent Communications Network aims to make local press effective, stand against the monopoly and monologism of mass media, serve as an instrument of self-expression for the civil society. In addition, this network aspires to bring local press in a position where it can survive in the face

of economic, legal, political or social challenges. Therefore, the opportunities of new communication technologies are benefited, and horizontal solidarity networks are built between local newspapers, local televisions and local radios for the production of news content and programs with an attempt to render journalism better, diversify news content and have a wider context in the local press (Alankuş, 2003: 3-5, 12). In this respect, any news content such as news, photos, articles and caricatures on websites are benefited only for reference, ignoring the cost burden of mass media and especially local newspapers. In short, in light of the opportunities provided by new communication technologies in obtaining information, a significant support is provided to local press in terms of any fees or copyrights payment (Atabek, 2003: 73-74).

According to Gezgin (2007: 177-178), it is possible to summarize some functions of local press as follows:

“The main function of local press is to inform the public about mechanism of public services in the context of the ruler and the ruled. Supervision of the administration on behalf of people and creating public opinion are among the most important responsibilities of local press; and contributing to the rooting of democracy necessary in the reflection of national will is also one of the important functions of local press”.

In this direction, local press has the function of informing the public. If necessary, it has the opportunity to oversee local government on behalf of the public and it communicates the demands and requirements of the public to the local government. Furthermore, local press has a guiding feature in how masses can share or convey common opinions and feelings when creating news texts so that the culture

of democracy can function in a healthy way. with this feature, the indirect participation of individuals can be achieved, and the development of the culture of democracy can gain momentum. With expanding the boundaries of local press by means of the Internet, this feature can break the chains of the dominant monopoly concept in the press, and the functioning of the culture of democracy can generally continue in the field of Internet journalism.



5. POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MEDIA AND THE IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE ON NEWS

5.1. The Relationship of News – Ideology

5.1.1. Definition of ideology and conceptual discussion.

The concept of ideology, which is derived from French, is the product of relaying the ideals of democracy, ensuring that mass movements are included in politics and social, ideational and political upheavals along with the Industrial Revolution. From this perspective, Jürgen Habermas states;

“... steps out of the criticisms of the world’s traditional interpretations and makes a claim of scientificness. However, they would continue to fulfill functions of legitimization and therefore prevent the analysis of actual power relations and doing so with respect to public awareness. In the narrow sense, ideology appeared as such for the first time. Ideology, under the guise of modern science, derives its own legitimacy from the critique of ideology again, hence replacing the traditional methods of legitimizing the ruling power. Ideology and ideological critique emerged together. In this sense, one cannot mention pre-bourgeoisie ideology.”

Traditional beliefs comprise a static, hierarchical, limited and consistent whole. Ideologies, on the other hand, are products of a society that gradually becomes pluralist and are identified with certain competitive groups, to the interests of which they serve. While traditional religion deals with the interaction between the everyday lifestyle of people and the sacredness of the afterworld, the secular universe of ideology refers to science and reason to legitimize the public projects that ensure the transformation of this world. Ideologies are often own products of the society, derived

in consequence of social analyses. This trend, on the other hand, is reinforced with the gradual democratization of political phases. Along with the Industrial Revolution, a boom in literacy was observed, as books and newspapers became substantially cheaper due to the communication revolution attached. Individuals were able to reach more information and sources of information varied, both of which gave the interpretation of knowledge a problematic form. Competitive formations with different interests or ideologies had to have a universal ideology, despite their limited roots. That was because persuasion over commanding became more widespread with the masses being more and more included in the field of politics. Despite being a product of the French Enlightenment, the concept of ideology extends to the general issues on philosophy that internalize matters of meaning and direction of Western European intellectuals along with the collapse of the world of Middle Ages. Having used the term ideology in 1799 for the first time, Antoine Destutt de Tracy was one of the leading philosophers of “*Institut de France*”, who wished to spread the ideas of Enlightenment. In “*d’Ideologie*” he penned between 1801 and 1815, Tracy proposes a science of ideas that would represent the foundation of all other sciences – an “ideology”. Tracy also refuses the formation of all innate thoughts and explains that all of our thoughts are based on physical senses. Regardless of religious or metaphysical biases, the rational examination of the roots of ideas would pave the way for the founding of a just and happy society. Consequent to the examination of individual thoughts, it would appear that the root of all of this would reveal universal human needs and desires. Drawing on these needs, a legal framework to be prepared would make sure that nature and society would be in harmony, hence satisfying the desires/demands. In this context, nature and society are associated. The cause of this association, on the other hand, was their examination with a rational method –

ideology. Therefore, the concept of ideology has, first and foremost, a positive and progressive meaning (McLellan, 2012:2-6).

In other words, there are numerous descriptions regarding ideology today. They are as follows:

- “The production process of meanings, signs and values in social life”,
- “The cluster of ideas concerning a particular social group or class”,
- “Ideas for legitimizing a dominant political power”,
- “Systematically distorted communication”,
- “Socially mandatory illusion”,
- “The environment, in which conscious social actors make sense of their own worlds”,
- “The process, where social reality is turned into natural reality”,
- “The confusion of linguistic and factual realities”,
- “Manners of thought, motivated by social interests”,
- “The cluster of beliefs with action purposes” (Eagleton, 2015:18).

The concept of ideology also has roots in Germany. Contrary to Tracy, who argued that the natural and social world is clear in the rational mind, German Romantic Movement focuses on humans, attaching meanings, defending the people’s own reality from collective and individual perspectives in the face of changing circumstances. At this point, there appear to be two main streams for the term, ideology. The first one is the French rationalist approach, observed with Tracy, who used it for the first time, and his circles. This approach focuses on society’s consensus-based nature and advocates that truth can be achieved after a deep thinking process. The second and opposing approach, on the other hand, is related to Hegel and

Marx and even extends to Habermas. In this approach, the focus is on how truth is produced. Society is not a whole, which is based on a fixed or usual consensus; it is a variable notion with conflicts. According to Marx, the derogatory meaning of ideology consists of two states. The first one relates ideology to idealism, considering idealism a problematic philosophical approach and positioning it across materialism. The correct worldview is a materialist approach. The second one, on the other hand, relates ideology to the unequal distribution of power and resources within the society. According to the materialist historical view Marx advocates for, the manner, in which individuals fulfill their material needs, determines the rest of the society. The social process, at its core, was based on the fulfillment of material needs such as alimentation, dressing and shelter. Individuals were satisfying these material needs in the natural world and were transforming said world with the process of labor, as per their own purposes. In this context, the main activity of the individual was the process of labor. Marx assessed this process as a material practice and claimed that this must be the starting point of social science. Thus, ideology had to be explained with respect to material practices (McLellan, 2012:9-13).

In this context, what turns thoughts into ideology had to do with the conflicting nature between social and economic relations in the process of labor. According to Marx:

“Consequent to this conflict between the individual’s interest and the society’s interest, the latter assumes the form of an independent structure, much like the State, as a community life that split from the true interests of the individual and the society, also leaning on actual bonds, but is illusory at the same time.”

As a result;

“All struggles within the state; struggles among democracy, aristocracy and monarchy, struggle for the right to vote and so on, are actually the illusory forms assumed by the real struggle between different classes.”

Providing ideological power to certain ideas or thoughts, this factor is often related to class struggle and their social and economic grounds. Normally, conflicts of interest are spread throughout the society. Ideas that justly reflect the asymmetrical distribution of social and economic relations paint the harmonized picture of society, rather than the conflictive one, and attempt to prevent the fragmentation of society and cover up said conflict. In this context, Marx's statement of “the ruling ideas in all times are the ideas of the ruling class” comes from this very point. That is because, those who have control over economic production and distribution can also produce and distribute ideas. The statement in the German ideology, “the reason as to why humans and conditions look upside down in all ideologies such as a *camera obscura* in the historical life of humans, just like the physical life of theirs, turning objects upside down in the retina,” reflects that the idea is a distorted representation of a real “thing”. In his early conceptualizations, Marx thought that ideas were distorting reality or were opposites. In other words, according to Marx, ideology ensured to obscure or invert real relations among individuals. Moreover, he expresses that ideology is not a constantly logical or empirical error, but the superficial or deceptive expression of the truth. Later, Marx was interested in how ideology was produced in individuals' manner of forming relationships with one another within the everyday operations of the capitalist society. From this perspective, Marx states in his book

Kapital that ideology arises from the superficial relations of capitalist societies and that they serve to obscure the main production relations (Mclellan, 2012:14-17).

According to Lukacs, who begins the investigation of ideology with a meta-analysis, ideology is not the discourse that does not depend on the ways in which things occur in reality, but the discourse that lies deep down in things, is not aware of their orientations and is dependent on these ways with superficial and limited manners. At this point, ideology is not entirely an illusion or false consciousness in terms of errors, according to Lukacs. Grasping history as a whole is to find it within its conflicting process and its own dynamics. Both Hegel and Lukacs claim that knowing the whole is a particular political and moral norm. According to Lukacs, on the other hand, reification is not only one of the fundamental characteristics of capital economies, but also a fundamentally structural issue of capitalist societies from all perspectives. For Lukacs, commodity fetishism is not only a state of mind, but also a material and objective structure, related to capitalism, as per its definition. In this context, Lukacs argues that “what is meant by the readiness of a class to establish its own hegemony, is to allow the organization of the whole society’s interests in line with the organizational style of its own consciousness and interests.” (Eagleton, 2015:138-139).

Also, the part that Engels mentions ideology for the most part, on the other hand, is a clarification of the materialist historical view. He wrote the following words in 1890 about economic, political and ideological relations:

“Humans make their own history, but they do so in an environment, conditioning this history, and on the basis of real relations, which existed before them; economic relations from amongst them are ultimately decisive,

despite being influenced by political and ideological relations; it is the key to all relations and only it can take us to a real understanding.”

Thus, he first and foremost separates political, economic and ideological relations. Then, he posits that economic relations determine political and ideological relations. Engels also forms a close relationship between ideology and ignorance. Thus, the ideological thinker has false consciousness. He or she does not know what the real and driving forces that affect him or her are and this is not an ideological process. Engels had a negative ideology conception, because he identified ideology with ignorance and ideas that are disconnected from reality or are distorted. At the same time, Lenin was positioning all classes and especially the working class from an ideological perspective, drawing on the clarification of class struggles. Therefore, ideology was losing its negative connotation. What renders an idea problematic is not its ideological characteristic, but the interest of the class to which it serves (McLellan, 2012:24-27).

Shedding light on the concept of commodity, Lukacs underlines that the most qualitative thing in this structural phenomenon is the encounter of the individual's own activity as regardless from the individual, alien to the individual and as a force with its own laws. With respect to the individual's actions in the work process, as well as his/her objective actions, the individual is no more the real subject of this process; he or she becomes a mechanized part of a mechanical system, to the rules of which he or she has to adapt and he or she finds before him/herself, fully operational, incomplete and not dependent on the individual (Özbek, 2011:99). This quality is viewed on both objective and subjective grounds. It is objective, because a world made up of commodities and commodity markets arises and individuals adopt and

accept the laws of this new world. Said laws, on the other hand, become forces that work despite the individual and with which the individual cannot deal with. Lukacs states Marx's opinion of the labor becoming a commodity of the worker. Thus, the universality of the commodity form begins with the abstraction of human labor that objectifies in the commodity within the scopes of subjectivity and objectivity. According to Lukacs, there is a certain structural relation in the capitalist social structure and it is the commodity exchange. Within said structural relation, circulation of commodities converts people's social relations into an objective relation among things. Lukacs posits that the rationality principle, based on accountability, changes the "characteristic of the thing" of everything human labor yields. Commodity production, becoming the dominant mode of production, aims to buy and sell labor as a commodity as well. Lukacs states that commodity relations arise as pure, undistorted and real areas with the capital that exists in the individuals' consciousness. The individuals' relations with each other, with real objects to fulfill their needs, yet are obscure within the commodity relations, cannot be perceived under commodity relations and become unrecognizable and these relations for the reified consciousness have become representative of the social lifestyle. Gramsci uses the term "historical bloc" to refer to social modes. Structures and superstructures comprise the concept of historical bloc. The historical bloc is the organic formation of the base with socio-economic qualities and the superstructures with political-ideological qualities. The base is viewed to be the totality of social forces and production relations. The link between the historical bloc and superstructures also point to the fact that it is formed via intellectuals. An integrating historical bloc ensures that the dominant class forms its hegemonic order with its own intellectuals. For Gramsci, superstructures have a complex integrity. While he mentions a

determination in the base of the historical bloc, a transition to freedom is observed in the superstructure. In this context, Gramsci utilizes the term “*catharsis*” to explain the level of obligation and freedom between base and superstructure. This concept elaborates the transition from objective to subjective, obligation to freedom (Özbek, 2011:102-121).

According to Gramsci, the superstructure of social formation comprises of the organic collection of political society and civil society. The dominant class, ruling the remaining groups, on the other hand, is approached in the field of civil society. The counterpart of the forcing factor of the dominant class is dealt with in the political society. Political society is the area of “direct rule” that excludes itself from the state or the legal government. The political society is the coercion and oppression apparatus, which the ruling class uses to ensure that other social structures act in accordance with the production mode in effect. The political society hence serves to the purpose of sustaining the status quo by pushing the system. Gramsci mentions a dictatorial administrative structure in periods, when political society is more dominant. On the other hand, in times when civil society is more dominant, a hegemonial system is expressed. Gramsci states that the links between the social forces with close relations with the base is independent than the wills of individuals and social groups are based on the developmental foundations of concrete production powers. Each social structure has a particular function in production. Gramsci refers to the fact that ideologies arise from the concrete and material relations of the society. In other words, according to Gramsci, ideologies have material roots and they have to do with a social formation being under a hegemony. Gramsci’s grasp on ideology must be tackled with the reality that a social structure is under dominance. According to him, dominance of the ruling class that possesses social governance spreads the

ideology of the ruling class to all strata and activities of the social structure. The ruling class spreads ideologies through groups of intellectuals it forms itself. According to Lenin, on the other hand, ideology is viewed as the quality of scientific consciousness, more than being any consciousness. Accordingly, each ideology is historically conditioned; however, each scientific ideology corresponds with the objective truth, absolute nature. Moreover, if the truth is merely an ideological form, truth that is independent from the individual appears to be likely and if it really is a form of human experience, then truth that is independent from the individual would not be the objective truth anymore. Another phenomenon that must be tackled in Lenin's understanding of ideology is his thoughts on hegemony. The proletariat must fight an ideological battle against the bourgeoisie. This class structure is aimed at constantly pursuing the ideas of intellectuals and philosophers and unmasking them. Another ideological struggle is fought against strata of classes and groups that may be allies. It is a struggle that attempts to bring together groups as per its views, aiming to include them within its ideas and program and thus, drive them under its hegemony, whilst being directed at persuasion. Since it shatters the influences of bourgeois ideology, it is expressed as the indirect struggle against bourgeois ideology (Özbek, 2011:76-131).

When ideology is evaluated as per the Marxian theory of "alienation", two aspects become prominent. The first one is the economic dimension of alienation, described as "the alienation in real life". The second one, on the other hand, is the alienation in ideational structures; in other words, in fields of religion, state, law and morals. Marx states that the individual's existence in law, morals, religion and state is an alienated one. The consciousness experienced and observed in religion and in

ideological conception is an alienated consciousness. According to Marx, the individual must be free from alienated consciousness or alienation in consciousness. Marx analyzes at length social formations and their forms throughout history. As a result, the particular productive activities of individuals also form social-political relations. According to Marx, even when it is real or imaginary, ideology is approached as conscious narratives. With this approach of Marx, all ideological approaches and ideological forms of consciousness (morals, metaphysics, religion and so on) visibly lose their autonomy. In addition to this truth that critiques material relations and is unique to them, it is the individuals themselves that cause both their ideas and the products of their ideas to change. From this point of view, what determines life is not consciousness, but it is life that determines consciousness.

According to Marx, the ideas of the ruling class are always ruling ideas. The class with the dominant material power of the society would also possess the dominant spiritual power. Thus, the class that possesses material production instruments would also possess ideational means of production. Furthermore, individuals, who are not provided with ideational production means would have ideas, based on the ruling class of the society. Ruling ideas are the ideational expressions of dominant relations of material production. Individuals that comprise the ruling class also have a consciousness. When they, as a class, rule, they would also be ruling other social strata in a widespread manner. They have a dominant nature as producers of ideas, just as much as the other beings with ideas amongst the rest. They organize the production and distribution of ideas in their own time and their ideas become the ruling ideas of their time.

Consequently, ideology is a false social consciousness according to Marx; in other words, a consciousness that distorts the truth and the social consciousness that remains unresponsive in the face of these.

5.1.2. The ideology factor in news production.

There are many diverse methods and instruments to utilize ideology, but mass communication instruments carry the greatest importance in this respect. The most ideal ideological carriers, mass media is the most effective ideological apparatus today. Messages or notions, designated to shape public opinion, are not always injected with calculations or in large dosages. Covertly hidden in the news themselves, these dosages are more clearly and openly noticed, when they are evaluated after being injected to the public opinion consecutively. When the news injects its final dosage, they would be injecting a particular purpose or an ideology to the society. News is described as the most significant building block of the ideological setup of the society. Also comprising the microorganism of the ideological formation, news carry and convey tangible events. Often the news are the tangible events themselves (Kazancı, 2002:77-79). One of the outputs of media, news is among the resources developing information. Transforming into a technical phenomenon or event, news has significant shares among the instruments that inform individuals. When the concept of news is scrutinized in detail, various types, sections and many different purposes can be found. Sometimes they are informing and sometimes they are entertaining; but there is an important purpose in the background, as these activities are carried out. Feeding the ideology, news fulfill their functions sometimes overtly and sometimes covertly (Fejes, 1994:258; İnal, 1996:141; Kazancı, 2002 :78). As a tangible event, the notion of news is also qualified as money, crisis or power. In other words, it is the expression of the unity of power or strength and its own will per

se. Along with the technological developments today, this event is spread and its influence and significance are increased. There are a number of ideologies within the social structure and these ideologies have their own discourse rarely in their messages. These messages are constantly reflected onto the society, taking hold of it. The most important and influential instrument that conveys this message to the individuals is mass media. While this conveying is carried out, media selectively disseminates the information (Dursun, 2001:80-81).

News that produces ideology is not an abstract concept. News cannot only be perceived as messages. News is tangible, whereas messages are abstract. In addition, news as a concept is the tangible version of the message. It has a content, a purpose and a tangible form. News production processes are based on the structural plan that underlies the news text, produced by members of the press. Van Dijk expresses news as “public discourse”. This concept illustrates an approach that places importance on the news production process and the reader’s comprehension/grasp of the news. Thus, news is clearly associated with social practices, news making practices and ideologies. In other words, the process in question is a holistic structure, consisting of journalist, editor, newsroom and the publishing policies of the institution. Before producing the news text, information acquired via agency texts and press conferences – interviews, change within the news production process. Constructing the news discourse around such important information, the type emphasis on the news language, sentence structures and adverbs, place and time designated for the adjectives to depict the subjects are all ideological selections (Özerkan, 2002:64-73). At the same time, there is an event or phenomena that every news wishes to relay. Thus, a discourse is expressed. The discourse is the written or oral narration of a way of thinking. As an entity with limited autonomy, the monopolization of media, its area

of competition, the size of the enterprise and its expectations influence discourse. The discourse of news is determined as per the historical circumstances, under which news content is established, and purpose of production. In certain periods of time, power and rule that is on the forefront in the social formation, is reflected on the news content. Dominant discourse within the news discourse becomes usual constantly and, in this case, the dominant ideology would be reconstructed. At the same time, the news discourse is established within the political economy of media (Kazancı, 2002 :81-82).

Ideology is a piece of information that is the exact opposite of the truth, is oppressing, formed and rejecting (Çakmak, 2019:1130). If information instruments sustain their existence within a social structure as an entity, this would be because they have the function of producing information for the society. Ideology is a process within the social structure, generating “awareness” from a class-related perspective, in order to produce an attitude or behavior before the social production of this structure (Sholle, 1999:268).

According to Shoemaker and Reese (2014:97-99), who elaborate ideology as a mechanism that serves as an integrating power in the society, a hierarchical order of media will reveal the individual level on the inside and when the levels of media routines are consecutively listed, they will show corporate level, level outside of media and the ideological level on the exterior. Thus, opinions and thoughts are related with interests and power. Moreover, the power to create symbols is not an impartial one. Notions and events are structured in such a way that they are interpreted from the perspective of dominant groups. From an ideological point of view, media functions as the extension of the interest groups in the society and heavily influences the reconstruction of dominant ideologies, continuity of

supervision and the coexistence of values and institutional order. As a result of the integration of discourse and language, ideologies come to life. The purpose of the ideological discourse is to use a convincing subject, in order to convince the subject and attract all subjects to its side. Language that seeks to persuade exists within action; the shaping and ensuring of organization is dependent on ideological discourse. Persuaded by the ideological discourse, the subject moves on to a whole new consciousness (Çoban, 2015:208-209). Thus, the opinions and ideas that the subject thought belonged to them are actually the ideas that are under the hegemony of the ideological discourses (Çakmak, 2019 :1132).

News content map the power relations within the society in their drafts. The powerful groups find a place for themselves in the news on a regular basis, whereas the less powerful groups initiate actions such as protests or strikes to be covered in news. Also, the media contributes to the ideological structure via its control mechanisms by emotionalizing events and situations, serving the matter through polarization, dramatizing the event, amplifying the twistiness of the event and reinforcing its current state. In this context, messages in media texts have complicated linguistic and ideological structures. According to van Dijk (2010:13), discourse has quite the significance in vernacular words, used with the reconstruction of ideologies. There is a connection between discourse and actions. To that end, discourse must be controlled in order to have control over the actions of the individuals. The control of the social structure is ensured via the direct production of discourse. In other words, news discourse has a persuasive dimension as well. The journalist first and foremost aims to “persuade” with the news content and make others feel that he or she “relays the truth”. Media content includes additions and explanations throughout the process of producing appropriate materials for readers of all levels to consume. Accordingly,

it is an ideological initiative to reconstruct the truth in the form of news. Media plays a significant role in the reconstruction of ideologies through the strategic utilization of the language. Furthermore, media contributes to the ideological structure by emotionalizing events and situations via its control structures, serving the subject through polarization, dramatizing events, enhancing the distortion concerning the event and reinforcing the existing matters. In this context, messages in media texts have complex linguistic and ideological structures. News content provide the outline of a map of power relations within the society. The powerful is mentioned regularly in the news stories, whereas the less powerful has to initiate protests or strikes to be covered in news (Özerkan, 2002:68-73).

Another matter is the acquisition of information and producing an opinion concerning the notions or events that occur globally; this happens through the discourse of mass media that is relayed to the target audience. Possessing great power, it is very important that this discourse be investigated closely with respect to news reports, titles, schemes and styles, in order for political, economic, cultural and social power's ideologies to be grasped (Dijk, 2005:353).

