

**News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting**

**A Dissertation**

**Submitted to the Office of the Dean  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,**

**Tribhuvan University**

**in Fulfillment of the Requirements**

**for the Degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**in**

**Journalism and Mass Communication**

**Submitted by:**

**Ghama Raj Luitel**

**TU Roll Number: 53/072 (Magh)**

**TU Registration No. 23718-89**

**June 2024**

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### Letter of Recommendation

We certify that this dissertation entitled “News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting” has been prepared by Mr. Ghama Raj Luitel under our supervision. We hereby recommend this dissertation for final examination by the research committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY in JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION.

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**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**Office of the Dean**  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Ref. No.:.....



This dissertation entitled "News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting " was submitted by **Mr. Ghama Raj Luitel** for final examination to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the **Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Journalism and Mass Communication**. I hereby certify that the Research Committee of the Faculty has found this dissertation satisfactory in scope and quality and has therefore been accepted for the degree.

.....  
Prof. Kushum Shakya, PhD  
Dean and Chairperson  
Research Committee

### Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own and it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for any award of any kind or any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.



.....  
Ghama Raj Luitel

Date: June 3, 2024

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News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting A Dissertation Submitted to the Office of the Dean Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Journalism and Mass Communication Submitted by: Ghama Raj Luitel TU Roll Number: 53/072 (Magh) TU Registration No. 23718-89 June 2024 Abstract This dissertation delves into a comprehensive examination of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. The study has employed an inductive approach to achieve three objectives: assessing the news sourcing in the main news of Nepali radio broadcasting, evaluating the affecting factors of the news sourcing process in Nepali radio newsrooms, and analysing the process of radio newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing. Content analysis of news bulletins, field observations of newsrooms of the sample radio stations, and in-depth interviews with 26 experts, radio managers, and news chiefs, journalists have been conducted to collect qualitative primary data. The study examines a total of 1711 headline news items from four sample radio stations—Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM— analysing various categories such as genre, source based on beat, nature of news sources, gender representation, geographical distribution of sources, unidentified/anonymous sources, accuracy, diversity and objectivity in source selection and verification process and, internal and external affecting factors in sourcing process. It further examines the sources that make headlines of news bulletins based on their social structure and hierarchy, gender equality and core to periphery perspectives. Drawing on Gatekeeping Theory with Agenda Setting Theory and Normative theories, the study explores the multiple realities of sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. The findings reveal that radio stations heavily rely on single and anonymous, one-sided news sources and unattributed main news stories exhibiting failure in maintaining, objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process of the headline radio news. Local radio stations, instead of adhering to local norms, heavily rely on sources from the federal capital, province capital and major cities excluding local sources of news. Political parties, leaders, and governmental officers/agencies are the major sources for the main news on radio stations. The study identifies a lack of diversity, including gender, indigenous, Tarai-origin and marginalised communities, among the sources of headline news stories. Internal factors such as poor economic conditions, weak management, limited physical infrastructure, and an unskilled and inadequate workforce in newsrooms have severely affected the sourcing process. External factors, including political, social, economic and cultural structures, have influenced the source selection process. Consequently,



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Ghama Raj Luitel

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## Abstract

This dissertation delves into a comprehensive examination of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. The study has employed an inductive approach to achieve three objectives: assessing the news sourcing in the main news of Nepali radio broadcasting, evaluating the affecting factors of the news sourcing process in Nepali radio newsrooms, and analysing the process of radio newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing.

Content analysis of news bulletins, field observations of newsrooms of the sample radio stations, and in-depth interviews with 26 experts, radio managers, and news chiefs, journalists have been conducted to collect qualitative primary data. The study examines a total of 1711 headline news items from four sample radio stations—Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM— analysing various categories such as genre, source based on beat, nature of news sources, gender representation, geographical distribution of sources, unidentified/anonymous sources, accuracy, diversity and objectivity in source selection and verification process and, internal and external affecting factors in sourcing process. It further examines the sources that make headlines of news bulletins based on their social structure and hierarchy, gender equality and core to periphery perspectives.

Drawing on Gatekeeping Theory with Agenda Setting Theory and Normative theories, the study explores the multiple realities of sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. The findings reveal that radio stations heavily rely on single and anonymous, one-sided news sources and unattributed main news stories exhibiting failure in maintaining, objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process of the headline radio news. Local radio stations, instead of adhering to local norms, heavily rely on sources from the federal capital, province capital and major cities excluding local sources

of news. Political parties, leaders, and governmental officers/agencies are the major sources for the main news on radio stations. The study identifies a lack of diversity, including gender, indigenous, Tarai-origin and marginalised communities, among the sources of headline news stories. Internal factors such as poor economic conditions, weak management, limited physical infrastructure, and an unskilled and inadequate workforce in newsrooms have severely affected the sourcing process. External factors, including political, social, economic and cultural structures, have influenced the source selection process. Consequently, newsrooms tend to prioritise power elites as sources, neglecting the perspectives of ordinary and marginalised people. The study also reveals that gatekeepers in radio stations are influenced by the power elites while selecting and placing sources in the news.

The findings underline the critical need for transformative enhancements in the sourcing process of Nepali radio broadcasting. It emphasises the need to adopt normative values for the radio newsrooms to enhance objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process being responsible towards society.

*Keywords:* news sourcing, gatekeeping, agenda-setting, objectivity, diversity, normative values

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### Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACORAB	Association of Community Radio Broadcasters Nepal
AFP	Agence France-Presse
AIR	All India Radio
AM	Amplitude Modulation
ANPA	American Newspaper Publishers Association
AP	Associated Press
AT&T	American Telephone and Telegraph
BaSE	Backward Society Education
BBC	British Broadcasting Company before 1927 and after the British Broadcasting Corporation
BFM	The radio station, run by Birat Shree Media Network Private Limited on 91.2 Megahertz.
CD	Compact Disc
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CPN— UML	Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist)
DAB	Digital Audio Broadcasting
DAB	Digital Audio Broadcasting
ed.	Edition
Ed.	Editor
Eds.	Editors
EHF	Extremely High Frequency
FCC	Federal Communication Commission
FGD	Focus Group Discussion

FM	Frequency Modulation
FNJ	Federation of Nepali Journalists
GHz	Gigahertz
HD	High Definition
HF	High frequency
ISBS	Indian State Broadcasting Service
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KDKA	Call sign of the first commercial radio under the Westinghouse Electric Company in the United States of America
KHz	Kilohertz
MF	Medium frequency
MHz	Megahertz
MoIC	Ministry of Information and Communication
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NEFEJ	Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists
NHK	Japan Broadcasting Corporation
PCGG	Call sign of the first radio station in the Netherlands
PCM	Pulse Code Modulation
PCN	Press Council Nepal
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PRB	Press-Radio Bureau
PSB	Public Service Broadcasting
RCA	Radio Corporation of America
RN	Radio Nepal
RS	Radio Sagarmatha

SHF	Super High Frequency
SIRM	Save the Independent Radio Movement
TV	Television
UHF	Ultra-High Frequency
UK	United Kingdom
UP	United Press
US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
VOA	Voice of America

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction

The radio is regarded as a vital source of information for the broader society including general people. In this context, this study focuses on news sourcing practices in Nepali radio broadcasting by perusing a systematic research methodology under the interpretivism philosophy.

Radio broadcasting is an electromagnetic transmission of airwave signals for public reception emitting from a room or studio of a station that is directed to specific receivers (Abbot, 1941, p. 3). Within a radio station's newsroom, a multifaceted process unfolds, whereby information is gathered from diverse sources in the surrounding environment, and subsequently curated into a cohesive news package presented in the form of a bulletin to a wide range of audience.

Radio news encompasses information deemed suitable for broadcasting, representing an account of an event that is both novel and captivating to the audience, while possessing a broad-reaching impact. McLeish (2005) defines radio news as follows:

News is 'that which is new, interesting and true'. 'New' in that it is an account of events that the listener has not heard before – or an update of a story previously broadcast. 'Interesting' in the sense of the material being relevant, or directly affecting the audience in some way. 'True', because the story as told is factually correct. (p. 53)

A radio news bulletin constitutes a compilation of news items packaged by the newsroom. According to Shook et al. (1996, p. 99), the duration of news bulletins varies across different geographical locations and broadcasting mediums, ranging from 5 to 30

minutes. BBC (2024) defines a radio bulletin as "a brief radio news broadcast, giving the bare facts of news stories before more depth is added in a full programme" (para. 1).

The news sourcing process involves gathering information by approaching different persons, institutions, and documents. According to Zamith (2022) "the term 'news source' refers to any person, organization, document, or object that provides information to journalists" and sourcing in news is important "because the source is quoted as saying can be even more important than what the journalist writes" (p. 159). A relationship between journalists and news sources is known as news seekers and news providers. Journalists always seek information for news dissemination and sources hold information to provide journalists. Fisher (2018, pp. 5–6) describes that time and situation reshape the relationship between news sources and journalists during information-seeking and information-providing practices that are based on the efforts to disseminate information to the audiences.

Zamith (2022) argues that journalists and sources generally have gains and losses in the information exchange process. During the sourcing process, they can exchange power. Sometimes the relationship between journalists and sources can be "adversarial as well as mutually beneficial" (p. 160). According to Gans (1979, p. 116), the relationship between sources and journalists is like a dance where they need to maintain harmony in seeking and providing information. Berkowitz (2009) describes the relationship between information seekers and providers as a power relation where in his views "sources and the sourcing are intricately connected, as the sourcing reflect organisational and journalistic norms encouraging repetition of practice as well as privileging powerful sources" (p. 3).

According to Schudson (2003 p. 134), information seekers need to approach the authorised informants and their version of reality to make authentic and credible news to

disseminate to the public. Carlson and Franklin (2011, pp. 2–5) discuss that discourse of the voices of news sources shapes the public insight to know, realise and understand the rest of the world. According to them, presence and power must be involved to be a news source.

Zamith (2002) discusses the tendency of journalists to approach repeated sources. Journalists frequently connect themselves with those sources who respond often and quickly. Journalists maintain address books of sources that are media friendly and willing to respond to media easily. Zamith further argues "this is especially the case for public information officers or press agents, or public relations professionals whose job it is to respond to media requests and whose training allows them to promote perspectives favourable to their employer" (p. 162).

Studies on journalism and news sources have found that most of the news sources are officials in power instead of the general people in the news-making process. Carlson (2009) discusses the idea of the presence of power as news sources that "the reliance on official sources and routine news channels is one of the most reproduced findings in studies of journalism" (p. 529). The arguments of the above-mentioned scholars clarify that the sources of power structure as information holders influence the information-seeking, news production and dissemination process.

A radio news bulletin necessitates the identification, selection, and verification of sources, as the information for news originates from these sources. The identification, selection and verification of sources is done by the reporters and editors in a newsroom as initial gatekeepers and final gatekeepers. Reporters and editors are considered the deciding authorities of news sources to select or reject in news reporting, writing and the finalisation process. The persons and organisations who want to provide information to the reporters or editors need to pass from the selection gates of reporters and editors to be

the news sources (White, 1950, pp. 384–390; Westley & Maclean, 1957, pp. 31–36). The sources of radio news encompass individuals and organisations spanning the breadth of society, ranging from small communities in villages or neighbourhoods to the national and international levels. Consequently, news information is derived from people and organisations operating at the local, regional, national, and international levels. The radio newsroom acquires information from these sources through both formal and informal means however, as Shoemaker & Reese (1996, pp. 178–179) state, the sourcing process of newsrooms is affected by the internal and external environment.

McLeish (2005) categorises radio news sources as professional, official, commercial, and public (p. 71). The sources of radio news relating to events or issues encompass a wide spectrum, ranging from formal and predictable to informal and unpredictable. These sources include individuals who possess authority, expertise, relevance, direct involvement, or firsthand witness accounts of the events or issues at hand. In this context, Mencher (2011) classifies news sources into three categories: human sources, physical sources, and online sources (p. 279).

"The newsroom draws upon both primary and secondary sources to acquire this information. Primary sources encompass individuals and organisations that maintain direct connections to the newsroom, serving as the principal founts of news" (Kharel & Deuja, 2003, p. 50). Conversely, secondary sources are not directly connected with the newsroom but linked through alternative channels. The newsroom exercises discernment and discerning selection in determining which information and its corresponding sources merit inclusion within the news bulletin, thus ensuring its relevance and resonance with the intended audience.

In a radio newsroom, reporters and editors selectively choose news stories and their sources through a gatekeeping process. News values, editorial judgment, station

policies, and the environment impact the selection of news sources (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, pp. 178–179). Radio introduced news broadcasting in the Western world shortly after World War I in 1920. In Nepal, people adopted the practice of listening to official news on the radio when Radio Nepal began regularly broadcasting news bulletins in 1951 (Onta et al., 2004, p. 71). News information is a generative process with one that initiates, for example, a journalist and one that supplies into is the news source. The relationship between the initiator and the supplier of public information has been changed from time to time according to political and broad environmental changes. It has changed the paradigms of the relationship of news initiators and suppliers within the given framework of the political system. The political system reshapes the relationship of the two parties as journalists and sources in either controlled or liberal and open ways (Seibert et al., 1956, pp. 1–2) Regarding the sources of radio news in Nepal, sources from Radio Nepal to the age of proliferation of FM radio stations in the non-governmental sector, changed the landscape of radio news.

During its initial stages, Radio Nepal relied on Indian news agencies as major sources of news. The government procured news content from these Indian news agencies to supplement its broadcasting endeavours (Devkota, 2017, p. 132). However, Rana (1989) has admired Radio Nepal as the medium which kept Nepali people informed about the happenings and events outside and inside of the country. He has addressed Radio Nepal as the "feed-back medium of the all-round progress being achieved by the nation" (p. 125).

Radio news started to broadcast from the beginning days of broadcasting. KDKA started its first regular broadcasting with the election returns of the presidential election in 1920 in the USA. It was used to broadcast sports and market reports from the beginning of the broadcasting (Folkerts & Lacy, 2004, p. 224). The first Nepali citizen to

transmit news from radio technology was Naradmuni Thulung who got a chance to transmit a message targeting the allies' military forces from Athens calling them to be calm after the conclusion of World War II (Thulung, 2015, p. 48). In Nepal, the first radio news practice was exercised by Jayendra Thapaliya in Bhojpur under the administration of Naradmuni Thulung after seizing Bhojpur from Rana rulers during the revolution in 1950. Thapaliya used to broadcast news bulletins twice a day (Thulung, 2015, p. 104). Radio Nepal started regular news broadcasting from its beginning day on April 2, 1951 (Thapa, 2019, pp. 157–158). Radio Nepal established its own reporting section after only the political change in 1990 (Lamsal (2020, p. 195).

Until the advent of independent radio broadcasting in 1997, news sources for Radio Nepal predominantly comprised power elites. However, a transformative shift occurred with the establishment of Radio Sagarmatha in 1997, which not only marked the inception of the first independent radio station in Nepal but also across the entirety of South Asia (Mainali, 2002, p. 26). Before 1990, the radio newsroom had no reporting desk in Radio Nepal. The major news sources were the royal palace and Singha Darbar for the radio news. According to Thapa (2019, pp. 158–159), Radio Nepal had to filter the news in its newsroom under the interest of rulers before going on air before 1990. During the Panchayat System, Radio Nepal did not have the freedom even to cover the description of the debate in the Rashtriya Panchayat (parliament without opposition). Subsequently, independent local radio stations emerged, enabling the public to revel in news content in an open environment. Presently, the reach of radio broadcasting extends to remote villages in Nepal. According to the 48th annual report of the Press Council Nepal, a total of 1186 licensed radio stations disseminate news and diverse radio programmes nationwide (Press Council Nepal, 2023, p. 148).

Radio stations in Nepal draw information from a multitude of sources, prepare news content, and disseminate it through packaged bulletins for public consumption. Despite the regular broadcast of news bulletins by numerous radio stations, there is a gap in scholarly research examining the news sourcing of these stations. From its inaugural day on April 2, 1951, Radio Nepal commenced the broadcast of news bulletins in both Nepali and English languages (Adhikari, 2004, pp. 70–71). For nearly half a century, Radio Nepal held a monopoly as a government-owned station, until 1997. However, the establishment of Radio Sagarmatha (RS) in 1997 shattered this monopoly, marking its distinction as the first independent radio station not only in Nepal but in all of South Asia (Mainali, 2002, pp. 29–30). Following a year of observation of RS, the Nepal Government began issuing licenses to other private radio stations.

There are many outlets for receiving information for an audience in the digital age: radio has to compete with newspapers, magazines, television, online portals and social networks. Nonetheless, the sources of all media are basically the same, the physical and human sources, internet and computer, since the particular nature of media, sources are presented in different ways in each type of medium. For example, a newspaper just makes a quotation from a source in letters and a photograph of the source would be supportive as proof for the readers and the press releases and news text from news agencies is enough for newspapers. But television needs to show the environment and audio-visual of the news sources and radio should have voices and ambient sound of the sources (Mencher, 2011, pp. 233–245). Online portals can converge all types of media outlets to incorporate their nature into a platform. Social media networks are not journalistic modes so there are examples of disinformation and misinformation through the platform social media (Lewandowsky & Van der Linden, 2021, pp. 12–13). In order

to instill trust among audiences, radio news needs to disclose its sources with coverage statements with the voices of the sources.

To present a comprehensive picture of events or issues, the news must incorporate multiple sources and alternative voices, a practice known as objectivity in sourcing. Therefore, the topic " News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting" is selected for this study. This approach ensures that a wide range of perspectives is considered, fostering a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the audience.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Radio news has become an integral part of daily life in modern Nepali society, with people tuning in regularly. Radio newsrooms actively collect news from diverse sources of information and undergo a rigorous gatekeeping process to select the news and associated sources. It is incumbent upon radio to fulfil its responsibility by amplifying the voices of the general people, marginalised communities, and minority groups, giving a platform to the voiceless instead of solely focusing on the powerful elites. Failure to adhere to principles such as objectivity, diversity, credibility, and balance in the source selection process not only risks undermining the credibility of radio stations but also deprives the public of authentic news encompassing a broad spectrum of perspectives and opinions.

As per the Press Council Nepal (2023, p. 148), Nepal currently has 1186 radio stations on-air, broadcasting news bulletins/informational programmes nationwide. However, there is a noticeable absence of academic research examining the sources utilised in radio news. To find the gap in the study, a comprehensive systematic thematic view of various journal articles and research work has been reviewed. It has been discerned that scholars have directed their attention towards diverse facets of radio broadcasting, encompassing historical development, programmatic content, news

dissemination, and sourcing practices within news bulletins. Some scholars have delved into the principles underpinning radio news and news sources. Extensive studies have been conducted on radio programmes and news, exploring their impact on audiences. Many scholars have specifically scrutinised the content relating to disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, examining their implications for communities. However, it is noteworthy that earlier studies have demonstrated a dearth of focused investigations on sources within radio news bulletins.

It has been found during the reviews of literature that some of the scholars have already carried out studies on radio programmes and radio news. Buckalew (1974) examined the news gatekeepers and their sources of 31 radio stations in the western US, however, it did not analyse the sources of news. Banjade (2007), researched radio Madan Pokhara. Similarly, Dahal and Aram (2013), researched the role of community radio stations in the empowerment of minority indigenous communities, and Acharya (2015) carried out a study on the role of community radio in rural development in Nepal. Alike, Khanal (2015) researched the effects of radio programmes in rural areas of Nuwakot district. As Timilsina (2019) focuses a study on the access of migrant communities to local radio in New Zealand, he has not entered the area of sourcing on the radio news.

After the review of the literature, some themes have been identified as gaps to carry out a further study: financial and infrastructural issues of radio newsrooms in Nepal; issues of news reporting on Nepali radio stations; issues of editing and presentation of radio news; issues regarding professionalism in Nepali radio journalism; and news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.

After recognising the gap that no one has carried out a study on news sourcing in radio broadcasting in the Nepali context, the study has been directed to fill the academic gap on sourcing in radio news. In this connection, the study has selected the title, 'News

Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting'. Besides, the study is focused on exploring how radio stations maintain objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process of news amid the affecting factors. Accordingly, the study aims to analyse and interpret the news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study has centred its focus on the following research questions:

- a. What is the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting?
- b. Why is the news sourcing process affected in radio newsrooms?
- c. How do radio newsrooms maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study attempts to meet the following objectives:

- a. To study the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.
- b. To evaluate the affecting factors of the news sourcing process in radio newsrooms.
- c. To analyse the process of radio newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Radio news broadcasting in Nepal has a venerable legacy, spanning over seven decades since its inception within the government sector. Independent radio stations, carving their niche, emerged more than two and a half decades ago. At present, local radio stations have attained ubiquitous coverage, permeating every district throughout the nation. Listening to radio news has become an entrenched cultural practice in Nepal. In urban enclaves, individuals imbibe morning strolls and vehicular commutes with the auditory companionship of radio news, while rural denizens rely on this medium to stay informed amidst home chores, agricultural fields, and leisure walking. Radio, assuming

the mantle of a trusted information conduit, assumes ample significance during times of disasters or crises, elections, national events, or unforeseen adversities. An illustrative testament lies in the aftermath of the devastating Gorkha earthquake in 2015, where radio singularly emerged as the authentic lifeline, endowing the public with vital updates and awareness.

This study delves into unexplored territory by investigating the news sourcing in the broadcasts of over 1186 radio stations, an area that has remained unexplored thus far. The research uncovers sourcing practices, elucidating which social classes, communities, and organisations are accorded priority as news sources in Nepal. The study further assesses the sourcing status, diversity, and objectivity in news sourcing. Notably, conducting a qualitative content analysis of radio news bulletins presents inherent challenges, as it necessitates access to news archives spanning six months. The reason behind choosing content analysis as a tool of research is that the actual presence of the sources in main news bulletins can be found only through content analysis.

By fostering a greater sense of social responsibility, this study empowers radio newsrooms to serve their communities more effectively. The findings not only shed light on crucial aspects of sourcing in radio news but also inspire further academic exploration in related fields. Thus, this study assumes paramount significance as the pioneering endeavour dedicated to comprehending radio news sources and their implications.

Radio serves not only as a medium for news but also as a platform for community engagement, enabling the sharing of local activities, achievements, challenges, grievances, and public opinions on various issues, thereby fostering participatory democracy. The diverse information received from community members assumes the form of news on radio broadcasts. When radio stations incorporate input from a broad spectrum of individuals, including marginalised communities, it empowers grassroots

populations. By amplifying community voices, this information reaches the policy-making level, promoting good governance and transparency. To achieve this, ensuring access and participation of the general people and marginalised communities in the newsroom is crucial. However, there is a lack of concrete data on people's access and involvement as sources of information for newsrooms. Hence, it becomes imperative to encourage broader participation of individuals in newsrooms for the betterment of democratic societies.

This study undertakes an analysis of the level of people's participation as key figures in radio news, supporting radio stations in upholding their motto of being the voice of the voiceless. By incorporating a wider range of voices as news sources, radio stations can enhance the reliability and authenticity of their news bulletins, offering a comprehensive portrayal of events and issues. Ultimately, this study contributes to the fulfilment of democratic ideals by facilitating inclusive participation in the newsroom and amplifying the voices of all segments of society.

For the qualitative content analysis, four radio stations have been selected based on the purposive sample selection method. The sample radio stations are Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM. Radio Nepal is a government-owned and pioneering radio station in Nepal. Radio Sagarmatha is the first radio station from the non-governmental sector while Radio Lumbini is the first surviving radio station run outside the Kathmandu Valley, run by the ownership of a cooperative, representing the western part of the country. Likewise, BFM is one of the oldest radio stations in the eastern part of Nepal run by the private sector. Radio Nepal represents the national broadcasting, while Radio Sagarmatha, the first community/independent radio in Nepal, represents the central and hilly part of the country. Radio Lumbini represents the local community radio in the western part whereas BFM lies in the eastern part of the country.

Another reason behind the selection of these sample radio stations is that they could provide a three-month-long audio archive of their main news bulletins giving consent to the researcher for the content analysis.

### **1.6 Justification of the Study**

The systematic literature review reveals a notable research gap concerning the news sourcing on radio, both within Nepal and globally. Despite Nepal's geographical context and the substantial presence of radio as a medium, there remains a lack of scientific exploration into the positioning of radio as a news source and its ability to deliver diversity and objectivity. Consequently, the identified problem is pertinent, as it addresses this research gap and introduces a novel topic for research. This study is well-positioned to fill this knowledge gap adopting systematic approaches for understanding the extent to which radio serves as a news source and its capacity to uphold principles of diversity and objectivity. Furthermore, the researcher's deep experience in radio broadcasting, coupled with a genuine passion for the subject, underpins the selection of this problem. With keen interest and expertise in the field, the researcher is confident in his ability to approach this problem effectively and provide a sound academic solution.

The study employed a qualitative content analysis methodology, focusing on news bulletins from four distinct radio stations over three months. The selection of the sample followed the purposive sampling method, with Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM chosen as representative stations. Each of the selected radio stations possesses unique characteristics. Radio Nepal, situated in Kathmandu, holds the distinction of being the country's oldest government-run broadcasting organisation. Radio Sagarmatha, based in Lalitpur, stands as the first independent broadcasting organisation operated by the non-governmental sector. Radio Lumbini, located at Manigram in Rupandehi district, holds significance as the first radio station established

outside the Kathmandu Valley, operating under a cooperative organisation. Its inclusion in the sample is bolstered by its consistent recording of three-month news bulletins, making it a representative radio station for the western region of Nepal. BFM, with a broadcasting centre in Biratnagar, represents the eastern part of the country as one of the oldest radio stations operating under the private sector.

These four radio stations collectively encompass the diverse spectrum of radio operations in Nepal. Geographically, they represent all regions of the country. Moreover, they have willingly agreed to archive and provide audio record tapes of news bulletins broadcast over the three months, facilitating the research process. However, radio stations operating in hilly and Himalayan districts were unable to be included in the study due to the unavailability of their news records. Despite approaching more than a dozen radio stations, their inability to provide news recordings led to the selection of radio stations that could furnish three-month news bulletin records and possessed distinctive attributes as samples. The primary objective of selecting these radio stations is to conduct an in-depth analysis of their news content.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

Considering research sources, including time and materials, the current research work has primarily focused on the headline news of prime-time news bulletins in the evening and excludes other news bulletins, radio programmes and commercials, entertainment, and public service announcements of radio stations. It is delimited to:

- a) Geographic area: Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Morang and Rupandehi districts.
- b) No other than the four radio stations as the sample: Radio Nepal, the oldest and government-owned radio station; Radio Sagarmatha, the first in the non-governmental sector run by the NGO in the central part of the country; Radio Lumbini, the first survived non-governmental radio station out of the Kathmandu Valley and run by the

cooperative in the western part of Nepal; and BFM as one of the oldest radio stations in eastern Nepal which has an archiving system of news bulletins and run by the private sector. These stations have been selected as sample radio stations because they could provide recorded news bulletins for three news bulletins under the purposive sample method. Thus, these four radio stations represent all types of radio operating in Nepal. Radio stations operating in hilly districts and other parts of the country are not selected for the study because of the lack of news records availability.

c) For content analysis, news bulletins spanning specific timeframes have been collected. These include news bulletins from Radio Sagarmatha, broadcast from 1 Asar to 31 Bhadra 2078 (15 June to 16 September 2021) at 18:45 daily, news bulletins from Radio Nepal, aired from 1 Saun to 31 Asoj 2078 (16 July to 17 October 2021) at 19:00 daily; BFM, aired from 1 Asoj to 29 Mangsir 2078 (17 September to 15 December 2021) at 18:00 daily and news bulletins from Radio Lumbini, broadcast from 1 Kattik to 30 Push 2078 (18 October 2021, to 14 January 2022) at 18:00 daily news bulletins. The selection of these timeframes is based on the availability of recording tapes of radio news broadcasts, which have not been consistently recorded and available on the same dates; this collection of news bulletins ensures representative samples for the subsequent content analysis.

d) No other than the headline news of prime-time bulletins has been analysed through the content analysis of the selected radio stations.

### **1.8 Introduction to Radio Stations as Taken for Sample**

From the diverse array of radio stations operating in Nepal, four distinct types have been selected as sample radio stations. These include Radio Nepal, the government-run national broadcaster; Radio Sagarmatha, the pioneering independent radio station operated by a non-governmental organisation; Radio Lumbini, a community radio station

located outside the Kathmandu Valley and operated by cooperatives, representing the western region of the country; and BFM, a commercial radio station operated by the private sector, representing the eastern part of Nepal. This purposive sampling method ensures representation from each type of radio station, providing a comprehensive and inclusive perspective for the study. Brief descriptions of the sample radio station and sample radio news have been presented below:

*a) Radio Nepal.* Radio Nepal is a national broadcasting service owned and operated by the government through the Radio Broadcasting Development Committee under the Radio Formation Orders of the government in 1984 (Adhikari, 2004, p. 69). Radio Nepal, the Radio Broadcasting Service Development Committee runs under the Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology of the Nepal Government (Radio Nepal, 2023). According to the official website of Radio Nepal (<https://radionepal.gov.np/>), it broadcasts news bulletins on an hourly basis from 06:00 am until late at night to close the transmission. However, the news bulletin of 19:00 for three months has been selected as the sample for the content analysis.

*b) Radio Sagarmatha (102.4 MHz).* Radio Sagarmatha began its broadcasting on 22 May 1997 as the first independent community radio in South Asia under the ownership of the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (Mainali, 2015, p. 44). Situated at Bhanimandal, Lalitpur, currently, Radio Sagarmatha broadcasts its airwaves from 06:00 to 22:00 a day. Radio Sagarmatha began its news bulletin, *Halchal*, on 5 December 1998 (Luitel, 2005, p. 226). It broadcasts five news bulletins plus a brief presentation of news published in newspapers in the early morning at 06:00. The news bulletin of 18:45 for three months has been selected as the sample for the content analysis.

*c) Radio Lumbini (96.8 MHz).* Radio Lumbini was established on 10 February 2000 by Lumbini Information and Communication Cooperative Limited in Manigram,

Rupendehi district, Lumbini Province, the western part of the country as the first radio outside the Kathmandu Valley and the first of its kind in South Asia (Radio Lumbini, 2023). About 100 shareholders contributed about 20,000 rupees each to set up the station in 1998 (Noronha, 2003, p. 2170). Radio Lumbini has been on air 18 hours a day with a powerful transmitter of 2 kilowatts. It broadcasts news bulletins at 05:40, 09:00, 17:00 and 19:00 a day. News of 19:00 for three months has been selected as the sample for the content analysis.

*d) BFM, Biratnagar (91.2 MHz).* BFM was established in Biratnagar under Birat Shree Media Network Private Limited in 2006. It began broadcasting through a 500-watt transmitter on 23 January 2007. It has 18 hours of transmission a day from 05:00 to 23:00 with seven news bulletins from early morning 06:00, 09:00, 11:00, 14:00, 16:00, 18:00 and 22:00. The news bulletin of 18:00 for three months as the sample has been selected for the content analysis.

## **1.9 Organisation of the Dissertation**

Chapter 1 introduces the academic problem, research gap, research questions and objectives for the study related to news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. Chapter 2 attempts an extensive review of the literature on news sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting. Similarly, Chapter 3 dwells on research methodology including applied research design and data collection tools and techniques. Chapter 4 includes the status of news sourcing in radio broadcasting whereas Chapter 5 analyses the affecting factors of the sourcing process in the radio newsrooms. Chapter 6 of the dissertation analyses the procedures of the newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing. Lastly, in Chapter 7, the findings and conclusion of the study have been included according to the three objectives.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

A wide range of literature from Google Scholars, Research Gate, Academia, Central Library of Tribhuvan University and other physical and online libraries and databases have been extensively reviewed to identify knowledge gaps for the systematic academic study. This thematic literature review based on chronological order aims to identify research gaps. The purpose of this literature review is to identify existing knowledge gaps pertaining to the utilisation of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting. In the extensive chronicles of radio news, researchers have conducted extensive studies into various dimensions of radio news, newsrooms, and news sources. This review widely includes professional standards, values, theoretical aspects and empirical studies on news sourcing practices of radio broadcasting and relevant media outlets.

#### **2.2 Review of Professional Standards in News Sourcing**

Many experts, intellectuals, and media practitioners have extensively examined the theoretical dimensions, and professional values and principles to be followed by practitioners while dealing with news sources. They have emphasised the critical role that sources play, not only in shaping a news story but also in determining the overall credibility of the media outlet they represent. These media intellectuals shed light on the diverse types of news sources and offer insights on how reporters can approach them to produce authentic news stories. They underscore the importance of journalists handling sources with care while adhering to professional skills, norms and values. Furthermore, these experts stress the significance of maintaining a professional relationship between information providers and seekers as sources and journalists. This entails ensuring that

interactions with sources are conducted in a manner that upholds the principles of journalistic integrity and impartiality. By adhering to professional standards, journalists can foster a sense of trust and reliability in their news reporting, thereby enhancing the credibility of the media organisation they are affiliated with.

In this light, Hullen and Karg (2006, pp. 12–15) discuss the uses of multiple sources in news. In their opinion, only one source of news would not be sufficient for making news credible and trustworthy. They suggest reporters use information through more than one independent source so that the credibility of news would be high. For a radio bulletin, their strong recommendation is to approach more than two independent sources as far as possible. They suggest reporters inform the audiences clearly about the condition of source verification if there is only one source in the news bulletin.

McLeish (2005, pp. 63–72) describes that radio news reporting should be accurate, intangible and fair. He identifies the radio news sources as professionals, officials, commercials and the public. The journalists should choose the sources as per their needs and the nature of news information. He suggests radio reporters and editors be careful in covering offensive statements while covering the news of distress. McLeish has advised radio reporters to be careful in collecting and writing news related to civil disturbance and war.

Laczo (2016, p. 7) discusses that the radio station should develop a strong network of local sources and stakeholders including various community members for effective dissemination of information. She argues that the radio medium is more effective and relevant in a country like Nepal where the risk of natural disaster is high. She shares an incident of a regular radio listener in grade 7 from Rasuwa district, the northern part of Nepal, who was suffering from a severe cold and wanted to be one of the local sources for radio by sharing his information but could not get an opportunity for it.

Laczo further suggests that the radio station should be able to connect to other people in several communities as sources, who are willing to share their information like the child, to serve audiences the first-hand information from among them.

Similarly, Manhart (2016, p. 7) states that the role of radio is important for people who are facing a crisis or disaster. When the earthquake hit Nepal in 2015, radio stations across the country played a vital role in disseminating information to people who had to face the cut-off of electricity and communication services. Access to newspapers, television and the internet was not possible as the electricity line and the roads were damaged by the earthquake. Manhart describes that the radio disseminated information and spread knowledge that was important to the public and "earthquake survivors depended on the radio to follow rescue and relief distribution" (p. 7).

Rosenauer (2005) advises reporters to exercise caution when dealing with sources during the reporting process. It is preferable to gather information from multiple sources rather than relying solely on a single source. When assessing sources, reporters should consider whether they are human sources or documents. Human sources can provide valuable insights and make a story more credible and engaging. Additionally, reporters should collect relevant documents in different formats to complement the human voices in their news stories. However, it is important to conduct thorough research on these documents to ensure their suitability and reliability within the story.

Furthermore, Rosenauer (2005) suggests reporters should possess the ability to distinguish between objective and subjective sources of information, determining whether they are neutral or biased. In cases where a source displays bias, it is crucial to include a third source to ensure a balanced perspective in the story. Additionally, reporters must assess the credibility of their sources. While some sources may offer only opinions, others provide factual information. It is the reporter's responsibility to skilfully

incorporate both opinions and facts from sources into their story, using the art of storytelling to present a comprehensive and accurate account. He proposes some checklists for journalists who are reporting:

Am I getting all my material from a single source?... Are my sources only human or only documents?... Is my source objective or subjective in relation to the topic?... Is my source credible?... Is my material comprised of facts or opinions?  
(pp. 21–22)

Bhatt (1993, pp. 128–129) emphasises that inclusive news stories in broadcasting media can only be achieved when reporters can develop relationships with news sources and cultivate them properly. According to him, a reporter's personal effort is essential to establish a confidence level with sources. He further suggests reporters establish a personal equation with the sources by "continuous contacts and demonstrating ability to report a story accurately and secure good coverage" for news media. Regular contact with sources is essential to get an exclusive news story. Bhatt further advises reporters to contact the source directly via phone if there is no possibility of meeting them physically. However, they need to verify the trustworthiness of information through other sources as well. Contact must be established with high-level sources if the news is about the government and other organised institutions.

Strentz (1989, pp. 21–23) discusses the relationship between a journalist and a source. In his opinion, a reporter should not depend totally on a source. Sometimes the source of news can manipulate the facts. Reporters must verify the facts. A journalist should know the facts while contacting and using the news sources as "the people have their vested interests, and those interests affect how they see the world" (p. 24). Moreover, reporters should respect the term 'off the record' and the privacy of a source in news reporting.

Ahuja (2001, pp. 68–69) stresses the need for the professional and healthy friendship of journalists with their sources. A trustworthy friendship with sources provides confidential information to reporters. The reporters always need to make their sources 'of knowledge widened and restricted' so that they can cultivate friendships with the sources. Furthermore, Ahuja argues that reporters go to most places and meet many people having different classes, ages, genders, positions, and power. A reporter always must have a nose for news and its sources so that they can cultivate it for a news story. Likewise, a good reporter should have a strong memory to remember the faces and pictures of people.

Beaupre (1998, pp. 62–63) discusses the importance of journalists attributing sources in their news stories. When reporters are eyewitnesses to an event, they become the primary source. In other cases, it is essential to mention the sources. News stories without named sources have less credibility. Journalists should diligently investigate unnamed news stories to uncover a credible source. At times, high-ranking government officials may provide journalists with confidential information but they may also request not to be named as the source. Some officials may share information "off the record." In such instances, journalists should respect the confidentiality of their sources and report the news without revealing their identities if the sources are credible and trustworthy.

The training manual by SPCBN-UNDP (2013, pp. 19–27) deliberates on the significance of sources in news reporting and highlights the journalist's responsibility in identifying and managing them effectively. Without proper use of sources, the information gathered by reporters can be inaccurate, biased, or incomplete. Reporters must recognise that sources only share information based on their own perspectives. Ideally, journalists should be present at the event to collect news first-hand. However, if they cannot be present, it is important to seek out eyewitnesses to ensure the credibility

of the news. These eyewitnesses may not necessarily be experts but can represent the viewpoints of the general public. The manual advises journalists to use multiple sources whenever possible to crosscheck facts. In cases where multiple sources are not feasible, journalists should disclose the position of the single source, enabling the audience to assess the reliability of the news story.

Hester (1987, pp. 75–77) presents the contradictory points of the news sources and the news reporters. It happens due to the conflict of interests of both parties. The government officials as news sources frequently complain that the reporters are engaged to dig out only the negative sides of the government and its officials. The officials allege that the reporters forget their duty to cover the positive stories related to the government. Similarly, the reports assume that government officials only want publicity and appreciation from the media instead of providing trustful and balanced information to them.

Hulteng (1983, pp. 49–51) urges journalists to maintain fairness in journalism, particularly in relation to individuals involved in a story. Journalists are encouraged to respect the rights of their sources and uphold their commitments to protecting the identity of confidential sources. However, when there is no obligation to maintain source confidentiality, reporters should always attribute the news to its source. Journalists have a responsibility to both their sources and their audience's right to quality information. Striking a balance between the rights of news sources and the audience's right to information is essential within a newsroom.

Kharel and Deuja (2003, pp. 50–51) present a comprehensive classification of news sources, categorising them into two main groups: international and national sources. Additionally, they propose two additional categories, namely formal and informal places and offices, as sources for reporters. Kharel and Deuja provide practical

advice to reporters, emphasising the importance of carrying essential tools such as a diary, pen, notebook, and recorder while conducting field reporting. They stress the significance of punctuality, professionalism, and credibility in interactions with sources and audiences. The authors highlight the need for reporters to uphold a strong work ethic, demonstrating reliability and trustworthiness in their reporting endeavours. Their guidance serves as a valuable resource, underlining the crucial elements of source selection, preparation, and professionalism for journalists operating in the Nepali context. By adhering to these principles, reporters can enhance the accuracy and credibility of their news reporting, ultimately contributing to the overall quality of the media landscape.

Alike, Poudyal (2003, pp. 18–20) divides radio news reporting into two distinct approaches: note-taking and recording, and field reporting. In the first category, radio newsrooms compile news by gathering information from various sources such as news agencies, press releases, and official statements. This method involves carefully taking notes and recording relevant details. The second category, field reporting, necessitates reporters physically visiting the location in order to gather first-hand facts, capture voices, and record sound effects. In significant cases, reporters can even provide live descriptions and conduct interviews directly from the field. This approach enhances the immediacy and authenticity of the news coverage.

Mainali (2015, pp. 315–318) highlights the ethical and value-based approaches of a newsroom towards its sources in connection with the news business. Describing the relationships between reporters and sources, he discusses that the public relations officers make an effort to impress and tempt reporters. The relationship between the sources and the newsroom should be maintained in a balanced manner. If reporters fail to maintain a fair professional relationship with their sources, there would be a chance of

involvement in an extra-professional relationship with the sources. This situation certainly ruins the credibility of a newsroom.

Khanal (2003, pp. 47–48) argues that news reporting is the foundation of journalism. The image of a news media is determined by the news story prepared by a reporter. Reporting should be done following the principles and theories that demand newsgathering with appropriate news sources as reporting is a foundation, fuel, and backbone of news. Dissemination of fake news from the wrong sources would harm society.

Similarly, Basnet (2007, pp. 111–117) mentions that the source is important in a news story. Only trustworthy sources can enhance the credibility of a news media. Reporters are expected to disclose their sources of information in the second paragraph of a news story. In cases where the news introduction is concise, they can even include a source in the opening line. Basnet proposes a classification of news sources into two categories: organised or official sources, and unorganised or unofficial sources. Reporters must rely on appropriate and credible sources when crafting their stories. By doing so, they can ensure the accuracy and reliability of their news reports.

Kharel (2010, pp. 36–37) recommends journalists apply their skills and knowledge while reporting and writing news though only some of the journalists would have a chance of getting scoop who have in-depth knowledge of place and issues and extensive sources of information. The process of news, fact collecting, checking, getting additional information through research, writing the story and packaging news for written or spoken form, applies to all news media including newspapers, radio, and television. Kharel further interprets the relationship between a journalist and a fitting source for quality news as follows:

A journalist should eat, breathe and live news. A journalist is as good as his/her sources. The better informed and more reliable the sources of information are, the higher the quality thus produces. It also has a great bearing on credibility. (pp. 38–39)

Ojha and Risal (2008, pp. 26–42) assert that reporters, equipped with qualities such as common sense, dedication, intelligence, and skillfulness, should possess the ability to identify appropriate sources for covering high-quality news. Tracing potential sources is essential for reporters to gather news effectively. The authors recommend that reporters extract answers to the 5W and 1H questions from their sources and diligently record them before crafting a news story. They also highlight an incident involving radio news that was based on incomplete information from a source. On 8 March 1964, Kirti Nidhi Bista, the then Minister for Education, Construction, Information, and Transportation, who later became the Prime Minister of Nepal, was scheduled to inaugurate the Bhadrapur airport in Jhapa district. The radio news broadcast by Radio Nepal erroneously announced that the minister and his team would return to Kathmandu immediately after the airport inauguration on the same day. Consequently, the local organisers, relying on this news, did not arrange additional programmes for the minister. However, Minister Bista had intended to stay in Jhapa for additional days, so he had brought the necessary bedding with him due to the lack of lodging and hotel facilities at that time. Consequently, the Minister was compelled to return to the capital city on the same day as the inauguration programme. This situation arose due to incomplete information collected by the radio reporter from the source. Ojha and Risal (2008) further mention that the reporter's reliance on a question solely related to the inauguration programme schedule resulted in him assuming that the Minister would

return on the same day. Based on this assumption, the reporter prepared the news for the radio bulletin without seeking further details about the Minister's return schedule.

Regmee and Khanal (2002, pp. 50–64) stress the crucial role of reporters in gathering factual information through their reporting skills. Acting as a bridge between the news media and the outside world, reporters are responsible for maintaining a regular calendar of events. Possessing a deep understanding of the subject matter and relevant issues enables reporters to identify suitable sources and engage with them professionally. Additionally, Regmee and Khanal recommend that reporters attribute their sources to their news articles. Without mentioning credible sources, the news loses its credibility.

Diversity in news sourcing indicates the representation of multiple sources from diverse sectors of society such as women, gender, caste, religion, and minority communities. According to (Blanchard, 1977, p. 25), diversity in news sourcing has been reflected in the report of the Hutchins Commission (1947) which urges news media to maintain a 'representative picture of constituent groups in society'. (The detailed status of the diversity of news sources is referred to in Chapter 6 of this dissertation).

Khanal and Poudyal (1999, pp. 27–33) explore the sources utilised by radio newsrooms, including newspapers, news agencies, press releases, press conferences, and various governmental/non-governmental offices. They highlight that radio differentiates itself from newspapers by incorporating voices and sound effects in its broadcasts. Telephone interviews also serve as a valuable source of news. However, Khanal and Poudyal underline the significance of field reporting, particularly conducting interviews with diverse sources accompanied by background sounds and sound effects. They stress the importance of radio reporters carefully interviewing individuals directly involved in incidents or eyewitnesses to ensure comprehensive and authentic news coverage. To ensure the accuracy and credibility of radio news, reporters need to interview relevant

officials and the police. Incorporating sound effects from the event locations further enhances the liveliness and authenticity of radio news broadcasts.

Radio Television News Directors Association, which has been converted to the Radio Television Digital Foundation (2015) urges journalists to follow ethical guidelines in the news production process. It recommends that broadcasting and digital journalists should not do any activity that shows a conflict of interest in the profession. In order to fair reporting and news treatment, the code of ethics suggests:

Deception in newsgathering, including surreptitious recording, conflicts with journalism's commitment to truth. Similarly, the anonymity of sources deprives the audience of important, relevant information. ...For every story of significance, there are always more than two sides. While they may not all fit into every account, responsible reporting is clear about what it omits, as well as what it includes. ...Scarce resources, deadline pressure and relentless competition do not excuse cutting corners factually or oversimplifying complex issues. (Para. 8, 9, 12)

American Society of Newspaper Editors (1975) has formulated principles for journalists to make news accurate, truthful, impartial, balanced and credible as the Statement of Principles. It urges journalists to be careful of the rights of the sources:

Journalists should respect the rights of people involved in the news, observe the common standards of decency and stand accountable to the public for the fairness and accuracy of their news reports. Persons publicly accused should be given the earliest opportunity to respond. Pledges of confidentiality to news sources must be honoured at all costs, and therefore should not be given lightly. Unless there is a clear and pressing need to maintain confidence, sources of information should be identified. (Para. 7)

Similarly, the Press Council Nepal (2016) has promulgated a detailed code of ethics for the news media and the journalists to follow. It recommends that journalists need to be fair and professional in dealing with their sources for trustworthy news. It suggests that journalists and media houses republish or rebroadcast any content by compulsorily mentioning the original sources. It emphasises that the “source should be quoted for the reliability of the news. However, while quoting the source, the name and identity of such source should be kept confidential so as to avoid any serious damage to the source” (p. 5).

The American Federal Communication Commission in 1960 recommended 14 subjective areas of news and programmes for the broadcasters as the programme-policy declaration that meet the diversities and interests of the listeners (Krasnow et al. 1998, p. 615). In the context of Nepal, the National Broadcasting Act (1993) has specified the functions, duties, and powers of a broadcaster regarding radio content along with news reporting, writing, and broadcasting as follows:

"(a) To have a necessary inquiry as to the truth of the information, news, articles, or programmes received by him and broadcast, or cause to broadcast, them at the specified time, (b) To edit and broadcast, or cause to be edited and broadcast, the news by being politically neutral, ... (e) Even if broadcasting is to be made about any controversial matter, to broadcast it by analysing it from all viewpoints to the extent possible, and without twisting the state of affairs, (f) Not to collect and broadcast false and illusive news."

These provisions of the National Broadcasting Act ensure a free and fearless environment for radio journalists to collect, prepare and broadcast authentic news from reliable sources. The legal provisions, on the one hand, encourage journalists to provide news without fear and threat and on the other hand, make conscious them not to collect

and broadcast news through not authenticated sources. Meanwhile, Article 17 (2)(a) and Article 19 of the Constitution of Nepal (2015) have made the journalists responsible towards the society with the provisions of reasonable restrictions.

### **2.3 Review of Previous Studies: International Context**

Only a few studies have been found related to news gatekeeping and sources in radio newsrooms in the American context during the 1970s based on the review of the Literature available in Google Scholars, Research Gate, Academia and physical and online libraries/databases.

In this connection, Waxman (1973) conducted a comparative study on news structure and treatment of news sources by gatekeepers during normal day operations and operations during a flood disaster in 1972 in the US. The study picked up 10 commercial broadcast radio stations, all AM, in four local communities. In the result, the study found that the workforces in the radio newsrooms were the controllers of the major gate in the news flow during normal operations whereas the newsmen and other gatekeepers were replaced by an emergent norm that opened all gates during local disasters. Likewise, whereas during normal operations news was what newsmen made it, during local disasters news was what the public made it. Although the study focuses on the gatekeeping process of news through various gates in normal operation and operation during disasters, it does not cover the news sources and the news-sourcing process in radio broadcasting.

Likewise, Buckalew (1974) carried out a study on the news sources of 33 news editors of 29 radio stations in 11 communities in six states of the western parts of the US. The study aimed at finding news items and their sources selected by the editors for radio news bulletins. The study revealed that only 451 news stories, 44%, were used in news bulletins out of the 1019 stories as total input. Out of the total number of news stories,

609 were collected from wire services. It means 59% of the total news items were from the wire services. Some radio stations assigned their own beat reporters for field stories. The number of such field stories was 129 or 13 per cent of the total. The number of news gathered via telephone was 74, which is 7 per cent of the total news stories. Of the total input number of 1019, the number of news items originating from press releases stood at 82. Likewise, the radio stations were found using different volumes of wire services' news as per their market sizes. The radio news editors of small-town were found using 36 per cent of the stories from the wire services while 66 per cent of the stories were used by the editors in medium-sized towns, and 69 percent of the stories were used by the editors in big cities. The study concluded by stating that the data from various sources the radio editors used in their bulletins were as follows:

Of the 451 stories used by these 33 radio news editors, 274 came from the wire, 59 from beats, 49 off the phone, 26 from newspapers, 27 from reporters, and 12 from press releases. They came up with three stories on their own, and one story originated with a sales department. That means a typical local newscast might contain 60% wire copy (most likely rewritten, at least pencil-cited), 13% from beats, 11% from telephone calls, 6% originating with the local newspaper, 3% from news releases, and only 6% coming from reporters' enterprise. (Buckalew, 1974, p. 605)

The study mainly focused on the use of news items in radio news bulletins from wire services as the source in Western America. It has been supportive of further studies on news sources in radio news. However, the study does not cover the total scenario of sources in radio news. Furthermore, the study was carried out in the time of 1970s when social media and internet-based information sources were not introduced. Hence, the study lacks analysis of the recent trends in radio news sources in the current days.

It revealed wire services as the largest source of incoming news and the other major news sources were incoming telephone calls from public officials, corporate officials and spokespersons. Public officials dominated the sources of incoming wire copy. It pointed out that the news operation was more "reactive" than "active," as it heavily relied on previously prepared stories, initial sources, and wire services. However, the study does not cover objectivity and diversity in radio news sourcing in the changing context. This study has remained supportive to frame a new study on news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.

Furthermore, other studies related to news sources have also been reviewed which are associated with various media outlets. Reese et al. (1994, p. 84) have revealed the lack of diversity in news source selection as power elites dominated the news source selection process in US television channels. According to the study, interviewees and officials, institutional spokespersons, experts, and journalists were sources of news on US television news content.

Whitney et al. (1989) uncovered that television networks' news sources exhibit "limited diversity." Among the over 5,000 sources quoted in evening newscasts, nearly three-quarters had institutional affiliations. Additionally, more than one-third of the sources were linked to the government.

In a study examining TV news sources in the US, Berkowitz (1987) discovered a lack of diversity in news sources, with major sources predominantly linked to various government agencies. Among 156 news items, 48.6% of network news sources were government-affiliated. Moreover, 75% of local television news stories and 71% of network news stories appeared to originate from routine news sources. A study conducted by O'Neill and O'Connor (2008) found that in the sampled West Yorkshire newspapers, a single source was used in 76% of the total news stories analysed. The

study further revealed that these single sources had significant influence over the selection and framing of issues and published materials. Similarly, two separate studies by Mathisen (2013); and Allern (2001) found that local news media in Norway frequently relied on a single source in nearly half of the sampled news stories. They also disclosed that small local newspaper newsrooms tended to use single sources more frequently compared to larger newsrooms of national-level newspapers.

Lacy et al. (2013) conducted a study on the sourcing pattern of 198 radio stations in 120 metropolitan statistical areas from 363 metropolitan statistical areas in the US. The study found that the radio stations' sourcing behaviours were equivalent to the weekly newspapers. The study states that the “radio news produced fewer stories, and they tended to have poorer sourcing than daily local government stories” (p. 471). The study concludes that the quality of news sourcing of public radio stations was above compared to the competitive commercial radio stations. They broadcast news from more diverse sources than commercial radio stations. The sourcing quality of public radio stations' news was higher than that of daily newspapers (Lacy et al. 2013, p. 472). The study shows that the quality of news stories depends on the quality and accessibility of the appropriate sources. The study will be supportive to a researcher to find out the sourcing trend of radio news in the Nepali context.

Rodero (2020) has conducted a study on the role of radio as a news source during the Covid-19 pandemic in Spain. The research has found that radio was considered the most effective and trustworthy medium for information among the respondents. The study has revealed that 42% of the participants viewed radio as the best medium for dealing with the crisis, followed by television (35%), the Internet (12%), newspapers (8%), social networks (2%), and magazines (1%). The survey has emphasised the importance of radio in delivering informative content during the pandemic. Although the

study shows the trend of listening to radio stations for trustworthy information, it does not enter the aspect of sources of news and the trend of radio news sourcing.

In contrast to Rodero's study, Van Aelst et al. (2021) have conducted a research study focusing on the changing news media consumption habits during the COVID-19 pandemic in 17 European countries. The study has found that the habits of the audiences in the 17 European countries have been changing during the crisis. As per their findings, the trend of listening to the radio has decreased along with the habit of reading newspapers. Instead, people have been found using television, social media, and online portals to get updates and more information about the pandemic. The study has pointed out the reason for declining the use of radio and newspapers to be the “lockdown and the disruption of daily routines during the pandemic when many people did not go to work and could for instance not buy their newspaper at train stations or listen to the radio while commuting” (p. 16). The main concentration of the study was to find out the shifting trends of news media consumption from traditional to new media. However, the study lacks an analysis of radio news sourcing.

Another study conducted by Mathisen (2021) examined the sourcing and diversity in sourcing among local and regional dailies and radio broadcasts across the five regions of Norway. Results of the study showed that nearly half (49%) of published and broadcast news relied on a single source while 25% based on two sources and 19% relied on three sources. The study revealed that personal sources were quoted in 74% of the total sample news items. Among these, 73% of sources were identified openly, while only 1% of the sources were anonymous individuals. Additionally, 25% were based on two sources, and 19% were based on three or more sources. Mathisen (2021) further states that among the news sources, the leadership of private enterprises and public administrators influenced the agenda, as more than a quarter of the news stories are

aimed at managing interests. The studies mentioned above indicate that Norwegian media failed to maintain diversity in sourcing.

Rochyadi-Reetz (2022) has investigated news sourcing practices in reporting on climate change in Indonesia. The study has found national actors as the main source among three news-sourcing practices. The second type of source has been identified as international news sources, and the last is international news flow from news agencies. These sources have highly influenced the audience needs, internet algorithms and journalists. However, the study has dwelt on news sourcing in radio broadcasting.

Matthews et al. (2023) have found that the government sectors and the leaders have been projected as the prime news source in the UK's main news outlets during the COVID-19 pandemic. The political sources represented 48.4% of the sources cited in social media posts. This finding revealed that the most frequently quoted sources are the UK Prime Minister followed by the U.S. President. Since this study has focused on the social media outlets of the main news, this hasn't analysed the news sourcing in radio broadcasting.

Linards et al. (2023) have researched the sources in the online media of Switzerland during the war in Ukraine. The study shows that 40.7% of foreign news has come from news agencies. Most of the news regarding the war is taken from NATO, the European Union (together 27%) and Ukrainian government and military sources (21%) in comparison with Russian sources (12%). The study revealed that the media in Switzerland tilted towards Ukraine and its allies as news sources rather than Russian sources. However, this study focuses on the news sources in online media regarding the war in Ukraine and does not describe the news sourcing in broadcasting media.

Janáčková et al. (2024) have disclosed in their study that Slovak radio broadcasting stations have national news content in the first category for broadcasting

and foreign content in the second category. They have only covered the news categories within the border of Slovakia and abroad. However, they have not covered the news sourcing of radio stations.

#### **2.4 Review of Previous Studies: Nepali Context**

In Nepal, the Institute for Integrated Development Studies in 1996 carried out a study on 'mass media and democratisation'. It has published the result of the content observation broadcast on Radio Nepal among others. Out of 100 news items broadcast in seven days, Radio Nepal was found to have broadcast only 36 percent of domestic news superseding international news with 64 percent. Among the 36 items of domestic news, 50 percent were of political beat covering the royal and governmental formal activities, routine and ceremonial including birthday celebrations of the king and prime/ministerial activities. The rest were the non-political news ranging from the social sector, economy, environment, development and natural calamities (Aditya, 1996, pp. 147–148). The study shows that Radio Nepal had a priority of international news rather than the coverage of national news. Among the national news, half part was covered by the political hierarchical formal news dissemination. Although the study has categorised the news based on various beats, it does not deal with news sourcing.

Adhikari (2005, pp. 209–210) in his observation found that the main sources of local radio stations are the newspapers, whereas the radio stations prepare some news items from their own sources, but the number of such news items is very small. All FM radio stations in the Kathmandu Valley depend on the morning newspapers for their morning news bulletins. Adhikari claimed that radio stations generally do not mention the newspapers as sources of their news, but the radio stations are taking the news published in newspapers for their bulletins. Some of the FM take news from the National

News Agency (RSS) along with international agencies such as the Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), Reuters, and Xinhua.

Kharel (2010) carried out a content analysis of the front-page political news of 25 national news (12 dailies and 13 weeklies) with 1731 news of the dailies and 479 news items of weeklies. The study revealed that 53.71 percent of the news from dailies and 7.53 percent of news from weeklies directly quoted political sources. The percent of the news published with unnamed sources was 17.07 in dailies and 80.94 in weeklies. Political news with the Kathmandu Valley dateline was 83.85 percent in dailies and 99.06 percent in weeklies. Of all front-page news items, 69.38 percent found political news in dailies whereas it found 88.73 percent in the weeklies. The study found that the rate of political news is high on the front page of the press. Besides, Kathmandu, a core or centre of power has got top priority in political news. The data means the power elites and power centres have captured the prime space of the dailies and weeklies. However, this study has not covered the news sources in radio news broadcasting, it supports to analysis of the sources in radio in a broad canvas.

Likewise, Timilsina (2012, pp. 197–200) has surveyed the status of news in four FM radio stations: Ghodaghodi FM, Dinesh FM, Khaptad FM and Tikapur FM, in Kailali district. The survey has exposed that they don't have the same priorities for issues and events in news bulletins. They broadcast two types of news in their bulletins: the news they collect and prepare through their reporters and the news they relay from the network radio stations and production houses. The editors or coordinators filter the news as gatekeepers in the newsroom. The radio stations which do have not their own reporters in the newsroom depend on the news streamed in the digital news portals and the news received via the network. According to the report, of 163 total news items, the Ghodaghodi FM broadcast 40 items from its own reporters' sources and the rest, 123

from the internet. Likewise, Dinesh FM found broadcast 54 news items from its own reporters' sources and 61 items from the internet out of the 115. Likewise, Khaptad FM, out of 104 news items, broadcast 35 items from its own reporters and 69 others from the internet. Similarly, Tikapur FM broadcast 31 news items from its own sources and 109 items from the internet, out of the 140 news items. The survey reveals that the local radio stations in Kailali district broadcast more news outside Kailali than the local news.

Federation of Nepali Journalists (2020) in support of Sharecast Initiatives Nepal, reveals that 71% of journalists including the workforce of the newsrooms of radio stations faced problems in reporting and writing news during the lockdown imposed to contain the COVID-19 pandemic wave I. The reporters in urban areas and metropolitan cities faced difficulties in going to the field to collect information compared to the reporters in the suburban and village areas. The respondents responded that they faced problems with transportation and health safety facilities such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sanitisers. Many journalists lost their jobs during the pandemic, and some of them were forced to leave their jobs without a salary or salary cuts. It hampered the radio journalists in carrying out their daily work of news reporting by accessing the sources.

Similarly, Freedom Forum (2020) has surveyed across the country to find out the situation of the Nepali press during the COVID-19 pandemic. The result of the survey shows that 38 per cent (3,190 in number) of journalists across the country lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 crisis. The radio stations in Bagmati province cut down 50 per cent of radio journalists working in the newsroom during the crisis. The report states that most of the radio stations deducted the number of radio news bulletins to sustain during the adverse situation. It also cut down the number of field-based news items as well as the quality of the news bulletin.

At the same time, the Nepal Press Institute (2020) has surveyed 1134 journalists from all seven provinces to find out the impact of COVID-19 on the Nepali press sector including radio journalists/communicators. The survey revealed that 85% of the respondents were reported to have a sense of vulnerability. Moreover, 75% of the journalists experienced anxiety while 51.8% of the journalists working in radio and television sectors, acknowledged reduced broadcast production.

Dahal et al. (2021, pp. 73–74) highlight the decline in access to news sources in the Nepali media due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They note that the lockdown restrictions prevented reporters from gathering news on the field. Both news sources and journalists were hesitant to meet in person due to the risk of contracting the virus. The pandemic's impact on the Nepali news media was evident in various aspects, from news operations to the collection and processing of radio newsrooms. Consequently, the quality of news suffered as journalists were unable to gather firsthand information from their sources. Media practitioners have acknowledged their inability to access the field and sources for firsthand news collection.

Acharya (2021, p. 4) highlights the decline in the quality and diversity of radio news in Nepali radio stations, attributing it to a reduction in human resources. Previously, radio stations employed around 20 radio journalists for a decade, whereas now only 10 journalists remain. This significant reduction in staff members within the newsroom and production room has harmed the quality of news production. Furthermore, the decrease in monthly salaries has hindered the ability to engage with diverse news sources, further compromising the quality of news. Acharya argues that the trend of broadcasting breaking news hastily has also contributed to the decline in the quality and diversity of radio news.

Using the gatekeeping theory for data collection and analysis, Aryal and Dhital (2022, p. 62) carried out a content analysis of 11,530 sample news items published in Nepali print media in August and September covering child-related issues. They found that only 6 percent of the total sample size published child-related issues. This study has examined child-based sources in print media. However, it is not directly related to broadcasting media. But again, it supports the examination of news sources of radio stations through content analysis.

Moreover, several dissertations for the Doctor of Philosophy related to radio news and content of the Nepali scholars have also been reviewed. In this connection, Banjade (2007) conducted a case study on Radio Madanpokhara, Palpa as part of his Doctor of Philosophy degree. The study revealed that in a survey conducted in January 2004, 80.8% of local respondents listened to the radio for both information and entertainment purposes. While the primary focus of the study was on the establishment of Radio Madanpokhara, its radio programmes, and the perspectives of the audience, it also highlighted community participation in programmes and information gathering from different villages. According to Banjade (2007, pp. 142–143), a radio representative from each Village Development Committee was appointed by the radio management. These representatives played an active role in gathering information about local activities in their respective areas. They also participated in the production of radio programmes that focused on the problems, achievements, activities, and experiences of community members within the locality. The research conducted by Banjade illuminates the involvement of community representatives in Radio Madanpokhara, focusing on their role in information gathering and programme production. This showcases the significance of community participation and engagement in the functioning of the radio station.