Van Dijk (1998:33) explains the placement of ideological thoughts within news content through four elements, which he calls the ideological square: the expression of one's own positive and good qualities and actions; the expression of the other's bad qualities and actions; undervaluing one's own negative and bad actions and qualities or not covering them as well as they must be covered; and undervaluing the other's successful and positive actions and mentioning them less than they are supposed to be mentioned (Çakmak, 2019:1133). This way, ideologies are obscurely, but clearly injected within news discourse and play a key role in the manipulation of target audiences. In this case, media constantly deals with new ideas, redesignates

limits and reconstructs and approves the social rules (Shoemaker and Reese, 2014:101-102; Çakmak, 2019 :1134).

From this perspective, news and journalism appear to have a mission and function that are beyond merely transmitting a phenomenon or an event to the target audience. Many events or phenomena can be explained as to act as bridges for journalists to serve certain ideologies. Ideological opinions are hence relayed to target audience via discourse, used in news production.

Studies to evaluate news content, on the other hand, often use two approaches to that end; liberal pluralist and critical. Liberal pluralist approach, which fundamentally internalizes objectivity, diversity and feasibility, is the representative of the liberal ideal and advocates for freedom of press; it explicates the relations between media and power, while describing the society as a complicated field of competition among groups and interest groups (Sözen, 1997:53-54).

The inclusion of ideology within news texts designates the purpose, to which the news content is to serve and what kind of a purpose it is. Ideological operations in news content causes media to serve to dominant power as an instrument. Producing and needing ideology at the same time, media plays an active role in production and consumption processes, legitimizing and reinforcing the political, economic and ideological power. In this context, media has an opposable power, in addition to influencing masses and standardizing their thoughts.

News content produced by mass media serve to spread the dominant power and to manipulate the persons, who are the receivers, according to its own interests; therefore, they ensure the constant reconstruction of the dominant ideology. Media undertakes a significant role in the production and reproduction of ideology regarding the dominant power. As the economic, political and social power justifies itself, the

news texts/contents display a structure that supports the dominant ideology with respect to the constructed meanings. News texts are prepared in line with the discourse of the persons or institutions possessing the power.

News content often fulfill the function of informing and letting others know about the events that occur. At the same time, news is influenced by a number of factors. News texts are constructed on reality, but concepts of ideology, language, meaning and discourse are still prominent.

According to Chomsky, the aim of the dominant power is to shape individuals as per its own policies and turn them into unresponsive masses that receive all kinds of information as they are provided (Herman & Chomsky, 1998:99-108). Media systematically produces all processes from what the masses are supposed to be aware of and what to agree on.

Informing/notifying the society and ensuring the formation of a public opinion, media has certain important responsibilities with respect to public service and individuals. Media fulfills the function of informing the society, in addition to forming public opinion. It becomes the subject of democracy and reality discussions, thanks to what it reflects, what it lacks to reflect and the way in which it reflects what it does. Media has the means to organize societies' understandings systematically within the framework of a particular ideology. In other words, media is the source of the dominant power in terms of generating common meanings and public opinion in the minds of individuals. Media and power relations have to do with the dominant power, using some methods to filter the content presented in the news, selecting the appropriate ones to be covered, how marginal thoughts are left behind and allowing the dominant power's interest circles gain the means to easily relay their messages to the public (Çaycı, 2016:87-88). The constant reconstruction of the dominant power in

media results in the marginalization of alternative thoughts and discourses and ultimately, supporting of the thoughts of the elite. Thus, worlds of meaning become manipulated within a certain ideological perspective, as the states of receiving information or participating in negotiations of discussions in the public sphere, which are adopted by the masses as their areas of freedom, vanish (Çaycı, 2016:89).

For Foucault (2003:131), on the other hand, the dominant power cannot guarantee the security of its continuity in democratic systems without information production, supervision, distribution and withholding. From this perspective, the dominant power must know the society very well and possess all kinds of information about the masses, in order to keep the society under supervision and reinforce its authority. The dominant power secures its discourse of dominance, safety and discipline via its authority. The authority understanding of the dominant power is relayed to the society through central authority, public institutions and media. The institutions in question are public institutions that ensure authority, safety and social order, such as law enforcement, military, prisons and courts, and are the repressive state apparatuses (Althusser, 2006:62-63). At the same time, these institutions spread the authority of the state in order to discipline the masses, ensure social order and the safety of public life. The dominant power needs communications, from amongst ideological state apparatuses, to supervise all information, determine public opinion, carry out social surveillance and filter the aforementioned in line with the ruling power. Still, media leaves its position as an instrument that supervises the dominant power as the fourth power in the new digital age and becomes an ideological apparatus that supervises the society in the hands of the ruling power. Thus, the dominant power is involved in the everyday life with new communication technologies in order to access the information that is unique to the individuals in the

digital age. Serving to the spreading of the authority of the dominant power, information is not only limited to scientific knowledge; information belonging to an individual or an institution is unique for the consistency of the dominant power. Knowledge is a hierarchy with the state at the top. According to Foucault, dominance of knowledge is also the dominance of the ruling power (Foucault, 1980:131).

Rivers claims that there are two governments in the age of digital communications. The first one is the dominant power and the second one is media. The constant production of ideology is required for the continuity of the dominant power and the self-reproduction of the dominant discourse is required to ensure it. In this sense, it is the media, where discourse is reconstructed and distributed to the masses, which is why media has an important place with this particular characteristic. The powerful elite and the dominant ones today systematically utilize conventional and interactive digital media. In this case, dominant powers use traditional and digital media to complement one another in order to reconstruct their ideologies and render the period more effective (Çaycı, 2016:92-93).

As the second government penetrating everyday life for dominant ideology to take roots, media has a characteristic that organizes political relations and ensures their visibility. Thus, it fulfills the function of monitoring the relations of both public and the ruling power, as well as appearing as if it monitors the government per se (Rivers, 1982:7-20). For example, the ruling power needs news media to produce its dominant ideology, hence manipulating the political orientations of the masses and creating a force of pressure on the decision-making mechanisms of the state and politics. That is because the main principle of having the power and remaining at power is the constant reorganization of the relations (West, 1998:237).

Consequently, relaying “the whole truth” to the public is the main function of news as per its impartiality principle, whereas it currently turns into a commercial field of activity under the ruling power’s control and as an ideological apparatus (Çaycı, 2016:94).

The most important factor, relaying ideological influence in language, is the news discourse. Thanks to the discourse that can be observed in the news content, what the press outlet wishes to tell the society and what words and sentences it uses to that end can be understood (Sözen, 2017:25). Reality is produced within discourse and each discourse is a construction of reality. The fundamental factors that determine discourse are the individual’s ideology, lifestyle, characteristics of the target audience, the channel itself and the ideology of the channel. According to Van Dijk, ideologies organize, control and monitor forms of perception of certain groups as the main frame of perception. Thus, in terms of its function and structure, the ideology becomes the totality of thoughts, which are desired to be produced in both the political sphere and in media. Ideology is the influencing of the society through thoughts that are wished to be generated. Relayed to masses, ideologies are adopted by some groups in the society as “readymade thoughts” (Devran, 2010:18-118).

For Akça, ideology is internalized and reconstructed via social practices. Language, on the other hand, is the most important social practice. How the events and objects are depicted, with what adjectives they are expressed with and whether or not they were attributed positive or negative values are ideologies’ reflections via language (Akça, 2009:83).

Language is an instrument of ideology, relaying meanings and thoughts and thanks to its different usages, conveying various meanings to various masses. Every selection of word, sentence and sentence structure is virtually a message itself in

language use. With the masterful utilization of discourse and language, it becomes possible to penetrate the thoughts of large crowds and persuade people. Ideological messages that are hidden within the language for masses to accept the thoughts that are desired to be produced ensure the continuity of the ruling power's predominance (Gül, 2018:5). As media becomes a commercial area of activity with profit purposes, the relation between media and power becomes more intensive. Media must abide by the de facto rules of the capitalist economic system in terms of being a social institution (Tokgöz, 2006:34). The intervention to the news language is not only dependent on economic reasons and dominant powers feel the need to establish some control over media to dominate the society. The most important instrument that serves to the purposes of imposing opinions on wide groups and constantly forming ideologies is media (Gül, 2018:5-6).

Supporters of critical theory and cultural studies mention their view that news texts do not represent independent and objective reality; instead, they show the reality that is established, as a result of the point of view of the journalist, and a set of forms of making sense. Parties that express this view claim that *"news cannot be characterized as the accurate or biased picture of reality, however, it can be described as a framework, stemming from the social world being structured in a uniform way; thus, they emphasize that it functions as a construction of reality"* (Tuchman, as cited in Dursun, 2001:128).

The reality of the news, shaped with respect to the ideologies of press outlets, requires repetitions to reinforce the meanings that are wished to be conveyed and not be forgotten (Yurdigül, 2011:25). In this context, Watson states that news *"thanks to its discourse, explicating today's reality, reestablishes reality within its own form,*

rather than relaying what occurs, while inevitably relays the events that occurred by reconstructing it” (as cited in Rigel, 2000:179).

Members of the press must use these methods by reconstructing reality in order to sustain that what is presented is the only truth.

5.2. Ideological Influence on News in Local Press

5.2.1. Local press – Ideology.

Local newspapers in Turkey are defined as Anatolian Press. In other words, they are the newspapers that fall outside of the national newspapers in Turkey. The essence of the local press’ definition as “Anatolian Press” has integration, concretizing unity, referring to concepts of the ideal of wholeness and national unity. Newspapers are divided into two as national newspapers and local newspapers, in accordance with their publishing purposes and content. Both national and local newspapers fundamentally aim to provide news. The main difference between national and local newspapers, on the other hand, is the scope of interest to which news content is relevant to readers. While some news content has to do with the country or the world in general, some are relevant to a more limited community. The differences in target audience differentiate national and local newspapers in terms of both the need for tools and investment in staff. National newspapers have a more sizable capital structure and means for personnel, whereas local newspapers are press channels with smaller scales in terms of both equipment and personnel. National newspapers are more powerful from a financial perspective and their advertising and distribution fields work in a more systematic way, which is why they have more sales potential in comparison with the local press.

At the same time, national newspapers have a close relationship with local newspapers with respect to news exchange. Local newspapers provide sources for

news to national newspapers. In other words, local newspapers are the capillaries of national newspapers. Therefore, in regions, where national newspapers do not have proper access, they provide news to them, complementing national newspapers in this sense. The newspaper reader wants to see information/knowledge in the pages about himself/herself and that is why local newspapers stand closer to readers than national newspapers. A familiar face or a photograph in the newspaper pages attract the attention of the reader more. Such news content gain readers to local newspapers. In other words, local press is an area of resistance in which various originalities, surrounding global values, are persistently advocated. Described by Chomsky as “independent islets of media”, local press prepares an environment of a new and unique pluralism, struggle and collective solidarity against the deplating and standardizing features of global flow of information, in addition to defending the independence of their local authenticities. Moreover, one of the biggest advantages offered by local process to its target audience is related to properties of proximity and easy access. Achieved with the concept of proximity, benchmarks such as accuracy, impartiality and integrity are expressed to be important in terms of both ethical behavior and democracy. Since it describes the distance which secures corporate and editorial independence along with the prevention of ideological and political interventions and due to the intensity of vis-à-vis relations in the narrow sense, it does not allow lying or distorting the news with respect to interpersonal relations. According to Duran, intensive supervision of local press by its target audience provides a significant advantage with respect to journalism. This way, local press cannot attempt to twist the news, the target audience witnesses. The intensity of social supervision of the communications in a limited region constantly provides significant information about the reliability and integrity of the members of the local press in a

town, neighborhood or province. In other words, local press represents a democratic area, where events are witnessed and the feeling of participating in the news production process is at a maximum level due to the intensity of vis-à-vis relations. While local press pushes journalists to be more careful as they cover events, it also contributes to the establishment of a feedback system as a result of the circulation of messages in a limited area.

The essence of local press, which is theoretically called horizontal journalism, lies in the statement that “the distance between the starting point of the news and its destination is shorter than the distance between the rulers and the ruled”; that is to say it carries a feature of “communication among the ruled – the public”. The first thing that catches attention in the local press, for it is different than other channels of press, is its lack of an initiative regarding the deception of the public opinion or an understanding of publishing, based on obscuring or twisting the news. Along with the equity of the local press, its initiatives for establishing itself and its own news organizations represent one of the most important ethical values of independent and honest journalism, which is not stated in writing. Independent journalism has quite a significant place in the destruction of twisted political and cultural perspectives as Duran calls “orientalism in press”. Potential contributions of the local press to an alternative thought, which may convey humane messages rather than describing the world via sexism, racism, ethnicism, violence and discrimination concerning a discourse of hatred and grudge, as well as securing both cultural pluralism and the representation based on said pluralism, and even to an alternative world, cannot be underrated.

Defined by Golombek as “dynasty journalism”, the financial structure and editorial staff of local press often consists of the close circles of the owner of the

newspaper, as it is widely known. Administrators of such newspapers usually carry out the profession of journalism with a heartfelt passion, sacrifice or to attract respect from other around them and not with the purposes of making profit. The meaning of conducting the profession of journalism for local journalists, on the other hand, is almost equivalent to a lifestyle; they are people who are fascinated by news and enjoy communicating with the community. Moreover, the local press has a more limited target audience with similar mindsets; therefore, it may significantly contribute to the effective formation of political citizenship. In other words, it is the bridge of a public community with a civil identity, consisting of members, who understand each other, know each other, share each other's burdens and speak the same language.

The most positive characteristic of the local press is its proximity to its target audience; thus, its mentioning of the close-by events to the local people and providing both entertaining and educating information to them, represent its most important functions. Local press is a marketplace, where a multitude of opinions are expressed and shared. Thanks to this feature, it strengthens democracy by ensuring individuals' direct participation in the events and audits civilian authorities and powerful elites in the local region. The importance of the security to be provided by face-to-face communication in a familiar place with familiar people for individuals, who have lost their cultural authenticity, national sense of belonging and personal originalities to uniform lifestyles and relations in the unreality of the global age. In this context, local press ensures the reinstatement of the sense of belonging of the individual, which is destroyed by the global age and by the human being, isolated in the vital entirety, and the reconstruction of the feeling of unity, which humans miss.

To put it another way, local press plays a key role in designating a place for individuals and developing their senses of belonging in the face of

displacement/rootlessness, which is encountered in different forms today. The place in question as designated by local press does not necessarily have to be a geographical place either; oftentimes it can be a cultural, sometimes spiritual/religious, political place/country. Furthermore, the need for local press is not limited to individual needs only. The current state of the national press with commercial and public qualities renders the existence and survival of local press mandatory. Against concepts such as uniform culture, uniform human, uniform world, which were brought along by globalization, local press preserves local culture and identities, which is another aspect of its importance. Thanks to the existence and sustainability of local press outlets, press can lose its monotony and assume a polyphonic appearance.

5.3. Political Economy of Media and Media Ownership in Turkey

5.3.1. The notion of political economy.

Political economy examines the foundations of social development. This foundation comprises of the production of material goods and production structures; on the other hand, political economy investigates production from the point of view of interpersonal relations within the production. To put it differently, it scrutinizes the economic relations among people. In this context, political economy deals with the ownership structures of production instruments, states of various social groups within production and the relations between them; that is to say, the modes of production of material goods. At the same time, political economy is a class study. It investigates the relations and vital interests between individuals and classes. Individuals in a society need food, shelter, clothes and other material goods. Since they have to produce them, individuals also have to work. Production of material goods represents the root of all asocial developments. The production process of these goods consists of human labor and tools. Labor is the useful force of the individual for the production

of material goods. Tools of labor affect matters on labor and change their appearances; they are everything that aids individuals in this sense. Machines, equipment, operational buildings, artwork and all transportation vehicles are considered tools of labor (Nikitin, 2016:2-14).

Capitalism is defined as “a social organization, where the bulk of the public owns almost nothing as their own property and hence are forced to remain workers, while the soil, equipment, factories and such belong to a few big landowners and capitalists”. Workers take advantage of individual liberties in the capitalist system, but they lack the means of production and subsistence, despite their complete freedom. Thus, they have to work at capitalist enterprises.

Furthermore, commodities are presented for consumption in use value and for sale in exchange value. The matter of interest for the producer of the commodity is value, but in order for the commodity to be viewed as a value, it has to possess use value and the commodity must be an object in demand. The common characteristic of commodities, on the other hand, is that they are useful things and products of labor. In other words, commodities have two qualities – use value and value. The worker spends his labor while producing a commodity and said labor carries a twofold feature. The worker’s labor, which materializes within the commodity, manifests as both concrete and abstract labor. The type of labor that is spent for a particular purpose and in a useful way is concrete labor. Concrete labor reveals the use value of the commodity. Abstract labor, on the other hand, is expressed as spending the human labor. Abstract labor represents the value of the commodity and depends on the production of the commodity.

Everything from needles to factories and even to human labor can be bought and sold in the capitalist system. This turns into forms of commodities. The

commodity, according to Marx, is considered as an economic cell of the bourgeois society. Commodity production is defined as the products, which are designated for sales or exchange in the market, rather than personal consumption. Including labor, everything is a commodity in the capitalist order. Leaning on the capitalist system, commodity production is the most fundamental mode of production. Relations amongst individuals in production, or in other words, production relations are also called commodity relations. With respect to the capitalist regime, the production relation has to do with the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. In order for the capitalist structure to exploit the worker, on the other hand, the worker must first sell his own labor, which is described as a commodity. The owner of production tools and the capital does not take place per se in the production in the capitalist mode of production of the commodity. Purchasing labor in exchange of money is what mobilizes production powers. As labor turns into a commodity, commodity production in the capitalist system moves forward and becomes universal. A person, who produces an object for his/her own consumption would only be producing a product, this would not be a commodity. In order for a product to become a commodity, it must fulfill a social need. The scrutiny of the commodity reveals two interdependent features: use value and exchange value (Nikitin, 2016:35-40).

Under circumstances of commodity production, each producer manufactures a particular commodity. Labor is divided within the society. As social divisions of labor increase, branches of production increase too. Thus, “labor of each producer makes up a part of social labor and assumes a social appearance”; however, in a society where private ownership of production tools continues, producers would be managing the production process and their operations separately without a unity between them. Therefore, their work, which is social labor, appears as private labor and the social

quality of labor becomes obscure. Social quality, on the other hand, manifests itself during the exchange in the market and it clearly is observed that the private labor of the producer is a part of the social labor during the exchange and trade of commodities.

Labor power is the entirety of the individual's spiritual and material abilities as used and exploited as the individual wishes, while he or she manufactures material goods. In other words, labor power is the individual's capability to work. Labor power is a necessary element of production in all social structures. In capitalism, it turns into a commodity and laborers are deprived of their production and subsistence equipment during this process. Under these circumstances, the only thing laborers can do is to offer their labor powers in the market. The value of labor power is expressed with fees in capitalism. In the capitalist order, the capitalists possess production tools, but the workers do not. Thus, laborers work under the supervision of capitalists, who purchase the labor power. The capitalist decides when the worker will manufacture and with what tools. At the same time, the capitalist would not only own the laborer's labor, but also owns the product, manufactured by the laborer.

The laborer uses his or her labor while manufacturing a commodity and this type of labor has a twofold characteristic. The first one is the abstract labor, representing the value of the commodity. For the capitalist, production of use value is only a tool to fulfill its purposes. The purpose of capitalist production is surplus value. In order for surplus value to exist, the laborer must work more than needed for the reproduction of the value of his or her own labor power. Therefore, surplus value is the result of capitalist exploitation of laborers.

Accumulation of capital in the capitalist system causes constant production and concentration of the capital. Concentration of production within large enterprises

includes production in small factories, an impossible division of labor, specialization, organization of sales and declining expenses of management and when production is carried out on a larger scale, the profitable, yet expensive and heavy machinery can be used. Concentration and ownership of the capital by a single person, hence the centralization, occurs in leaps, instead of following a linear path. Concentration and centralization usually increase with each economic recession, because weaker or underdeveloped enterprises do not survive and are destroyed by stronger companies, who are technically more advanced as well. Thus, as capital becomes concentrated within large companies, a great portion of the profits would be collected, which results in faster concentration.

To put it differently, capital that is used in the production field of the capitalist regime, tends to concentrate in gradually larger portions. The most technologically advanced firms in the capitalist system would acquire the highest profit and they would hence accumulate the largest funds. At the same time, large firms would be quite available to find financing opportunities, needed to enhance their operations and apply new production methods such as machinery and large-scale organizations. This way, a trend would be observed in large production units becoming even larger. Small capitalists would either be crushed or they would survive with smaller scale productions. Especially during times of economic recession, many small capitalists would be bankrupt or they would have to sell their small-scale production initiatives to larger capitalists. In addition to each of their capital structures, expanding with their accumulated profits, individual capitals would lose their independence and fall under central supervision. According to Marx, capitalists will owe their existence to other capitalists. As banks and loans develop, concentration and centralization of capital

will accelerate. Capitalist mode of production will possibly pave the way for larger capital structures to be established (Eaton, 1996:110-111).

A few firms also possess more than half of the production of a particular good in the capitalist structure. Thus, these large companies can carry out the process as they wish, in the event that they pursue a common policy. Such collaboration between large companies ensure that small ones are taken under larger ones or withdraw from the sector completely. In this context, the most direct and definite form of monopoly is the predominance of one large company. In other words, capitalists, who work with one or more great capitalist(s), can carry out the supervision and take many diverse industrial branches under, thus determine the prices, as well as amounts of production, are defined as monopolistic capitalists.

5.3.2. Political economy of media.

Media economics is often defined as the infrastructure of communication and mass communication sciences. While it carries traces of communication science, it also fits the economic areas of interest. Values that are consumed within the process of news, turning into publishing, which is described as mass communication activities, are established on an entirely financial logic now. Media economics is the study that reflects how media industries use the scarce resources, as they produce the news content to be distributed amongst consumers within a society with the purpose of fulfilling various demands and needs (Albarran & Chat-Olmsted, 1998:4, as cited in Bayraktar, 2013). In other words, media economics represent the area concerning how economic and financial pressures manipulate media industries and company activities, how they limit them and how the laws and theories, reflecting their influence on the dynamics of the media markets are originally applied (Hang, 2006: 25, as cited in Bayraktar, 2013).

Including the main principles of economics, media economics usually fulfills the needs of receiving news and entertainment. Media economics studies how consumers (viewers, readers and listeners) can best fulfill their needs with scarce resources. To put it differently, manufacturing with limited resources to satisfy the needs of individuals and conveying said goods and services to different groups lie at the foundations of media economics. However, there are two differences between media economics and economics. The first one applies economic mindset to press, whereas the second one applies media theory to the discipline of economics per se. The first one adopts an economic perspective such as price formation, supply, demand laws and scarce resources. The second one, on the other hand, highlights characteristics that are unique to press (Treuther, 2004:3). According to Albarran, media economics can investigate and explain how media industries such as newspapers use limited resources to fulfill demands and needs, in terms of content production and distribution amongst consumers (Baltes, 2003:11). Economics is a mechanism that determines ‘what’ is to be produced, ‘how’, ‘where’, ‘when’ and ‘for whom’ and these decisions are emphasized by the enterprise, ruling power and consumer (Doyle, 2002:4). However, media economics takes as its basis the expectations of the groups in the field of press and ultimately, its consequences become blurry with respect to the thoughts, behaviors and demands of the reader.

Areas of interest of media economics have to do with both the macro and the micro aspects of media. Studies in the micro economics field concern firms, consumers or the industry, while the macroeconomics approach concerns information economics as a whole (Lacy & Niebauer, 1995:5). Macroeconomics analyzes how factors such as inflation, price, interest, foreign exchange, production and unemployment affect the press, whereas microeconomics deals with employees,

sector structure and the attitudes of companies in the sector. When examined at length, it is observed that it also deals with matters that influence media industries such as business strategies, pricing policies, competition, international trade and concentration (Doyle, 2002:8). According to Albarran, macroeconomics, which covers both studies in media economics and the general economic structure on a national level, also encapsulates microeconomics, which examines firms, markets and consumers (Albarran & Chan-Olmsted, 1998:4-5). Media economics is a term that explicates the sector, rather than any media enterprise. This term studies production processes, consumer attitudes and behavior and the market structures in service activities. In other words, “media economics is related to how the information and entertainment wishes and needs of readers, advertisers and the society are shaped with the existing resources by media executives” (Barca, 2008:1).

The factor that ensures the industrialization of media in terms of economic value is the development of capitalist philosophy and production mindset in the media channels. According to Tokgöz, mechanization, urbanization and industrialization, the main components of economy, identified the technological and social position of newspapers after the second half of the 19th century. Newspapers became mass papers, instead of those of the elite. Technological development in fields of printing, paper production and typesetting also caused newspapers to be sold at cheaper prices (Tokgöz, 2003:29). Due to the Industrial Revolution, media and economy coalesced and formed a single sector and an industry. Fulfilling needs of information or knowledge with a simple structuring, media outlets, due to the improvements in the purchasing powers of consumers, turned into giant conglomerates that spread over different industries and aim to expand more and more.

The recent interest in the media economics by investors, politicians and newspapers can be derived from the following four developments (Ramstad, 1997:45):

“Increasing use of liberal market principles in media regulations”,

“Emergence of large-scale multinational media enterprises”,

“Cross-border distribution of media products”,

“Increasing international media regulations (laws on publication rights and so on)”.

Media market mostly focuses on the media outlet’s ownership structure, structural analyses and the market. Gustafsson (1988) argues that research studies in media economics must select and focus on one level such as the firm, the industry and the market (Ramstad, 1997:49). There are five main groups, using the information provided in the structural analysis of the media outlet – regulatory institutions, politicians, companies, researchers and investors (Ramstad, 1997:47).

Displaying an effort to solve the society’s problems, politicians must also take into consideration the influence of the press on the society, as well as the society’s influence on the press. The employment and expansion of press as well as its orientation of the economy by providing information and entertainment made sure that politicians see that media is at the heart of both society and politics.

The oligopoly market structure that characterizes the media sector in the best way possible is often named as such and consists of 2-6 large firms with close numbers in circulation, income and ratings that dominate the market. In such a market structure that threatens freedom of press and consumers, the entry and exit of similarly powerful companies influence their economic powers to a large extent. Until

recent years, newspaper patronage was predominant in Turkish press as well. Simavi family owned *Hürriyet* and *Günaydın*, Nadi family owned *Cumhuriyet*, Karacan family owned *Milliyet* and Ilıcak family owned *Tercüman* as both owners and journalists (Nebiler, 1995:89). Today, on the other hand, newspaper ownership became the media of conglomerates that have non-media capitals due to conglomeration and economic power (Kaya, 2009:247).

One of the areas, where ownership concentration is quite commonly observed recently, is the media sector. While the gathering of new enterprises in the media sector and the acquired profit being passed to only a handful of companies expand said enterprises, the investment initiatives of these enterprises are also enhanced. Because of the investment risk, large companies that lean on conglomerates often start investing in the press sector.

The most common form in media is the horizontal concentration of ownership (Tokgöz, 1991:95-96). The firm integrates with the firm that produces the same goods in horizontal concentration. Horizontal integration allows the firm to have control over the prices and cut costs, while it also puts the company in a position of monopoly in the market. In today's world, many giant conglomerates have their own media and most of them are specialized in media to a large extent. They can move towards horizontal integration by owning conglomerates in diverse fields (Peryy, 2002:97). Moreover, the firm can take advantage of horizontal concentration to acquire profits thanks to producing the media product, integrating consumption phases, controlling media markets and distributing the products. In the 1980s, a rapid increase was observed in media consolidation, aiming for horizontal integration (Grossberg, Wartella & Whitney, 1998:113). Horizontal integration ensures control, along with

the increase in advertising and circulation rates, exploits labor by destroying editorial personnel and causes monotony in media.

Each enterprise is exposed to external pressure and becomes dependent or independent as such with the measures that vary in matters of materials, capital and income (Picard, 2002b:4). Companies expand by hiring workers, increasing capital, producing products and services and selling them in the market; therefore, media economics has a significant place in terms of studies. The fundamental goals of a firm are to maximize its enterprise value and to make profits. To that end, company owners and workers must take into consideration financial means, environmental factors and operational factors.

Political economy of media generally focuses on how the capitalist system restructures its existence constantly with the distribution of economic and cultural resources, in addition to undertaking the task of criticizing the capitalist system, founded on inequality and exploitation relations. The political economy approach of media seeks answers to the questions concerning how the ownership and property structures of media are imposed upon news texts, how the dominant social structure and power relations are reproduced and legitimized. According to Golding and Murdock, the main function of the political economy of media “is to explain the existing distribution of power and economic control and explicate the systematic relation between them” (Golding & Murdock, 2008:48, as cited in Demirel, 2016:83-84). Thus, media is expressed as a channel, producing commodities under the supervision of the ruling ideology and with the function of spreading the ideology of such structure (Demirel, 2016:84).

Within the scope of the political economy of media, Altschull states that media relays the ideology of those who constantly support it financially. From this

perspective, some models are developed to explain how media functions within the capitalist system. According to the commercial mode, media reflects the ideology of those with economic power (advertisers and media owners). According to interest groups model, on the other hand, the ideology of groups that support the economy, such as political or religious groups, are relayed by media. Finally, the unofficial model argues that media serves to a significant function in relaying the ideology of the individuals, who wish to relay their own opinions or ideas (Altschull, 1984, as cited in Demirel, 2016:84).

Studies in the political economy of media often emphasize at their core how the ownership structure, monopolization and profit drive of media are reflected on products, outputs and content (Demirel, 2016 :85). The political economy of media can be viewed in two – instrumentalist and structuralist approaches. Instrumentalist approaches consider media as an instrument of the capitalist system and evaluate it according to ruling classes or persons. The structuralist approach, on the other hand, points to the economic elements that lie at the foundations of the capitalist system and evaluated the relationship between ideology and power within the scope of political economy, imposing certain restrictions to the ownership structure in media industries, as well as the actions and choices of its employees (Yağlı, 2009:65, as cited in Demirel, 2016: 84).

In other words, political economy of media focuses on the ownership and property structure of instruments of communication, production relations, how the products are manufactured and how they are distributed. Within the scope of the political economy approach, media outlets sustain their functions as commercial institutions in the capitalist system. Products and content within media outlets that persist their existence in the capitalist system are described with commodity

production. Results of commodity production, these products display cultural value along with economic values. The products or outputs in question, which possess an economic value, also fulfill functions of restructuring and legitimization of the dominant structure and power relations (Yaylagül, 2006:127, as cited in Demirel, 2016: 85).

Another explanation states that press enterprises survive as significant parts of the capitalist economic system. The political economy method in the field of press examines media – power relations, their influences on news content and the ownership structure of mass media. Emerging after the Industrial Revolution, mass media rapidly advanced and became an efficient and functional instrument in the shaping of a new social order under the dominance of ruling classes. Mass media were also quite effective in the self-legitimization of capitalism, spreading of the capitalist culture and the ideas and opinions of the ruling classes, becoming the dominant mindsets in the society. In this context, critical political economy analyzes the functions of media enterprises, how they fulfill these functions and how ruling classes manipulate society by controlling media. Furthermore, critical political economy reveals and evaluates those who control press enterprises, supervise them, their economic structures and their relations with political powers.

All enterprises must seek profit purposes in the capitalist market system. In this context, so do the press enterprises; they also have to compete with other enterprises and develop in order to survive. The difference of press enterprises than others is their production of information, which ultimately shapes the mindset and consciousness of the society. Subjected to the information produced by media, the individual's behavior and thoughts are determined and molded. Therefore, media has quite an important responsibility towards the public opinion. It is also aimed that the

social responsibility of the press be protected with both laws and ethical rules, but the main function of press is to convey accurate information to the society and ensure social development. This way, press must look after the benefit of the public under all circumstances. Moreover, press has the function of protecting individuals, who have been subjected to injustice, but relations of mutual interest and commercial concerns lead to overlooking ethical rules and public benefit. As press enterprises become conglomerates, competition, ambition for profit and monopoly caused publishing to fall to the background, while it used to be on the lookout for public benefits. Even though public printing is attempted to be protected by press enterprises under state ownership, press channels still functioned as tools of propaganda for the political power.

Sustainability of capitalism continues over consumer culture, which is one of the most important functions of the press. From this perspective, ruling classes influence the determination of the needs of society with news content and products; they are those which the individuals do not actually need and are presented as such via the messages relayed to them with mass media. This indirectly leads individuals to consumption. Consumption in the capitalist order is a process that reflects individuals' status, rather than material needs, where individuals attach meanings to their *raison d'être*. The press determines needs of individuals, make sure that their living cultures are formed and individuals still think that they use their own free will to identify what they shall have. However, it is the media industry that determines people's needs and shapes their lifestyles. The media industry also improves consumer culture and sustains it. In this context, advocates of critical economy approach study the commodification effect of the press. Another important matter is the monopoly and concentration in press. Global media outlets across the world are monopolized by the

largest capital groups of the world and competitive conditions of the market economy improve the monopolizing trends. Vertical, horizontal and cross monopolization trends are observed in press as well. The monopolization trends in press represent an obstacle before the transmission of various thoughts and opinions, which are requirements of democracy, to the public. Heavily preventing individuals' free access to accurate information, monopolization also challenges competition in press. Small scale press enterprises cannot survive in the competitive environment they share with large capital groups. Another issue arising from the monopolization trends is the unilateral movement of global information flow. International media companies influence and determine the direction of the flow of information. Due to the dominance of press in developed countries, flow of information is directed from developed countries to developing and underdeveloped ones. In matters where the press is strong, capital groups that own press enterprises attempt to oppress political powers and organize the ruling power as per their interests. Media executives did cause some pressure on political powers during the times when press in Turkey was powerful; still, the inspection mechanism of politicians became more involved with press enterprises as political power strengthened recently.

In other words, remarks of Marx and Engels with respect to media – power relations, are as follows:

‘The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it.’ (Marks & Engels, 2015:72).

This statement of Marx and Engels represents one of the fundamentals of critical political economy studies. Ruling powers own *“intellectual means of production”* in order to rule the society better, thus shaping masses. This way, large groups in the society would rely upon the dominant mindset as well.

According to Peter Golding and Graham Murdock, on the other hand, there are three significant postulates in Marx and Engels’ evaluation. They are presented below:

“Control over production and distribution of thought is concentrated in the hands of capitalists, who dominate production,

As a result, their worldviews start dominating the thoughts of dependent groups,

And this ideological dominance plays key role in the maintenance of class inequalities” (as cited in Adaklı, 2006:22-23).

Vincent Mosco also states that when political economy approach is applied to media, media becomes industrialized and media products become commodified. Accordingly, press has also become an industrial field and media products turned into commodities, earning exchange value. The transformation of media outputs into commercial products; i.e., the commodification of media products damages the public benefit of the news content in question (Yaylagül, 2014:146).

Smythe, on the other hand, states that mass media is a product of monopolistic capitalism. Founded by monopolistic capitalism, mass media has the most important function of transforming readers/viewers into commodities and selling them to advertisers. Those who benefit from products of mass media as marketing means are not readers, but consumers. Thus, monopolistic capitalism market its products to the

society through mass media. Press enterprises, the most important competition of which is related to ratings, increase their advertising revenues to be at the top and generate various content formats to attract attention. That is because the most important revenue item of press enterprises is advertising. Even enterprises that prioritize public benefit and aim to relay the most accurate information to the society cannot survive without advertising revenues. Thus, small scale press enterprises that cannot compete in the capitalist market conditions are acquired by capital groups, further contributing to trends of monopolization. This way, press enterprises became publicity channels under the dominance of the capital, as well as effective channels for marketing. Content formats, produced to spread consumer culture in press, are offered to the society (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2010:232).

The press contributed to the reconstruction of the order, which exists under monopolistic capitalist circumstances, and sells masses to advertisers by producing them as commodities. According to Smythe, mass media commodifies viewers or readers and offer them. Through content formats that would pique the interest of viewers/readers and news texts, entertainment programs or television series, the media industry draws attention to advertisements of consumer goods, exploiting them. Masses consume the content formats, delivered to them over mass media, and are encouraged to purchase consumer goods. The capitalist system creates demands by mass media for its products to be sold and this is ensured by the transmission of advertisements to the individuals, utilizing mass media (Smythe, 1977).

Invented by the monopolistic capitalism, mass media surrounds individuals. Individuals deliver messages at any given moment, directly or indirectly. Certain ideologies are relayed to masses through the delivered messages and a lifestyle which fits the interest of the dominant powers are attempted to be imposed. The main feature

of this lifestyle is its emphasis on consumption, while the consciousness of individuals, which is formed with said lifestyle, is hence shaped. This way, Smythe illustrates that mass media, which comprises “the consciousness industry”, to which Smythe refers to as the shaping process of masses’ consciousness, has quite an important function (Güngör, 2013:157).

Additionally, Herman and Chomsky reveal in their “Propaganda Model” how the capital groups, that have a hold on mass media, manipulate society with the news content they produce. According to Herman and Chomsky, mass media delivers the produced message content to individuals via various channels and plan to inject individuals with capitalist social order with their coded messages. In a structure where power is possessed by a small group and there are significant class conflicts, adapting individuals to an already existing system requires an intensive propaganda system (Herman & Chomsky, 2012:72). For them, press constantly fulfills its propaganda purposes; i.e., press under the ownership of monopolizing and dominating powers, and global media outlets systematically conduct propaganda. The function of the press is explained to be looking out for public benefit, ensuring social responsibility and hence leading democratic development; yet, the main purpose of today’s press has been to manufacture individuals’ consent in light of the interests of the ruling classes (Yaylagül, 2014:173).

6. NEOLIBERAL POLICIES AND CHANGING OWNERSHIP

STRUCTURES IN TURKISH MEDIA

6.1. Reflections of Neoliberal Policies in Turkish Media

1980s, 1990s and early 2000s are characterized by three main trends that shed light on the stages of history – technological revolution, democratization and globalization. Media had quite an important role for all three of these trends (McChesney, 2001:1). The democratic age, which was promised in the early stages of neo-liberal policies in 2001 was replaced with inequality, conflicts and decline of democracy, while media also witnessed some changes. Media outlets that were largely national are also replaced with global media market. McChesney (2001) states that this global oligopoly has two interdependent features: The first one is the rapid spread of companies with mostly American origins across the world. Since American market was sufficiently developed and only allowed isolated expansion with certain rates, its purpose was to convert the growth potential abroad into capital. The second one is mergers, becoming the main determinant of the period, as well as convergence. To put it differently, the global media market brought along monopolization and concentration. Within the neo-liberal deregulation in media, capitalism has always been in a search of profit maximization. This means that, in terms of media systems, obstacles before concentrated media ownership and commercial exploitation are to be expanded and entirely destroyed. In order for companies to reduce risks and improve means of profit, the system aims to grow by investing in a number of diverse fields (McChesney, 2001: 2-3).

Global media industry emerged as a result of a set of state policies legitimizing the neo-liberal system and not of natural laws or free markets. In short, neo-liberal transformation produces a system that aims to maximize profits of both the state and

the market, rather than a market structure where the state shrinks. As Loic Wacquant and Aksu Akçaoğlu (2014:67-70) argued, it is not only an economic theory, but also a political one and a form of state as well. Under only a few large companies, media goes against the term, freedom of press, from all aspects within the scope of democratic theory. Produced as a means for democratic supervision and governance, journalism is controlled by people, who take advantage of the increasing inequalities and seek their own interests only. According to McChesney (2001), attacking the profession of journalism and its professionalism is a large part of the neo-liberal change of media and communication systems and the global media structure is a significant and convenient tool for neo-liberal policies. That is because it is simultaneously one of the most important tools of artificially forming a political culture to sustain the dominance of capital. In this context, the actual success of neo-liberalism is to provide significant advantages in favor of the dominant powers throughout the process of redistributing wealth.

As multinational companies started to invest in the media sector and establish new companies in sectors, where they did not exist before, effects of neo-liberalism policies started to be more apparent in media. In this context, traditional media became a part of conglomerates. Today, many media outlets were established with neo-liberal policies, but before they spread throughout the world, a lot of media executives did not step into the market with profit related goals. The deregulation process has been the most important feature of neo-liberal policies, influencing the media sector. Described as the removal of rules, deregulation involves reorganization too. The deregulation of media ownership allows new administration systems, along with maximum profit and privatization. This also causes substantial growth and increasing profit margins in the media sector (Adaklı, 2006). The main reason of the

transformation in media, especially after the 1980s, was the influence of neo-liberal policies and global neo-liberalism on Turkish media. Kaya (2009:223) expresses that Turkey has been one of the countries with the most radical and rapid changes. The spread of neo-liberal policies also accelerated with the decrees of January 24th, 1980, when service industries on solid foundations and especially telecommunications were privatized (Adaklı, 2006:134).

An oligopoly structure can be widely observed in the media sector in Turkey. Dominating the market before 1980, the press enterprises had only a limited number of shareholders, which reflects the chronic structure of the oligopoly in question. Early 1940s hosted a market structure with a few powerful enterprises, founded on family ownership. Before 1980, Nadi family owned Cumhuriyet newspaper, Simavi family owned Hürriyet newspaper and Karacan family owned Milliyet newspaper, which illustrated that only a few families held ownership after the concentration of press. After 1980, on the other hand, capital structure of the press sector changed owners and those who operated in different sectors entered into press for the first time, which integrated capital, acquired in diverse areas and that of the press.

It is understood that during the structural transformation of the Turkish press, neo-liberal policies that had national and international influences were substantially determinant. When the events that affected media before 1980 are examined, “private-liberal” policies along with “social-public” ones, especially after the World War II, can be seen in prominence. Starting after World War II and continuing until late 1980s, a completely opposite ideology is stated to have shaped around the world (Liberalism and Marxism). Since that time, when press was used in the battle to manipulate masses and persuade them according to their interests until today, it has been argued that the only ideology that almost single handedly dominated press has

been neo-liberalism. When one of the two opposing ideologies vanished, which began in 1970s and was left behind with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, neo-liberalism became the predominant ideology and increased its influence in all sectors visibly, including press.

“A chaotic structure” is said to have emerged in the early times of Turkish press as neo-liberal policies partially changed the field of press from an economic point of view, while on the other hand, market mechanism and professional business administration were still not fully rooted. The trend towards monopolization rather than actualizing democratic ideals revealed a structure that contrasted the democratic tradition with respect to the dominance of market ideology. Started in 1970s and largely influenced Turkish press in 1980s while also causing a structural transformation, neo-liberal policies represent an ideational notion that blesses the market.

In the new world order, where multinational states were in play, neo-liberalism influenced the market mechanisms of nation states and ensured that national markets were integrated with the capitalist system as they opened up to competition. It continues to operate with a new form of comprehension. This way, the neo-liberal period does not occur only from an economic aspect, but also provides a new understanding to perceive and make sense of the world. Along with political, social and cultural fields, neo-liberal policies have carried out national and international transformations, while their formations were highly affected by institutions such as World Trade Organization, International Money Fund and World Bank. These institutions aim to open up the international market with regulations to have neo-liberal policies adopted and remove the obstacles that hinder the habit of international capital.

It has been stated that along with neo-liberal policies, a new economic system, where the social state understanding regressed, the parallel state's social and economic policies were pushed aside and the state started to assume a supervisory function, instead of an entrepreneurial one, as adopted and in this sense, rules that were formed in line with the principle of etatism were removed and new ones were put into effect. It is also observed in the press sector that the state monopoly was eliminated, while the supervision function started to be fulfilled by supreme institutions. Furthermore, the state reduced its support and the market was taken under regulations accordingly. Consequently, union actions and social and personal rights of press employees were restricted.

In this context, neo-liberal policies concerning press in Turkey became fundamental purposes themselves. As the capital with diverse fields started to penetrate the industry of press, competition became fierce and the lack of regulation in competition became more intense in this field. During this process, competitive strategies of press also displayed significant changes. In addition to its function to notify the public opinion, it started to aim for more sales and more profits. Observed in the press, this policy change also caused a competition environment to emerge in spheres of technology, employees, products, promotions, organizational structures and distribution.

The press was beware of criticizing dominant powers and the state, because of the military coup d'état in 1980. Therefore, a passive mentality of publication was adopted during this time. Unable to criticize political powers, the press turned to tabloidization. Along with the transition to multi-party system and the integration of the new international structure, opinion journalism weakened after 1980s and 1990s, as the concept of tabloids became widespread. The changes in the ownership structure

of press and the influence of the dominant power on media largely affected the publication policy of media. Avoiding the creation of criticizing news texts regarding capital groups due to advertisements, news content in media were almost completely turned into advertisements. Instead of investigative news texts, tabloid news became more popular. A homogenization and routinization were observed in the news, while investigative journalism was pushed in the background and lighter journalism types became more prominent. At the same time, there was another factor in the press with predominating neo-liberal policies – the trust issue with the newspapers. Newspapers were giving out various extra products such as pots and pans in the 1990s as promotional offers, which caused them to lose their credibility as publication outlets, especially before the eyes of the readers. Moreover, the political sphere that drove tabloidization after 1980 and the economic transformation of the neo-liberal system paved the way for unethical behaviors towards press professionals. In short, the former statement of *“if the newspaper says so, it is true”* was transformed into *“if the newspaper says so, it is probably made-up”*.