The study of Banjade (2007) is not specified in one area of the radio programme or radio news. It is based on the general perspective of the development of community radio and its service to the local communities with their participation. Hence, it is not centred on news reporting and sourcing in radio news broadcasting. The study has opened the gate for further specific studies on radio news reporting and its sources to the researchers.

Dahal and Aram (2013) have studied the role of community radio stations in the empowerment of minority indigenous communities Athpahariya in Dhankuta and Danuwar in Kavrepalanchowk districts through the local community radio stations Radio Makalu and Radio Namobuddha. They have found that community radio stations have been playing a vital role in empowering the indigenous communities by collecting news, views, issues and experiences of the community taking its members as sources and broadcasting it in local languages. As their study focused on the empowerment of indigenous communities through community radio stations, they did not discuss the sources of news on those radio stations.

Khanal (2015) has "analysed behaviour and attitude of the audience related to socio-cultural, economic, livelihood, health, gender and educational aspects" (pp. 3–4) in Nuwakot district through the radio programme broadcasting. Khanal (2015) has noticed the newsroom and coverage of news sources that,

Lacked a well-managed newsroom, office and sufficient manpower. There were less number of news-makers/reporters and they lacked motivation due to nominal salary and facilities. They did not go to the spot, used secondary sources for news and depended on telephone inquiries, the internet and online. (p. 59)

The observation of the radio newsrooms in Nuwakot district has been supportive in analysing the sourcing trend of main news broadcasting of radio stations, however, the

study is focused on the impact of radio programmes in rural areas. The dissertation is not centred on news reporting and sourcing in a radio newsroom.

Similarly, Acharya (2015) in his dissertation has focused on the study of the role of community radio in rural development with the objective “to examine the role of community radio through their programmes in enhancing the peoples' participation in rural development”. After the study, Acharya found that community radio stations have a positive impact on listeners in the health and awareness sector. However, Acharya claims that the “Nepali audiences of FM Radio programmes believe less that it could create an impact on the construction of road and bridge and improvement on irrigation facilities” (p. 186).

Acharya (2015, p. 196) emphasises that FM stations are a primary source of information for people, particularly for news updates. However, while Acharya's study examines the impacts of radio programmes on listeners, it does not specifically address reporting and sourcing practices within radio news broadcasting. While valuable insights are provided regarding the significance of radio programmes, further research is needed to explore sourcing dynamics in radio news production.

Timilsina (2019) focuses on the access of migrant communities to community radio programmes in New Zealand. Under the problem of “how the Filipino, Nepali and Iranian migrant communities value their local radio programmes in this digital era where media platforms are increasingly becoming transnational, and technology has facilitated diasporic populations to receive media content from their countries of origin in any host society”, Timilsina (2019) found that the migrant communities have easy access to the radio stations in the processes of pre-production, production, post-production, feedback and decision regarding radio programme. He has concluded that the migrant communities in New Zealand use community radio as a public sphere “to build their

sense of community and consensus for their common cultural identity. The activities and function of community public spheres are ultimately directed toward the wider New Zealand public sphere” (Timisina, 2019, p. 265).

Since Timilsina (2019) focuses the study on the access of migrant communities in programmes on local community radio in New Zealand, he has not entered the area of sourcing on the radio news. Although the study is on the radio programmes and information provided to the migrant communities, it opens the door for the study on sourcing in radio news broadcasting.

## **2.5 Review of Normative Values in News Sourcing**

The news gatekeepers should be responsible towards society by maintaining diversity, accuracy, balance and ethical values while selecting and verifying sources and news. Responsibility towards society makes them accountable and maintains high moral standards of journalistic practices. Social responsibility evolved during the first half of the 1900s as part of normative values, which makes media responsible for society maintaining ethical and moral values (Christians et al., 2009, pp. 52–54). It is a revised version of the free marketplace of ideas adding the responsibility of the free press. However, the idea of objectivity in news appeared earlier than the concept of social responsibility with the rise of the Penny Press in the US during the 1830s. Kaplan (2002, pp. 28–34) describes the rise of objectivity in the 1830s and the detachment of partisan journalism in the 1890s that established the foundation of objectivity which got institutionalised and was perceived as an integral part of ethics as canons of journalism in 1923. Schudson (1978, pp. 78–79) argues that the fairmindedness and separate values of the information model and then the story model emerged as journalistic values in the form of ethics in the late 1890s.

Porwancher (2011, pp. 188–191) goes back to the 1890s and describes the practice of normative values as objectivity with fairness, accuracy and diversity in journalism that was set up by the New York Times in 1896. After acquiring ownership of the New York Times, Adolph S. Ochs distinguished it from the Yellow Press by featuring a statement on the masthead: "All the news that's fit to print." This assertion remains visible to readers even today.

Two decades after the declaration of the ASNE's Canons of Journalism, a commission under the chair of Robert Hutchins, the Chancellor of Chicago University, was formed to study the status of the freedom of the Press in the US in 1942 (Blanchard, 1977, p. 16). Publishing the report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, Hutchins (1947) states that media should play a responsible role. He suggests that a reporter should bear the chain of responsibility while dealing with the source of the news. He further advises that a reporter "must be careful and competent. He must estimate correctly which sources are most authoritative. He must prefer firsthand observation to hearsay. He must know what questions to ask, what things to observe, and which items to report" (p. 21). While selecting and verifying sources of news, newsrooms should be responsible towards society for objectivity and diversity of content with fair play.

Furthermore, the report of the commission headed by Hutchins (1947) recommends five points that the media should follow while doing news business:

- (1) a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning;
- (2) a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism;
- (3) the projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society;
- (4) the presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society;
- (5) full access to the day's intelligence. (Hutchins, 1947, p. 102)

The commission's report emphasises that while the government doesn't necessarily have to intervene in matters concerning press freedom, the press bears the responsibility of acting conscientiously within society. This pertains to the responsible conduct of collecting, selecting, and disseminating information, news, and views. Peterson (1956, p. 75) states that the Commission on Freedom of the Press established the base of Social Responsibility. He mentions six functions of media under the Social Responsibility, that are:

- 1) servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs;
- (2) enlightening the public so as to make it capable of self-government;
- (3) safeguarding the rights of the individual by serving as a watchdog against government;
- (4) servicing the economic system, primarily by bringing together the buyers and sellers of goods and services through the medium of advertising;
- (5) providing entertainment;
- (6) maintaining its own financial self-sufficiency so as to be free from the pressures of special interests. (p. 74)

The main thrust of the social responsibility of media is to be objective and maintain diversity in content. It makes the media such as radio stations obliged to society as they carry the sense of being public trustees. McQuail (2010) has drawn the essence of the social responsibility as follows:

The media have obligations to society, and media ownership is a public trust; news media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant; the media should be free, but self-regulated; the media should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct; under some circumstances, government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest. (p. 171)

The trend of social responsibility as ethical and moral values came from 500 BC as an Athenian tradition in the West and Muslim countries and their tradition and

philosophy in Eastern societies like the Indian sub-continent and China (Christians et al., pp. 37–43). Ethics supports media and journalists to be responsible towards society in their business. Media outlets have incorporated ethical values since the inception of the Canon of Journalism in 1923 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The canons and the updated Statement of Principles by the ASNE in 1975 underscore responsibility, independence, truth and accuracy, impartiality, and fair play as key parameters for upholding the standard of journalistic practice. The News Leaders Association (NLA), formed through the merger of the American Society of News Editors and the Associated Press Media Editors, advocates for fair and principled journalism while championing the causes of freedom of information and open government. Promoting diversity and inclusion in coverage and the journalism workforce, fostering opinion journalism, advancing news literacy, and facilitating the exchange of ideas stand as key initiatives of the ASNE (NLA, 2021).

In Nepal, the Press Council Nepal (2016) has issued a Code of Ethics for Nepali journalists and media houses to uphold high standards of journalistic practice. The code includes provisions for journalists and media houses to maintain social responsibility while practising journalism. It calls on journalists to respect citizens' privacy and consider national security, unity, social harmony, as well as the rights of victims and children when reporting and disseminating news and opinions.

## **2.6 Review of the Media Theories/Theoretical Framework**

The analysis of the study on news sources in Nepali radio news broadcasting is based on the theoretical framework of media gatekeeping theory of White (1950), Westley and Maclean (1957), Shoemaker (1990), and other scholars whose contribution is being reviewed in this section. This theory has been selected to analyse the sourcing practices of the gatekeepers in radio newsrooms. According to this theory, reporters play

a pivotal role as primary gatekeepers, filtering facts, sources, and event descriptions to shape news stories. Through the application of this theory, the research aims to analyse how reporters selectively choose or dismiss sources in their news stories. Furthermore, the study will examine the crucial role of the editor as the final gatekeeper, responsible for further refining news content before it reaches the audience. The primary objective of this study is to explore the intricate interplay between reporters and editors within a radio newsroom, utilising the lens of gatekeeping theory. By doing so, it endeavours to identify the specific types of news sources that reporters and editors include or exclude, while also delving into the underlying rationales behind their decisions. Guided by the gatekeeping theory, complemented by the framing theory, this research endeavours to provide an understanding of the decision-making processes involved in source selection and exclusion within Nepali radio news production. This dissertation also analyses the placing and prioritising sources in radio news in the light of the Agenda Setting Theory and the responsibility of radio stations towards society while selecting and verifying sources under the normative (responsibility) Theory.

By adopting the gatekeeping theory, this study aspires to offer valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of sourcing practices within Nepali radio news broadcasting. It aims to contribute to a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate factors that influence reporters and editors, shedding light on the complexities that underlie their choices in source selection. Through this analysis, a deeper understanding of the intricate mechanisms at play in radio news sourcing will be achieved, fostering a deeper understanding of the field.

The concept of gatekeeping theory dates back a century. The concept of the theory was introduced by Walter Lippmann, a journalist, in the US in 1922. The concept was revised in the 1940s. It took nearly six decades to get the modern concept of

gatekeeping theory. Many Scholars from Lewin (1947); Herman and Chomsky (1988); and Shoemaker (1990) refined the concept of gatekeeping. Without mentioning the term 'gatekeeping', Lippman described the filtering process of news passing through the gate of an editor to fit in a news outlet. He did not discuss the role of reporters as gatekeepers, instead, he only recognised the editor as a filter point of news and content to be published in newspapers. Lippmann (1922) discusses the role of an editor as a gatekeeper of news and contents within a framework in his mind in the American context of the the1920s, which is still relevant:

He must, as we have seen, woo at least a section of his readers every day because they will leave him without mercy if a rival paper happens to hit their fancy.

...Every bulletin requires a swift but complicated judgment. It must be understood, put in relation to other bulletins also understood, and played up or played down according to its probable interest for the public, as the editor conceives it. Without standardisation, without stereotypes, without routine judgements, without a fairly ruthless disregard for subtlety, the editor would soon die of excitement. (p. 352)

Lewin (1947, pp. 143–146) has coined the term 'gatekeeping' to show a selection process of food and vegetables in a household. A housewife goes to the market and purchases food and vegetables for the family. The foods under her choices reach the dining table to be served to the family members. The concept of Lewin is that the housewife becomes the gatekeeper for her family to decide what type of foods in which quantity and quality and ceiling of the budget enter the home. In this way, she has the power to make decisions about selecting markets, shopkeepers, foods and vegetables with desired quality and quantity.

White (1950, pp. 384–390) describes that the gatekeeping idea of Lewin (1947) inspired him to carry out a study in the communication field to compare the news flow in a newsroom. White (1950) carried out a study related to the selection process of news of a telegraph wire editor, 'Mr. Gates', at an American local newspaper. White found that Mr. Gates used only 10 per cent of the total contents received from wire service. The reasons for rejecting 90 per cent of the contents by the editor were two factors: " 1) rejecting the incident as worthy of being reported, and 2) selecting from many reports of the same event." (White, 1950, p. 386).

Westley and Maclean (1957, pp. 31–36) proposed a theoretical concept depicting the newsroom process, where reporters gather information from various sources in different environments. They not only filter the information but also actively seek out sources. After filtering and processing the information, reporters send it to the newsroom editor. While editors primarily receive news from reporters, they also obtain information directly from the environment through press releases, phone conversations, and social media interactions. Editors then further filter and refine the information received from both reporters and external stakeholders. The filtered information is subsequently transmitted to the media audiences. As a result, audiences rely on the mass media to receive information that has been filtered, shaped, and edited by reporters and editors. They do not have direct access to the unfiltered information from the environment, but instead receive a curated version determined by the reporters and their editors.

Their concept of gatekeeping highlights that only sources with access and influence in media houses have the opportunity to meet reporters and editors. This unequal access creates a power dynamic, where certain sources are more likely to be included in news stories. Others without such access may struggle to have their

perspectives represented. This emphasises the significance of gatekeeping and power dynamics in news production.

Galtung and Ruge (1965, pp. 65–71) have elaborated on the concept of gatekeeping proposing 12 factors that affect the selection process of news. The factors are as follows: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, and composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons, and reference to something negative. They claim that the news gets the final shape in a newsroom within the criteria of the proposed factors.

Harcup and O'Neill (2001, pp. 13–16), have added some elements to Galtung and Ruge's (1965) factors which are: entertainment (picture opportunity, references to sex, reference to animals, humour, showbiz/TV), reference to something positive, reference to elite organisations or institutions, agenda, promotion and campaigns. They underscore that they tried to complete the factors of Galtung and Ruge (1965) adding the new elements which are to be covered by journalists approaching the related sources.

McNelly (1959) presents a comprehensive model that critiques White's (1950) model for its limited depiction of foreign news gathering and processing. McNelly's model emphasises that the news process extends beyond gatekeeping and encompasses a complex journey from the event to gathering, filtering, and dissemination to the receivers. It acknowledges that gatekeeping is an ongoing process involving active participation from reporters and audiences alike.

Bass (1969) introduces a double-action gatekeeping model of news flow that discusses the active roles of both reporters and editors. The model consists of two stages: the newsgathering section and the news-processing section. In the newsgathering section, reporters approach news sources, filter information, gather relevant details, and prepare news content. In the second stage, editors, copywriters, and translators further filter the

news received at the desk. This concept is more specific and clearer to show the process of the newsroom and the responsibilities of the journalists compared to the previous concepts of Westley and Maclean (1957); and White (1950).

According to the concept of the Bass, a flow of raw news comes from the sources of information from the environment. Newsgatherers like writers, reporters and local editors filter the raw news and make news copies to submit to the news processors like editors, copywriters and translators. Finally, the news gets the final shape as a complete product passing through the filtration process.

McQuail and Windahl (1993, pp. 186–188) state that Ericson et al. (1987) have designated news sources as proactive or reactive. According to their concept, news sources are organised institutions, and they play active roles in disseminating news from the media. They organise press conferences and send press releases, press statements or press notes to display in news media. Reporters prepare news stories by approaching the sources and dispatching them to the editors. The size, form and priority of a news story depend on the decision of an editor as the editor is the final gatekeeper of news content.

McQuail and Windahl (1993, p. 167) further describe that Shoemaker (1991) has added the social, institutional, ideological and cultural contexts where the gatekeeping process takes place within a media house. According to the concept, multiple players like the sources, advertisers' market, interest groups and the government influence the gatekeeping process. The gatekeeping process is analysed on a big canvas rather than under a given routine of a media house.

Shoemaker and Riccio (2016) describe the multiple gatekeepers who select and reshape information from several sources into news stories. "At the information-gathering phase, the gatekeeper selects information to pass through the gate, where it may be edited, frames applied, as well as adding images and hyperlinks" (p. 2). They

have emphasised the role of social media and the internet as the sources of news for mass media in the digital age. They have an analogy that the vast environment in a society affects the gatekeeping process in a newsroom. The vast environment means the elements such as the social, economic, cultural and political factors. The economic factor affects the sourcing process through advertisement and sponsorship whereas, the political factor affects the sourcing process through the power and influence of the political leaders and the government. Likewise, the social factor affects the sourcing process through the influence and power of the social and structural hierarchy. Cultural factors affect the newsroom's gatekeeping and sourcing process through its cultural and religious traditions and the religious leaders. It affects the newsroom through symbolic or semiotic elements that are deep-rooted in society. These factors affect the agenda-setting process of the newsroom through advertisements and political and cultural influences. In other words, compared to the general people, the power elites in a broad society not only get a chance to be a source of news but also, affect the agenda-setting process in a newsroom.

While the power elites become the sources of news, they are heard in society, and the media echoes their voices and reflects the decisions in society. It not only supports power elites to gain power and influence in society but also maintains the status quo. For the marginalised people, who are not able to reach their voices to the newsroom, their thoughts, saying and aspirations pile up as the spiral of silence. They hesitate to say anything anti-current in a society afraid of isolation. The spiral of silence is not good for a democratic society (Noelle-Neumann, 1974, pp. 43–51). The situation of the spiral of silence in a society creates one-way and imbalanced public opinion where the real public has no own say in the mass media. In this situation, as Lippmann (1922) argues, only a few persons in society who can be counted on fingers can create a 'pseudo environment' that affects people "in deciding on their political behaviour—votes, allegiances, and

support" through the created flawed public opinions on the outlets of mass media (Defleur, 2010, p. 67). It disturbs the true practice of participatory democracy and social justice, human rights and equality which are the major and essential elements of the democratic system through the distorted version of reality.

Herman and Chomsky (2008) propound a propaganda model that focuses on the influence and multilevel effect on mass-media interests and choices of inequality of wealth and power. They have proposed five filters originally in 1988 under a propaganda model that determines the news to fit in a news media. The filters are as follows:

- (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms;
- (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media;
- (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by the government, business, and "experts" funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power;
- (4) "flak" as a means of disciplining the media; and
- (5) "anticommunism" as a national religion and control mechanism. (p. 2)

According to the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky, each raw material must pass through the proposed filters to fit in a media outlet. The media serves as the content in the interests and influences of powerful and wealthy elites. They argue that the media plays a biased role through their proposed five filters. The sourcing of mass media is a proposed third filter by Herman and Chomsky. They state that the mass media maintains a symbolic relationship with powerful sources for their own benefit. The newsroom of mass media needs to have a continuous flow of a large volume of information in a steady way to meet its goals. As is not possible from other sources, they use the contents from the government, powerful elites and business sectors. Even mass media cannot afford their reporters to cover every event that occurs or is organised in the national and international arena. Government agencies and corporate houses provide

media with pre-planned information with photos, video and audio clips that would make it easy for the media to fill up their spaces. The media use content from powerful sources to show that they are not biased by elite sources. But at the same time, they become biased towards the general people who do not have the power, money and access to share their information through the mass media (Herman & Chomsky (2008, pp. 18–22).

Moreover, Erzikoval (2018) has discussed the network gatekeeping modality in the digital age. Unlike the traditional gatekeeping of White, the network gatekeeping works as the ‘power to select, withhold, display, shape, repeat, localise, disregard, and delete information and introduces the concept of gated (those who are subjected to gatekeeping)’ (p. 2). She argues that in the digital age, the network gatekeeping theory conceptualises the networked nature of information such as social media platforms, websites and email. The power of the gatekeeper in the newsroom is affected by the political power and other interest power groups through the network dissemination system of information.

Gatekeepers decide to select or deselect news sources based on their agenda-setting in a particular case, issue, person or event. They prioritise news sources by framing and priming processes. McCombs and Shaw (1972, pp. 178–189), propounded the Agenda Setting Theory as the process of news and content placing and priming by the media to influence the audiences. According to the Agenda-Setting Theory, news media have the power to influence their audiences to think about any issue or event. In light of the theory, radio newsrooms can influence their audiences through agenda-setting functions when they prepare news and broadcast it giving priority to the bulletin. The newsroom first approves or rejects the sources of information through the gatekeeping process and then places them in news bulletins according to their importance. The newsroom's agenda-setting plays a crucial role in determining which

news items and sources are considered prime. The audience's perception of what constitutes prime news aligns with the newsroom's selection, thereby influencing how news is presented.

Dearing and Rogers (1996) have an opinion that agenda-setting is “an ongoing competition among issue proponents to gain the attention of media professionals, the public, and policy elites” (pp. 1–2). Revisiting the Agenda-Setting Theory, Guo and McCombs (2011) conceptualised network agenda-setting theory as the third-level agenda-setting. The conceptual theme of their network agenda-setting is “the salience of the interrelationships among constructs or the associative network regarding a certain topic can be transferred from the media agenda to the public agenda” (Guo & McCombs, 2011, p. 9).

McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (2014, pp. 782–783) have classified agenda-setting into seven facets such as basic agenda setting, attribute agenda setting, network agenda setting, central to understanding the strength of agenda-setting effects, consequences of agenda setting, origins of agenda setting and agenda melding, a way of merging the civic agendas by the media and the valued reference communities with personal views and experience. They have discussed in detail the need for orientation, network agenda-setting and agenda melding.

Normally, the agenda-setting process has an explanation of why certain issues are salient and how they come to be on the media agenda-setting, the public agenda-setting, or the policy agenda-setting, in addition to the interrelationship among the media agenda, the public agenda, and the policy agenda (Kim, Kim & Zhou, 2017, p. 7)

The agenda-setting process in the newsroom guides the selection of news and associated sources. Before the news bulletin is prepared, the newsroom establishes an

agenda, and reporters or desk editors then collect news and select sources following that agenda. Only sources related to the specific event or issue aligned with the newsroom's agenda can access the newsroom. Therefore, agenda-setting functions as a gatekeeping element within the newsroom. The theory has been supportive of the analysis of the policing and prioritising of the sources in the main news of radio news broadcasting.

## **2.7 Gap Analysis**

A wide range of literature from Google Scholars, Research Gate, Academia, Central Library of Tribhuvan University and other physical and online libraries have been extensively reviewed to identify the research gap. However, a few literature have been found to be associated with radio news sources in the American context only in the 1970s limiting them to specific news beats. While examining the existing literature in the international and national contexts beyond the 1970s, no studies were found with a direct focus on news sourcing in radio broadcasting. The studies on news in radio broadcasting and news sources of other media outlets have been meticulously reviewed to identify gaps for further study.

Through an empirical review of the existing literature, it becomes evident that many scholars have conducted research on various aspects of radio programmes and news within different timeframes. However, it is important to acknowledge that these studies have inherent limitations due to their thematic focus. They may be confined to specific areas or topics, which limits the generalisability of their findings.

Overall, while the existing literature provides valuable insights, it is important to recognise the limitations inherent in each study's scope and timeframe. The theoretical review of the literature reveals that several scholars have dedicated their research to the historical evolution of radio broadcasting, programmes, and news bulletins. Additionally, some studies have explored the legal dimensions surrounding radio, including the

challenges faced by radio stations in achieving the freedom to broadcast news. Others have delved into the nature and structure of radio programmes and news, examining their specific disciplines and characteristics. Furthermore, some scholars have examined the fundamental principles that underpin radio news practices associated with it.

Several scholars have conducted extensive research on diverse facets of news, and news sources on radio broadcasting and other media outlets. Waxman (1973) conducted a comparative study on news structure and treatment of news sources by gatekeepers during normal day operations and operations during a flood disaster in 1972 in the US while Buckalew (1974) carried out a study on the news sources of 33 news editors of 29 radio stations in 11 communities in six states of the western parts of the US. Similarly, Whitney (1979) conducted a study titled "The Sources of Radio News" based on a leading midwestern radio station in the US. Likewise, Whitney et al. (1989) uncovered that television networks' news sources exhibit "limited diversity. Lacy et al. (2013) conducted a study on the sourcing pattern of 198 radio stations in 120 metropolitan statistical areas from 363 metropolitan statistical areas in the US.

In the recent context, Rodero (2020) has conducted a study on the role of radio as a news source during the Covid-19 pandemic in Spain while Van Aelst et al. (2021) have conducted a research study focusing on the changing news media consumption habits during the COVID-19 pandemic in 17 European countries. Moreover, Mathisen (2021) examined the sourcing and diversity in sourcing among local and regional dailies and radio broadcasts across the five regions of Norway. Similarly, Rochyadi-Reetz (2022) has investigated news sourcing practices in reporting on climate change in Indonesia while Linards et al. (2023) have researched the sources in the online media of Switzerland during the war in Ukraine.

Furthermore, Matthews et al. (2023) in their study have found that the government sectors and the leaders have been projected as the prime news source in the UK's main news outlets during the COVID-19 pandemic while Janáčková et al. (2024) have disclosed in their study that Slovak radio broadcasting stations have national news content in the first category for broadcasting and foreign content in the second category. These studies have explored the impact of radio content during crises like disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as delving into the intricacies of news flow within radio newsrooms. Additionally, the researchers have examined the accessibility of local radio stations for diaspora communities and have delved into the historical, legal, theoretical, and principled dimensions of radio programmes. However, these scholars haven't focused on news sourcing in Radio broadcasting keeping objectivity and diversity at the core of the study.

Likewise, in the Nepali context, it is noteworthy that early studies have not specifically focused on the sourcing of radio news broadcasting. For instance, Banjade (2007), researched radio Madan Pokhara as a case study. Acharya (2015) carried out a study on the role of community radio in rural development. Dahal and Aram (2013) have focused on the role of community radio stations in the empowerment of minority Indigenous communities. Khanal (2015) researched the effects of radio programmes in rural areas of Nuwakot district. However, their studies are not directed to the News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting.

As a result, the review of existing literature has identified several gaps that warrant further studies. These areas include financial and infrastructural issues of radio newsrooms in Nepal; issues of news reporting on Nepali radio stations; issues of editing and presentation of radio news; issues regarding professionalism in Nepali radio journalism; and news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.

A noticeable gap exists in the literature as previous studies have not specifically focused on news sourcing in radio broadcasting. Consequently, the study has selected the thematic area of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting for research. The previous studies also have not enquired about the objectivity and diversity of sources and the affecting factors in the news source selection and verification process. Therefore, this study aims to address this knowledge gap by researching the sourcing in the main news of Nepali radio broadcasting under the title 'News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting'.

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

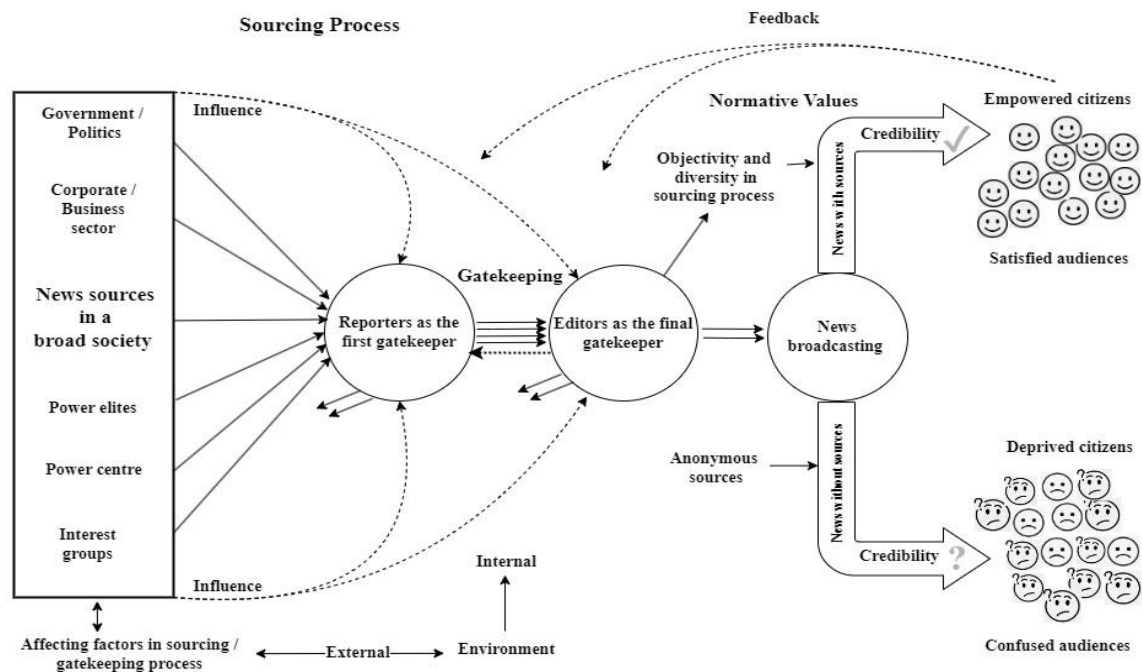
Considering the theories and functions of a newsroom and news sourcing process, the study focuses on the following functional conceptual framework:

Being a part of a complex society with various ideological and cultural systems, a radio newsroom exercises news businesses by collecting information from news sources and writing, packaging and broadcasting news. Newsroom operation is a process where media workers with different positions from reporters to editors engage in the gatekeeping process. Broadcasting news with diverse and credible sources enhances the quality and credibility of a radio station among the audiences. A radio newsroom needs to maintain objectivity and diversity in the source selection process to fulfil its responsibility towards society. However, elite powers easily have access to newsrooms as sources to provide information to radio journalists instead of the general people. Internal factors such as the workforce, organisational management, professional, financial and technological capacity of the newsroom affect the source selection and verification process while social, economic, political and cultural factors as power elites and power centres affect the gatekeeping process externally. These factors affect the

agenda-setting and gatekeeping process of a newsroom. To materialise the concept, the diagram of the conceptual framework for the study has been proposed as follows:

**Figure 2.1**

*Conceptual Diagram of Sourcing Process in Radio News, 2023*



*Source: Modified Diagram Based on Westley and Maclean (1957, p. 33).*

Figure 2.1 illustrates the influential news sources in the broad society on the left side, from where reporters and the newsrooms receive a continuous flow of information. Reporters also tend to select those sources that are easily accessible and reachable. The sourcing process of news depends on the socio-political, economic, cultural, and ideological context of both the reporter and the sources. Some sources, particularly those with power, money, or influence, have direct access to the newsroom to provide information. They frequently show their presence in newsrooms and provide information routinely. The newsroom is often influenced by these powerful and influential sources. However, ordinary individuals and common people generally have a rare chance to be selected as news sources due to their lack of access to the newsroom and power to show.

After the filtering process, the newsrooms disseminate two types of news to their audiences: news items with source attribution that maintain objectivity and diversity in sourcing; and news items that lack source attribution or broadcast with anonymous sources. The consequences of broadcasting news without source attribution or with anonymous sources confuse listeners and decrease the credibility of a broadcasting organisation. Normative value as objectivity inspires journalists to disclose their news sources. The notion of diversity makes journalists sensible towards the inclusion of the general people and marginalised communities as in news as news sources. News with source attribution makes audiences confident and satisfied. Compared to the news without mentioning sources, news broadcasting with diverse sources maintaining objectivity and diversity makes news more credible. However, the environment of a radio newsroom as an internal factor and the power elites and power centres as external factors affect the gatekeeping process in news source selection.

Guided by the above-mentioned conceptual framework, the research has been carried out on the title: News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

To achieve the research objectives, the dissertation primarily centres on examining and analysing the responses to the predetermined research questions through a systematic inquiry. Throughout the study, theoretical frameworks derived from mass communication and journalism, as well as other pertinent research philosophies, have guided the research process. By applying these theoretical perspectives, the methodology aims to meet the objectives of the study providing a comprehensive understanding of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting through a systematic research process that is as follows:

#### **3.1 Theoretical Perspective of the Study**

The media Gatekeeping Theory of White (1950) and others, the media Agenda Setting Theory of McComb and Shaw (1972), and the Normative theories of social responsibility by Hutchins Commission (1947); and Peterson (1956) have been taken as the guiding media theories for the study. According to the Agenda Setting Theory, a reporter selects or deselects sources of news from the beginning of the reporting process to influence audiences through various social, political, cultural and economic agendas (McComb & Shaw, 1972). Through the gatekeeping process, a radio newsroom selects only the sources of the news that they want to give entry into the bulletins. Those sources of news which are denied entry remain out of the news gate. The gatekeeping process has a decisive role in providing an entry or denying an entry to news sources in the news-making process.

A radio newsroom takes news from confident and reliable sources in its news bulletins. Reporters and editors are guided by their own consciences and news values of a newsroom while they follow the gatekeeping process (White, 1950; Lewin, 1947;

Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Gatekeepers should be responsible towards the society while doing gatekeeping of sources. The concept of social responsibility as normative values has been introduced by the Hutchins Commission in 1947 (Blanchard, 1977, p. 16–17). Theodor Peterson (1956) shaped it in the form of the Social Responsibility of the Press. The main thrust of the normative theory of social responsibility is that the press should be responsible towards the broader society in doing journalistic business. There is an interlinking connection between these three theories in this theory.

The Gatekeeping Theory supports the analysis of the news source selection process of a radio newsroom. The editor in the newsroom also regulates the gate for the news sources through the selection process. The Agenda Setting Theory guides in analysing the priority and placing of the sources in the main news. The Normative Theory supports checking the social responsibility of the gatekeepers during the sourcing process in radio newsrooms whether they maintain objectivity and diversity.

In contrast, the radio newsroom gives priority to an item of news in the headline of the news bulletin, according to its agenda, that it wants to set. According to the Agenda Setting Theory of (McCombs and Shaw (1972), a newsroom sets its agenda by placing desirable events, issues and related sources prioritising them and providing a prime time or a prime location. A newsroom highlights them in an attractive way to catch the audience's attention. The mass media do not tell the audiences what to think but they tell audiences what to think about (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, pp. 176–187). Furthermore, Herman and Chomsky (2008, pp. 18–22) discuss that the mass media serve the power elites by selecting them as information sources instead of reaching out to the general people. They call sourcing one of the filters of media propaganda. In connection with these theoretical insights of the scholars, this study intends to interpret the news sourcing

in Nepali radio broadcasting within the theoretical frameworks of the mass media theories (Detailed discussion in Chapter 2).

### **3.2 Philosophical Perspective of the Study**

To interpret and describe the research questions through the objectives of the news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting, the study has applied the research design based on the following philosophical aspects:

#### ***a) Ontology***

Ontology in philosophy refers to existential matters and questions about the nature of existence which is tuned with epistemology. As a branch of metaphysics, ontology stands for what is there to study. Ontology is divided into two parts: realism/objectivism or domain ontology which refers to the single truth of knowledge and relativist/subjective or interface ontology which refers to many dimensions of reality and perceptions of various people regarding different aspects of realities that can be constructed through a systemic study (Smith, 2009). Accordingly, this study is based on the relativism/subjectivism ontology that reflects multiple realities of knowledge of news sources in Nepali radio news bulletins. This ontology is related to the interpretivism epistemological philosophy of research to analyse the multiple realities in the radio news sourcing process. The study has found multiple realities of the sources in news such as a single source, multiple sources, anonymous sources, no sources and the weaknesses of newsrooms in maintaining objectivity and diversity of sources focusing on the main news of Nepali radio bulletins within the study area.

#### ***b) Epistemology***

The root of Epistemology goes to the Ancient Greek *epistēmē* which refers to systematic or reliable knowledge. "Epistemology is closely connected to the method as they are both concerned with knowledge creation and validation broadly construed.

Research methods are essentially epistemologies – by following a certain process we support our claim to know about the thing(s) we have been researching" (GO-GN, 2020, p. 10). To explore the knowledge, the research has adopted an epistemological stance grounded in relativist/subjective ontology, which acknowledges multiple and subjective realities inherent in insights derived from diverse practices and interactions. This approach embraces the Interpretivism epistemological philosophy of research, which entails examining the interplay between news sourcing practices and the diverse perspectives of experts, academics, and news practitioners.

James and Busher (2009) describe transactional epistemology as constructivist epistemology under which people construct multiple meanings in different ways to interpret and understand the same phenomena as they argue that "there can be no unmediated grasp of the social world that exists independently of the researcher and all claims to knowledge take place within a particular conceptual framework" (p. 7). Furthermore, transactional or constructivist epistemology means multiple realities, and the researcher is a part of the society and consequently cannot be separated from the knowledge. Accordingly, to match the relativism/subjectivism ontology, the transactional/interpretivism epistemology has been selected in the study relating to subjectivism/relativism ontological philosophy and qualitative research methodology to interpret multiple realities underpinned in the news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting.

Connecting to the transactional/interpretivism epistemology, inductive approach with qualitative methodology and data collection methods such as qualitative content analysis, in-depth interviews and newsroom observation have been applied and the relativism/subjectivist ontological realities regarding news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting has been interpreted. The epistemological knowledge has found that radio

stations have failed to maintain objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process. Additionally, the study reveals similarities in sourcing trends within the primary news coverage of Nepali radio bulletins, such as the reliance on single sources and anonymous sources. Likewise, notable distinctions exist in various aspects, such as the selection of headline makers as sources, the prioritisation of sources in headline news, and the maintenance of diversity. These findings are discussed in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

*c) Axiology*

Axiology refers to the value and ethical considerations of research. In the study, the researcher has followed ethical values and norms during every step of the research. The data for content analysis has been taken with the permission of the authorities concerned with the sample radio stations. During content analysis, a basic codebook has been prepared before analysis of the sources in the main news of radio bulletins. The researcher has no affiliation relationship or prejudice with any of the sample radio stations and the persons selected as experts and authorities of these sample radio stations.

The researcher is free to analyse the data independently based on the research outcomes. Identification of the researcher has been given and the purpose of the interview and observation has been explained to experts and concerned authorities before taking the interviews. Audios were recorded with the permission of the concerned persons. The researcher entered the sample radio stations' newsrooms to have the observations with the permission of the concerned authorities. Every author, researcher, and working paper presenter whose ideas and works have been borrowed are genuinely credited in the dissertation. The findings of the dissertation are the original works of the researcher. No part of others' studies has been incorporated without proper citations and references as well as other sources used in this dissertation.

### 3.3 Research Design

The research design follows the philosophy, methodological approach, methodological choice, strategy, and time horizon as recommended by Saunders et al. (2009, p. 108; Dudovskiy, 2016, p. 34). The subjectivist ontology and interpretivism epistemological philosophy advocates the necessity for the researcher "to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors. This emphasises the difference between conducting research among people rather than objects" (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 116). This philosophy is interlinked with the inductive approach that stands for the multiple dimensions of realities and constructivist worldview. The study aims to interpret the sourcing of radio news. There is not only a dimension of the realities and the situations of radio stations for sourcing news. The academic problem chosen for this study is not possible to measure and prove only in numbers. As the deductive approach only matches the positivist philosophy and quantitative methodology, it is not appropriate to show the multiple dimensions of the realities of radio news sources. Under the inductive approach, the research has been designed as a narrative inquiry strategy.

According to Saunders et al. (2009, pp. 152–153), under the interpretivism philosophy, there are two types of research choices: mono-method and multi-methods. Under the interpretivism philosophy, this study is intended to follow the multimethod qualitative methodological choice aiming at gathering qualitative data through multiple data collection methods such as qualitative content analysis, interviews, and observation. As Dudovskiy (2018) describes "qualitative data collection methods are exploratory in nature and are mainly concerned with gaining insights and understanding on underlying reasons and motivations" (p. 106), multiple qualitative methods have been selected to collect primary data for the research.

Philosophically interpretivism interprets the data using an inductive approach. Therefore, qualitative methodology has been selected to interpret the data during the study. Qualitative research is known as the methodology that explores the quality of data. This methodology assesses or examines the issues through the experiences and opinions of people. Qualitative research is generally characterised by inductive approaches to knowledge-building aimed at generating meaning (Leavy, 2017, p. 9). As Creswell (2009, pp. 8–9) describes, this study considers the Constructivist Worldview which equivalents interpretativism philosophy under which individuals seek their understanding of the world in which they are born, live and work every day.

Under the methodological choices, two types of time horizons are in trends in the research: the longitudinal and the cross-sectional time horizons. The longitudinal time horizon refers to the long process of data collection. Under this, the researcher should take data from a long-time observation or continue the study of the events in series. As Saunders et al. (2009, pp. 155–156) describe, the longitudinal time frame seeks answers to the question regarding what types of changes have come in a long process of data collection. This study relies on the content analysis of audio data from radio news spanning a total of seven months (from June 2021 to January 2022). Additionally, it includes two days of newsroom observation of four sample radio stations and interviews conducted with 26 experts, academicians, radio managers, journalists, and practitioners from various radio stations.

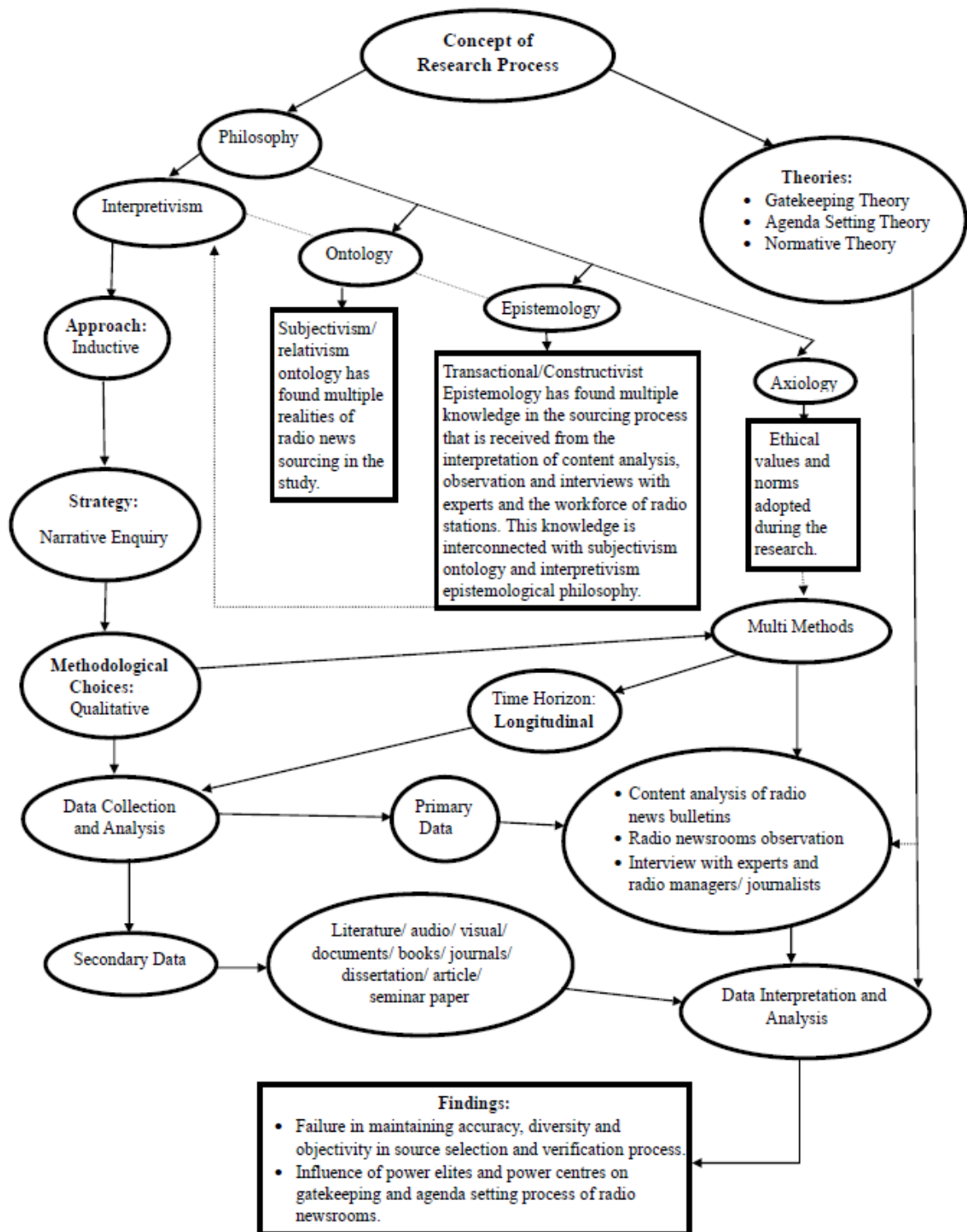
The study follows the changing phenomena of sourcing in Nepali radio newsrooms during the research time of seven months duration through the content analysis method. Consequently, the study has followed the longitudinal time horizon under the research design. Within the research design, primary and secondary data have been collected, which has been described in the data collection techniques section.

***a) Concept of Research Process***

A concept figure of the research process has been prepared to visualise the whole process of the research applied in the study. The main idea of the diagram is based on the research onion of Saunders et al. (2009, p. 108) which has visualised the process that begins from the philosophy, applied theories, approaches to the data collection techniques and analysis for this study. The research concept in the figure systematically links the philosophy of research to the theories and qualitative content analysis of radio news bulletins, newsroom observation and in-depth interviews with related experts, academicians and radio managers/news chiefs/journalists. Figure 3.1 describes the research guided by the interpretativism epistemological philosophy which is suitable for inductive research with qualitative methodology and multiple methods.

Figure 3.1

## Concept of Research Process



Source: The concept has been modified from the 'Research Onion' of Saunders et al. (2009, p. 108).

### 3.4 Methods

Qualitative multi-methods have been applied in this study to collect and interpret qualitative data to interlink the interpretative philosophy. Scholars have defined research methods as tools that are used to collect data in a systematic study. As Strauss and Corbin (1998), regarding qualitative data collection methods, state that “researchers gather data using interviews and observations, techniques normally associated with qualitative methods” and “code the data in a manner that allows them to be statistically analysed” (p. 11), this study has carried out content analysis, in-depth interviews, and radio newsroom observations under the qualitative data collection method that are presented below:

#### *a) Qualitative Content Analysis*

Content analysis falls under the family of systematic, rule-guided techniques used to analyse the informational content of textual data (Mayring, 2000, p. 2). According to Forman and Damschroder (2015), “qualitative content analysis stands in contrast to methods that, rather than focusing on the informational content of the data, bring to bear theoretical perspectives” (p. 40). Ethnographic Qualitative Content analysis has been applied in this study to collect and interpret the data of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting as Krippendorff (2004, p. 16) describes ethnographic content analysis as a type of qualitative content analysis which produces quantification with narrative description. Earlier, Altheide (1987) has explained that ethnographic content analysis is a qualitative data collection and analysis approach, which proposes that “numeric as well as narrative data be collected when studying such documents as TV news and movies” (p. 65). The main characteristics of the qualitative ethnographic content analysis applied to this study have been presented in Table 3.1 below with contrasting features of quantitative content analysis:

**Table 3.1***Qualitative Ethnographic Content Analysis*

	Quantitative content analysis	Qualitative ethnographic content analysis
Research goal	Verification	Discovery; verification
Sample	Random and stratified	purposive and theoretical
Types of data	Numbers	Numbers, narratives
Data entry points	Once	Multiples
Data analysis	Statistical	Textual and statistical
Data presentation	Tables	Tables and texts

*Source: Altheide (1987, p. 67)*

As Table 3.1 describes, this study has applied qualitative ethnographic content analysis of four sample radio stations' radio news bulletins spanning through three-month duration under the purposive sample selection method to interpret the news sourcing in the forms of numbers and narratives. The sample radio stations are Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini and BFM. Since the sample radio stations could provide the content in the form of audio, the study has carried out the aural (audio) ethnographic content analysis. As per the suggestion of Altheide (1987); and Krippendorff (2004), the sourcing of news has been described by generating statistical and narrative data, which refers to the ethnographic qualitative content analysis method. Under the ethnographic content analysis, records of the news bulletins of individual radio stations have been collected, produced numbers and narratives. Both the latent and manifest value of the audio record have been interpreted through the content analysis process.

Every station has a unique identity and characters to get selected as a sample radio. Radio Nepal, is the oldest and government-owned broadcasting station, Radio Sagarmatha, is the first independent radio station in South Asia, run by the NGO, while Radio Lumbini is, the oldest station out of Kathmandu Valley, run by cooperatives that represents the western part of the country and BFM, an old station which could provide

an audio archive of the news bulletin for three months and run by the private sector which represents the eastern part of Nepal.

These four sample radio stations represent the four types of ownership of radio broadcasting in Nepal, government-owned, NGO-run, cooperative-run, and private sector-run. Main news bulletins of the sample radio stations in the evening time have been selected as the sample news for content analysis. The main news bulletins of the sample radio stations such as Radio Nepal at 19:00, Radio Sagarmatha at 18:45, Radio Lumbini at 18:00 and the BFM at 18:00 have been selected for the content analysis. The reason for selecting news bulletins in the evening time is that the news bulletins are prepared by the newsroom at their full capacity by mobilising reporters to gather the events of the whole day. For the content analysis of the main news, all sample radio stations were requested to provide the audio record of the broadcast news bulletins for three months. The time duration of the radio news audio is varied due to the convenience of the radio stations to record live broadcasting of radio news bulletins. The broadcasting date and time of news bulletin table are as follows:

**Table 3.2**

*Description of the Sample Radio News for the Qualitative Content Analysis*

Sample radio stations	Type of radio	Broadcasting date of the sample news bulletins	News broadcasting time	Time duration of the radio news bulletins
Radio Sagarmatha, Lalitpur	Community run by NGO	1 Asar–31 Bhadra 2078 (15 June–16 September 2021)	18:45–19:20	25 minutes
Radio Nepal, Kathmandu	Government	1 Shrawan–31 Asoj 2078 (16 July–17 October 2021)	19:00–19:25	25 minutes
BFM, Biratnagar	Private	1 Asoj–29 Mangsir 2078 (17 September–15 December 2021)	18:00–18:20	20 minutes
Radio Lumbini, Rupendehi	Community run by cooperative	1 Kartik–30 Poush 2078 (18 October 2021–14 January 2022)	18:00–18:15	15 minutes

*Source: Field Study, 2022*

**i) Purpose of Qualitative Content Analysis.** Taking the questions from Lasswell (1948, p. 216), a table has been developed to show the purpose of the qualitative content analysis of news sourcing in radio news based on Holsti (1968, p. 604) as follows:

**Table 3.3**

*Concept of Content Analysis with Purpose, Elements, Question and Use*

Purpose	Element	Question	Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To study the status of news sources in Nepali radio broadcasting.</li> </ul>	Source: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sample radio news bulletins of selected radio stations</li> </ul>	Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The study aims to enquire about the status of sources in the headline news of Nepali radio stations.</li> </ul>
	Encoding process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coding the key terms in the codebook according to the objectives of the study</li> </ul>	Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To analyse diversity in sources: gender and minorities equality, Indigenous people, core and periphery, the accuracy of sources, balance in sources with suitable cases</li> <li>Uses of single sources, anonymous sources and attribution to the sources</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To examine the objectivity and diversity of news maintained by radio stations in their news sourcing process.</li> </ul>	Channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini and BFM</li> </ul>	How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the aural (audio) content analysis</li> <li>Ethnographic approach of qualitative content analysis</li> </ul>
	Message: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headline news of radio bulletins in the evening time of four radio stations</li> </ul>	What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the sources used in the radio news,</li> <li>Analyses the sources as human and extra-human</li> </ul>
	Recipient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listeners of radio news</li> </ul>	To whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present findings and analysis of the uses of sources considering the media theories— Gatekeeping, Agenda Setting and Normative Theories</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To evaluate the affecting factors in the news sourcing process of Nepali radio broadcasting.</li> </ul>	Decoding process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening and coding the aural data in the code book</li> <li>Interpreting the data following the media/communication theories</li> <li>Being non-partial and maintaining objectivity as a researcher</li> </ul>	With what effect (and cause)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the internal factors that affect the sourcing process: workforce, physical infrastructure, capacity building of the workforce, inclusiveness of radio newsroom</li> <li>Analyse the influence of external factors in the sourcing process of radio news</li> </ul>

*Source: The concept has been modified by adopting from Holsti (1968, p. 604)*

As Holsti (1968) developed a model of content analysis adopting the questions from Lasswell (1948) with the purpose, questions and research problems, Table 3.3 has been developed in this study to project the concept of content analysis of radio news with the questions, 'who says what, in what channel, to whom, with what effect'? The table has clarified the concept with answers to the questions through the ethnographic content analysis under the purpose, element, questions and use of content analysis columns.

Costa and Amado (2018, p. 19) present a table visualising content analysis with methods, estimated time, validity, reliability and tools. According to them, the method of qualitative content analysis is manual reading (listening) and coding of documents, estimated time is high (weeks or months), validity is potentially high, and reliability can be problematic because the approach is inductive of the qualitative content analysis. They propose 10 items of software as tools for qualitative content analysis. During this study, CSV files, Excel files, Pivot table and NVivo tools for the content analysis.

During the content analysis of 1711 main news broadcast on four sample radio stations, a codebook has been carefully prepared with suitable categories to cover the enquiry of the research questions and listed the data to assess and analyse news sourcing in the main news of Nepali radio broadcasting. As Mayring (2000, p. 4) suggests, a criterion of the definition has been formulated and derived from the research questions and the theoretical background. The data has been reviewed to comprehend the fundamental concepts and themes within the news sourcing in radio broadcasting. Initially, 137 themes were identified in the first phase, which were subsequently consolidated into 76 categories during the second step. Lastly, the three primary themes with selected media theories such as gatekeeping, agenda setting and normative values—the status of news sourcing; objectivity and diversity in news sourcing; and influencing factors in the news sourcing process — have been utilised across 23 coded categories.

For instance, the sourcing beat/subject areas were initially categorised into 30 categories, which were later condensed into 13 categories in the final analysis. Likewise, headline makers determined by social structure were initially categorised into 23 areas. However, during the final phase, they were condensed into 10 categories. Following a review of the grouped codes, they were expanded back into 23 themes. Subsequently, a codebook was developed to track the codes for content analysis based on the finalised themes.

Following the piloting phase, which involved analysing one month of news bulletins, the codes and themes were refined to their final form.

It took seven months to collect the audio records from all sample radio stations for content analysis. The first recorded tape of daily news was of Radio Sagarmatha on 15 June 2021, and the process continued for the next three months. Radio Nepal started to preserve an audio record of an everyday news bulletin on 16 July 2021 and continued the process for the next three months, 17 October 2021. BFM, Biratnagar began to record its daily news bulletin on 17 September 2021 and continued the process for up to three months until 15 December 2021. Radio Lumbini started to record its daily news on 18 October 2021 and continued the process for up to three months, until 14 January 2022. It took an additional month to receive the audio recording.

Note-keeping in a diary continued to trace the major trends of sourcing during the content analysis. The issues and cases have been noted down in the diary throughout the content analysis process. Every headline of the main news is transcribed in a separate diary. The codebook prepared in an Excel sheet has been given an entry into the Google form and filled out the variables of the content for analysis. The data from the Google Form has been downloaded into the CSV file format. In the file, the coding process was completed and composed into the tables of each category by applying the Pivot table under the Excel spreadsheets. All Pivot tables have been imported into Microsoft Word

to visualise and analyse the data. The data primary and analysis of the content have been furnished under chapters 4, 5 and 6. Hence, the date of the audio recording is varied for the sample radio stations, so it is impossible to compare each other in all cases and issues of the data. However, some similar cases, trends and issues have been compared with the stations.

### **3.5 Data Collection Techniques**

Two types of data have been used in the study: primary data and, secondary data. Qualitative content analysis, field observation and in-depth interviews have been taken to collect primary data and the pre-published data have been taken from the secondary sources as the secondary data. The methods and collection techniques are as follows:

#### ***a) Primary Data***

Primary data refers to the information gathered by the researcher through systematic study and field observation. The result of the content analysis from three months of the main news bulletins from the four radio stations, i.e., Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini and BFM, is based on primary data for the study. Besides, the result of the newsroom observation and the data from the interview with experts and concerned officials, journalists have been also included as the primary data in this study.

**i) Field Observation.** According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011, p. 169), researchers learn "to narrate communication process about which" they were "previously unaware or inarticulate" through observation. Each sample radio station's newsroom has been observed with a typical case sampling strategy representing the topic of the study. News meetings, news reporting, source selection and verification process, writing, editing, and gatekeeping of a news bulletin have been observed as the overt observer as prescribed by Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p. 124). In the overt observation method, the newsrooms

of the sample radio stations have been visited and observed with the permission of the respective radio management. The observation (fieldwork) schedule is as follows:

**Table 3.4**

*Schedule of the Radio Newsroom Observation*

Radio stations	City/ District	Date of observation	Time of observation
BFM	Biratnagar, Morang	15-16 November 2021	10 AM to 7 PM
Radio Sagarmatha	Bhanimandal, Lalitpur	14-15 August 2021	10 AM to 7 PM
Radio Lumbini	Manigram, Rupendehi	11-12 April 2022	10 AM to 7 PM
Radio Nepal	Singha Darbar, Kathmandu	11-12 November 2022	10 AM to 7 PM

*Source: Field Study, 2022*

For the field observation, a module has been designed as a checklist before visiting radio newsrooms. During the observation, the following procedures of the news operation and gatekeeping process have been observed: status of human resources in the newsroom, editorial meeting, news stories collection techniques, news writing, news submission to the desk, editing and finalisation of the news story, deadline, news monitoring, revision of the bulletin after going on air. The details of the module have been presented in Appendix— 4.

An enquiry has been made with the management and workforce in the newsroom for more information about the newsroom operation during the observation period.

**ii) Interview.** To describe and analyse the data that has come from the content analysis of radio news of the sample radio stations, in-depth interviews have been taken with 26 personalities. Sectoral wise, radio managers, news chiefs, radio journalists and listeners among them. Two sets of structured questions have been designed to ask the

interviewee, one for the experts, and another for the Radio managers/journalists. The main reason for developing two sets of questions is to cover the multiple grounds of experiences, knowledge and perspectives of concerned experts/intellectuals and practitioners. The interviews have been taken face-to-face, written, telephone and online. The interviewees have been selected as the experts, academia, listeners, media practitioners, researchers, radio journalists and radio managers (Referred Appendix—1). The time duration of the interview has been taken of six months from January to June 2023. The two separate sets of structured questions have been presented in Appendices—4 and 5.

***b) Secondary Data***

Secondary data refers to the data publicised before the research in the form of various outlets from analogue to digital that is related to the subject areas of the study. Books, journals, newspapers, radio and television content, dissertations, materials of the previous studies and online content and seminar papers have been taken as the secondary data for the study. Physical libraries of universities, organisations and individuals, online libraries, official sites, journals' sites, and databases have been visited to collect the secondary data. They have been carefully verified, and the collected data's reliability, validity, and authenticity were tested before using them. The parameters and norms have been followed during the secondary data collection process. Proper credits have been given to the secondary data sources used in the study following the norms and guidelines of the seventh edition of the Publication Manual of APA in the form of in-text citations and references. In this research report, first-hand literature and original texts, audio and visual forms have been consulted as the secondary data sources. Gender and community-friendly language have been maintained in the dissertation.

### 3.6) Data Analysis with Objective-wise Log Frame

An objective-wise log frame has been developed to describe and analyse the objectives-wise findings with methods, approaches and ways of findings in Chapter 7. The table has analysed research questions 1, 2 and 3 with applied methods, such as content analysis, interview and field observation with qualitative approaches to interpreting the ways findings such as the status of news sourcing, cause and effects and the process to maintain the objectivity and diversity, which are as follows in Table 3.5:

**Table 3.5**

*Log Frame to Analyse Data with the Research Questions*

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Applied methods</b>	<b>Approach</b>	<b>Way of findings</b>
RQ1: What is the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting?	Content analysis, interview	Qualitative	Interpretation
RQ2: Why is the news sourcing process affected in radio newsrooms?	Interview, observation	Qualitative	Cause and effect interpretation
RQ3: How do radio newsrooms maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing?	Observation, content analysis, interview	Qualitative	Process interpretation

*Source: Study, 2023*

Table 3.5 comprises three research questions: what is the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting? why is the news sourcing process affected in radio newsrooms? and how do radio newsrooms maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing? with the applied methods, approaches and ways of findings. The table shows that the qualitative approach has been applied with qualitative content analysis,

interview and newsroom observation to interpret the status of news sourcing, causes and effects and sourcing process of newsrooms. The detailed results with wide discourse and the findings by exploring research questions have been presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and Chapter 7.

### **3.7 Measures Adopted to Make the Study Biasfree**

Several scholars have proposed various criteria to make research work bias-free. Guba and Lincoln (1981) have set a standard in qualitative research to check bias by employing responsive and adaptable approaches. They have suggested researchers adopt immediacy and sensitivity to the changing phenomena having a good sense of clarity and summary.

Later, Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose transferability, credibility, confirmability and dependability as major criteria in the qualitative paradigm to maintain "trustworthiness".

Furthermore, Morse et al. (2002) stress the need for adopting verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research ensuring responsiveness, methodological coherence, appropriateness of sample, collection and analysis of timely and relevant data, theoretical thinking and aspect of theory development (pp. 13–19). They further elaborate in detailing to make the qualitative research a bias-free work:

A good qualitative researcher moves back and forth between design and implementation to ensure congruence among question formulation, literature, recruitment, data collection strategies, and analysis. Data are systematically checked, the focus is maintained, and the fit of data and the conceptual work of analysis and interpretation are monitored and confirmed constantly. (p. 17)

Likewise, Galas (2017, p. 1) argues that qualitative researchers commonly concur that emphasising concepts like rigour and trustworthiness is more relevant to the reflective, subjective essence of qualitative research.

In light of the scholars' insights, the study has embraced responsiveness, methodological coherence, appropriateness of the sample, and collection and analysis of timely and relevant data to make it bias-free. The data and the entire dissertation have been thoroughly reviewed, and errors have been promptly corrected. A sufficient sample size has been selected in content analysis and interviews until the point of saturation was reached. Furthermore, the study has not received funding from any party, nor does it carry any obligation or affiliation with the samples during the research, as it remains an independent endeavour. Ethical considerations have also been taken into account to make it a bias-free work.

## Chapter 4

### Status of News Sourcing in Radio Broadcasting

This chapter aims to assess the status of news sourcing in the headline news of Nepali radio broadcasting meeting objective 1 of the study. First, the chapter connects the news sources to the evolution and development of radio news and sources; and then presents an analysis of the news sources such as the beat of sources, nature of sources, sources from the geographical point of view, and status of people as sources are presented with the result of the content analysis, discussion of the experts and the experiences of radio practices.

#### 4.1 Background

Radio news commenced with regular radio broadcasting after World War I in 1920 in the Western world. In Nepal, general people got access to radio news during the Rana Regime after World War II when the then Prime Minister lifted the restriction imposed on possessing the radio set for the general people in 1947. People became habitual to listen to the official news on the radio after regular broadcasting of news bulletins from Radio Nepal in 1951 (Onta et al., 2004, p. 71). People have been enjoying news from independent local radio stations since the birth of Radio Sagarmatha in 1997 as the first independent radio station not only in Nepal but in entire South Asia (Mainali, 2002, p. 26). It became possible because of the transformation of the political system from the conservative closed non-party Panchayat to an open, liberal and pluralistic democratic system.

Nepal between the mid-twentieth century and the first quarter of the twenty-first century has witnessed a sea change in broadcasting, mainly induced by political changes. If radio news bulletins are the manifestations, such as the leaves of a tree, the successive political system and state of media freedom have been the major factors, in turning the

leaves yellow or green (Mckenzie, 2006, pp. 36–37). Different political systems have shaped the media landscape in Nepal by setting policies suitable for their philosophy.

Moreover, the political system and the broad social system of any country shape the media system (Siebert, 1956, pp. 10–11). Nepal has been undergoing different political systems such as authoritarian, and liberal democratic. As a part of the broad social environment, media also have been shaped by the changes in political systems in the country. Seibert (1956) argues that "when the authoritarian turns in the function of the mass media, he has already determined the basic purpose of government. These purposes inevitably control his attitude towards both the cultural and political aspects of communication" (p. 18). In the Nepali context, the Rana and the Panchayati regimes had adopted the authoritarian media system.