Along with the neo-liberal policies in press, it is observed that unionism has also assumed a passive state. According to these policies, flexible production and partial working conditions were practiced in press and during this time, a new mode of customer-oriented production was employed, where consumption overpowered production, consumers overpowered producers and demand overpowered supply. This way, employees in press and media, which are owned by different capital groups, became able to work at different publication enterprises within the same conglomerate.

With the conglomeration of media in 1980s, capital groups turned their attention to the press sector, which was not really profitable, in line with their

personal, political and economic interests and to gain more power, while opening all the doors that represent an obstacle for their companies. To put it differently, new media owners aim to integrate the power of this sector with economic and political power, instead of making profit from the media sector per se. Some of the external support for media patrons during the 1980s and 1990s include giving them the power to monopolize press, financing from public resources to make up for the losses of media owners during times of economic recession, when the banks they owned went bankrupt and their tax dues were retired for a long stretch.

At the same time, throughout the process from 1950 to 1980, significant factors in small family businesses' expansion towards media industry included the transition from letter type printing technology to offset printing and the accelerating investment in fields of transportation – telecommunications. Observed in 1980 and after, neo-liberalism is a system that largely removes state intervention to the capitalist economy and ensures the growth of areas of action of capital groups. Thus, non-press enterprises under large scale conglomerates tend to utilize the fourth power, the power of press, as per their interests to have a say in the press sector as well. Conglomerates are the capital groups that use the press for purposes such as advertising for themselves, establishing and reinforcing political relations to acquire shares from public tenders, since they operate in a number of diverse sectors.

In other words, as the concentration in the media sector accelerated, traditional media ownership under the control of journalist families was replaced with the media structure, dominated by capital groups that actively operate in non-media fields. Integrated with cross ownership, the new media ownership did not include unions in their employment policies after 1990 with respect to press enterprises, which led to limited autonomy for members of the press, who did not have any job security under

these conditions and had a hard time standing up with all the pressure from media owners and advertisers. It is also not quite possible to talk about editorial autonomy either. As of 1980, editors in Turkey became identified with the media owner, rather than the profession, and reporters were self-censoring at the time. A significant component of large capital, working conditions for labor in press and personal rights regressed, while manipulation and sensations became too common in news content. Executives of press enterprises and columnists manipulated the press from political and economic points of view and ideologists of the bourgeoisie and their prominent representatives. In the press environment with economic pressure, it became more challenging to keep together wide masses of public and the capacity of free journalism became weaker against the strong interests of the political power and capital groups. The commodification of news content, or in other words, media for capital accumulation in the economic sense or the production of cultural products serve to the ideological reproduction processes of societies. Reproduction in the press hosts two phases. The first one corresponds with the sphere of economic reproduction, whereas the second one with the sphere of political – ideological production. Thus, press assumes quite a significant role in both production and ideology relations with these two interrelated phases.

To put it in different terms, press outlets of capital groups in Turkey side with said capital groups in all news, comments and social developments concerning labor – capital relations, keep their silence in matters regarding economic rights such as working life, strikes and unemployment, but still support neo-liberal policies that favor capital and the political power, such as privatization.

6.2. Neoliberal Policies and Their Reflections on Internet Journalism

While the media sector of the 1980s was an area with fierce competition among massive conglomerates, the 2000s witnessed the active participation of the Internet (Adaklı, 2010:73). In this context and within the scope of traditional media, members of the press, who worked exclusively for a news center, were turning the information/knowledge from the source only, and thus preparing them for the editorial process. Still, journalism underwent a complete transformation as a result of the direct involvement of new communication technologies to the media sector. As the Internet was able to transmit messages integrated with sound, photographs, texts, videos and other visual files, it appeared to be more effective than traditional media, which led to the repositioning of journalism. Accordingly, Internet journalism attracted the attention of media patrons, for it was able to rapidly and efficiently deliver messages, transmit to wider masses simultaneously and carry out the aforementioned activities quite quickly and with significantly lower costs (Yıldırım, 2010:233). The new information technologies and especially the Internet rendered individuals more interactive, hence illustrating the process of said transformation very clearly.

Under the supervision of technological mechanisms, members of the press were gradually stripped from news sources and directed towards desktop journalism. In other words, members of the press, who were driven away from private journalism, consisting of the codes of traditional media, had to turn to reporting and agency journalism. Furthermore, a member of the press, who had a certain level of control over his or her sources, would hand over this authority to the executives. This way, news production process, which is one of the fundamental functions of the profession of journalism, was given news agencies too. That being said, as members of the press

turned into reporters, who compiled news instead of producing them, had to become employees of the press, who made news out of news (Baytar, 2010:219).

The new media environment, where the notion of advertising was substantially included, for this new environment was quick, practical and was able to transmit without time or space limitations, became a noteworthy platform, catching the attention of capital groups that invest with the quality of the changing media. Advocates of neo-liberal approaches concerning Internet journalism argue that new communication technologies enhance the boundaries of freedom of thought and expression and improve the democracy culture of the society. However, it is also observed that contrarily, new means of exploitation emerged and consumer culture spread along with the liberal circulation of the capital. Communication activities in the field of Internet journalism are parts of a global market mechanism and as such, capital groups that own global media companies increase their investments in new communication technologies. Under the supervision and control of these groups, information/knowledge serve to the new decision-making mechanisms and the dominant powers utilize new communication technologies to ensure the continuity of the order that serves their interests. The new media order undertakes a significant role in the reconstruction of the existing system (Berkman, 2014:51). The new media sector and specifically the field of Internet journalism hence became an industrial field.

To put it differently, the term of globalization and the accompanying new economy policies that were employed with respect to democratization, integration and liberalization in the 1980s caused the transformation of media. Especially, the term ‘globalization’ is described as “the integration of production and communication”. Media is quite significant in order for neo-liberal economy policies to be employed

and to function. Thus, the adoption of neo-liberal policies ensured the rapid improvement of communication systems and media gained an international dimension with them (Mattelart, 2001:99). Privatization policies in the 1990s have manifested themselves especially in the field of telecommunications and globalization policies were spread throughout the masses by utilizing values such as human rights, liberalization and democracy culture, while the privatization policies, hiding behind these values, are stated to possess great importance for democratization to be actualized (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2010:400).

Significant changes were observed in the 1990s in the communication technology systems in Turkey. These changes are stated to be the structural arrangements, representing the infrastructure for global companies to enter into the market. Moreover, laws that prevent monopolization in press with “deregulation” policies and audit publication were abolished. These regulations were expressed as the elimination of the obstacles standing before democracy culture and freedom of thought and expression (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2010:402-403). In other words, policies of change in Turkey and studies to integrate Turkey to a free market economy, which started as of 1980, are evaluated as the reflections of neo-liberal policies, observed across the world. At the same time, legal arrangements that brought state monopolization to a halt in the 1990s paved the way for new monopolizations to emerge. The application and dissemination of neo-liberal policies across the world occurred over communication technologies and press. New communication technologies; i.e., the Internet, ultimately spread new means of exploitation to masses and helped to accelerate its expansion.

To put it differently, capitalism is an order, which turns “sources such as labor capital, raw materials, soil and information” into commodities that can be profitable.

Products of the media industry are also turned into commodities with profit purposes. Moreover, academics claim that Internet journalism serves to the continuity of the capitalist order within the scope of their studies in critical political economy of media and traditional media specifically. According to these academics, readers/viewers in the new media become commodities that are put up for sale, much like the case with traditional media. In this sense, their means are expanded to the extent that their commodification tendencies increase and even deepen. It also must be noted that the capitalist order is transformed, the injustices in the distribution of power are reconstructed and initiatives to control communication networks are carried out in the field of Internet journalism.

In analyses regarding traditional media, researchers, who focus on the political economy method place great emphasis on the matter of monopolization. That is because “ownership relations, economic supervision and class conflicts are interdependent”. Those, who possess the means of production also dominate production and distribution processes. Similarly, capitalists, who have control over social consciousness too have production means and aim to control social consciousness with them. This approach, applied within traditional media analyses, is also utilized for new media. Dominant classes, who possess the means of traditional media, take new communication technologies under their control as well. Much like the case with traditional media, new media is an industrial field that operates within the capitalist order and as such, products of new media are commodities with profit purposes. In this context, capitalist production is expressed as the entirety of relations such as “the exchange of goods in the market, production of profit, capital accumulation and means and power of production” (Berkman, 2014:46). In other

words, concentration tendencies are also observed in the monopolization levels in new media as well (Berkman, 2014:46-48).

Garnham argues that media products as commodities are produced and consumed within the capitalist system and monopolization exists in new media. From this perspective, commercial relations over networks are not shaped according to consumer preferences, but according to product needs (Garnham, 2000, as cited in Berkman, 2014). McChesney criticizes the claims that monopolization in media will come to an end with the internet, the development of which is accelerated with the influence of neo-liberal policies, and media will contribute to the improvement of democracy culture with the Internet, and posits that internet is the greatest manufacturer of monopolies of the history of capitalism, rather than preventing the anti-democratic decisions of the monopolies per se (McChesney, 2013). Capital groups concentrate in the field of new media with company mergers and acquisitions and only a few companies own almost all of the employees, added value and business volume. Just a few companies in the telecommunications sector have complete control over the revenues in total (Çakır, 2014).

Power is distributed unevenly in the capitalist production relations and dominant classes, who possess the means of production, have all other types of power as well. Moreover, capitalists own the production means in the communication field, as well as the power to manipulate communication. This power has an important function to sustain the continuity of the capitalist mode of production. New media, on the other hand, is designated by those who have the power as the area, where said power is to be reconstructed, and it is organized as such. Capital groups or “production powers” that invest in this field to develop new communication technologies take advantage of the technologies in question and reinforce their

positions in the market. New media in the global capitalist order is systemized as an order that provides new opportunities, increases competitive power, revives free market relations and reconstructs dominant powers. Power is reconstructed in the new media to serve to the dominant groups (Berkman, 2014).

According to Mansell (2004), power is distributed evenly in the society. New media plays an active role in the sustaining of social inequalities and the reproduction of communication products in new media as commodities, as well as their consumption, the commodification of viewers/readers and functions such as controlling access, reflect power relations. The field of new media is formed as a structure, where those who hold the power can reproduce economic and social inequality. Mansell (2004:97-98) claims that as the Internet developed, monopolization in media did not vanish and political powers did not democratize either.

Wayne, on the other hand, argues that digital journalism will expand “the social and cultural access of capitalism in general by offering new platforms for commodities to be sold, instead of improving participation in cultural sources”. For McChesney (1997), dominant powers with the political economy of society also preside communication systems. Despite the state financing of communication systems, it appears that private companies acquire the profit. From the perspective of capitalists, cutting costs become largely significant and this way, the task appointed to the neo-liberal state would be to ensure infrastructure investments to cut costs for the investments of capital groups (McChesney, 1996). Similarly, Wallerstein highlights that fixed capital investments of the state and the resources are distributed in favor of the dominant powers, which represents a mechanism per se, while fixed capital investments increase concentration and accumulation of capital (Wallerstein,

1991:46-47). Information/knowledge and media industry lie at the foundations of investment, capital accumulation and growth within the world's economy. According to McChesney, communication technologies are shaped according to the interests of the dominant groups. In this order, the function of masses is to fulfill the wishes of this structure, satisfy the needs related to profit and business maximization and help these groups reach their goals. The development of global communication market results in a rapidly accelerating commercialization, rather than a democracy culture (McChesney, 1996).

The capital transforms patterns of social relations via new communication technologies and shapes the social structure, where the power relations are in effect. Embraced by the integrated communication networks, "the information society" became the setting for power and information struggle, for information is systematically used due to political and commercial interests (Robins & Webster, 1988). The changing process of the capitalist order that globalized with new communication technologies within the scope of neo-liberal policies is described as the information society. The claim of these definitions, on the other hand, is that the modern capitalist society is replaced by a new social structure (Çakır, 2014:82).

6.3. Changing Ownership Structures in Turkish Media

The 1980s has been a period that witnessed the powerful inclusion of the media sector among other strategic sectors. A significant characteristic of this period since 1989 that also reinforced the economic and political hegemony of USA, has been the substantial increase of investments to the press sector in developed and underdeveloped countries. Traditional press (television, newspaper, radio, cinema and so on) started to become parts of conglomerates and encountered new communication technologies in this structure, such as the internet. This period of time, when

traditional media companies turned into a massive communication sector along with the means brought along by new communication technologies caught the attention of those who conduct studies in the field of political economy. Herbert Schiller (1969) used terms such as “cultural imperialism”, “media imperialism” and “privatization and commercialization of media” to depict the concentration function of the media industry since the 1960s in developed capitalist countries. Stating that the cultural oppression is not entirely eliminated in 1960, he claimed that “the difference today is that national media power has submitted to the authority of transnational companies”. Golding and Murdock focused on trends, consolidation, diversification, internationalization and concentration in the media sector in early 1970s (1973). According to Hamelink (1983), four main trends regarding the discipline of communication are stated: consolidation, digitalization, deregulation and globalization. Moreover, John B. Thompson (1996:190) argued that the media sector consists of semi-commercial or commercial institutions, determined by political and financial pressures in the competitive market of other sectors, while new communication technologies heavily contribute to said changes.

Neo-liberal economy politics in the media sector bring along a new function, rather than eliminating government interventions. Since 1970, only the form of government interventions changed. In the capitalist order, on the other hand, the state and the market are linked together with strong ties. Since the market does not have a self-regulation mechanism, “regulation” or in other words, state intervention, occurs on its own motion. The discourse of free market became a myth in and of itself, ideologically supporting the capital class that needs state intervention (Amin, 2000:9-10). Groups within the Turkish press sector in 2003 were Doğan, Uzan, Sabah, İhlas

and Çukurova. As of 2006, Turkish media sphere witnessed the continuance of three main groups: Ciner, Doğan and Çukurova.

The first changes in the media sector occurred, when the banking operations of some press enterprises were prohibited and the companies under them were handed over to TMSF (Saving Deposit Insurance Fund). As of September 2005, the fund put these assets up for sale. Controlled by Uzan Group, İmar Bank was expropriated in July 3rd, 2003, and all the other assets were on February 14th, 2004, after which TMSF became one of the largest media groups itself. TMSF was granted broad authority with the changes in the Banking Laws. Along with its authorities to appoint executives to the press enterprises under it, TMSF started to turn over the companies to their new owners via tenders in 2005. Transferred to TMSF, media companies affiliated with Uzan Group were turned over to their new owners, while the ownership structures of Doğan, Çukurova and Ciner groups also changed. Doğan Media Group kept the leadership in the Turkish media market, despite the increasing number of competitors and aimed to break into foreign markets. Aydın Doğan Group claimed that the development of the newspaper market in Turkey was blocked and hence continued to publish in Turkish language in Asia, Europe, Central Asia and Caucuses, as well as the language of these regions.

In 2003, Bilgin family put a stop to its press life, which initiated with Yeni Asır Newspaper and ended with Sabah newspaper. Later, ownership of ATV and Sabah Newspaper were handed over in full to Ciner Group in 2005; i.e., to Turgay Ciner.

The changes in the ownership structure of the media sector were heavily influenced by the economic stability decrees on January 24th, 1980. The consequence of these decrees in terms of the press has been the removal of subsidies that the state

provided to press for newsprint papers. As the costs increased, publications resorted to private listings and this new economic system caused the advertising investments to proliferate and private advertising agencies to develop. During this time, Naci, Karacan and Simavi families with journalism backgrounds put their magazines and newspapers up for sale, left the industry and lost their former glory in the press sector. They were later replaced by capital groups that operate in the other sectors outside of the press. In the early 1980s, neo-liberal policies became more effective in media, which prepared the grounds for the economic recession in 2001 due to the relations between media patrons, businesspeople and political powers. A total of 25 banks were bankrupt in this recession, some of which were banks that also had a hold on the media sector. In this way, some media groups had to pull out of the competitive market, as a result of the 2001 recession. On the other hand, some press enterprises were expropriated by the government and were later turned over to TMSF. A few years later, TMSF put them up for sale with tenders. Thus, the recession in 2001 changed the ownership structure of press.

TMSF expropriated a total of 12 companies because of their debts, including some press outlets of Çukurova Group. Later, TMSF appointed executives to these media companies, who changed the publishing policies of these press outlets and terminated the columnists and journalists, whom they deemed to be opposing the government and themselves. In this context, it is generally accepted that the media industry is used by media patrons in Turkey as a weapon for investments in other sectors (Sönmez, 2003; Bek, 2004; Adaklı, 2006).

The majority of the five media groups in the media market also have significant investments in areas such as energy, finance, mining and construction. With the only exception of Çukurova Group, Doğan Group with the largest share,

Doğuş Group, Çalık Group and Ciner Group all have at least one hydroelectric power plant. Furthermore, the construction companies these media groups own win state tenders, while they also carry out their private projects. Ranking in this market as the law that prohibited owners of press outlets of television and radio broadcasting from investing in financial fields, Doğuş Group also owns one of the largest banks in Turkey. Çalık Group has a company in finance too. On the other hand, Çukurova Group is a partner in one of the biggest telecommunications companies in Turkey.

Turkey witnessed a severe economic crisis in 1990 – early 2000. As a result, both media and politics went through significant changes. Due to the fiscal deficits and current deficits, Turkish economy found itself in a great depression in late 2000. Along with cheap forex in 2000, a high current deficit number in import arose and outflow of foreign capital accelerated. The economic recession in 2001, along with the high values of American dollars and the outflow of the capital, economic shrinkage reached 6 percent, which illustrated that this was the harshest recession of the history of Turkey.

A significant decline in advertising expenses with the shrinking domestic market was also witnessed after the recession. This meant that the sector shrunk as well. Later, a price reduction was applied. Advertising expenses were instantly cut off with all the other sectors that were influenced by the decline in the domestic demands due to the financial field. The media sector reacted immediately to this decline in revenues and terminated approximately 5 thousand press employees. After the 2001 recession, the new structuring in the field of media showed a tendency towards new alliances to reinforce the power of the existing companies.

Dominance in press in 2002 belonged to Doğan Media Group with a share over 50% in the market. Handed over from Müflis Dinç Bilgin to TMSF, Sabah –

ATV were turned over to Çalık Group via loans from public banks, but companies owned by other press outlets, which are defined as “central media”, were carrying out activities in fields such as mining, construction and energy other than that of media, for they entered into this sector to take advantage of the “external economy”, revealed by media. With the use of media, which is expressed by capital groups as the fourth power, shaping political power and leadership or benefit from public tenders, privatizations and mining, energy and construction licenses in exchange of constructing ideological views over media, were aimed. However, the political power surrounded the capital groups that invested in the field of media. First, Doğan Media Group terminated Petrol Ofisi, to which it invested in addition to the field of media with tax operations, and aimed for downsizing. Doğan Media Group also discarded one television network and two newspapers and chose to downsize and keep “a low profile”.

Sönmez states that along with the recession in 2001, the dominant groups in the media sector organized, started using “the media as weapons and journalists as assassins”, which led to the media shed its skin (Sönmez, 2013).

Relations between media and the ruling power directly influence media outputs. Media patrons, who win public tenders and take advantage of the privileges offered to them by political powers, form their publication policies as per the requests of the ruling power and terminate the opposing members of the press (Sözeri, 2015).

Media outlets of Doğan Group were turned over to Demirören Group. Hence, Demirören Group became the largest of the sector after its initiation to it in 2011. Following this transfer, press changed owners to a large extent and new media patrons emerged with it.

6.4. Ownership Structure in Local Press

Enterprises are founded and operated to earn profit. There are also enterprises, where social purposes are considered in addition to making profit. Drawing off on the definition of an enterprise as an institution that carries out operations to produce and market economic goods and services, media enterprises are called “economic institutions that produce news and thoughts”. To put it differently, media outlets are described as institutions with economic, commercial and social aspects. This way, media enterprises with commercial operations departments can also be called economic units that manufacture thoughts and provide public services. Economic units that fulfill functions of public service are informative and educational social areas, influencing the thoughts and behavior of individuals. This way, two different aspects of the press can be observed.

The aspects in question are the economic one and the one related to social benefit, which can also be called public service. In order for the press to fulfill its function of public service, it needs a particular amount of economic expenses; this expense must be kept at a minimum and the enterprise should continue its activities as an economic institution to also make profits. The press enterprise that provides public services at the same time has social concerns too. Newspaper enterprises with social services must renew their equipment with the developing technology in order to provide faster and more qualified services. The press has to make profits to consistently carry out its public services in the best way possible; however, when the notion of administration is taken into consideration in press enterprises, an emphasis on the social responsibility of press in terms of its functions becomes more meaningful. Still, group administrations are observed in large scale press enterprises

regarding national newspapers today. Thus, there are executive boards in the administration of these enterprises, consisting of more than just one person.

In the local press, on the other hand, personal administration is observed. In some local newspapers, department chiefs and page supervisors take over the management of certain departments of the newspaper. It is important that the executive editor and editor in chief, working in local press, must possess knowledge concerning technical and marketing matters. That is because local press enterprises are small scale institutions and the members of press working at such enterprises are little in numbers, which means administrators may have to spread their areas of responsibility throughout the whole paper.

The main aim of press enterprises is stated to be forming public opinion in social, cultural, political and economic matters, shaping the public opinion in these matters and raising awareness. Enterprises, on the other hand, are explained as “economic institutions that produce with the aim of fulfilling a need”. This determines the aim of press outlets along with the founding purposes of organizations. In line with its aims and functions, the press notifies, criticizes and audits, announces to the public opinion and contributes to the formation of the public opinion. At the same time, it serves to the function of educating the target audience. Accordingly, press enterprises produce a service, but they also have a distinct feature than other service productions. Press enterprises produce products of news and thoughts, rather than producing services with physical values.

The press enterprise also has to compete, as it brings out into the open its products. Lacking the means to distribute to large areas, to publish in extensive numbers and intensive working processes like national newspapers, local newspapers prepare their work through similar processes; however, the form and content of

newspapers differ. Various differences such as content, mode of using photographs, headlines and fonts provide certain characteristics to national and local newspapers. These features become tangible along with the ideas of the authorities in the executive personnel of newspapers.



7. ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS IN LOCAL PRESS AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES TOWARDS JOURNALISM

7.1. Environmental Journalism and Its Emergence

7.1.1. The definition of environmental journalism.

According to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007:11), within the scope of the definition of news, environmental news cover relations between human beings, communities and the environment, life in an environment and protection of the self. In parallel with this explanation, environmental journalism is expressed as a system that ensures the delivery of information/knowledge regarding what awaits societies and what goes on in their surroundings.

Environmental issues today spread throughout the discursive and material areas of our lives and penetrate the lives of individuals via politics, economics, culture and society. At this point, it is of importance that environmental journalism, which builds a bridge between politics and society, must be considered a fundamental factor regarding environmental and legal matters with respect to a discursive process (Carvalho, 2005:2).

Comprising of complex systems, the environment must represent an area for a holistic consideration of scientific, economic and social fields and for the discussion of environmental matters. Media, on the other hand, is referred to as a joint field that prepares grounds for the content of environmental matters, how they are considered, what matters are debated and which analytical methods are to be noticed (Cox & Hansen, 2015:9). Media shapes environmental policies and social perceptions (Boykoff, 2007a:102). Although the influence of press on society is not directly noticed, it still indirectly influences the public deeply via means of media (Priest, 2016:34).

In this context, Richard Holliman advocates that the profession of journalism, from a scientific perspective, may heavily influence public debates with respect to public understanding and transparency (Holliman, 2011:834). Furthermore, journalists covering environmental news texts serve as the connecting link between environmental activists, business executives and the society (Sachsman, Simon & Valenti, 2005:365); however, individuals, who do not have direct experience in environmental matters or expertise, provide information/knowledge after forming them. Individuals, on the other hand, acquire an idea or an opinion indirectly, for certain environmental matters are reflected from a particular point of view in press and accordingly shape their behavior and actions (Frome, 1998:35). From this perspective, press stands at a position that also includes politics and science.

Research studies on environment and media relations from 1970s until today focus largely on news media and studies concerning environmental news and debates (Hansen, 2015:209). In academic studies regarding the manner in which environmental news are covered in press, on the other hand, it is observed that irrelevant definitions concerning environmental matters are involved and the particular presentation of these matters has significant effects on the actions and attitudes of individuals (Carvalho, 2005:2). The press affects via interactive networks a number of various processes from official environmental policies to the society's perception towards the environment and even unofficial definitions (Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017:299).

7.1.2. The scope of environmental journalism and its development.

Individuals constantly need to receive information about the events that happen around them, in order to sustain and direct their lives. Thus, they make countless preferences in many respects regarding where they would keep living, in

addition to everyday matters, which highlights the importance of environmental news. In this context, environmental news is the news that focus on matters that are related to what happens concerning the environment, as well as trends, possibilities and existing issues.

Environmental journalism encapsulates many social and scientific fields that emphasize the everyday lifestyle of the society and possess scientific qualities. The need for honest, efficient and thoroughly investigative “environmental” journalism or the need for events in environmental matters increase with every passing day (Sharma, 2010:63). News content regarding the environment may evoke hope, concern or fear in individuals. In such a case, everyday attitudes and behavior of the views/reader and decisions of consumers are potentially influenced. Therefore, it carries importance that evidence and information/knowledge in news texts be of high quality, in order to encourage conscious decisions and behavior (Rögner & Wormer, 2015:3).

One of the influences on the development of environmental journalism was its use as a scientific force to harm individuals during World War I. The newspaper that produced news to offer scientific services for the first time in 1921 used scientific reports to state that hazardous chemical substances were used in the industry and the female workers, who used said substance at work, had cancer; this revelation in the paper was a significant step during this time (Krech, McNeill & Merchant, 2004:817). This way, journalism that prepares news texts about environmental matters were based on articles on nature, investigative reports and scientific journalism regarding public health.

As of 1960s, environmental matters became public concerns, which increased the attention of the press to this field. In 1970, on the other hand, members of press

started focusing more on the news sources due to public discussions that gradually increased and became more challenging. Over time, nuclear accidents, climate changes and ozone layer depletion started to require expertise in environmental matters for the sake of environmental journalism. In relation with the steps taken in the political field about environmental matters, interest groups in media felt the need to have expert personnel, so that in the event that they needed to shed light on technical and scientific arguments, they would have individuals, who can critically evaluate these arguments (Allan, Adam & Carter, 2000:4).

The first meeting, held for international matters on environment, was the Stockholm Conference in 1972 within United Nations. This conference is widely accepted as an important step towards bringing environmental matters into the global political agenda. At the same time, United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) was established after the conference. Consequent to such political, scientific and social developments, environmental matters created strong reactions in the press too. Large scale media companies in Europe and America between 1970 and 1980 started to hire environmental journalists, which led to the increasing importance attributed to expertise in environmental matters. Additionally, a number of diverse organizational studies along with global meetings were conducted in environmental journalism.

8. THE THEORETICAL APPROACH IN NEWS PRODUCTION PROCESSES

8.1. Agenda Setting

Along with the advancement in technology, internet becomes a platform, where information is reconstructed and presented in a new manner. In addition, the concept of internet journalism arose, which is described as the access of information via the internet and the utilization of news production and collection practices of journalism per se. Besides serving news selections on a wide scale, internet journalism also offers easy and more detailed access to topics and events, which are covered in traditional media. The local press, on the other hand, is defined as “the newspapers that cover local news and topics, which is different than national news, and are only published and read in a particular region” or “newspapers that only include news that concern the people, who live in a particular town or city, and are published at said location” (Yazıcı, 2014:10-11). Local press prioritizes the events and phenomena regarding the region and local people and covers them in further detail in internet journalism. Individuals can have access to information and knowledge with internet journalism, which is one of the mass media, and are more prone to accepting the degrees of importance, placed by the press on events or phenomena. Readers do not only acquire more information about themselves and the topics, which are of interest for the whole society, via mass media, but they also learn how much importance they are supposed to place on said event or issue with regards to the importance attached on them by mass media (Severin and Tankard, 1992:208 cited by Yaylagül, 2013:78). The idea that the manner, in which the press presents news, determines how the individual thinks and talks about the events or phenomena, represents the basis of this theory. In other words, the press determines what the

majority of the individuals are to talk about and how the readers are supposed to reflect upon the facts, through setting an agenda. The press has the power to set an agenda. Internet journalism in national press uses this power to inject the dominant ideology to the readers/viewers, which is different than the internet journalism in local press. The press is able to set the agenda for the society by placing more weight on a particular notion or event of its desire. In order to do it, the press establishes a control mechanism on the information and supervises the information, which carries utmost importance for social power to persist. Those, who have control on the flow of information, also have the means to come to power over individuals. These people are called gatekeepers, who supervise the messages in press with respect to their selection, shaping, presentation and the repetition of their timing (Agee, Ault and Emery, 1985:33 cited by Yaylagül, 2013:78-79). Internet journalism in national press sets the agenda for the ideologies of the capital-oriented groups specifically in energy news and disseminates the dominant ideology across the society. Internet journalism in local press, on the other hand, sets the agenda by covering topics that look out for the public interest.

The individuals in capitalist societies spends a great deal of their time by watching television, reading newspapers and listening to radio. It is known that individuals seek news concerning the world in which they live from mass media with the development of the internet. The press does not produce news from all events or phenomena around the world. Certain events or phenomena are brought on the agenda constantly or more than others by the press. The press forms a public opinion and sets the agenda for the society by touching upon certain events and ignoring others; however, individuals do not acquire any information concerning those that are not brought up by the press. This attitude has to do with the power of the press in terms of

setting an agenda and informing the society, rather than its powers of persuasion and influence; still, it is assumed with this theory that consequent to agenda setting, the ideas and opinions of the public are also influenced. The importance and priority, placed on events and phenomena by the press, becomes the importance and priority of the public. According to the fundamental approach of this theory, readers thus determine the topics they are to be interested in and the degree to which they are going to be interested in these events and issues (Yaylagül, 2013: 80-81).

In this context and within the framework of the theory of agenda setting, internet journalism in local press sets the agenda in energy news too by evaluating events from all perspectives including economic, social and political ones; yet because of the ownership structure of the press, energy news in the national press sets the agenda by allowing for the ideological structure or messages, wished to be conveyed or injected by the ruling class to the target audience. Internet journalism in local press, on the other hand, presents energy news to the target audience by seeking the interest of the region and local people there. All information that are prioritized for the geographical location in question are relayed to the local people and agenda is hence set.

In other words, the agenda setting approach is based on the idea that the press determines what individuals are supposed to think about; not how they are supposed to think. The power of the press can be observed in it ignoring certain topics and events, varying per se and keeping certain events or phenomena on the agenda at a frequency it wishes. In short, the theory of agenda setting states that events that are deemed to be important by the press and are thus covered, designate the agenda for the readers/viewers, keeping their agenda busy as well, whereas the events or phenomena that are not covered in press do not make it to the agenda at all. The ways,

in which energy news are made with internet journalism in national and local press, also differ. Internet journalism in national press prioritizes the ideological structure of capital groups in news texts in matters of energy. On the other hand, internet journalism in local press has a different prioritization than that of national press and often places importance on the events and problems regarding public interest when it comes to energy news.

8.2. Democratic Media Theory

There are two interdependent rights in the democratic media theory of Williams. The first one is the right to relay information and the second one is the right to acquire information. The right to relay information is also viewed as a social right, in addition to being an individual right. The right to relay information is expressed as a social right with individuals' effective participation in the political processes. The undertaking of active roles of individuals in political periods leads to the legitimization of contemporary democracy before the public, in relation with the free will and consent of the society. The right to acquire information in the democratic theory of media is integrated with the right to relay information. Ensuring liberal participation of the people in the formation processes of political opinions and political will, the right to acquire information is one of the most important prerequisites of democracy. Within the scope of the democratic theory of media, which is also against the commercial theory of media that highlights only profit, the working press outlets and press officials practice the duties, functions and responsibilities that are expected from them without any economic and political oppression or supervision from the dominant ideology (Çebi, 1999:43).

Internet journalism in local press within the context of the democratic theory of media, overlooking political ideology and oppression, specifically makes energy

news. In other words, internet journalism in the local press prepares energy news stories, based on the freedom of speech and consent of the local community. Prepared by internet journalists in national press, energy news stories especially place importance on profit; however, the locality and the local people are prioritized in local press. Within the framework of the rights of relaying and acquiring information in the democratic theory of media, internet journalism in local press ensures active participation of individuals in the formation process of political events in particular. Because of the dominant ideological structure, which is often observed in the energy news in national press, individuals freely reflect their opinions on the events and phenomena covered in energy news in internet journalism of local press, using their own free will. Internet journalism in local press acts as a bridge between the local administration and the local people, making sure that individuals undertake active roles as per the demands and requests of the people, regarding the events or phenomena mentioned in energy news. Press officials, who work in the local press, ignore the political and economic oppression and supervision mechanisms, and fulfill the duties and responsibilities demanded by the local community.

Prepared in line with the democratic theory of media, energy news and the manner, in which the matters or points are covered, become the voice of the people, who live in the local community, hence reflecting their free will. This way, contemporary democracy is ensured to come to life in both the locality and across the country thanks to energy stories of internet journalism in local press, made according to the democratic theory of media.

9. ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS IN LOCAL INTERNET JOURNALISM

9.1. Methodology

9.1.1. Research hypothesis.

Differently from internet journalism of the mainstream press, capital-focused understanding is ignored in environmental news contents of local internet journalism representing local public opinion in light of democracy to protect social and cultural lifestyle.

9.1.2. Research objective and significance.

This study is designed to directly elaborate on local problems of local communities within the framework of environmental news in local Internet journalism and reveals the factors that negatively affect local people's social life by ignoring the general capital-focused understanding in energy news.

Differently from the economic and political factors on which mainstream press focuses, this study aims to prove that news contents are produced and presented by a journalistic understanding that serves to protect a region's ecological order as well as social and cultural lifestyle of local people.

In that vein, the study aspires to make local people's voice heard using energy news in local internet journalism by keeping economic and political interests in the background. Therefore, this study pays regard to the demands of local public opinion and is intended to serve as a bridge between local people and administrators by conveying these demands to local administrations. Thus, this research aims to explain that news content on energy in local internet journalism prioritizes demands and interests of local public opinion and that this understanding of journalism is principally adopted.

9.1.3. Research method.

Due to the pandemic (Covid-19), which affected the whole world, the research process was difficult to be completed. For the same reason, the press officials, who wished to participate in this study, were interviewed remotely – online, by telephone or e-mails. The remote communication attempts delayed the completion of the study a couple more months. I shared information about the nature and content of this study with the press officials before the interviews, but some of them thought that I was working for an energy company with commercial purposes in their location and did not initially accept the interview. Thus, they initially refused to participate. However, I remotely contacted them, expressed myself and explained that the interviews were for an academic research study and I carried no commercial agenda-whatsoever. After lengthy explanations about who I was, I was able to carry out the interviews with them. Unfortunately, I encountered further complications in reaching out to press officials, because I had to carry out this study remotely due to Covid-19 pandemic conditions. Despite these negative circumstances, I was able to complete this research study productively.

The research utilizes semi-structured in-depth interview as the selected research method. Respondents were asked a total of 13 questions and all respondents answered the 13 questions via phone calls or e-mail correspondence. Responses, which were not deemed implicit or clear during further evaluations, were asked to the respective respondents again and elaborations were acquired.

Using semi-structured in-depth interview, the study assesses the mentality of journalism in local internet journalism, which is conveyed through energy-related news content. This research method helps to shed light on how, in what way, by means of which principles and with what purposes the press officials, who work in

internet journalism in local press, prepare the news stories. Moreover, indispensable news values and whether or not they were prominent during said preparation was also investigated with the questions. The journalism understanding of local internet journalism, aiming for public benefit, in contrast with mainstream internet journalism, is clearly unmasked with the evaluation of how the events and matters in news texts of local internet journalism, based on the ecological order, are covered.

9.2. Purpose and the Scope of the Research Study

Local press has an important role in the rooting of democracy, for it is able to relay the cultural, social, economic and political developments or novelties in the region in a healthy way, convey the problems of the region and is effective in the formation of public opinion in the region, having emerged from journalism as such.

Also possessing the feature of feeding national press, local press can relay a significant event or piece of news regarding the locality to which it belongs across the whole country. The culture of democracy, grounded on multivocality, freedom of thought and the supervision of administrations by the local people, is rooted and spread via local press. Thus, the democracy culture that is constructed on local units ensures the liveliness of the country's democracy. Freedom of thought in the local press is prevailed by multivocality, supervising local administrations, and keeping democracy alive this way.

Contrary to the national press, where capital-oriented mentalities prevail, local press conveys the demands and problems of the local people to the local administration, besides supervising whether or not the local administration fulfills its duties, responsibilities or functions, on behalf of the public, ensuring the grounding of democracy as such. Therefore, local press also aids in the formation of individual

opinions by ensuring mutual communication and interaction between authorities and the public.

This study on energy news in internet journalism in local press addresses the lack of directly professional values and ethical principles in the preparation of energy news due to the pressure caused by the ideological structure of the national press, and claims that local press, which is capable of making the voices of the public heard more effectively, covers especially the negative factors surrounding events or phenomena, influencing the nature in the locality as well as the lives of the people there, in the news stories on energy.

In addition, the research study involves publications that intensively cover energy news from amongst the local newspapers in the regions, where energy-related discussions are abundant before the public; however, those, who accepted to participate in this study could not have been interviewed face to face, because of the ongoing Covid-19 outbreak, which still affects the globe. From this perspective, online, real-time interviews, e-mails and telephone calls were used in the months of November and December of 2020 to interview the respondents of the study – Mahir Ateş, Publisher and Founder of Muğla Devrim Newspaper; Meryem Akgün, Managing Editor of Karadeniz Newspaper; Osman Sav, Publisher of Zonguldak İmza Newspaper; Ali Rıza Tığ, Founder and Publisher of Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper; Metin Eltaş, Journalist for Denizli News (denizlihaber.com); Ümit Özmen, Managing Editor of Aydın Ses Newspaper; Kenan Molla, Publisher of Akhisar News Agency; Mehmet Leventoğlu, Executive Editor of Bandırma Gerçek Newspaper; Murat Berhun, Journalist at Adana News Center (www.adanahabermerkezi.com) and Chairperson of Adana Internet Journalists Platform; Oktay Erol, Publisher of Yeni

Muhalefet (yenimuhalefet.com) and Tunahan Ünsal, Journalist at Çanakkale Gündem Newspaper.

The research portion of the study considers the position and journalistic experience of the media professionals in internet journalism in local press as they were interviewed. The regions, which were prioritized by the media professional in the news they prepare, as well as the type of news, were evaluated. The following table shows the names of the publications for which the interviewees work and the cities, where they are published.

Table 1

Names/duties of the interviewees and the publications in the research study

Name of the newspaper	Publishing region/city of the newspaper	Name of the journalist	Duties
Adanahabermerkezi.com	Adana	Murat BERHUN	Journalist - Broadcaster ÇukurovaTürk TV Deputy Director General/Chairperson of Internet Journalists Platform
Akhisar News Agency	Manisa	Kenan MOLLA	Publisher
Aydın Ses Newspaper	Aydın	Ümit ÖZMEN	Aydın Ses Newspaper Managing Editor
Bandırma Gerçek	Balıkesir	Mehmet LEVENTOĞL	Executive Editor

Newspaper		U	
Çanakkale Gündem Newspaper	Çanakkale	Tunahan Ünsal	Journalist/Employee
Denizlihaber.co m	Denizli	Metin ELTAŞ	Journalist
İmza Newspaper	Zonguldak	Osman SAV	İmza Newspaper Publisher
Karadeniz Newspaper	Trabzon	Meryem AKGÜN	Karadeniz Newspaper Managing Editor
Muğla Devrim Newspaper	Muğla	Mahir ATEŞ	Muğla Devrim Newspaper and Printing House Owner
Pusula Newspaper	Zonguldak	Ali Rıza TIĞ	Pusula Newspaper Owner
yenimuhalefet.c om	Adana	Oktay EROL	Publisher

9.3. Findings

9.3.1. Positions of the interviewed media professionals.

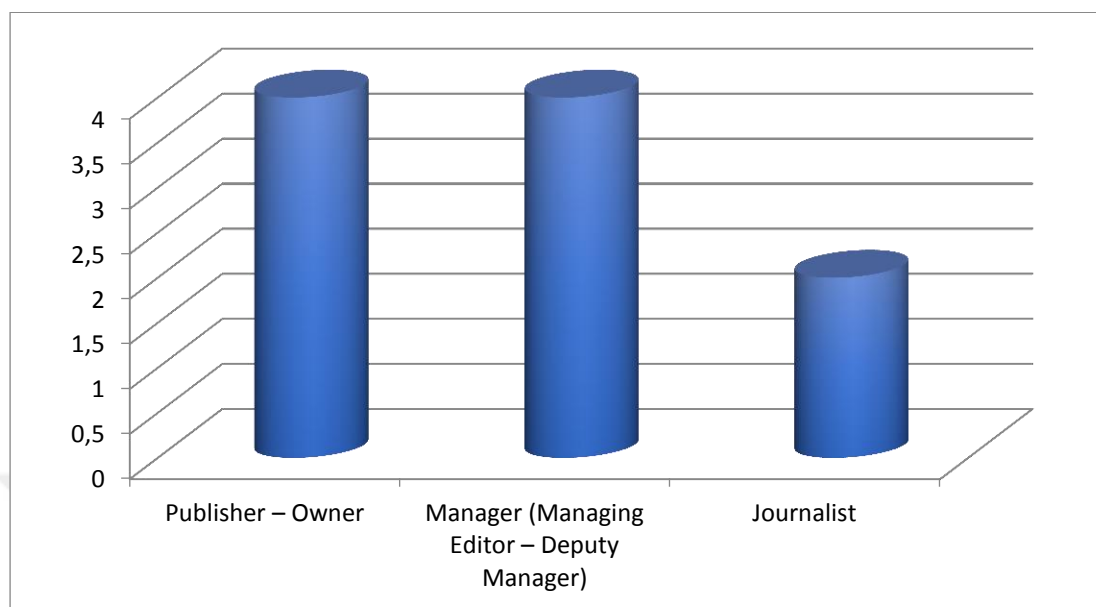


Figure 1. Positions of the interviewed media professionals

A total of 11 local newspaper employees/managers/publishers were interviewed within the scope of this study. The distribution is as follows; four publishers, four managers (managing editors and deputies) and three journalists. As was mentioned above, the interviews included various methods of online real-time interviews, phone calls and e-mails due to the limitations brought along by the Covid-19 outbreak (Figure 1).

9.3.2. Journalism experience of the interviewed professionals.

Duration of the professional experiences of the journalists in the research study vary. Accordingly, there is 1 respondent with 0-5 years of experience; 2 respondents with 6-10 years of experience; 2 respondents with 11-20 years of experience and 6 respondents with experience of 21 years and above (Figure 2).