Williams (1976, pp. 130–137) describes the organisational structure of media as authoritarian, paternal, commercial and democratic. These communication systems reflect the political, cultural and commercial expressions of the influence of the broad system. The first, the authoritarian communication form reflects media control, manipulation and censorship of media by the state. The 'purpose of communication is to protect, maintain, or advance a social order based on minority power' (p. 131). This structure of the communication system reflects the media under the Party-less Panchayat System that controlled the fourth estate to protect the absolute king and the political system itself. As the broadcast media, Radio Nepal was used as an instrument of the mouthpiece of the Panchayati System. Its sources of news were censored and filtered who could be supportive of the authoritarian system. After the political change in 1990, the democratic government used Radio Nepal as the paternal communication system which Williams (1976) describes as the authoritarian communications 'with a

conscience: that is to say, with values and purposes beyond the maintenance of its own power” (p. 131).

Moreover, Merrill and Lowenstein (1979, p. 186)) elaborated press philosophies into four types: authoritarian with negative government controls, social-centralist with positive government controls, libertarian without government controls, and social-libertarian with minimal government controls. According to the typography of Merrill and Lowenstein (1979, pp. 165–168), Radio Nepal, a governmental broadcasting tool, exercised the social centralist model with positive government controls in the democratic environment after 1990. The governments were elected and democratic, however, the control over Radio Nepal in news sourcing was over the control of the government. In this course, the royal palace and the government agencies also became news sources for Radio Nepal as the authoritarian power. Only the power elites were the news sources for the radio news until an iron gate opened for independent radio broadcasting in 1997 (Mainali, 2002, p. 26). Different theories attempt to explain the reasons behind the selection process of news and news sources.

The gatekeeping theory explains the process and reasons for selecting news and sources in a newsroom. According to the theory, the selection process is determined by the judgement of a reporter and an editor, who are at the gate to filter the flow of news. They are guided by their own consciences and news values they set in a newsroom while they select news and related sources (Lewin, 1947, pp. 143–146; Galtung & Ruge, 1965, pp. 65–71). Additionally, the Agenda Setting Theory discusses the process and philosophy of placing the content received from sources with more priority or less priority. Normative values inspire journalists to be responsible towards society during the news sourcing process.

The newsroom sets the agenda by placing desirable events, issues and related sources in prime time or prime location highlighting them in an attractive way to catch the audiences' attractions. The mass media do not tell the audiences what to think but they tell the audiences what to think about (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, pp. 176–187). Herman and Chomsky (2008, pp. 18–22) discuss that the mass media serve the power elites by selecting them as information sources instead of reaching the general people. They call sourcing one of the filters of media propaganda. Whatever the theory, philosophy and reasons behind it, the newsroom of a radio station selects news from a few sources and deselects news from the rest of the sources. Questions like what types of sources they select and why and what is the picture of the sources in a radio news bulletin should be answered through a systematic content analysis, observation, and interview.

#### **4.2 Defining Radio**

Radio is a technology which transmits signals through the airwaves. In the words of Orlik (2003), “radio station catapults its message into the air over an assigned frequency. This broadcast communication is then capable of capture by all receiving sets within range of the signal for the benefit of the listening/viewing public” (p. 82).

Radio is a form of mass media and sound communication by radio waves, usually through the transmission of music, news, and other types of programmes from single broadcast stations to multitudes of individual listeners equipped with radio receivers (Starling & Skertvedt, 2023, para. 1).

Hiebert et al. (1988, pp. 149–150) describe that the historical development of radio became possible as a result of the advancement of electricity and magnetism. The first electro-magnetism message was transferred via wire telegraph in 1844 by Samuel F.

B. Morse and voice transmission through wire was made possible in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell.

During the contemporary period of telegraphy and telephony, James Clerk Maxwell predicted the capacity of radio wave frequency travel in open space with the speed of light in 1864. Heinrich Hertz demonstrated radio waves at his lab in 1887 (Roland, 1990, pp. 1–5). Marconi Demonstrated the wireless telegraph as radio technology in 1895 and Reginald Fessenden and Lee de Forest developed the technology to broadcast long-distance airwaves (Dominick (2010, p. 150)

The term radio was used in English as the prefix for the term conductor to mean radiation before using it as radiotelegraph. Turow (2014, p. 302) states that Eduard Branly, the French inventor, coined the term radio from the radioconductor in 1897. The term radio-conductor is connected to the meaning 'to radiate' in English. The word broadcasting refers to the transmission of radio waves today and it has been taken from the seeding techniques of farmers in the US. According to Coe (1996, p. 3), radiotelegraphy was called wireless in the beginning days. It continued until 1906. In 1906, The International Radiotelegraph Conference held in Berlin chose the word radio for wireless communication. Radio broadcasting was possible through the work of many engineers and scientists in the 19th and 20th centuries.

*Radio* was used in the US in the first decade of the twentieth century. Before, it was only known as wireless. Hijiya (1992, pp. 69–70) states that De Forest founded De Forest Radio Telephone Company in 1907 after he invented the triode, the vacuum tube. The company was rearranged immediately as Radio Telephone Company. De Forest was convinced by the future of human voice over radio frequency rather than the dot-dash telegraphy. Hence, he used the term radio in the name of his company. Earlier, the name

of his company was related to the wireless telegraph. De Forest used the term radio in 1907. It was five years before the US Congress passed the Radio Act in 1912.

However, until 1912 the US government did not use the term radio instead of wireless. The Wireless Ship Act of 1910 was promulgated in the US as the first attempt to regulate radio communications. Two years later the US Congress introduced the Radio Act of 1912 after the Titanic catastrophe on the Atlantic Ocean in April 1912 (Tullai, 2009, para. 9–10). "As a result of the Titanic's disaster and the subsequent congressional investigation, the US government passed the Radio Act of 1912" (Hoolihan, 2016, p. 37). The term radio was officially introduced in the US governmental system after the promulgation of the Act.

In the UK and its colonies, the term wireless was used by the end of the twentieth century, and it is common to date (Coe, 2006, pp. 3–4). The first broadcasting service in the UK got its name as the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) which was born in 1922. However, the BBC published a magazine, *Radio Times* as a regular guidebook for its audiences in 1923. The first edition of the Radio Times appeared on 28 September 1923 (bbc.com, n.d.) Although it did not identify itself as radio broadcasting, the BBC recognised the term radio through its publication.

There are no reliable and authentic sources of history with a timeline of the invention of the radio in the Eastern world. However, *Purans* and *Epics*, the holy scriptures in the Himalayan regions, Bharatbarsha, mention the radio announcements in the sky as *Akashbani* to stop mankind from taking unholy steps, or vices to guide human beings to follow the right track in life. The instances of the Akashbani as radio technology are mentioned in the case of Dusyanta vs. Shakuntala and Kansa vs. Debaki in the Mahabharat and Devipurana (Pandey, 2013, p. 125; Basishtha, 2008, pp. 24–29;

Bhajibee & Poddar, 2014, p. 276). As a reference to the pre-historical epic, India has put the name of its official internal radio broadcasting as the Akashbani.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, the 18 *Puranas* might have been created between 350–750 CE (Doniger, 1998, para. 5). Gautam (2011, as cited in Kharel, 2015, pp. 45–46) mentions that the timeline of the Mahabharata era was 300 B.C. in the Western opinion and 3067 B.C. in the Indian perception. The events of *Akashbani* announcements are found in ancient Holi scriptures and stories such as *Mahabharat* and *Puranas*, however, radio technology was not known and used in day-to-day life in the early Eastern society.

### **4.3 Radio Broadcasting**

Radio broadcasting is an electromagnetic transmission of airwave signals for public reception emitting from a station that is directed to specific receivers. “When sounds are generated in an enclosure such as a room or a studio, the impulse that reaches the ear of the listener in the room comes from several places” (Abbot, 1941, p. 3).

After a century-long experiment at various stages by different scientists, radio became a mass medium. World War I was the cut time for radio broadcasting. Before the war, radio was being experimented on, refined, and used for point-to-point communication by amateurs and the military. It was used as the medium of communication for ships to shores and shores to ships in the beginning, transferring Morse Codes through radio technology. Later, it was used as a faster and the easiest communication means from an earth-based station to aircraft and aircraft to the earth-based station during the World War transferring both voices and Morse Codes. Radio experiment was controlled at the public level during the war. After the war was over, the experiment on the radio reopened in the private sector. Regular broadcasting began in the US, the UK and many countries in Europe, and America at the beginning of the 1920s.

By the end of the 1920s, this new technology was adopted by powerful nations and their colonies over the world.

After the war, the door opened for radio broadcasting in Europe and America. KDKA, the radio station's call sign under the Westinghouse Company, received a license to broadcast on 27 October 1920 and began its regular broadcast on 2 November of the same year in Pittsburgh, US. It broadcast the returns of the presidential election on its first broadcasting with the support of the *Pittsburgh Post* via telephone service (Barnouw, 1966, p. 69). This is how the first regular broadcasting began in the US. According to Conrad (1940), the first shortwave radio broadcasting began by KDKA on the eve of 1923 from Pittsburgh to London. From the very beginning, radio broadcasting leaned towards long-distance broadcasting.

One year before the broadcasting date of KDKA, PCGG, one of the world's first scheduled radio broadcasting services, started its broadcasting in Europe in Rotterdam, Netherlands on 6 November 1919 (Berg, 2013, p. 50). The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) started its regular broadcasting on 14 November 1922, from Marconi's studio 2LO in the UK (Crook, 1998, p. 59). In different countries in Europe and Asia, the radio broadcasting phenomenon happened in the early half-decade of the 1920s. According to Johnson (1981, pp. 167–168), radio broadcasting in Australia began in 1919. Likewise, in the Soviet Union, radio broadcasting began in Moscow in 1921 (Lovell, 2015, pp. 1–4). Radio broadcasting began in Japan in 1926 ([www.nhk.or.jp](http://www.nhk.or.jp)). Radio broadcasting in India came into practice with the establishment of an amateur radio club in 1924 in Madras. The Indian Broadcasting Company started radio broadcasting in 1927 from Bombay and Calcutta. After its economic failure, the colonial government took over its ownership and renamed it into the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) in 1929. The ISBS was converted into All India Radio

(AIR) in 1936 (Viswanath & Karan, 2000, pp. 89–91). Now All India Radio is a solo radio station for news broadcasting in India. The private sector has no right to broadcast news yet there.

In Nepal, Prime Minister Padma Shamsheer Rana established radio broadcasting as Nepal Broadcasting on 27 January 1947. It used to broadcast news published in the *Gorkhapatra* and the lines of *Hanuman Stotra* during daytime (Onta, 2004, pp. 42–46). Before that, he lifted the restriction for the general people to possess radio sets with them in July 1946 (Regmee and Kharel, 2001, p. 41). After that decision, wealthy people used to import radio sets from abroad to listen to.

A rebel armed force led by Naradmuni Thulung began radio transmission after seizing a set of wireless of *Mohan Akashbani* in Bhojpur on 10 December 1950 (Thulung, 2015, p. 104). The radio was used to broadcast information during the war against the Rana rule in Bhojpur, the eastern hilly district of the country.

During the war against the Rana regime, the Nepali Congress party also established a radio broadcasting station in Biratnagar during the revolution on 2 February 1951 (Want, 2004, p. 49). The first broadcasting of Prajatantra Radio Nepal goes back over the Nepali Congress party headquarters at Biratnagar Jute Mill in Biratnagar as the broadcasting centre (Koirala, 1960, pp. 1–9). The democratic government formed immediately after the toppling of the Rana regime established Nepal Radio (later renamed Radio Nepal) as an official broadcasting service from a room of school building of Rana rulers with very weak transmitter of 0.25 kilowatts transmitter and very limited equipment on April 2, 1951 (Shaha, 1989, p. 134). Radio Nepal started to broadcast news bulletins in Nepali and English languages from its first day of broadcasting (Adhikari, 2004, pp. 70–71). It was the beginning phase of regular radio news broadcasting in Nepal.

The monopoly of the government-owned station Radio Nepal remained until 1997, nearly a half-century. Radio Sagarmatha (RS), the first independent radio station in South Asia, came into existence in 1997, challenging Radio Nepal's monopoly on radio broadcasting (Mainali, 2002, pp. 29–30). It was the first independent and community radio station in the entire South Asia. After one year of observation over RS, the Nepal Government issued licenses to other private radio stations. Now there are 1186 radio stations on the air after getting licenses (Press Council Nepal, 2023, p. 148).

However, the National Broadcasting Act of 1993 has not categorised radio broadcasting services. In practice, there are three types of radio services in terms of ownership: government-owned, community/non-profit, and commercial. Under the community/non-profit radio services, nongovernmental organisations-run, cooperatives-run, and educational institutions-run radio stations are on the air. Likewise, under government ownership, there are three types of radio broadcasting services in practice in Nepal including Radio Nepal: Traffic Police-run radio and local government-run radio. The National Mass Communication Policy 2016 has envisioned the categories of radio stations in Nepal as public service broadcasting (PSB), community radio broadcasting and private radio broadcasting (Nepal Government, 2016, p. 7–8). Initiatives have been taken by the government and the parliament to convert Radio Nepal and Nepal Television, the government-run broadcasting services into the PSB model, but the efforts of the government on the matter have not taken place yet.

#### **4.4 Types of Radio Stations by Technology**

Radio broadcasting is a technology that emits electromagnetic waves (radio frequencies) into the atmosphere through the oscillation of high-voltage current which a radio tuner receives within the range of the radiation. Electromagnetic waves are the carriers of broadcast radio frequencies from a certain radio station to the set of a receiver.

Human ears have an average capacity of hearing to sound between the range of 20 Hz to 20 kHz (Heffner & Heffner, 2007, p. 20). However, there are different capacities of humans and other creatures to hear sound frequencies, radio frequencies are higher than the ranges of the capacities of all of them. Radio waves are part of the electromagnetic spectrum which are measured in hertz. The units of radio frequencies are given name after the German scientist Heinrich Hertz, who successfully experimented with sending, receiving, and measuring radio frequencies in 1887. Radio frequencies range from about 30 kHz to 300 GHz. They can carry sound, pictures, and visuals (Gross, 2013, pp. 356–358).

A frequency of up to 300 kHz is called low frequency. Orlik (2003, pp. 45–47) explains the propagation of the frequency spectrum at the international level that radio broadcasting starts from the medium frequency (MF), 300 kHz to 3000 kHz (3 MHz), which is allocated for AM radio, especially the medium wave. The Radio frequency spectrum from 3 MHz-30 MHz is called high frequency (HF), which is allocated for shortwave radio broadcasting. FM radio and VHF-TV have been allocated radio frequencies that range from 30-300 MHz in the electromagnetic spectrum. Likewise, ultra-high frequency (UHF) ranges of the radio frequency spectrum of 300-3000 MHz, which is allocated to UHF-TV, wireless cable, microwave, and satellite communication. The super high frequency (SHF) band, consisting of 3-30 Gigahertz (GHz), is allocated for the satellite and microwave relay. The extremely high frequency (EHF) has a frequency range of 30-300 GHz and is allocated for the satellite.

Keith (2010) describes the process of radio broadcasting relating to transmitter and radio frequency simply:

It is the function of the transmitter to generate and shape the radio wave to conform to the frequency the station has been assigned by the regulatory

authority. Audio current is sent by a line from the control room to the transmitter. The current then modulates the carrier wave so that it may achieve its authorised frequency. A carrier wave that is undisturbed by audio current is called an unmodulated carrier. The antenna radiates the radio frequency. Receivers are designed to pick up transmissions, convert the carrier into sound waves, and distribute them to the frequency tuned. (p. 276)

There are different radio stations in practice in the world. From a technical perspective, there are four types of radio stations broadcasting in the world: analogue radio stations, digital audio broadcasting (DAB), satellite radio stations and internet radio which are as follows:

***a) Analogue Radio Broadcasting***

Analogue radio technology is an old technology that is not supported by computer technology as a file. Law Insider (n.d.) defines analogue broadcasting as "the transmission of sound, text and images whether still or moving in a continuously variable signal in the form of electromagnetic or radio waves" (para 1). Analogue radio broadcasting is divided into two categories: Amplitude Modulation (AM) and Frequency Modulation (FM).

**i. AM Broadcasting.** According to Shell and Stone (2016, pp. 10–14), AM is the oldest technology of radio broadcasting, which, Reginald Fessenden used for the first time in 1906. The AM has three categories of broadcasting: long wave, medium wave, and short wave. Long wave radio broadcasting spectrum lies between 148.5 kHz and 283.5 kHz, which is used for radio broadcasting in Europe, Africa, and some parts of Asia. It is not allocated in the Western Hemisphere countries such as the United States and Canada, Bermuda, and US territories. Hence, in this region, the long frequency band

has been allocated for aeronautics navigational aids. Now, this broadcasting technology is going to be phased out in many countries.

Shell and Stone (2016) describe medium wave radio broadcasting in the range of 520 kHz–1,610 kHz radio frequency spectrum. In some regions, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) authorises extended AM (medium wave) broadcast bands between 1610 kHz and 1710 kHz. Medium wave is commonly used for commercial and national broadcasting and is popular among listeners as AM radio. In Nepal, the medium-wave radio is only under the ownership of the government. As the government-run station, Radio Nepal enjoys the AM technology of broadcasting, there is no permission for the private sector to run AM radio.

Frequencies of short-wave radio broadcasting range from 1.711 MHz to 30.0 MHz. A powerful shortwave radio can reach hundreds of miles distance during daytime through the earth's level and thousands of miles distance during nighttime through the higher level of the atmosphere, the ionosphere. Shortwave radio frequencies are used for distance transmission of radio broadcasting. Shortwave radio uses very low frequencies. AM frequencies in short waves and medium waves are the static frequencies that are disturbed by the atmospheric electromagnetic phenomenon (Gross, 2013, p. 360; Keith, p. 277). These days the listening trends of FM radio have shadowed AM radio broadcasting.

**ii. FM Broadcasting.** In contrast to AM, "FM is higher on the spectrum and closer to light than that of AM, and just as light waves do not travel through buildings or hills, FM signals are similarly affected, making them line of sight" (Gross, 2013, p. 363). The FM signals are limited to travel in distance, so it is called local broadcasting. FM frequencies are allocated to broadcast in radio from the range of 20 MHz which could be the range of 87-107 MHz or 88-108 MHz. Televisions also used FM frequencies lower

than those used in FM radio service. FM radio was invented by the American engineer Edwin Armstrong in 1933-35. He wanted Radio Corporation of America (RCA) to promote his newly invented technology. However, the focus of RCA was on newly developed television technology and did not support Armstrong. However, he continued his experiment with a 50,000-watt FM transmitter in New Jersey, the US. The FM technology could not gain popularity until the FCC, the American regular body permitted to broadcast stereophonic sound in 1961. It caught pace in popularity when the FCC ordered to the AM radio stations to produce separate radio programmes for FM in 1965, who had held FM radio licenses and relayed AM programmes through it (Gross, 2013, p. 135).

Interesting data shows the graph of the popularity of FM in the US between two decades of the 1970s to the 1980s. During the early 1970s, AM had 75 percent of the listeners and FM had only 25 percent. By the late 1980s, the audiences had shifted up to 75 percent to FM and remained only 25 percent AM. But Armstrong was not alive to see the popularity of his invention as he committed suicide, jumping from the 10th-story on January 31, 1954, amidst a disputed situation with his wife and the continuing battle of patents (Medoff & Kaye, 2017, pp. 66–68). However, the tragedy end of the FM inventor shocked his well-wishers and family members, and the popularity of FM would not be stopped. The journey of FM radio broadcasting in Nepal began with the on-airing of FM Kathmandu on 16 November 1995 under the ownership of Radio Nepal (Poudel, 2021, p. 146). FM radio became popular access to various communities in Nepal after the entrance of the non-governmental sector in 1997.

***b) Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB)/ High Definition (HD) Radio***

HD radio Digital radio transmission that is broadcast in the same frequency band as conventional AM and FM stations; also called in-band on-channel. Its quality is nearly

comparable to the Compact Disc (CD) quality. Digital radio broadcasting is pulse code modulation (PCM) with the binary digits 0 and 1. In the 1990s many radio stations in Europe converted to digital radio and in the US digital radio broadcasting was introduced in 2001. The development of digital radio broadcasting is slow in developed countries because radio sets were costly and there was a lack of attractive radio programmes. The data from 2016 shows that 2300 radio stations entered digital radio broadcasting and 78 percent of listeners listened to digital radio in the US (Sterling, n.d. para. 1–3; Keith, 2010, pp. 23–24; Gross, 2013, pp. 360–61, Medoff & Kaye, 2017 p. 69). The developing countries, including Nepal, are far away from the path of digital radio broadcasting to date.

### *c) Satellite Radio Stations*

Satellite radio technology is the latest technology of radio broadcasting with up-linking and down-linking radio signals through satellite. "Satellite radio is a technology through which a consumer can receive streaming channels of music and/or talk through a special receiver" (Turow, 2020, p. 339). Satellite radio covers a distance of 35000 kilometres nearly the round of the globe. In the US, Satellite radio broadcasting began in 2001. In the UK, the BBC World Service provided satellite downlink dishes to its partner radio stations from 1995. Radio Nepal moved to satellite technology in 1999 in Nepal. Radio Sagarmatha used satellite receivers of the BBC World Service to rebroadcast the BBC Nepali Service in 1999. Network through satellite in Nepali radio began in 2003 with the initiation of Communication Corner in Kathmandu. Radio stations and production houses such as Ujyalo, Mirmire FM and Equal Access use satellite technology to share and relay radio programmes and news in Nepal (Humagain et al., 2009, pp. 26–31). Through the satellite broadcasting facility, FM radio stations, which are local by nature, also have a chance to go on air in more geographical areas via a

combination of satellite radio technology and local FM radio stations in different places of the country.

#### ***d) Internet Radio***

Internet radio is a geographical boundary-free transmission of radio that uses the internet network and protocol. During the 1990s radio could be heard through the newly established media, internet (Keith, 2010, pp. 280–281). The convergence capacity of the internet to assimilate audio, visual and text made possible transmission of radio over new media. Internet radio is categorised into two types, streaming the same content by radio broadcasters simultaneously and internet-based streaming only. In Nepal, Mercantile Communication Private Limited started Nepalnews.com, an online portal in 2000 that provides space to Nepali news and current affairs-related content of Nepali media targeting the Nepali diasporas abroad. It was used to keep some audio content of radio programmes. Mercantile opened another online portal, Mazzako.com providing live streaming of radio broadcasting after the successful people's movement in 2007. Mercantile shut down its online portals in 2015 because of financial loss ("Nepalnews.com shut down", 2015, n. d.). Now radio stations stream live so that it could be heard beyond the range of their broadcasting.

#### **4.5 Types of Radio by Ownership**

There are three types of radio stations in service by ownership: Government-owned, Public Service Broadcasting, commercial and community/non-profit making radio. The electronic medium was developed and run by the private sector in the US from the telegraph, and telephone era. In the beginning, radio broadcasting was only in the private sector. The US government has been running Voice of America with a half dozen of its entities along with the private sector broadcasting. However, the government broadcasting system's target is only for external service, which has been in existence

since World War II. In Europe, Africa, and Asia, radio broadcasting was under the control of the government for a long time. In South Asia, long-ranged AM radio broadcasting service is under the control of the government till the date. In Nepal, Radio Nepal has been running as a government-owned radio station since its day first broadcasting.

***a) Public Service Broadcasting (PSB)***

PSB is a broadcasting service that is run by public funds and is expected to be impartial in political and business issues. According to the White Paper of the British Government on the future of the BBC in 1994, the following are the basic six characteristics of PSB: "general geographical availability; concern for national identity and culture; independence from both the State and commercial interests; impartiality of programmes; range and variety of programmes; and substantial financing by a general charge on users" (Mendel, 1999, p. 6).

The UK in Europe became the first to practice the PSB. Based on the recommendations of the report of the Crawford Committee, the British government converted British Broadcasting Company, the privately run radio into British Broadcasting Corporation, a public entity, through the Royal Charter on 1 January 1927 (Potter, 2012, p. 21). Apart from the UK, Germany and France are other exemplary countries for public broadcasting, Chile, the US, Canada, Japan, South Africa, and Australia are examples of countries of PSB practice (Buckley et al, 2011, pp. 193–201). In South Asia, India has transferred the ownership of All India Radio and Akash Bani including Durdarshan from the government to the Prasar Bharati, a semi-autonomous body. According to the provision of the Prasar Bharati Act, 1990 which was enacted in 1997, the government has the privilege to order the Prasar Bharati to broadcast or not to broadcast any news item or current affairs content. An Expert Committee recommended the government amend the legal provisions that hinder the real autonomy of Prasar

Bharati as PSB (Expert Committee on Prasar Bharati, 2014, pp. 10–12). Based on the existing provisions, Prasar Bharati is not free to exercise PSB practice independently.

In Nepal, the High-Level Media Suggestion Commission of 2006 (p. 15) recommended Nepal Government allocate separate frequencies for PSB, community and commercial radio and provide grants to run PSB and community radio. After a decade, another Commission as High-Level Commission on Information and Communication (2016, pp. 37–43) proposed a draft of the Public Service Act along with the structure of the Public Service Broadcasters. It recommended government convert Radio Nepal and Nepal Television into the PSB model. Mass Communication Policy (2016) has envisioned the PSB model of broadcasting. The Nepal Government has taken steps towards the conversion of Radio Nepal and Nepal Television into the PSB model. The government submitted a bill to the Federal Parliament on the PSB in 2020 which is in the process of becoming an act. The National Assembly, the upper house, has already passed the bill and sent it to the House of Representatives, the lower house. The House of Representatives has then sent the bill to a thematic committee to finalise it. However, lawmakers and journalists alike criticised the bill alleging that it did not meet the international standard of practice of editorial independence of broadcaster (Pradhan, 2020).

PSB has to produce and broadcast various radio programmes that address diverse audiences and national interests. Aryal (2015, pp. 18–19) suggests Radio Nepal begin the classification of its programmes and make an appraisal to meet the standard of public radio broadcasting.

### ***b) Community/Non-profit Broadcasting***

The practice of community/non-profit radio broadcasting is all over the world. A radio station that is run by a community or non-profit organisation is called community radio.

UNESCO has defined community radio as follows:

A community radio station is characterised by its ownership and programme and the community it is authorised to serve. It is owned and controlled by a non-profit organisation whose structure provides for membership, management, operation, and programme primarily by members of the community at large. Its programme should be based on community access and participation and should reflect the special interests and needs of the listenership it is licenced to serve. (Fraser & Estrada, 2001, p. 4)

The motive of community/non-profit radio is to spread awareness, participate, share, and empower the community. In Nepal, the National Mass Communication Policy (2016, pp. 9–10) has defined community radio as the broadcasting service that is run by non-profit motive organisations such as consumer groups, public transportation, local clubs, *Guthis*, non-governmental organisations, cooperatives, community or public educational institutions and those governmental offices related to climate change, weather forecast and agriculture. The policy has envisioned financial support from the government to the community broadcasting services within a standard criterion. Besides community radio, educational radio stations also have been run by educational institutions in Nepal as non-profit radio stations.

### ***c) Private Radio Broadcasting***

Private radio broadcasting means the radio service which is run by business organisations or the private sector to get profit. In the US, and Latin American nations such as Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, the private sector started radio broadcasting. In

Europe and the UK, the private sector got a chance to run radio in 1970 (Skretvedt & Sterling, 2021). France had private radio at the beginning of radio broadcasting, government-controlled in 1936. In 1968, France resumed radio in private broadcasting along with public radio (Legay, 2017, p. 2). Now, 69 percent of the audiences listen to commercial radio (Lardeau, n.d., para. 2). This is how private radio resumed in Europe after a long period of the exercise of the monopoly of public radio and government-controlled radio broadcasting.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, numerous independent countries of the Soviet bloc including Russia introduced commercial radio service. The monopoly of government in radio ended in Germany after its reunification in 1990 with another former Eastern European bloc, including Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. In African countries such as South Africa, Gambia, Swaziland, Liberia, and one or two other small countries radio went on in the private sector by 1987 (Skretvedt & Sterling, 2021). This is a picture of a trend to be liberal towards the private sector in broadcasting.

As early as Asia, the Philippines introduced a privately owned radio of 50 watts in 1922 during the period of US control. It seems that the practice of broadcasting media in the Philippines has been mostly privately owned and free from government controls (Maslog, 2000, 376–384). India introduced radio through the private sector in the early 1920s. India introduced private radio during the 1920s and reorganised it as All India Radio in 1936 and continued government control for 6 decades.

After a long monopoly of the government in broadcasting, India granted a licence to the private sector in 1999 and the first radio went on air in 2001 (Sen, 2014, p. 2). Before India, Pakistan went on private radio in 1995 ("The rise and rise", 2018). In Bangladesh, private radio started in 2006 (Rahman & Rahman, (2012, pp. 3–7). Lately in

comparison with Europe South Asia also become liberal in broadcasting introducing the private sector.

However, Nepal entered private radio broadcasting before to Bangladesh in October 1998 with the broadcasting of Kantipur FM (Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology, 2017). Private radio stations are free from the control of the government. They broadcast news and current affairs programmes including talk and entertainment-based radio programmes for up to 24 hours a day.

#### **4.6 Types of Radio by Reach of Signal**

Radio is classified as local, national, and international by its reach of signal and content of coverage. However, the content of national broadcasting and local FM radio can reach abroad through the Internet. Among radio stations, Nepal does not have an international broadcasting service. Instead, the BBC, All India Radio, Voice of America (VOA), and China Radio International have been beaming in the Nepali sky as influential international radio stations. Radio Nepal is a national broadcasting service in Nepal. FM radio stations across the country are the local radio stations with some exceptions of network FM stations in the capital city of Nepal.

#### **4.7 Defining Radio News and Sourcing**

News that is fit to broadcast is called radio news. Radio news is an account of an event that is new, interesting to audiences and impacts many. The news comes from the surroundings of the radio station. McLeish (2005) defines radio news as follows:

News is 'that which is new, interesting and true'. 'New' in that it is an account of events that the listener has not heard before – or an update of a story previously broadcast. 'Interesting' in the sense of the material being relevant, or directly affecting the audience in some way. 'True', because the story as told is factually correct. (p. 53)

Radio news can be defined as the description of an event or an issue that can be fit into a bulletin or a news programme. In Europe, a news bulletin is a package of news briefs to broadcast for a short time duration such as up to 5 minutes. Whereas a news programme is defined as a long news package of up to one hour with details descriptions and analysis of the events and issues. However, in the US, the Snapchat of breaking news is called bulletin (Boyd, 2001, pp. 126–127). It shows that there are different practices in Europe and the US in understanding radio news bulletins.

Shook et al. (1996, p. 99) describe that the practice the length of news bulletins ranges from 5 to 30 minutes in different places and different broadcasting media. Many broadcasting media have designated 5 minutes as a short news bulletin for brief news stories and 30 minutes for descriptive news packages. India and Nepal also have the practice of radio news bulletins for 5 to 30 minutes. Generally, All India Radio (AIR) broadcasts the main news bulletin for 15 minutes. FM radio stations in India relay radio news of AIR as they have no authority to broadcast news in their capacity. AIR broadcasts 5 to 10-minute durations of short news bulletins in different languages (All India Radio, 2019). In Nepal, Article 19 of the Constitution of Nepal (2015, p. 9) has guaranteed that radio stations have the right to broadcast news.

A radio news bulletin is a collection of news items that are prepared in a package by the newsroom. Each news item of a radio news bulletin does not get a headline, dateline, or by-line. In some special cases, the newsroom gives credit to its reporter in a news bulletin. The headlines are taken for the bulletin from only the important news items. Those headlines are read as the major highlights at the beginning of the news bulletin as main news highlights. Radio news items are compiled in a bulletin with a priority value. Wilby and Conroy (1994) define radio bulletin as follows:

Bulletin information is the outcome of radio's primary public service function – to keep listeners informed of those events and development of particular interest and relevance of them. The emphasis is on reporting these events, not discussing and analysing them. Bulletins convey data in the form of individual stories often honed down to their basic elements and told dispassionately; there is space elsewhere in the schedule for presenters and correspondents to weigh up the implication of the information reported. Most bulletins are scheduled for broadcast at fixed times of the day and other output has to fill round them. Listeners often time their domestic or travelling routines according to what they can hear on the radio. (p. 178)

The news bulletin is confined by the time duration framework. All news items should be pre-sized, trimmed down and compressed to be fitted within the given time duration. In a short bulletin, only a summary of the news is asserted while voice clips and short interviews of sources and actualities of the events are inserted into a long-time duration news bulletin with a detailed description. Wilby and Conroy (1994, p. 179) describe that there are three types of news bulletins: "the hourly summary, the major summary and the news bulletin." These bulletins are from two minutes to 30 minutes. The time duration of news bulletins varies according to time, human resources, and budget. Radio stations in Nepal have a practice of broadcasting news bulletins for up to 30 minutes.

#### ***a) Sources of Radio News***

Sources of radio news are the members and the organisations of a broad society. The broad society goes from a small community in a village or a town of a city to the national and international level. In this way, the information for news also comes from the persons and organisations at a local, regional, national, and international level. A

radio newsroom gets information formally and informally from the sources. McLeish (2005) categorises radio news sources as professional, official, commercial, and public. According to him, the sources of radio news are categorised as "staff reporters and specialist correspondents, e.g., crime, local government; freelances and 'stringers'; computer, fax and wire services; news agencies; syndicating sources including other broadcasting stations; newspapers" (p. 71). He has categorised the 'government sources, both national and local; emergency services such as police, fire and hospitals; military and service organisations; public transport authorities' as the official sources. McLeish also enlists business and commercial Public Relations departments, and entertainment interests as commercial sources. He has categorised 'the listeners, taxi drivers, voluntary organisations, societies, and clubs' as the public sources. This category can be elaborated as the workers, pedestrians and general people involved in their day-to-day work.

Formal and informal, predictable, and unpredictable, related to the event or issues are the radio news sources. Those persons who are authorities, experts, concerned, affected, related or witnesses of the events or issues are the sources. In this regard, Mencher (2011) classifies news sources into three categories:

Human sources, which consist of authorities and people involved in news events.

When using human sources, reporters find the person most qualified to speak— an authority on the subject, an eyewitness, an official, a participant. Physical sources, which consist of records, documents, reference works, newspaper articles. Online sources, which include a vast array of human and physical sources, from academicians to government data. (p. 279)

In light of the above-mentioned definitions, besides primary and secondary sources, more types can be added as network-fed source syndicator-delivered sources and independent or original news sources.

#### 4.8 Evolution of News Sourcing in Radio Broadcasting: International Context

News broadcasting on the radio was not possible before World War I (1914-18). However, Reginald Fessenden, a Canadian American engineer omitted news items when he made possible the first radio broadcasting in 1906. Starkey and Crisell (2009) argue that Fessenden "missed the chance to be the first to broadcast news but he declined to continue broadcasting and it took time to develop radio news more than a decade" (p. 3). Fessenden just played recording music and read some lines from *the Bible* in his first broadcasting. It was the reflection of contemporary society which had no idea of the potentiality of radio and its news at that time. "It was not until the early 1920s when the 'wireless' had become known as the 'radio,' that broadcast journalism began to evolve" (Keith & Krause (1989, p. 108). Though Fessenden did not broadcast news through his first radio broadcasting, he paved the way for radio broadcasting that had the potential for radio programmes, and news that was followed in the coming future.

During the 1910s, there was no idea of the various uses of radio technology except using it to transmit the Morse code message from one wireless station to another. Hilliard and Keith (2010, p. 13) discuss a moment of the Titanic distress in 1912 in the Atlantic Ocean while its crew members transmitted information about the dead and surviving passengers through the wireless morse code telegraphy that was invented by Guglielmo Marconi. Instead of a compiled news bulletin like today, it was just a simple description of the wounded survivors and the dead persons provided by a 21-year-old Russian American, David Sarnoff. He continuously provided information of distress as a young wireless operator at the Wanamaker Department Store in New York.

The point-to-point wireless telegraphy transmission service was used between a ship and shore to connect the ship to transmitting information in an emergency. Crook (1998) argues that "the development of sound and broadcast technology was first

exploited as the means for military and commercial communication" (p. 69). Crook (1998) further describes that the wireless telegraphy was used to arrest a murderer, Doctor Hawley Harvey Crippen, who was fleeing from the United Kingdom to Canada with his lover Ethel LeNeve. Dr. Crippen was on the most wanted list of the London Police. Dr. Crippen's lover disguised as a boy, and he introduced her as his son. But the ship's captain suspected them and telegraphed to the London police office. Consequently, the police arrested both Dr. Crippen and LeNeve, chasing them in the Atlantic Ocean. They were captured by the police with the very information that was transmitted with dot-dash symbolic messages via wireless telegraphy.

Vivian (2013, p. 133) has mentioned the evolution of radio news in the US with the initiation of Lee de Forest during the presidential election in November 1916. Vivian (2013) further points out that the inventor and initial broadcaster Forest made factual errors while he was transmitting the results of the presidential election. Forest declared the name of Charles Evans Hughes as the President-elect. However, Woodrow Wilson was the real winner of the 1916 US presidential election. It was misleading information transmitted to the listeners by Lee de Forest. He failed to transmit authentic news to his listeners without access to first-hand and credible news sources to make his news reliable.

Sterling and O'Dell (2010, pp. 354–355) retrace the origin of regular radio news. They mark the first broadcasting day of KDKA radio on 2 November 1920 in the US. It was the result of the US presidential election which was first aired by KDKA on the day Warren G. Harding won the race as the elected president of the US that year.

As KDKA did not have its own newsroom in the beginning, the radio station aired its initial news bulletins with the information sources available in local newspapers' newsrooms. KDKA had to rely on newspapers as it did not have its own reporters who

could collect news from various sources. Regularly scheduled radio broadcasting in the US began in 1920 with content such as news, information, talk, music, and comedy. Some radio stations aired programmes including political discussions and events of sports through the newly developed radio network.

Keith and Krause (1989) argue that radio waves were used to convey news before this medium reached the mass audience in the form of radio broadcasting.

Rebroadcasting the distress radio signals of the sinking Titanic in 1912 was an example of news transmission of the wireless telegraphy that could make the people aware and help them rescue the victims in the vessel. However, the transmission of point-to-point wireless signals was not radio journalism as we know it today. However, radio broadcasting began in the early 1920s, it had become a source of fast wireless distance communication in the early 1900s. In the Atlantic chasing incident that was associated with a criminal Dr. Crippen and the Titanic distress in 1912, radio communication was used as the medium of sharing the description of events from sea to shore and from shore to sea. The radiotelegraphy was used from sea to shore as the fastest distance communication in the case of chasing Dr. Crippen in the Atlantic Ocean in 1910, while the medium was used on both sides of the ocean as the sea-to-shore and shore-to-sea wireless communication in the case of the Titanic distress. It can be considered as the pre-radio broadcasting exercise of radio news.

Regular radio broadcasting in the UK started in 1922. The BBC has published an article on its official website ([bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)) entitled *The BBC Story* covering its development and beginning of news broadcasting. According to the article (pp. 1–2), the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) began broadcasting in November 1922. However, limited news broadcasting was allowed to the BBC only after 7 pm due to an assumption that sales of newspapers might go down.

While looking at Asia, radio news started in Japan with the establishment of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) in 1926. According to the official site of the Japan Broadcasting System ([www.nhk.or.jp](http://www.nhk.or.jp)), three broadcasting stations merged and the NHK was established in 1926. However, the official site of the NHK does not talk about the first broadcasting of its news and news sources.

Likewise, Lovell (2015, pp. 1–4) discusses the evolution of broadcasting news in the Soviet Union. People used to listen to the broadcasting of ‘spoken newspaper’ in Moscow through loudspeakers in 1921 although a radio transmitter was invented in 1920 in the Soviet Union. Lovell further argues that early radio broadcasting served to speed up ‘news’ in a real-time immediacy along with the representation of ‘amplification of various forms and practices of public speaking that predated sound reproduction: lectures, speeches, meetings, and theatre.’

Similarly, in Australia, radio broadcasting commenced in 1919. However, the early radio stations' focus was on broadcasting entertainment content targeting families in homes rather than giving news of day-to-day happenings. Johnson (1981, pp. 167–178) argues that the radio in Australia became a genuine source of information during the great depression in the early years of the 1930s. News reporting and broadcasting reaching the sources in Australia changed the gear after the establishment of the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) in 1932. Essentially, the true radio news broadcasting practice began only after a decade of radio broadcasting in Australia. The ABC became a pioneer radio station for reporting through various sources and broadcasting it as an authentic news bulletin.

Radio broadcasting in India came into practice soon after the beginning of radio broadcasting in the West. Viswanath and Karan (2000, pp. 89–91) mention the commencement of broadcasting in India along with the establishment of an amateur

radio club in 1924 in Madras. A private company, the Indian Broadcasting Company, started radio broadcasting in 1927 from Bombay and Calcutta. The first news bulletin went on the air from its Bombay station on July 23, 1927 (Prasar Bharati, 2022, para. 4). The colonial government took over it in 1929 and was renamed the Indian State Broadcasting Service (ISBS). The ISBS was converted into All India Radio (AIR) in 1936. Regarding the broadcasting of radio news, Viswanath and Karan further argue that the role of radio the colonial government enforced a policy to restrict the coverage of political matters. However, they do not mention the terms news and news sources in the early radio broadcasting services in India.

#### **4.9 Evolution of News Sourcing in Radio Broadcasting: Nepali Context**

In contrast to the Western world, radio broadcasting technology did not make its way to Nepal until the 1940s. As Regmee and Kharel (2002, p. 41) describe, during the regime of Prime Minister Padma Shamsher Rana, the restriction over ownership of radio for general people was lifted in 1946. On the contrary, Devkota (2017, p. 180) mentions that the restriction on possessing radio sets was elevated only in 1947. Padma Shamsher set up a small radio station, *Nepal Broadcasting*, at Tundikhel in Kathmandu to disseminate information to the general people in 1947. Onta (2004, p. 45) mentions that engineer Kashi Raj Pandey and journalist Prem Raj Sharma were the announcers of *Nepal Broadcasting*. They used to use the *Gorkhapatra*, the only government-owned vernacular newspaper, as the source of news for broadcasting. The radio station used to broadcast news items and information including the market price that were already published in the *Gorkhapatra*. Besides, *Hanuman Stotra* and spiritual songs also used to be on-aired during its half-hour-long broadcasting every 1 PM. This radio station had no systematic newsroom and hired no reporter to collect information for its bulletin. Therefore, it had to rely on the news published in the *Gorkhapatra* (Onta, 2004, PP. 42-

46). However, unlike Onta's claim, Regmee and Kharel (2002) argue that *Nepal Broadcasting* did not broadcast news, but some loudspeakers were set around the Tundikhel so that the general people could listen to the broadcasting.

During the revolutionary movement in 1950-51, an armed rebel force led by Naradmuni Thulung seized a wireless set from *Mohan Akashbani* in Bhojpur, which subsequently served as a crucial medium for broadcasting information pertaining to the movement. The radio station was utilised to disseminate updates about local-level attacks and victories against the Rana administration. Thulung (2015, p. 104) notes that the radio station broadcast two news bulletins daily, one in the morning and another in the evening. Thulung recounts a distressing incident during the early stages of broadcasting, whereby seven members of the revolutionary force were killed in Pakhribas, Dhankuta, due to an attack carried out by the armed forces deployed by the Rana regime. The forces of the Rana administration had attacked the revolutionary force based on the news broadcast by Jayandra Bahadur Thapaliya, the news presenter who had no idea of the editing or gatekeeping process.

Poudyal (1971, p. 91); Onta (2004, p. 49); Devkota (2017, p. 180) mention that the Nepali Congress party also established a radio broadcasting station in Biratnagar during the revolution against the Rana regime in 1951. At that time, Tarani Prasad Koirala started broadcasting from Prajatantra Radio Nepal to disseminate information and propaganda about the revolution from Biratnagar. Koirala, the first broadcaster of Prajatantra Radio Nepal, retraces that the party-headquarters at Biratnagar Jute Mill in Biratnagar was arranged as the broadcasting centre (Koirala, 1960, pp. 1–9). Koirala (1951) in his memoir published in *Jhankar*, an in-house journal of Radio Nepal, further mentions that he on-aired a live outdoor news report of a battle along with sound effects of bullets and grenades from the battlefield at Singhiya riverbank in Biratnagar. In this

way, the revolutionary forces started disseminating news before the formal establishment of Radio Nepal in 1951 (pp. 1–9). Koirala used to broadcast information received from his fighting armed commanders in various places.

The democratic government formed immediately after the toppling of the Rana regime established Nepal Radio (later renamed Radio Nepal) as an official broadcasting service on 2 April 1951 (Onta et al. 2004, pp. 8–9). Radio Nepal started to broadcast news bulletins in Nepali and English languages from its first day of broadcasting (Adhikari, 2004, pp. 69–71). Radio Nepal had neither its own reporting section nor reporters to collect news from the various sources within and outside the country (Upadhyaya, 2017, p. 393). However, Radio Nepal became an official broadcasting medium of faster news dissemination for the people who were scattered throughout the country.

Furthermore, Samaj Daily (1954), the second daily newspaper of the country, which was published under the editorship of Maniraj Sharma, discussed the situation of news sourcing in Radio Nepal through a special editorial in 1954 to justify the beginning of its own publication:

Let's leave it to talk of foreigners, even if we don't know information about our own compatriots. Even now, we don't have an idea what type of losses we have borne in which part of the country by the flood and other natural disasters. Even now what we know, is what we first hear on the Indian radio and later on Radio Nepal. Let's think about the only government-owned Radio Nepal. We can't hear the news about any event within the country, nothing else remains to listen to Radio Nepal after listening to the Indian radio. The Nepal government buys those types of news for Radio Nepal from India and spends Rs. 2000 a month that we have already listened to on Indian Radio. However, the government is reluctant to

establish a system of news sources for the regular flow of news from the various parts of our own country. (Sharma et al., 2017, p. 480)

The aforementioned statement from the *Samaj Daily* exemplifies the state of radio news coverage during the initial phase of broadcasting in Nepal, where first-hand sources were not directly accessed. As highlighted by Devkota (2017, p. 132) and Thapa (2004, p. 181), the practice of employing reporters to gather news from the field dates back to 1943 in Nepal. However, it is noteworthy that until 1990, the newsroom of Radio Nepal (RN) did not have provisions for hiring reporters. The recruitment of reporters within the RN newsroom and the engagement of stringers outside the Kathmandu Valley only commenced after the restoration of democracy in 1989. This development marked a significant shift in the approach to news gathering and reporting within the radio industry.

Devkota (2017, p. 180), Regmee and Kharel (2002, p. 42), Thulung (2015, p. 104), and Onta (2004, p. 49) shed light on the early history of news broadcasting in Nepal, which predates the official establishment of Radio Nepal, the national radio station. During the early days of its broadcasting, Radio Nepal relied on these sources to disseminate news and information for its news bulletins. However, significant changes occurred in 1960 with the establishment of *Rastriya Samachar Samiti* (RSS), a national news agency. Following the inception of RSS, Radio Nepal began to broadcast news bulletins based on the news and information provided by the agency (Pokhrel, 2010, pp. 10–11). It is worth noting that until 1990, Radio Nepal did not have a practice of deploying reporters to gather news independently. However, on exceptional occasions, such as royal visits to different parts of the country, Radio Nepal used to cover these events through special report packages (Onta, 2004, p. 172). It shows that the royal palace was one of the prime sources of news for Radio Nepal.

As McQuail (2010, p. 70) describes radio stations under the control of the government are operated in a transmission model that means just transmitting information from top to down rather than including content from down to top. In the Nepali context, the operation modality of Radio Nepal was under the transmission model.

The description of Brecht (1932, p. 29) is suitable to characterise the distributive nature of Radio Nepal and the need for alternative radio channels from the non-governmental sector to make radio from the distribution apparatus to the communication apparatus:

Radio is one-sided when it should be two. It is purely an apparatus for distribution, for mere sharing out. So here is a positive suggestion: change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him. (p. 29)

Though democracy prevailed and the democratic constitution was in promulgation, the psychology of the rulers especially of the bureaucrats was not habitual with the open society, open dialogues and criticism because they were groomed and orientated in a closed social and political culture during the 30 years of the non-party political system.

The democratic governments also continued the Panchayati policy to make Radio Nepal a political tool even after the restoration of democracy in 1990. Radio Nepal adopted a censor system to control the content before broadcasting through news and current affairs programmes. Adhikari (2022, pp. 42–43) one of the officers of Radio

Nepal describes remembering his role as censor officer in Radio Nepal that he did not let pass any news item to broadcast that was offensive to the king, royal family and the government in the democratic environment.

In a changing democratic environment, Radio Nepal started to build up a newsroom with a news reporting section in 1990 shifting staff from different sections into the newsroom. Reporters were recruited after the broadcasting of *Ghatana Ra Bichar*, an analytical current affairs programme in the same year (Lamsal, 2020, p. 195). The news reporting section covered diverse issues in news bulletins. It started to broadcast a daily current affairs programme *Ghatana Ra Bichar* to cover the political analysis and interviews on the vital issues of the day. However, it was a controversial and politically dynamic radio programme, and a censor officer was assigned by the station for the gatekeeping process (Dahal, 2019, pp. 70–71).

However, After the political change from the Panchayati autocracy into the multiparty democratic system, the government issued the National Communication Policy in 1993 which envisioned opening the door for the non-governmental sector to run FM radio (Acharya & Sharma (2022, p. 3). Rajendra Dahal, a journalist, and Narahari Acharya, a member of the parliament, played significant roles in shaping this policy, as mentioned by Dahal (2003) and Acharya (2003).

Dahal (2003) describes that while working on drafting the National Communication Policy, Dahal and Acharya foresaw the future dynamics of communication development in Nepal for the next decade. They recognised the potential of FM radio broadcasting as a crucial medium for educating and informing the public, thereby transforming the country's geographical and social landscape. However, convincing other committee members, especially those representing government bodies and government-run media, proved challenging.

Eventually, through their persistent efforts, Acharya (2003) and Dahal (2003) succeeded in including a provision in the communication policy that allowed the private sector to operate FM broadcasting systems for educational and entertainment purposes. This provision paved the way for the emergence of private FM radio stations, marking a significant milestone in Nepal's communication landscape. Their visionary approach and perseverance in advocating for the inclusion of private FM radio broadcasting in the communication policy laid the foundation for the future development of Nepal's radio sector. It created opportunities for diverse voices, educational programmes, and enhanced information dissemination, ultimately benefiting the Nepali population as a whole.

According to Mainali (2002, p. 28), following the enforcement of the National Communication Policy in 1992, the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) organised a seminar to assess the feasibility of FM radio operations in Nepal. During this time, Communication Minister Bijaya Gachchhedhar showed a positive inclination towards allowing the private sector to establish and operate FM radio stations in the country. Subsequently, the government introduced the National Broadcasting Act as a bill in Parliament in 1993, which was later endorsed and implemented in the same year.

Wagle (2002, pp 40–41) describes that recognising the potential of FM radio, NEFEJ seized the opportunity to collaborate with UNESCO in establishing an FM radio station in the Kathmandu Valley. An agreement was reached between NEFEJ and UNESCO to conduct a feasibility study for the operation of an FM radio station in the valley. In pursuit of their goal, NEFEJ submitted multiple applications to the government, seeking a license for radio operations. Through their persistent efforts, NEFEJ aimed to leverage the power of FM radio as a means of effectively disseminating information, raising environmental awareness, and promoting sustainable development in Nepal. Their collaboration with UNESCO and their continuous engagement with the

government were crucial steps in realising their vision of establishing an FM radio station in the Kathmandu Valley.

In their report to the UNESCO head office in Paris, Arnaldo and Linder (1994, pp. 1–10) discuss the establishment of FM community radio in Nepal. They highlight that in 1984, UNESCO had already approached the Nepal Government with a proposal to establish a community radio in Surkhet. However, the Panchayati government at that time did not accept the proposal. In their report, Arnaldo and Linder recommend that the Nepal Government allow a maximum of 10 FM radio stations in each major city, with no more than five in the Kathmandu Valley. They argue that this limitation in the Kathmandu Valley is due to the bowl-shaped landscape, which can cause frequency interference and reflection. Additionally, they suggest that the government should not grant permission for radio stations in the valley to exceed a capacity of 500 watts. It is worth noting that the current situation differs from the recommendations made in the report. Currently, there is a babel of signals of radio stations in the Kathmandu Valley, with some stations surpassing the recommended capacity limit. This discrepancy can be attributed to the government's failure to effectively manage and regulate frequency allocation. The findings of Arnaldo and Linder's report shed light on the initial recommendations for FM radio station establishment in Nepal and highlight the challenges faced in maintaining proper frequency management in the Kathmandu Valley.

In their report, Arnaldo and Linder (1994, pp. 21–27), put forth a proposed format for Radio Sagarmatha, envisioning it as a one-to-two-hour-long radio magazine programme that incorporates a community news bulletin. They emphasise the importance of engaging with the general public by reaching out to individuals in various settings such as streets, tea houses, and hospital wards, among others, to gather content for Radio Sagarmatha's programmes and news bulletins. In terms of editorial stance,

Arnaldo and Linder advocate for community broadcasters to maintain a neutral political position when it comes to editing and broadcasting news. They stress the significant responsibility that rests on the shoulders of these broadcasters. Their proposal aims to create a platform that not only provides a comprehensive radio programme but also actively involves the community in shaping its content. By encouraging a neutral editorial stance, Arnaldo and Linder seek to ensure that Radio Sagarmatha becomes a reliable and inclusive source of information for the community it serves.

However, the relationship between Radio Sagarmatha and the government turned sour following the radio's establishment, as the government did not grant permission to broadcast news and current affairs programmes to the radio. Humagain (2005, p. 13), and Mainali (2002, p. 29) highlight that NEFEJ had already applied to the Ministry of Information and Communication (MoIC), requesting a temporary license to conduct test transmissions once the necessary equipment arrived in Kathmandu. In the absence of a response from the ministry for an extended period, NEFEJ proceeded with its test transmission from 31 March to 3 April 1996. Remaining silent during the test transmission, MoIC suddenly became proactive and sought a clarification letter from NEFEJ on 5 April. The ministry's request can be summarised as follows:

As of the 2nd and 3rd of April, a broadcasting signal was heard in the Kathmandu Valley, and it has been noticed that the broadcasting was made by NEFEJ.

Therefore, you are required to clarify the following questions within three days of receiving the letter: 1. What type of programme with what reason did you broadcast without getting a license? 2. Where did you get the radio frequency license from? and 3. Where did you get radio equipment including the transmitter from? If you have got the license for that purpose, then where did you get it from? (Luitel & Acharya, 2005, p. 11)

Radio Sagarmatha obtained a license from the government on 18 May 1997 and commenced to broadcast on 22 May 1997 subject to more than 15 conditions (Dahal, 2005, p. 14). Mainali (2002, p. 27) describes that there was a need for a radio news outlet that could be able to provide space without any restriction and censorship. The struggle for half a decade to have the license for radio broadcasting from the independent sector in Nepal was to make the radio apparatus from distribution to communication channels where the listeners are not only listening to radio stations but also speaking on the radio in a two-way communication model. The struggle to expand news sources in Nepali radio can be traced back to the establishment of Radio Sagarmatha, the country's first independent radio station, in 1997. He further describes that to avoid potential legal repercussions from the government, the promoters of RS decided to broadcast the news bulletin as '*Halchal*' instead of using the term 'news'. *Halchal* is a colloquial Nepali term used to inquire about people's well-being.

After the broadcasting of Radio Sagarmatha, the door was opened to other radio stations from the non-governmental to the private sector to collect and broadcast news. After one year of broadcasting Radio Sagarmatha, the private sector and other community radio stations began to operate and continued sourcing practices in their news bulletins (Mainali, 2002, pp. 31-32). According to the forty-eight annual report of the Press Council Nepal (2023, p. 148), now 1186 radio stations broadcast in the sky of Nepal and most of them have been practising sourcing in news.

#### **4.10 Assessment of Radio News Sourcing**

To examine the status of news sourcing in the main news of radio news bulletins, a qualitative ethnographic aural (audio) content analysis has been conducted using a three-month sample from four selected radio stations. Due to the nature of the content being available solely in audio form, the analysis focused on the aural aspects rather than

text-based analysis. The study explored theoretical and pre-existing frameworks pertaining to the status of news sourcing in radio news broadcasting to assess the sources' representation. An ethnographic qualitative content analysis approach has been employed to evaluate and analyse the status of the sourcing based on the audio recordings of the radio news bulletins. However, due to variations in the availability and contexts of the audio records across different dates and stations, complete data comparison among the radio stations was not feasible. Nonetheless, where possible, data from the sample radio stations were compared to identify common themes and trends. Despite limitations in data comparability, this study provides valuable insights into the status of sourcing in radio news bulletins through qualitative analysis of the audio content. The details of the content analysis are as follows:

The details of sample radio stations, the size of the content (news) and the broadcasting time of the news bulletins are presented in Table 4.1 as follows:

**Table 4.1**

*The sample size for the Content Analysis*

Radio stations	Time duration of bulletins	Number of news items	Percent	Broadcast time	Broadcast date of news bulletins
Radio Sagarmatha	3 months	477	27.88	18:45	15 Jun–16 September 2021 (1 Asar–31 Bhadra 2078 BS)
Radio Nepal	3 months	445	26.01	19:00	16 July–17 October 2021 (1 Shrawan–31 Asoj 2078 BS)
BFM	3 months	338	19.75	18:00	17 September–15 December 2021 (1 Asoj–29 Mangsir 2078 BS)
Radio Lumbini	3 months	451	26.36	18:00	18 October 2021–14 January 2022 (1 Kartik–30 Push 2078 BS)
Grand Total	12 months	1711	100.00		

*Source: Field Study, 2022*

As shown in Table 4.1 news items from three months broadcast from four sample radio stations have been selected for the content analysis purpose. From BFM, 338 items of main news have been selected from 17 September to 15 December 2021. The number of main news here is equivalent to the number of headline news of the particular radio

station. Likewise, 451 main news items are selected from Radio Lumbini. The broadcasting time duration of the sample radio news items was of three months from 18 October 2021 to 14 January 2022. Both BFM and Radio Lumbini have the same broadcasting time of the news bulletin, i.e., 18:00. The sample news bulletin of Radio Nepal has also been selected for three months. Radio Nepal's news bulletin broadcast period is from 16 July to 17 October 2021. Its news broadcast time is at 19:00. Similarly, another sample radio, Radio Sagarmatha, has also been selected for analysis of its news for three months, from 15 June to 16 September 2021. The broadcast time of its news bulletin is 18:45.

The content analysis focuses on evening-based main news bulletins from the sample radio stations. The rationale for selecting the evening news is that newsrooms have more time to include essential events of the day to the best of their capacity. During this time, radio correspondents gather information throughout the day and send it to the newsroom, where the news is prepared to the best of their abilities. Afternoon events tend to be more prominent in the news compared to those occurring in the morning or at night. While radio stations rely more on newspaper publications for news in the morning, this is not the case for evening news bulletins. The selected radio news bulletins are from different dates due to the availability of archives. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha could provide archive recordings of their broadcast news bulletins, while Radio Lumbini and BFM did not have the same archival capacity. As a result, Radio Lumbini and BFM recorded the news bulletins upon request for study purposes. The news bulletins from each radio station were chosen for three months based on the Nepali calendar. It should be noted that the period covered by Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha, which provided news bulletin records from the summer months, includes more days than that of BFM and Radio Lumbini, which provided records from the winter months. This discrepancy

arises from the variation in the number of days between summer and winter months according to the Nepali calendar.

The analysis stresses specifically the headline news of the three-month news bulletins from the selected radio stations. This analysis revealed variations in the number of main news items among the radio stations. For example, BFM consistently featured four headline news items in each bulletin, while Radio Sagarmatha had 7-8 headline news items, Radio Lumbini had 5-7 headline news items, and Radio Nepal typically included 5-6 headline news items. Consequently, the sample news from different radio stations exhibited differences in terms of the number of headline news items included. The total number of headline news items selected for content analysis amounted to 1711. BFM contributed 338 headline news items, Radio Lumbini featured 451 headline news items, Radio Nepal had 445 headline news items, and Radio Sagarmatha included 477 headline news items. In terms of percentages, BFM accounted for 19.75%, Radio Lumbini comprised 26.36%, Radio Nepal constituted 26.01%, and Radio Sagarmatha represented 27.88% of the total time analysed. These findings highlight the variations in the number of headline news items across the different radio stations, indicating differences in news coverage and the allocation of airtime for main news stories.

#### **4.11 Total Time Duration of Radio News Bulletins for Content Analysis**

The total duration of the news bulletins from the sample radio stations varies due to the differing lengths of their respective bulletins. BFM has a news bulletin duration of 20 minutes, Radio Lumbini has 15 minutes, while both Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have news bulletins lasting 25 minutes each. The total duration of the news bulletins selected for content analysis is as follows:

**Table 4.2***Total Time Duration of News Bulletins*

Radio stations	Time duration of news bulletins (in minutes)	Time duration of news bulletins in hours	Average time duration of news bulletins (in minutes)
BFM	6,790	113.16	20.1
Radio Lumbini	6,780	113	15
Radio Nepal	11,130	185.5	25
Radio Sagarmatha	11,385	189.75	23.9
Grand Total	36,085 minutes	601.41 hours	21.1 minutes

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 4.2, the total duration of news bulletins taken from the four sample radio stations for content analysis is 36085 minutes. Out of which, the duration of BFM's news bulletin is 6790 minutes, Radio Lumbini's is 6780 minutes, Radio Nepal's is 11130 minutes and Radio Sagarmatha's is 11,385 minutes. When converted into hours, the total duration of the sample radio bulletin covers 601.41 hours. Out of this, the total time duration of the BFM news bulletin is 113.16 hours and Radio Lumbini has 113 hours. Likewise, Radio Nepal has a 185.5-hour long time duration of news bulletins whereas Radio Sagarmatha has an 189.75-hour long time duration of its news bulletins. Of the four selected sample radio stations, BFM's total bulletin duration is 20.1 minutes, Radio Lumbini's 15 minutes, Radio Nepal's 25 minutes and Radio Sagarmatha's 23.9 minutes. In this way, the shortest news bulletin is that of Radio Lumbini, whose duration is only 15 minutes. The longest duration is that of Radio Nepal, with 25-minute news bulletins. The average duration of news bulletins broadcast by all four radio stations is 21.1 minutes.

While analysing the total period of the overall news bulletin, it can be seen that the longest period is for Radio Sagarmatha, which occupies 11,385 minutes, while the

shortest period is for BFM, which has a broadcast duration of only 6,790 minutes. The durations of news bulletins broadcast by Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal are found to be between 6,780 minutes and 11,130 minutes. Although BFM's programme schedule shows the standard time of news bulletins as 20 minutes, some news bulletins are longer than 20 minutes, so the total period of three months is calculated to be 20.1 minutes.

Radio Sagarmatha has a standard time of 25 minutes for its bulletin. However, it has not maintained the discipline of standard time duration every day. As a result, the average time of the news bulletin is 23.9 minutes. It has been found that Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal have maintained the duration of their news bulletins at exactly 15 and 25 minutes respectively as per the scheduled timetable every day.

#### 4.12 Genre in the Main News of Radio Bulletins

The sample radio stations have basic news genres such as hard news, interviews, and news reports in the news bulletins. The picture of the genres they follow is as below:

**Table 4.3**

*Genre of the Main News of Radio Bulletins*

Radio stations	Hard news without voice insert		Interview		Radio report		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
BFM	336	99.41	0	0.00	2	0.59	338	100.00
Radio Lumbini	425	94.24	22	4.88	4	0.89	451	100.00
Radio Nepal	443	99.55	0	0.0	2	0.45	445	100.00
Radio Sagarmatha	477	100.00	0	0.0	0	0.0	477	100.00
Total	1681	98.25	22	1.29	8	0.47	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As per data from Table 4.3, the main news broadcasts from the sampled radio stations have been categorised into three sections: hard news, interviews, and radio reports. The analysis reveals that out of a total of 1,711 main news items broadcast by all

four radio stations, the majority, amounting to 1,681, falls under the category of hard news. This represents approximately 98.25 percent of the total sampled news content. In contrast, the number of interviews and radio reports is significantly smaller in comparison. Specifically, the table indicates that only 22 news interviews were conducted across all the sampled radio stations, accounting for a mere fraction of the total news items. Similarly, the number of radio reports observed in the table is only 8. It is worth noting that in the hard news section, there is no inclusion of voiceovers, emphasising a more direct reporting style. Interviews, on the other hand, are given the least priority in terms of making headlines in news broadcasting. Moreover, the duration of interviews included in the news segments is relatively short. Regarding radio reports, the analysis reveals that these segments typically incorporate the voices of approximately 4 to 5 individuals, providing a multi-perspective approach to the news.

In Table 4.3, all the sample radio stations broadcast 98.25 percent of news in the form of a narrative description of events without inserting the voice of the sources. They only have 1.29 percent of the voices of the sources as news interviews and 0.47 percent of sources' voices as news reports in the headline news. Analysing the data for each radio station, it is evident that BFM has broadcast a total of 338 main news segments, out of which 336, accounting for 99.41 percent, were categorised as hard news. Surprisingly, no interviews were included in their news programme. Additionally, only 2 radio reports were incorporated, representing a mere 0.59 percent of the total news content.

Similarly, Radio Lumbini has aired 425 out of 451 main news segments during three months, indicating that 94.24 percent of their news coverage consisted of hard news. In contrast to BFM, Radio Lumbini included 22 interviews in their main news broadcasts, amounting to 4.88 percent of the overall news content. Additionally, they incorporated 4 radio reports, which made up 0.89 percent of the main news content.

Moving on to Radio Nepal, they presented 443 hard news segments out of a total of 445 samples in their main news, resulting in an impressive 99.55 percent. Notably, Radio Nepal did not include any interviews in their main news programme. However, they did include 2 radio reports, which accounted for a minimal 0.45 percent of the news content.

Lastly, Radio Sagarmatha emerged as a radio station that exclusively broadcasts hard news, with all 477 samples in their main news falling under this category. Surprisingly, no interviews or radio reports were included in their main news programme throughout the three months. In summary, the analysis of these radio stations reveals that BFM and Radio Sagarmatha focused solely on hard news, without incorporating interviews or radio reports. On the other hand, Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal maintained a similar emphasis on hard news but included interviews and radio reports to varying degrees in their main news programme.

Among the four radio stations, Radio Lumbini has become the station that broadcasts the most diverse types of news. A comparative analysis of the above table shows that Radio Lumbini is the station that broadcasts the most diverse types of news among the four radio stations. Compared to other radio stations, Radio Lumbini has become a radio station that has a voice in the main news through interviews and radio reports.

It is found to have broadcast all three types of news. Comparatively, Radio Sagarmatha is the station that has not adopted diversity in the main news, which does not produce any other type of main news except hard news. It takes more human resources in newsrooms to prepare radio news and reports collecting the voices of the sources in the fields.

### 4.13 Length of the Sample Headline News Stories

The sample radio stations broadcast their main news for up to more than 60 seconds. Three categories have been created to analyse the length of headline news: less than 30 seconds, 30 to 60 seconds and more than 60 seconds. The table below shows the details of the length of the sample headline news of the radio stations:

**Table 4.4**

*Length of the Headline News Stories*

Radio stations	Less than 30 seconds		30-60 seconds		More than 60 seconds		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
BFM	3	0.89	112	33.14	223	65.98	338	100.00
Radio Lumbini	1	0.22	218	48.34	232	51.44	451	100.00
Radio Nepal	1	0.22	271	60.90	173	38.88	445	100.00
Radio Sagarmatha	0	0	66	13.84	411	86.16	477	100.00
Total	5	0.29	667	38.98	1039	60.72	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 4.4, the time duration of the news broadcast by the sample radio stations has been categorised into three types: less than 30 seconds, 30 to 60 seconds and more than 60 seconds. Altogether, only 5 news items are found to be of less than 30 seconds, which represents only 0.29 percent of the total news, whereas 667 news items are found in 30 to 60 seconds time length which is 38.98 in percentage. Out of the three types, the most, 1039 items of news were found to be in the more than 60 minutes category. It represents 60.72 percent of the total number of news, 1711.

Compared to other radio stations, BFM has news of fewer than 30 seconds category which represents only 0.89 percent of its total number of main news, 338. Out of 451 news, Radio Lumbini has only one news item in the less than 30 seconds category which is 0.22 in percentage. Likewise, out of 445, Radio Nepal has only one news item in the less than 30 seconds category which is only 0.22 in percentage. Radio Sagarmatha has no news item in the less than 30 seconds category.

In the 30 to 60 seconds, BFM has 112 (33.14%), Radio Lumbini has 218 (48.34%), Radio Nepal has 271 (60.90%) and Radio Sagarmatha is found to have broadcast 66 (13.84%) news items. It is found that BFM broadcast 223 (65.98%), Radio Lumbini 232 (51.44%), Radio Nepal 173 (38.88%) and Radio Sagarmatha broadcast 411 (86.16%) news items in the more than 60 seconds categories. The table shows that most of the total radio news of all sample radio stations has been broadcast more than one minute in length.

It can be analysed that if the radio stations had shortened the length of news by up to 30 seconds and up to one minute, more news sources could have been included through the added news. By doing this, the radio stations would have a chance of maintaining more diversity in source selection. More than one minute of the news is too lengthy for the audience. The data shows that radio stations do not have good copy editors in the newsroom to shorten and sharpen the news and add more issues and voices of more people maintaining more diversity in the news and news sources.

The editing process sharpens, polishes, and compresses news. It makes news interesting to audiences. According to McLeish (2005), the editing principles are as follows: to rearrange recorded material into a more logical sequence, to remove the uninteresting, repetitive, or technically unacceptable, to reduce the running time, for creative effect to produce new juxtapositions of speech, music, sound, and silence (p. 31). Further, Smith and O'Connell (2004) describe the role of the editor that "in addition to correcting spelling and grammar, editors also judge the quality of the reporting and help reporters improve the way their stories are written" (p. 85).

However, during the field study, only 2-3 persons have been found working in the newsroom. Their main role has seemed just to compile stories for the bulletins. The function of an editor to compress the stories has been found lacking. Adhikary, a senior

journalist and media educator, criticises that there are no editors in the media who can edit news properly. In his opinion, the editors are not aware of their role in editing the stories. He further stresses the situation of radio newsrooms, "news editors/readers without proper education/training are likely to be easily deceived by someone with a sinister design. The other possible reason is an individual's greed for pecuniary gains" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Giri, the Chairperson of the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB), accepts that the local radio stations have yet to afford quality reporters and editors. That is why, the news is not properly edited (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). While the news is not edited properly, the length of a news story is too long and lousy to the listeners. If the newsroom broadcasts the same size of news that it gets from elite organisers of events, it takes airtime unnecessarily and the stories of common or voiceless people might not get a chance to be incorporated in the news bulletin. As the role of a gatekeeper, the editor should filter news properly since "news editing is tailoring news items or a news story to the required shape and size, using the right kind of expression and symbols" (Joseph, 2000, p. 144). According to the Gatekeeping Theory, discussed in chapter two, it depends on the editor how many items filter to pass the gate for the broadcasting.

Table 4.4 shows that 60.72 percent of the total sample news on all stations is more than one minute in length. The time of radio news is not increased because of the news reports but it has been increased by only the description of hard news. Radio Sagarmatha has 86.72 percent of its total news is more than one minute in length while BFM has 65.98 percent which is followed by Radio Lumbini with 51.44 percent.

Only Radio Nepal has 38.16 percent of news with more than one minute out of its total news. Based on the field study it has been found that Radio Nepal has two sections

of the newsroom: reporting and news desk. The reporting section is responsible for collecting news and the desk is responsible for editing, compiling, and broadcasting the news.

The other stations do not have enough human resources in the newsroom which has been confirmed by the field study of the researcher and the acceptance of the radio managers and news coordinators through the interview. For instance, here is a case of BFM. BFM's news coordinator Adhikari (Netra), describes the lacking situation of an editor in his newsroom consisting of a news coordinator, two newsreaders and currently only one city reporter (Personal communication, March 12, 2023). Those human resources are insufficient in his newsroom.

There is no available position of editor or copy editor who can decide the size of the news. This problem has been faced by Radio Sagarmatha and Radio Lumbini. Basnyat, the Station Manager of Radio Sagarmatha, (February 13, 2023) and Neupane, the Chief Executive Officer of Radio Lumbini, (March 5, 2023) express that their stations do not have sufficient human resources, especially the reporters and editors (Personal communication). In this situation, nobody is responsible for the lengthy and lousy news broadcasting.

#### **4.14 Assessment of Radio News Sources based on Beat Areas**

The selected radio stations have covered various sources through different beat/subject areas in the headline news of the sample news bulletins. Mainly, the beat areas of the news sources have been categorised into 13 types to analyse the content.

The major beats comprise political/government, health/pandemic, entertainment/sport/arts, international, social/cultural, disaster/weather/climate, economic/business, road/accident, education/science/technology, development/environment, framing/agriculture, media/communication and gender

equality/minorities/social inclusion. The major areas having common features have been combined into one group to ease the data presentation. For instance, beats concerning politics and government have been enlisted under the same group while other areas including disaster, weather and climate have been categorised into the same list. The beat areas/subjects and their status projected by the sample radio stations are as follows:

**Table 4.5***Radio News Sources Based on Beat Areas*

Beat/subject of news stories	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Political/ government	95	28.11	124	27.49	156	35.06	102	21.38	477	27.88
Health/ pandemic	36	10.65	80	17.74	116	26.07	116	24.32	348	20.34
Entertainment/ sport/arts	85	25.15	84	18.63	8	1.8	86	18.03	263	15.37
International	79	23.37	0	0	93	20.9	79	16.56	251	14.67
Social/cultural	18	5.33	62	13.75	11	2.47	9	1.89	100	5.84
Disaster/ weather/ climate	6	1.78	20	4.43	11	2.47	35	7.34	72	4.21
Economic/ business	3	0.89	21	4.66	26	5.84	14	2.94	64	3.74
Road/accident	5	1.48	21	4.66	9	2.02	8	1.68	43	2.51
Education/ science/ technology	4	1.18	14	3.1	8	1.8	11	2.31	37	2.16
Development/ environment	6	1.78	11	2.44	5	1.12	14	2.94	36	2.1
Farming/ agriculture	1	0.3	3	0.67	2	0.45	3	0.63	9	0.53
Media/ communication	0	0	6	1.33	0	0	0	0	6	0.35
Gender equality/ gender minorities/ social inclusion	0	0	5	1.11	0	0	0	0	5	0.29
Total	338	100	451	100	445	100	477	100	1711	100.00

Source: Content Analysis, 2022

As Table 4.5 shows, to analyse the diversity of the sources, the sample news bulletins have been classified into the news beat/subject area of the coverage. For this, the headline news of all four radio stations has been grouped into 13 sections such as entertainment/ sport/ arts, development/ environment, disaster/ weather/ climate, economic/ business, Education/ science/ technology, farming/ agriculture, gender equality/minorities, health/ pandemic, international, media/communication, political/ government, road/accident and Social/cultural beat areas. While analysing the content, it is found that radio stations give higher priority to the government and political sector as their sources.

Out of 1711 sample headline news, the number of the story in the government and political beat is 477, which represents 27.88 percent of the total news items.

The second priority of the stations as sources of main news seems to be the health/pandemic sector which covers 348 (20.34%) out of the total news items. The sample of the news has been selected during the COVID-19. Because of the wide coverage of the pandemic, the number of the beat has got the second position of the coverage. At the time, the government published a daily bulletin and organised regular press conferences every day with the Ministry of Health and Population. The radio stations regularly covered the release and press conference making it a regular headline of the news bulletin. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the health/pandemic sector got the second top priority in the radio news bulletins.

The sports, entertainment and art sectors are in the third position of the radio stations in their news bulletins which is 263 in number and 15.37 in percentage. Of the four radio stations, Radio Nepal has made headlines of major sports events only. In contrast, the rest of the stations have given priority to sports as the regular headline in their news bulletins. The data shows that Radio Nepal has broadcast only 8 headline

news related to sports/entertainment and arts whereas BFM, Radio Lumbini and Radio Sagarmatha have broadcast 85, 84 and 86 news items related to sports, art, and entertainment as the main news of the bulletins.

The data in the table demonstrates that all sample radio stations have given fourth priority to the international news beat. It has got 14.57 percent (251 items) airtime of the total sample main news of radio bulletins. Out of four sample radio stations, BFM has covered 79 news items (23.37% of its total news), Radio Sagarmatha has given 79 news items (16.56% of its total news items) and Radio Nepal has given 93 news items (20.90% of its total news) for the international beat. However, Radio Lumbini has not given priority to international beat in its headline news. As a result, the international beat of news has got a nil score in Radio Lumbini in the headlines.

The lowest priority as the headline news is given by all radio stations to gender equality and minorities which has got only 0.29 percent of the total news. Out of four radio stations, only Radio Lumbini has covered 5 news items on gender equality and minorities as the main news of the bulletin. However, the rest of the stations have not provided space for the same as the main news. The second and third lowest priorities are given to media/communication and farming/agriculture sectors which have got airtime as the main news of the bulletins at 0.35 and 0.53 percent respectively.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (2023, para. 1), 66 percent of the total population depends on agriculture in Nepal. However, the data in the table reflects that out of 1711 news items, only 9 (0.53%) news have got airtime on agriculture and farming as the main news of the radio bulletins. The table shows that the airwaves of all sample radio stations on agriculture/farming is less than one percent of their total news items. Only 1 (0.30%) of the news on BFM and 3 (0.67%) of the news on Radio Lumbini, 2 news items (0.45%) on Radio Nepal and 3 (0.63% of

its total news) on Radio Sagarmatha got spaces as main news. It means that all the radio stations have given less priority to the agriculture/farming beat in their headline news. The villages, farmers and agriculture sectors as the news sources seem to not have become an influential factor in the radio newsroom.

Out of the total sample news, the sources about the development/environment beat have got 2.10 percent (36 in number) on-air time. Compared to BFM, a private radio station and Radio Nepal, a government-owned station, Radio Lumbini and Radio Sagarmatha are found to have made more headline news on the development/environment beat. Radio Lumbini has covered 2.44 percent (11 news items) and Radio Sagarmatha 2.94 percent (14 news items) as the main news sources from the development/environment area. As run by environmental journalists, the major share of the sources of environmental and development issues goes to Radio Sagarmatha. Whereas BFM has 1.78 percent (6 news items) and Radio Nepal has only 1.12 percent (5 items) of the sources that have been covered in the development and environment beat. The table further projects that out of the four radio stations, Radio Nepal has given less priority to development and environmental issues and events as the main news of the bulletin. However, compared to political, pandemic, and international beats, the sample radio stations have given less priority to environmental and development issues and events.

Out of the total sample news items (1711), the sample radio stations have provided 2.21 percent (37 news items) airtime to the education, science, and technology beat. The table indicates both community radio stations, Radio Lumbini and Radio Sagarmatha, have given more airtime to education, science, and technology, i.e., 3.10 percent (14 news items) and 2.31 percent (11 news items) respectively. Whereas BFM

and Radio Nepal are found to have covered 1.18 percent (4 news items) and 1.80 percent (8 news items) on education, science and technology beat respectively.

Disaster/ weather/ climate beat has got 4.21 percent (72 news items) airtime in the main news of all four radio stations. Radio Sagarmatha has given high priority (7.34%) to the disaster/weather/climate issues and events, whereas Radio Lumbini is in second position (4.43%), Radio Nepal is in third position (2.47%) and BFM last position (1.78%) in terms of making headlines from disaster/weather/climate beat. Regarding the sources related to economics/business beats, all the radio stations have given 3.74 percent air space in their main news. Compared to the local radio stations, Radio Nepal has given high priority (5.84%) to the economics/business beat while BFM has given the least priority (0.89%) to the same field in its main news. Radio Lumbini is found in the second position (4.66%) and Radio Sagarmatha in the third position (2.94%) regarding the coverage of economics and business beat in the main news of their news bulletins.

Road/accident beat has got 2.51 percent (43 news items) airtime whereas issues and events on social and culture have got 5.84 percent (100 news items) air space as main news in all four radio stations. Out of four sample radio stations, BFM has given 1.48 percent (5 items of news) airtime in the main news, where Radio Lumbini is found providing 4.66 percent space (21 news items), Radio Nepal 2.02 percent (9) and Radio Sagarmatha 1.18 percent (8) of its total headline news.

Yogi, a radio journalist at BBC London, argues that common people from remote areas and villages don't have access to radio newsrooms as well as other media outlets. In his opinion, privileged communities, organised groups, and organisations have more access to the newsrooms as they know quite well how to lobby for their cause (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Mainali asserts that Nepali journalism is urban-based and urban-biased. He further discusses that it is based on events, in other words, the news does not become news in Nepali journalism without someone taking action. This means that "Nepali journalism is neither issue-based nor focused. As a result, the news is made only for those with power and money, class, profession, gender, and caste" (Personal communication, February 5, 2023).

Bhoosal, the former station manager of Radio Lumbini, has experienced that radio stations do not have their own human resources, news priorities and policies. Therefore, there is no necessary follow-up in the news, and there is also a lack of resources and means for confirming the source or for field reporting. He argues that in this situation, it is not possible to improve the news by examining different sources or meeting with many people. "Due to the behaviour of relying on limited individuals, the sources of news are limited, urban-centric elites who are the same one after another. This may have happened due to the lack of public relations of the media and the way to find the content. On the other hand, it also revealed the importance and priority given to news by radio stations" (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

In the opinion of Bista, a senior journalist, "there is no doubt that the structure and content of the newsroom should be inclusive to cover the plurality and diversity of the society. Most of the news on the radio depends on events and opinions expressed in public gatherings, and such opinions basically come from the leadership level, and because they are male in terms of gender, the ethnically specific Khas-Arya community, and geographically accessible urban areas" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). He analyses that there is a lack of professional training, university education and policy development are responsible for this, and it needs to be restructured.

Kharel, Professor of journalism at Tribhuvan University, analyses that this is an easier way. Radio stations need low investment, and they expect high returns, which is contradictory, and it cannot happen. By this, radio listeners would not find that news comprehensive and newsworthy. They are just spoon-fed, meaning that when you rely especially on political parties and government officials and similar other official sources, the general public reaction is to rely on them less. That's why they are less newsworthy. He suggests that radio stations make news more diverse by applying the following ways:

You should not depend only on official sources. You must do your best to get alternative sources to contradict the information provided officially endorse it or reconfirm it. But this doesn't happen. So, it's a one-sided flow of information, one-sided. 'The government says this, the political party says this' and then the result is one-sided information. There is no verification, no cross-verification. That's why this is not a very reliable method of collecting information. Now and then it is essential again. It might seem contradictory, but it is essential (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

Basnyat accepts that the content of the news is more political and related to government issues. In her opinion, it is natural that the source is also more connected with this (Personal communication, February 13, 2023).

Analysing theoretically, the gatekeepers of the sample radio stations' newsrooms have not been socially responsible while selecting news sources. They are influenced by the agenda of the power elites while gatekeeping the news sources. They have given major space (27.88 percent) to the political and government sector as news sources while gender equality/minorities and social inclusion only have got air space of 0.29 percent of the total sample size of news.

In summation, the findings show that the diversity in the content is not maintained by the radio stations. The sample radio stations have not given priority to gender balance and minorities, farming, environment, development, education, science, and technology. Their focus has been mainly on government and political parties and entertainment. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown was enforced throughout the country. Consequently, news on health/pandemics has been covered in the main news with priorities. Even, the radio stations out of the Kathmandu Valley, have not found giving priority to the events and issues of farming even though it is a profession of most of the people in Nepal. Experts have pointed out that the gatekeepers such as reporters and editors in newsrooms have not maintained a balance in sourcing with the priorities of the issues and events which are related to the general people and communities.

#### 4.15 Nature of News Sources in Headline News

News bulletins of sample radio stations have been prepared after receiving information from different sources such as people, institutions/organisations and other media outlets. Table 4.6 describes the nature of sources of main news on the sample radio stations as persons, institutions, and other outlets. The table shows the data of news items broadcast without mentioning news sources.

**Table 4.6**

*Nature of News Sources in Headline News*

Nature of Source	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
People	100	29.59	242	53.66	195	43.82	158	33.12	695	40.62
Institutions/ organisations	56	16.57	66	14.63	102	22.92	139	29.14	363	21.22
Other outlets	17	5.02	9	2	15	3.37	22	4.61	63	3.68
Without source	165	48.82	134	29.71	133	29.89	158	33.12	590	34.48
Total	338	100	451	100	445	100	477	100	1711	100

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As Table 4.6 projects, 40 percent (695 items) of the total headline news of four sample radio stations has been prepared by getting information from people as sources. 21.22 percent (363 news items) of news received from institutions or organisations as news sources. Out of the total news, 3.68 percent (63 news items) have been received from other outlets such as newspapers, websites, and social media, which has been named as other outlets. A big portion of the headline news that is 34.48 percent (590 news items) has been broadcast without mentioning any source.

Out of four radio stations, Radio Lumbini has broadcast a large portion of the main news by mentioning persons as news sources. Of 451 total news items, it has broadcast 242 news items (53.66% of its total main news items) during the timeframe of three months. It has broadcast 14.63 percent of its total news (66 items) mentioning institutions/organisations as sources. According to the data shown in the table, it has broadcast news from other outlets with 2.00 percent (9 items) as the source. However, Radio Lumbini has broadcast a big chunk of news with 29.71 percent (134 items) of the total news without mentioning any news source.

Radio Nepal is in second position to broadcast news mentioning persons as news sources. It has provided 43.82 percent (195 items) of air space in its total number of the main news to persons as sources. Whereas 22.92 percent (102 items) of its total main news have been broadcast from institutions or organisations as sources in its news bulletins. Out of 445 news items, Radio Nepal has broadcast 3.37 percent (15 items) of headline news from other outlets such as newspapers or social media, while it has broadcast 29.89 percent (133 items) of headline news without mentioning sources.

Out of its total headline news items (477), Radio Sagarmatha has broadcast 33.12 percent (158 items) mentioning sources as persons. It has been found to have broadcast 29.14 percent (139 items) of news mentioning institutions as sources and 4.61 percent

(22 items) news from other outlets. It has broadcast a big number, 33.12 percent (158 items) of news stories without mentioning news sources.

Compared to other sample radio stations, BFM has broadcast a smaller number of news mentioning persons as sources. Out of 338 news items, it broadcast 29.59 percent (100 news items) from persons as sources while 16.57 percent (56 items) from institutions and 5.02 percent (17 items) from other outlets. The table shows that 48.82 percent of the headline news (165 items) is found to have been broadcast on BFM without mentioning sources.

Altogether, 34.48 percent of the total news from all sample radio stations has been broadcast without sources. It is this fact that opens the discussion and criticism of the objectivity of radio newsrooms.

#### 4.16 Person as Radio News Source

Radio stations broadcast news from various sources. The table shows the status of persons as sources in the headline news of the sample radio stations. Human as sources is divided as 1 person, 2 people, 3 people, 4 people and more than 4 people as follows:

**Table 4.7**

##### *Person as News Source in Headline News*

People as source	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	Number of news	Percent	Number of news	Percent	Number of news	Percent	Number of news	Percent	Number of news	Percent
1 person	90	12.95	196	28.20	186	26.76	150	21.58	622	89.50
2 people	5	0.72	21	3.02	7	1.01	6	0.86	39	5.61
3 people	4	0.58	17	2.45	1	0.14	1	0.14	23	3.31
4 people	1	0.14	5	0.72	1	0.14	1	0.14	8	1.15
4+people	0	0.00	3	0.43	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	0.43
Total	100	14.39	242	34.82	195	28.05	158	22.72	695	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 4.7, out of the 1711 headline news, 40.62 percent (695 items) are found to have been broadcast with humans as sources. Out of 695 main news items,

89.50 percent (622 items) have been broadcast referencing a single person as a source. The number of news items that mention two people as sources are 5.61 percent (39 items). Likewise, 3.31 percent (23 news items) of the total news quoted people as sources are found to have mentioned 3 people as sources. Whereas 1.15 percent (8 items) news have quoted 4 people, and 0.43 percent (3 items) have mentioned more than 4 people as news sources. Most of the news (89.50 percent of 695 headline news) is found to be prepared and broadcast based on single-person sources. It has been revealed that radio stations connected to 3 or more sources only in news reports and vox-pops. They have not found it to reach diverse people to have information and cross-check the received information in hard news to make it more reliable, trustworthy, and credible, which makes audiences in confusion.

While analysing persons as sources in radio news bulletins of four sample radio stations, Radio Lumbini is in the first position in terms of covering more headline news mentioning persons as sources. Of the total 695 news items, it has given more airtime, with 34.82 percent (242), to people as sources. Compared to other stations, BFM has less, 14.39 percent (100 news items) sample airtime for people as the source. Radio Sagarmatha has 22.72 percent (158 news items) of the total main news citing people as the source whereas Radio Nepal has provided 28.05 percent (195 out of 695 news items). After Radio Lumbini, Radio Nepal is in the second position in terms of mentioning people as news sources while Radio Sagarmatha is in the third position for this matter.

While dealing with news having two persons as news sources, BFM has covered (0.72 percent (5 news items)), Radio Lumbini has covered (3.02 percent (21 pieces of news)), Radio Nepal has given space for 1.01 percent (7 news items) and Radio Sagarmatha has covered 0.86 percent (6 news items) of its total main news.

Likewise, talking about 3 persons as news sources, Radio Lumbini has given space for 2.45 percent (17 news pieces), the highest number among other radio stations. BFM is in the second position which has provided 0.58 percent (4 news items) out of the 695 headline news. Radio Nepal (0.14 percent) and Radio Sagarmatha (0.14 percent) are in the last position, providing only one news item with each citing 4 people as news sources.

In terms of mentioning four people as sources of news, BFM, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have cited them in only one news each (0.14 percent) in the headline news of a total of 695 headline news. Whereas Radio Lumbini has been found to have broadcast news with 0.72 percent (5 news items) of the total headline news having four persons as news sources.

Only one of the sample stations, Radio Lumbini, has been found to cite more than 4 people as sources of the main news. It has broadcast news mentioning more than 4 people as sources with 0.43 percent (3 news items). BFM, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha haven't been found to have broadcast news with sources quoting more than 4 people.

All sample radio stations have been found to have broadcast 59.38 percent (1016) of the main news from sources other than the people. BFM has 13.91 percent (238 items), Radio Lumbini has 12.22 percent (209), Radio Nepal has 14.61 percent (250), and Radio Sagarmatha has 18.64 percent (319 items) broadcast of the total headline news from sources other than people. News from institutions/organisations and other outlets such as newspapers, websites, social media and news without mentioning sources are grouped in the other sources row to show the data which is not related to the people as sources.

The media experts do not believe in news based on single sources. Bista argues that the reasons behind the single-sourced radio news are firstly the compulsion to do a lot with few human resources, secondly the lack of resources, thirdly the lack of professional practice and fourthly, the leadership and sources of the news do not question the credibility or do not take it seriously. In his opinion, news sources should be cross-checked by connecting more than one source (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). Coverage of more sources in a news item maintains a diversity of sources in the news which makes news more credible for the listeners. It is the lack of objectivity and diversity in source selection in the gatekeeping process.

Yogi has traced the reason behind the single-person sourcing that it may be because reporters don't have proper training and radio stations also don't ask reporters to be more rigorous in their news reports (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). The radio newsrooms should plan to vary the level of training to develop human resources. Without timely training from basics to advanced levels on news reporting, writing, editing and presentation, a communicator can't have ideas to make news balanced, impartial, diverse, and trustworthy.

Bhoosal has observed that the newsrooms of radio stations collect news just from press releases, formal ceremonies, and similar events in which the sources are just a single person or a single institution. Rather than making the content of the news official, analytical and realistic, this kind of tendency seems to be more due to the ease of providing basic and simple information. After that, the arrangements of training to develop human resources in journalism and radio programme production have not been done for many years. Some of the currently involved radio journalists may not even know about the basic news (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). It has been observed during the field study that local radio stations have problems with the lack of

news experts or senior journalists who are designated as news editors. The main responsibilities of radio journalists are two to three in number in newsrooms just to compile news received from various sources in the form of press releases, telephone, news portals, websites and news agencies and broadcast it through the presentation. There is a lack of actual news operations such as regular editorial meetings, discussions on the news of the day, news reporting, writing, and editing. There is a lack of proper handing over of the chargesheet with briefings to upcoming shifts in the newsrooms. It has been hampered in gatekeeping smoothly by the qualified and professional editor. That means the compromise in the quality and loss of credibility of news items and lack of diversity in sources.

Kharel has identified the problem of the news meeting in the Nepali media house that the news media in Nepal in general, don't hold regular meetings. Even the best of all the large news media hold meetings about once in two weeks, otherwise once a month. In his experience, regular editorial meetings should not happen especially in small newsrooms. They are so limited people; they are mostly confined to their own radio stations. He suggests that they can at least discuss amongst themselves. "They can meet on the phone, they can talk. Not for the sake of formality, but for what is happening. What can be done etc.? A lot of things can happen, a lot of things" (Personal communication, January 30, 2023). A proper news operation practice is needed in radio newsrooms for a perfect gatekeeping process. In the lack of this practice, the newsroom converts as the centre of the implementation of political and elite agenda setting instead of being responsible towards society.

According to Giri, along with the issues of geographical landscape and resource mobilisation, the situation of newsrooms and editors, reporters and stringers is connected. If the distribution of resources is done properly, or there is accessibility in

terms of geography, the newsroom is organised properly. The condition of editors and reporters is not bad. But it is found that "in some districts of geographical difficulty, there is a big problem to conduct a newsroom. One can question the existence of a newsroom. In such a situation, what will be the condition of the editor, reporter, and stringer and what will be the condition of the diversity of sources?" (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). When there is a scarcity of reporters and editors in a newsroom, it is not possible to run the newsroom and select and verify sources properly.

Mainali, a radio expert and media educator, analyses that there are three apparent reasons behind the single-sourced content in news bulletins: the first reason is that Nepali journalism is dominated by partisan journalism. Second, there is a lack of skilled human resources in Nepali radio journalism. And thirdly, the existing unfavourable environment for journalists in Nepali journalism including lack of salary, and heavy workload, has made journalists lazy. According to him, gradually, such trends have started to firmly develop in the form of new norms in Nepali journalism (Personal communication, February 5, 2023). These reasons are the weaknesses of radio newsrooms which invite the agenda of power elites knowingly or unknowingly. Because the proper judgement in gatekeeping is not possible in this environment.

In the opinion of Raut, the Head of BBC Nepali Service, single-sourced news on the radio is now an established fact. The main reason is a very low investment by radio stations in quality human resources and their newsgathering operation, along with less interest in training and upscaling their news leaders and journalists (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). As a result, the quality of output is not improving, and news presenters carry on with the practice which has been the norm from the previous times.

Local radio managers Adhikari (Netra) (February 23, 2023), Basnyat (February 13, 2023) and Neupane (March 5, 2023) also have a similar experience in that their radio stations have been facing inadequate staff in news. Not only that, but they have also been facing the challenges of financial investment in newsrooms and production. They are not in a position to hire quality human resources in newsrooms in sufficient quantity (Personal Communication).

The radio managers have expressed their difficulties that their radio stations have to compromise with single-person sources because of a lack of sufficient funds and investment, advertisements, and sponsorships, which has left the newsrooms in a position to be unable to maintain diversity and multiple sourcing in the news. They are facing low advertisement and revenues on the one hand and challenges to hold radio listeners due to newly emerged internet and social media platforms on the other hand.

However, they are hopeful that improvement can be possible in future if the situation is changed in favour of radio in future (Personal communication). Despite the claim of Pyakurel using multiple methods to check the authenticity of the information including the multiplicity of the sources, the data is not matched with his statement. It has been found in a content analysis that Radio Nepal has broadcast 26.76 percent of a total of 695 news citing a single person as a news source.

#### **4.17 Sources of Radio News from the Geographical Point of View**

Sample radio stations have broadcast their news bulletins connecting with the sources at the local level, such as village municipalities, municipalities, districts, and provinces they are situated in, and the sources at the central and international levels. The central level shows the capital of the country. Table 4.8 visualises the types of sources from the geographical point of view as follows:

**Table 4.8***Types of Sources by Geographical Point of View in the Main News*

Radio stations	International sources		Local sources		Central level sources		Not mentioned		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
BFM	27	7.99	63	18.64	83	24.55	165	48.82	338	100.00
Radio Lumbini	7	1.55	189	41.91	121	26.83	134	29.71	451	100.00
Radio Nepal	15	3.37	24	5.39	273	61.35	133	29.89	445	100.00
Radio Sagarmatha	27	5.66	45	9.44	247	51.78	158	33.12	477	100.00
Total	76	4.44	321	18.76	724	42.32	590	34.48	1711	100

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 4.8, it has been found that the sample radio stations have prepared and broadcast radio bulletins based on news received from various sources. In this table, the radio's news sources are divided into three parts—local, central, and international and then analysed. It is found that the radio stations have prepared most of the news, 42.32 percent (724), by quoting central-level sources. These radio stations have prepared and broadcast only 18.76% (321) of news from local news sources. Only 4.44 percent (76 items) of the total main news mentioned international sources on all four radio stations. The amount of news without mentioning any source is 34.48 percent (590 items).

News sources from the local, district, and state levels are considered local sources. Likewise, sources of news broadcast by referring to the country's federal capital, central government, officials, leaders, parliament, courts, ministries, federal government departments, offices, people's representatives, police, and army headquarters etc. are classified as central level sources. Sources of news received from abroad are defined as international sources.

While making a comparison among four sample radio stations, it was found that Radio Lumbini has broadcast the highest 41.91 percent (189) of the news referring to local sources and the least 1.55 percent (7) of the news citing international sources. BFM is in the second position to broadcast news by citing local sources. It broadcasts 18.64 percent (63) of its headline news stories citing local sources. Radio Nepal has broadcast 5.39 percent (24) of the news mentioning local sources which is the smallest size of the sources in its coverage. After Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha has become the station that broadcast the least headline news with 9.44 percent (45) mentioning local sources.

Out of the sample radio stations, Radio Nepal has become the first to broadcast news by citing central-level sources. It has broadcast 61.35 percent (273) of the total news headlines citing central-level sources. Radio Sagarmatha has become the second radio station to broadcast news from central-level sources by quoting central-level sources in 51.78 percent (247) of the total number of its main news. Radio Lumbini has broadcast 26.83 percent (121) of all its main news from central-level sources. BFM is the radio station that uses the least volume of central-level news sources, which has broadcast 24.55 percent (83) of the total main news items citing central-level sources.

In terms of mentioning international sources, BFM has broadcast 7.99 percent (27) news of its total headlines while Radio Sagarmatha has broadcast 5.66 percent (27) of its total news. Similarly, Radio Nepal has broadcast 3.37 percent (15) of its total news mentioning international sources. During the content analysis, it has been observed that all sample radio stations except Radio Lumbini have broadcast at least one item of the main news on an international event or issue. However, they have not mentioned sources in every international news story. As a result, the number of international sources of the story seems less compared to other sources.

While talking about not mentioned sources in the main news of radio stations, BFM has been found in the first position broadcasting 48.82 percent (165) of its total news items without identifying news sources. Radio Sagarmatha is in the second position broadcasting 33.12 percent (158) of its main news without mentioning news sources, whereas Radio Nepal is in the third position with 29.89 percent (133) of its main news without mentioning sources. Radio Lumbini has been found to have broadcast 29.71 percent (134) of its total main news without mentioning sources.

The data shows that the radio stations have relied on most of the sources (42.32 percent) related to the central level, the capital of the country. They have broadcast news from local and provincial sources with 18.76 percent. It seems that the power centres are newsmakers on radio stations instead of the general people. As Herman and Chomsky (1988, pp. 18–20) state, the media needs regular news flows in the newsroom, nevertheless, they do not have reporters to cover all events, they take feedings of the news from the power elites in the form of government, political powers, and business powers. Accordingly, the media use power elites as sources in the form of filters. This theory is attracted here to analyse the sources of radio stations as they have provided more airtime to the sources at the central level of the country as a power centre rather than the ordinary people and local sources.

Basnyat argues that her station's audiences in capital city areas may have paid attention to this because they have access to news sources. In her point of view, the news from the central level of the country has the power to attract media and its audiences through many events and issues that arise from the centre, but not from the periphery (Personal communication, February 13, 2023).

Banjade, the News Chief of Radio Lumbini, agrees with the views of Basnyat adding that as a community/local radio, "the news from rural areas is given priority,

however, since our access to the city will be easy, many issues will be covered" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). In his experience, the news of the central power has been given priority by local radio because of the easy access to the sources.

Pyakurel, the News Chief of Radio Nepal, accepts that the most important activities are accrued or organised in the capital cities and urban areas where high-profile personalities take part in the events. In his opinion, news related to those events and issues gets headlines in radio news where prominent personalities are involved, however, news out of the cities and urban areas also gets placed in bulletins by their importance, but not as main news (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Neupane expresses that the news collector reporter and listeners of the news are more likely to stay in the capital and market areas than in the rural areas. Events like public meetings, and ceremonies occur in capitals, cities, and urban areas than in local rural areas. In her experience, "investigative journalism is now in a state of obscurity, as a result, what content comes in front of the news personnel goes on-air by compiled in a bulletin." (Personal communication, March 5, 2023).

Dahal, an Associate Professor at Kathmandu University, argues that this is "part of the Marxist analogy of 'ruling class has ruling ideas.' As society by and large thought to listen to the powerful in the society the media many times reiterates this notion and hence established the agenda". In his opinion, this is also a good example of agenda-setting theory (Personal communication, May 22, 2023). Moreover, As Noelle-Neumann (1974, p. 44) states, this situation of sourcing in radio newsrooms creates an environment of the spiral of silence among the common people in the broad society. Instead of the common people, political, social, economic and cultural elites capture the newsroom as the source. Consequently, the voices of the majority of the citizens become silent because of the lack of access to the newsrooms. Likewise, a notion of agenda-setting and media

framing suggests that the media not only tell us what to think about, but also how to think about it, and, consequently, what to think (McCombs & Shaw, 1993, p. 65). In sum, based on the qualitative data of content analysis and the discussion of experts and radio managers it is found that the gatekeepers in the newsrooms are under the influence of political and social agenda-setting. Consequently, political leaders and government officials are top priorities to make headlines as the sources. It is because of the political economy which filters sources in the newsrooms welcoming the powerful elites as headline makers rather than the inclusion of general people and marginalised communities. In the light of the discussion of experts and experiences of radio practitioners, a conclusion is drawn that the listeners also have a habit of listening to the powerful people in positions and politicians rather than the voiceless people among them as headliners because of the agenda-setting of the radio newsroom.

## Chapter 5

### **Affecting Factors in the Radio News Sourcing Process**

This chapter aims to evaluate the causes and factors in the radio news sourcing process that meet objective 2 of the study. The mass media functions as a subsystem of society, existing and operating within its boundaries. Lasswell (1948) describes the functions of mass media in society, and radio news aligns with this description. It serves society by fulfilling several roles: "(1) the surveillance of the environment; (2) the correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment; (3) the transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next" (p. 217). As an integral part of society, radio news collects news and information from members of the community and delivers it to a wide and geographically dispersed audience. Its role is to serve the informational needs of society through the dissemination of news.

Radio stations rely on human sources for their newsrooms, selecting individuals who are trained or educated within society. The sourcing process in a newsroom is influenced by factors such as the qualifications and quality of the human resources, physical infrastructure, financial position, and social and cultural power structures. These elements shape the effectiveness and scope of information gathering for news reporting.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) have examined how both the internal and external environments impact the gatekeeping process within newsrooms. They contend that internally, journalists exhibit biases towards specific issues and communities. Additionally, they are susceptible to influence from government authorities, political powers, large corporate entities, public relations campaigns, and advertisers during the news-making process. As they further argue, ordinary individuals face significant barriers in accessing reporters and editors to share their concerns, events, and voices. They lack the means to afford media visits to invite journalists to witness events

firsthand in the field. Shoemaker and Reese's analysis underscores the challenges faced by ordinary people in having their perspectives and experiences represented in the news. The gatekeeping process within newsrooms is influenced by internal biases and external forces, resulting in a limited scope of voices and perspectives being presented to the public.

Furthermore, Herman and Chomsky (1989) discuss the dynamics of the newsroom, shedding light on its increasing reliance on information, photographs, sound bites, and video clips sourced from government offices and corporate entities. Their analysis suggests that the voices and releases of power elites take precedence in news stories, rendering the inclusion of ordinary citizens futile.

According to Herman and Chomsky, this phenomenon underscores the media's role in serving the interests of the power elites by amplifying their perspectives and disseminating their messages within the news. As a result, the media inadvertently becomes a conduit for the voices and agendas of those in positions of power. The sourcing process is a fundamental function of the media. This chapter aims to analyse those internal and external factors of the environment that affect the selection process of sources in radio newsrooms.

### **5.1 Workforce Capacity that Affects News Sourcing Process**

Each of the sampled radio stations possesses its own dedicated newsroom responsible for preparing and broadcasting news according to a daily schedule. The composition of human resources within these newsrooms varies based on the station's capacity and specific requirements. The status of human resources within the newsrooms of the sampled radio stations is outlined as follows:

**Table 5.1***Workforce Capacity of the Newsrooms in Sample Radio Stations*

Radio stations	Journalists	Editor	Reporters/ stringers	Copy editor/ writer	Contract	Part- time	Volunteer
BFM	4	1	5	3	4	3	0
Radio Lumbini	6	1	8	0	3	1	2
Radio Nepal	38	26	80	0	8	0	0
Radio Sagarmatha	8	0	5	0	6	2	0

*Source: Field Study, 2022*

Here, Table 5.1 displays the current staffing situation in the newsrooms of the sampled radio stations. BFM operates a relatively small-scale newsroom with four journalists assigned to its news desk. This team consists of one editor and three writers. Additionally, BFM has appointed five stringers located in different districts to cover local events. All journalists in the newsroom work on a contractual basis, with three of them serving as part-time employees. Radio Lumbini, on the other hand, employs six journalists within its newsroom. Among them, one individual holds the position of editor. Radio Lumbini also maintains eight reporters as stringers in peripheral districts. However, there is no designated copy editor within their team. The newsroom has hired three journalists on a contractual basis, with one serving as a part-time employee and two working as volunteer journalists. In the case of Radio Sagarmatha, they have a newsroom staffed with six full-time journalists on contract, and an additional two journalists working part-time. Currently, there is no editor, copy editor, or volunteer within their newsroom setup.

In comparison to the other three sampled radio stations, Radio Nepal boasts a larger newsroom with a team of 38 journalists. The newsroom is organised into two sections: the reporting section and the news desk. Within the news desk, there are 26 editors, while the reporting section comprises 12 reporters, including a chief reporter.

The majority of journalists in the newsroom hold permanent positions, while eight journalists are on a contractual basis. Radio Nepal has established a robust network of journalists across the country, with 68 stringers regularly sending their reports from all 68 districts of Nepal. This extensive network enables Radio Nepal to have broad coverage nationwide. In contrast, local radio stations operate with smaller newsrooms comprising only a few journalists who focus on covering activities and events within their respective localities.

Bhoosal argues that radio stations are currently ineffective in revenue collection, which is the backbone of the newsroom. Compared to radio programme production, a news programme is an expensive programme. He further discusses that as in the past, radio stations have not been able to increase facilities such as financial and physical infrastructure for news. He assesses that "there are limited media persons in the radio stations. There is a lack of good quality recording equipment in the field, a lack of human resources capacity-building plans and a lack of editorial policies and priorities for the news" (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Banjade agrees with experts and describes the current state of newsrooms as having temporary and inadequate financial and physical infrastructure. He advocates for extensive improvements to address these deficiencies and elevate the standards of newsrooms. He adds, "the condition of human resources in the newsroom is currently poor, which hinders the adoption of modern practices. The lack of skilled personnel forces the newsroom to operate traditionally. As a result, achieving accuracy and clarity in the news becomes challenging" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023).

During the observation of the newsrooms at Radio Lumbini, BFM, and Radio Sagarmatha, it was apparent that only 2-3 media personnel were actively involved in the newsrooms, primarily compiling news obtained from online sources and press releases.

On the other hand, Radio Nepal had over half a dozen journalists working in the reporting section. Notably, no editorial meetings were observed in any of the newsrooms, and there was a lack of visible planning for field reporting.

Compared to other stations, the government-run Radio Nepal has a sound physical infrastructure and enough human resources. However, Pyakurel accepts that the human resources of Radio Nepal are not enough for in-depth beat reporting (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). Radio stations outside the Kathmandu Valley lack sufficient editors, correspondents, resources, and means to provide accurate and diverse news. The shortage of personnel and limited access to resources hinder the production of reliable content. " Limited resources have made beat journalism unviable outside the Kathmandu Valley, forcing one individual to handle all tasks. This has hindered our capabilities in executing effective reporting in these regions" (Personal communication, February 23, 2023). Investments in training, funding, and infrastructure are needed to address these challenges and deliver quality news.

The state of Radio Sagarmatha, the nation's first public-sector radio station in the Kathmandu Valley, is also observed to be inadequate. Basnyat highlights the insufficiency of essential infrastructure, such as computers/laptops, recording equipment, and editing tools, within the radio newsroom. In her experience, "operating within a tight budget, the radio station grapples with a scarcity of journalists and insufficient staff in the newsroom. The limited number of semi-trained journalists and support personnel presents challenges in ensuring a balanced, diverse, and credible news coverage" (Personal communication, February 13, 2023).

Likewise, Radio Lumbini faces a dire situation concerning both infrastructure and skilled human resources, as revealed by Neupane. Financially, community media houses encounter significant challenges. While the news section possesses some computers, the

cameras, recorders, and other equipment fail to meet digitisation requirements. Neupane observes a lack of sufficient human resources within the station, particularly in the newsroom. She attributes this to the organisation's inability to retain skilled journalists, resulting in a noticeable exodus. She accepts that "the reliability and diversification of news sources depend on the adequacy of human resources and their capacity within the newsroom. However, the persistent shortage of personnel poses a significant challenge in achieving this objective" (Personal communication, March 5, 2023).

BFM also is not exempt from the issues of poor infrastructure and human resources conditions. Adhikari (Netra) describes that the financial and physical infrastructure condition is not good for the station, where the news business is being carried out in poor condition, which is not enough for the newsroom. His newsroom has "a news coordinator, two newsreaders, and only one city reporter. The human resources are insufficient for reliable news, selection of factual sources, and maintaining the diversity of sources" (Personal communication, March 12, 2023). An inadequate number of workforces working in newsrooms affects the reporting by accessing multiple sources.

Sah, the Executive Director at Nepal Madhesi Foundation, contends that despite the proliferation of radio stations, a scarcity of resources persists. He cites the example of the Madhes Province, where unskilled personnel are responsible for news collection, writing, and broadcasting due to resource limitations. He extrapolates this situation to other regions across the country. "Due to the absence of financial resources, radio stations are unable to hire qualified and necessary human resources. Consequently, they find themselves repeatedly broadcasting the same news that arrives in the newsroom throughout the day" (Personal communication, June 13, 2023).

Kharel criticises the radio management for the dearth of competent human resources within the newsroom. He views this as a weakness and a lack of responsibility

on the part of media management. According to him, media management individuals in Nepal tend to invest minimally, even if their news media outlets are highly successful or profitable. Kharel observes a disconnect between the profits earned and the investment made, which consequently impacts the sourcing and credibility of the media due to the shortage of human resources (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

Only providing accuracy in news is not sufficient but also newsrooms should access diverse voices to cover every aspect of a news story. Jha examines human resources as a significant concern, emphasising the crucial role played by the types of personnel hired and their comprehension of our social dynamics. He argues that the paradox lies in media houses neglecting the necessity for diversity in information, resources, and investment in information gathering. The importance of considering these factors is often overlooked, hindering the overall effectiveness and inclusivity of media organisations. He further assesses that "investments should be allocated for news acquisition, and dedicated reporters should be retained for that purpose" (Personal communication, June 14, 2023). In essence, his view is that newsrooms and media houses often fall short in terms of spending the necessary resources to gather news effectively, especially when it comes to urgent topics.

Basnet raises concerns regarding the infrastructure of radio stations, which directly impacts the news-sourcing process. She notes that many radio station studios pose risks, particularly in the event of disasters like earthquakes. Radio stations situated above three or four floors are deemed unsafe, as exemplified by the experiences of journalists during the 2015 Gorkha earthquake. Basnet emphasises the need for safe physical infrastructure. She further asserts that the economic aspect has played a significant role in the overall lack of professionalism in Nepal's journalism sector (Personal communication, March 13, 2023).

Additionally, Mainali contends that the proliferation of radio stations in Nepal has reached an unmanageable level. According to him, radio owners often underestimate the requirements of radio management, assuming that a mixer, transmitter, and antenna is sufficient for operation. Human resource planning is often overlooked in radio management, despite human resources being the key drivers in knowledge-intensive industries such as media houses. Mainali criticises the lack of priority given to human resources in Nepali media houses, resulting in staff reductions during crises. He emphasises the importance of skilled human resources in the newsroom who possess a deep understanding of the essence of news production, highlighting the significance of the mind over mere machinery:

However, there is a lack of management planning for personnel, with no systematic hiring, capacity building, or personal development initiatives in place. Consequently, the state of human resources in the radio industry is deplorable, with only a few individuals of quality to be found. Unskilled personnel, devoid of proper training and lacking essential equipment, often produce news articles that resemble essays, leading to a lack of credibility. (Personal communication, March 6, 2023)

In essence, the examined radio stations face significant challenges of financial constraints and a dearth of skilled human resources. Insufficient recruitment efforts have directly undermined the sourcing process, resulting in a limited number of unskilled journalists who predominantly rely on external sources, including press releases, instead of conducting on-the-ground reporting. The radio management's response to this weakness seems to be marked by a sense of helplessness rather than proactive measures to rectify the situation.

## 5.2 Capacity Building that Affects News Sourcing Process

Capacity building of human resources is imperative for any media organisation. To enhance the skills and capabilities of journalists in the newsrooms, various forms of training are crucial, ranging from basic to advanced periodic training, on-the-job training, specialised training, and refresher courses. However, the current status of training for journalists in the sample radio stations can be summarised as follows:

**Table 5.2**

*Training for Capacity Building of Journalists in the Newsrooms*

Radio stations	Training of 1 year or more	Training of 6-11 months	Training of 3-5 months	Training of 1-2 months	Training of 15-30 days	Training of 7-15 days
BFM	0	1	0	2	0	0
Radio Lumbini	0	0	0	0	0	0
Radio Nepal	0	0	0	0	0	2
Radio Sagarmatha	0	1	3	0	0	0

*Source: Field study, 2022*

Training plays a vital role in enhancing the capacity and skills of journalists within a newsroom. There is a need for radio stations to organise training programmes ranging from basic to advanced levels, including refresher courses for new staff members. Table 5.2 reveals that there has been a lack of emphasis on enhancing the capacity of journalists in the sample radio stations. In comparison to Radio Nepal and Radio Lumbini, Radio Sagarmatha and BFM have provided training opportunities to their human resources for capacity enhancement. BFM has one journalist trained for 6-11 months and two journalists with knowledge acquired through 3-5 months of training. Radio Sagarmatha has one journalist with 6-11 months of training and three journalists with knowledge gained from 3-5 months of training. Radio Nepal has conducted two events of week-long training, with an additional training programme offered to 29 new

staff members during the first six months of the current fiscal year (2022/2023). Table 5.2 provides an overview of the training status for journalists working in newsrooms.

The data reveals that a significant portion of human resources within the newsrooms lack training. To ensure the production of quality news and maintain an appropriate sourcing process, timely training, refreshment programmes, and orientations are crucial for these individuals. Mainali's analysis points to several reasons behind the observed lack of training in newsrooms. Firstly, the increase in the number of radio stations is identified as a primary factor. The rapid and uncontrolled growth of radio stations has created a situation akin to excessive and unwanted expansion, comparable to cancer. In the early days of independent broadcasting in Nepal, when there were only a few manageable radio stations, timely training for radio journalists and producers was a priority. However, with the proliferation of radio stations, training has lost its priority. Secondly, radio training is a time-consuming and expensive process. The lack of foresight and vision in radio management has prevented the development of human resources and hindered the broadcasting of quality content. Mainali suggests that the practice of hiring untrained personnel in radio may have originated from the print media sector. Lastly, there exists a prevalent mindset across the country that connections and nepotism play a significant role in securing jobs, even within government media. In private media, proximity to the owner often determines employment opportunities. These factors collectively contribute to the lack of training and the persistence of untrained human resources within the radio industry. Mainali concludes that:

There is a lack of minimum standards for recruiting media personnel in newsrooms, encompassing fundamental qualifications and abilities. This deficiency is particularly evident in the radio sector. The radio station founders often believe that merely speaking in front of a microphone and playing songs

suffices after establishing a radio station. Consequently, it appears that media management does not consider the necessity of developing human resources, disregarding the need for trained personnel within their newsrooms (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Jha criticises the prevailing state of some radio stations, where a single individual is responsible for playing songs throughout the day, downloading and broadcasting news alone. In such cases, the absence of editorial meetings, source identification, selection, and diversity become apparent. Many radio stations operate with fewer journalists and technicians than necessary, relying on news sourced from various online portals. The need for field reporting and verification is neglected, with some even broadcasting news without proper authentication. The underlying principles of responsible information dissemination and accountability seem to be fading away. If there were fewer radio stations, there would be ample resources available to train human resources, resulting in an abundance of quality radio journalists within the newsrooms. Furthermore, this would facilitate better coverage of inclusion and ensure the quality of news (Personal communication, June 14, 2023).

Bhoosal offers criticism regarding the absence of newsrooms equipped with skilled journalists in radio stations. Instead of actively producing news, the focus is predominantly on compiling information. Editing is often overlooked within the newsroom, and there is little consideration given to the selection and utilisation of news sources. Bhoosal identifies the financial crisis within the radio industry as the main factor that hampers the source selection process. Insufficient finances also contribute to the lack of skilled workforce within the newsroom. With more than two media workers assigned to compile, organise, and read the news throughout the day, the establishment of

a genuine newsroom becomes unattainable (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Bista provides valuable suggestions to enhance the capacity of the workforce in radio newsrooms. His recommendations include strengthening the organisation's economic aspect and ensuring policy clarity. Increasing the efficiency of the working human resources is essential, and creating a plural and diverse structure within the newsroom is crucial. Moreover, fostering a motivating environment for journalists by offering favourable service conditions, facilities, and opportunities is essential while safeguarding them from internal and external interference. Bista believes that by addressing the weaknesses of newsrooms, individuals, organisations, and the profession itself, radio news can become more dignified, accountable, and reliable to the community while maintaining diverse sources (Personal communication, February 2, 2023).

Giri agrees that radio newsrooms lack trained human resources. He emphasises the crucial necessity of providing basic to advanced training for radio journalists. Giri further highlights the significance of state policies, particularly those related to the promotion of local radio (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). These policies play a direct role in positively influencing various aspects, including management, the newsroom, technical operations, programme development, and the selection of authentic news sources.

### **5.3 Educational Qualification of Radio Journalists**

A minimum educational qualification is considered essential for individuals working in the newsrooms of radio stations. Journalists with higher educational degrees possess the capacity to comprehend the multifaceted aspects of societal issues and events. The following presents the status of the educational degrees held by radio journalists in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations:

**Table 5.3***Education Qualification of Journalists in the Sample Radio Stations*

Radio Stations	MPhil/PhD	Master's	Bachelor	Less than bachelor
Radio Lumbini	0	2	3	1
BFM	0	1	3	9
Radio Nepal	1	16	21	0
Radio Sagarmatha	0	3	2	0

*Source: Field observation, 2022*

Table 5.3 reflects that human resources with grade 11 to PhD degree qualifications are working in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations. Radio Lumbini has two journalists with master's degrees whereas a journalist with a master's degree is working at BFM. One journalist in Radio Nepal has earned PhD degree. Likewise, 16 journalists in Radio Nepal and three journalists in Radio Sagarmatha have master's degrees. While talking about human resources with bachelor's degrees, Radio Lumbini and BFM have three persons while Radio Nepal has 21 journalists and Radio Sagarmatha has two journalists. Moreover, Radio Lumbini has one and BFM has nine plus two passed journalists in their newsrooms. But Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have no human resources that have lower qualifications than a bachelor's degree. Table 5.3 represents the status of the educational qualification of the human resources working in the newsrooms.

The actuality is that on the one hand, insufficient journalists are working in the newsrooms, on the other hand, most of the working journalists are not trained and soundly educated. Experts have pointed out the lack of adequate qualifications in radio with their propositions. Adhikary advises radio management to hire journalists in radio

newsrooms only based on qualification and competence. Members of communities perceived as traditionally marginalised can be given an opportunity in education/training before they join the radio news service. The ultimate basis must be the merit of the candidate. In his judgement, news editors/readers without proper education/training are likely to be easily deceived by someone with a sinister design (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

On the other hand, Sah assesses the situation of poor-quality human resources in radio relating to the financial and physical infrastructure. He analyses the situation, highlighting that radio stations are unable to hire qualified and educated personnel in line with the requirements due to resource constraints. The availability of educated and trained journalists is contingent upon the presence of adequate resources and physical infrastructure within the radio stations. When these elements are lacking, it becomes challenging to attract highly educated, well-trained, experienced, and qualified individuals. Consequently, he adds, "the practice of broadcasting the news matters in the same form as it came to the newsroom, without cross-verification. This not only affected the news source selection process, but on the contrary, that source selection process could not even begin. This is a sad situation" (Personal communication, June 13, 2023).

Likewise, Raut discusses that the absence of quality education, training, and orientation towards value-based journalism can potentially lead a newsroom to exhibit conscious or unconscious bias in its news coverage. Raut argues that in an environment characterised by limited resources, insufficient training, and a lack of awareness regarding established journalistic values, coupled with lower levels of education, the influence of radio station investors and market interests, as well as justified salaries and other motivational incentives, the entire news operation, from gathering to presentation

and monitoring, may be susceptible to certain influences (Personal communication, February 22, 2023).

Meanwhile, Metts, a professor of Communication at Spring Arbor University, US, prescribes hiring better-trained and well-educated journalists in the newsroom. Part of the training is the ability to recognise one's own prejudices and biases and so be intentional about recognising and reporting other viewpoints. He cautions that "otherwise, radio news, or any other news, will continue to tell only one side of complex, multidimensional issues. Welcoming other voices to the conversation is essential for a healthy democracy" (Personal communication, March 1, 2023). Whereas, Adhikari, the Chief Executive Officer of Pokhara-based Radio Saphalta, points out the trend of political activists entering the journalism sector, which is bad practice. In her experience, a person who can understand the news and its impact is necessary for radio journalism. This requires good educational qualifications and training. In Nepal, political activists enter the newsroom as journalists. She argues that such activist journalists tend to do politics within the media rather than journalism. "It is important to be a journalist who can use a pen for the radio, who knows the subject matter, rather than a journalist of such a party" (Personal communication, February 23, 2023).

On the whole, what the experts pointed out is that there is a lack of qualified journalists in the radio newsrooms, and they have discussed that the management of the radio stations should pay attention to hiring qualified human resources and implementing a plan after preparing it for the career development of the workforce in the newsroom for the betterment of the sourcing in radio news.

#### **5.4 Demographic Picture in the Newsrooms**

The demographic composition of journalists in the newsroom provides insights into the levels of inclusiveness and representation of marginalised communities. The

inclusiveness of the newsroom is reflected in the degree to which multiple voices from diverse communities are incorporated as news sources in the headlines of radio bulletins. Table 5.4 presents a visual representation of the level of inclusiveness observed in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations, which in turn influences the sourcing process of news.

**Table 5.4**

*Demographic Picture in the Newsrooms of the Sample Radio Stations*

Radio stations	Total journalists	Male	Female	Dalit	Hill-origin community	Tarai-origin community
BFM	4	3	1	0	2	2
Radio Lumbini	6	4	2	0	5	1
Radio Nepal	38	21	17	1	32	5
Radio Sagarmatha	8	4	4	0	6	0

*Source: Field study, 2022*

Based on Table 5.4, the representation of women and Dalits, including hilly and Tarai-based communities, is examined in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations. It should be noted that the data simplifies the demographic representation by categorising individuals into three basic groups: Dalit, hill-origin community, and Tarai-origin community, owing to the vast number of cast/ethnic groups in Nepal. Dalits, who face marginalisation in both hilly and Tarai communities, are combined into a single category. Similarly, the classification of male and female representation is indicated in the table. Radio Nepal appears to have a more inclusive representation in its newsroom compared to other radio stations, as indicated in Table 5.4. However, it is noteworthy that BFM,

Radio Lumbini, and Radio Sagarmatha lack Dalit representation in their newsrooms, while Radio Nepal has only one Dalit journalist. Radio Sagarmatha also lacks representation from the Tarai community in its newsroom. Among the hilly and Tarai communities, journalists from the hilly community dominate in three out of the four radio newsrooms. BFM has two journalists from the hilly community and two from the Tarai community in its newsroom. In all four radio stations, the representation of Dalits is notably low, with only one person working in the newsroom of Radio Nepal.

Regarding gender representation, BFM and Radio Lumbini have low female representation in their newsrooms, with only one female journalist at BFM and two female journalists at Radio Lumbini out of a total of eight journalists. Radio Sagarmatha stands out with a higher proportion, as half of its eight journalists are female. Radio Nepal demonstrates a relatively good representation of female journalists, with 17 out of 38 journalists being female. Notably, BFM has only one female journalist among the four stations, while Radio Lumbini has two female journalists among the six in its newsroom.

The data projects that the picture of the newsrooms of the sample radio stations is not inclusive in terms of women, Dalit and Tarai-origin communities. Compared to women and Terai-origin communities, the presence of the Dalit community is very limited, with only one person in the newsroom of Radio Nepal.

Jha raises significant concerns regarding the lack of inclusiveness within radio stations, particularly in their newsrooms. He criticises the fact that radio journalists often lack awareness of the social dynamics and power structures within the areas where the radio stations operate. This lack of understanding directly impacts their ability to connect with news and its sources effectively. Jha emphasises the importance of having an inclusive newsroom, as it enables different perspectives and angles to be incorporated into news stories. However, due to the immaturity and ignorance of those in the

newsroom, outside reporters are often brought in to shape the vision and angle of news stories. This results in a disconnection between the reality on the ground and the news being reported. In some cases, news reporters from the field send news updates, but the lack of inclusiveness within the newsroom leads to the desk creating their own customised news narratives for publication or broadcast. Jha furthermore argues that:

When one group of newsrooms dominates the coverage while marginalising news from underrepresented communities, even political news concerning these communities may lack political correctness. There is often an underlying prejudice in such reporting. Therefore, it is crucial for newsrooms to be inclusive and for news sources to be selected based on inclusivity. Why should individuals from only powerful communities consistently be the main focus of news headlines? Shouldn't people from other communities also receive prominent coverage? These questions continue to be raised, emphasising the importance of fostering inclusivity and diverse representation in news reporting. (Personal communication, June 14, 2023)

Moreover, Adhikary argues that while inclusive representation in the media, particularly in radio, is a commendable objective, it would be unfair to solely rely on gender equality or representation of different ethnic groups as a means to enhance the credibility and reliability of news services. He advises that if inclusiveness becomes the primary priority, there is a risk of compromising the quality of information utilised in news bulletins. Therefore, Adhikary suggests that while inclusiveness should be valued, it should not overshadow the importance of maintaining the quality and accuracy of the information being disseminated (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Bista highlights the necessity of an inclusive structure and content within the newsroom to ensure the coverage of the plurality and diversity present in society. He

points out that a significant portion of news and opinions broadcast on the radio predominantly originate from political leaders who belong to male, ethnically distinct Khas/Aryan communities, and geographically accessible urban areas. As a result, radio news tends to primarily represent these areas and cater to the elite class, creating a disproportionate focus on these specific demographics (Personal communication, February 2, 2023).