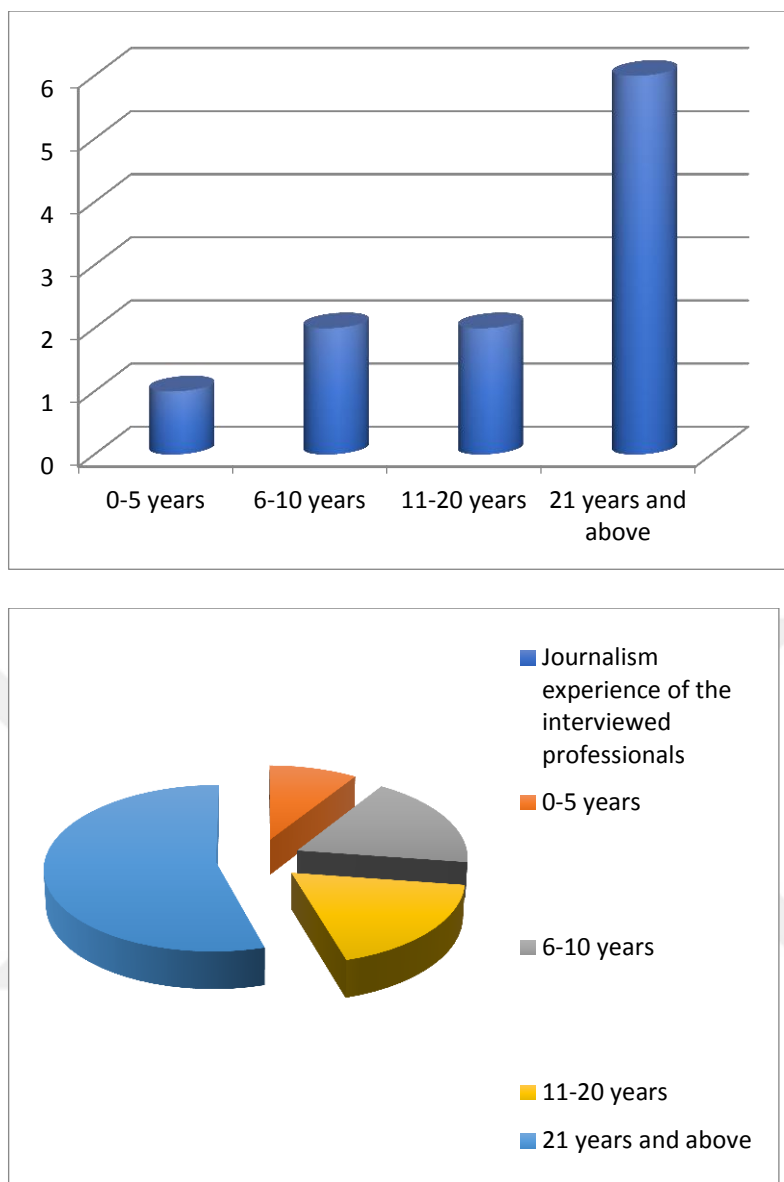


Figure 2. Distribution of the respondent journalists' experiences by years

9.3.3. Priority of regions in news.

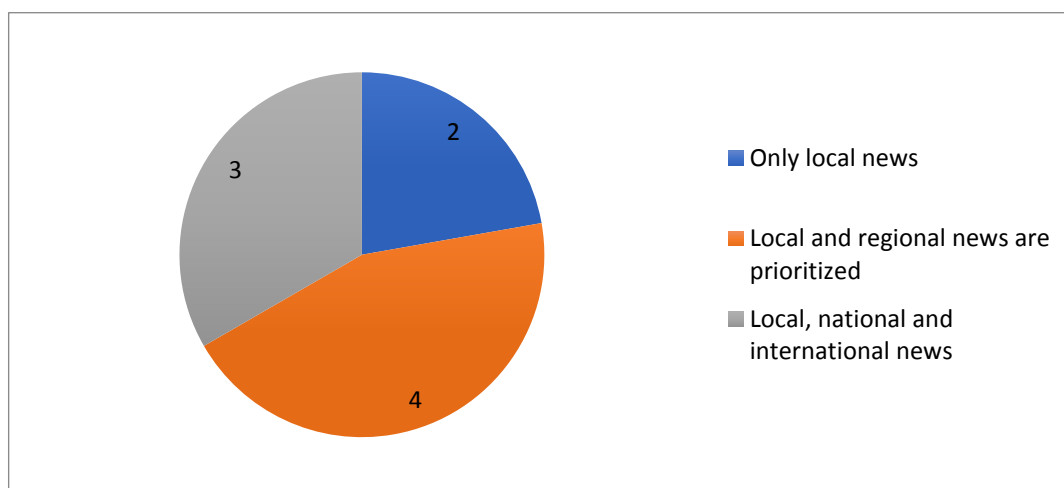


Figure 3. Geographical priorities in newspapers

The local media first voices the issues of the region, in which it exists, then aims to publish the news as per its editorial policies from amongst national and international news. According to the statements of the 11 local newspaper representatives, who participated in this study, five of these publications include national and international news with the priority on local news. Four of them prioritize local news and regional news. According to the statements of the representatives from two publications, on the other hand, the prioritized and single most important criterion in the selection of news at newspapers is the local news (Figure 3).

9.3.4. By type of news.

According to the responses of the interviewed newspaper representatives, the news content of the publications depends on the agenda; still, there are targeted content for all of them. Accordingly, four newspapers prioritize news with political content, one prioritizes political and nature-related news and six newspapers include all types of news (Figure 4).

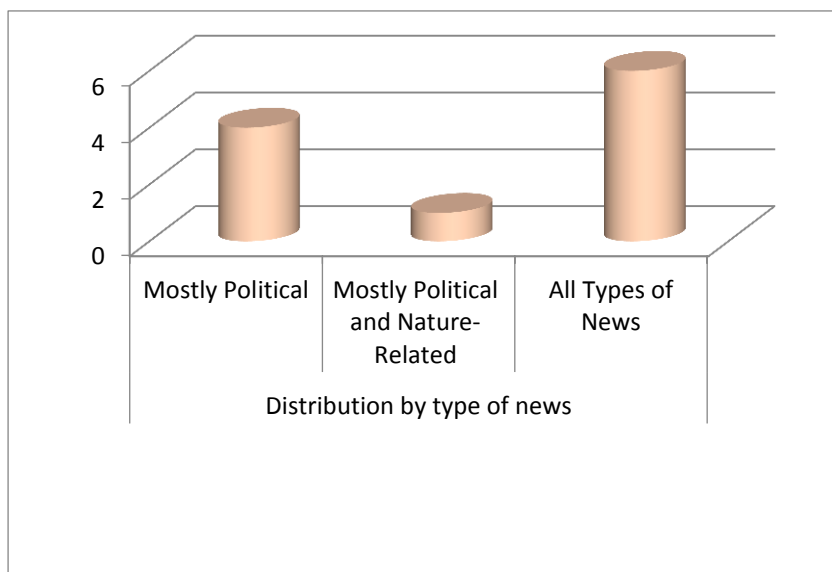


Figure 4. Distribution of newspapers by news content

Fundamental Principles of Internet Journalism in Local Press

According to the findings of semi-structured in-depth interview, local newspaper representatives, who were interviewed, attempt to make their news in line with the principles of journalism and consider common values of truth – justice – rights – freedom of speech, keeping local news on the agenda and forming public opinion.

Meryem Akgün, Managing Editor at Karadeniz Newspaper, states that public benefit, objective, balanced and information-oriented awareness raising, rights and justice form the basic principles of journalism. Osman Sav, Publisher of Zonguldak İmza Newspaper, on the other hand, stated that making news that would be of benefit for the formation of public opinion in the region and keeping the issue on the agenda until the authorities in the region solve said issue are the main principles of journalism.

Ali Rıza Tığ, Publisher of Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper, named the value of truth of the news and attracting the attention of the public are the main principles, on

which they base their news stories. Metin Eltaş, Journalist at denizlihaber.com, and Ümit Özmen, Managing Editor at Aydın Ses Newspaper, on the other hand, expressed that accurate, objective facts with the usage of the right to respond as per the public need of being informed must be taken into account and during meetings, such principles are used to evaluate the newsworthiness, writing of the news and its process of publishing.

Within the scope of the interviews, all press officials stated that they take into account the fundamental principles of journalism, when they prepare their stories. However, they added that in exceptional cases, they pursue different editorial policies. Officials from Karadeniz Newspaper, Aydın Ses Newspaper and adanahabermerkezi.com stated that especially in topics such as harassment, rape, femicides, children's abuse, terrorism or national values, they do what they conscientiously believe to be the right thing before the journalistic principles and they do not hesitate in disclosing the names of the perpetrators. Moreover, Ümit Özmen, Executive Editor of Aydın Ses Newspaper, claimed that in certain cases, news that may cause harm to the public or victimize them, are not served. From this perspective, according to the press officials in internet journalism in local press, looking out for public interest is one of the most important principles of journalism.

News Types Found in Internet Journalism in Local Press

All of the local newspaper representatives expressed that they prioritize news about the problems of the local people and the region and the follow-up on the solutions of said problems. The topics and demands of the provinces rank first in this sense.

- Mahir Ateş; Owner of Muğla Devrim Newspaper and the Printing House:

“Our priority is the news that concern politics and nature. In addition, statistical news is prepared about public order news (of course most of these are local news), and all of the news that we publish in the newspaper are also served on our website. At the same time, we closely follow the problems, voiced by the local people, as well as the developments that would destroy nature and damage the living areas of future generations.”

- Meryem Akgün; Managing Editor of Karadeniz Newspaper:

“While we cover all news categories, the majority of them would be political news. The problems of the local provinces, their demands, roads, water, electricity and singular aggrievement news are also covered.”

- Osman Sav; Zonguldak İmza Newspaper’s Publisher:

“We mostly publish news to form public opinion by voicing the problems of the province and the country. As İmza Newspaper, we follow up on various issues and the most important ones among them right now are the completion of Zonguldak Airport with respect to its shortages and the immediate construction of Mithatpaşa tunnel. For example, we try to attract the attention of the authorities by highlighting that the only ancient city of the Black Sea Region, Filyos, has not been spared sufficient subsidies. We emphasize the losses of the university, the government and the citizens, because natural gas is not available at BEU Med School and the area, trying to pressure the officials to immediately solve this problem. We underline that Zonguldak is a whole different beauty with its natural treasures and tell officials that investments are needed for nature tourism. We draw attention to the transportation issues with roads in particular. We cover news about the imminent finish of Filyos project.

We also place importance on news that would form public opinion in terms of environmental pollution.”

Local press prioritizes the creation of multivocality and the public’s undertaking of active roles instead of manufacturing consent of individuals as per the interests of dominant groups, which is the case with national press. Thus, it paves the way for the development of democracy.

- Ali Rıza Tığ; Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper’s Publisher:

“We cover all kinds of news concerning Zonguldak and problems in Zonguldak on our news website. We present news from different areas such as politics, sports, arts, celebrities, and business and laborer worlds. Most of them are political news. They are followed by what we call hot news; such as public order news - those about accidents, suicides and murder.”

- Metin Eltaş; Journalist at denizlihaber.com:

“As you can tell by its name, denizlihaber.com is the news website of Denizli. Therefore, what we do is local news to the fullest sense of the word. The news that we insist on pursuing are those about the city and the problems in the city – and we keep following up on them until they reach a solution. The follow-up of environmental issues also represents important processes. Other than them, everything that concerns urban life and the problems that exist within the social life are included in this process.”

- Ümit Özmen; Managing Editor of Aydın Ses Newspaper:

“While we cover all types of news on our website, the largest attraction is received by news about public order and politics. Since we are a local newspaper, all the news that we make concern local matters.”

- Kenan Molla; Publisher of Akhisar News Agency:

“General, economy, sports, public order, celebrities... The most widely covered topics are probably those about economy and sports. We highlight the problems of the local people, who live in the province, and try to make sure that they find solutions.”

- Mehmet Leventoğlu; Executive Editor of Bandırma Gerçek Newspaper:

“Our priorities are the news about local and regional developments and NGO administrators and political party administrators, who assess the social reflections of said events, which would be followed by sports news.”

- Murat Berhun; Journalist at adanahabermerkezi.com:

“Hot news are the ones that receive the highest attraction (most widely read). Accidents, fires, politician incidents... They are interesting, which is why we try to cover all of them. Moreover, we try to present current and particular news with different approaches. The strongest emphasis is on local politics. As you can appreciate, mainstream media does not really cover local politics at length. Non-profit and non-governmental organizations, political parties and associations are the news sources that step forth for us in local media. Of course, I guess the most important source for us would be City Councils.”

- Tunahan Ünsal; Journalist at Çanakkale Gündem Newspaper:

“What we cover is mostly about what happens on the streets and the problems of the citizens – the electricity bills that cannot be paid, constant increases of natural gas prices and the extent, to which politics affect the problems of citizens. Can they generate active solutions or not? We often set up our news in ways that would be on the lookout for public interest in terms of problems

of the local tradespeople, their expectations, how chambers, unions, stock exchange or bar associations act and how they should be acting.”

Internet journalism in local press addresses a more limited target audience in geographical terms; it also considers the demands and interests of the target audience and prepares the products and content about the theme and events to be covered in news from this perspective. The local press first and foremost reflects the priorities of the public in its news discourse, rather than acting in line with the ideological structures, which aim for economic support.

Manner of Covering Energy News in National Press According to Members of Local Press

Members of the local press evaluated the manner, in which energy news are covered in national press, and found it to be negative. Overall, a few interviewees stated that the national press covers energy news without detail, seeks commercial interests and acts in a biased way that is far from the truth. Additionally, it was expressed that excluding a few exceptional cases and journalists, who are experts in their fields, the reported news is not really taken into consideration.

- Mahir Ateş; Publisher of Muğla Devrim Newspaper:

“I think some of them publish with a bias. I believe that the harmful production of many energy enterprises is obscured from the public.”

The main function of the press is to ensure social responsibility and seek public benefit. The interests and benefits of the local people are prominent in local press, in order to ensure public benefit.

- Meryem Akgün; Managing Editor of Karadeniz Newspaper:

“I really see them as dreams seen from rose colored glasses, far from reality and overlooking the harm for nature.”

- Osman Sav; Publisher at Zonguldak İmza Newspaper:

“News, provided by journalists, who have expertise in this field, can be more objective. However, I am one of those people, who believe that energy companies must use their media promotions departments more actively.”

- Ali Rıza Tığ; Publisher at Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper:

“National press provides energy news according to the industries, where their owners work too.”

- Metin Eltaş; Journalist at denizlihaber.com:

“Unfortunately, national press, including 99 percent of its players, has the kind of structure that absolutely supports a political idea and advocates for its policies. If the media outlet supports those in power, they would assume an understanding that blindly supports the energy news. If they are anti-power, their stance is still blind in the same way. Therefore, what they publish is far from credible.”

- Ümit Özmen; Managing Editor at Aydın Ses Newspaper:

“As is the case with many topics in mainstream media, energy news are also subject to ideological and political approaches, which is why objective publications are not available, in my humble opinion.”

- Kenan Molla; Publisher at Akhisar News Agency:

“They are provided without details.”

- Mehmet Leventoğlu; Executive Editor at Bandırma Gerçek Newspaper:

“Except for marginal newspapers via Anadolu Agency and other agencies, we often evaluate them as sponsored and for perception purposes.”

- Murat Berhun; Journalist at adanahabermerkezi.com:

“Commercial.”

- Oktay Erol; Owner and Managing Editor yenimuhalefet.com:

“It is the local press that lets out the first scream! Then the national press comes along and evaluates it as per its own “interests”. Remember Mount Ida! The local press there, the people there, the point of view there... Without them, which national outlet would have owned it? And then... Which networks or newspapers actually covered it? Other than a few national press outlets, they did not even cover it! Why, you ask? Because their interests would not be sought that way; their ways for milking would shrink...”

National press conveys the ideological views of those that provide financial support to it. The capital groups in question with the economic power in hand shape the energy news in national press as per their own ideological views and ideas. This way, the perception in the news that is prepared in line with the interests of the interest groups is injected to the individual with the wish that their consent is to be manufactured.

- Tunahan Ünsal; Journalist at Çanakkale Gündem Newspaper:

“The media outlets that I follow on national press are Oda TV, Sözcü, Birgün, Sol newspapers. I do not follow other sources at all. I do not evaluate the energy news in national press. I do not think there are statements or content to be evaluated. The air pollution created by thermal power plants, is so tangible that İzmit’s Dilovası industrial zone is destroyed by these chimney activities. Those, who pass from İzmit Dilovası cannot even see where they are going, this area of İzmit is basically covered in fog. Similarly, the measurement

values, conducted in Çan region of Çanakkale show that pollution is gradually increasing and the risk of getting cancer in this region is also increasing in direct proportion with the situation. Therefore, I believe national press should touch upon public health and sociological implications more than they do. I do not recommend that energy news is followed on national media that much.”

Press officials, who work in internet journalism in local press, cover in detail the news stories about their environment and events that occur in the area, affecting the local people there. This way, they attempt to make the public’s voice heard; however, national press from the eyes of the local press, is turning into a global market, overlooking public interest due to profit purposes and monopolization in media. The multivocality that must exist in media is replaced by standardization in voice, generating the ideological perception in news content with respect to the ruling ideological structures, their interests and their demands.

The influence of the manner, in which national press reports energy news, on the energy news in local press

The local press relays the matter or events that occur in its surroundings to the local people in detail. In contrast with the national press, concerning a local issue, the local press offers more detailed information or knowledge in a more explanatory way. This way, local press becomes the most important news source of the national press. National press acquires information about a particular event or phenomenon, which occur in a locality, from the local press. Since national press knows that local press relays the relevant information concerning local matters to the target audience, it uses local press as a source for local news.

The research also includes questions for the respondents about how the energy news are covered in national press and whether or not they influence the content of energy news in local press. Responses, acquired during the in-depth interviews, concluded that the way, in which energy news are often covered in national press, does not affect energy news and their content in local press.

- Mahir Ateş; Publisher of Muğla Devrim Newspaper:

“It would not have any influence.”

- Meryem Akgün; Managing Editor of Karadeniz Newspaper:

“It would affect about 80 percent.”

- Osman Sav; Publisher at Zonguldak İmza Newspaper:

“Perhaps it is because of the workload or of its lack of interest; but the local press does not follow how it is covered in national press.”

- Ali Rıza Tığ; Publisher at Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper:

“The way we publish our energy news has nothing to do with national press.”

- Metin Eltaş; Journalist at denizlihaber.com:

“Local press is always one step ahead of the national press, when it comes to energy news in its region. Local energy news is first covered in local press and the national press would follow local press, as is the case in many other examples too. We as the local press do not really follow national publications or get inspired by them.”

- Ümit Özmen; Managing Editor at Aydın Ses Newspaper:

“The source that feeds mainstream media with news is often local newspapers. The news in local newspapers is covered by local reporters of these newspapers and they are usually agency reporters, which is why local newspapers, who are representatives of almost all regions except for the three

or four metropolitans, which are covered as provincial, are followed by national press. Thus, I do believe that national newspapers follow local newspapers. This is why we are not influenced by them, but it is the other way around.”

- Kenan Molla; Publisher at Akhisar News Agency:

“We follow up on almost all energy news on national press.”

- Mehmet Leventoglu; Executive Editor at Bandırma Gerçek Newspaper:

“News content of energy companies, prepared for information and perception purposes, are not interesting enough, except for news about new renewable energy resources in particular. Their numbers are not high and especially with regards to matters such as identification of the economic problems of the public, solution recommendations and environmental sensibility, topics discussed on local media pages are followed, shared on social media and they receive a lot of feedback, both positive and negative.”

- Murat Berhun; Journalist at adanahabermerkezi.com:

“It does not affect us.”

- Oktay Erol; Owner and Managing Editor yenimuhalefet.com:

“If we are the source of energy news, the stories would be set up with the ‘energy’ from the society. However, if we are not the sources, if the matter in question is what is going on in a city far, far away, then news to support “that region” with information, acquired from various agencies, are covered! It is the duty of the press to declare to readers that similar events to those that were witnessed also occur in different places.”

Within the context of this research study, it is found that national press deems local press as a news source regarding local matters and issues and shapes the notions and events that are covered in news with respect to the publication policies, followed by the ideological structure.



10. CONCLUSION

Within the scope of the study, media officials, who work in internet journalism in local press, were interviewed online in real time, via phone calls or e-mail correspondence due to the limiting circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews were about energy news covered in online local press and included cities of Zonguldak, Adana, Denizli, Aydın, Muğla, Trabzon, Manisa, Çanakkale and Balıkesir, which represented the sample of the study. The research study investigates the mentality of journalism, reflected on news content, relating to energy, and the ways, in which matters regarding energy are covered. It also undertakes the comparison with the mentality of journalism in national press. From this perspective, the position of interviewed media officials, their journalistic experience, geographical priorities in the news stories published in the web sites of local press and the distribution of news content in the web sites of local press are revealed within the scope of this study.

As this study mentions in broader terms too, neo-liberal policies caused a decline in democracy besides inequality across the country, while significant changes occurred in press as well. National media outlets became actors in the global media market. Media today is shaped in line with the interests and benefit of corporations that hold off-media capital in hand due to conglomerization and economic power. Since the press outlet must seek profits in the capitalist system, the accompanying interest-based relations and commercial concerns contribute to the overlooking of professional ethical principles and public benefit. In other words, media owners, who keep national press under their auspices, operate press outlets as per their ideological views, since they also invest in other areas too. Emerging as a result of the technological developments, besides the great changes in media, internet also caused

the repositioning of journalism. Also known as online journalism, internet journalism is not limited by time and space, in addition to being quick and practical. As it produced news content with such characteristics, it also became part of the global market mechanisms. Thus, capital groups ensure the continuity of the order, which serves their interests, with the information they have under their auspices by investing in new communication technologies. In other words, internet journalism helps to rebuild the existing order.

Within the context of political economy of media, focusing on the ownership structure of communication technologies, production relations, the manner, in which the product is acquired, and the mode of publication, the national press outlets in the capitalist system function as commercial companies/institutions. Products and content, prepared by national media outlets in the capitalist system carry economic values as well as cultural values. Products and content with economic value, on the other hand, ensure that the ruling ideological structure is reproduced and legitimized. Especially giant conglomerates that control national press invest in energy and shape the news stories regarding energy – their area of investment – according to their ideological views and demands. As was stated previously, the scope and subject of the research study reveal that press officials, who work in internet journalism in local press in 11 different cities expressed that products and content about energy in internet journalism in national press violates professional ethical principles and ignores public interest. However, the local press officials, who cover the events and themes in their locations by turning them into news language in a way that looks out for public benefit and interest, ignore the oppression of capital groups and do not become the ideological apparatuses of these groups; therefore, they are able to operate and fulfil their functions by looking out for the democratic media theory. Also known

as Anatolian press, local press addresses a geographically limited region and prioritizes the newsworthiness and professional ethical principles as the products and content about energy are prepared under a general headline such as environmental news. Furthermore, the right for information, which is a natural right of the individual within the scope of democratic media, is actualized in internet journalism in local press via editorial policies that seek public benefit. This way, the individual is able to exercise their rights to be informed, thanks to the journalistic mentality of the local press that prioritizes public benefit. Events and matters, which are covered in the news at length and are sensitive to the region, where local press function, bestow upon the individual a sense of belonging. In line with the principles of accuracy, proximity and clarity, which are defined as news values, and with news about energy, local press is able to actively include the individuals in the locality within the public opinion and prevent events or occurrences that may negatively influence the ecological order. Internet journalism in local press succeeds in ensuring the continuity of multivocality and the survival of the culture of democracy by ignoring the supervision or control of any capital groups.

This study assesses the journalistic understanding of press officials, who work at various local press outlets in different cities that became popular with energy discussions, as they covered the energy related events or matters in their respective locations. As internet journalism in local press brings to life contemporary democracy and principles, the local people find the opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions about the notions and events covered in media, in line with the principles of freedom and equality, comprising a powerful arena of public opinion by making their voices heard.

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Appendix A: Interview with Murat Berhun, Journalist and Broadcaster from Adanahabermerkezi.com

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I have been a journalist for 27 years in written, visual (television), new media (internet) and audio. For thirteen years, I have been managing Adanahabermerkezi.com...

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Even though it looks difficult, being objective is the essential. We pay attention to being impartial as we make the news and steer clear of our personal feelings and thoughts. If there are things we want to say, we additionally disclose that it is our own thoughts; i.e., columns, commentaries and so on. This goes to show that we separate news and personal opinions. That is the goal anyway; to show it.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

There are no different principles for each news. We only have our basic principles. Objectively presenting the news, conveying a message to the society and not to one person and publishing for public benefit. As for responsible publication, the matters we specifically pay attention to are suicides, obscuring the identity of the victim, presumption of innocence until the perpetrator is punished and protecting the national interests of the country with the first three articles of the Constitution and the 4th article that protects the former three.

4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?