Basnet, the Editor of *Ghatana Ra Bichar Weekly*, advocates for an inclusive newsroom that incorporates representation from the women, Dalits, Terai-origin communities, Adibasi Janajati, Muslims, and other minority communities to the greatest extent possible. Such inclusiveness ensures a broader range of news sources in radio bulletins, promoting diverse perspectives and enhancing the overall inclusivity of the news coverage. (Personal communication).

After all, the experts assert that a non-inclusive newsroom cannot effectively maintain a diverse range of news sources, including those from marginalised and minority communities. They emphasise the importance of an inclusive newsroom, which would ensure multiple sources and perspectives are reflected across various news segments. Radio management should demonstrate sensitivity towards fostering inclusivity within the newsroom. This can be achieved through a competitive process that prioritises the recruitment of highly qualified and competent individuals to form a skilled workforce within the newsroom.

### **5.5 News Sourcing Procedure: Selection and Verification of Sources**

Radio stations follow a structured process for news production, encompassing the selection and verification of sources. Journalists are responsible for choosing and validating news sources, from the field to the news desk. Fieldwork entails on-the-ground reporting, enabling reporters to directly engage with a variety of sources. In

contrast, the news desk primarily handles press releases and relies on secondary sources of information.

Field reporting is a testament to a newsroom's ability to gather news through its reporters, allowing for direct engagement with various sources. This form of reporting, accompanied by voice clips, is considered credible news for the audience as it provides the opportunity to hear the voices of the sources directly. On the other hand, the news desk deals with news obtained from diverse secondary sources. The table provided below provides a comprehensive overview of the news production process, including source verification:

**Table 5.5**

*News Sourcing Process: Selection and Verification of Sources*

Method/process of news story production	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Desk work	168	49.70	270	59.86	259	58.20	319	66.87	1016	59.38
Field reporting with voice byte	2	0.59	29	6.43	53	11.91	0	0.00	84	4.91
Reporter's narration only	3	0.89	18	3.99	0	0.00	0	0.00	21	1.23
No source	165	48.82	134	29.71	133	29.89	158	33.12	580	34.48
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 5.5 portrays that all sample radio stations broadcast news based on desk work in more than half (59.38%) of the total news. Desk work indicates the work of making news from press releases and other outlets and preparation of news from the desk. The stations have broadcast 4.91 percent of headline news with their own reporters with voice bites from fields.

Less than two percent (1.23%) of the total headline news is found to have reporter's narration without inserting voices of sources. It shows that most of the news is prepared at

the desk of the newsroom without going to the field to collect news. Rare cases and events are reported by the reporters going out of the stations.

Out of the sample stations, Radio Sagarmatha has broadcast over two-thirds (66.87%) of total headline news based on desk work. Radio Lumbini is in the second position to have broadcast headline news based on desk work with 59.86 percent (270) followed by Radio Nepal with 58.20 percent (259). BFM remains in the last rank in broadcasting desk-based main news in its bulletin with 49.70 percent (168).

While talking about field reporting with voice bites, Radio Nepal is on the top compared to other stations with 11.91 percent (53) of total headline news. Being in the second position, Radio Lumbini has broadcast field reporting with 6.43 percent (29) of the main news with voice bites of the sources. BFM has on-aired field reporting with voice bites with only 0.59 percent (2) of its main news. While Radio Sagarmatha is not found broadcasting any field reporting with voice bites of the sources in its main news.

In terms of the description of reporters without voices of sources, Radio Lumbini is ahead of other stations with 6.43 percent (29) followed by BFM with 0.59 percent (2). The data indicates that Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have not broadcast reporter's narrative descriptions in their main news.

The number of main news broadcasts without mentioning any sources is in significant amount on the sample radio stations. In this case, BFM is in the top position with 48.82 percent (165) of its total news followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 33.12 percent (158). While Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal have the same result of the news broadcast without sources with 29.71 percent (134) and 29.89 percent (133) of their main news respectively.

Overall, radio stations tend to engage in reporting to a limited extent, relying heavily on desk work and delivering news without explicitly mentioning sources. This trend

indicates a weakness within the newsrooms of radio stations in terms of effectively selecting and verifying appropriate sources for news coverage.

Adhikari (Netra) explains that the situation in his newsroom has worsened in the aftermath of global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters. These unforeseen circumstances, including earthquakes and lightning, have had a significant impact on the newsroom's operations. The earthquake resulted in a prolonged disconnection of the station's internet, causing a disruption in delivering the desired information to listeners. Moreover, lightning strikes have damaged the radio equipment, rendering the station unable to transmit notifications when it is closed. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about various challenges, including the economic downturn, leading to the closure of bulletins and the unfortunate dismissal of colleagues from the newsroom. As a result of the pandemic, post-COVID-19, the economic situation of radio is weak. The radio cut down staff in the newsroom, which has hampered the newsroom in identifying and selecting sources because regular field reporting has not been possible regularly in the absence of an adequate number of journalists in the newsroom. The departure of experienced colleagues has created a void that has yet to be filled, leaving a lasting impact on the newsroom. Consequently, the newsroom has to rely on the information received from second-hand sources such as newspapers, news agencies, online portals and social media instead of firsthand sources (Personal communication, March 12, 2023). As Adhikari (Netra) mentions, news reporting, seeking information and verifying sources from the newsroom has been changed to get information from secondary or indirect sources. In the post-COVID-19 situation, the pandemic has converted the radio newsroom into a palace to practise churnalism.

Out of the total sample size of 1,711, a mere 4.91 percent of the headline news comprises field-based stories accompanied by ambient sound and voice recordings of the

sources. These particular stories have been prepared by the radio station's reporters. Additionally, only 1.12 percent of the headline news consists of reporter narrations, but it remains uncertain whether they gathered the information by visiting the field or producing the story within the studio. However, these voice dispatches differ from the regular voices of the presenters. Interestingly, the news bulletins do not credit or acknowledge the reporters responsible for producing these stories. The news presenters have not been observed giving due credit to the reporters. The post-COVID-19 situation is not favourable to radio stations since their news business is based on desk work instead of reporting reaching the field.

The news desk primarily relies on public relations-related content, such as press releases, press notes, and material sourced from other outlets, to prepare news stories. This practice can result in the newsroom being influenced by powerful elite sources outside of the editorial team. Bhoosal argues that it is often easier for newsrooms to rely on press statements from political leaders rather than seeking out perspectives from ordinary individuals. Political leaders have greater access to newsrooms and frequently deliver speeches at various locations throughout the day. It becomes a straightforward task to report on what a leader said at a particular place. However, in certain instances, leaders may repetitively express the same ideas every few days. This can result in news being based on assumptions regarding their statements. Political leaders or high-ranking officials have a desire to maintain regular media coverage, sometimes even providing news topics themselves. On the contrary, ordinary citizens facing difficulties are not actively involved in generating news, and in some cases, journalists are not even acquainted with them. Consequently, news coverage tends to focus solely on a particular individual or group, perpetuating a lack of diversity in news representation (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Mainali criticises the news desk for being filled with lazy and unskilled journalists who prioritise establishing connections with elite individuals. He provides an example of government-owned radio stations, which often prioritise featuring the voices of the Prime Minister and ministers, even for events of little news value to the public, such as the inauguration of a toilet. The same problem extends to private and community radio stations, which also maintain close relationships with local and national power elites and businesspeople. As a result, these stations rely on desk-based news coverage rather than having their own reporters in the field, resulting in biased reporting influenced by these powerful individuals. Unfortunately, the voices of ordinary people hold little value for these stations as they fail to attract advertisers or sponsors. The priority for sponsors and advertisers lies in promoting their own interests through news and radio programmes (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), the judgement of the sourcing process in the newsroom is influenced by outer factors. Journalists are influenced by the political and business powers as well as the organisations and officials over the individual ordinary citizen. They believe in those power elites even if they provide false information compared to a person who gives the right account of information to a journalist. Because the journalists believe the persons who are in the position. Contacting officials and organisations is more convenient for journalists compared to reaching out to ordinary individuals who go about their daily lives at home, in the fields, on the streets, or in their workplaces. The influence of public relations campaigns conducted by interest groups further shapes journalists' perspectives. These campaigns involve providing press releases, arranging press visits, and offering support through advertisements and sponsorships. As a result, journalists tend to prioritise news stories featuring officials and organisations, often neglecting the viewpoints of the general people.

Regmee, a Professor of Journalism and Communication at Purwanchal University, argues that the aspiration to serve as the voice of the common people remains unfulfilled for Nepali broadcasters. This is attributed to the challenges associated with radio house management policies (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). Dahal points out that the lack of field-based reporting may stem from resource constraints, as well as the absence of adequate training and support (Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

### **5.6 Organisational Structure of Media that Affects News Sourcing Process**

The result of the content analysis shows that the media structure influences the sourcing process observed in news production. In the case study, Radio Nepal, as a government-owned media outlet tends to prioritise sources related to government affairs, including information about the Head of the State, Head of the Government, provincial chief ministers, ministers, government authorities, and government activities. However, BFM, operating within commercial broadcasting ownership, prioritises sources that can help them generate revenue to run the radio station with those sources.

Similarly, community-based broadcasting institutions like Radio Sagarmatha and Radio Lumbini radio stations prioritise sources pertaining to the local community and events within the community itself. Furthermore, Radio Sagarmatha places particular emphasis on public health and environment-related news sources. The distinctive structures of these media outlets shape their sourcing preferences, reflecting their respective organisational structure.

**Table 5.6***Organisational Structure of Media that Affects News Sourcing Process*

<b>Radio station</b>	<b>Nature of ownership</b>	<b>Sourcing priority</b>
Radio Nepal	Government	Government and its line agencies/ ruling parties/ politicians
Radio Sagarmatha and Radio Lumbini	Community-NGO/ Cooperative	Environment/community activities as well as social/political sectors
BFM	Commercial	Sources that can sell news time and can be supportive of earning revenues

*Source: Content Analysis and Field Study, 2022*

Regarding Table 5.6, Bista argues that the ownership pattern and ideology have impacted newsrooms in the selection process of news sources. For example, the government-owned radio station selects more sources from the government sector. The private media cover more and more sources that are involved in business and politics instead of the people who live at the grassroots level. Community radio receives information from the members of society. In practice, the structure of ownership affects the content. In Nepal, there is a hold of two types of ownership— political and community in radio. The workforce is decided based on the investment that affects the balance in the content of radio news. Principally, there is a chance of prejudice in content based on the structure of the newsroom and its working style (Personal communication, February 2, 2023).

In conclusion, when journalists are disconnected from the grassroots, they rely on desk resources, which often reflect the perspectives of organisations and political powers. Through content analysis, acknowledgements from radio managers and news chiefs, and expert discussions, it is evident that external factors such as political parties, leaders, business sectors, and established power structures influence the sourcing process.

Simultaneously, the newsroom's limited capacity to connect with ordinary people on the ground further exacerbates this issue. Ownership patterns and working style also affect the sourcing of news in a newsroom. The COVID-19 pandemic has confined the news collection practice from the field to the news desk. The pandemic has become a cause of the curtailing of the workforce in radio newsrooms which has limited the capacity of newsrooms within only its news desk.

### **5.7 Credibility of the News Sources**

The credibility of news sources plays a vital role in establishing trustworthiness among the audience. It is the responsibility of radio stations to ensure the dissemination of credible news by relying on first-hand, authentic, and appropriate sources. By incorporating diverse and relevant sources, radio stations can enhance the credibility and authenticity of their news coverage, providing a comprehensive understanding of events and issues. An analysis of source credibility in news stories reveals various categories, including single sources, biased one-way sources, multiple balanced sources, sources with voice bites, and news with anonymous or no sources.

These categories help determine the level of credibility, ranging from highly credible and credible sources to low-credible and not credible sources, based on the nature of the sources employed. By prioritising high-quality and reliable sources, radio stations can uphold the integrity of their news content and establish a reputation for delivering trustworthy information to their audiences.

The findings of the content analysis regarding the credibility of sources and the analysis of the data have been presented in Table 5.7. It represents the major trends of credibility of the sources, which are affected by the internal and external factors in a newsroom.

**Table 5.7***Credibility of the News Sources*

Nature of sources	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
High-credible	10	2.96	48	10.64	53	11.91	11	2.30	122	7.13
Credible	89	26.33	149	33.03	146	32.81	167	35.01	551	32.20
Low-credible	64	18.93	112	24.83	105	23.59	134	28.09	415	24.25
Not credible	175	51.78	142	31.49	141	31.69	165	34.59	623	36.41
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As Table 5.7 projects that the radio stations have only 7.13 percent of the total headline news sources highly credible. High-credible news sources are defined as news in which multiple/balanced sources and sources with voice bites are used. Radio stations have used credible sources in nearly one-third (32.20%) of their total headline news. Credible news sources are considered in the table as the news which are prepared with single sources but citing the authorities. The headline news citing persons or institutions as single sources who are not authorities and related directly to the event or issues have been categorised as low-credible sources. Radio stations have broadcast headline news citing 24.25 percent low-credible sources. While they are found broadcasting more than one-third (36.41%) of the headline news without sources. The news without sources, anonymous sources and one-sided sources have been categorised as not credible news.

While dealing with each radio station, Radio Nepal and Radio Lumbini are in the first position in terms of broadcasting 11.91 percent (53) and 10.64 percent (48) of their main news with high-credible sources respectively. Radio Sagarmatha and BFM are in the following positions in broadcasting news with 2.30 percent (11) and 2.96 percent (10) of their headline news citing highly credible sources.

Radio Sagarmatha has on-aired 35.01 percent (167) of its main news mentioning credible sources. Credible sources mean a single person or institution as a news source that has the right authority. Radio Lumbini has broadcast news with credible sources with 33.03 percent (149) of its main news stories. Radio Nepal is found broadcasting 32.81 percent (146) of its total headline news citing credible sources which are followed by BFM with 26.33 percent (89) of the headline news.

Out of the sample stations, Radio Sagarmatha is in the top position regarding broadcasting news quoting low-credible sources with 28.09 percent (134) of its total headlines which have been followed by Radio Lumbini with 24.83 percent (112) of its main news. Radio Nepal is in the third position in terms of broadcasting low-credible headline news with 23.59 percent (105) of its headlines. Compared to the other sample stations, BFM is in the last position broadcasting news with low-credible sources in 18.93 percent (64) of its headline news. Low-credible source means a single source who is not an authority and is directly not connected to the story. This type of source is the cause of degrading the credibility of news stories.

The data of the table projects that Radio stations have broadcast more than one-third (36.41%) of the main news without mentioning any sources, with anonymous sources and biased/one-sided sources, which have been labelled as not credible sources. Station-wise, BFM is ahead of other stations in terms of broadcasting more than half of its total news 51.78% (175) connected with non-credible news sources followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 34.59 percent (165) of its total main news. Radio Nepal is in the third position broadcasting news without a credible source with 31.69 percent (141) of its headline news which is followed by Radio Lumbini with 31.49 percent (142) of its total headline news.

Highly credible sources are categorised by the voices of the authorities and the multiple citations of the sources that cover all aspects of the news stories. Only 7.13 percent

of the total sample news items seem to be cited to credible sources such as the government authorities and multiple first-hand sources. As mentioned above, credible news sources are considered as the news prepared with single sources but citing the authorities, with a percent of 32.20. The headline news citing persons without proper identification or portfolio, and institutions as single sources who are not authorities and related directly to the event or issues have been categorised as low-credible sources. Its percentage is 24.25. While there are no sources in the news and used anonymous sources, the stories are categorised as not credible sources with 36.41 percent. It shows that the wide picture of the event or issues can only be carried out by a fully trustworthy story for the audience.

Kharel cautions against relying on limited sources, as it prevents journalists from obtaining a complete and accurate picture of the truth. Expanding the pool of sources leads to more comprehensive and nuanced news coverage. Kharel advises radio journalists on identifying credible and non-credible sources, helping them make informed choices in their news reporting:

Someone beat a police official, that's all and then it's true. It's accurate information.

But it's not a full story. Maybe the police officer just hit him several times. He was in a drunken state and the police officer asked the man to pay his bill. He refused to pay and even made threats, which led to the physical altercation. However, it is important to provide the complete picture. Without the full context, it is not the whole truth.

That's why I don't trust social media journalists; they often lack the necessary depth and accuracy. To be a true professional journalist, one must adhere to rigorous standards. While social media may have its importance and influence, traditional news media has specific responsibilities and expectations from the public to verify and cross-verify news regularly. In the realm of broadcast and online media, there

are constant opportunities to improve news coverage using new techniques, if necessary.

Jha, a Terai-based freelancer, relates the sources with credibility and non-credibility with the credibility of not only the radio news but also of the radio in the minds of listeners. He discusses that when a person receives information, but the authenticity of the sources of the information is not disclosed, the credibility of the information is questioned. He further states that credibility is how to adopt it, and how to take it, the question and doubts are rising in people's minds regarding the authenticity of the received information. In his prospect, radio stations have made listeners hungry for information through news, but the listeners have not been able to get its authenticity and broad analysis. He further analyses that:

There should be a commitment to the balance of the story as well as its sources that is required for news, but if the official's quote is not there, from which level the information was leaked, or received, or how the information was received, in this situation doubts arise in the mind of the audience. Due to these weaknesses, the credibility of radio stations is decreasing day by day today. (Personal communication, June 14, 2023)

Similarly, Sah believes that radio news is not so credible to listeners in the current days because of the broadcasting of biased news. He argues that they are biased in choosing topics and sources. Because of that, "only the elites have more favour in them, on the other hand, cross-verification and diversity in news sources are not adopted, so their verification is weak. Therefore, the radio news has not been fully truthful and reliable" (Personal communication, June 13, 2023).

Conversely, Pyakurel claims that his radio bulletins are credible. He states that his radio station broadcasts only authentic news (Personal Communication, February 20, 202).

However, the data shows that 23.59 percent of the sources of the main news of Radio Nepal are less credible whereas 31.69 percent of sources are non-credible. Opposing Pyakurel's statement, Bista agrees with the findings that most of the radio news is event-oriented and one-way opinions expressed in a public function ceremony are given more priority. He discusses that although there is no question of truth in the case of their bite being used, it cannot be objective in terms of news value and social impact. He further states that "it's true that the objectivity of the news cannot be maintained when more than one-third of the news is broadcast without mentioning the source" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023).

Mainali argues that radio stations whether private or government, have failed to meet the credibility of news and other content. Because they are just broadcasting news being a mouthpiece of the power elites. They are influenced by the big advertisers, government, and political parties so they give one-way content even without sources because they are following the trend of the tabloid print media (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Adhikari (Netra) accepts that they cannot reach diverse sources since they are facing a lack of human resources. He states that the main reason for this is not being able to reach the village toll in field reporting. Due to the lack of human resources in everything, it was not possible to do as desired (Personal communication, March 12, 2023).

Likewise, Basnyat knows that the impact of broadcasting a one-sided and narrowed picture of the event causes misunderstanding and crises to the listeners which impacts negatively to society. She shares her understaffed position that even knowing the negative impact, the radio station must rely on secondary sources because there aren't enough skilled journalists in the newsroom. She believes if there are qualified and adequate human resources, access to primary sources for news could be maintained (Personal communication, February 13, 2023).

Overall, the radio stations have been found predominantly broadcasting headline news sourced from low-credible and non-credible sources. Experts unanimously agree that relying on such sources diminishes the credibility of radio stations among their audiences. Broadcasters themselves acknowledge that they are compelled to use these sources due to resource limitations and a shortage of skilled journalists.

### 5.8 Balance in Sourcing Process

Balance in a news story is determined by various factors including assignments, source selection, projection, presentation of sources, storyline/angle, scripting, and tone. While listening to the archive of the news stories, a code/module has been prepared to analyse the balance in the news stories. The findings of the content analysis regarding the balance of the sample radio news are as follows:

**Table 5.8**

*Balance in News Sourcing and Presentation of News Stories*

Radio stations	Balanced news		Imbalanced news		Unidentified news		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
BFM	211	62.43	93	27.51	34	10.06	338	100.00
Radio Lumbini	283	62.75	141	31.26	27	5.99	451	100.00
Radio Nepal	289	64.95	117	26.29	39	8.76	445	100.00
Radio Sagarmatha	321	67.29	119	24.95	37	7.76	477	100.00
Total	1104	64.52	470	27.47	137	8.01	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

The data in Table 5.8 reflects the fact that radio stations have presented nearly two-thirds (64.52%) of their headline news in a balanced way. Nevertheless, their sources in political news are imbalanced based on only one leader's speech, where the leaders blame opposition parties and their leaders. Their presentation tone, storyline, and projection of sources of the social events, functions and non-controversial issues are balanced to this extent. They have presented the headline news in a balanced way although they did have

missed sources or relied only on a single source. However, 27.47 percent of the headline stories are found to have been presented in an imbalanced way. This has happened because of the projection of only one source in a controversial issue; one-sided sourcing with allegations to the other side and lack the response from alleged persons or organisations; political biases of the newsperson and ownership control over the newsroom.

Of the total sample headline stories based on international and sports events have been mentioned as an unidentified category. Those types of stories have been given the label of unidentified news. The number of unidentified news is 8.01 percent of the headline news in the total sample size.

While making comparisons, Radio Sagarmatha is in ahead of other stations in terms of presenting news stories in a balanced way with 67.29 percent (321) of its total sample size followed by Radio Nepal with 64.95 percent (289). Being in the third position, Radio Lumbini has broadcast headline news with 62.75 percent (283) balanced news followed by BFM with 62.43 percent (211) of its total sample news.

Remaining ahead of other stations, Radio Lumbini has broadcast news in an imbalanced way with 31.26 percent (141) of the total main news followed by BFM with 27.51 percent (93) of its headline news. Radio Nepal is in the third position in broadcasting imbalanced stories with 26.29 percent (117). Radio Sagarmatha is found to have on-aired 24.95 percent (119) of its total headline news.

BFM has become the first to broadcast unidentified news items with 10.06 percent (34) while Radio Nepal is found in second position broadcasting headline news in an unidentified way with 8.76 percent (39) of the main news. Radio Sagarmatha being in the last position, has broadcast 7.76 percent (37) of headline news in unidentified news.

According to these findings, radio stations have a big weakness in maintaining the balance in sourcing. They have been found lacking multiple sources, cross sources,

reactions on one-sided opinions and multiple views on a controversial issue or event. However, while analysing the database of headline news regarding the storyline, presentation and tone, the finding in Table 5.8 has revealed that 64.52 of the total news has a neutral and balanced tone in the presentation. Regarding the presentation, radio stations have been found broadcasting nearly one-third of the total headline news in an imbalanced way.

McQuail and Deuze (2020) argue that as media industries accumulate money, their status and close relation to vested interests grow. It has reduced independent news sources and overlooked alternative voices, focused on the major marketplaces and products aimed at the "lowest common denominator to attract a mass audience, avoided risks, and reduced investment in less profitable media tasks (such as investigative reporting and documentary filmmaking)" (p. 156). According to them, the media generally ignore minorities and the poor but potential audiences and make their content, including news politically imbalanced.

Adhikari (Netra) accepts that they have not been able to maintain the balance of sources in the news because of the lack of workforce in the newsroom. He states that the management has not fulfilled the human resources in the newsroom. However, they have been serious about making their presentation of news bulletins in a balanced way as much as possible (Personal communication, March 12, 2023).

A reference of nearly a quarter century before to the US can be added here to demonstrate the importance of maintaining the balance in the news sourcing process. In the US, the Hutchins Commission in 1947 set a goal for the commitment of journalists to provide a wide and full picture of the events at a level of neutrality, detachment, and commitment to truth. "It involved the adoption of certain procedures for verifying facts, drawing on different sources, presenting rival interpretations" maintaining "the pluralism of opinion and information" (Curran, 1991, p. 98). The scope of the terms 'pluralism of

opinion and information' and 'drawing on different sources' is widened which indicates the multiple and balanced sources in the news content covering the opposition point of view.

Adhikari argues that if radio broadcasts imbalanced information, it will harm society. The imbalanced information affects the psychology of women, children, and civilians. She urges radio stations to widen their range of sources in the news so that different people and organisations are identified as sources of news than sources currently used. She makes a statement showing the important link between balanced sourcing and the impact of the radio news that investors and employees must know the relation between the sourcing and the impact of radio on society (Personal communication, February 23, 2023). Her statement emphasises the responsibilities of the gatekeepers in the newsrooms to maintain balance in the news by selecting balanced sources.

In addition, Neupane argues that the lack of a skilled workforce is the main obstruction to maintaining balanced news sources. Radio stations do not have a skilled workforce in the required number. She is worried about the affiliation of the journalists at the radio stations who are also affiliated with a particular political party. Not only that but also there is the establishment and development of communication groups associated with political organisations. She is afraid that in such a situation, it is possible to envisage the broadcasting of balanced news with a balanced news sourcing process, however, it is not possible to put it into practice in the given situation (Personal communication, March 5, 2023).

Meanwhile, Press Council Nepal also has emphasised balanced sourcing with a diversity of voices in news production. Clause 6 of the code of conduct for journalists and media houses issued by the Press Council Nepal (2019) has a provision for the dissemination of factual, balanced, and objective information that:

- 1) Remaining firm to the principles of objectivity, journalists and mass media should disseminate factual news and balanced opinion. While doing so, proper space should be given to the opinion of the concerned party. (2) The news, views, information, and notices that the journalists and media disseminated through social networks should be true, factual, balanced, and decent.

At this point, experts and radio managers/news chiefs agree that there is very little trained and qualified workforce in the newsrooms of radio stations who can assimilate the responsibility of journalists as gatekeepers to maintain balance in news sourcing. Pyakurel accepts that only one-way news with a single source and news without sources not only make audiences in confusion but also ruin the credibility of the station. In his opinion, to overcome the problems radio stations should enhance their capacities in the newsroom (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Kharel advises the stations to maintain newsworthiness where accuracy and balance automatically come in the news stories. Furthermore, he emphasises to do in radio newsrooms something new, something very relevant to the people, very relevant, something interesting, that's news. He believes:

That is what separates news from other stories, from other social media for example. Here, you have an institution that functions like a public trust. It gives the most important news, gatekeeps the most information and serves the general people, then its credibility rises. It's not only a question of accuracy and balance. It's also a question of newsworthiness. (Personal communication, January 30, 2023)

Basnyat expresses her inability to make news truthful and balance with the very limited workforce. She operates Radio stations with a small budget, and the newsroom with very few editors, reporters, and other staff members. She states that "with limited

trained journalists and other support staff, it is difficult to keep the news balanced and diverse" (Personal communication, February 13, 2023).

Credibility comes with the diverse voices and opinions of sources provided by radio. Regarding balanced sources and credibility, Giri states that it has gone down even more than this, and trust in radio is steadily declining. "Radio news bulletins are reliable if they are produced by themselves, but if there is an influence of copy-and-paste journalism in radio, it may not be possible to tell" (Personal communication, February 22, 2023).

Subsequently, Dahal assesses the condition of the balanced sourcing in local radio stations that the resources of the local radio stations are very less, and they also couldn't find enough other resources to explore more sources which is a drawback for the balanced sourcing (Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

On top of that, Yogi has assessed radio newsrooms that they usually don't send their reporters for investigative stories. He observes that they usually cover formal events and are happy with the news/press releases sent by various organisations or radio interviews with newsmakers. In his experience, usually, radio stations don't have dedicated reporters to cover different beats as a result, they work as producers/reporters and even editors. "This affects the overall output including the accuracy and balance of sourcing to objectivity and credibility because these are interrelated" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Mainali concludes that the media gives priority to those who have the power to make news or headlines. Weak people cannot become newsmakers. He is furious with the journalism textbooks, which taught that the activities of voiceless people cannot become news under the rudiments of the elements of news. He has not found that even the minimum tasks such as confirming the incident, determining the basis of the sources,

and mentioning the appropriate and sufficient sources in the news in a balanced way are not being put into practice during news preparation. Mainali criticises that there is no meaning in presenting news in a balanced way while there are no balanced sources in the news stories (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

To summarise, the study findings indicate a lack of balanced sources in the headline news of the selected radio stations. However, a significant proportion (64.52 percent) of the news stories maintain a balanced tone. The scarcity of skilled personnel in the newsrooms has hindered the ability of local radio stations to achieve balanced sourcing in their main news stories. Despite the presence of ethical codes and principles guiding journalists, the stations face challenges in presenting comprehensive news stories that incorporate diverse perspectives and opinions. Among the four sampled radio stations, Radio Nepal, as a government-owned entity, holds a distinct position due to its superior financial and physical resources. It is strategically located in the Singha Darbar compound and operates broadcasting centres across the country's provinces, boasting well-equipped sound studios and a substantial workforce, including correspondents stationed in various districts. However, despite these advantages, Radio Nepal faces similar challenges as local stations in ensuring the integrity of their news stories, such as maintaining truthfulness, impartiality, and balanced sourcing. Both Radio Nepal and local radio stations have experienced audience confusion and a decline in overall credibility.

### **5.9 Affecting Causes and Factors in the News Sourcing Process**

Radio journalists serve as gatekeepers within the newsroom, exercising control over which sources are granted access to the news broadcasting process. Through this gatekeeping role, they make deliberate decisions to include certain sources while excluding others, ultimately shaping the information available to listeners. The selection

or deselection of sources occurs through two distinct processes: the initial selection of events and issues. During this stage, reporters and editors employ subjective criteria to determine the perceived newsworthiness or relevance of events and issues. Their decision-making is influenced by a variety of factors, including their understanding of news values, the explicit or implicit guidelines set forth by the media organisation, and their own biases or predispositions towards specific topics, events, or societal groups. Furthermore, journalists' frames of reference and contextual lenses significantly impact their gatekeeping decisions, as they bring their unique perspectives and interpretations to the selection process.

The second factor is the environment which affects the sourcing process. The environment is divided into two categories—internal and external. Within the internal environment, it comes a lack of physical infrastructure and financial conditions that decide the number and quality of equipment and the recruitment of the journalists, their professional career development, and their professional security. In that situation, a station is rich in terms of enough physical infrastructure which refers to enough working stations with recorders, microphones, computers, and other facilities with several studios whereas strong financial resources refer to hiring a team of qualified and competitive journalists such as reporters and editors in the newsrooms and the stringers or correspondents in enough numbers out of the studio.

Additionally, the investment and incentives for field reporting and investigative reporting, welcoming the marginalised voices in the news can include a widened range of diverse, accurate and balanced sources in the news. In contrast, the stations that lack sound physical infrastructure and strong financial conditions, can't hire a qualified competitive team of journalists in the newsroom and the correspondents out of the stations. Bista (2017, pp. 206–207) states that despite the legal provision to protect

working journalists and workers in Nepali media houses, the situation is that there is a lack of execution of the legal provision in practice. Consequently, journalists are deprived of getting legal protection regarding having an appointment letter, regular payment of minimum salary and facilities such as gratuity and leave facilities. The result has come for the timely study of the minimum wage fixation committee.

Those stations just broadcast news by non-skilled fellows, who are a few by assembling news and information items that they get in the newsroom, taken from online and other outlets. In this condition, one cannot imagine the truthfulness, impartiality, objectivity, accuracy, and balance of information with the voices of a wide range of sources. The outer environment refers to the social, political, economic, and cultural environment that affects the news-sourcing process.

External factors that influence in news sourcing process include those news sources who are in the position of influencing the power. The result of the content analysis and newsroom observation shows the prioritisation and reliance of newsrooms to power sources from the governmental and political sectors. Jha states that there is a tradition of giving news priority to power elites in the name of very important persons. Further, he argues that following the trend of the Panchayati System of the government-controlled media giving hierarchical news of the president, prime minister, minister, chief minister, and the leaders of main political parties as a top priority has been established even in the democratic era. The media practice has been established by giving news citing the state government and the central government. Regarding the coverage of political parties, Jha criticises the media that there are several political parties registered in the Election Commission, but only a few political parties have been taken by the Nepali media as a powerful force. Even now in the district, it is known whether local administrative chiefs are influenced by the big parties. "Therefore, due to

the power structure, there is a mentality among the reporters that they should also cover their news as a priority. These media have not prioritised the common people and events or issues related to them" (Personal communication, June 14, 2023).

Regmee argues that political, social, and cultural forces affect broadcasting in varying ways. The political power supersedes all others. He further states that the principles of value journalism have not been established in Nepal yet under which "social power should have guided or directed the broadcasting network. He believes that it takes time to see the changing scenario in Nepal. Listeners are not yet compelling forces in Nepal to influence the way radio stations run (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

In this regard, Kharel discusses that the Nepali media are just spoon-fed, which rely especially on political parties and government officials and similar other official sources, the public reaction is to rely on them less, which is why they are less newsworthy. He emphasises the alternative voices in the news which he has not observed in Nepali media:

You should not depend only on official sources. You must do your best to get alternative sources to contradict the information provided officially, endorse it, or re-confirm it. But this doesn't happen. The government says this, the political party says this and then the result is one-sided information. There is no verification, no cross-verification. That's why this is not a very reliable method of collecting information. (Personal communication, January 30, 2023)

At the same time, Sah analyses the social and cultural structure which affects the sourcing in radio that the society, the state, the fourth estate media, civil society, whatever is beyond the state, bureaucracy, security agencies, professional community, the international community of Nepal, all these are dominated by the hill-origin

community. Reflection of this structure is also seen in the media. He criticises the social structure that:

Even in the hill-origin communities, the Khas/Arya community and the Brahmin caste and Hindu religion and culture have more influence than the Dalits and Indigenous people. This is the reflection of the social power structure in the media either. Even in Terai/Madhes, those who are higher in terms of social structure come into the media as sources and headline makers instead of the common and marginalised people.

Mainali analyses the social factor in the view of the existence of the collectivist culture, where the expressive statement or message in front of the person's status, history and relationship has very little importance. He means that aspects such as political and social status, economic condition and family heritage are the criteria for determining editorial priority in Nepali newsrooms. Nepali newsrooms are not only affected by this situation, but they have also completely assimilated these criteria while choosing news content and sources to the extent that journalists do not even have a feeling that it is going wrong (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Moreover, Raut states that all the factors have various degrees of influence on the overall news operation of a radio station. Whether the journalists are paid well or not, whether they have adequate support to do their job properly, whether is there a provision to set aside their conflict of interests related to their work, their ability to work independently as a journalist has a bigger role play in their day-to-day performance (Personal communication, February 22, 2023).

Regarding the factors that affect the selection and verification of sources in the newsrooms, Bista relates it to ownership and money management. He states that ownership of the respective media and the structure of the newsroom are basically the

main factors influencing the choice of the news source. In his opinion, the choice of news, i.e., to cover more or to kill, or to give priority to which level is more important because of its policies or political trends. He adds the advertisement and sponsorship that affect the gatekeeping and sourcing process of a newsroom that "another important aspect is the advertising market or the economic aspect. It is said that when money speaks, the truth is silent" (personal communication, February 2, 2023).

Moreover, Bista (2017, pp. 216–223) puts a figure that ownership of forty percent of radio at the central and local levels is in the hands of organised political leadership. Forty percent of ownership of the radio stations is in the control of vested interest groups including businesspersons and only twenty percent of the ownership is in the hands of genuine persons who serve society and respect their profession. He further argues that only what can be seen at a glance is that the issue of terms and conditions and the freedom of the press are different. But actually, they are interrelated. There are conflicts between journalists and management in media houses that do not manage the issues of working journalists properly. As a result, the media houses are locked from time to time. The effect of such internal conflicts has a reflection on the quality of content and news including its sourcing process. A journalist who is not motivated cannot do a good job. It affects the sourcing process of the news bulletins in radio stations because nonmotivated journalists do have not that level of inspiration to seek proper sources and verify them (p. 307).

Radio practitioners and experts have the same opinion about the reasons behind the weaknesses in the sourcing process that is the lack of policies and professionalism, inadequate skilled workforce and resources in the newsrooms, insufficient investment in the news business and lack of wide and serious discussions about the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of broadcasters towards the society and the nation. There

is a lack of regular plans to enhance the professional capacities of the journalists in the radio stations. Another reason is low and irregular payment to the journalists, which does not allow them to devote fully to their broadcasting career. As the experts have discussed, the broadcasting profession has been made an alternative for people who want to work as radio journalists. The financial crisis the stations have been facing for years also is one reason which has become an obstruction on the way of professionalism in the radio newsrooms. These are the factors that affect the selection and verification of news sources in radio newsrooms.

The experts have suggested to the radio stations that they can do their best on their part even in the given situation minimising the affecting factors in news sources selection and verification process. Their voice is the same, radio should have an internal policy and they need to arrange regular serious discussions and assessments on their selection and verification process of news bulletins. Experts have suggested that radio stations should take steps for necessary reforms in the sourcing process by strengthening and sensitising the newsroom with sufficient resources, timely training, and regular reasonable payment to the journalists so that they need not open the back door to earn extra money to run their homes. The journalists working in the newsroom accept that the impact of the one-sided, anonymous and biased sources in the news ruin the credibility of radio stations. During the interaction in observation, the journalists have told that they know they should be responsible towards society having knowledge and skills of using objective, diverse, truthful, credible, and balanced sources in their news stories. Not only that, but they also know that they should be aware of including the common and marginalised people in their news stories instead of providing more space and priority for the power elites in their news bulletins as the headliners. However, they accept that they do have not a proper policy, training, motivation and adequate skilled workforce in the

newsroom. The experts have agreed that the inclusive but competitive composition of a newsroom would be more effective in covering diverse voices in the news instead of a monotonous and non-competitive one.

### **5.10 Cases of Radio News: Affecting Evidence in News Sourcing**

Three representative cases have been taken from each radio station to show the level of the effect of the cause factors in news sources during the news preparation and broadcasting process. These case news items are the results of the lack of good training, motivation and professionalism in newsrooms which is as follows:

#### ***a) Cases of Radio Sagarmatha***

**Case 1.** A news broadcast in the news bulletin on Radio Sagarmatha on 11 July 2021, under the headline, 'Two separate parties are registered by the leaders and students of Janata Samajbadi Party' has not found any sources. Instead of mentioning sources in the disputed issue, the news has just been broadcast based on assumption. The news assumes without source that "While the dispute over the authenticity of the party is going on in the Election Commission, it is assumed that Janata Samajwadi Party President Mahanth Thakur and Upendra Yadav are going to register each other's old party". The newsroom did not feel that it was necessary to verify the news through authentic sources before broadcasting it.

**ii) Case 2.** In the news broadcast on Radio Sagarmatha on 16 July 2021, under the title 'Nepal not to play Asian Senior Women's Volleyball', it is mentioned that the organisers decided not to allow Nepal to play the game in the Philippines due to Coronavirus. No authority has confirmed it and no one has been quoted. Using assumptions in the news-making process has ruined the objectivity of sourcing and credibility of the news. The editorial team did not verify the news by connecting with authentic sources such as officials of the National Sports Council Nepal.

**iii) Case 3.** On 10 June 2021, Radio Sagarmatha aired news titled 'Private sector requests the government to pass MCC'. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) project in Nepal became extremely controversial when the country became polarised. The request of the Nepal Chamber of Commerce including other umbrella organisations of industrialists and businesspersons to the government to pass such a controversial project was broadcast in the news. However, the reaction or statement of the side that was against MCC was not included in this news. In this way, when only one-sided sources are mentioned on controversial topics and sources related to the other side are not given place, this news has become one-sided, and it has lost its balance.

***b) Cases of Radio Nepal***

**i) Case 1.** On 19 July 2021, Radio Nepal broadcast the news entitled 'UK and EU Accusation of China's Widespread Cyber Attack' in which the UK and the European Union accused China of a wide cyber-attack that year. It was not mentioned from which news agency this one-sided news was taken. Also, the news mentions that the European Union in a statement accused China of the attack. But the news could have been prevented from being one-sided by asking the Chinese embassy in Nepal about the accusation. The media also followed the same trend when similar accusations were made by countries like the UK and the US which have hostile relations with China. Also, the news could have been made credible by quoting the news agency as well. However, the editorial group did not think it appropriate to do so and, as a result, one-sided and unsourced news was broadcast.

**ii) Case 2.** On 10 August 2021, Radio Nepal aired the news titled 'Finance Minister Janardan Sharma comments on the decline in credibility towards the budget because the previous government brought the budget without paying attention to the funds'. In that news, the incumbent Finance Minister's accusation was aired mentioning

that the credibility of the budget has decreased because the previous government did not pay attention to the status of funds when preparing the budget. But when the finance minister made such a serious accusation, the news could have been made credible and balanced by taking the reaction of the concerned former finance minister as well, or his party's reaction. This left a negative impact on the credibility of news and news sources.

**iii) Case 3.** On 30 August 2021, Radio Nepal aired the news titled 'PM's Instructions to Immediately Remove Solid Waste and Garbage from Kathmandu'. In the news, the Prime Minister called the mayor and deputy mayor of Kathmandu and instructed them to pick up the garbage in Kathmandu city as soon as possible. The landfill site in Banchare Danda was blocked by residents from taking garbage trucks to the landfill site. Their demands could not be fulfilled at the local level.

A section of the road leading to the landfill site was also damaged due to landslides. A decision of the federal government was necessary to solve this problem. In this regard, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Kathmandu met with the Prime Minister for their initiation asking for support. They raised the matter related to the issue with the Prime Minister and asked him to take the initiative to solve it. But this remark did not appear anywhere in the news broadcast by Radio Nepal.

On the contrary, it was broadcast that the Prime Minister called the mayor and deputy mayor and instructed them to remove the garbage promptly. The mayor and the deputy mayor were not quoted anywhere in the news. In this way, the details of the incident were distorted and one-sided news was broadcast. Instead of broadcasting factual news, the government-run radio station thought it was good for it to broadcast the news with full praise to the Prime Minister.

*c) Cases of Radio Lumbini*

**i) Case 1.** Radio Lumbini has broadcast news titled 'Lumbini Pradesh Sabha Building Construction Stopped Due to Lack of Budget' in its bulletin dated 14 December 2023. In this news, the information was broadcast that the construction company stopped the work due to a lack of funds. Ananta Raj Ghimire, the Executive Officer of the Lumbini Province Infrastructure Development Authority, has been quoted for the requested modified budget to the Ministry of Finance of the Federal Government after modifying the design of the Provincial Assembly building, but the budget was not released. However, no information or response was broadcast about the position of the Ministry of Finance. Due to this, the news became one-sided and imbalanced. The balance could have been maintained by asking the finance secretary, the finance minister, or the leader of the ruling party. If it had been done, the listeners would have received broader information about the budget of the proposed Provincial Assembly building.

**ii) Case 2.** Radio Lumbini broadcast a news titled 'Education Minister Paudel's Statement in Making the Education System Scientific' in its bulletin dated 17 December 2023. In the news, Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Devendra Paudel, while addressing the programme during his visit to Rupandehi, accused the so-called old and big parties of not being willing to make changes in education. When the incumbent minister accused the big and old parties of not wanting to make changes in education, it was not revealed what kind of changes he was talking about. The accused parties did not respond to this. Due to this, this news became one-sided and imbalanced. By asking the opposition leaders who were responsible for education or ex. education minister or the leader of the opposition party, the newsroom could have relied on balanced news sources.

**iii) Case 3.** Radio Lumbini broadcast a news titled 'Request for Address to the Victims of Tinau-Danaw Corridor' in its bulletin of 19 December .2023In this news, the struggle committee's protest for the next few days was broadcast. However, the statement of the related agencies that could address the struggle was not included in the news. Again, on 4 January 2023, in the news entitled 'Tinau-Danaw Corridor Victims' Gathering', information was broadcast that the victims would stop the Butwal Sub-metropolitan City and stage a naked demonstration. However, since this news was being broadcast unilaterally, it was not considered necessary to ask any officials of the sub-metropolitan city or other related bodies in Butwal to provide further information or remarks of the authorities. It is found that the news was broadcast serially, and was designed one-sidedly, sympathising with the protestors.

***d) Cases of BFM***

**Case 1.** A news broadcast on BFM under the title 'Excise sticker printing is in confusion, why is the department so infatuated with the disputed Madras company?' has no source. The news mentions different dealings of the Internal Revenue Department with the contractor; however, it lacks the sourcing to the concerned officials and the contractor. The news in a one-way written is as follows:

The Internal Revenue Department has been collecting revenue on alcoholic products through excise stickers. However, the department has not yet decided what quality stickers to produce. The contract with the government-owned Janak Shiksha Samagri Kendra, which is responsible for printing excise stickers, is about to expire. The Supreme Court has given an interim order on 8 September not to enter an immediate contract with the disputed company Madras Printer Securities, which was selected through international bidding. Along with this, sticker printing has become confusing. Due to the disputed Madras securities, the

government's top priority smart license campaign was also stalled. Last year, the department entrusted the printing of stickers to Janak Shiksha Material Kendra in 3 phases. Accordingly, it was agreed that the centre would print 750 million stickers for alcohol and gutkha along with 69 million for cigarettes. Out of which 80 million units have already been provided by the centre and an agreement has been reached for another 170 million units in the third phase. The department is alleging that stickers are being printed from the centre but now they are not able to maintain the standards. The government-owned Janak Shiksha Samagri Kendra has already printed more than half of the stickers of the agreement. (BFM News bulletin, September 18, 2021)

The news which is longer than one-minute mentions different aspects of the story including the Internal Revenue Department, Janak Shikhsa Samagri Kendra, the contractor and the Supreme Court, but has not mentioned any source to make the story credible.

**ii) Case 2.** On 19 September 2021, BFM broadcast news stating that Communist Party of Nepal—United Marxist Leninist (CPN—UML) Standing Committee member Subash Nembang urged judges to return the medals awarded by the government. The news mentioned that during a program organised by the CPN (UML) that day, leader Nembang expressed his opinion that it was inappropriate for legal practitioners and judges to accept medals from the current government, especially those involved in legal actions against the CPN (UML) government. His call for an immediate rejection of the medals was emphasised in the report. However, this news item presented a one-sided perspective, as it lacked the voices of lawyers and judges who were criticised by the leader.

**iii) Case 3** The news regarding the government's decision to remove the member secretary of the National Sports Council from BFM was broadcast on 23 October 2021. In this report, no specific source was cited for the dismissal of the member secretary by the government. Instead, the news mentions, "A board member has informed that after the government removed the member secretary of the National Sports Council from the position, the other members expressed their concern that their future was at risk." However, none of the members expressing doubt about their future in this news has been quoted as a news source though it was possible to obtain a response from the authorities, but this was not pursued by the station. This resulted in the broadcasting of anonymous and one-sided news.

During the content analysis, a diary was maintained for note-taking purposes to support the analysis of the cause and effect in news sources. It is observed that all political news derived from leaders' speeches consisted of one-sided blames and claims, which are broadcast across all sample radio stations' news bulletins. The stations are not observed taking action to balance the news by providing information or reactions from the other parties implicated in the story. During the observation of the radio stations' newsrooms, it has been noted that the broadcasting of news containing accusations and one-sided stories dominated the coverage. The newsrooms have appeared to have a habit of broadcasting one-sided stories or those types of stories without sources. Kharel evaluates that when radio newsrooms fail to engage diverse information sources, it reflects a bias since they rely on limited sources. He criticizes the prevailing trend in Nepali media, including mainstream outlets, for neglecting significant segments of society due to their limited information sources. Consequently, the content becomes biased as it overlooks alternative viewpoints. Kharel has proposed additional recommendations for newsrooms to diversify their sources, "Relying solely on government sources for information isn't adequate, it's equally essential

to seek perspectives from other stakeholders; only relying on one source can lead to a biased approach (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

Based on the data from content analysis and expert discussions, it is evident that radio stations lack the vision to access multiple sources instead of relying solely on one. Kharel and Adhikary criticise the practices of radio newsrooms, noting that regular reporting and editorial meetings are not yet standard procedures. Many radio stations seem to function as propaganda outlets for political parties, religious organisations, or businesses. As a result, newsroom managers often prioritise speed over fact-based reporting to the public. Adhikary argues that when radio stations neglect their primary responsibility and fail to uphold their constitutional obligations as citizens, they see little need to re-check or verify information sources woven into various stories. Accuracy frequently takes a backseat to the temptation of offering breaking news updates (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Radio news is prepared under tight deadlines, requiring rapid production. However, experts emphasise that the pursuit of speed and being the first to break news should not compromise accuracy in sourcing and content. Giri notes that radio newsrooms often lack the necessary organisation. When a newsroom lacks organisation, its processes also suffer. Practices such as regular meetings and agenda discussions become less robust. This lack of organisation is primarily attributed to resource constraints and policy issues. According to Giri, these factors contribute to weaknesses in maintaining diversity and objectivity in sourcing, verifying, and cross-verifying information (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). Well-organised newsrooms with good policies can meet the requirement of accuracy in sourcing.

Regmee discusses the reason behind the weakness of radio newsrooms in maintaining objectivity. He points out the reason that radio broadcasting, although having 72 years of history and private broadcasting touching nearly 28 in Nepal, has not

developed a professionally structured broadcasting culture of focusing on newsroom practices, teamwork spirit in reporting, editing, and presentation on the air". In his observation, coordinating a culture of linking all sections of broadcasting on a newscast basis, daily basis or even weekly basis, reviewing and reforming the same and bringing about the whole radio station on the same pace of broadcasting values is still missing. He assesses:

Broadcasting is often viewed as an alternative career path or a stepping stone to other media endeavours. It is not typically considered the primary profession by those who manage, regulate, or work on-air, including presenters and support staff. (Personal communication, February 20, 2023)

The issues of stability in the radio profession as a career have affected the quality of human resources working in radio newsrooms. It is related to the brain drain of the experts from radio which has affected news quality. Bhoosal states that if the source is the basis of neutrality and reliability in news, it is also the confirmation of truth and facts. When the news does not seem factual, reliable and neutral, then it does not assume the true form of news. He criticises the growing trend of radio stations relying on copy and paste without following the journalistic process for news making. "It is difficult for a person to get established in a newsroom because they have to perform all the roles of reporter, editor and reader. Likewise, the news is made from only the information taken from online portals, received by e-mails and speeches of leaders " (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

The trend of churnalism instead of the practice of journalism has disturbed the reporting system of newsrooms. Churnalism needs no reporting and diversity of voices as news sources. Yogi has an argument relating to the training for journalists. In his opinion, the main reason behind the issues of objectivity in news sourcing is due to a

lack of training and exposure. In his experience, radio newsrooms usually don't send their reporters for investigative stories. They usually cover formal events and are happy with the news/press releases sent by various organisations or radio interviews with newsmakers (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

Training and skill development only make journalists perfect. Dahal agrees with Yogi's analysis that one of the reasons could be the lack of resources while the owners and management of the radio stations are reluctant to add the physical infrastructure and expansion of quality human resources. In his observation, similarly to the previous experts' views, the capacity building of the journalists through periodical useful training and support is also not available to the Nepali radio by and large (Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

Results of content analysis, radio newsroom observation, the broadcast case news items and experts' views as well as the experiences of radio practicers support evidence that there is a lack of professional integrity in the news sourcing process. To summarise the discussion, the internal causes and factors that affect the sourcing process are incentives and the timely skill development of workforces in the newsroom through periodic and level-wise training. The lack of a working environment with sufficient remuneration with timely payment also has affected the news-sourcing process. The sourcing process within radio stations has been profoundly shaped by the intricate interplay of political, social, cultural, and economic forces that wield power in society. Content analysis and newsroom observations indicate that radio stations often prioritise the news stories that amplify the perspectives and narratives of influential power elites who make their presence before the journalists as sources. Comparatively radio stations have been found neglecting the voices, issues, events, and perspectives of the general people and marginalised communities. The extent and nature of this influence seem to

vary, contingent upon the complex interrelationships of political dynamics, societal norms, cultural values, and economic factors at play. The internal conditions of journalists, contracts, terms of services and facilities and internal conflict not only affected the sourcing process in news but also impacted the content and quality of radio news. Scholars and experts unequivocally assert that the influence of power elites on the sourcing process within newsrooms is deeply entrenched in the multifaceted web of political power structures, social hierarchies, economic interests, and cultural hegemony in the news sourcing process.

## Chapter 6

### Objectivity and Diversity in the Radio News Sourcing Process

This chapter aims to analyse the process and ways the radio stations applied in maintaining objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process based on the criteria of objective 3 of the study. The chapter has been divided into two parts: objectivity and diversity which are being analysed based on content analysis, field observation and discussion.

According to McQuail (2010), objectivity is a significant aspect of media practice and "a particular attitude to the task of information collection, processing and dissemination", which is attached to a "broader notion of truth" (p. 200). Objectivity in the source selection process maintains the accuracy, balance and fairness of news stories. The Hutchins Commission (1947) puts forward the concept of objectivity in news reporting and dissemination. The commission urges the press including newspapers and radio to disseminate news maintaining objectivity with "truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning" (Blanchard, 1977, p. 25).

Objectivity in the news-making and sourcing process is a concept under which "news is gathered and told value-free" (Vivian, 2013, p. 216). Objectivity in the news-making process was introduced in the penny press era of the 1830s in the US. Associated Press (AP) strengthened neutral journalism rather than partisan and opinion-based content in the name of news. Journalism became a money-making business through selling and advertising, the pioneer publishers and editors made news free and started to favour information-driven news (Vivian, 2013, p. 225). In 1923, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) introduced truth and accuracy, impartiality, and fairness in its journalistic canons as an ethical principle.

According to McQuail (2010), objectivity carries neutrality, fairness and truth within the news reporting and source selection process. In his words, objectivity requires "a fair and non-discriminatory attitude to sources and to objects of news reporting which should be treated on equal terms" (p. 201). Furthermore, Westerstahl (1983) explains objectivity as factuality which dwells truth, relevance and informativeness as well as impartiality to ensure balance and neutrality. It is also related to the notion of Habermas (1989) that is related to the rationale of undistorted communication.

In Nepal, the Press Council Nepal (2016) has issued codes of conduct to journalists and media houses to maintain objectivity in reporting, news-making and dissemination process urging them to disseminate 'factual, balanced and objective information': "remaining firm to the principles of objectivity, journalists and mass media should disseminate factual news and balanced opinions. While doing so, proper space should be given to the opinion of the concerned party" (p. 4). The code of conduct advises journalists and mass media to engage in 'objective, fair, decent and trustworthy journalism'.

When reporters are assigned to prepare a news item, they should ensure the accuracy of sources. White and Barnas (2010) suggest reporters verifying sources as double or triple sourcing:

A reporter should never use a source as a basis for a story until the information is checked for accuracy. Verifying a story is not always easy, especially when a reporter is working under deadlines. One of the best ways to ensure that a story is accurate is to find several other sources who will disclose exactly the same information. This is known as double-sourcing or triple-sourcing. (p. 46)

Single-sourcing news might fail in the test of accuracy. It is a chance to not only misguide the audiences with a single source of information but also influence the

neutrality of the newsroom. Brooks et al. (2014) emphasise multiple sources of news for accuracy:

Gathering information from several sources is one of the keys to good writing and good communication. It's also the best way to ensure accuracy because when several sources are used, information is more likely to be verified. When additional sources are checked and cross-checked, the chances of a story being accurate improve greatly. (p. 112)

A reporter should verify information until they find more than one reliable source. Relying on only one source of information can be risky for the authentication of a news item. Some of the stations have a policy to disclose the sources before to at least one authority in the newsroom so that the disaster that happens by relying on a source can be avoided (White & Barnas, 2010). A reporter should find, cultivate, and use reliable sources for the news. They need to spend time with probable sources sitting, talking, chatting, and having a cup of tea or coffee with them. Finding a reliable source is not easy. Selection of an appropriate source and maintaining diversity in selecting sources is more difficult than identifying a source.

It is easy to make news only based on the press release received in the newsroom, but this makes the news bulletin only a mouthpiece of the government, politicians, and businessmen. Not only that, but it also makes the news bulletin one-sided, as a result, the news bulletin cannot cover the news of the general public. Therefore, a radio newsroom should maintain locality, and diversity in sources providing airtime for local and general people-related events and issues (McLeish, 2005, pp. 71–72). A reporter must always be careful not to be manipulated by news sources in the newsroom. Sometimes one-sided sources can manipulate the news.

According to Brooks et al. (2014), maintaining accuracy in a news story is essential whether the story is 'great or small, long or short'. Accuracy and fairness are related to each other, but they are not the same. "Being fair requires asking yourself if you have done enough to uncover all the relevant facts and have impartially delivered those facts, without favouring one side or another in a story" (p. 14).

For the accuracy of the story, reporters and gatekeepers should maintain the check sheet to "make sure facts (events, dates, names, statistics, places, quotes) are correct, verify facts with multiple sources, use reliable sources for statistics, use facts as the substance of the story, discover and add all necessary facts" and for the fairness of a story "provide context for the fact, give all relevant sides of a story, strive for balance" (Brooks et al., 2014, p. 14). It shows that without maintaining accuracy and fairness, a newsroom is not only unable to meet the objectivity of the story but also unable to make the story balanced and credible. While the story is biased, it makes the audience confused. Consequently, the story lost its trustworthiness.

Müller (2014, p. 207) has categorised the vertical and the horizontal media function as mass media's democratic requirements. He argues that the vertical function of media just propagates "information about the activities and decisions of political office-holders, especially about official misconduct, to as many citizens as possible" (p. 207).

McQuail and Deuze (2020) suggest that the vertical function of media is not related to the diversity of the content of media. On the contrary, the horizontal function of media is related to the diversity of media content. Through the horizontal function, media "succeed in constituting an open public sphere that reflects the diversity of the society" (p. 251). The horizontal functional concept of media inspires and makes aware

the media persons in radio newsrooms to maintain diversity in the content and sources of the news to constitute and strengthen the open public sphere.

Baran and Davis (2015) describe that a journalist should be careful with a commitment to "attempt to fulfil their norm of objectivity. Events are treated in isolation with little effort to interconnect them. Connection requires putting them into a broader context, and this would require making speculative, sometimes controversial linkages" (p. 271).

### **6.1 Checklist for the Process of Objectivity in News Sourcing**

As a concise normative form of the discussion of the above-mentioned scholars, a table has been developed to show the checklists to interpret the level of objectivity maintained by the radio stations in the news source selection process. Table 6.1 describes a typology of a process of source selection with the checklist as follows:

**Table 6.1***A Checklist of the Process to Interpret Objectivity in News Sourcing*

News making and sourcing process	Checklist of action to interpret the objectivity
Objectivity in the information collection and sourcing process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factual in form, accurate, honest, sufficiently, complete, and true to reality, truth, relevance, informativeness</li> <li>• Balance and neutrality</li> <li>• Fair and non-discriminatory attitude to sources,</li> <li>• All sources should be treated on equal terms</li> </ul>
Media practice of sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information collection, processing, and dissemination</li> </ul>
Necessity of multiple points of view in sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When facts are in dispute</li> <li>• need to treat all sources as of equal standing and relevance</li> </ul>
Quality of reporting and sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of undistorted information</li> <li>• Reliable and credible accounts of events</li> </ul>
Reliability and neutrality of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checkable and separating fact from opinion,</li> <li>• Balanced and fair/impartial information</li> </ul>
Reporting and sourcing alternative perspectives and interpretations with the opportunity to respond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a non-sensational, unbiased way, as far as possible</li> <li>• Give the earliest opportunity to respond to the persons who are publicly accused</li> </ul>

*Source: based on ASNE (1975); McLeish (2005); McQuail (2010); Vivian (2013);*

*Brooks et al. (2014); Baran and Davis (2015); and McQuail and Deuze (2020)*

Table 6.1 projects a checklist of the news-making process to maintain objectivity in sourcing. This checklist has been prepared based on the normative indicators that have

been discussed in the several works of the scholars mentioned above. There is a section with the making and sourcing process on the left side of the table. A checklist of actions to interpret objectivity is on the right side to show the actions of a newsroom that have been taken to maintain objectivity. To maintain objectivity in news sourcing, radio newsrooms need to ensure factual in form, accurate, honest, sufficiently, complete, and true to reality, relevance, informativeness information with balanced and neutral treatment. There should be the necessity of multiple points of view in sourcing when facts are in dispute. At this point, the gatekeepers need to treat all sources as of equal standing and relevance way. Quality of reporting and sourcing is determined by collecting undistorted information and reliable and credible accounts of events separating fact from opinion with balanced and fair/impartial information. Reporting and sourcing alternative perspectives and interpretations to all relevant sources in a non-sensational and unbiased way as far as possible. Newsroom needs to provide the earliest opportunity to respond to the persons who are publicly accused persons and institutions. This chapter has been designed to describe these normative values and ethics of radio stations as their social responsibilities.

The checklist in Table 6.1 has undergone a rigorous examination through content analysis and newsroom observation. The data interpretation has been carried out through interviews with relevant experts and practitioners, as presented below:

## **6.2 Level of Objectivity in News Sourcing**

The table shows the level of objectivity of radio stations in sourcing. The radio stations have selected single, double, or more sources in their main news. They have broadcast news with one-sided/biased sources and news without sources. Details of the objectivity in sources are as follows:

**Table 6.2**  
*Single and Multiple Sources in the Main News of Radio Bulletin*

Nature of sources	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Single source	153	45.27	267	59.20	251	56.40	301	63.10	972	56.81
Multiple/balanced sources	10	2.96	42	9.31	53	11.91	11	2.31	116	6.78
One-sided/biased source	10	2.96	8	1.77	8	1.80	7	1.47	33	1.93
No source	165	48.82	134	29.71	133	29.89	158	33.12	590	34.48
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 6.2 illustrates the fact of the objectivity that radio stations depend on single sources in most of their news bulletins. The stations have a few numbers of news relied on multiple sources. Out of the total sample news, they have broadcast headline news relying on a single source with 56.81 percent (972). Only 6.78 percent (116) of headline news has been on-aired with multiple sources balancing the stories. Compared to single-source stories, it is more than 13 times less. More than a third of the total main news is found to have been broadcast without mentioning any source. The percentage of news broadcast by radio stations with no source is 34.48 (590). Sample radio stations are found to have broadcast one-sided/biased news stories. However, the number of this type of story is not bigger--1.93 percent (33) of the main news which falls in this category.

Compared to other stations, Radio Sagarmatha has the largest amount of news with single sources with 63.10 percent (301) of its total headline news. Being in the second position, Radio Lumbini has broadcast 59.20 percent (267) of main news stories relying on single sources. Radio Nepal is in the third position broadcasting single sources news with 56.40 (251) of its total headline news. Compared to others, BFM has slightly a smaller

number of news prepared depending on the single source. It has broadcast 45.27 percent (153) of headline news with single sources. Overall, all radio stations have broadcast more than half of their total news relying on single sources. The data indicate that they failed to maintain objectivity in sourcing while selecting news as they depended on only one source.

More than one-third of news is found to have been broadcast without sources i.e., 34.48 percent. BFM is ahead with nearly half of the news broadcast without sources at 48.82 percent (165). Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal are in the same position broadcasting with 29.71 percent (134) and 29.89 percent of the main news without sources. While Radio Sagarmatha is in the second position casting news without mentioning sources with 33.12 percent (158).

The percentage of multiple sources to make the story balanced by radio newsrooms is very low. BFM, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha are at the same level below having 3 percent of their total headline news that has been broadcast citing multiple sources. Radio Nepal has broadcast news relying on multiple sources with 11.91 percent (53), which is more than that of the other three radio stations followed by Radio Lumbini which has 9.31 percent (42) multiple sources of the total headline news. While BFM with 2.96 percent (10) and Radio Sagarmatha with 2.31 percent (11) of the total number of the main news are found to have broadcast news connecting with multiple sources. Only multiple sources can make news balanced. Overall, the data reveals that the radio stations are not careful about the balanced sources. It weakens the objectivity of the radio stations in news sourcing.

Although the number of one-sided/biased sources in the main news of the sample radio stations is very low, the data explains that the radio stations have a practice of inserting one-sided/biased sources in the news. Except for BFM, the rest of the stations have less than two percent of news citing biased sources with one-way reporting. BFM has broadcast 2.96 percent (10) of its main news by mentioning one-way and biased sources in

controversial events and issues. While Radio Lumbini with 1.77 percent (8), Radio Nepal with 1.80 percent (8) and Radio Sagarmatha with 1.47 percent (7) of total headline news are found to have broadcast main news connecting biased and one-sided sources in controversial issues and events.

Overall, the data demonstrate that the radio stations have weaknesses in the practice of gatekeeping regarding maintaining objectivity and diversity in sourcing. A regular assessment in this regard can correct the weakness of the newsrooms as gatekeepers.

### **6.3 Accuracy in News Sourcing**

Authenticity and diversity in sources decide the parameter of the accuracy of the sources as well as the news story. To analyse the accuracy in sourcing, sources such as high-credible (multiple balanced sources and Sources with voice bites) and credible (single sources that have authority) have been grouped into the accuracy of sources category. Likewise, low-credible (single sources directly non-related and without authority, one-sided/biased sources) and non-credible sourcing (anonymous sources and news stories without sources) have been grouped into the inaccuracy category.

Radio news is prepared by a reporter with information received through numerous sources. The sources can be categorised as formal and informal, predicted and unpredicted, institutions/organisations and persons. When reporters are assigned to prepare a news item, they should ensure the accuracy of sources. In this connection, White and Barnas (2010, p. 46) suggest reporters verify sources as double-sourcing or triple-sourcing to maintain accuracy in their news stories. According to their suggestion, a reporter should not blindly prepare news without cross-verifying the information with two or three news sources.

Single-sourcing news might fail in the test for accuracy. Such sources may not only misguide the audiences with a single source of information but also influence the

neutrality of the newsroom. Hence, Brooks et al. (2014) emphasise multiple sources of news for accuracy:

Gathering information from several sources is one of the keys to good writing and good communication. It's also the best way to ensure accuracy because when several sources are used, information is more likely to be verified. When additional sources are checked and cross-checked, the chances of a story being accurate improve greatly. (p. 112)

A Reporter should verify the information until they find more than one reliable source. Relying on only one source of information can be risky for the authentication of a news item. Some of the stations have a policy to disclose the sources in front of at least one authority in a newsroom so that the disaster that happens by relying on a source can be avoided (White & Barnas, 2010). A reporter should find, cultivate and use reliable sources for the news. They need to spend time with probable sources sitting, talking, chatting and having a cup of tea or coffee with them. Finding a reliable source is not easy. Selection of an appropriate source and maintaining diversity in selecting sources is more difficult than identifying a source.

It is easy to make news only based on the press release received in the newsroom, but this makes the news bulletin only a mouthpiece of the government, politicians, and businessmen. Not only that, but it also makes the news bulletin one-sided too. As a result, the news bulletin cannot cover the voice of the general people. Therefore, a radio newsroom should maintain locality, and diversity in sources providing air space for local and general people-related events and issues (McLeish, 2005, pp. 71–72). A reporter must always be careful not to be manipulated by news sources in the newsroom. Sometimes one-sided sources can manipulate the news. The more newsrooms can prepare news based on multiple sources, the less the risk of one-sided sources

manipulating the news. Women and gender minorities, Dalits and marginalised people in society should be given access to the newsroom and news content as sources to maintain diversity. For instance, McQuail and Deuze (2020) give an example of the absence of diversity in a newsroom from a gender perspective, "In this matter, attention has also been directed to 'the news', which was for long largely a male preserve and in its dominant forms and contents (politics, economics, sport) has been oriented more to male audiences" (p. 192).

Table 6.3 visualises the accuracy and inaccuracy level of the sources in the headline stories of the radio news bulletins. This category indicates a single source which is not directly related to the event and activity and is without authority as inaccuracy. This category has included those news items which are one-sided and biased sources. Anonymous sources also are added here as inaccurate news sources. News Sources with voices, authority as sources and multiple sources have been merged as a sourcing accurately category which is as follows:

**Table 6.3**

*Accuracy Level in News Sourcing*

Nature of sourcing	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Sourcing accurately	99	29.29	197	43.68	199	44.72	178	37.32	673	39.33
Sourcing inaccurately	239	70.71	254	56.32	246	55.28	299	62.68	1038	60.67
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As Table 6.3 describes, the sample radio stations broadcast most of the news sourcing inaccurately. They are found to have broadcast 60.67 percent (1038) news of the total headline news from inaccurate sources.

Only 39.33 percent (673) of the total headline news has been on-aired from accurate sources. News stories with multiple sources, stories with voice bites of sources and single sources with authority are grouped in this category. Authenticity and diversity in sourcing are called accuracy in sourcing. The sample radio stations have lagged in maintaining the accuracy of the headline news stories.

While dealing with the data from each station, BFM has a very low accuracy of sources with 29.29 percent (99) while Radio Nepal has a high accuracy of sources with 44.72 percent (199) of its total headline news. Radio Lumbini is in the second position in terms of broadcasting news with accurate sources in the main news with 43.68 percent (197) followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 37.32 (178) of its total headline news.

While making comparisons regarding inaccuracy in sourcing, BFM is found to have a big number of inaccurate sourcing with 70.71 percent (239) followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 62.68 percent (299) of its main news stories. Radio Lumbini is in the third position broadcasting news from inaccurate sourcing with 56.32 percent (254) followed by Radio Nepal with 55.28 percent (246) of its main news stories.

Overall, the radio stations are not conscious of the increment in the accuracy of the sourcing process. That is why a large number of the stories are found to have been broadcast with inaccurate sourcing. Dahal argues that this is the result of casual and convenient reporting for the sake of doing news. It also poses serious revision if the government or competent authority mules on contemplating controlling media. This attitude of radio also puts the credibility of journalism at stake (Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

Mainali assesses that there is no editorial freedom in Nepali newsrooms. Even more than in the case of radio stations, the person or unit that takes editorial responsibility is not specified. In his assessment, it is difficult to find the skills required for journalism in radio, and the management is not ready to develop such skills. In this given situation, how does a

radio station meet the requirements of accuracy in news sourcing? Furthermore, he states that direct intervention of management and the market continues in Nepali newsrooms, which completely rejects the principles of objective journalism. As a result, the recognition of objectivity and accuracy in sourcing in Nepali journalism is disappearing (Personal communication, March 6, 2023). Accuracy in sourcing is related to the skilled and qualified human resources which is lacking in radio stations.

Accuracy in sourcing has a direct connection to the accuracy and credibility of the news bulletins which depends on the proper sourcing in the news. Adhikary discusses that once radio stations forget their primary responsibility and defy the constitutional obligation as citizens, they do not find it necessary to re-check or verify the sources of information weaved into various stories. "Accuracy of information is often compromised at the expense of speed—with a temptation to offer breaking news every now and then" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). This has hampered the social responsibility of gatekeepers while doing news business.

Yogi believes that radio news bulletins are often known for their truthfulness. He suggests providing all parts of the stories with their concerned sources accurately. However, he states, they may not be professional at times as they may fail to give news or views from both sides accurately (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). If we elaborate on the term 'professional', which Yogi emphasises, it means to maintain news sourcing properly covering all aspects of a news story connecting with the appropriate and authentic sources that can provide a broad and wide range of pictures of any event or issue. Likewise, regarding the accuracy of the sources, Poudyal advises a reporter to answer the questions to the checklists such as:

Relevance: does the information relate to the topic? Who is the intended audience of the story? How does this source compare to other sources you may have found

suitable on the topic? Authority: Who wrote the information, are they an expert or knowledgeable in their field? Accuracy: Where does the information come from? Is it supported by evidence? Can you verify the information in one or more other sources? (Personal communication, January 28, 2023).

These are the checkpoints for the gatekeepers to work in the newsroom. According to McQuail and Deuze (2020), the term accuracy in the news story has several meanings which one cannot judge only by observing texts alone in the story. Accuracy means in one way:

Conformity to independent records of events, whether in documents, other media or eyewitness accounts. Another meaning is more subjective: accuracy is the conformity of reports to the perception of the source of the news or the subject of the news (object of reporting). Accuracy may also be a matter of internal consistency within news texts. (pp. 453–454)

Metts compares the trend of depending on secondary sources to the small independent radio stations in the US, which makes radio in problem in terms of accuracy. He describes the reason behind the weaknesses in accuracy which is human nature. He analyses that it happens when a reporter thinks about why to do something that requires more time and effort if there is no incentive to do so. Incentives, by the way, do not have to be financial or material. Taking pride in one's work as a professional can also be rewarding. He alerts the Nepali media to detach from the partisanship which is also an issue in the way of accuracy of the sources that "all Nepali media, including radio, will be hampered as long as it so much depends on political winds and power" (Personal communication, March 1, 2023).

In conclusion, Acharya, a senior journalist and media educator, offers first advice to the radio stations to be free from any biases and avoid any pressure from outsiders i.e.,

maintain editorial freedom for maintaining objectivity and accuracy in the sourcing process. If gatekeepers of a media house are biased then one cannot expect truthfulness, impartiality, accuracy and factual stories with wide voices and opinions from that media house. The second prescription to the radio stations he offers is to be strong financially and "believe in the audiences more than any other interest group. Address the local interest of the people rather than the political ideology that you belong to" (Personal communication, January 27, 2023).

#### 6.4 Unidentified/Anonymous Sources that Ruin Objectivity

During content analysis, the sample radio stations have been found using unidentified/anonymous sources in the news stories. These stories ruin the accuracy of the news stories. The status of the unidentified/anonymous sources is shown below:

**Table 6.4**

*Unidentified/Anonymous Sources Used in the News Story*

Type of sources	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Anonymous sources	59	17.46	32	7.10	49	11.01	66	13.84	206	12.04
Other types of sources	279	82.54	419	92.90	396	88.99	411	86.16	1505	87.96
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 6.4, it is found that anonymous sources were used in the main news broadcast by the sample radio stations. The sample radio stations have provided 12.04 percent (206 items) of airtime for their main news that contains anonymous sources. For example, they are found using various terms to cite anonymous sources in mainstream news. The terms include spectators, a source person, an informed source, it is said/it is found/it is expected, it is claimed, officials said, media said, leaders said, mentioned in the news, mentioned 'lawyers, said organiser, experts gave stress,

international media said, analysts said, experts seemed to worry, experts say, it is assumed that it is suspected that, according to eyewitnesses, found in a study, a study revealed it, according to eyewitnesses, an official said, international media mentioned it, one of the justice said, Indian media disclosed, British media mentions that, according to the weather forecasters, among others.

Out of the four sample radio stations, BFM has come in the first position in terms of broadcasting 17.46 percent (59) of its total headline news mentioning anonymous sources. Radio Sagarmatha is in the second position for broadcasting anonymous sources in its main news. It has given 13.84 (66) percent of airtime of its main news to anonymous sources. Radio Nepal is in the third position for broadcasting anonymous sources providing 11.01 percent (49) of its main news. Compared to others, Radio Lumbini has broadcast the lowest 7.10% (32 items) of anonymous sources in the main news.

Adhikary discusses that the use of anonymous source(s) is virtually banned in major news organisations because the information thus derived is not considered credible. In his experience anonymous sources are used only in extraordinary situations when sources that can be identified are not available immediately, and if the broadcast journalist is on a deadline. Sources must be identified when the next news bulletin is updated. In his opinion, "in the absence of a monitoring mechanism, such a perilous practice goes undetected and is not disciplined. If a radio station has earned a public reputation for its service over a long period, listeners may not be too sensitive about attribution" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). This is the responsibility of radio news gatekeepers to identify the authentic sources before broadcasting news.

Regmee also suggests broadcasters not to use anonymous sources in news at all because they could not be taken as authentic. Agreeing with the findings of this study, he

states that the broadcasters rely on the use of anonymous sources in actual reporting. In his observation, the reason behind it is that reporters feel it is safe and comfortable and provides a safety net for not exposing the sources (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). Anonymous sources confuse the listeners and decrease the credibility of the news items.

Bista discusses that the principles of journalism and the journalistic code of ethics in Nepal also advocate that the source should be mentioned for the credibility of the news, and if it is necessary to keep the source confidential, it should be protected by keeping the source confidential. He argues that anonymous sources question the credibility of the news. It raises questions about the truth of the news and encourages imagination. Bista has an observation that sometimes the reporter's thoughts are reflected in the news through anonymous sources. In his opinion, things like not mentioning the source, and how to do it mainly "depend on the nature of the news, it is natural not to reveal the source when it is necessary to protect the general or source, but in all cases, doing so has a serious impact on the credibility of the news" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). Different types of anonymous sources have been found in radio news broadcasting. A detailed description of the anonymous sources is given in Table 6.4a.

***a) Details of Unidentified/Anonymous News Sources***

Sample radio stations have given different types of names and terminologies to unidentified/anonymous sources. It is normal for radio stations to use the terms such as 'it is said, it is found, media said, a source says, an informed source, it is assumed, experts said/ highlighted/seem worried' among others. The details of the anonymous sources of all the sample radio stations' main news are given in Table 6.4a as follows:

**Table 6.4a***Descriptions in Details of the Unidentified/Anonymous Sources*

Anonymous sources	BFM	Radio Lumbini	Radio Nepal	Radio Sagarmatha	Number of news	Percent
It is said/it is found/expected/claimed	22	11	17	13	72	34.95%
Officials said	7	8	12	12	39	18.93%
Media said/ mentioned in the news	6	3	9	10	28	13.59%
An informed source/ a source person	5	2	1	5	13	6.31%
Experts said/ highlighted/seemed worried	3	1	2	4	10	4.85%
According to eyewitnesses	4	1	2	3	10	4.85%
Found/ revealed in a study	3	0	1	2	6	2.91%
Organiser said	2	1	1	1	6	2.91%
Spectators said that	2	1	1	2	6	2.91%
It is assumed/suspected that	1	2	1	1	5	2.43%
Leaders said	1	1	1	2	5	2.43%
Analysts said	1	1	1	0	3	1.46%
Lawyers said/judge said	1	0	0	1	2	0.97%
According to the weather forecasters	1	0	0	0	1	0.49%
Total	59 (28.64%)	32 (15.53%)	49 (23.79%)	66 (32.03%)	206	100%

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As Table 6.4a visualises data the terms of anonymous sources such as it is said/it is found/it is expected/it is claimed is found to have been used with 34.95 percent of the total anonymous sources in the main news of radio stations. The second most used term is officials said, which has 18.93 percent of total anonymous sources of all sample radio news bulletins. The third most used term is media said/mentioned in news with 13.59 percent. The other terms that have been revealed are an informed source/a source person (6.31 percent), experts said/highlighted/seem worried (4.85 percent), according to eyewitnesses (4.85 percent), found/revealed in a study (2.91 percent), organiser said (2.91 percent), spectators said that (2.91 percent), it is assumed/suspected that (2.43

percent), leaders said (2.43 percent), analysts said (1.46 percent), lawyers said/justice said (0.97 percent), according to the weather forecasters (0.49 percent).

While talking radio-wise, of the 206 total anonymous sources, Radio Sagarmatha has been observed in the first position to have broadcast with 32.03 percent (66) main news citing anonymous sources. BFM is in the second position with 28.64 percent (59) anonymous sources followed by Radio Nepal with 23.79 percent (49). Radio Lumbini is found to have broadcast anonymous sources on a minimum scale of 15.53 percent (32) in its main news.

Hence, the use of anonymous sources in news has posed criticism and raised the question of objectivity and credibility of the sourcing. It is evident that the broadcasting of 12.04 percent of news with anonymous sources by the sample radio stations has weakened the objectivity of the newsroom of radio stations.

Yogi discusses that citing anonymous sources in news stories erodes the credibility of the news. Media, especially radio stations, should discourage such practices. He suggests radio journalists cite original sources instead of anonymous sources to meet objectivity and to make news credible (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). Anonymous sourcing practice indicates the weakness of radio newsrooms towards society.

Press Council Nepal (2017) has instructed journalists that "source should be quoted for the reliability of the news. However, while quoting the source, the name and identity of such source should be kept confidential so as to avoid any serious damage to the source". The principles of journalism and the code of ethics of journalists also guide that the source must be mentioned for the credibility of the news, and only if it is necessary to keep the source confidential, it should be protected by keeping the source confidential.

Bista argues that anonymous sources question the credibility of the news. It not only raises questions about the truth of the news but also encourages imagination. Sometimes the reporter's thoughts are reflected in the news through anonymous sources. "Things such as not mentioning the source, and how to do it mainly depend on the news, it is natural not to reveal the source when it is necessary to protect the source or general, but in all cases, doing so has a serious impact on the credibility of the news" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). The truthfulness of the gatekeepers is always in question mark while using anonymous sources.

In the experience of Panthi, a female journalist for Kantipur FM, generally, the news without a source seems unbelievable. A reporter should mention the source while reporting to make it credible. But in some cases, the source has to be kept confidential (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). Being a radio journalist, Panthi accepts the need to discourage anonymous sources in the news.

In Kharel's opinion, using anonymous sources is a professional crime. In his argument, it should not have happened. He proposes an active role of the watchdogs among the media that should create an atmosphere for discouraging such practices. He has a further idea to stop the anonymous sourcing:

If the watchdog among the media fails, then the watchdog of the watchdogs, that's the Press Council, should come forward and say why aren't you identifying the sources? Sources should be disclosed at any cost as far as possible. It is on very rare occasions that sources are not identified for the sake of some serious purposes like if you don't reveal such information, you lose a lot. You are very certain that the statement coming from the source is accurate. (Personal communication, January 30, 2023)

The role of media support systems and regulatory bodies such as universities, intellectuals and Press Council Nepal make aware the gatekeepers by pointing out their weaknesses. Moreover, Dahal discusses that the credibility would be in question if more anonymous sources are cited. He adds that it would also make the media lose their status in society. Not only that in Dahal's opinion, "this would also adversely impact their financial sustainability and social capital" (Personal communication, May 22, 2023). Newsrooms should be responsible for maintaining their credibility and status because it is their responsibility.

Agreeing with Bista, Khanal, a media educator, adds the idea that the journalist code of conduct, 2016 issued by the Press Council Nepal with the coordination of the Federation of Nepali Journalists states that sources should be quoted for the reliability of the news. However, while quoting the source, the name and identity of such source should be kept confidential so to avoid any serious damage to the source in a particular case. According to Khanal, "mentioning anonymous sources results in the audience being cheated; it is far from right to be informed and is not a pure and healthy practice" (Personal communication, January 28, 2023). The essence of the discussion is that the normative values, national ethical aspects and journalistic principles should be considered by the gatekeepers of radio newsrooms to maintain a high standard of practices.

Metts argues that anonymous sources are safer though less credible, and sources will give more information if they cannot be identified own (Personal communication, March 1, 2023). He further discusses that crediting sources still gives listeners more confidence in the report, since they can evaluate the source's potential motives or biases on them.

Basnet has a different view on the uses of anonymous sources in media. She argues that since the listeners have been getting used to hearing the same thing for years, they do not seem to question the credibility. However, as a listener, after listening to the news on the radio, she feels like...what is it? (Personal communication, May 13, 2023). She feels difficult to believe the news which uses anonymous sources.

Yogi debates that citing anonymous sources in news stories erodes the credibility of the news. He suggests radio managers and newsrooms be careful of the ruin of the credibility of news (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). In his judgement, media, especially radio stations, should discourage such practices.

Mainali argues that the general audience does not have to believe in the news without sources as the basis and facts of those types of news are not found. "As a result, Nepali journalism in general and radio, in particular, has lost the trust of the general audience. A bitter example of this is that the people level the radio station itself as having a certain opinion or side" (Personal communication, March 6, 2023). Anonymous sourcing practice is not a good one. To regain the trust, radio gatekeepers should abandon this practice of being transparent in source selection.

Why do radio stations use anonymous sources? Jha has an answer to this question: when the media does not have its correspondents, it does not even buy news from national and international news agencies officially. They must give the news to the audience; they must tell people. Suppose there is a news bulletin of 5, 10, 20, or 25 minutes, then news of that time duration should also be given. Time or deadline is short. And what they do is that it doesn't look like someone else stole it, it looks like their original, but it doesn't even have to be clear from which source they got the news (Personal communication, June 14, 2023). He argues that most of the time we have invested in the physical infrastructure of the radio, but

the management of the radio does not invest as much as they should in collecting news and receiving information.

Giri accepts that the radio stations use anonymous sources which is wrong practice. On the contrary, he claims that anonymous sources can't ruin the credibility of radio news. He believes that despite the use of anonymous sources in the news, radio stations have maintained credibility (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). The role of the umbrella organisation is high for the awareness of radio stations to discourage the bad practice of anonymous sources.

However, Raut disagrees with Giri and claims that anonymous sources instantly make the credibility of news items or statements used doubtful. He argues that the audiences are now aware, and savvy of the terms mainstream media uses claiming anonymous sources as something which is there by design and hence should not be trusted, or it tends to help them doubt the credibility of the information and question the intention of using the source (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). Credible news with identified sources except a special situation for protecting secret sources makes audiences satisfied with the information.

Bhoosal argues that news items broadcast using anonymous or abstract sources are the subject matter like news but are not the news. He points out that there is a tendency of not using real sources in certain types of news, in general, news that is prepared or broadcast without using real and primary news is not reliable. He examines that currently, most of the news broadcast on the radio relies on other media, so errors in that media are automatically transferred to the radio as well. He further warns the radio stations, "if they rely on some irresponsible online portals, there is a danger that radio stations will also become a medium for spreading wrong news" (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). His statements encourage the newsroom

gatekeepers and radio management to be responsible and transparent in news reporting and broadcasting.

To sum up, the experts and the managers of radio stations agree that anonymous sources are bad for the health of truthfulness and trustworthy news. It harms the credibility of radio stations too. However, because of the lack of good orientation, and skilled human resources in the newsroom, it happens frequently. The experts advise stopping this kind of practice in radio news bulletins because it leaves the audiences in confusion.

### **6.5 Attribution in the Main News Stories**

Radio newsrooms have prepared news connecting various sources. Objectivity in sourcing means the attribution of news to the appropriate source of news. Table 6.5 shows the attribution of news to the sources. Reporters, press releases/ documents, newspapers/sites, broadcast media/sites, news agencies, and social media are the categories to analyse the attribution in radio news. To maintain the norms and values, and to make stories more credible, radio newsrooms need to attribute their reporters if they prepare the news or the dispatches they send. Reporters also mention the sources of news stories in their stories except in exceptional cases such as the need to maintain secrecy of the sources regarding their protection. If the news is prepared by the newsroom desk, then the news discloses the sources the news desk cited for the story. National and international news agencies and other outlets also need to be attributed if newsrooms include them in the news bulletins.

To assess the actual status of the attribution to the sources, the content analysis focuses on the attribution to sources in main news on radio stations which shows the level of objectivity of the news bulletins of the sample radio stations. The details of the attribution to sources are as follows:

**Table 6.5***Attribution in the Main News Stories*

Credit to	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Reporters	5	1.48	30	6.65	48	10.79	0	0.00	83	4.85
Press releases/ documents	3	0.89	53	11.75	20	4.49	15	3.14	91	5.32
Newspapers/ sites	7	2.07	1	0.22	0	0.00	3	0.63	11	0.64
Broadcast media/sites	10	2.96	0	0.00	9	2.02	9	1.89	28	1.64
News agencies	9	2.66	0	0.00	0	0.00	11	2.31	20	1.17
Social media	3	0.89	1	0.22	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	0.23
No one	301	89.05	366	81.15	368	82.70	439	92.03	1474	86.15
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 6.5 illustrates that 86.15 percent (1474) of the main news of the total sample size have not credited any sources of information. It means only less than 14 percent of the total main news has been broadcast with the attribution to the sources. Out of the news credited to the sources, press releases/documents are the priority of radio newsrooms. It has 5.32 percent (91) airtime of the total headline news of radio bulletins. News credited to newsrooms' own reporters is the third priority with 4.85 percent (83). The other sources of news such as broadcast media/sites and news agencies are under two percent to get attributed by the radio stations. Broadcast media/sites have got credits with 1.64 percent (28) while news agencies have got credits in 1.17 percent (20) of the news broadcast by the total radio stations. Newspapers/sites and social media are the least priority of newsrooms to attribute with less than one percent. Newspapers have got attribution in headline news with 0.64 percent (11) while social media have got credit with only 0.23 percent (4). The data reflects that the radio stations make more news based on press releases, their own reporters,

broadcast media sites and news agencies. They are found not to have relied on social media and newspapers in the evening bulletins.

While dealing with station-wise data, in terms of the attribution to reporters, Radio Nepal is ahead with 10.79 percent (48) followed by Radio Lumbini with 6.65 percent (30). BFM is in the third position in giving attribution to reporters with 1.48 percent (5) while Radio Sagarmatha is found with no news attributed to its reporters.

While talking about the attribution to press releases/documents, Radio Lumbini is in the top position with 11.75 percent (53) followed by Radio Nepal with 4.49 percent (20). Being in the third position, Radio Sagarmatha has attributed press releases/document as news sources with 3.14 percent (15) followed by BFM with 0.89 percent (3), the least priority compared to other stations.

Radio Lumbini and Radio Nepal are found not attributing to news agencies as news sources whereas BFM is in the first rank with 2.66 percent (9) of its total news attributing to news agencies followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 2.31 percent (11) of its total headline news stories.

While dealing with the data from each station, BFM is found attributing broadcast media and their sites as news sources with 2.96 percent (10) of its total headline news. Being in the second position, Radio Nepal has attributed broadcast media with 2.02 percent (9) of headline news followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 1.89 percent (9) of its total headline news. Radio Lumbini has not attributed broadcast media as its news source.

In terms of attribution to newspapers and their websites, BFM is in the top rank with 2.07 percent (7) of headline news followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 0.63 percent (3) of headline news. Radio Lumbini has rarely attributed to newspapers and their sites with just 0.22 percent (1) of headline news whereas Radio Nepal is found not giving credit to newspapers in its bulletins as news sources.

New emerging social media is not the priority of radio stations for attribution as the news source. It has got less than one percent attribution by two radio stations while it is not mentioned by the other two radio stations. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have not attributed to social media in their bulletins whereas BFM has 0.89 percent (3) and Radio Lumbini has 0.22 percent (1) of the headline news giving attribution to social media.

While 86.15 percent of news has been broadcast without attribution to any source, Dahal criticises that it is quite evident that the news coverage by radio stations is not only biased but also counterproductive to the whole business of journalism. In his point of view, it is also apparent that the journalists are divided as per party lines and their content reflects a high level of political biases. Moreover, other biases related to the rich and powerful are also well reflected when radio stations give easy access to powerful persons rather than the voices of voiceless in the society (Personal communication, May 22, 2023).

Regarding the absence of attribution in news, Matts argues that anonymous sources are safer though less credible. He further proposes a condition of not giving credit to the sources when the sources can provide more information if their identity is not disclosed. However, he stands in giving credit to the sources because "crediting sources give listeners more confidence in the report since they can evaluate the sources' potential motives or biases on their own" (Personal communication, March 1, 2023).

Jha points out a bad trend of giving news without mentioning sources as there is no such wide discussion and debate about how radio news should be prepared and presented. In his opinion, in the absence of a wide discussion of the modality and procedure of news development and broadcasting, the tendency to give news without attributing to sources is increasing. He further discusses that the newly opened radio stations are imitating the practices of the old ones. They do not think that they are following the wrong way. Jha further argues "basically, the ideas of how you prepare the information, whom you take as a

source, how you package and present that information, and what its effect should be taken into consideration to maintain diversity and balance in sources. However, radio stations in Nepal don't have systematic plans to meet these aspects." (Personal communication, June 14, 2023).

Based on the findings, it is evident that a mere, 4.85 percent of news broadcasts by the sampled radio stations credit their reporters as sources. Mainali delves into the implications of this lack of attribution, highlighting that the absence of identifiable sources in news reporting has led to a loss of faith among the general audience. Consequently, the trust once bestowed upon Nepali journalism as a collective entity, and specifically radio stations, has been severely eroded. Mainali further reveals that audiences have labelled radio stations as exhibiting a biased or favouring stance, often accused of taking sides aligned with specific interest groups. This perception further deepens the scepticism and distrust prevalent among the general audience towards radio stations (Personal communication, March 6, 2023)

Sah examines the longstanding trend in journalism characterised using anonymous sources and the absence of proper credit given to news sources. He argues that this trend is rooted in the orientation of journalism in Nepal, which relies on pseudo-formulas like *Sulsule* and *Sutra*, following the lead of knowledgeable sources. This orientation has become a legacy issue in the field. Furthermore, Sah contends that the lack of quality in news and other content can be attributed to inadequate education, insufficient training, and limited resources. Journalists often lack the necessary skills, and institutions face resource constraints, which contribute to the problem. Sah predicts that this trend will persist for a few more years (Personal communication, June 13, 2023).

Regarding the missing attribution to sources in more than three of the fourth news items, Acharya debates that if radio stations use anonymous sources in major stories, it is

the cooked news rather than the happened one. In his argument, there is a very slim chance of using proper sources and avoiding anonymous sources (Personal communication, January 27, 2023).

Neupane concurs with the prevailing deficiencies in sourcing practices within radio news. She highlights the need for increased investment as the primary underlying cause for this issue. According to her analysis, the lack of adequate investment hampers the ability to retain the necessary workforce. Without a well-executed investment strategy, it becomes impossible to ensure both the quality and quantity of personnel required for effective news reporting. In essence, the absence of a sufficient and competent workforce is tantamount to an accident waiting to happen. " There is a potential for addressing the current situation if substantial investments are directed towards the relevant areas. However, the challenge lies in the inherent problem of securing adequate investment for radio stations" (Personal communication, March 5, 2023).

Pyakurel agrees that the one-sided or incomplete picture of any event might delude the audience and can have hazardous effects on them depending upon the context of the news. Eventually, it destroys the credibility of the media if the audience does not find a multiplicity of sources (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Adhikary offers a critical perspective on the current trend of news broadcasting by radio stations, highlighting that the present atmosphere is not conducive to maintaining objectivity. He argues that a significant majority of radio broadcasters have failed to meet the expected standards of objectivity. To address this issue, Adhikary proposes a solution for radio stations to maintain objectivity in their sourcing. According to Adhikary, radio stations should focus on establishing newsrooms equipped with a trained workforce and updated gadgets. This would enable them to take their journalistic responsibilities seriously. Additionally, radio stations should provide mentorship to their staff, emphasising the

expectations of the audience and the importance of maintaining credibility in the news reports being disseminated. By fostering a culture of professionalism and integrity, radio stations can work towards upholding objectivity in their sourcing practices. Adhikary concludes that healthy competition among radio networks is crucial as it provides news consumers with a range of choices. This competition can incentivise radio stations to strive for excellence in their reporting, thereby benefiting the audience and ensuring a more objective news landscape (Personal communication February 21, 2023).

In conclusion, the newsrooms of radio stations, acting as gatekeepers, demonstrate a glaring weakness in upholding objectivity. Their shortcomings extend beyond the realm of sourcing diversity and extend to the crucial task of news balancing. Extensive data analysis reveals a stark reality: most radio news headlines feature prominently powerful groups, communities, and individuals occupying influential positions. Unfortunately, marginalised groups such as women, Dalits, Adibasi Janajati, Madhesi, and minorities are systematically excluded as equal sources in the primary news coverage of radio stations. This imbalance perpetuates a hierarchical structure favouring the hill-origin Khas Arya communities.

Moreover, the data exposes a prevalent trend among radio stations of heavily relying on singular sources for news reporting. A staggering 86.15 percent of news broadcasts are based on information provided by anonymous sources, devoid of proper attribution. Moreover, radio stations exhibit a biased inclination towards prioritising sources from central or core locations, thereby disregarding voices from peripheral regions. Consequently, the sourcing practices employed by radio stations have failed to maintain the vital principles of diversity, objectivity, and credibility. Widespread concern among experts continues to mount, as the credibility of the news disseminated by sampled radio stations experiences a steady decline. The main news bulletins produced by these stations contribute significantly to this downward trajectory, further exacerbating the erosion of trust among their audience.

## 6.6 Process of Maintaining Diversity in News Sourcing

Diversity in news sourcing reflects the representation of the source persons as news sources from diverse sectors of society such as women, gender, caste, religion, and minority communities. The Hutchins Commission (1947) in the US conceptualized the principle of diversity in news content and source selection urging the press to project a "representative picture of constituent groups in society, avoiding stereotyping and explaining group values and goals as completely as possible" (Blanchard, 1977, p. 25).

Dominick (2005, p. 426) describes that the Associated Press Managing Editors (APME) Association in 1995 added the concept of diversity in news sources in its code revising the previous code of 1975 which had adopted responsibility, accuracy, integrity, and independence. Revised codes of 1995 of the APME have covered the issues of plagiarism with diversity."

The Journalist Code of Conduct issued by Press Council Nepal (2016) has not directly guided journalists and media houses to maintain diversity in their news items and news sources. However, what it has suggested treating content in a normative way that can maintain diversity in the sourcing process as well as support to uplift the various sectors of society such as "children, women, elderly citizens the incapacitated, the helpless, differently able persons, the excluded class, community, region, linguistic groups, the minority and the obsolescent community" (p. 4).

Being accurate in sourcing entails maintaining diversity in news items. According to McQuail and Deuze (2020, p. 576), accuracy is inherently linked to the diversity of opinion, along with other checklist criteria such as impartiality, actuality, social reality, and balance. The Hutchins Commission's recommendation emphasises that journalists should present a comprehensive picture of an event by accessing a diversity of sources, including various perspectives on the news story.

**Table 6.6***Process of Maintaining Diversity in News Sourcing*

Key checklist	Steps for maintaining diversity in the news sourcing process
Approach	Multiple sources
Treatment for fairness	Cross sources in controversial issues, impartiality
Access to	Powerless or marginal voices
Maintenance	A separate existence in a larger society
Coverage	Various social, economic and cultural realities of the societies in a more or less proportional way
Space to	All more or less equal chances of access to the voices of various social and cultural minorities in society
Access to	Women, minorities in gender and tribe in the news
Access to	Villages and remote areas in the news as sources
Chance to	Common people for sharing their information and issues
Access to	All the stakeholders/sources related to a controversial issue to avoid bias in news

*Source: Based on Hutchins Commission (1947); Dominick (2005); McQuail (2010)*

Table 6.6 which has been prepared based on the normative ideas of scholars such as Hutchins Commission (1947); Dominick (2005) and McQuail (2010) shows the checklist and process for a radio newsroom to maintain diversity in the news sourcing process. According to the checklist, a radio newsroom needs to follow multiple sources to maintain diversity. Likewise, a newsroom should be connected with cross sources if there is a controversial issue in the news. The media should provide space for powerless or marginalised individuals in news bulletins to uphold their presence within a larger society. Various social, economic, and cultural realities of societies should be covered proportionally, offering diverse perspectives and insights. Similarly, women and minority groups across genders and tribes should have access to news coverage as sources, ensuring diversity in the sourcing process. Rather than exclusively focusing on power

centres like urban areas, newsrooms should prioritise access to village and remote areas for news stories. This approach enables a more comprehensive representation of voices and experiences, bridging gaps between different communities and promoting inclusivity in media narratives.

The media should prioritise ordinary people giving them space to share their community's information and concerns alongside prominent figures and celebrities. All relevant stakeholders should be given the chance to voice their perspectives on controversial issues. This approach allows for a broader and more diverse range of voices and viewpoints, providing audiences with an opportunity to have broader and more diverse voices and perspectives on an issue.

To describe how sample radio newsrooms maintain diversity in the source selection process, a list of categories as a checklist has been followed through content analysis of news bulletins. These categories include the status of women's representation in headline news, gender representation in the radio newsroom, headline makers by social structure and hierarchy, headline makers by demographic distribution, hill-origin community as the headline maker of radio news, terai-origin community as the headline maker of radio news, headline makers by gender equality perspective, and headline makers by core to periphery perspective. A checklist of radio newsrooms from sample radio stations describes the process the newsrooms follow during the observation period.

### **6.7 Gender Representation as Sources of Headline News**

Diversity in source selection and verification means maintaining gender, cast, ethnicity, and inclusiveness in the sources of news. Women represent more than half of the total population of the country. According to the data of the National Census (2021), the presence of women is 51.04 percent compared to men with 48.96 percent in the population of the country. It shows the presence of women is more than men in the

country. However, the data of content analysis shows that it is not reflected in the sources of the main news of sample radio stations.

Table 6.7 describes the status of the representation of women in the headline news of the sample radio stations. The picture of women's representation as the main news source is as follows:

**Table 6.7**

*Gender Representation as Sources in the Headline News*

Radio stations	Women as source		Men as source		Both as source		Others		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
BFM	3	0.89	95	28.11	2	0.59	238	70.42	338	100.00
Radio Lumbini	18	3.99	212	47.01	17	3.77	204	45.23	451	100.00
Radio Nepal	10	2.25	184	41.35	1	0.22	250	56.18	445	100.00
Radio Sagarmatha	9	1.89	149	31.24	0	0.00	319	66.88	477	100.00
Total	40	2.34	640	37.41	20	1.17	1011	59.09	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 6.7 shows that the representation of women as the source of main news is only 2.34 percent (40) of the total sample headline news of all the sample radio stations. Whereas the men's representation as the main news source is 37.41 percent (640). Out of the total 338 news broadcast by BFM, only 3 (0.89%) news items mentioned female sources. It aired 28.11 percent (95) of its overall main news stories mentioning male sources. In this way, the ratio of male and female sources is very wide. When comparing male sources with female sources, the difference between them is 16 times. In other words, the presence of women as sources in the main news has decreased by 16 times compared to men.

Radio Sagarmatha appears to be the second lowest-ranking station in terms of making women a main news source, with only up to 1.89 percent (9) of all its main news sources being women. However, the data showed that 31.24 percent (149) of all its main news sources were men. If we compare the position of women and men in the main news of Radio Sagarmatha, the difference in the ratio is 16.55 times. It is seen that female sources got 16.55 times lower position compared to male sources.

Radio Nepal is found as the third station to broadcast less headline news with mention of women's sources. It is found that 2.25 percent (10) of all its sample headlines came from female sources. While comparing the position given to female sources by Radio Nepal, male sources have been given 41.35 percent (184) airtime of the overall main news. This figure is 18.4 times higher than positions obtained by female sources.

The data further mentions that among all four sample stations, Radio Lumbini provided more priority to female sources in its main news. It gave 3.99 percent (18) airtime to news from female sources. However, this number is also very low. Radio Lumbini has given 47.01 percent (212) airtime to the news received from male sources, which is 11.77 times more than the position received from female sources. Analysing the sources of the main news broadcast by all four radio stations, it has been found that the position of female sources is 16 times less than that of male sources.

The table shows that 1.17 percent (20) of the total headline news has been broadcast by all the sample radio stations mentioning both women and men as news sources. BFM has covered 2 (0.59%) headline news mentioning women as sources.

Whereas Radio Nepal has only 1 news (0.22%) with women and men sources. Radio Sagarmatha has not broadcast any main news with men and women sources. Radio Lumbini has broadcast the highest number, 17 items (3.77%) of its total headline stories with both men and women as news sources.

Scholars McQuail and Deuze (2020) advocate that women and minorities, Dalits, and people backwards in society should be given access to the newsroom and news content as sources to maintain diversity. For instance, they give an example of the absence of diversity in a newsroom from a gender perspective, "in this matter, attention has also been directed to 'the news', which was for long largely a male preserve and in its dominant forms and contents (politics, economics, sport) has been oriented more to male audiences" (p. 192). Meanwhile, Kharel suggests sufficient coverage of women's issues in radio news, making them headliners, he suggests radio journalists go to the core areas, women who spend most of their time outside the Kathmandu Valley in their own provinces (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

Acharya agrees with Kharel that the newsroom has a wrong practice of citing the elite class in the name of women and minorities. The newsroom has not been able to explore the original sources at the grassroots level from the very beginning and the wrong trend has been followed by the followers (Personal communication, January 27, 2023).

Raut argues that generally, some radio stations have been covering news from the perspective of inclusion. However, when comes to the point of the main news they have not maintained diversity in sources. In his point of view, the reason behind not including women in main news as sources is the inherent bias in the minds of newsroom leaders and senior journalists as a result of their upbringing, discriminatory traditions, some ill aspects of patriarchal societal norms and also complete ignorance towards the importance, urgency and necessity of being inclusive while being in the news business too (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). In sum, gatekeepers should be bias-free while selecting sources for the news to maintain diversity in the content of news.

Schulze, an international trainer at the International Institute of Journalism, Berlin (IIJB), has her observation on the absence of inclusiveness of the voices in the newsroom that it happens because of the misunderstanding of the role of journalism. In her opinion, mainstream journalism is overwhelming, but community radio should profile themselves to give the underprivileged a voice without prejudice (Personal communication, February 23, 2023). Impartiality is essential to maintain diversity through inclusiveness in sources. That is found lack of practice in the sample radio newsroom.

Poudyal, a female lecturer of journalism at Tribhuvan University, argues that the media especially the radio should be the voice of the voiceless but most of the time elite voices and even within that, males are used as news sources in the media. Behind this in her observation, the management of media is one of the reasons for the choices of sources and the reporter's comfort might be another cause (Personal communication, January 23, 2023). According to her, the weakness in source selection from both parts such as management and reporters has become the obstacle to being the voice of voiceless people.

Adhikari (Netra) accepts that his station could not maintain diversity by including women as sources in its main news because of a lack of enough human resources and the proper news policy to guide it. Furthermore, he says that they are giving space to women in the rare news, and the presence of women is not at a satisfactory level (Personal communication, March 12, 2023). Resources and the lack of willingness of management are the reasons behind this situation in the radio newsroom.

Metts argues that being more inclusive in the news takes much more work. In his opinion, only well-trained human resources in number with good pay in the newsrooms can maintain diversity and inclusiveness in the news. "If stations are understaffed and staff is underpaid or untrained, these diverse but common sources will continue to be

ignored" (Personal communication, March 1, 2023). His focus is on training to enhance the capacity of the gatekeepers in the newsroom for their ability to properly filter the sources.

Adhikary has different points of view regarding inclusiveness in the news. He argues that the issue of elite voices gaining easy access to radio newsrooms is debatable. While inclusive entry into the media (radio in this case) is a desirable situation, it would be unfair to expect that gender equality or equality based on different ethnic groups alone can enhance the credibility/ reliability of news services. He argues that "if considerations related to inclusiveness are to be given top order of priority, the quality of information used in news bulletins is bound to suffer" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023).

The experts have their vision, angle and thoughts regarding the gender balance and presence of women in the main news of the radio bulletins. However, they have one voice and feel that there is a lack of the presence of women in the main news. They advise radio stations to be sensitive to the underrepresentation of women and the imbalance of gender in the headline news.

#### ***a) Gender Representation in Radio Newsrooms***

The field study through the observation has found that there is no gender balance in the newsroom of radio stations. Except for Radio Sagarmatha, the representation of female journalists is low in comparison with male journalists. The status of the gender representation in the newsroom of the sample radio stations is as follows:

**Table 6.7a***Gender Representation in Radio Newsrooms*

Radio Stations	Total journalists	Male	Female	Others
BFM	4	3	1	0
Radio Lumbini	6	4	2	0
Radio Nepal	38	21	17	0
Radio Sagarmatha	8	4	4	0

*Source: Field study, 2022*

As Table 6.7a demonstrates, except for BFM, the newsrooms of the rest of the sample radio stations seem inclusive regarding the presence of journalist women. The most inclusive newsroom is at Radio Sagarmatha which has an equal number of male and female journalists by 4/4. Radio Nepal has 17 female journalists in the newsroom out of 38 in total. While Radio Lumbini has two female journalists in the newsroom out of six in total number. Out of four, only one female journalist works at the newsroom of BFM which is only 25 percent of the total number of its journalists. The identity of other gender minorities has not been identified. The presence of women is not in an equal proportion in radio newsrooms. Out of the radio stations, BFM has only one female journalist out of four journalists. Similarly, Radio Lumbini also has only two journalist women out of six journalists in the newsroom. Of 38, Radio Nepal has 17 women journalists in the newsroom.

Khanal has observed that there are haphazard and poor practices in Nepali radio institutions, however, some of the radio stations pay attention to making newsrooms and news sources inclusive. Most radio stations have been facing the problem of good resources and there is a lack of proper division of work; where gatekeepers have no sufficient attention, and they should work what the boss says (Personal communication,

January 28, 2023). As lack of the proper presence of women also is a reason for the lack of inclusiveness of women in the headline.

In Nepal, only 6 percent of women are editors and only 25 percent of working journalists are women (Women Journalist-friendly..., 2022, para. 13). According to the Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), out of its 13,077 members, 10,669 are male journalists and only 2,408 (18.41 percent) are female journalists (FNJ, 2023). Analysing the data, the reflection of the presence of women journalists in holistic has been reflected in the radio newsrooms too. While the presence of females is lower than males in the newsroom, it is reflected in the presence of sources. In this regard, Pyakurel accepts that women and minorities haven't been able to get prominent positions in most fields and get mentioned as sources (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). The result of qualitative content analysis and discussion of the experts and radio managers/news chiefs shows that the inclusiveness of women and minorities is in least priority of sample radio stations. The stations seemed weak to maintain diversity in the selection of sources which has affected the presence of the issues and events related to women and minorities in main news bulletins.

### **6.8 Headline Makers by Social Structure and Hierarchy**

The classes and power groups make the headlines for radio bulletins due to their power gravity, social structure, and hierarchy in the local, national and international society. Maintaining diversity in the source selection and verification process ensures the representation of the common people, marginalised and minorities in the news as sources. Table 6.8 represents the headline makers of the news bulletins of selected radio stations by social structure and hierarchy. The details of the sources who have made headlines in the radio news on the sample radio stations are as follows:

**Table 6.8***Headline Makers by Social Structure and Hierarchy*

Headline makers	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	News items	Percent	News items	Percent	News items	Percent	News items	Percent	News items	Percent
Government	80	23.67	153	33.92	162	36.4	220	46.12	615	35.94
Party/ politician	71	21.01	106	23.5	134	30.11	54	11.32	365	21.33
International	70	20.71	18	3.99	87	19.55	107	22.43	282	16.48
Professional/ expert	9	2.66	38	8.43	4	0.9	5	1.05	56	3.27
News agency/ media	22	6.51	2	0.44	9	2.02	18	3.77	51	2.98
Common people	5	1.48	18	3.99	1	0.22	6	1.26	30	1.75
Business sector	2	0.59	19	4.21	1	0.22	1	0.21	23	1.34
NGOs/ INGOs	0	0	3	0.67	0	0	11	2.31	14	0.82
Religious leader	0	0	1	0.22	0	0	0	0	1	0.06
Unidentified	79	23.37	93	20.62	47	10.56	55	11.53	274	16.01
Total	338	100	451	100	445	100	477	100	1711	100

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 6.8 shows, that the government, government agencies and government officials are the top headline makers of the main news broadcast by all four sample radio stations. Of the overall 1711 news, 35.94 percent (615) have government sources as the headline makers. In order to make it easy for analysis, all three levels of government officials, government agencies, the council of ministers, and the parliament have been placed under government sources. The second biggest headline makers after the government sources are political parties and party leaders. They account for 21.33 percent (365) of the total headline news. International politics, leaders, activities, and events ranked third among the headline makers. They occupy 16.48 percent (282) of the overall headline news of all four radio stations. Professionals and experts are positioned

fourth in terms of making news headlines. They occupy 3.27 percent (56) of the overall headline news. However, compared to the previous three headline makers, their number is very low. News agencies and media are in fifth place in terms of making radio news headlines. They occupy 2.98 percent (51) of the overall headline news. The general people are also among those making slightly fewer headlines. They have become the headline makers of the news only when there is an accident, when they are connected to a serious crime or when they have become a source of human interest-related news. The public accounted for 1.75 percent (30) of the overall headline news. Traders and corporate sectors seem to make 1.34 percent (23) of the news headlines. This sector also falls into the category of rarely making headlines. Similarly, NGOs/INGOs made 0.82 percent (14) of the headlines. The influence of the religious sector is less in Nepali radio news compared to other sectors. During the content analysis, it seems that this sector has occupied only 0.06 percent (1) of the overall headline news. Headline news without any category or group occupied 16.1 percent (274) of airspace. Under this classification, that news suggests that no person or group or special category were revealed as a headliner.

Among these radio stations, BFM has allocated the least, 23.67 percent (80) of its news bulletins to the government, government agencies or officials as headliners, while Radio Lumbini has provided 33.92 percent (153) airtime, Radio Nepal has provided 36.40 percent (162) airtime and Radio Sagarmatha has provided the most 46.12 percent (220) of time slots to the government and government agencies or officials as headliners. In this sense, when comparing the radio stations, BFM is the one that gives the lowest position to the government, government agencies or officials as the headliner, while Radio Sagarmatha is the one that gives the highest position.

After the government and related agencies, the radio stations have prioritised political parties and political leaders as sources while making headlines in the news.

Compared to the four sample radio stations, Radio Nepal has been observed as the first station where political parties and their leaders make the most headline news. It has given 30.11 percent (134) of its overall headline news to political parties and their leaders. Radio Lumbini has been observed as the second station to include political parties and their leaders in its headlines. It has given political parties and leaders 23.50 percent (106) of all its headlines. It is found that BFM has also given a large space 21.01 percent (71) of its news bulletins to political parties as headliners, but this is less than that of Radio Nepal and Radio Lumbini. It placed 71 political parties and leaders out of its total of 338 headline news items. Compared to the three radio stations, Radio Sagarmatha has the lowest, 11.32 percent (54) of news headlines made by political parties and leaders.

International leaders, events, and activities, which have become the third headliner among all radio stations, have the lowest position on Radio Lumbini, 3.99 percent (18), while the highest position on Radio Sagarmatha is 22.43 percent (107). This sector got 19.55 percent (87) of headlines on Radio Nepal and 20.71 percent (70) of headline news on BFM.

Compared to all four radio stations, Radio Lumbini is the radio that has given the most space to professional and expert sectors as news headliners. It placed 8.43 percent (38) of all its headline news in the bulletin. The professional and expert sector as a headliner has the lowest position in Radio Nepal, 0.9 percent (5) while Radio Sagarmatha comes in the second position in terms of providing less airtime to this sector, with only 1.05 percent (5) position in the main news. BFM has given 2.66 percent (9) of its overall headline news to the Professional and Expert sector as headliners.

The presence of news agencies and the media sector as headline makers in radio news is very low. Compared to all four radio stations, Radio Lumbini has provided this

sector only 0.44 percent (2) of airtime as a headline maker. This sector has been provided with the highest airtime by BFM at 6.51 percent (22), while Radio Nepal has given 2.02 percent (9) of airtime and Radio Sagarmatha has provided 3.77 percent (18) of air space in the headlines.

Radio stations have occasionally provided space to common people in their main news, i.e., 1.75% of the total headlines. However, the presence of the common people as headline makers is very low in number. Out of the four sample radio stations, Radio Lumbini is in the first position providing the most, 3.99 percent (18), airtime to common people as the headliners. Remaining in the second position, BFM has provided 1.48 percent (5) of its total headline news to common people as headline makers. Radio Nepal has given the least 0.22 percent (1) position to common people as a headline maker, while Radio Sagarmatha, being in the second last position, has provided only 1.26 percent (6) airtime of its main news to the common people as a headline maker.

Business and the corporate sector are not influential in radio news as headline makers. It has been ranked in a low position after common people. This sector only has a 1.34 percent share in the total headline news of all four radio stations. Radio Lumbini has become the first among other stations to provide more airtime, 4.21 percent (19), to the business and corporate sectors as headline makers. Radio Sagarmatha has given only 0.21 percent (1) airtime for its headline news to corporate and business sectors as the headliners. Being in the second position, Radio Nepal also has given the least airtime, 0.22 percent (1) of its total headline news as the headliner. BFM has provided 0.59 percent (2) airtime to the corporate and business sectors in its news as the headliners.

The data from content analysis shows that the NGOs and INGOs also do not have an influential position towards the headline news on radio stations. They have only a 0.82 percent share in the main news as the headline makers of the sample radio stations.

BFM and Radio Nepal have no space in their main news as the headline makers for NGOs and INGOs. Radio Lumbini has only 0.67 percent (3) airtime for NGOs and INGOs as the headline makers. Only Radio Sagarmatha being a radio station run by an NGO has provided more space, 2.31 percent (11), than other stations for NGOs and INGOs as the headline makers.

Religious leaders have almost no say in the main news of the sample radio stations. It has a very nominal share, 0.06 percent (1) of total headline news stories as the headline makers. Only Radio Lumbini has provided 0.22 percent (1) airtime of its total main news for the religious leaders and religious sector. The rest of the stations, BFM, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha, have not provided their airtime for this sector as the headline maker.

All sample radio stations have provided 16.01 percent of the total headline news to unidentified sources as headline makers. The rate of this type of headline maker is higher in BFM than in other stations. It has 23.37 percent (79) space for the unidentified headline makers whereas, being in the second position, Radio Lumbini has provided 20.62 percent (93) of its total main news for the unidentified sources. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have 10.56 percent (47) and 11.53 percent (55) of their total main news respectively for the unidentified headline makers. Unidentified headline makers are in question in terms of objectivity in the selection process of the sources in the news.

Giri accepts that radio stations are influenced by politics, consequently, they give priority to the government and politics in the news bulletins. "We are still not able to establish the belief that other social issues are important besides political events. Due to the lack of it, the statements of political leaders or government officials get priority in the news" (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). He argues that community radio stations do have not available skilled and trained human resources. In the absence of

skilled human resources, proper gatekeeping is not maintained to make diversity in sources is not possible.

Mainali argues that the first aspect behind this is the psychology of journalists. In his opinion, they have kept the mindset that writing about the people does not make them a journalist. He argues that another important aspect is that the meaning of Nepali media is political. "Journalists have the illusion that if the power centre believes them, they can also build some social status. Considering the situation, journalists have also taken advantage of this relationship" (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

Kharel observes that this is an easier way to collect information with low investment in the newsroom. This is not a very reliable method of collecting information. They are just spoon-fed, the newsroom relies especially on political parties, government officials and other similar official sources, and the general public reaction is to rely on them less. In his opinion, the government says this, the political party says this and then the result is one-sided information. There is no verification, no cross-verification. That's why they are less newsworthy. He further argues that only giving credit to the government and political sector is a one-sided flow of information. That's why now and then it is essential again. It might seem contradictory, but it is essential. He has a suggestion for radio newsrooms to maintain diversity, objectivity, and credibility in the news sourcing process, "you should not depend only on official sources. You must do your best to get alternative sources to contradict the information provided officially endorse it or re-confirm it. But this doesn't happen" (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

Acharya argues that preparing such news by quoting the government, or its officials and politicians is found very easily with less effort. Its reason is "a lack of commitment to doing differently from the competitors and the lapses in in-depth stories

because of human as well as financial resources" (Personal communication, January 27, 2023). Local radio stations had enough room to cover the local issues instead of providing a large space to the government and political sources.

Metts assesses the lead role of politics over the social, cultural, and economic aspects in Nepal. He argues that in Nepali discourse, politics is assumed as king of all aspects of the nation. He observes that people talk about politics all the time, even though there may be more important social, cultural, and economic issues. "If politicians aren't talking about an issue, it's practically invisible (Personal communication, March 1, 2023). He argues that it is easy to attract listeners to a radio station by talking about what politicians are talking about rather than what ordinary people are talking about.

Neupane accepts, saying that this practice is all over the country. However, her radio station is "trying to cover the diversity within the local subject, social mental health and economic, minority religious community, in our priority, though it's not enough" (M. Neupane, personal communication, February 12, 2023).

She has experienced that the content of the news is more political and related to the government issues, accordingly, it is natural that the source is also more connected with this (Personal communication, February 12, 2023). As a community radio, it has the responsibility to give air space to the general people instead of the priority of political news.

Pyakurel accepts that a large portion of news content broadcast through his radio station is news that comes from the government and political sectors. In his experience, "politics gets a high priority since it is a subject that has an impact on the largest number of audience and also it is the subject of most common interest" (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). He describes that the news from other sectors such as finance, sports, culture, agriculture, literature, arts, and reports on social issues have their own

places in the news bulletin. The result of the content analysis is confronted with his statement, as the table shows that 36.40 percent of the total headline news broadcasts from government sources on Radio Nepal whereas, 30.11 percent of the total headline news has been broadcast connecting the political sources. The total percent of both government and political sources reaches 66.51. It represents more than two-thirds of the headline news getting information from political and government sources.

Whereas Bista analyses that the easy way has worked more than the professionalism of journalism. "Since politics dominates every region of the country, maybe even the newsrooms at the radio stations have not been untouched by it" (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). According to him, political instability is higher, political issues are always prioritised, democracy and other political change movements are going on, and the media is more involved in Nepal.

Likewise, Khanal has observed that government officials and politicians get more space in the news bulletin because of their crucial role. "Audiences have more interest in political events and issues in developing countries as they occupy space due to important concerns. Negative news and political rumour get the matter of radio stations where development issues are neglected" (Personal communication, January 28, 2023). He argues that political gossip is being sold in the name of human interest or the interest of the audience.

Regmee criticises that it is a way of pleasing the government and politicians or political parties because they are in power and can at times help the radio or the broadcasters. From a value journalism perspective, the practice is wrong as it spreads obedient journalistic trends. He argues that due to the excessive importance given to politics and government in the main news, various radio stations are mostly known for their affiliation with some financing government wing or politician or political parties as

the mouthpiece of one government institution, or NGO or a politician or a political party. He observes that "divorcing from such a trend appears difficult for radio runners – owners, producers and reporters – because they are not financially independent. (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). He argues that the financial dependence, as is known to all mainstream broadcasters, does not allow the radio to challenge those in power.

Considering all of these, theoretically, the newsrooms have set the agenda in placing and presenting the events and issues in the main news of their bulletins. They picked up the political and governmental sources in top positions repeatedly through the gatekeeping process. The headline news is a placing and priming of the newsroom as the piece of news in the top and attractive position of the bulletins. The findings show that the newsrooms of the sample radio stations place political and government sources as top priorities compared to other sectors in news bulletins through the gatekeeping and agenda-setting process. It has curtailed the chances of the general people in different social segments to reach to radio newsroom.

### **6.9 Headline Makers by Demographic Distribution**

The sample radio stations have broadcast news citing different sources from various sectors as the headliners. There are different sources of news as persons and non-persons or institutions. In the following table only the persons as headline makers are being presented and analysed. According to the National Census Office (2021, pp. 52–56), there are 140 tribes and castes in Nepal. It is not possible to show and describe all tribes and castes as the headliners in the main news. To catch a broad picture, the tribes and castes have been categorised into four major types for the content analysis including the hill-origin community, the Terai-origin community, and the mixed community. Radio stations need to cover more sectors demographically to maintain diversity in news

sourcing. The others category represents the news based on non-personal/institutional sources, anonymous sources, and news without mentioning sources. Table 6.9 describes the demographic distribution of diversity of news sources in the form of headline-makers as follows:

**Table 6.9**

*Headline Makers of News by Hill vs. Terai-origin and Dalit Community*

Headline makers	B FM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
	Hill-origin community	108	31.95	225	49.89	189	42.47	169	35.43	691
Tarai-origin community	3	0.89	30	6.65	13	2.92	7	1.47	53	3.10
Mixed	3	0.89	6	1.33	6	1.35	2	0.42	17	0.99
Dalits	0	0.00	1	0.22	2	0.45	1	0.21	4	0.23
Others	224	66.27	189	41.91	235	52.81	298	62.47	946	55.29
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As Table 6.9 projects, to analyse the diversity of sources the variables have been prepared broadly in five categories: Hill-origin community, Terai-origin community, Dalits, Mixed and other sectors. From the point of view of the diversity in news sources from the demographic point of view, it has been observed when analysing the content analysis that the hill-origin community category makes the most headlines in much news. The hill-origin community occupies 40.39 percent (691) of the total space as the main news source. Comparatively, the Terai-origin community has taken only 3.10 percent (53). It has been found that both hill-origin and Terai-origin communities occupy 0.99 percent (17) of airtime as mixed headline makers. It seems that both made headlines in

the news of the political leaders of the hill and Terai-origin communities speaking on the same stage. It has been found that the so-called untouchable Dalit community within both the hill and Terai-origin communities is very few, who got only 0.23 percent (4) of the place as a source of the main news. The international community, institutions/offices, and anonymous sources, which have also made headlines, have been grouped into the 'others category'. The *others category* occupies 55.29 percent (946 places) of airtime. Thus, when analysing the diversity of sources in the news, it seems that the presence of the Dalits within the Terai-origin community or the Hill-origin community as headline makers is very low i.e., 0.23 percent. The Hill-origin and Terai-origin communities are separately described in Table 6.10 and Table 6.11.

Compared to the other three radio stations, Radio Lumbini has given more airtime (6.65 percent) of its total headline news to the Terai-origin community. However, being situated in Terai, BFM has been found to give only 0.89 percent airtime to the Terai-origin community as the headliner. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have given 2.92 percent and 1.47 percent of their airtime to the Terai-origin community in the headline news respectively.

Dalits have very little (0.23%) representation in headline news as sources on the sample radio stations. Out of the four stations, BFM has no representation of Dalits as the headliners in the main news. Radio Lumbini has 0.22 percent, Radio Sagarmatha has 0.21 percent and Radio Nepal has 0.45 percent representation of Dalits as headliners in their main news. In principle, community radio is a medium to cover the voices of poor, marginalised and minorities being a voice of voiceless people. However, in practice, community radio also has the same position as the government and commercial radio in the coverage of minorities and Dalit issues in the main news. According to the social responsibility theory, the gatekeepers should be socially responsible while doing

gatekeeping in the newsroom. The theory makes them aware of maintaining diversity in source selection. The data shows a bias of newsrooms towards particular communities such as Dalits and minorities.

The hill-origin community has domination of representation in radio news of all stations as the headliners. Compared to all sample radio stations, half of the total news (49.89%) has been prepared on Radio Lumbini from the Hill-origin sources as the headliners. Compared to other stations, BFM has less representation (31.95%) of this community as the headliner. Being in the second position, Radio Nepal has 42.47 percent of the headliners from the Hill-origin community. While Radio Sagarmatha seems in the third position to give more space (35.43%) to this community in the main news as headliners.

The number of representations of mixed communities as headliners is very low (0.99%) on all radio stations. Radio Sagarmatha has the lowest number (0.42%) of headliners from mixed communities compared to other stations. BFM is in the second-last position (0.89%) having headline news from the mixed communities. Radio Nepal and Radio Lumbini are in the same position having 1.35 percent and 1.33 percent respectively.

Out of the sample radio stations, BFM has a big amount (66.27%) of the other categories of headline makers. In this category, international sources, institutions/organisations, and unidentified sources are merged. Radio Sagarmatha follows BFM with 62.47 percent of headline makers as the other category. This category has scored in the third position (52.81%) in Radio Nepal and 41.91 percent in Radio Lumbini being in the last position.

The data projects that the radio stations have geographical biases in their main news. They have given more space to the hill-origin community (40.39 percent) than the

Tarai-origin community (3.10 percent). Not only that, but they also seem to be biased towards the Dalit communities whether they fall into the hill-origin or Tarai-origin communities. Only 0.23 percent of the total sample headline news has been allocated to the Dalit communities. It shows space-biased and so-called classed-biased communication.

Mainali argues that prejudice has become an integral part of editorial policy in Nepali journalism. In his observation, the establishment of media houses is not run according to the norms of journalism but has started to be established to fulfil certain interests and most of the media belong to this category. He has a strong belief that "in the case of radio, about 80 percent of the radio stations operating in Nepal today are either established for certain self-interests or they depend on the financial resources of the traditional power centres for their operation" (Personal communication, March 6, 2023). The ownership pattern of radio stations also has become a cause of a bias in news source selection.

Kharel accepts the situation of biases in the headlines of the radio bulletins towards certain communities and groups that become true again. He discusses that when radio stations don't tap, when journalists don't approach diverse information sources, "as far as professional standards are concerned, it seems to be biased because they contact only limited sources, and they don't diversify their sources, which is another way of creating a bias" (Personal communication, January 30, 2023). It is a picture of a narrow area of sources cited in the news.