Journalism evolves in line with the development of technology. News sites are among the concrete examples of this evolution. Since they are connected with technology, they are sources that can be accessed at any given time. From this perspective, hot news are the ones that receive the highest attraction (most widely read). Accidents, fires, politician incidents... They are interesting, which is why we try to cover all of them. Moreover, we try to present current and particular news with different approaches.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

The strongest emphasis is on local politics. As you can appreciate, mainstream media does not really cover local politics at length. Non-profit and non-governmental organizations, political parties and associations are the news sources that step forth for us in local media. Of course, I guess the most important source for us would be City Councils. Issues in traffic, settlement issues and social issues are among the themes that we follow on a local scale.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Southern provinces are lucky with respect to energy sources. Because we can fulfill hot water needs with clean energy we call solar energy. That is the first thing that pops up in my mind. It is within our lives. However, realistically speaking, we can consider “Energy” as fossil and renewable energy. Thus, our definition of such news would include nuclear power plants, oil and its derivatives, wind energy, geothermal energy, solar energy and fossil fuels.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

As we deliver energy news, we talk about an indispensable source. However, when we are using this energy, we cannot consume and contaminate future either. These are our priorities. Informing the people accurately and encouraging the use of natural gas instead of fossil fuel are among our goals as a publisher. In sum, energy is necessary, but we must consume consciously too.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

We mostly cite regional news or produce them as stories. The existence of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline in our region makes it a serious one with respect to energy. Ceyhan Energy specialty industrial zone, approved in 2007 in Ceyhan, makes us more sensitive. As crude oil is processed and a product with high added value is acquired, our country and our city will be gaining too. There will be more employment opportunities and the city will become richer. We try to create a public opinion for this project to be actualized.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

As is the case in mainstream media, economic justifications changed the ownership structures. There are now newspapers that do not focus on the public's problems, but on the commercial objectives of their owners. Unfortunately, local outlets also dropped their quality as their objectives changed with the changing ownership structures, much like the case in mainstream media.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

Unfortunately, the content has a serious effect, commercially speaking. If an energy company is placing listings, it is almost impossible to make negative news about them.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

Commercial.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

Mainstream media, feeding by local media, is an equation with multiple variables. Mainstream media would only cite news, if the content is commercially or politically in line with their purposes. Unfortunately, there are very few media outlets that cite news for solely public benefit.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

It does not affect us. We have our own principles and rules. No mainstream media outlets can write about why the Ceyhan Energy specialty industrial zone with 100 billion USD investment and an employment opportunity for at least 60 persons with the potential of transforming the region into an energy base, has not been completed for the past 13 years. They cannot make the news for political reasons. However, we published over ten news stories and commentaries about the matter as Adanahabermerkezi.com. Therefore, we do not feel the need to carry the energy news, published by mainstream media, to our website, since they cannot make what we can.

Appendix B: Interview with Kenan Molla, Publisher of Manisa Akhisar News Agency

1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?

I have been a journalist for 38 years. I have been working at this institution for 17 years.

2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?

Our publication policies are as follows:

1. Akhisar News Agency publishes informative and educational content in order to use the internet and the technology accurately and gain maximum benefit from them.
2. Akhisar News Agency pledges to provide corrections about events, if they are proven to be different than published, and remove all relevant news, photographs and images.
3. Akhisar News Agency offers its readers the opportunity to share their opinions with the public and reflects all points of views regarding the matter, as well as varying opinions.
4. Akhisar News Agency gives the chance to parties to exercise their rights to respond in the face of allegations and claims, in the fastest and most accurate ways possible.
5. Akhisar News Agency displays an unbiased and non-obsessional approach in all stages from the investigation of the news until its presentation.
6. Akhisar News Agency supports and pioneers the constant change and development process at the core of internet journalism.

7. Akhisar News Agency undertakes the responsibility, stemming from the trust towards itself, and aims to protect this trust.
8. The main function in journalism is to relay the truth fully to the public in the shortest time possible by finding the truth, not distorting or exaggerating it and without being under any influences.
9. The journalist avoids any methods or attitudes that may overshadow the esteem that is synonymous with their title.
10. No gifts or privileges, which are against professional ethics and traditions, can be accepted from the persons or institutions that are or thought to be the subject matter of the publication.
11. No one can be humiliated or reprimanded due to ethnic background, gender, social status or relationship, religious beliefs, physical flaws or age.
12. No publications can be made that would limit freedom of thought, conscience or speech; general moral understandings, religious feelings or the fundamental bases of the family institution.
13. No nicknames or expressions can be used to humiliate, dishonor or slander persons and institutions, beyond the limits of criticism.
14. No one, unless judicially charged as such, can be announced “guilty”.
15. News stories, the investigation of which fall under the means of journalism, cannot be published without questioning and designating the outcomes and/or fact checking.
16. Unless reasonably credible grounds are shown, no one can be blamed with actions, which are deemed punishable by law.

17. The private life of persons cannot be the subject matter of publications, unless the lifestyle in question means that there is implicit or explicit consent of the person or is required to do so for the sake of public benefit.
18. Unless there is public benefit in question, no news stories can be made with methods that would be considered attacks on the personal rights of the person, such as using a hidden camera, hidden voice recorders or trespassing.
19. The relatives or close ones of the culprits or crimes cannot be disclosed unless they are relevant with the incident or it is required to do so for better understanding the event.
20. Information provided with the condition of confidentiality cannot be published unless seriously required to do so for the sake of public benefit.
21. Confidentiality of the source is deemed to require maximum respect and rigor, unless in cases, where deception of the public is aimed.
22. The investigation, preparation and publication of the news always require balance, commitment to the truth and objective behavior.
23. The published news also covers the opinion of the charged. If the relevant party does not comment or no contact could be made, they are also mentioned in the same news story.
24. No summarization or changes, which would render the cited person incomprehensible or ridiculous in publications, can be made. The sources and dates are explicitly stated in the published quotes.
25. All public opinion polls are published with the explicit disclosure of the name of the research institution, the name of the person, who demanded

such polls and the funding for the study, date of the study, number of respondents and research method.

26. Publications, which would encourage or promote violence or bullying, negatively influence children in sexual matters or promote hatred and hostility between individuals, communities and nations, are avoided.

27. Publications with the nature of listings and advertisements are disclaimed in a way that would leave no room for doubt.

28. The deadline is respected for the publication date.

29. The right for quotes and retractions due to erroneous publications are respected and necessary actions are taken.

3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?

1) The main function in journalism is to relay the truth fully to the public in the shortest time possible by finding the truth, not distorting or exaggerating it and without being under any influence of any interest or oppressive groups. 2) The journalist excludes their professional work from all interests or influential relations; cannot be involved with any activities or organizations that may damage the reputation of the journalist or the newspaper and cannot undertake any active roles in any professional sports clubs or political parties. a) Employees of the newspaper and magazine cannot influence the readers by disclosing the nature of their votes or undertake an attitude, which would be politically binding for the newspaper.

4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?

General, economy, sports, public order, celebrities... The most widely covered topics are probably those about economy and sports.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

We highlight the problems of the local people, who live in the province, and try to make sure that they find solutions.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Energy is one of the most miraculous creations on the earth. Thanks to it, our lives continue without problems. Therefore, all kinds of news on energy sources, which are the largest parts of our lives, are evaluated.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

Our publication policy in energy news makes it a priority for us to relay news from the right source. For example, the increases or decreases in fuel oil prices are specifically published right from the source.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

Since there are not that many local sources in energy news, national news is evaluated.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

The monopolistic ownership structure of media does not contribute positively to local press, but there are no other alternatives since there are no other sources.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

In local media, energy news is not produced locally most of the time; therefore, an effect is not in question.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

They are provided without details.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

It is not enough in this sense; further education and awareness are needed.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

We follow up on almost all energy news on national press.

Appendix C: Interview with Ümit Özmen, Managing Editor of Aydın Ses Newspaper

1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?

I have been a journalist in Aydın province for 12 years. I have been working for Akgül Media Group for 10 years. I served as a correspondent for 5 years, and have been a manager for the last 5 years.

2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?

According to the public's right to information, we must convey the facts without distorting them, regardless of the consequences, while exercising the freedom to obtain information, comment and criticize. For this reason, we strive to report facts correctly, objectively and by respecting the right of reply based on the principles of the profession. We are making news with a tone of voice that sides with who's right, who's been victimized and, of course, the public.

3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?

The publication policy and principles of the newspaper are set forth and all employees are aware of them. So, we all act according to these principles in collecting and reporting news. In exceptional circumstances, however, correspondents discuss and evaluate newsworthiness, making and publishing news with me as the Managing Editor. Although very rarely, we choose not to serve some news where we believe that would harm the society or cause unjust suffering.

4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?

While we cover all types of news on our website, the largest attraction is received by news about public order and politics.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

Since we are a local newspaper, all the news that we make concern local matters. We mostly report on problems in municipality works, citizens' problems in public institutions and press conferences of political figures.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Energy news are quite popular in our region and particularly geothermal energy is the first one that comes to mind as an important type of renewable energy. This type of news includes solar energy, geothermal energy and windmill plants.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

We primarily try to consider the balance of harm/benefit to nature and people. Our policy is determined by compliance of plants with laws and regulations, transparency of companies and opinions of people living in the region. Of course, we sometimes witness that companies are unfairly accused, so we always strive to obtain full information to confirm the news.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

Unlike national newspapers, we grant all citizens and authorities in the region the right to speak and comment in energy news.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

Media ownership structure sharpens in national newspapers and this unfortunately, negatively affects local newspapers. Political/ideological approaches of the visual and printed media – which we refer to as the mainstream media – affects confidence in the local media. However, local newspapers find it relatively easier to change this perception through their own publication policies.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

Energy firms have almost no influence on local media. Despite the ownership of capital holders, local newspapers engage with people in their region, and ownership does not have any effect as local newspapers instinctively try to protect their cities.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

As in many other topics, I believe that the mainstream media does not publish objective energy news due to its ideological and political approach. I think that the mainstream and alternative media does not give the devil his due in this regard, as they fail to explain methods to decrease dependence on foreign energy sources in detail or the importance of energy types providing regional benefits and building plants without harm to nature and humanity. As a matter of fact, they consider energy news only as materials for criticism.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

In the mainstream media, these topics are mostly covered on Fox News, especially the morning news. I think the national press gives place to such news when

there's any development about public order such as police/gendarmerie intervention or blocking the way. I believe their attitude to this is ideological.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

The source that feeds mainstream media with news is often local newspapers. The news in local newspapers is covered by local reporters of these newspapers and they are usually agency reporters, which is why local newspapers, who are representatives of almost all regions except for the three or four metropolitans, which are covered as provincial, are followed by national press. Thus, I do believe that national newspapers follow local newspapers. This is why we are not influenced by them, but it is the other way around.

Appendix D: Interview with Mehmet Leventoğlu, Executive Editor of Bandırma Gerçek Newspaper

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I have 35 years of experience in journalism as a correspondent and incumbent in printing. I've served as editor in chief, executive editor and newspaper owner in these 35 years.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

As *Bandırma Gerçek* newspaper, our principles are based on the foundation philosophy of the Republic and we aim to objective inform people in accordance with the universal enlightenment criteria. Within the framework of these principles, we are not impartial. Our basic principles are clearly defined in our copyright page.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

The Executive Editor is responsible for issues regarding the basic principles. Not all news is presented after discussion. In case of criticism about the news or the column, we consult with our publication organization and give space to a column containing different opinions and the right of reply as we respect freedom of expression.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

Our priority is to share news about local and regional developments, and opinions of NGO managers, and political party managers evaluating their reflections on the society in addition to posting sports news. Our columnists are followed by

many people, and we also give space to developments in our country and the world that are relevant to the public opinion by following international news agencies.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

Our priorities are the news about local and regional developments and NGO administrators and political party administrators, who assess the social reflections of said events, which would be followed by sports news, judiciary cases and environmental sensitivity.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Energy is the fundamental source of all industrial productions and sustainable common living spaces in the current technology age. Our news include emphasis on clean energy production with no environmental pollution thanks to the support of the developing technology and artificial intelligence, supporting renewable energy resources, and all real efforts to remove fossil fuels from energy generation. Our aim is to follow and inform the public opinion about developments in this field and *open* them up for discussion on social media for guidance.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

Regarding solar power, wind energy, boron reserves – our strategic value – as well as hydrogen that is claimed to be taken under control as the future's energy resource, we follow a publication policy that leans towards Hydro Electrical Plants, which do not harm sustainable living spaces and create added value. We are careful about the information pollution due to the competition among different energy companies and not falling into the trap of projects with an agenda to manipulate perceptions.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers?

What issues do you pay attention to?

We report news with an approach that is realistic and sensitive to all stakeholders since we have close contact with the public opinion. National newspapers, on the other hand, have to be pro-government and company advertisements in line with their economic needs. There have been developments that seem to be related to blackmailing when it comes to making mistakes or not. This method brings about self-censorship in printed and online news portals in local sense too. News on companies that place ads but have negative effects in terms of the environment are not covered by most of local papers in Balıkesir, except *Bandırma Gerçek*. Press that is close to the government is protected by ad support. In our newspaper, we objectively follow all developments about energy and open them up for discussion on social media platforms. Our concern for the environment is a factor we consider in our publication policy as well.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

When media owners consist of local elites, capital owners or pro-government persons, their approach towards developments become biased and since this is known by the public opinion, their reliability and rating decline. As a matter of fact, campaigns to discredit economic and political rivals are a common method despite known by the local public opinion.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

Social media platforms have been increasing communication and awareness due to posts by members with high numbers of followers. Platform managers are influential on local media owners.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

Except for marginal newspapers via Anadolu Agency and other agencies, we often evaluate them as sponsored and for perception purposes.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

Particularly news by local media organizations with high ratings are increasingly covered in our country's agenda compared to the past, however there is not sufficient feedback to discuss the real issues in the public opinion due to fast-changing agenda. Although regional members of parliament raise local issues in the parliament, this is not an effective method under today's circumstances.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

News content of energy companies, prepared for information and perception purposes, are not interesting enough, except for news about new renewable energy resources in particular. Their numbers are not high and especially with regards to matters such as identification of the economic problems of the public, solution recommendations and environmental sensibility, topics discussed on local media pages are followed, shared on social media and they receive a lot of feedback, both positive and negative

**Appendix E: Interview with Tunahan Ünsal, Journalist from Çanakkale
Gündem Newspaper**

1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?

I have been actively working as a journalist for the past 3 years. I have been working at a local newspaper since 2017. I am from Çanakkale and I am working at a newspaper from Çanakkale too. For three years, I have been producing news actively in the field and almost every day. Many news with my signature in education, politics, sports, culture and arts, environment and ecology are published and I follow up on them every day. I am 27 years old and a graduate from the department of Radio, Television and Cinema.

2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?

We are a daily and political local newspaper in Çanakkale, published in writing and in online platforms. We cannot say right-wing or left-wing; we often refer to our editorial policy as central media. We try to be the voice of everyone; whether it is AKP or CHP or the continuation of Gelecek Party – our editorial policy is about raising the challenges everyone on the streets is going through. Being the voice of the street is a mentality of ours. We do not move ideologically either. We merely convey how news are supposed to be, much like the mentality of that of an agency; what happened, how it happened and when it happened. We leave the perception to the reader to interpret the news from the lens of what they read. We try not to direct them towards something.

**3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these?
Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

I have worked at national newspapers – I worked at TRT and interned at NTV. I worked in Antalya. I can compare national press and local press for you. In national press, there are routine news meetings every single morning and fundamental principles are not discussed at these meetings. But of course, before you delve into the news, how they will be set up and produced are mentioned and discussed and we evaluate them daily. Because despite the fact that Çanakkale is relatively small as a news population, it still is a city with 160,000 people, who have problems and experience challenges, mostly due to its geopolitically strategic location. Therefore, the number of news produced is quite high. We publish 20-22 news every day on our website and 15 stories on our newspaper. I can say that these numbers are close to those of a national newspaper. Naturally, we have meetings about this news in the beginning and at the end of each day, as we publish them.

**4. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these?
Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

As I have mentioned, we are a newspaper of 12 pages. Out of these 12 pages, one is spared for culture and arts, one for public order, others for what we call ‘third pages’, sports, then judicial cases and political news. Actually, we try to cover news from all kinds of areas. Çanakkale has a strategic importance. General Vice President of CHP, Muharrem Erkek, is also the MP of Çanakkale and CHP news population is actively more, that I can say. Also, Group Deputy Chairperson of AKP, Bülent Turan is an MP of Çanakkale; therefore, Çanakkale is politically dynamic. The municipality with CHP administration supports CHP and the majority of Provincial Special Administration and Provincial Council are CHP supporters; thus, I can say that there

are many news stories and details about investments, services from local administration and subsidies, which is why I can say the news are mostly political, but we also cover other types of news as well.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

Actually, I answered this question in the second one; what we cover is mostly about what happens on the streets and the problems of the citizens – the electricity bills that cannot be paid, constant increases of natural gas prices and the extent, to which politics affect the problems of citizens. Can they generate active solutions or not? We often set up our news in ways that would be on the lookout for public interest in terms of problems of the local tradespeople, their expectations, how chambers, unions, stock exchange or bar associations act and how they should be acting.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Let me answer the question of how to define energy news as follows; energy news consists of renewable or consumable oil and natural gas and wind power plants, hydroelectric power plants, thermal power plants, mines, how underground population is made use of above the ground, as well as their pros, cons and costs for the people. That is how I would define energy news. So, what news or topics are included in this definition? I am guessing that Çanakkale will be shaped with the upcoming questions; it is quite a popular region with mines, wind power plants, geothermal power plants and thermal power plants. In other words, this region is quite satisfying in terms of energy. This satisfaction also brings along various issues and problems, in my humble opinion.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

To what extent is the air polluted in a region, where there is a thermal power plant? If a geothermal power plant is to be established in Çanakkale's Ayvacık region, how would Ayvacık's people react to it? As these projects and power plants are brought to life by the government, how much money will Turkey make or spend? If a foreign firm is included, how are they supervised and how should they be supervised? I think all of these matters must be explained to the people. Like I said, thermal power plants in Çan region of Çanakkale, geothermal power plant in Ayvacık, Gülpınar or projects like the goldmine in Kirazlı Balaban region, right next to the only drinking water source in Çanakkale, are already severely pollution the air and water resources and in my opinion, they reflect poorly. This is how I make my news. However, there are 12-13 local newspapers in Çanakkale. In terms of the number of newspapers, Çanakkale is one of the cities, right after Denizli, with the highest number of newspapers. Local media works very actively in Çanakkale. The media is divided into two, because the news is made over two questions; the first question is about how these mines and power plants will contribute to the country. They are bound to cause damages. It is said that these damages are not intolerable or unregarded and news with such an editorial perspective are made. But in the news that I make, we move like an agency. While I was writing a news story on a thermal power plant in Çan and how it was polluting the air, I was captioning the photograph of the smoke, coming out of the power plant's unfiltered chimney with "Çan Cannot Breathe Anymore" and at the same time, I was calling the power plant for a quote. I do it so that journalism is impartial and I let the company speak too. That is how I can say that we make news for the benefit of the citizens and in a balanced way, but much like national press,

there are two prominent views in local press as well – some focus on economic gain and some focus on the damage and harm on the environment.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers?

What issues do you pay attention to?

National media has been two-headed throughout the years, but I do not know how many heads it has nowadays. It is impossible to count. One of the main policies taught at communication faculties is political economy; which basically means that no publication is entirely independent from the economic power and those who hold it. Therefore, the majority within national media, with the exception of some news sources, generally consider energy news from the point of view of the capital. They cover the damages as little as they can and sometimes, they do not cover them at all. And as I have mentioned in the previous responses with respect to the differences than national publications, we mostly highlight the damages in the region in comparison. Çanakkale is a city of agriculture with tomatoes, paprika and diverse agricultural products. It is in top 10 agricultural cities in Turkey. It faces the danger of draught and losing productive lands, starting to lose its powerful position. Thus, we make news with this in mind and focus on the potential damages of the mines to the region, rather than their economic contribution. I have summarized this information in previous answers. This would be my brief answer.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

Media owners have the say in operations and how the news stories are to be published in local press, just as national press. I mean, no publications I know provide the reporters with full independence. The ideology of the media owner, their views and the line, in which they want to carry their newspapers, are our focal points in how we prepare the news. You do not really see hints dropped at groups that possess

capital in the national press; however, we use the term shaking in local press, which means we sometimes shake capital owners to bring them around and basically point them towards the issues, instead of the money, so they can focus on sociological issues with our critical news. This happens more in local news than national news, because the dynamics here are not like national; on a local level, there are less people and smaller cities. Let me specify for Çanakkale – it is a small city with a population of 160,000. You can see the chairperson of the chamber you criticize at the shop, butcher or grocery store; you can be side by side with this person. This is actually quite fascinating. You get together with someone, whom you exposed, in a physical setting, or you can get together with the same person for another news story and cover a positive move of theirs this time. Therefore, we are quite different than the nationals, but I can still say that the structure of media ownership influences local press as well; after all, no publication is entirely independent from economy.

10. Having entered into a very distinct process with the diversity in social media, what kind of effects do you think the media ownership structure in local press has on journalists (and therefore, the news content), who make energy news?