Acharya criticises the motivation and intention of the establishment of radio stations in Nepal. In his opinion, the stations themselves are established by biased investors. He blames the radio stations for an alignment with political parties and particular communities as follows:

If there are four radio stations in a community, there is no doubt that one radio station belongs to the UML, another to the Nepali Congress, the third to the CPN Maoist and the last one to Madhesh-based groups or parties if in Terai or to a discontented group with other parties in hill areas, and in this situation, how could you expect unbiased content from those stations? (Personal communication, January 27, 2023).

The experts have agreed with the findings that the radio stations are biased toward specific places, and communities, and they favour the specific class and geographical origin communities. The radio managers and news chief have their positions in this regard. Pyakurel claims that his station is not biased towards any particular community by class and geographical origin. However, he sets his position by explaining that the headlines are based on the interest of the audience and the impact of the news. In his opinion, it is not possible to get a place in news bulletin headlines for a news story of communities without power and position in Radio Nepal, a government-owned station (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). It is clear that without power, the news of the general community cannot become the headline of the bulletin, such news is unlikely to even get a regular place in the bulletin in Radio Nepal.

However, Yogi differs from Pyakurel's analysis claiming that the news items coverage by radio stations are biased towards privileged communities or groups. In his experience, marginalised communities, women, and Dalits don't get equal treatment in the news (Personal communication, February 21, 2022). Providing airspace to only the powerful people socially and politically has deprived minorities of access to the newsrooms as sources.

Dahal assesses that it is because of the division of journalists with political party lines. In his logic, "political biases are also high and other biases related to the rich and

powerful are well reflected when radio stations give easy access to the powerful persons compared to the voiceless in society" (Personal communication, May 22, 2023). The data and the experts' views show that power elites have an influence on the newsroom under the political agenda setting during the gatekeeping process.

Adhikari (Netra) accepts that his station has some lack towards the communities. In his experience, the main reason for this is not being able to reach the village and toll in field reporting. Due to the lack of human resources in everything, it was not possible to do as desired (Personal communication, March 12, 2023). However, BFM is in the Tarai-based city, Biratnagar, the reality is that the headlines of Tarai-origin communities are only 0.89 percent compared to the hill-origin community with 31.95 percent of its total sample headline news. It does not a representation of Dalit communities as the news headliners in the sample bulletins.

Neupane accepts that the reason behind particular communities especially the Tarai-origin and Dalit are unable to get more space in headlines may be due to the belief that power attracts the attention of many. Another reason she has expressed is that because of the lack of human resources, the newsroom makes the news received from the surroundings and other communities rather than the Tarai-origin and Dalits take place by approaching through press releases and phone conversations (Personal communication, February 12, 2023). Her radio station, Radio Lumbini also is in Tarai-based radio station. It has given the Tarai-origin communities its airtime in the news headlines with only 6.65 percent compared to hill-origin communities with 49.89 percent as the headliners. Dalit communities have got only 0.22 percent of airtime of the headline news.

Basnyat's radio station, Radio Sagarmatha is based in the capital city, the Kathmandu Valley. She argues that the headlines are made to match the interests of the local radio listeners. So, some particular communities by geographical and class might

not have a chance to get a place in the headline news (Personal communication, February 13, 2023). Her radio station has provided only 1.47 percent space to Tarai-origin communities as the headliners of the total sample main news compared to the hill-origin communities with 35.43 percent. It has just provided 0.21 percent of total main news to the Dalits community as the headliners.

Khanal sums the discussion up with his argument that most radio stations are covering biased news. He further claims that most of the radio stations are operated by politicians, businesspersons, and interest groups. In his opinion, there is no independent investment in radio stations either commercial or community, it is not expected to cover all communities as headliners in the news (Personal communication, January 28, 2023). The newsrooms of the sample radio stations seem to lack in incorporating diverse voices carefully as sources in their main news bulletins.

In sum, the radio stations seem weak in the inclusion of the Tarai-origin and Dalit communities to provide enough airtime in the main news as the headlines. It is because of the mindset of agenda setting with the traditional news values that decides the importance of the news. According to traditional news values, the prominent personalities and power elites are the appropriate persons and communities who make headlines in the news bulletins and news media. The news gatekeepers have not been able to come out of the periphery of the traditional news values in agenda setting. They have forgotten the normative values of a newsroom such as the social responsibility of a radio newsroom as the gatekeeper. As the evidence of the statement is the data of content analysis and the arguments of the experts are matched. Not only that, the gatekeepers also have accepted that there is a lack of inclusion of Dalits and minorities in their gatekeeping process.

#### **6.10 Hill-origin Community as the Radio News Headline Makers**

The hill-origin community has been divided into three main categories to analyse the proportion of headline makers. The main categories are Khas Arya, Adibasi Janajati and Dalits. Khas Arya indicates Hill-origin Brahman, Hill-origin Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi/Dashnami. According to the Indigenous Nationalities Commission (2019), there are 59 tribes and castes under the Adibasi Janajati (Indigenous people) in Nepal.

Out of them, Newar, Tamang, Kumal, Sunuwar, Majhi, Danuwar, Thami/Thangmi, Darai, Bhote, Baramu/Bramhu, Pahari, Kusunda, Raji, Raute, Chepang/Praja, Hayu, Magar, Chyantal, Rai, Sherpa, Bhujel/Gharti, Yakha, Thakali, Limbu, Lepcha, Bhote, Byansi, Jirel, Hyalmo, Walung, Gurung and Dura are Hill/Mountain Janajati (Bennett et al. 2008, p. 3). All these ethnic groups/castes have been composed in one broad category as Adibasi Janajati to make it easier to analyse the data.

The National Statistics Office, Nepal (2023) has published the report of the National Population and Housing Census 2021 classifying 145 castes and ethnic groups in its report. National Dalit Commission (2017) has categorised Dalits into seven classes: Gandarva (Gaine), Pariyar (Damai, Darji, Suchikar, Nagarchi, Dholi, Hoodke), Badi, Viswakarma (Kami, Lohar, Sunar, Wod, Chunara, Parki, Tamata), Mijar (Sarki, Charmakar, Bhool), Pode (Deula, Pujari Jalari) and Chyame (Kuchikar, Chyamkhal) into the Hill origin Dalits. These all castes of Dalits are broadly categorised in the table Dalits.

The representative picture of the Hill-origin community as headline makers of the radio news is as follows:

**Table 6.10**

*Hill-origin Community as the Radio News Headline Makers*

BFM	Radio Lumbini	Radio Nepal	Radio Sagarmatha	Total
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Headline makers	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Khas Arya	91	13.11	185	26.66	158	22.76	126	18.16	560	80.69
Adibasi/Janajati	17	2.45	40	5.76	31	4.47	43	6.2	131	18.88
Dalits	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.29	1	0.14	3	0.43
Total	108	15.56	225	32.42	191	27.52	170	24.50	694	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 6.10, out of the total number of sample headline news (1711), 694 news items have been broadcast mentioning Hill-origin communities as sources. Out of 694 main news items, 80.69 percent (560) news items have been broadcast citing Khas Arya as the headline source. Only 18.88 percent (131) of news has been found quoting Adibasi Janajati as the headline maker source. The representation of Dalits is the lowest, only 0.43 percent of headline news. Only 3 persons have been found being quoted from the Dalits in the headline news of the total sample size.

While going into the radio one by one, BFM and Radio Lumbini are found not quoting hill-origin Dalits as the headliners in their main news, whereas Radio Nepal has broadcast 2 news items making Dalits the headliners in its bulletin. Radio Sagarmatha has broadcast one headline news quoting Dalit as the headliner.

Radio Sagarmatha has broadcast a higher number of news mentioning Adibasi/Janajati from the cluster of the Hill-origin community with 6.2 percent (43 news items). Out of its 225-headline news cited Hill-origin community, Radio Lumbini has given 5.76 percent air space (40 items) to Adibasi/Janajati as the headliners. While Radio Nepal remained in the third position providing 4.4 percent (31 news) from the Hill-origin cluster to Adibasi/Janajati as the news headliners. Remaining in the last position, BFM

has broadcast only 2.45 percent (17 news items) from its Hill-origin community cluster in this category.

Regarding the representation of the Dalit community as the headline makers in the Hill-origin community cluster, the number is very least, 0.43 percent in total. Radio Nepal has broadcast 0.29 percent (2 news items) followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 0.14 percent (1 news item) mentioning Dalits as the headline makers in the hill-origin community cluster. Radio Lumbini and BFM have given no airspace for the representation of the Dalits in this category.

The Dalit communities are in a marginalised position in hill-origin communities as the headliners in radio news bulletins. The findings picture the reflection of the composition pattern of the social power structure and hierarchy in radio news sourcing. The people in top power positions such as political leaders, government officials, and sectoral leaders have a better possibility to be the headline makers rather than the common people.

The majority (80.69%) of those types of headline makers are from the Khas Arya communities. They are power elites who can reach the newsroom even among the Khas Arya communities too. The rest of the Khas Arya is as common as the Dalits and Adibasi Janajati who do not have any public information and views/reactions from the point of view of the newsrooms.

Regmee discusses that the commoners have nothing to offer, the marginalised cannot raise their voices, the backwards cannot speak out, and the deprived do not have any tools to point out their presence in society (Personal communication, February 20, 2023). He suggests that radio stations should have been the voice of the poor and the voiceless and presence-less, which has not been practised in the so-called mainstream media including radio broadcasting.

Poudyal argues that media should be the voice of the voiceless but most of the time elite voices are used as news sources in the media. In her analysis, the management of the media may be a reason for the choice, audience demand may be another one and the reporter's comfort may be another cause (Personal communication, January 28, 2023). Her statement emphasises that there is not only one factor in society that affects the sourcing in the newsroom. Media policy, tradition, social structure, the habit of the taste of news developed by the media in the listeners and creativity and activeness of reporters affect the sourcing in the headline of a radio bulletin.

Panthi agrees with Poudyal arguing that as society is, so is media, the biggest thing is that unless there is a change in thinking and mentality, nothing can change, it is necessary to bring about a change in the mentality of the individual (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). Her suggestion to the gatekeepers is to change the set mentalities of bias in the newsroom while selecting and verifying sources and maintaining diversity.

In summary, the news gatekeepers of radio newsrooms have not prioritised common people as the headliners. Rather, the ongoing news sourcing practices as the established tradition of the newsroom has been observed is only the selection of the power elites as the headliners.

### **6.11 Terai-origin Community as the Radio News Headline Makers**

For the content analysis, the Terai-origin community has been divided into four main categories: Brahman/Chhetri, Madhesi others, Adibasi/Janajati, Muslim and Dalits. The Madhesi Commission (2022) has published a long list of classifications of Terai-origin communities into 150 categories. Out of them, according to Bennett et al. 2008, p. 3) the Brahman, Nurang, Rajput and Kayastha are included in the Terai-origin Braman/Chhetri category. Likewise, Tharu, Jhangad, Dhanuk, Rajbanshi, Gangai,

Santhal/Satar, Dhimal, Tajpuriya, Meche, Koche, Kisan, Munda, Kusbadiya/Patharkata and unidentified Adibasi/Janajati fall in the Terai-origin Adibasi/Janajati category.

The National Statistic Office, Nepal (2023) has categorised Kewat, Mallah, Lohar, Nuniya, Kahar, Lodha, Rajbhar, Bing, Mali Kamar, Dhuniya, Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Sonar, Baniya, Kalwar, Thakur/Hazam, Kanu, Sudhi, Kumhar, Haluwai, Badhai, Barai, Bhediyar/Gaderi as Terai/Madhesi Others in its report of the national census. In this study, two categories such as Bramhan/Chhetri and Terai/Madhesi Others have been merged as the Bramhan/Chhetri and Other categories to analyse the data. All the Muslim communities across the country are represented by the Muslim category. Likewise, in this study, the Terai-origin Dalits include Chamar/Harijan, MuSahr, Dushad/Paswan, Tatma, Khatwe, Dhobi, Baantar, Chidimar, Dom, and Halkhor. The representation of the Terai-origin community as the headline makers of radio news is presented in Table 6.11 as follows:

**Table 6.11**

*Terai-origin Community as the Radio News Headline Makers*

Headline makers	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bramhan/ Chhetri/ Tarai Madhesi Others	2	3.77	20	37.74	9	16.98	5	9.43	36	67.92
Adibasi/ Janajati	1	1.89	6	11.32	2	3.77	1	1.89	10	18.87
Muslim	0	0.0	3	5.66	2	3.77	1	1.89	6	11.32
Dalits	0	0.0	1	1.89	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.89
Total	3	5.66	30	56.61	13	24.52	7	13.21	53	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 6.11, only 53 (3.10 percent) news items have been broadcast out of a total of 1711 sample sizes citing the Terai-origin community as the headline makers. Out of the total number (53 items of news) in the cluster of Terai-origin

community as headline makers, Brahmin/Chhetri/Terai Madhesi Others have been cited in 67.92 percent of the news (36 news items). It shows the same trends as the Hill-origin community to give more airtime in headline news by the Brahmin/Chhetri community as news sources. Only 1.89 percent (1) of news items have been broadcast citing the Terai-origin Dalit as the headliner. The Muslim community has got 11.32 percent (6 news items) of the total sample size in this cluster as the news headliners. The Terai-origin Adibasi/Janajati communities are the headliners of 18.87 percent (10) of the total main news under this cluster. Comparatively, the *Terai-origin Brahman/Chhetri/Madhesi Others* have more representation than the previous ones in the main news, with 67.92 percent (36) of the total sample size under the Terai-origin community cluster as the headline makers. The data projects that the marginalised communities and groups do not have access to the newsroom to share their social events, ideas, issues, achievements, and problems as news sources.

While going through the data of all sample radio stations, the content analysis found that only one radio station, Radio Lumbini, has given airtime for one news item (1.89 percent) to the Dalits as the headline maker. The Dalits, as the headliners, have no representation in the rest of the sample stations.

The headline news has no representation of Muslims as the headliners on BFM. Whereas, out of a total of 11.32 percent (6 items) of the main news in the Terai-origin community cluster, 5.66 percent (3 items) have been broadcast by Radio Lumbini, 3.77 percent (2 items) by Radio Nepal and 1.89 percent (1 item) have broadcast by Radio Sagarmatha making the Muslim community as the headliners. Talking about the Terai-origin Adibasi/Janajati as the headliners, out of a total of 18.87 percent (10) headline news, 11.32 percent (6) fall to Radio Lumbini while 1.89 percent (1) each goes to BFM and Radio Sagarmatha respectively and 3.77 percent (2) to Radio Nepal.

As the news headline makers, the Terai-origin Brahman/Chhetri/Madheshi Others have got 67.92 percent of the total number of news, 53 under the Terai-origin cluster. However, compared to other Terai-origin communities, this community has occupied more space. Going with single radio stations, the data shows that top priority has been given to this community as the headliners by Radio Lumbini with 37.74 percent (20) of the total news items under the cluster. Radio Nepal has stood in the second position making headlines citing this community in its 16.98 percent (9) main news items whereas Radio Sagarmatha has got the third position providing 9.43 percent (5) news items followed by BFM with 3.77 percent (2) main news items as the headliners. Compared to the Hill-origin community, the Terai-origin community has got less space in the news bulletins as the headline maker.

Sah states that there are four categories of people in Terai/Madhesh origin communities: Brahmin Rajput, Chhetri, and Kayastha are the highest caste people in Terai Madhesh. Although their population is small, they have a good grip on knowledge production, government jobs, and the media. The middle caste is Yadav Madheshi and others. Then comes the Janajati and after that the Dalits. "The lower you go, the more Dalits and tribals will not get access to the media, now their news will be negative. Positive news will come from the privileged community, it is the same in the hills and Terai/Madhesh" (Personal communication, June 13, 2023). He argues that the bias in source selection in Terai is also the same as in hilly areas.

According to Bhoosal, the voices of other minority communities are rarely heard on the radio which is dominated by a particular community. Most of the news sources are chosen from the community with the same majority, while in radio programmes, people with the same majority are found to have given interviews as sources. In his opinion, this

is a type of bias consciously or unconsciously of a majority community towards minority communities. For example, he explains:

The presence of the hill-origin community is weak in the radio operated by the Terai Madhesi community, while the presence of the Terai Madhesi community is less in the radio operated by the hill-origin community. The presence of women is less in the news and content of radio stations operated by only men or in the newsroom where only men are present, while the presence of men is less in radio stations operated solely by women. However, at the national level, the dominating classes have more presence in the news as headline makers. There is more dominance of hill-origin communities and men, overall, the same is seen in the news or other materials (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Dominating communities and gender have seemed biased towards minorities in news selection. Moreover, Jha criticises that a privileged class has become dominant in the information in the country. Because this elite class's relatives and interest groups also became the majority in the media. But there is a ruling class in our journalism in an undeclared form. In that situation, even in Terai/Madhesh or in the radio stations invested by the Madhesi, a class that is common in terms of caste is rising into the neo-elite class under the current power structure making more headliners. They also talk about other marginalised sections of society including the farmers, and Dalits. In his observation, ordinary people cannot hold a press conference, cannot write a letter to the editor, and also cannot call on the radio and express their grievances.

He adds that media persons in our society have not been able to reach such people and are not able to pick up their content, events, and issues. Talking about the marginalised grassroots-level people of Terai/Madhesh, they are not within the reach of the state even today. In his assessment, however, the media have flourished, and the

number of journalists is increasing, but a large section of Nepali people in Nepal, has not been recognised by the state mechanism. The media need to pick up the issues of the ignored people, give space to them in the headlines, and keep talking about them to make the line agencies of the government responsible and accountable towards them. Jha has an assessment that:

Even now, Nepali journalists make mistakes while doing journalism for the people. Yes, there have been improvements, and discourses have been held on this subject. But still, our dark sides are abundant. Now the situation of radio stations is not as easy and simple as it looks from the outside. They are undergoing critical financial situations hampering the radio stations from doing real journalism in the newsroom. (Personal communication, June 14, 2023)

The internal and external factors such as lack of resources, training, incentive, political pressure or alignment and mentality have worked for the bias in the newsrooms. Mainali argues that bias is automatically applied by the preoccupied mindset of journalists working in the media. It seems that the media give priority to those who have the power to make news or headlines. He who is weak cannot become a newsmaker in the mainstream media. Even in journalism textbooks, it is taught that the stories and activities of voiceless people cannot become news under the headline based on the elements of news (Personal communication, March 6, 2023). He criticises the orientation of journalists for not prioritising the activities of common people and minorities in news. The traditional journalism teaches that only prominent people and the community make news. Raut analyses the role of donor agencies, International Nongovernmental Organisations (INGOs) and Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs) towards sensitising society to social inclusion and social justice. He expresses that those INGOs and NGOs

have an important role in getting underrepresented voices into the newsroom or radio airwaves. However, in his thoughts regarding the inclusion in political news then:

The reason could be the inherent bias in the minds of newsroom leaders and senior journalists as a result of their upbringing, discriminatory traditions, some ill aspects of patriarchal societal norms and their complete ignorance towards the importance, urgency and necessity of being inclusive while being in the news business. (Personal communication, February 22, 2023)

In sum, radio newsrooms are not strong enough for their own analysis of the news sources they use in radio news bulletins. There is a gap in analysis, understanding, realisation and implementation of the inclusion of common people, marginalised and minority people in news bulletins as news sources.

#### **6.12 Headline Makers by Gender Equality Perspective**

To analyse the status of gender equality in headline news, the content analysis focuses on the male and female sex as the main variables. The headline news made by quoting males and females has been put in the mixed category. The others category represents non-personal/institutional sources, anonymous sources, and unidentified/non-mentioned sources. The details of the gender equality as the headliners are as follows:

**Table 6.12***Headline Makers by Gender Equality Perspective*

	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent	No. of news	Percent
Women	3	0.89	21	4.66	10	2.25	13	2.73	47	2.75
Men	101	29.88	210	46.56	175	39.33	145	30.40	631	36.88
Both	2	0.59	9	2.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	11	0.64
Sources other than people	232	68.64	211	46.78	260	58.43	319	66.88	1022	59.73
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

As shown in Table 6.12, out of the total news amount, 59.73 percent goes to other categories which indicates the news broadcast without sourcing the people. When it comes to sourcing people, it should be ensured that the gender balance is maintained in headline makers of the main news. The balance between males and females as the headliners of the bulletins has not been maintained. While men occupy 36.88 percent (631) of the total news as headline makers, women occupy only 2.75 percent (47) of the headlines. Both males and females have been seen as the headline makers in only 0.64 percent (11) of news on the sample radio stations.

While entering the individual radio stations to analyse the data of the content analysis, BFM has been found to secure the lowest rank in female representation quoting only three women (0.89% of its total news items) as headline makers. At the same time,

it has given 29.88 percent (101) space to men as the source of its main news. Being in the second position, Radio Nepal has provided 2.25 airtime (10) of its main news to women as the headline makers. In contrast, it has broadcast 39.33 percent (175) of the main news citing men as headline makers. Radio Sagarmatha has provided 2.73 percent (13) of its total news items to women whereas it has on-aired 30.40 percent (145) of total main news quoting males as the headliners. Compared to other stations, Radio Lumbini being in the top position has given more air space, 4.66 percent (21), of its main news to women as the headliners. While comparing with the proportion of the headliners, the number of news items having headlines citing men on Radio Lumbini is 46.56 percent (210), a big difference between the two. The table shows that there is a big gap in radio stations' newsrooms about maintaining gender balance in the main news to give space to women as headline makers.

While talking about the mixed headliners of the main news of the sample radio stations, only BFM and Radio Lumbini have cited male and female sources as the headline makers in their main news providing air space to both 0.59 percent (2) and 2.00 percent (9) respectively. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have not been providing airtime to both men and women as the headline makers.

Basnet argues that due to the lack of women in the newsroom, women's issues have not made headlines. Another thing is that in a patriarchal society, women are unable to become sources of news since men dominate the structure of the state and society. Even at the leadership level of political parties, there are more men than women. "When the structure of the state and society is dominated by men and the media houses are also dominated by men, how can women come to the headlines? But this system and thought need to change" (Personal communication, May 13, 2023). She believes that the situation will remain the same until there is a change in mindset.

Mettes emphasises the need for inclusiveness in headline news. His perspective is that being more inclusive takes much more work in maintaining diversity in news sourcing. However, he opines that many people support their own political prejudices and biases (Personal communication, March 1, 2023). Whereas Sah has expressed worry that media are being converted into the voices of powerful persons and positions rather than the voices of the voiceless. Behind all this is the equation of caste and social structure. In the case of women, he describes, whether it is in the hill or Terai/Madhesh, whether it is the elite class or the Dalit class, it is women who are oppressed or exploited in all classes. "That is why women are also marginalised and their voice does not reach the media. On the other hand, some of the women of the city have got a place in the media, even if only to a certain extent" (Personal communication, June 13, 2023). There is a lack of internal and external assessment of sources in news bulletins from the point of view of women's participation to correct their practices of including powerful persons and males as news sources in the main news.

Jha discusses that, due to the patriarchal society, the media is not able to bring women as headliners in the news, be it in the hills or Madhesh. This is also an example of a power structure. That is why there is more news about the superiority of men. Instead, women-related news is covered when they become victims. Those who are close to power in the Hill-origin community or Madhesi community are the women who dominate the news headlines. A new powerful class is being born in Terai too. The castes and communities that have access to power also have the media. Those who are not in power, are not decisive or are few, and they do not speak out. They get a place in the media based on their relationship with power rather than belonging to a community. In his observation:

Women are also quoted as sources only from those who come to power rather than from others. Women holding expertise and leadership of departments have been given a lower position compared to politicians. Even though she is a qualified woman who can speak about political science, law, and issues of national concern, she is not made a headliner. This is a matter of the traditional thought that is prevalent in radio and other media. (Personal communication, June 14, 2023)

Analysing the data of content analysis and discussion of experts, another aspect of the selection of women as news sources is that only the women who are in power and live in urban areas. The voices of rural women remain in the spiral of silence.

In sum, according to the census data of 2023 published by the National Census Office of Nepal (2023) out of the total population of Nepal (29,192,480), the percentage of women is 51.04. Although women are in the majority population, the coverage of news sourcing from women as the headliners are very limited in radio news (2.75 percent of the total sample news items). Compared to men, women are excluded from the national core power structure which has been reflected in the gatekeeping process of the newsroom.

### **6.13 Headline Makers by Core to Periphery Perspective**

The content analysis aims to analyse the diversity in news sourcing from the centre to the periphery perspective. Various power centres influence the headline-making process in radio newsrooms. To examine the sources from the core to periphery perspective, the sources have been categorised into six types. Explicitly disclosed and undisclosed sources are also included in this category. Because the place where those sources are from gives their geographical identity.

The analysis intends to show the interest and priority of radio stations regarding the selection of the places in headline news which are the symbols of the power centres.

The table, shows the country capital, state capital, urban area, rural area, and international area as the variables for comparing the priority of news as follows:

**Table 6.13**

*Headline Makers by Core to Periphery Perspectives*

Places of sources	BFM		Radio Lumbini		Radio Nepal		Radio Sagarmatha		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
	of news		of news		of news		of news		of news	
Capital of the country	138	40.83	140	31.04	302	67.87	290	60.80	870	50.85
Capital of a province	73	21.60	221	49.00	19	4.27	13	2.73	326	19.05
Urban areas	19	5.62	49	10.86	11	2.47	13	2.73	92	5.38
Rural areas	3	0.89	4	0.89	8	1.80	25	5.24	40	2.34
International	95	28.11	23	5.10	98	22.02	134	28.09	350	20.46
Not identified	10	2.96	14	3.10	7	1.57	2	0.42	33	1.93
Total	338	100.00	451	100.00	445	100.00	477	100.00	1711	100.00

*Source: Content Analysis, 2022*

Table 6.13 shows that most of the news items broadcast by the sample radio stations are about the country's capital. The stations are found to have broadcast more than half of the news items from the federal capital. It is found that 50.85percent ( 870of the total 1711 sample news have been broadcast covering the events and issues from the federal capital.

Based on the strength, such sources influence the gatekeeping process of the newsroom and the priority of source in the radio is also evident through the findings. That is why all the sources mentioned and not mentioned are attached here.

The influence of the federal capital is seen not only in the radio stations located in the Kathmandu Valley but also at the centre of the newsrooms of the radio stations outside the valley. It is found that the local radio stations also rely more on the central sources and news than the local ones and give priority to the centre. Capitals of the provinces are found to have become the second priority of the main news on the radio stations. Of the total sample size, 19.05 percent (326) of the main news has been broadcast relating to the events and issues of provincial capitals. The third priority is given to the urban areas in the main news. The urban areas have got 5.38 percent (92) airtime for the total main news stories on the radio stations. Only 2.34 percent (40) of the main news is found to have been broadcast on the issues and events of the rural areas. International events and issues have got a large chunk, 20.46 percent (350) of the main news. The number of unidentified news is 1.93 percent (33) of the total news.

At the individual level, Radio Nepal has been found in the first position prioritising events and issues of the federal capital city in more than two-thirds (67.87%) of the main news stories. Radio Sagarmatha is in the second position in terms of prioritising events and issues of the federal capital in 60.80% of the total headlines. Out of the total 477 main news stories, 290 are broadcast depending on the issues and events relating to the federal capital city. Two hundred ninety of its headlines are related to the federal capital. Likewise, BFM is in the third position with 40.83% (138) of its headlines coming from the federal capital. However, Radio Lumbini has least prioritised the headlines from the federal capital. It has incorporated 31.04% of the headlines related to the federal capital in its bulletins. According to these data, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha heavily rely on news sources from the

federal capital itself while news sources from provincial, local and rural are overshadowed. Even BFM has mostly relied on news sources from the centre. In comparison to other sample stations, Radio Lumbini has prioritised the local sources in its headlines rather than relying on sources from the federal capital.

Out of the sample radio stations, Radio Lumbini has prioritised the news of the capital of the province. It has given 49.00 percent (221) airtime of total headline news to province-capital-related news. Being in the second position, BFM has provided 21.60 percent (73) of its main news to the issues and events related to the capital of the province. Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha are found to have given very low priority to news related to the capital of the province in 4.27 percent (19) and 2.73 percent (13) of their total headline news.

Urban areas are the third choice of stations to take news from. Radio Nepal has broadcast the least news with 2.47 percent (11) related to the urban areas followed by Radio Sagarmatha with 2.73 percent (13) of its headline news. Out of the sample stations, Radio Lumbini is in the first position in terms of giving priority to urban-based news with 10.86 percent (49) which is followed by BFM with 5.62 percent (19) of the total headline news.

The rural area is the least priority of the station while covering the news. In comparison to other stations, Radio Sagarmatha gives high priority to rural areas with 5.24 percent (25) whereas Radio Nepal is in the second position in terms of covering rural areas as a news source with 1.80 percent (8). BFM and Radio Lumbini are in the last position giving an equal 0.89 percent of their news to rural areas.

Excluding Radio Lumbini with the least priority at 5.10 percent (23), the other three sample stations have given high priority to international issues and events in the headline news. BFM has broadcast 28.11 percent (95) of its total headline news related to international issues and events. Radio Sagarmatha is found to have given 28.09 percent

(134) of its main news to international affairs. Radio Nepal is in the second last position giving 22.02 percent (98) airtime for its headline news to international events. Radio Lumbini has the practice of making headlines on international news only based on the major events while the others have made one to two headline news regularly in their bulletins to cover international affairs.

The last row indicates that Radio Lumbini (3.10%) and BFM (2.96%) are in the top position to broadcast the main news without mentioning any place of the origin of the news. Radio Nepal (1.57%) and Radio Sagarmatha (0.42%) have given the least priority to headline news without mentioning the places the news has come from.

Kharel observes that the media has just made coverage of the issues and events from the core areas such as the capital city of the country and the capitals of the provinces and districts and even from the urban areas rather than the villages and remote places of the country. Elites from the headquarters of the district are quoted more than the reporters going to the interior part of that particular town or district. They are also in the nearby tea stalls or the campuses' teachers. They don't go beyond that. The difficulty is that most of the Nepali citizens are poor and unemployed. In his understanding, the stories of people in the majority are not prioritised in the media and the headlines of their news. Moreover, he adds that:

Reporters don't go to the interiors, whether it's the big media, their stringers just base themselves in the headquarters or city centre. They don't go to the interior, and that is reflected in the headlines, and then apart from headlines, they don't. It is also visible even in the local news broadcast by the local radio stations. (Personal communication, January 30, 2023).

In particular, reporters do not have access to reach women in rural and faraway areas to listen to their voices, while rural women also do not have access to newsrooms to tell their stories. Because of this gap, women are less portrayed in the news.

Jha analyses that the media from Kathmandu is also quoting the people from the capital city, and the media from districts are also taking the same person as a source. He blames that there is a tradition to consider the real Nepal, the rural area, as fake Nepal. If it happens in Kathmandu, it is considered that it is important. Not only that but also the media considers the experts and people who live in Kathmandu as more knowledgeable and important compared to those who live out of the Valley. While the media outside Kathmandu itself does not give a place to the local experts and other people, the local journalists are eager to take Kathmandu as a source. He further states that due to contradictions at various levels, the media is not as accountable to the people as it should be. Because media is said to be the voice of the voiceless, but the media is proud to be the voice of the powerful. Therefore, the media is more concentrated in the capital, the centre of power. Jha has an analysis regarding the accessibility of the sources in the main news of radio bulletins in the frame of the analogy of the core to the periphery:

In the beginning phase, only Kathmandu city was the centre of power. Although provinces have been formed now, the influence of Kathmandu has not decreased. Apart from the federal capital, Kathmandu, seven power centres have now been set up. Even in those seven centres, none of them is equal to Kathmandu regarding the enjoyment of power. The voices that are picked up by media are represented by the equation of power of the core, the capital of the country compared to the periphery, the area which is out of the central power. (Personal communication, June 14, 2023)

Though the core area is being increased on a regional basis, the trend of the hegemonic central core trend has been adopted by the regional hubs as the province power. Those areas enjoy speaking on the radio as the news source instead of the villages and remote areas.

In essence, as Friedmann (1966) discusses, the core is a well-developed city or urban area with political power which has an unequal and unbalanced relationship with the peripheral areas that are undeveloped and dependent on the core in various aspects including development. The core has such an attraction to power that it attracts organs of society like a magnet. Broadcasting voices of core areas in prime space instead of villages has a symbolic correlation with the magnet of power. Because the media is also a part of society, the power of the centre has attracted the media as well.

Therefore, the data also shows that even the radio stations in the periphery outside of Kathmandu are attracted by the news from the country's capital and they seem eager to choose news sources from the capital. After that, the capital of the province is placed in the centre of the news because the power of the province level is vested in the capital of the province. After the provincial capital, the news of urban areas or accessible places has been given space in the headlines. One of the reasons behind the news of rural and remote areas not getting a place in the headlines is that reporters do not reach there, and the other reason is that the media is not attracted to these peripheral areas since those areas are not vested with state power. In this way, compared to the periphery, the core area is in the news headlines.

In sum, the radio stations do have not quality human resources to maintain objectivity and diversity in sourcing while preparing the news. A good practice of newsrooms to verify the sources approach multiple sources, make news balance and promote investigative reporting has not been established. Relying on a single source and broadcasting one-sided stories on controversial issues are the areas the newsrooms need to improve in future. Because of the lack of enough resources for both financial and quality human perspectives, it has been observed that radio newsrooms have not been able to maintain accuracy, objectivity and diversity in a newsroom which has affected the

objectivity and diversity in news sourcing. There is a lack of vision and programmes of radio stations to build up the capacity of the workforce in newsrooms which has affected the quality, objectivity, diversity and credibility of radio news.

#### **6.14 Observed News Sourcing Process in the Newsrooms**

A checklist for newsroom observation has been applied during the newsroom observation to describe the process of the radio newsrooms in news reporting, news writing and news sourcing procedures. Regular news meetings, regular assignments, field reporting, work from the desk, cross-sourcing in controversial issues, approaches for multiple sources, trends of the uses of single sources, interviews from the field, fact collection from the field, field observation, talk to concerned people as a source, workforce on duty in newsrooms during the observation days and news preparation without sources have been checked during the newsroom observation separately that is presented in Table 6.14 as below:

**Table 6.14***Observed News Sourcing Process in the Newsrooms*

Objectivity checklists	BFM	Radio Lumbini	Radio Nepal	Radio Sagarmatha
Regular news meeting	No	No	No	No
Regular assignment	Self	Self	Rare	Self
Field reporting	Rare	Rare	VVIP* coverage	Rare
Work from desk	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cross-sourcing in controversial issues	No	No	No	No
Approach for multiple sources	No	Vox-Pop	No	No
Use of single sources	Common	Common	Common	Common
Interview from field	No	Rare	No	No
Fact collection from the field	No	No	No	No
Field observation	Rare	Rare	Rare	Rare
Talk to common people as a source	No	Vox-pop	Vox-pop	Vox-pop
Working human resources in newsrooms during the observation	2	3	10	4
News without source	Common	Common	Common	Common
News taken from websites of other media outlets/ agencies without attribution	Common	Common	Common	Common

*Source: Field study, 2023*

\*VVIP: Very important person like Prime Minister, Ministers and high-level officers.

Table 6.14 exposes that most of the work has been done on the desks of radio newsrooms. To maintain objectivity and diversity in news source selection, there should be regular news meetings to discuss major weaknesses and project news of the day. The meeting assigns reporters/newspersons to cover events and issues for the news bulletins. However, during the observation of all sample radio stations, no news meetings were seen. Why not a regular news meeting? Radio managers and news chiefs have the same answer they don't have enough human resources. For example, Adhikari (Netra) (February 23, 2023), Basnyat (February 13, 2023) and Neupane (March 5, 2023) accept that they do not have enough news staff to go to the field regularly (Personal Communication). Only important issues have been covered by the limited human resources. In the absence of the news meeting, there is no regular assignment to reporters in the newsrooms. Field reporting for the FM radio stations is rare. Hardly do they go to field reporting. Radio Nepal, the government-owned and aided radio station have human resources compared to other local radio stations, it has the trend to cover only VVIP's activities in news through field reporting. Most of the process of news sourcing is completed from the desk taking news from computers, press releases and news from online media. Pyakurel (February 20, 2023) also admits that they have only prioritised issues for news reporting as top political and governmental activities in the hierarchical structure (Personal Communication). The practice of cross-sourcing in controversial issues and events with multiple sources could not be seen during the observation period.

The news items taken as cases also prove that the controversial issues are being broadcast from the sample radio stations without cross-sourcing opportunities to say for the accused persons. Radio stations are found to approach multiple people in only vox-pop, not in the news. The next common trend of all sample radio stations in the

newsroom is to rely on a single source. News broadcasting without a source also has been found a common phenomenon in radio stations during the field study. Talk to two or more common people as a source is just in vox-pops. During the field study of the sample radio stations, only 2-4 news people have been seen except Radio Nepal with 10 people. News taking from the websites without giving attribution to the news outlets and agencies also seemed common.

The newsroom observation has found that many radio stations face significant challenges due to inadequate physical infrastructure, limited financial resources, and a shortage of skilled human resources. As a result, these stations tend to fill their news bulletins primarily with information obtained from press releases and other media outlets, rather than conducting their own on-the-ground reporting. Original reporting comprises only a small portion of their news bulletins and is considered a rare occurrence. It has been observed that the main news stories of these radio bulletins predominantly feature political leaders, political parties, government officials, and individuals from the power elite, while the representation of ordinary people and marginalised communities is notably minimal.

Among the four sample radio stations examined, Radio Nepal stands as an exception due to its relatively sufficient physical infrastructure and human resources, which are supported by an annual budget from the government. However, even Radio Nepal is not exempt from the issues and trends identified in the sourcing practices of their main news bulletins., the sourcing practices in the main news bulletins of the examined radio stations are significantly influenced by factors such as inadequate physical infrastructure, limited financial resources, and a scarcity of skilled human resources. These factors contribute to a heavy reliance on secondary sources and a lack of original reporting. Moreover, the predominant focus on political figures and the power

elite in news stories further marginalises the voices of ordinary people and marginalised communities. As field reporting is rare, fact collection from the field, field-based interviews and voices from the field also have been found rare during the newsroom's observation. This observation has not only shown the poor practices of objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process but also projected the dilemma in the destination and sustainability of Nepali radio stations because of the sourcing practices of news.

The radio managers/news chiefs have envisioned some ideas to follow for the solution to the issues. Basnyat proposes the necessary steps to be taken for the solution of the problem by arranging skilled journalists, making the newsroom news-friendly, broadcasting news by verifying and cross-verifying, sticking to the radio station's mission and objectives, keeping the media away from the influence of the political parties and the unnecessary power elites, and encouraging diversity in the news (Personal communication, February 13, 2023). Besides, Pyakurel has a plan to solve the issues regarding sourcing. He suggests radio stations improve their access to society and prepare more diverse and neutral personnel in the newsrooms for the betterment situation of the sourcing in the news bulletins (Personal communication, February 20, 2023).

Meanwhile, Adhikari (Netra), has proposed a plan to its management to make the newsroom efficient. He hopes if the necessary workforce can be managed, the desk can be made effective. However, the poor financial condition is the obstruction in the way of the reformation of newsrooms. Consequently, his repeatedly submitted plans "could not be approved due to the financial aspects of the management" (Personal communication, March 12, 2023), whereas Neupane suggests that the source of the received news should be checked, and newsrooms should not rely on only one source (Personal communication, March 5, 2023). Analysing the statements of the radio managers and news chiefs, they have not expressed a commitment to change the practices of the

newsroom in the selection, verifying processes that ensure objectivity, and diversity in the sourcing process in the radio bulletin. However, their desire to improve the practice of newsrooms is reflected in their statements.

Experts have different ideas regarding the improvisation in the gatekeeping and sourcing process in the radio newsroom to meet the standard of selection and verification of the sources that ensure diverse, accurate, credible, and balanced sources. In the line, Maharjan, a media researcher, emphasises that radio stations should have internal policies regarding sources to correct the lack in the sourcing process (Personal communication, March 11, 2023).

Whereas Metts advises that hiring better-trained journalists can help. He underscores the importance of training for the newsroom team. He warns, that otherwise, radio news, or any other news, will continue to tell only "one side of complex, multidimensional issues. Welcoming other voices to the conversation is essential for a healthy democracy" (Personal communication, March 1, 2023).

Yogi highlights the importance of the careful selection of news sources as their selection could add or reduce biases in the news. He further adds that the newsrooms must be inclusive and give proper space to issues related to women, Dalit, Indigenous and other marginalised communities (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). Panthi believes that teamwork, regular meetings, discussions, satisfactory salary, and regular payments to the journalists would be supportive to improve the weaknesses of the sourcing process in the newsrooms. "Not to work under pressure from anyone, improvement can be done independently and fairly. Many problems are also solved when the workers get a satisfactory salary and on time, from the financial side or the monthly salary" (Personal communication, February 21, 2023). Furthermore, Poudyal has suggested that radio stations should ensure the reporters have the requisite acquisition

experience, skills, and training necessary to execute the source selection (Personal communication, January 28, 2023).

As far as Khanal has some points as advice to the newsrooms for the betterment in the selection and verification of news sources. The first step is to use proper and authentic news sources. Giving priority to only one aspect of news may cause a state of conflict so equally include both aspects, all sides, and all aspects. He suggests justifying unidentified sources and correcting errors promptly by placing facts and quotations in the proper context. (Personal communication, January 28, 2023)

Bista proposes to follow the standards of journalistic professionalism. He explains that the radio stations can meet the standards of professionalism by strengthening the economic side of the organisation along with policy clarity, increasing the efficiency of the working journalists, making the structure of the newsroom plural and diverse, creating the service, conditions, facilities and opportunities for the development of the human resources involved, creating an environment of motivation for the workforce towards the profession and the organisation, freeing from internal and external interference. Furthermore, by removing the weaknesses of newsrooms and individuals, organisations and professions can be made more dignified, accountable, and reliable to the community (Personal communication, February 2, 2023). Acharya gives tips to avoid weaknesses in the selection and verification of sources by being free from any biases maintaining editorial freedom as well as being strong financially and addressing the local interest of the people rather than the political ideology (Personal communication, January 27, 2023).

Sah argues that the management of radio stations and the journalists working there should realise that there is social discrimination and bias in media content based on caste, tribe, and geographical landscape. Therefore, he suggests radio stations bring those

marginalised communities into the news content covering their local issues, events, problems, and desires by placing them in prime locations and times of radio news bulletins (Personal communication, June 13, 2023). Jha describes that the size, number and capacity building of journalists and available resources in the newsroom are directly related to the news sources and credibility. He believes, whatever limitations there are, some creative work can be done within the given situation. Journalists can do something good with the information they get, whether the news is inclusive or not, whether there is diversity in the news, and whether there is a basis for confirming the source in the news or not. He advises media houses to be bound morally so that the code of conduct can be regulated. He sees the future of radio stations only in credibility (Personal communication, June 14, 2023).

Furthermore, Raut argues that the value of the radio station matters the most. He has some chronological points to make the radio newsrooms strong such as:

The purpose of the whole radio operation should be clear to the journalists and all staff. Then come the organisational standards and guidance like editorial standards. Fair play comes after this. Once these are well implemented, the most important aspect after this would be the proper training and development of news-leaders and journalists. All these require a strong will on the part of the investors or owners of the radio stations to pour in the required resources in the news operation with a sense of social responsibility. (Personal communication, February 22, 2023)

Bhoosal agrees with Raut and adds some more tips to get a better newsroom for meeting the standards of source selection and verification process. He argues that besides the determination of the policy and priority of the news, the necessary workforce, physical equipment and resources should be arranged for the newsroom with a regular revision of news and the procedure for planning. After determining the area of the news

(thematic area, geographical area), radio journalists should have a vivid idea of the content to be covered with a regular evaluation process. (Personal communication, February 20, 2023)

Adhikary has a long list to address existing weaknesses in the selection and verification of news sources that radio stations should take some steps in a planned manner. He suggests that resources permitting, owners/runners of radio broadcasting stations can enhance the credibility/reliability of news broadcasts by taking the following measures, on a priority basis:

1. Introduce a recruiting process to encourage young people with a sense of commitment to the profession. Giving jobs to relatives or friends cannot guarantee quality news-products. Those recruited should get a reasonable salary on time.
2. Ensure in-house training in other institutions within the country and beyond.
3. Hold reporting/editorial meetings—at least once a day. And encourage reporters to bring first-hand reports—with soundbites. Transportation costs and meals have to be offered as incentives.
4. Run interactive sessions with listeners. Choose a time/duration when wider participation can be ensured.
5. Conduct surveys—at least once in six months—to find out audiences' feedback and expectations. Such surveys provide a handy basis for identifying areas of improvement.
6. Encourage reporters/editors to build a network of contacts which can gradually be developed as reliable sources of newsy information. (Personal communication, February 21, 2023)

Regmee's concern is on the transformation of radio newsrooms in the digital era to maintain their credibility. He advises radio stations to ensure quality service to listeners at local, city, regional, provincial, national and international levels. He urges radio stations to be sincere in developing broadcasting as the profession in which journalists

can achieve their most like in other branches of media. Furthermore, he suggests, that broadcasters should meet together from time to time and express freely how they can improve broadcasting in the country in light of the technological devices available in society. In the age of digital and media convergence, he advises ways to mitigate the competition that broadcasting faces in the digital era and the risk that radio broadcasting is encountering in the presence of YouTubers- audio and visual – and their promoters should compel broadcasters to re-imagine or re-invent radio broadcasting in the country (Personal communications, February 20, 2023). In this connection, Metts argues that partisanship in journalism is an issue which hampers objectivity and diversity in news sourcing by depending on political winds and power. He suggests coming out from the parties and power to cover the diverse level of ordinary people in news as sources (Personal Communication, March 1, 2023).

Furthermore, Giri argues that umbrella organisations should sensitise the member broadcasters to maintain objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process so that biases would not come into the news. He adds, "The umbrella organisations like the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB), should also provide policy circulars to member stations on the principles and theoretical issues to make the news diverse and credible. (Personal communication, February 22, 2023). Mainali concludes the discussion by suggesting that it is necessary to maintain a minimum environment conducive to journalism in radio stations. In his opinion, Nepali radio stations should give independent recognition to those journalists taking editorial responsibility and the newsroom to enter the principles and values of journalism in the radio stations. He adds that "the development of a skilled workforce and the development of the practice of professional competence, the professionalism, can enhance the objectivity and diversity in news sourcing" (Personal communication, March 6, 2023).

In sum, the result of the content analysis and the newsroom observation, have shown multifaceted realities of sourcing in maintaining objectivity and diversity during the news sourcing process. The process of the radio newsrooms in the selection and verification of sources has been observed that it is not enough. The discussion of radio managers/news chiefs, journalists and experts from the range of broadcasting practitioners, leaders the academicians concludes that there are various weaknesses of radio stations in the sourcing process of radio news regarding the maintenance of objectivity and diversity which can be over by the skilful practices adopting professional norms and values.

## Chapter 7

### Findings and Conclusion

This chapter presents the significant findings and concluding remarks derived from the study on news sourcing within the headline news of Nepali radio broadcasting. Derived from the relativism/subjectivism ontology and transactional/constructivist epistemology, the study presents the findings of the results of the data achieved from the multiple qualitative methodological tools such as content analysis, field observation, in-depth interviews with the line of interpretivism philosophy in the light of the gatekeeping, agenda setting and normative media theoretical framework. Under the purposive sample selection method, Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM have been selected for content analysis and newsroom observation. The findings and conclusion of the study are as follows:

#### 7.1 Findings

The study has focused on meeting the aim of the three objectives which have been set to answer the research questions. This research has been carried out based on the media theories: Gatekeeping Theory, Agenda Setting Theory and Normative Theories. During the study, this research has found the multiple realities of news sources under the subjectivism ontology and transactional/constructivism epistemology in different sample radio stations that have been analysed within the 23 major themes that have been drawn from the objectives and the theories. The finding of the study shows that news sources are essential for radio news, however, the news sources have influenced the news sourcing process. The radio newsrooms and the journalists are a sub-system of a meta-environment and are affected by the socio, political and economic factors by using information from several sources. According to the changes in the political system, the nature, priority and inclusion of sources in news also have been changed or reshaped. A

need for responsible gatekeeping in news sourcing towards society has been found from the result of the study regarding diversity in news sourcing. A log frame according to the three objectives has been designed to describe the findings and the major findings have been presented chronologically in this chapter.

The major findings of the study are as follows according to the objectives:

***a) Objective 1: Status of News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting***

Objective 1 aims to assess the status of news sourcing in the main news of Nepali radio stations. To fulfil the objective of exploring research question 1, a comprehensive analysis of various subjects and themes has been conducted using an inductive approach. Qualitative data collection methods, such as content analysis and observation of sample radio newsrooms have been employed. The data obtained from these sources, along with insights gathered from interviews with experts and radio managers/news chiefs, journalists and listeners have been assessed using relevant theories and principles. By applying these analytical frameworks, a thorough evaluation of the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting has been achieved.

**i. Total Time Duration of the Sample Size.** The cumulative duration of news bulletins selected for content analysis from the four sampled radio stations amounts to 36,085 minutes (601.41 hours). BFM's news bulletin spans 6,790 minutes (113.16 hours), Radio Lumbini's covers 6,780 minutes (113 hours), Radio Nepal's comprises 11,130 minutes (185.5 hours), and Radio Sagarmatha's extends to 11,385 minutes (189.75 hours). In totality, 1711 news stories have been examined during the qualitative content analysis.

**ii. Genre in the Main News of Radio Bulletins.** Out of the total 1,711 main news items broadcast by the four sampled radio stations, the majority consists of hard news, accounting for 98.25 percent of the entire sample. In contrast, the number of interviews

and radio reports is significantly low, with only 22 news interviews and 8 radio reports identified in the tables. Notably, hard news items do not incorporate voice insertions. Among the various news formats, news interviews appear to receive the least priority in terms of making headlines in the bulletins. Furthermore, the analysis of radio reports reveals that they typically include the voices of 2 to 4 individuals as sources, indicating a broader range of perspectives and opinions being presented.

**iii. Length of the Sample News Stories.** Merely 0.29 percent of news items fall within the category of fewer than 30 seconds, while a significant portion of 38.98 percent lies in the range of 30 to 60 seconds. A substantial 60.72 percent of news items exceed 60 seconds, indicating a noticeable lack in the editing and gatekeeping system. This finding suggests that there is room for improvement in optimising the use of airtime and incorporating multiple voices within the news bulletins. Adhering to the journalistic principle of editing known as KISS (Keep it Simple and Short) could help truncate lengthy news items, allowing for the inclusion of diverse perspectives through the voices of additional individuals.

**iv. News Sources Based on Beat Areas.** Out of the 1,711 sampled headline news items, a significant proportion of 27.88 percent is focused on the government and political beat. The health/pandemic sector comprises 20.34 percent of the stories, while the sports, entertainment, and art sector accounts for 15.37 percent. Gender equality and minority issues receive the lowest priority, with only 0.29 percent of the total news dedicated to these topics. Similarly, media/communication and farming/agriculture sectors are given limited coverage, with airtime for these subjects amounting to 0.35 percent and 0.53 percent respectively. Despite women outnumbering men in the country, radio stations lack internal policies to ensure a balanced representation between genders and inclusiveness of minorities in their headline news. Only 0.53 percent of the headline

news pertains to farming. These findings indicate a heavy reliance on news sources related to the power elite, neglecting the voices of common people and minority communities. Due to the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic during the sample news collection period, all the sampled radio stations extensively covered the statements of health officials and experts as part of their main news coverage.

**v. Nature of News Sources in Headline News.** Among the total headline news from the four sampled radio stations, approximately 40.62 percent is attributed to people as sources. Institutional or organisational sources contribute to 21.22 percent of the news, while 3.68 percent is sourced from other outlets such as newspapers, websites, and social media. Notably, a significant portion of 34.48 percent of the headline news is broadcast without any mention of the source.

**vi. Person as Sources in Headline News.** Out of the 1,711-headline news analysed, a significant portion, comprising 40.62 percent, was broadcast with individuals serving as sources. Among the 695 main news items, a staggering 89.50 percent mentioned only a single person as a source. The inclusion of two people as sources was observed in 5.61 percent of the news items, while 3.3 percent quoted three people. Furthermore, 1.15 percent of the news items referenced four people as sources, and a minimal 0.43 percent (equivalent to three items) cited more than four individuals as news sources. The radio stations primarily connected with three or more individuals as sources in news reports and vox-pops. However, the sample radio stations encountered challenges in reaching a diverse range of individuals to gather information and cross-verify the received data in hard news segments. This limitation undermines the reliability, trustworthiness, and credibility of the news, potentially leaving the audience in a state of confusion.

**vii. Sources of Radio News from the Geographical Point of View.** The findings indicate that 42.32 percent of the news is sourced from the country's federal level, while

only 18.76 percent originates from local sources. International sources contribute to just 4.44 percent of the total news. Likewise, 34.48 percent of the news is broadcast without mentioning any specific source. This suggests that local radio stations rely heavily on federal sources rather than incorporating local and provincial sources, potentially impacting the diversity and accuracy of local news coverage.

Under Objective 1, the assessment of the status of sourcing in the main news reveals several key findings. Firstly, radio stations demonstrate a heavy reliance on a single source, neglecting the inclusion of diverse perspectives. Moreover, there is a lack of awareness regarding the maintenance of gender and minority balance in headline news. The farming sector, which represents a significant occupation for the majority of the population, receives limited priority in news coverage. Additionally, the prevalence of lengthy news items contributes to the rejection of news and related sources during the gatekeeping process. The absence of people's voices in the form of news reports and interviews further diminishes the inclusivity of the news content. Local radio stations also exhibit a limited exploration of news sources at the provincial and local levels. Theoretical analysis indicates that radio stations heavily rely on sources from the power elite during the gatekeeping process. Furthermore, the placement of power elite information in headline news suggests the shaping of news agendas to align with their interests. The broadcasting of over one-third (34.48 percent) of the headline news without proper sources raises concerns regarding the credibility of the news content.

***b) Objective 2: Affecting Factors in the News Sourcing Process***

To fulfil the objective of exploring research question 2, a combination of data collection methods including content analysis, field observation, and interviews have been employed. The analysis has been guided by the conceptual framework, drawing upon the Gatekeeping Theory, Agenda Setting Theory and Normative Theories to evaluate the data.

This finding is focused on the causes and effects of the internal and external factors in the news sourcing process. The findings under this objective are as follows:

**i. Workforce Capacity of the Newsrooms that Affects Sourcing.** Comparatively, BFM operates a small-scale newsroom with a team of four journalists, including one editor and three writers. It also employs five stringers in various districts to cover local events. All the journalists in the BFM newsroom work on a contract basis, with three of them serving as part-timers. Radio Lumbini, on the other hand, has a newsroom consisting of six journalists, including one editor. The station has eight reporters serving as stringers in peripheral districts. Unlike BFM, Radio Lumbini does not have a dedicated copy editor. It has hired three journalists on a contract basis, with one working as a part-timer, and two serving as volunteer journalists. Radio Sagarmatha's newsroom consists of six full-time journalists on contract and two part-time journalists. Currently, the station does not have an editor, copy editor, or volunteer in the newsroom. In contrast, Radio Nepal boasts a larger newsroom with 38 journalists. The newsroom is divided into two sections: reporting and news desk. The news desk comprises 26 editors, while the reporting section consists of 12 reporters, including the chief reporter. Most of the journalists at Radio Nepal hold permanent positions, while eight work on a contract basis. Additionally, the station benefits from the regular contributions of 68 stringers, who report from various districts across the country.

**ii. Capacity Building that Affects the Sourcing Process.** The radio stations have lacked their focus to enhance the capacity of journalists working in newspersons. Compared to Radio Nepal and Radio Lumbini, the human resources of Radio Sagarmatha and BFM have got more opportunities of training for their capacity enhancement. BFM has one journalist with training of 6-11 months and two journalists with knowledge of three to 5 months of training. Radio Sagarmatha has one journalist

with 6-11 months of training and three with knowledge of 3-5 months of training. Radio Nepal has provided training of around a week to 70 journalists while another training provided basic skills to 29 new staff during the first six months of the current fiscal year (2022/2023). The data projects that most of the human resources affiliated with the newsroom are untrained.

**iii. Educational Qualification of Radio Journalists.** The Educational qualification of a journalist affects the capacity and skill of a radio newsroom in the selection and verification process of news. In general, human resources with Plus Two to master's degree qualifications are working in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations. Radio Lumbini has two journalists with master's degrees whereas a journalist with a master's degree is working at BFM. Likewise, 17 journalists in Radio Nepal and three journalists in Radio Sagarmatha have master's degrees. When considering human resources among radio stations with bachelor's degree holders, Radio Lumbini and BFM employ three journalists each, whereas Radio Nepal boasts 21 journalists and Radio Sagarmatha also has three journalists on staff. Additionally, Radio Lumbini has one Plus Two passed journalist, while BFM employs ten journalists with Plus Two qualifications in their newsrooms. However, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha have fewer human resources with qualifications lower than a bachelor's degree, except for a journalist with a PhD qualification working at Radio Nepal.

**iv. Demographic Picture in the Newsrooms that Affect Sourcing.** Representations of women and Dalits including hill-origin and Tarai-origin communities are maintained in the newsrooms of the sample radio stations. According to the census 2021, there are 142 caste/ethnic groups in Nepal. It is not feasible to display all caste/ethnic groups here. To simplify the data concerning demographic representation in the newsroom, they are categorised into three basic groups: Dalits, hill-origin community, and Tarai-origin

community. Dalits are suppressed in both the hill-origin and Tarai-origin communities. Subsequently, Dalits from both the hill-origin and the Tarai-origin communities are included in a single category. In addition, the classification of male and female is also demarked in the table. Comparatively, Radio Nepal has a more inclusive picture of the newsroom than other radio stations as shown in Table. 6.4. However, BFM, Radio Lumbini and Radio Sagarmatha have no Dalit representation in their newsroom while only a Dalit journalist works in Radio Nepal's newsroom. Radio Sagarmatha lacks the representation of the Tarai-origin community in its newsroom. However, the journalists from the hill-origin community have a dominant presence in three out of four radio newsrooms when compared to the Tarai-origin communities. BFM has two journalists representing the hill-origin community and other two journalists from the Tarai-origin community in its newsroom. In all of the four radio stations, representation of the Dalits is very low with only a person working in the newsroom of Radio Nepal.

**v. News Production Procedure: Selection and Verification of Sources.** All sample radio stations have broadcast news based on desk work in more than half (59.96%) of the total news. Desk work indicates the work of making news based on press releases and other outlets from the desk itself. The stations have broadcast 4.91 percent of headline news with their own reporters with voice bites from fields. Less than two percent (1.23%) of the total headline news includes the reporter's narration without inserting voices of sources. It shows that most of the news is prepared at the desk of the newsroom without going to the field to collect news. Rare cases and events are reported by the reporters going out of the stations.

**vi. Organisational Structure of Media that Affects News Sourcing.** The result of the content analysis shows that the media structure influences the sourcing process observed in news production. In the case study, Radio Nepal, as a government-owned

media outlet, tends to prioritise sources related to government affairs, including information about the Head of the State, Head of the Government, provincial chief ministers, ministers, government authorities, and official government activities. However, BFM, operating within a commercial broadcasting framework, prioritises sources that can help them generate revenue to run the radio station. with those sources who can control government affairs or political matters. Similarly, community-based broadcasting institutions like Radio Sagarmatha and Radio Lumbini radio stations prioritise sources pertaining to the local community and events within the community itself. Furthermore, Radio Sagarmatha places particular emphasis on public health and environment-related news sources.

**vii. Credibility of the News Sources.** Only 7.13 percent of the total headline news sources can be classified as highly credible in the radio stations' broadcasts. Highly credible news sources are defined as those that incorporate multiple/balanced sources and include sources with voice bites. The radio stations have utilised credible sources in approximately one-third (32.20%) of their headline news. Credible news sources, as categorised in the table, refer to news that relies on single sources but cites authoritative figures. On the other hand, radio stations have featured low-credible sources in 24.25 percent of their headline news. Low-credible sources encompass instances where individuals or institutions cited as single sources lack direct relevance or authority concerning the events or issues. Furthermore, the radio stations have aired more than one-third (36.41%) of their headline news without any sources, rendering such news devoid of credibility. News lacking sources, anonymous sources, and one-sided sources are categorised as not credible.

**viii. Balance in the News Stories.** Radio stations have demonstrated a balanced presentation in nearly two-thirds of their headline news. However, when it comes to

political news, there is an imbalance in the sources utilised, often relying solely on one leader's speech where blame is directed towards opposition parties and their leaders. While the presentation tone, storyline, and projection of sources for social events, functions, and non-controversial issues are balanced to a considerable extent, less than one-third of the headline stories have been presented in an imbalanced manner. This imbalance arises from factors such as projecting only one source in a controversial issue, one-sided sourcing with allegations towards one party while lacking responses from the accused individuals or organisations, as well as potential political biases of the news personnel and ownership control over the newsroom.

**ix. Affecting Cause Factors in the News Sourcing Process.** The affecting cause factor is the environment which is found to affect the sourcing process. The environment is divided into two categories—internal and external. Within the internal environment, it occurs due to a lack of physical infrastructure and financial conditions that determine the number and quality of equipment and the recruitment of the journalists, their professional career development, and their professional security. External environment refers to the social, political, cultural, and economic structures that affect newsrooms while selecting news sources. The social, political, cultural, and economic sectors get higher space as the headliners in the news. Radio managers, news chiefs, and experts acknowledge that the financial constraints within their newsrooms have impacted the process of news gathering and sourcing. They admit that the prevalence of power structures in the news is a reflection of society itself, where most activities are influenced by existing power dynamics. External factors that influence in news sourcing process include those news sources who are in the position of influencing the power. The result of the content analysis and newsroom observation shows the prioritisation and reliance of newsrooms on power sources from the governmental and political sectors.

**x) Cases of Radio News that Failed to Maintain Objectivity in Sourcing.** Three cases of broadcast news from each radio station have been selected and described regarding the maintenance of objectivity and diversity in radio news. All cases are found not maintaining objectivity and diversity in news sourcing by selecting one-sided news sources, broadcasting news without sources and relying upon single sources and unidentified and anonymous sources.

***c) Objective 3: Objectivity and Diversity in the News Sourcing Process***

To fulfil the objective of exploring research question 3 of assessing objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process, a comprehensive approach has been adopted, encompassing the procedures of newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process. The result of the qualitative content analysis, radio newsroom observation, and in-depth interviews with radio practitioners, and experts have been analysed with the separate checklists of objectivity and diversity in the sourcing process. The process applied by the radio newsrooms has been analysed after setting standard checklists of objectivity and diversity in the news sourcing process. A separate checklist has been set during the observation to monitor the process of newsrooms to maintain objectivity and diversity during the news production process. After the analysis of the process under the checklists, the multiple realities and understandings of the practices of radio stations in maintaining objectivity and diversity have been observed as follows:

**i. Level of Objectivity in News Sourcing.** Most headline news items, accounting for 56.81 percent of the total sample news, have been broadcast by relying on a single source. In contrast, only 6.78 percent of the headline news has featured multiple sources, representing more than a thirteen-fold difference compared to single-source stories. Furthermore, over one third of the total main news, equivalent to 34.48 percent, has been broadcast without any mention of the source. This indicates a concerning lack of source

attribution. Additionally, a small portion of the main news, 1.93 percent, has exhibited one-sided or biased reporting. Although the number of such stories is relatively low, their presence raises concerns about the objectivity and fairness of the news content.

**ii. Accuracy in Sourcing.** Authenticity and diversity in sources decide the parameter of the accuracy of the sources as well as the news story. To analyse the accuracy in sourcing, sources such as high-credible (multiple balanced sources and sources with voice bites) and credible (single sources citing authority) have been grouped into the accuracy of sources category. Likewise, low-credible (single sources directly non-related and without citing authority, one-sided/biased sources) and non-credible sourcing (anonymous sources and news stories without sources) have been grouped into the inaccuracy category. The sample radio stations broadcast most of the news without sourcing accurately. They are found to have broadcast 60.67 percent news of the total headline news from inaccurate sources. This category indicates a single source that is not directly related to the news, lacks authority, presents one-sided and biased perspectives, includes anonymous sources, or lacks any identifiable source altogether. Only 39.33 percent of the total headline news has been on-air from accurate sources. News stories with multiple sources, stories with voice bites of sources, and single sources with authority are grouped in this category. Authenticity and diversity in sourcing are called accuracy in sourcing. It is evident that the sample radio stations are weak in maintaining the accuracy of the headline news stories.