Let me give you an example from the mines in Çanakkale; one belongs to Eczacıbaşı in Elastik Şahinli. I am not going to go into the details of whether Eczacıbaşı is large or not. Another one is a Canadian goldmine firm Alamos Gold, which is at the center of discussions relating to the goldmine in Kirazlı Balaban and cyanide usage recently. We talked about various international firms that travel across the world, search for mines in other countries and not just in their own, look for gold in those countries and leave economic shares such as 4, 8 or 20 percent, using the underground wealth of the country for themselves and their publics' benefit. This

happens in Çanakkale. Naturally, when we were making news about mining, we do not pursue policies such as cyanide must be used more or must be avoided completely; mining companies often get in contact with journalists, since we are among local stakeholders, and have the area investigated by press officials from local newspapers, in addition to providing further information about the place and constantly answering any question we might have. That is how they carry out their activities. We have never encountered a situation, where we were told that a mining firm was carrying out their activities secretly in a region of Çanakkale or heard any implicit discourse from such firms. In reality, this issue is not in practice, but in theory, when I say we never encountered such events. We, as journalists from Çanakkale, would consider how useful it would be to have such a mine here and how they would carry out the excavations, as well as the damage such activities could potentially make. Mining is a matter of damage. Nobody can claim that the soil can be cultivated as before, after something is taken away from underneath it. It is against logic and science. Mining firms do not really have a rule or dominance over journalists or newspapers; however, since they have strong capitals and monetary resources, they can provide support in local press with various advertisements, listings and news. Some newspapers put a price on these advertisements with monthly billings to acquire this clientele and try to help their newspapers survive. No local newspaper employee or local newspaper media owner cannot claim that advertisements were not sold to mining firms and they should not anyway. The oppression and censorship over the press is quite visible at any rate. Therefore, such economic collaborations can be observed to survive and publish news for public benefit in some way; you can see it any city, in Muğla and in Çanakkale too. I have not seen any threats, oppression or harassment in different matters from mining firms or powers that work in energy on

newspapers – at least not on a local scale. So, this does not affect the language, operation and style of the news we pen. That would be my answer.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

The media outlets that I follow on national press are Oda TV, Sözcü, Birgün, Sol newspapers. I do not follow other sources at all. I do not evaluate the energy news in national press. I do not think there are statements or content to be evaluated. The air pollution created by thermal power plants, is so tangible that İzmit's Dilovası industrial zone is destroyed by these chimney activities. Those, who pass from İzmit Dilovası cannot even see where they are going, this area of İzmit is basically covered in fog. Similarly, the measurement values, conducted in Çan region of Çanakkale show that pollution is gradually increasing and the risk of getting cancer in this region is also increasing in direct proportion with the situation. Therefore, I believe national press should touch upon public health and sociological implications more than they do. I do not recommend that energy news is followed on national media that much.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

The branches of press that may lead to national, which we qualify as national press across Turkey, are obvious. We have Anadolu Agency, Demirören News Agency and İhlas Agency. Through these agencies, national press gets to know about events across the country and provinces. Since local press across Turkey mentions the problems in headlines first, such hot topics would draw the attention of the national press. The national press is slightly behind local press with respect to such sociological matters. The local press does it first, then the national press follows,

carries the matter to televisions or various media and makes sure that the matter is further heard. TRT, DNA, İHA and AA actively work in Çanakkale, because there is a channel there; thus, a position, which connects two continents attracts the attention of such agencies. After a news story I made, someone from TRT Istanbul called a TRT reporter and apparently said to them, “This story was made in Çanakkale Gündem Newspaper; why are you still doing nothing? Why have you not made any news about it?” Actually, I can say that we sort of motivate national press to an extent. Somehow, we locally turn to the issues people are talking about. For example, İlker Karagöz, who is the anchorman for weekend news at Fox TV is from Çanakkale, Çan. Therefore, Fox TV covers issues in Çanakkale specifically. Similarly, Fox news have a specific section for local newspapers, initiated by İsmail Küçükkaya, in morning news program Çalar Saat. After covering Independent, Washington Post and Guardian, he would move from international newspapers to local newspapers and covers all newspapers from Adana to Samsun, Kars and Çanakkale. He talks about the issues and headlines of the day from each province. I think this is quite meaningful, because just like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said, local press is the collateral of the citizens. That is because they bring forward the issues, talked about in their houses, and experienced by people with not much in their pockets. They have to do it, let me at least say that. Thus, national press must lend an eye and an ear to the local press. I think local press should be supported slightly more too. Local newspapers are really very useful for citizens.

13. **Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?**

Some national media such as Duvar, Diken, Bianet, Evrensel, Sol, Birgün or Sözcü, have essentials in terms of environment. Interesting enough, Demirören News Agency has a quite interesting and clear attitude towards environment. I mean that some national newspapers had very interesting headlines about matters in nature; “Another fire in Akyaka”; “Akyaka Fire: A Precursor of Villas to be Built?” Such news is, to be quite frank, are not seen often in national press. Honestly, national press does not usually accept it when nature is harmed, benefits are offered to some parties or a green area is opened for profit to someone. That is why I cannot really smear national press with such discourse. They do not want to be unfair, yet some national media outlets consider this situation to be strategic. When there is a fire in Çanakkale’s Gelibolu region, two questions would immediately pop up in everyone’s minds; one, did this fire start in natural ways? Two, did someone set the fire? It is a natural and protected area and a fire there would reinforce the idea for constructing villas. National press often covers such news with headlines such as Gelibolu Burning, Our Lungs Are Burning, Damn Those who Set the Fire, Pine Cones are Burnt, Frogs are Burnt, Turtles Perished and so on. National press does not follow up on environmental news, they do the damage in terms of environmental news and do not voice the environmental impact assessment report. If they do, they do not write about the objections filed to the Supreme Court. Even when they do that, they do not voice the victimized people’s reactions or actions. If such reactions or actions or protests are controlled by police or gendarmerie officers, they do not write about it either. Publishing the photograph of twenty older ladies in traditional dresses in Ayder region of Rize with the caption ‘Villager ladies are protesting the geothermal power plant to be established in Ayder’ appears to be too populist to national press and they publish it. I think they do it for the sympathy and ratings. However, I can clearly say

that we, as local press, are not fed by the national press in environmental or energy matters. This is actually pretty sad, because national press should be making some space for me at certain points; however, national press does not do it for local press in Turkey. On the contrary, local press makes space for national press and national press follows local press in many regions or provinces. In a sense, it is safe to say that the balance has reversed in press. Finally, let me say that having too much local press in national press is not a good thing. Everyone is launching their own websites without any control and they publish their own opinions there for everyone to read – I do not see this as a sympathetic event. Twitter does this already, anyone can access the content of their wish. Newspapers and websites must be supervised very well before they are launched, they have to have quality, each press outlet must employ graduates from communication faculties and specifically, graduates from journalism. I think this would have a positive impact on both employment and the publication language and quality. I think press, as an industry, must shake it off and get it together; specifically, in Çanakkale and generally across Turkey. Naturally, the money from media should be withdrawn and media must become independent.

Appendix F: Interview with Metin Eltaş, Journalist from denizlihaber.com

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I have 30 years of experience in my profession. I have been working for denizlihaber.com for 6 years.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

We make and report news in accordance with the basic principles of journalism. There is not a separate principle, criterion or evaluation for each news. Indeed, when you comply with the basic principles of the profession, it is possible to see these principles in every news that you report.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

The basic principles are indispensable for this profession. For this reason, there cannot be a separate principle for each news. Journalism is fair when it shapes on the basis of these principles. If one takes different principles for each news, this will no longer be journalism. The main duty of a journalist is to inform. It is important to inform correctly, completely and with no pre-determined agenda. However, it is natural that not every news story can be published. There are different reasons for this.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

As you can tell by its name, denizlihaber.com is the news website of Denizli. Therefore, what we do is local news to the fullest sense of the word. The news that we

insist on pursuing are those about the city and the problems in the city – and we keep following up on them until they reach a solution.

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

The follow-up of environmental issues also represents important processes. Other than them, everything that concerns urban life and the problems that exist within the social life are included in this process

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

We evaluate news directly or indirectly related to the energy sector and its environmental impact as energy news. Issues related to energy include energy resources, plants that use resources to generate energy, natural resources and systems that process these resources.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

Denizli Haber's approach to energy news is based on environmental impacts that go beyond economy. We support environmentally-friendly energy investments and projects, while opposing to investments and projects that are not environmentally-friendly and have negative impacts on human life. Our recent news on a thermal power plant planned to be constructed in Tavas Plain is in the second group. We stood against this project to protect the city, its air and water, and thus human health. The relevant parties had to take a step back and withdraw from the project.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

The interest of the national press in local projects often develops too late. However, local press is always at the core of such projects. If you have sufficient

intelligence networks, you can get informed about a local project at an early stage when it is only an idea, and you can take up a stance from day one. While national newspapers usually take interest in the economic aspects and details of the project, local media focuses on whether the project is necessary in the region, how it will affect the natural balance there and whether the inhabitants would experience any health issue in the long term. By comparing the relevant project with similar ones, threats are prevented even before they emerge.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

As in all areas, local media is shaped by ownership relations. However, most of the local press is owned by journalists. Of course, economic concerns exist and shape news sharing, albeit small. On the other hand, what we see in national media does not apply to local media, since local media owners do not have holdings, economic ties or close contact with the government. This makes local media more independent than national media.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

They do not have any direct effect. At least, that's the case for denizlihaber.com.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

Unfortunately, national press, including 99 percent of its players, has the kind of structure that absolutely supports a political idea and advocates for its policies. If the media outlet supports those in power, they would assume an understanding that blindly supports the energy news. If they are anti-power, their stance is still blind in the same way. Therefore, what they publish is far from credible.

- 12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?**

In order for the national press to put local energy news on its agenda, a sensational side must have appeared. Since this is not the case in every news or energy project, the national press does not deal with this on its pages.

- 13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?**

Local press is always one step ahead of the national press, when it comes to energy news in its region. Local energy news is first covered in local press and the national press would follow local press, as is the case in many other examples too. We as the local press do not really follow national publications or get inspired by them.

Appendix G: Interview with Osman Say, Publisher of Zonguldak İmza Newspaper and Founding President of Karaelmas Journalists' Association

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I started my professional carrier in 1993. I have been a journalist for 27 years. I established *İmza* newspaper in 2016. I have been working for *İmza* newspaper for 4 years and we have achieved to publish formal advertisings.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Our basic principle is to make news that will form useful public opinion in the region. It is to constantly express problems and keep them on the agenda until the authorities solve them.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

Publication principles are discussed at the beginning, not before publishing every paper. All employees adopt these principles and over time, everyone from Editor in Chief to columnists publish according to these principles.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

If you consider our website, www.imzagazetesi.com.tr as a market, you can see that we cover news that will not harm the moral values of our society and all people with different views can read our news. On the other hand, we generally report news about the city and country's problems to form public opinion.

- 5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?**

As İmza Newspaper, we follow up on various issues and the most important ones among them right now are the completion of Zonguldak Airport with respect to its shortages and the immediate construction of Mithatpaşa tunnel. For example, we try to attract the attention of the authorities by highlighting that the only ancient city of the Black Sea Region, Filyos, has not been spared sufficient subsidies. We emphasize the losses of the university, the government and the citizens, because natural gas is not available at BEU Med School and the area, trying to pressure the officials to immediately solve this problem. We underline that Zonguldak is a whole different beauty with its natural treasures and tell officials that investments are needed for nature tourism. We draw attention to the transportation issues with roads in particular. We cover news about the imminent finish of Filyos project. We also place importance on news that would form public opinion in terms of environmental pollution.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Energy news on mineral coal, thermal power plants and natural gas have recently been on the agenda of our region. Across Turkey, on the other hand, everything from natural resources to other sources that generate energy and produce added value are in the category of energy news.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

Energy news are usually made through the statements of the authorities. In addition, developments and failures are reported.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers?

What issues do you pay attention to?

We report various news about mineral coal and thermal power plants in Zonguldak. What we pay attention to is accuracy of news... Indeed, as with many issues, public opinion can be misled by false information in energy news.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

If you mean people other than journalists owning media, this is the main reason why local media is also harmed. As a matter of fact, journalism is used as a tool to profit the main business of the media owner.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

This effect is so deep in the media of energy companies (mine owner). While they report biased news, other media organizations try to look at developments objectively.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

News, provided by journalists, who have expertise in this field, can be more objective. However, I am one of those people, who believe that energy companies must use their media promotions departments more actively.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

National press seeks out sensational news in local media. Except for this they are often distant from informative news. They do not use such news. We can say that it is a bit better when it comes to energy news.

- 13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?**

There is disconnection between the national and local media in this regard. Perhaps it is because of the workload or of its lack of interest; but the local press does not follow how it is covered in national press. However, they attach importance to energy news that will be reported on national media.

Appendix H: Interview with Meryem Akgün, Managing Editor of Karadeniz Newspaper

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I have been a journalist for nine years and I have been working at this institution for three years.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Public benefit, objectivity, balance, information-oriented awareness raising and rights, justice.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

We evaluate the agenda at daily routine meetings and determine a roadmap for the day according to the conditions of the time and within the context of publication principles without overlooking the regulations. Except for the particular news (harassment, rape, femicides, child abuse, terrorism), we follow principles in each news story. However, when it comes the particular news, which are exceptions, the philosophy of human beings before journalists, steps in and we do what we believe is the right thing to do. We do not abstain from putting forward the perpetrator before the public.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

While we cover all news categories, it is mostly political news.

- 5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?**

While we cover all news categories, the majority of them would be political news. The problems of the local provinces, their demands, roads, water, electricity and singular aggrievement news are also covered.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Energy news encompass all news regarding the potential of the country's underground wealth to be transformed into commerce and provide economic gain to the country.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

How it will benefit the country in terms of earnings, whether or not we are freely digging up the source of energy, whether or not we are dependent on other countries and the financial returns are evaluated.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

Since we publish locally in the Black Sea Region, we are mostly interested in mines and hydroelectric power plants. We focus on matters such as their damages to the nature, whether or not someone is making a profit for their personal benefits, the maximum number of hydroelectric power plants in a river; thus, we make environmental news.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

As is the case around the world, the media is shaped by the hands of those, who have power. We get our fair share from it too; but at the same time, we look out for balance without forgetting about our responsibility to the public. For example, after the fire in Trabzon Sürmene Çamburnu, we made a news story about the

touristic facility, built in that area. The facility stopped placing full-page advertisements because of it, but we did not care, because we believed unfair profit making was in play. The only effect was economic, but it is not at all moral. We are trying to make up for economic losses.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

On behalf of my institution, I have not seen significant effects. We freely made news stories on mines and hydroelectric power plants. We embellished the best headlines with news of unjust profit making by damaging nature.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

I really see them as dreams seen from rose colored glasses, far from reality and overlooking the harm for nature

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

It is clear as day that they cannot make such news as freely as local press can. There are many occasions, when we see distorted content. Another undeniable truth is that energy news, which are partially approved by the government, are delivered directly.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

I would say it would affect about 80 percent. As a local outlet, we would follow a news story in the national press and deliver the story ourselves after we edit the content.



**Appendix I: Interview with Mahir Ateş, House Owner of Muğla Devrim
Newspaper and Printing**

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

16 years.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Our principles include reporting true news based on research without bias, while respecting the right to speak and the freedom of expression of parties that concern the news. We also strive to deliver news on time. We respect human rights, freedoms and our country's interests in our understanding of reporting news. In addition, we serve based on Atatürkist publishing principle.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

The principles I have stated above were set forth as red line at the beginning. So, we strive to abide by our principles fully although we do not have the opportunity to discuss them every day.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

Our priority is the news that concern politics and nature. In addition, statistical news is prepared about public order news (of course most of these are local news), and all of the news that we publish in the newspaper are also served on our website.

- 5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?**

We closely follow the problems, voiced by the local people, as well as the developments that would destroy nature and damage the living areas of future generations. Furthermore, we follow important judiciary cases.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

They are news on man-made energy produced for individuals or large-scale plants producing energy for the local people or the country as a whole. They might be about natural gas, solar power, wind power or energy sourced from various mines as well as energy types produced through technological inventions.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

The priority is to prevent harm on nature and human life.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

Answered in the previous question.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

Owning a media in local press may cause pressure on public administrators with news stories made on behalf of the people. However, since there is no large capital structures in this particular province, there is really no media structure that may affect local press. No oppressive elements in this regard are observed. Still, certain newspapers in Muğla did have some endeavors to that end, which resulted in failure.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

As far as we are concerned, no such effect exists in Muğla newspapers. That is possibly because, as mentioned above, there is no newspaper owner, who also owns an energy company.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

There is a wide variety of publication organizations. I think some of them publish with a bias. I believe that the harmful production of many energy enterprises is obscured from the public.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

I do not have the opportunity to keep track of them all. As far as I can see, some newspapers freely express issues related to human and environmental health, while others do not show sufficient sensitivity.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affects your energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

It would not have any influence. We are trying to do what needs to be done within our publication policy.

Appendix J: Interview with Ali Rıza Tığ, Publisher of Zonguldak Pusula Newspaper

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

I have been a journalist for thirty years. I started at Zonguldak İnaniş Newspaper. I started publishing Pusula Magazine in 1999. I am the owner of and a writer at Pusula Newspaper, which has been publishing daily since May 8th, 2006.

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Our priority in making news is the truth of it and the relevance with the public.

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

You do not discuss publication principles during publication anyway. You would have your principles as you found the publication in the beginning. You would publish as per said principles.

- 4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?**

We cover all kinds of news concerning Zonguldak and problems in Zonguldak on our news website. We present news from different areas such as politics, sports, arts, celebrities, and business and laborer worlds. Most of them are political news. They are followed by what we call hot news; such as public order news - those about accidents, suicides and murder.

- 5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?**

We make news that prioritize issues in Zonguldak.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

Zonguldak has become a base of energy in recent years. Along with the discovery of hard coal here, Zonguldak became more important. Thermal power plants in our region turned Zonguldak into a base of energy. We do not use a specific definition such as energy news, other than these.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

For us, the priority is the production of hard coal in Zonguldak. In order for production to continue, hard coal must be used. The thermal power plants in our region mostly use imported coal. Our priority is to use local coal.

8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers? What issues do you pay attention to?

Zonguldak has a different state of mind than other provinces in terms of energy. Zonguldak does not want a thermal power plant. But since it was established, the province wants local coal to be used. We look out for the environment and support coal production.

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

Owners of press outlets should not have any other businesses outside of this industry. If the media owner has another job, the publication policy would be shaped accordingly and this would harm both the press and the province.

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

Energy companies influence local press. This happens in two ways; economic and political. If the media owner has financial gain from the energy company, they

would determine their publication policies accordingly. This would, in turn, influence the journalists, making the news stories. If the media owner is not in any relation with the energy company, the journalist would feel freer about making news.

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

National press provides energy news according to the industries, where their owners work too.

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country's agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

National press publishes as per the industries, in which the owners are actively conducting business. Turgay Ciner, owner of Habertürk, for example. He produces mines and operates a thermal power plant. The energy news in this newspaper is not the same as those in Hürriyet or Sabah newspapers.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages

The way, in which we publish energy news, has nothing to do with national press. We merely relay the problems in Zonguldak.

Appendix K: Interview with Oktay Erol, Publisher of the News Site

yenimuhalefet.com

- 1. How many years have you been a journalist? How many years have you worked at this newspaper?**

Actually, I used to deal with trade. But I also like reading and writing. This drove me towards writing. For years, I wrote for the local newspaper of my city alongside trade. As Internet became more common, I launched our website. We have been publishing for a decade now with the pieces, written by my friends with whom I met on social media and the support from media as well...

- 2. What are the basic principles of your newspaper when reporting news?**

Just like the newspapers in national media, we naturally have a publication policy. We try to avoid news or narratives that might panic citizens or cause semantic confusion as much as we can. It is also important for us to select the right “language”, just like our rigor in selecting the right news story. We aim for a “language” that would be understandable for the readers...

- 3. Do you discuss the basic principles before publication? Did you set these? Can you apply these principles in every news story?**

Right underneath our logo, it says “a different perspective and a different comment on events”, which I think describes us in the best way possible. News do not “fully” come out of the newspaper’s kitchen, as you know. Especially with the popularity of internet, “agency” news is used more and more. Newspapers turn to “commenting” on the news, which they receive from these agencies, most of the time. Right now, this is all that media does!

4. What kind of news do you usually report on your news site? What news do you include most on your news site?

Our news site covers current news and comments about them. Politics, economy, arts, world, life and health are the most common ones today... Third page news as well, even though they are not that common our site! Attention is paid so that our new site, yenimuhalefet.com, is not focused too much on gossip, tabloids or blood/grudges...

5. What are the issues that you highlight and follow in local news?

I live in Adana. I also write a column daily for a newspaper in Adana, aside from writing at my news site and managing it. Therefore, I am interested in local administrations and institutions. Much like the agency news I mentioned before, you do not really have problems finding local news, considering that all institutions today have “press consultancies”! However, you may generate some “special” news from time to time as well.

6. What is energy news? Could you define? What news and topics are under this definition?

What do we understand when you say energy? Electric, mechanical, chemical, thermal, nuclear energy are the types that we once learned about in physics classes in junior high school; but other than these, we have to look at their effects in our daily lives. Is energy not our power to do things? Going down the stairs, working, studying; even laughing is an outcome of energy. However, news in media have to do with fossil fuels and other types that stem from the heat the solar system brings to nature.

7. What are the publication policies you follow when preparing energy news? (What are your priorities?)

Unfortunately, the topic that we mostly see is about “damage to nature” as we open energy news today! As is known, natural courses sometimes change and even though the hydroelectric power plants, which are built by shrinking the areas of water, are relayed with the information that they will contribute to the national economy, it has been proven that they will turn into massacres later. Nuclear power plants, which are established for energy purposes, poison the regions in their reach and not just those, in which they are built. Announcing these matters to the public and bringing them forward are within the duties of the press. Our priority is nature. Because nature does not forgive any mistakes!

**8. What are the differences of your energy news from national newspapers?
What issues do you pay attention to?**

We cannot really talk about a differentiation between local and national press! However, national press cannot be expected to be as sensitive as local press; because local press does not shift, since it is actually in that particular nature and climate! It is where its life is lived... The position of national press is therefore different than local press! Even though they are known to the elements that would replace each other when necessary, the same sensitivity cannot be claimed!

9. What are the effects of media ownership structure on local media?

When you say media owner, we are talking about the local press, which they own! For example, in many places in Adana, you do not only know the owner of the outlet, but also the writers and columnists there. I do not mean that they have privileges there; but it is the reality that those, who have to be more sensitive, get it together. For example, you can get into many places more easily and acquire results more quickly as well!

10. What are the effects of local press owners on the journalists who prepare energy news (hence the content of the news)?

It is impossible for local press to deny what happens! Because it is within. That being the case, the media owner cannot oppose the journalist! Because they know that one day, they will come for them too. Think about it, murdering thousands of trees to merely search for gold under the mountains in your city! And it is not just you who sees it; everyone on the street with you witness it too! You cannot not write about it or cover it up! I am not talking about made up news or those that conflict the truth...

11. How do you evaluate the way the national press delivers energy news?

It is the local press that lets out the first scream! Then the national press comes along and evaluates it as per its own “interests”. Remember Mount Ida! The local press there, the people there and the point of view there... Without them, which national outlet would have owned it? And then... Which networks or newspapers actually covered it? Other than a few national press outlets, they did not even cover it! Why, you ask? Because their interests would not be sought that way; their ways for milking would shrink...

12. How much does the national press include energy news of local press (in their own region)? To what extent does it bring problems to the country’s agenda? Do you think that national press sufficiently reflects such news on their pages? How do you evaluate their attitude to this?

I repeat... National press does not and cannot cover all the events, raised by the local press! Only a handful of them do this... The main thing is the standpoint of the political mentalities in our country! My thief can steal, my friend can mess it up – that is mentality I am talking about! This “fickle” stance of the national press is, in my

humble opinion, has tried its chances on local press too! Even though they are not that strong now, I know that they show effort to be so! The mentality to see what happened and spread what they heard... You can only do that to the citizens.

13. Considering the contents of energy news in the national press, their ways of presenting the news, seeing the news (coverage frequency) and follow-up, to what extent the national press affect your release of energy news and carrying the related problems on your pages?

If we are the source of energy news, the stories would be set up with the “energy” from the society. However, if we are not the sources, if the matter in question is what is going on in a city far, far away, then news to support “that region” with information, acquired from various agencies, are covered! It is the duty of the press to declare to readers that similar events to those that were witnessed also occur in different places.