**iii. Unidentified/Anonymous Sources Used in the Main News.** The analysis reveals that the sample radio stations made use of anonymous sources in their main news broadcasts. Approximately 12.04 percent of the airtime allocated to main news segments was attributed to anonymous sources. The stations employed various terms and expressions to cite these anonymous sources within their news content.

*a. Terms Used for the Anonymous Sources.* The terms "spectators," "it is said/found/expected/claimed," "officials said," "media said/mentioned in the news," "an informed source/a source person," "experts said/highlighted/seem worried," "according to eyewitnesses," "found/revealed in a study," "the organiser said," "spectators said that it is assumed/suspected that," "leaders said," "analysts said," "lawyers said/judges said," and "according to the weather forecasters," among others, in the main news have been identified as anonymous sources in the main news of the sample radio stations.

**iv. Attribution to Sources in the News Stories.** A significant 86.15 percent (1,474) of the main news from the total sample size has been broadcast without crediting any specific sources of information. This means that less than 14 percent of the total main news has included source attribution. Among the news credited to sources, press releases and documents have been prioritised in the radio newsrooms, constituting 5.32 percent of the total headline news in radio bulletins. News credited to the radio newsrooms' own reporters ranked third in terms of attribution, with 4.85 percent. Other sources such as broadcast media/sites and news agencies received less attribution, each accounting for less than two percent of the news. Broadcast media/sites have been credited to 1.64 percent of the news, while news agencies received attribution in 1.17 percent of the news broadcast by the radio stations. Newspapers/sites and social media have been the least prioritised sources for attribution, each accounting for less than one percent. Newspapers have been credited in headline news with 0.64 percent, while social media received attribution with a mere 0.23 percent.

**v. Gender Representation in the Headline News.** The representation of women as sources in the main news is alarmingly low, accounting for only 2.34 percent of the total sample headline news across all the selected radio stations. In contrast, men are prominently featured as main news sources, constituting 37.41 percent. Additionally, a

mere 1.17 percent of the total headline news includes both women and men as news sources. The content analysis did not identify any representation of gender minorities as sources in the headline news of radio stations. This underscores a significant gap in the inclusion of diverse gender perspectives within the news content.

**vi. Gender Representation in Radio Newsroom.** Except for BFM, the newsrooms of the remaining sample radio stations exhibit inclusivity in terms of the presence of women journalists. Radio Sagarmatha stands out as the most inclusive, with an equal number of male and female journalists, employing four individuals of each gender. Radio Nepal showcases a relatively high representation of female journalists, with 17 out of 38 journalists in the newsroom being women. On the other hand, Radio Lumbini has a smaller newsroom with only six journalists, of which two are female. Regrettably, BFM's newsroom lags in terms of gender diversity, employing only one female journalist, which accounts for a mere 25 percent of its total journalist workforce.

**vii. Headline Makers by Social Structure and Hierarchy.** Government entities, government officials, and government agencies emerged as the primary headline makers, constituting 35.94 percent of the total headline news across all four sample radio stations. This category encompasses officials from all three levels of government, including the Council of Ministers and the Parliament. Political parties and their leaders follow as the second-largest headline makers, accounting for 21.33 percent of the total headline news. International politics, leaders, activities, and events rank third, comprising 16.48 percent of the overall headline news. Professionals and experts hold the fourth position in making news headlines, contributing to 3.27 percent of the total headline news. News agencies and media entities occupy the fifth spot, with their news accounting for 2.98 percent of the overall headline news. The general people are only highlighted as headline makers in specific instances such as accidents, serious crimes, or human-interest-related

news, representing 1.75 percent of the total headline news. Traders and the corporate sector contribute 1.37 percent of the news headlines, while NGOs and INGOs make up 0.82 percent. The influence of the religious sector occupies a mere 0.06 percent of the overall headline news.

**viii. Headline Makers by Demographic Distribution.** In the analysis of source diversity, the variables have been broadly categorised into five groups: hill-origin community, Terai-origin community, Dalits, mixed sources, and other sectors. The hill-origin community represents 40.39 percent of the total airtime as the main news source, while the Terai-origin community occupies only 3.10 percent. Both the hill-origin and Terai-origin communities together account for only 0.99 percent of the airtime as mixed headline makers. This suggests that their joint presence in news headlines is primarily observed when political leaders from both communities share the same platform. Furthermore, the representation of the Dalit community within both the hill-origin and Terai-origin communities is strikingly low, comprising only 0.23 percent of the main news sources. The remaining headline makers, including the international community, institutions/offices, and anonymous sources, are grouped in the 'others' category, which occupies a significant 55.29 percent of the airtime. Therefore, the analysis of source diversity indicates a minimal presence of Dalits within the Terai-origin and hill-origin communities as headline makers, accounting for just 0.23 percent of the overall airtime.

**ix. Hill-origin Community as the Headline Maker of Radio News.** Out of the total number of sample headline news (1711), 694 news items have been broadcast mentioning Hill-origin communities as sources. Out of 694 main news items, 80.69 percent of news items have been broadcast citing Khas Arya as the headline source. Only 18.88 percent of news has been found quoting Adibasi/Janajati as the headline-maker source. The representation of Dalits is the lowest, only 0.43 percent of headline news.

**x. Tarai-origin Community as the Headline Maker of Radio News.** For the content analysis, the Tarai-origin community has been divided into four main categories: Brahman/Chhetri, Madhesi others, Adibasi/Janajati, Muslim and Dalits. Only 3.10 percent (53 news items) of news items have been broadcast out of a total of 1711 sample sizes citing the Tarai-origin community as the headline makers. Out of the total number (53 items) of news in the cluster of Tarai-origin community as headline makers, *Brahmin/Chhetri/Tarai Madhesi Others* are found to have been cited in 67.92 percent of the news. It shows the same trends as the Hill-origin community to give more air space in headline news by the Brahmin/Chhetri community as news sources. Only 1.89 percent of news item are found to have been broadcast citing the Tarai-origin Dalit as the headliner. The Muslim community has got 11.43 percent of the total sample size in this cluster as the news headliners. The Tarai-origin Adibasi/Janajati communities are the headliners of 18.87 percent of the total main news under this cluster. Comparatively, the Tarai-origin Brahman/Chhetri/Madhesi Others have more representation than the previous ones in the main news, with 67.92 percent under the Tarai-origin community cluster as the headline makers. The data projects that the marginalised communities and groups do not have access to the newsroom to share their social events, ideas, issues, achievements, and problems as news sources. While going through the data of all sample radio stations, the result of the content analysis finds that only one radio station, Radio Lumbini, has given air space for one news item to the Dalits as the headline maker. The Dalits, as the headliners, have no representation in the rest of the sample stations.

**xi. Headline Makers from the Gender Equality Perspective.** To analyse gender equality in headline news, the content analysis focuses on the male and female sex as the main variables. The headline news made by quoting males and females has been put in the mixed category. The other gender has not been identified as the headline makers. The

balance between males and females as the main figures in the bulletins has not been maintained. Out of the total sample news (1711), men represent 36 percent as headline makers, whereas women account for only 2.79 percent of the total headlines. Both males and females have been observed as the main figures in only 0.64 percent of news on the sample radio stations.

**xii. Headline Makers from Core to Periphery Perspective.** The majority of news items broadcast by the sample radio stations revolve around the country's capital city, Kathmandu. An extensive 50.85 percent of the news items are specifically related to the federal capital. This significant presence of news from the capital reflects its influence on the gatekeeping process and source prioritisation within the newsrooms. Notably, this influence is not limited to radio stations located in the Kathmandu Valley, as it is also observed in the newsrooms of stations outside the valley. For instance, Radio Nepal and Radio Sagarmatha allocate 67.87 percent and 60.80 percent of their news coverage, respectively, to the federal capital. Similarly, BFM and Radio Lumbini allocate 40.83 percent and 31.04 percent, respectively. Even local stations tend to rely more on federal-level sources and information rather than emphasising local news. This highlights a prioritisation of the capital city across radio stations. The second priority in news coverage is given to the provincial capitals, which account for 19.05 percent of the main news. Urban areas follow as the third priority, occupying 5.38 percent of the total main news stories. In contrast, a mere 2.34 percent of the main news focuses on rural areas and their issues. In contrast, international events and issues receive a significant portion, comprising 20.46 percent of the main news coverage.

**xiii) Observed Newsroom Process of the Newsrooms.** During the observation of the newsroom process in maintaining objectivity and diversity there were no news meetings, no reporting assignments, cross sourcing practices seen. The practice of taking multiple is

found only in vox-pop. The reason for this is that there are not enough human resources in the newsrooms. They are heavily reliant on desk work. It has been observed that broadcasting news with single sources, without sources, and news taken from the websites of other media outlets without attributing sources is a common phenomenon in newsrooms.

In this manner, this chapter delves into the exploration of research question 2 and objective 2, which focuses on the intricacies of gender representation and source selection within the headline news of the sampled radio stations. While the newsrooms exhibit a satisfactory level of female representation, there is a failure to maintain gender balance in source selection for headline news. Furthermore, the inclusion of other gender identities, individuals, remains absent, both within the newsrooms and as sources featured in the headlines. Compounding this issue is the employment of unidentified or anonymous sources, which contravenes the core principles and ethical codes of journalism. However, radio stations have prioritised power elites from the realms of social, political, and cultural structures as prominent figures in their headline news, thereby marginalising the voices of common people and marginalised communities. Likewise, the Khas-Arya from the hill-origin community are given priority in selecting sources while the Brahman and higher classes from the Tarai-origin communities dominate the headlines.

Moreover, the dynamics of power are evident as the federal capital assumes the paramount position as the focal point of headline news, followed by provincial capitals and major cities. In contrast, the villages and remote areas receive nominal attention in the main news content of the radio bulletins. These findings highlight a power imbalance where the centre tends to dominate over the periphery in headline-making and source selection. The source selection process demonstrates shortcomings in terms of objectivity and diversity.

The radio stations encounter challenges in incorporating multiple voices from common people and marginalised communities, thereby compromising the accuracy,

objectivity, and diversity of the news sources. The findings indicate a preference for highlighting power structures as headline makers, which reinforces the influence of power elites and dominant centres. Additionally, the lack of source attributions in headline stories suggests that stations struggle to maintain objectivity and diversity in selecting news sources.

Radio managers/news chiefs and experts from the range of broadcasting practitioners, and leaders to the academicians accept that there are weaknesses in the selection and verification of sources in the main news of the radio bulletins. It has missed the objectivity, diversity, truthfulness, accuracy, balance, and credibility of news. Consequently, not only has this affected the credibility of radio news, but it has also cast doubt on the credibility of radio broadcasting as a whole, leaving listeners confused. The radio's responsibility to amplify the voices of marginalised communities has not been fulfilled. The norms and values of radio news have not been fully adhered to by the gatekeepers in the main news bulletins. There is also a lack of commitment to presenting alternative voices and diverse perspectives in radio news. Only the powerful elites feature as the main newsmakers in radio bulletins, sidelining marginalised and ordinary people.

Experts have opinion that it would be better to enhance sourcing process implementing internal policies and conducting regular discussions and assessments to pinpoint areas for improvement in news bulletin selection and verification. Strengthening and sensitising the newsroom can be achieved by providing essential resources and timely training to journalists. It is crucial to ensure that journalists receive fair compensation, which diminishes the temptation for them to resort to unethical practices in pursuit of additional income.

During interviews, experts and the radio managers expressed worries regarding the newsroom's reliance on one-sided, anonymous, and biased sources in news reporting, being devoid of their responsibility to society and not following techniques for maintaining objectivity and diverse sources of information in their news stories. Prioritising power elites as headline makers and not including the voices of common people and marginalised communities in their news stories are issues of concern for the experts. The experts concur that an inclusive, yet competitive composition of the newsroom would be more effective in capturing diverse perspectives, as opposed to a monotonous and non-competitive environment. The gatekeeping process of the newsrooms is influenced by both internal and external factors, as acknowledged in theory. By implementing the recommended reforms and strategies, radio stations can mitigate the impact of these factors and improve their overall sourcing and verification processes.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

Through a systematic literature review, notable gaps in academic research have been identified, particularly the absence of studies exploring the news sources utilised in Nepali radio news bulletins. This study endeavours to bridge this knowledge gap by comprehensively examining the subject matter under the ambit of "News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting." To effectively address this research gap, three overarching research questions have been formulated: what is the status of news sourcing in Nepali radio broadcasting? Why is the news sourcing process affected in radio newsrooms? How do radio newsrooms maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing?

In pursuit of comprehensive answers to these inquiries, the study adopts relativism/subjectivism ontology, transactional/constructivist epistemology and interpretivism research philosophy. The research methodology incorporates a multifaceted approach under the Interpretivism Philosophy encompassing qualitative

content analysis, in-depth interviews, and field observations as pivotal tools to scrutinize the academic quandary. A purposive sample selection method has been employed to systematically choose four representative radio stations: Radio Nepal, Radio Sagarmatha, Radio Lumbini, and BFM. With diligent attention to detail, recordings of radio news bulletins from the evening prime time have been diligently collected and analysed over three months. This endeavour seeks to offer invaluable insights into the intricate landscape of news sourcing prevalent in Nepali radio broadcasting, shedding light on the inherent challenges and strategies deployed to ensure diversity and objectivity in the sourcing process. By undertaking this scholarly investigation, the study aims to make a significant scholarly contribution to the field, fostering a deeper understanding of the multifaceted dimensions inherent in Nepali radio news broadcasting.

The application of Gatekeeping, Agenda-setting and Normative theories in this analysis facilitates a comprehensive exploration of the content landscape. The emphasis on embracing diverse sources serves to fortify the objectivity and diversity, in news coverage. By upholding the inclusion of reputable sources, the dissemination of authentic information to audiences is ensured. Concurrently, the deliberate cultivation of source diversity within newsrooms enables the amplification of a multiplicity of voices, provides a platform for marginalised communities, and engenders a holistic portrayal of events and issues. This dynamic process, underpinned by gatekeeping and agenda-setting mechanisms, governs the inclusion or exclusion of news items, as well as the prioritisation and positioning of news within broadcasts. Sources that merit headline status must be accorded paramount importance. Within radio newsrooms, the gatekeeping process wields influence over the selection and exclusion of news and its affiliated sources, while agenda-setting practices dictate the strategic prioritisation and framing of news items per the newsroom's agenda.

The study is driven by three fundamental objectives: firstly, to assess the status of sourcing in the main news segments of Nepali radio stations; secondly, to critically evaluate the multifaceted factors that exert influence on the intricate process of source selection and verification in news bulletins, and thirdly, to comprehensively analyse the intricate interplay of objectivity and diversity within the source selection practices employed by radio newsrooms. To effectively pursue these objectives, a rigorous qualitative content analysis method has been deployed, precisely analysing a substantial corpus of 1711 headline news items extracted from the four sample radio stations over a 7-month time duration. Moreover, overt field observation of the gatekeeping and source selection procedures and news operation has been undertaken through firsthand visits to all sample radio newsrooms. Additionally, in-depth interviews have been conducted with a diverse panel of 26 experts, comprising radio managers and news chiefs, to gain invaluable insights and perspectives.

The study findings have unearthed multiple realities and understandings of the practice of news sourcing on radio stations such as a significant reliance on single sources within the radio stations, signifying a conspicuous absence of objectivity and diversity in their source selection process. Notably, even at the local level, radio stations appear entangled in a web of dependency on sources emanating from the federal capital, thereby neglecting their respective local communities. Federal and provincial governments, political parties and political leaders have been found as the predominant influential sources of the headline news across the sample radio stations.

Evidence from the study proved that political power has reshaped the news sourcing in radio stations. Power centres have utilised radio news airwaves introducing their agendas and influencing the news gatekeepers through the news sourcing process. The political, economic and social meta-environment has affected the gatekeeping

system of the sample radio stations. The gatekeepers seem failed to be responsible towards the society by maintaining objectivity and diversity of sources providing space to women, Dalits, Adibasi/Janajati, Madhesi and gender minorities and other minorities and marginalised people. Comparatively, the federal capital, and major cities as the core have been found as the dominant news sources than the villages and remote areas. Even, local radio stations have not given the space in their main news to the villages, villagers and farmers. Radio stations notably relied on males compared to females, the hill-origin community compared to other communities such as the Tarai-origin community and Khas-Arya community compared to Adibasi/Janajati, Dalits and other minorities. Hence, there is a disconcerting lack of awareness and concerted efforts towards ensuring gender parity within the realm of headline news stories. The process they have taken also seems weak to maintain objectivity and diversity in news sourcing.

In the lens of principle, ethics objectivity and responsibility, radio newsrooms have prioritised the inaccurate sourcing process with unidentified/anonymous sources, citing no source, and broadcasting nearly two-thirds of news items without attribution of sources. The practice of accuracy, diversity and objectivity in news sources of radio newsrooms has been found poor. Moreover, internal, and external factors have been found affecting to the gatekeeping process of the newsroom through qualitative content analysis, newsroom observation and interviews with experts and radio practitioners. The COVID-19 pandemic broke the economic cycle of radio stations. Consequently, ownership and the size of the workforce in the newsroom have been reduced. It has affected the selection and verification process of news sources, which became the reason for the decreasing quality of radio news.

The human resources department has not had the opportunity to have training which could ensure building up their skill, quality and capacity in the selection of the

proper sources and preparing quality news. Low-paid, unskilled, and temporary workforce cannot maintain a high standard of journalistic practices being the voices of the voiceless people. The lack of economic resources and an inadequate presence of quality journalists within the newsroom compound these challenges. The pervasive influence of economic, social, and political structures further underscores how the source selection process is shaped, wherein power elites are favoured at the expense of amplifying the voices of the common populace and marginalised groups.

As a result, the gatekeeping process and source selection within radio newsrooms have been observed to be susceptible to both internal and external influences. The internal environment encompasses factors such as economic constraints, inadequate physical infrastructure, and a dearth of skilled human resources. Conversely, the external environment encompasses the broader socio-political, cultural, and economic power structures that exert a significant impact on the source selection process, often privileging the interests of the power elites. The radio news gatekeepers observed failed to be responsible towards the society while doing gatekeeping business.

Notably, radio stations employ filters in their source selection, with a substantial portion of their main news content allocated to government agencies, officials, and political sectors, collectively referred to as the power elites. The power elites wield considerable influence by setting the agenda and disseminating information to newsrooms through their lens. Subsequently, radio stations tend to rely heavily on these power elites as primary sources of news, thereby aligning their selection and placement of sources with the agendas propagated by these influential entities. Radio newsrooms have been receiving news information from the internet and social media in digital forms as sources, however, they have been facing problems with the verification of authenticity of the content in the age of misinformation and disinformation. Being responsible

towards society, the radio news gatekeepers should provide space to the women, Dalits, Adibasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Tharu, and other communities including marginalised minorities, farmers, villagers, people living in remote areas and general people to become gate openers instead of only provide airspace to the power elites and power centres in main news bulletins.

The findings of the study are intrinsically tied to the constraints stemming from factors such as sample size, temporal boundaries, thematic scope, geographical context, methodological paradigm, and data collection techniques. Thus, the study's outcomes substantively endorse the imperative for radio stations and policymakers to proactively address the specific issues elucidated within the confines of the study's limitations. Furthermore, the study serves as a catalyst, engendering a fertile ground for researchers to undertake subsequent investigations into interconnected themes, elucidating the intricate interplay of financial, managerial, infrastructural, and human resources in the implementation of news and programmatic endeavours targeted at diverse audience segments.

### **7.3 Contribution to Knowledge**

This study has made a significant scholarly contribution to the concerned field, fostering a deeper understanding of the multifaceted dimensions inherent in Nepali radio news broadcasting. Moreover, it further contributes to the academic and practical understanding of media practices in Nepal, offering insights into the interplay between political power, sourcing dynamics, and ethical considerations.

The identified challenges and recommendations for improvement contribute not only to academic discourse but also provide tangible guidance for media practitioners, educators, and policymakers involved in shaping the future of radio news broadcasting. The gatekeepers need to be responsible towards society while they select and verify news

sources ensuring the normative values of objectivity and diversity. The study proposes gatekeeping with responsibility toward society in the Nepali context in the form of an original contribution to knowledge since the gatekeeping theory originated in the American context and does not fit exactly in the Nepali context. The gatekeepers should not be fully guided by the Western news values in source selection which were developed in different contexts and are not exactly suitable to the Nepali context. The Nepali gatekeepers have a responsibility towards the rights of minorities and marginalised people, proper and balanced development of the country, rational distribution of natural resources and social justice while they are selecting news sources. They are bound by normative values and the social responsibility to cover diverse voices in the news. Thus, responsible gatekeeping with journalistic norms and values has been proposed to meet the objectivity and diversity in news sourcing as the new theoretical contribution of the study.

#### **7.4 Recommendations for Further Study**

The study titled News Sourcing in Nepali Radio Broadcasting has some recommendations after the conclusion of the dissertation that would be supportive of the upcoming researchers for further study in the field of radio news, journalism and broadcasting, which are as follows:

- financial and infrastructural issues of radio newsrooms in Nepal;
- issues of news reporting on Nepali radio stations; and
- issues of editing and presentation of radio news.

## Appendices

### Appendix— 1

#### List of the Interviewees

SN	Name	Expertise/affiliation	Date of Interview	Medium
1	Acharya, Suresh, PhD	PhD in Radio, Ex. Chairperson, Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ)/ media educator	2023, January 27	Online
2	Adhikari, Durga	CEO, Radio Saphalta, Pokhara	2023, February 25	Online
3	Adhikari, Netra Prasad	News Chief, BFM	2023, March 12	Face-to-face
4	Adhikary, Dhruvahari	Senior journalist/media educator	2023, February 21	Online
5	Banjade, Debiram	News Chief, Radio Lumbini	2023, February 2	Face-to-face
6	Basnet, Babita	Editor, Ghatana Ra Bichar Weekly, Ex-Chair, Sancharika Samuha	2023, May 13	Online
7	Basnyat, Urbasi	Station Manager, Radio Sagarmatha	2023, February 13	Online
8	Bhoosal, Bharat	Ex-radio manager/ trainer	2023, February 20	Face-to-face
9	Bista, Mahendra, PhD	Senior Journalist, Media Practitioner/ Ex-Chair, FNJ	2023, February 2	Online
10	Dahal, Sudhamshu, PhD	Associate Professor, Head, Department of Languages and Mass Communication School of Arts, Kathmandu University	2023, May 22	Online
11	Giri, Arjun	Chairperson, Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (ACORAB)	2023, February 22	Online
12	Jha, Chandra Kishor	Freelancer	2023, June 14	Phone
13	Khanal, Shreeram, PhD	PhD in Radio, author, media educator	2023, January 28	Online
14	Kharel, Parsuram (P. Kharel)	Professor, Ex. Head, Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Tribhuvan University, author/media critique	2023, January 30	Face-to-face
15	Maharjan, Harshaman, PhD	Researcher, media educator	2023, March 11	Written/online
16	Mainali, Raghu, PhD	Radio Expert/ Senior Journalist	2023, March 6	Face-to-face
17	Metts, Wally, PhD	Professor of Communication, Spring Arbor University, Michigan, US.	2023, March 1	Online
18	Neupane, Minakshi	CEO, Radio Lumbini and Tilottama Television	2023, February 12	Online

19	Panthi, Kamala	Radio Journalist, Kantipur FM	2023, February 19	Online
20	Poudyal, Sahishnu	Lecturer, Journalism and Mass Communication, Tribhuvan University	2023, January 28	Online
21	Pyakurel, Pawan	News Head, Radio Nepal	2023, February 20	Face-to-face/ Online/
22	Raut, Jitendra	Head, BBC Nepali Service	2023, February 23	Online
23	Regmee, Rama Krishna	Professor, Ex-Head, Mass Communication and Journalism, Kantipur College, Purwanchal University, author/media critique	2023, January 31	Online
24	Sah, Tula Narayan	Executive Director, Nepal Madhesi Foundation/ analyst/ writer	2023, June 13	Phone
25	Schulze, Angelika	International trainer, International Institute of Journalism, Berlin (IJB)	2023, February 23	Online
26	Yogi, Bhagirath	Journalist, BBC London	2023, February 22	Online

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## Appendix—2

### Transcribed Text of In-depth Interview with Professor P. Kharel

Kathmandu

Date: January 30, 2023

Place: Babarmahal,

Time: 1:00-2:30 PM

Time duration: 90 minutes

**Q. 1. Result of the content analysis found that priority is given to the government and politicians/ political parties as sources compared to other sectors. How do you analyse this finding?**

This is true. This is true largely in print media as well. And, TV, and radio news bulletins also. That's my general observations. I have not done strong comprehensive research on the contents of television and print media. But the general pattern seems to be that. For that matter, I have done the content analysis of about 25 newspapers, but not on television. This is in an easier way. You need low investment and they expect high returns which is contradictory and it cannot happen. By this, I mean listeners would not find that news comprehensive and newsworthy.

They are just spoon-fed, meaning that when you rely especially on political parties and government officials and similar other official sources, the general public reaction is to rely on them less. That's why they are less newsworthy. You should not depend only on official sources. you must do your best to get alternative sources to contradict the information provided officially or to endorse it or to reconfirm it. But this doesn't happen. So, it's a one-sided flow of information, one-sided. The government says this, the political party says this and then the result is one-sided information. There is no verification, no cross-verification. That's why this is not a very reliable method of collecting information. Now and then it is essential again. It might seem contradictory, but it is essential.

For example, if the government is announcing a major policy statement, then it is one-sided. The reactions will follow after that. But when it is concerned with let's say the government's explanation of certain policies, then there are other critics. And if you don't get the answers from alternative sources, then it becomes weak. That's what I think.

**Q. 1.1 So, what is the reason behind it? What is your opinion on it?**

As I said, it's a low investment in expectations of high return. They just listen to what the official briefing is, and they do not go beyond that and that does not make a good story. Because you don't have to work hard. It's very easy to work that way, whatever the government issues or whatever an institution officially issues. It may be a business house. It may be some other sector. Let's say even NGOs, it might be or a political party. So, you shouldn't rely on only one source for most of the time.

Now and then you can rely on only one source. For example, there is a party-political parties convention and they have elected a new president. Okay, that day, it becomes one-way traffic in the sense that you rely only on the official statement and you can perhaps ask some questions. But the next day you can ask follow-up questions to others for their reactions, like what do you think of the new president of such and such political party? You should ask others. You should ask their workers. You should ask other independent people also. So, there are many other alternatives which should be taken

immediately or if this is not possible then, after some time. But you must do it otherwise that will not make a very good news bulletin. In Nepal's case, it is very weak.

**Q. 2. It is found that radio stations mostly rely on a single source of news in their bulletins. What is the reason behind it?**

The answer is the same as the one I gave earlier in question number one.

It's easy because you go to a certain institution or political party or government official or some other institution and whatever reply they have, whatever response they give, you rely on them and without verifying them, without checking as to what the reactions of other people would be or other stakeholders would be, you just give it and that way you do not get a comprehensive story.

You need to give or present an all-rounded news, but this cannot be done this way.

And no individual or institution would be prepared to give the story of their weaknesses, their shortcomings. They were all generally like to project their institutions or their images in a very high-profile manner. This doesn't happen in real life. So, you don't get the full story.

**Q. 3. How is the credibility of news when anonymous sources are cited in news stories? For example, it has been found that more than 80% of the headline news was broadcast without giving credit to any sources.**

This is a professional crime. It should not happen. And watchdogs, like other news media, should create an atmosphere for discouraging such practices. And if the watchdog among the media fails, then the watchdog of the watchdogs, that's the Press Council should come forward and say why aren't you identifying the sources? Sources should be disclosed at any cost as far as possible. It is on very rare occasions that sources are not identified for the sake of some serious purposes like if you don't reveal such information, you lose a lot. You are very certain that the statement coming from the source is accurate. But if the source simply refuses to be identified, then you might not be willing to forgo or forget that story. You are not prepared. You are not certain that this happened, that what the source says is true, but he or she is not willing to be identified. That happens very rarely.

Even in the best of democracies, sources are not identified now and then. But in our country, except when they report about a press conference or statement, the slightest hint of new information doesn't have any identified name.

And if you don't have an identified name, that's not professional. But if you simply don't even give an indirect form of source identity then that's a professional crime. Meaning that if someone says that a foreign Ministry official said, you are not identifying the precise source, but that may be acceptable. Now and then it's acceptable even if the name is not given. But if you simply don't mention where it came from, whether it's foreign Ministry government or political party or a certain analyst, then that's a professional crime.

**Q. 3.1. Why does it happen regularly and normally? Is it a regular phenomenon?**

It's only in Nepal. Even in South Asia that most of the time when it is not a statement. In the statement, you have a letterhead. So, they know which political party or which institution issued it. So, everybody knows. So, sources are automatically known but when some people want to make certain comments for their own personal reasons, they don't want to be identified then news media should do their best to reject such news. In other democracy, they do it. So, you go through the news bulletins and newspapers of

advanced countries and even leading Indian dailies, most of the time the sources are identified.

Regarding Southeastern newspapers or other television bulletins, India is also not good example, but their record in this aspect is better than Nepal's. But in Western countries, sources are identified by name. General readers listeners and viewers tend to believe them because this practice of not identifying the sources is extremely rare. It is not only rare, but extremely rare so, they believe it. This is a radio bulletin or television bulletin or newspaper. It is under extreme pressure not to give this news but this news is really important.

For example: Who will be the president of Nepal, next president? This might be a question. And then if the source doesn't want to be identified to name who should be, you should drop it. They will drop it as well. If you drop that news, so what? They will not be a big calamity or disaster in Nepal. But if there are other stories that are very of great importance then again, I said extremely rare practices, you give the name or you don't give the name.

This is a strong suspicion that they obtain news from different sources, but they want to give the impression of: They themselves drew the information. If they mention certain newspaper or certain radio or television or RSS national news agency, then it would mean that you are carrying somebody else's news. You don't do your homework and you don't have your own reporters. That kind of message will go to the listeners. That's why they are not identifying. That's what I think but that's why I see it a professional crime. Otherwise maybe among them, I think there are very few such who simply don't know the necessity of identifying the sources. They may be very few. If they don't know, they don't deserve to be journalists, they should be sacked today. They don't even know that. So most probably they want to hide their shortcomings. They are stealing news from others. And then they are trying to give an impression that it is the story they themselves prepared.

**Q. 4. What is the reason that most of the headlines of the main news bulletins of the radio stations are about politicians and government officials? It is found from the content analysis which I have done.**

Because government officials or for that matter even politicians and even institutional chiefs, when I say institutional Chiefs maybe Federation of Nepalese Chambers and Commerce. It is easier to meet them, you go to a certain venue or to a certain spot and you get the news very easily. You don't have to do leg work, going to different sectors and then getting an information from different sources. For example, let's say Supply situation of chemical fertilizers. Either you only go to the Ministry of Agriculture or some agricultural related research institution, you go there, you get an answer then you come back. You don't have to go to many people. Whereas what the news media should do is go to a primary information source concerning that particular event. Who is the most important, you go there. After that, you also meet other stakeholders.

For example, when a budget is presented.

All the news media in Nepal: print, radio and television, what they do is the Minister of Finance presented a budget amounting to so many trillions of rupees or billions of rupees. They just say that and then everybody says that. Whereas professional media, they tap other sources also and stakeholders as well.

What would the consumer say about the new taxation policy? If the salary has been increased, they would ask the Civil Service plus the private sector because the private sector will also be under pressure to raise the salary of their workers.

And then they go to the labour class because of their minimum wages, whether they want their minimum wages to be increased or not. What is the demand? Then they would ask the ordinary people saying I'm the ordinary people invariably they say that well now the prices might rise. Well, most Nepalis are not employed anywhere. They are self-employed. They are not employed in an institutionalized sector like banking sector or big business houses or the government offices or educational sector of the organized sector. So, you should go to the stakeholders, but this means spending more time, meeting different people and it's not easy to meet people. It's not easy to contact many people even if you get the contact, the source might not be available immediately. Then you might have to go to his or her residence to get the information. They might not be available on the phone. So that means extra. Why should we work extra, they say? But the net result is that radio has less or very few number of listeners or that television stations also have fewer number of viewers than it would otherwise have.

So, if a news outlet, whether it's radio, television or print, works to collect information from different sectors, includes different sources in a particular news, several information sources, then the news becomes rich. And when it is rich somehow, its credibility rises not only the credibility of the news but the credibility of the entire particular news institution, whether it is radio, television or print. No? Because it gets a comprehensive story. Not only what the minister said. The minister said this then it ends. No. You ask somebody, i.e., the experts: the minister said this but this/this has happened. So, the expert raises new questions, then they will go to the stakeholders, meaning maybe the Electoral constituency or maybe the consumers or the service receivers. They go and their feedback is also necessary to get a complete story.

This kind of practice is not done adequately in any newspaper. Now and then big newspapers or big television stations or radio might have done, but not in a comprehensive manner at all.

And in the case of radio too, this applies. And radio stations, especially their newsrooms, are very small; there are very few journalists. Meaning the same journalist will be reading news bulletins round the day or they will have to double as editor, also as reporter as news reader etc. So, that will be difficult. But you have to invest. There's no way out. We don't have the money, so we can't help it if they say that. They are saying this: we don't have the required finance. That is why our news desk is very small. Well, if your newsroom is very small, you cannot invest then very few people will listen to your radio stations. And your credibility is low because people say: well, this radio station is not very comprehensive, so I will go to some other news outlet. That means whether they will go to the online news portals or radio or television. Or, people will have to suffer in the sense they will also search the online portals, they will also read the newspaper, they will also listen to television stations to get one information. They will have to search so many new channels, which is time-consuming.

And then it also reflects on the low credibility of different media. If they could rely only on one particular television or radio station, their time is saved. The credibility of the media also increases. So, it's like a cycle. You must invest well to run the radio station. If you can't then credibility is low. You cannot complain. Like if you go to a restaurant and why are you giving me yesterday's samosa? And then he will say: My child was ill yesterday and my wife was also sick. So please, this is yesterday's Samosa, you eat. We don't eat.

#### **Q. 4.1. No excuse there?**

Yes, you actually cannot. Likewise, in news also, you must give the best possible news every day and every item. That's your motto in practice. If you do that, then the

credibility of the media institution increases and then it will be able to render the service it promises to the public, meaning we are the fourth estate. Media has a great role to play. They give all kinds of rhetoric on this. But when you don't invest properly in terms of equipment, infrastructure, personnel, manpower and human resources, if you don't do that, then if the minimum requirement is not fulfilled, then you cannot complain. Like a student might genuinely have a problem, his family members, three family members might be in hospital. They might be ill at home. His earnings might be low and he has to look after them and he cannot attend classes regularly, so he fails. So, you cannot pass him. His story is a very sorry story. It's a true story, but you cannot pass him. It's the same.

The unfortunate part is that it has been more than 100 years since Lipman made that statement. More than 100 years. Now it's 2023. Yes, we celebrate the century since the Lipman statement came. The unfortunate part is that it is as relevant today as it was more than 100 years ago. And this is as relevant. What is said 100 years ago is as relevant today after one hundred years as at the time he wrote or he issued that statement containing the document. And this situation has gotten worse in the later decades in the sense that in recent years. Let's say last four or five years one of the best research institutions in the United States Pew Research Centre. It has been issuing research data annually showing that not more than 45% of the American public believes or trust American Media. That means CNN, Time Magazine, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Miami Herald, Chicago Tribune etc. and this is not me saying so. Who will believe me? This is a statement bed by people who are taller than me, who are fairer than me.

Fairer means whiter than me, in Nepal English, whiter. They are fairer than me and maybe they have blue eyes. And, every year they have been saying only 45%. As for people in the third-world countries, in South Asia and Nepal, Nepal being a part of South Asia, whatever CNN or Wall Street journal says, before it gets printed on here, people will believe it. Whereas the Americans themselves, only 45% believe. Just imagine! I always complain about this here. Whatever, if they were to say, KP Oli is a weak man, everybody will believe it. If I say that, nobody will believe it. Or I mean there are other 30 million Nepalis. So, this is the unfortunate part of our media culture, our thinking culture which is wrong, but that's what Lippmann warned that at that time is still relevant. And then the other scholars from the Western World, what they say is very accurate, but they have their own weaknesses. That's another part. I will not relate here of these scholars. And here to the elite and in Nepal's case, for example, is the same also in Bangladesh or India or Sri Lanka or Pakistan, a few people are only quoted when the budget comes. There are only four or five economists. They are all resided in Kathmandu.

Now you just watch in a few weeks later, the budget presentation will be made by the finance minister. And then who will be quoted for reaction? It will be those four one or two out of those four or five economists. They will be quoted whereas there are professors who have done their PhDs and they are on the staff or on the faculty of Tribhuvan University or Thakur Ram campus, Morang campus, Prithvi Narayan campus. They are never quoted. No one does. Any of these leading media and I've always been complaining. They are professors or just because they are outside Kathmandu Valley, they are no longer professors. Whereas there are lecturers here and Chiranjeevi Nepal was a lecturer for so many years, though he was GM and he had other positions in Tribhuvan University and there are other seniors working in Thakur Ram Campus and Prithvi Narayan campus. So, they are not quoted, that's just an example. They are elitists, urban centered, Kathmandu centered. So, most of the sources of information in the

leading media in Nepal are elite-based and elite from Kathmandu. Similar things seem to happen in the districts regarding FM radio stations. It seems I have not done any comprehensive study. They are also Guided by a similar attitude.

Now my assumption is even regarding other stories or other non-headline items, My guess is that elites from the headquarters of the district are quoted more than the reporters going to the interior part of that particular town or district. They are also in the nearby tea stalls or the campuses' teachers. They don't go beyond that. Whereas the difficulty is most of the Nepalis are poor. Most of them are unemployed. The vast majority and their stories cannot come because reporters don't go to the interiors, whether it's the big media, their stringers just base themselves in the headquarters or city center. They don't go to the interior, and we don't get any news in Nepal and that is reflected also, as you just mentioned in the headlines and then apart from headlines, if anybody does research, my fair guess would be that they don't, even local news broadcast by local radio stations, I don't think they go in the interior.

If I were there then I have my own suggestions. They could now these days even in the interior people, they have their mobile sets so mobile phones. From telephones, they can get a lot of information. They just need to get key people from different wards of a particular district or a municipality. They can get extra information. They don't have to go there if they can afford the time or the money. At least, phone is there. Still, you don't even do that. Maybe they don't have the knowledge to do that. Or maybe they are overworked because their Newsroom is very small and they have to over-stress themselves. So, this is the case. So, this is again, as I said the credibility of the overall media becomes low. Credibility means it doesn't mean it has to be inaccurate. It may be accurate. But then this is the same story, the same limited sources so they don't read it. Who cares?

You must try to cover the entire universe that the particular news media intends to cover. If it is a local like let's say Municipality radio station, then it's the entire region, the entire municipality will have to be covered. Information will have to reflect the diversity present in that particular municipality. If it's a district, if it is a province, the same thing is true. And then we'll have to go again to the National media which have more investment in Kathmandu. Any publication or broadcast media east of Kalimati or not Kalimati, Thankot or west of Bhaktapur Sallaghari, it is National (laughs). And some people might not believe it, that's why some newspapers write National in their masthead, above their masthead. Otherwise, radio stations, they can always claim to be National. But this is not the case. This is the unfortunate part and this means everybody is a loser. Listeners are losers because their stories that are most relevant to them, stories concerning their issues are not presented comprehensively. It's not presented. Like we always hear of water shortage in Kathmandu. If water shortage is occurring only in Kathmandu as reflected by the News Media, I would be very happy, though I always live in Kathmandu. That means, in the rest of the country water supply is very good. In Hetauda, in Tulsipur, in Ghorahi, in Nepalgunj, in Biratnagar, what is the water situation there? National media might not give, they should give these stories in order to be National.

Radio stations operating from these municipalities and districts, are they giving those stories or not? I have my doubts that they are not giving. So, are you relevant? You came to be Community radio and you give all sorts of speeches here. What are you doing there? And I, someone based in Kathmandu, most of the time I work from here, I can sense that they have their problems, but they are not being covered. If I can sense, those people are actually living that experience. And if they are not covered, how can they be relevant? Your credibility rises if you give such stories. If the budget is presented here, their Professor, Morang campuses' Professor doctor, if he's quoted this, you know, our

professional has been quoted, sense of participation will be there. Otherwise, if you want to be a national expert, you live in Kathmandu, then when you will get your news? Otherwise, you will not be so. Parshu Pradhana, you live in Kathmandu, then you will become a national *Sahityekar*. As long as you are in Biratnagar, you are *mophasal ka sahyekar*. You come here (Kathmandu), then you are national. I need to share this to Bijay Bajimaya, if you come to Kathmandu you are National sahyekar. If you are in Pokhara, no one will interview you. Why I am very sad is because this is a complaint not done by others, but this is based on my observations, not by meeting these people. So, if an ordinary media observer can sense this. What are these editors and news coordinators doing? Are they failing?

I don't think they are trying. If they are trying, okay, then they have not been able to convince their management. That's the weakness of the management. Ultimately responsibility goes to the management. Management in Nepal, media management people in Nepal generally want to invest very little, even the best news media or most successful media, for example Kantipur, they don't want to invest in proportion to the profits they make, in proportion to their expectations. They don't. So, we all have media that have low credibility. And again repeat. It doesn't mean they are disseminating lies. No. It means it may be accurate but accurate is nothing. As I say, schools in the Kathmandu district open today. This is very accurate. And then in order to make it balance, schools in Bhaktapur and Lalitpur also open today, the balance is there. But who is going to read this? Who bothers? There's no news. Nobody listens to it. That's part of a job.

You need to give something new, something very relevant to the people, very relevant, something interesting, that's news. That is what separates news from other stories, from other social media for example. Here, you have an institution that functions like a public trust. It gives the most important news, gatekeeps the most information and serves the general public, then its credibility rises. It's not only a question of accuracy and balance. It's also a question of newsworthiness. There are many scholars from the Western World also who now and then emphasize worthiness, but I personally always say this is one of the essential elements: newsworthiness. But Western Scholars, for many decades have stressed the need for proximity. That is true. It's like somewhat close to newsworthiness. Any story that is related to the public, to the immediate public, meaning, the immediate target group of a radio station or a television station or any immediate target. That means it should be interesting to the target, interesting (he stresses), not only related. Schools open in Kathmandu, it is related, that's proximity, but it's not newsworthy. Nobody is interested in that. You must give extra. If certain schools don't open then that's news like we talk about dog bites man and man bites dog story. Similar elements will have to be there. So, we are backwards in this sense, unfortunately. So, investors are to be blamed. And then if there is enough investment, then it's the fault of the news editors. And the biggest responsibility is for the media-related end use or other organizations like The press council for instance or FNJ. They should work to encourage these people and draw their attention to gather the most relevant information to the maximum possibility. Like within their resources, they can do.

As I said if there are only three people in the Newsroom, at least every third day or every second day, if not every day, they can phone certain key sources in different wards of a municipality. At least, they will get something new now, and then. I'm not saying daily. I'm not saying every item. It may be difficult for us. You do that and then in the other part is there are too many radio stations like there are so many Coca-Cola shops. So, everybody wants to run a radio station and they say resources is the problem. We know that. I too would have become a very active journalist, but I cannot afford to run a radio

station. If I ran then I would not be able to run a radio station according to what I just said, I cannot. So, I'm honest enough not to run a newspaper. Otherwise staying at home, I could run a weekly paper. I could easily run it. I will write, I will be a one-man editor, everything I could do it. But then circulation would be very limited, very very limited. I would have to issue free copies. Then I have to inflate these subscription rates or the circulation rates, then some fake reports, I would submit to the Press Council then they would categorize me as fourth great and then I would just spam my grid then they would upgrade it to classy, then my Vatta (allowance) would increase. This happens. So, radio stations and the most easily accessible and news institutions with the potential to reach their core audience (audience means listening, viewing and reading audience). So, in this case, listeners, let's say FM. It has very easy reach, covered by its work scope. And then the maximum possible detail, you should give. Like if there is a parliamentarian close to the municipality from where the radio station operates, the next parliamentarian could be two municipalities away, but still people from that particular municipality know that MPs is ours, he has never spoken, isn't that a story? It has been two sessions. He never speaks one, and then Boksi ko aarop ma disa khuwayo (forced to consume human excreta on suspicion of practicing witchcraft), they say. So, what is that person doing? Why don't you raise this question?

You don't expect Pushpa Kamal Dahal, KP Oli or Sher Bahadur Deuba to do it. It may not be possible also for big leaders to always raise that issue. But it's the primary task of the locally elected parliamentarians, the immediate constituency. Those Parliamentarians should be asked why you are not raising our problem, what are you doing? You are only talking about the government and who the president will be. Why aren't you raising our questions? They should say that. Their opinion leaders are also failures. They are not saying that. And then local opinion leaders also should shake up these radio stations. It is their duty. They speak on every issue. So why don't they say what kind of a News Bulletin you are broadcasting? our Parliamentary is never speaking or he spoke? Why don't you raise? You should do that. Nobody is doing that.

**Q. 5 How do you analyse the objectivity maintained by the radio newsrooms, when nearly one third portion of the news found broadcast without mentioning the sources?**

I must again repeat the earlier answer partly. This is totally unprofessional. So, it is their primary responsibility. Then again, the Press Council should raise these questions. media academics should raise these issues and then media research institutions should focus on it. And then the government itself also should do it. It's their primary task, also of the concerned Ministry, to raise this question, commissioned some people to do research and then highlight those. And, then big news outlets should also every now and then carry the reports of these research. Even stringers can be mobilized to do some mini research. So, objectivity cannot at all be attributed or considered to be credible. It might be objective but people will not believe it because of who said it. Like, let's say employment will be reduced by 25% within the next three years. If they read it or people will hear it on the radio, people will not believe it, who said that? If they mention the source and the source is very credible, it is said by such and such person, then people will tend to believe it. Maybe they will say: is it? Will it be? or they will believe it. But at least there will be some reaction.

**Q. 5.1. If their voice is also there, would be then it become more credible?**

Yes. That's excellent. That's the advantage of radio but they don't give. They hardly use it.

Because then that's what proximity is. Like, it's kind of a semi-live broadcasting in the sense that people would like to see why do people spend so much money towards a football match in the stadium instead of watching live on television because they want to see the source's flesh and blood.

If not, they want to see the visual. If not visual, they want to hear the voice on the radio. They don't do any of these. The radio should do that. That's their advantage, their own leader. And, then people can get the sense of the sincerity or the sense of conviction or confidence of the source when you listen to the voice, that's more powerful than giving it in an oral narrative. That's their failure. And once they don't have the resources, they should have but they don't have. Many they don't know, maybe they are not encouraged to do it. So, they take the lazy path. So, what should you do? Again, I say the Federation of Nepalese Journalists because they have been able to pool millions of rupees from different INGOs. So, they should go and give orientation to these people.

I don't think FNJ has this kind of idea itself. I very much doubt it first of all. If they have doubted then they will get themselves employed. They themselves will be the resource person. Maybe they are capable but not all of them. Every time for every training, the same person goes. That would not do but they should do it. And the government can also do this. It's not the government's intervention at all. It's not government handling or anything. It's for the general improvement of journalism standards. Of broadcast journalism, what is their advantage, you see, what is the situation? And then a different media should contribute like big media. So, you must invest more. You might say but then they don't do that. If you suggest that you must invest more, the best of big media houses in Nepal are not paying the minimum salary to all of their staff, not even the best.

**Q. 6. It is found that the elite voices city versus village, men versus women, Brahmin Chhetri versus Dalit, the businesspersons versus small traders and so on have easy access to the Newsroom instead of the common people as a news source. In your opinion, why are radio stations not inclusive when it comes to new sources?**

Okay! Again, because first of all, they should be convinced that such kind of practice in attracting diverse sources of information is essential. Maybe they are not convinced. Maybe they don't have the idea or maybe they have the idea, but they don't have the resources, personnel or manpower. They lack adequate human resources. Secondly, just because, on this we must be very careful. Just because this Brahmin or Dalit or Madhesi or some other communities or those communities that have not been able, in general, to advance much on to this level of the average Nepali. They have not been able to. But so far, I see another, firstly this kind of information sources have not been tapped at all. They have not been reached by the media in general first. Secondly even if some now and then do, they try to meet different people, some big media have tried. That too is inadequate now. When they go, if they go to the Dalit community, the most elite of them will always be there. There too, you need diversity. If they go to a Brahmin community, they go to the most privileged, or most educated among the Brahmin also.

Everywhere. Even if they go to the women, they are always in Kathmandu and in the name of the entire 15 million women, they already lead. Then, they say this is the victory of women. You must go to the core areas, women who spend most of the time outside Kathmandu Valley in their own provinces. Just to get some benefit, they give their permanent address. They might give address like Taplejung, Dadeldhura, but they are here every time. That should be well accounted for by political parties with ideological sincerity. They are not doing that. And then just because some Dalit or some Brahmin, it doesn't mean diversity in their respective communities has been reflected. No, that's

totally wrong. You are all the leaders coming from this quota system. They are the most privileged.

And they think of only their privilege, not their actual constituents, which numbers are large. They don't do that. That's one deficiency.

That is why. Firstly, the question itself has some answers. There is a big gap between urban centers or and rural centers and they believe in different communities as well. But within communities also, only a small minor group is repeatedly approached as information sources. Whereas the problem they try to raise is that of the entire Nepalis. They try to raise the issues of the entire Nepalis. And then only a limited few are being approached for information. Like if they are talking of PhDs, you talk with the PhDs. No problem. You don't have to go to every district. But when the issues are concerned with development, basic needs, employment, education, health then most of the people are those who are not quoted here. The people who suffer the most or people who lack privilege the most are hardly ever approached for information at all. Mostly, in general. So, most of the news, they rely only on the government. And then governments everywhere including the best of democracies are not very trusted by the people. They are considered to be necessary evil.

You need a government. We need to be governed. Otherwise, society would be Anarchist. That's why we are compelled to install a government. That's what America says, France says, UK says and everybody says that. But we need it.

But in general, you have to go to the common person. And in order to go to the common person, the woman always tries to protect itself, big Industries or big institutions, they always try to maintain their image. So, if their revelation of information, if their statements are to create adverse effects on their institutions, they will not speak for the general masses, whether it's a labor class or farmers or students. They will not speak for them. And then you are not approaching them. That's why, if they say educational policy. The government statement is good. You take them because they are the policymakers. Then you go to the teachers, different schools, not only government but private also, community also. Then you go to the students, you go to the parents not only in Kathmandu and eight or ten sources, not only that. As I said earlier, when the budget is presented, only four professors or not Professor only four economists or five economists. When I say this, I often say this and they say they name the people who are quoted. It will create a sense of participation if you quote sources from different areas, different communities. It will enrich the story. So on, for FM radio stations also, they have to see their core issues and then regarding any incident that happens in the particular municipality, they should go for diverse information sources which have not happened at all.

**Q. 7. To what degree do you feel the news coverage by radio stations is biased in Nepal? Why does it seem?**

I haven't done any proper content analysis regarding their news contents. I can just make a guess and then suggest certain aspects that is true again. For example, when they don't tap, when they don't approach diverse information sources, as far as professional standards are concerned, it seems to be biased because they contact only limited sources. And they don't diversify their sources. So, that is another way of creating a bias. Like, certain incidents happen, you ask only the government. What you have done is good, but then that's not enough. You have to ask others as well about the government claim. Some will say yes, they will support the government or they will have a contradicting view. Otherwise, it's like a biased approach. No? You ask only one person. That's a biased approach.

And that should not be done. People just think that you ignore somebody and you give only one source, that is one kind of bias. But, here, the general rule is to ignore large sections of society, whether by the national media, whether the print or the broadcast simply because their information sources are very limited. So, the content turns out to be biased simply because what their information sources said is accurate, accurate in the sense, whatever that source claimed it is given, right or wrong but whatever it says is given but then you are not giving the other point of views. And if you don't do that, then the result is bias. Result gets to be biased. That's all.

**Q. 8. The process of selecting and verifying sources seems weak in the radio newsroom, for example, news/editorial meetings, reporting, diversity and accuracy in sourcing. What are the reasons behind it?**

Actually, this should not happen especially in small newsrooms. They are so limited people; they are mostly confined to their own radio stations. So, at least they can discuss among themselves. When the newsroom is large, then it might be difficult to assemble them together frequently. It might be. But the problem is that the news media in Nepal in general, don't hold regular meetings. Even the best of all the large news media, they hold meetings about once in two weeks, otherwise once in a month. That's all. In practice, especially the large media or even professional media, they will hold a meeting of the entire newsroom at least once a week. And then if there are Beats, if there are certain desks like a sports desk, which is not the case in radio stations because they operate in a small manner. Large media should hold daily meetings as much as possible. Once a week the entire newsroom should meet. This has not happened in Nepal.

For radio stations they should meet daily. Now. It might sound contradictory, big don't need whereas small need. I said, for big media the beat reporters should meet regularly, beat reporters means including the concerned desk like sports desk, the sports editor and the reporters, they can meet every day. Now and then, there might be exceptions. There are three/four sports desks' journalists in large media. They can meet on the phone, they can talk. Not for the sake of formality, but for what is happening? What can be done etc.?. A lot of things can happen, a lot of things. For example, a sports reporter might listen to somebody at Dasarath Rangashala saying that there might be a good change in government. He might listen to some sports spectators, football spectators, and he can convey that information to the political beat. At the sports Stadium, some political leaders watching a football match might be overheard saying that the government might change, all the cabinet might be reshuffled. This clue can be conveyed by the sports reporter to the political reporter.

That is how the newsroom operates elsewhere here. They don't do that. At least the news sports desk should meet every day. They should be either in contact over the phone or they should meet, these beats for the large media. For the FM stations, they are in the same Newsroom. There are few. So, either on the phone if they are spread into like morning shift or day or evening. That's all. There are three reporters or three anchors, whatever you call. This should be in regular contact. That itself is a meeting. And serious talk you do, what talk, the general line is what's happening? Where did we fail or where did we improve today as compared to others? You should listen to other radio stations. The first task is for them to also listen to other radio stations, radio stations nearest to them, then radio stations next to the nearest, next in the line. For example, in your Municipality, there are two radio stations. Okay, you listen to them. Then in the entire district

And then you get ideas like such and such radio stations interviewed its parliamentarians. Then maybe we can also interview our Parliamentarian on this issue. Like if there's a

budget then you ask your Parliamentarian. Now I give an idea right now, every municipality you ask, you get in touch with your Parliamentarian. And ask what do you think of this budget? Whether he will use Golmotel Bhasa because he hasn't read, he didn't listen to the budget. He'll be watching this own online content. He will be watching those when listening to the budget space. He doesn't know anything then you trace him. And then you give the report saying that he couldn't answer properly. 'Oh, we are listening. Now. We have to study it. This is not a very good budget,' that kind of language anybody will give you. And if I don't listen to that budget speech, if I'm on the moon I can give the statement but there's no news. That's a Golmotel talk.

You ask specific questions. Now, how will it impact our Province? How can it impact our district? That you can ask. By the way, you are from our municipality, your core constituency. Could you say something on our municipality? Could you say? Because you would not be able to go to the micro level immediately, but at least he could speak of the district. His first task will be what will happen to my district. What impact will it have? If he doesn't know he should immediately be caught, that Parliamentarian should be in touch with experts that he has trust in. Then he should get their views also, then he should verify, then he should be able to speak. We know that none of her prime ministers are all in all but it's their job to be briefed by their experts. So, this Parliamentarian, he does nothing. His whole idea is to go to the party leaders' office. And then this is my chance to be prime minister. I must be or some Theka-patta (contract) he wants. You must ask them. They don't do it. This is the story now for all FM stations. You just ask your Parliamentarian first. And if it is from Dadeldhura, then you talk to Sher Bahadur Deuba. He will speak though he is the party leader, you ask: you are from our constituency, by the way, what is it that you do? And then you go to KP Oli, you go to Pusha Kamal Dahal. People are just lazy or they don't have idea. And then this professional organization who functions in the name of journalist, they are not doing their job properly.

**Q. 9. When it comes to truthfulness, how do you evaluate the radio News Bulletin, please answer with the specific example? Any cases?**

I don't know. I cannot immediately give any specific example of untruthful news. For all I can see that if you rely, which is a very fair assessment, if you rely on extremely limited sources, then you never get a full picture. And that is not a complete truth. Never get a picture. For example, someone beat a police official, that's all and then it's true. It's accurate information. But it's not a full story. Maybe the policeman just hit him several times. He was in a drunken mood and the policeman asked the man to pay his bill. He didn't pay it.

And he threatened him several times, but No I will not pay, he says, then he beat him. Then he also returned; otherwise, his head would be injured. So, you must give the full picture. Otherwise, that's not the full truth. So, you go for the truth, whether it's half-truth or entire lie. So, most of the time, it is semi truth. When it is semi truth, this is no news. This is news. We are talking about news. It isn't just ordinary information. News is something special. That's why I don't believe in those social media journalists, that kind of things don't happen. You have to be a full-fledged professional journalist. Social media for the sake of argument might be more important and more powerful than news media. But the news media, they have their own specific tasks, declared tasks, public expectations to verify news, cross verify news that comes out regularly.

And for broadcast media and even online media, every second you have an opportunity because of the new technique, you can improve your news every time. But specific news

Bulletin, you have to broadcast. For social media, you don't need. One day, you can issue 50 statements then the next 50 days, you can rest quietly. That's not journalism. And then don't try to fool me by saying such and such Williamson or Jackson said that. Who cares? Why don't care just because the name sounds somewhat Western and then whatever the Westerner says is correct? There might be some people saying oh, this is all of them. You said otherwise, I will have named, my name as Dhan Bahadur. Then I would always be Dhan, Dhan Bahadur. So here also, the task is oh, what is a journalist? What is the definition? People who are involved in social media, they might be performing technically. They might be performing a bigger role than journalists. But they are not journalists. For journalists, as I said, certain minimum specific periodicity of broadcasting news bulletins or issuing newspaper editions that's necessary and you can do extra. I always add extra because news portals, they can update the news every second, every minute. That's there, but television also can use their Ribbon or scrolling, whatever you call it, every time. But, hourly news Bulletin four times a week is up to them. That has to be fulfilled. These social media: people engage in social media don't have that responsibility. If you cannot fulfill that responsibility, you are not a full-time journalist.

**Q. 9.1. Regarding this question, one aspect is that generally in the news bulletins, we can see that according to agencies and the officials said like this, are used as forms of citing sources. This type of citing of the sources is done. What is your comment on this matter?**

This is totally unprofessional and duplicity because you might be specific in saying which agency. You must identify the agency. Sometimes they don't subscribe to agencies. They still knew information from other sources and they don't mention it. Now and then they cook up their own stories and attribute it to agencies. So, you might be able to see it live in flesh and blood, but you will never be able to identify these agencies. So, this is unprofessional again. They shouldn't do this at all. And then who's responsibilities? The government should hold discussion programmes, the Press Council should be proactive in launching interaction programmes concerning this kind of issues and then raise awareness then it would apply pressure on those people. Then they will restrain. But here even if such commissions or short committees are created, they appoint their own cadre. By the news without sources, the listeners would be misinformed. That's for sure. If they believe it, they are misinformed. If they don't believe it, then they are frustrated. Look what kind of media do we have? This happens.

**Q. 10. What is the reason behind the factors like social, political, economic and the cultural in society affecting the newsroom in the selection of news sources?**

Our society is highly politicized. Even grill companies, they are Pragatishil grill company, Prajatantrik grill company, and then Krantikari grill company and then companies related to other political parties. And, in sports also, sports athletes are divided into Krantikari, Prajatantrabadi, Pragatishilbadi. Among Kalakar (artists) also, it is the same thing, senior kalakar also are divided in that way. That kind of divided society will never create and they get the larger voice, others don't. Truly independent voices are rarely recognized in Nepal. That's the most unfortunate part and regarding press coverage also, it's the same. And why I say, it's the same, this is a very serious issue. It is proved by the fact. I rarely use the word 'prove' as researchers like you and me. But I say in this case proved. There are 12,000 members in the FNJ. Whereas in fact there are supposed to be 22,000. These are all affiliated to Nepali Congress, Moaist Centre, UML and other political parties including Rapraba and all.

22,000, Now they work in different media. And information is sometimes, they try to unrealize stories that will affect their political parties. They will try to project a certain leader High because it is their leader. If that happened then bias is there. I hear sometimes FNJ's Chair, previously also, now also, well as long as we work as journalists, we are impartial, then at other times we are party members. Then okay, you give the same privilege to the Supreme Court judges also. In the morning and evening, they can join the political parties when they are on the Bench, they are biased. They are not biased.

**Q. 11. What major steps do radio stations need to take to address the weaknesses in source selection?**

I think institutions like Acura, for instance, there might be others also. They should seriously work to render Professional Services to listeners. This should work professionally by holding serious interaction programmes seriously, interaction programmes that will give a Critic of their own preformation. They talk among themselves. They don't need to talk with others if they don't want to. To begin with one to assess their own performance in terms of their contents that are aired or disseminated. Secondly, they should try to get new ideas from different people and then it is up to them to assess which suggestions to accept and which to reject. Maybe what I say is not all practical or not all professional or not all acceptable to them. Acceptable in the sense in terms of their resources. But at least, be proactive in drawing independent opinions first. But more important is among themselves, they should hold serious discussions to improve their services within their existing resources. If they have only three people in the news, okay, what best can we do? At least try that. Three people working, only three people. What is possible? I'm sure there is a way out. You can work extra as I said earlier you can use the phone more often. Because news bulletins are not aired every hour. So, within bulletins, the space between two bulletins can always be used for phoning people: such and such thing happened there. What do you have to say? You can ask our parliamentarian. He met with an accident in Kathmandu. You can ask the local mayor or their family members there.

A MP got involved in an accident in Kathmandu. So, if you get that news from Kantipur, don't just go on talking in the newsroom. You phoned their family members, their in-laws and other relatives, their teacher, the MP's school teacher. He might be now 80 years. you talk to them. They are so many ways of improving your news content, even within the existing resources/ And I feel very frustrated when I see this. I just as a single person, just on the basis of observations and little story can make such suggestions. Then these people are working there. Why don't they, why don't they alert themselves and try to improve their services within their existing Manpower, within their existing system? We can always do that. And then the other thing is if you don't have certain news, but you know that it could be biased, you drop it. And try to get additional information the next day, the next News Bulletin or next week. That way, you save your credibility and there are ways saying that several radio stations gave premature news information saying this Parliamentarian did this.

But our research found that six days later. We found this, that will help. If you do this 365 days for two years people will begin to recognize the credibility of your station. Then once you try, your station gains its credibility. Then people will air to your station and not only your municipality but the neighbourhood municipality listeners also will listen to your radio. This is what I think. So, I get frustrated. I really get frustrated. Usually, they can't even do this and even the Press Council cannot do this. The FNJ

cannot do this and then professional institutions concerned with the broadcasters, they can't do it. The government cannot do it. Then what is this? Whereas there are journalists, thousands. I repeat thousands of journalists working as media advisers to not only Mayors but also ward chairpersons.

**Q. 11.1. Relating to this question, what is the importance of the diversity of sources in the media? Should it be necessary?**

Absolutely essential, diversity in the sense, of immediate stakeholders. If there's an accident who?

Maybe the police. The police will say something and then Somebody else will say something and then the family members, maybe the family members are biased, we don't know then observers, experts and then the general public, you should always go for this. And if you follow such an approach in every news item as far as possible every day every year. Three years will just fly like this. After three years/ four years, the credibility of your radio station as compared to other radio stations will be much better. If others are also working then competition rises. If every radio station, does it, then the competition rises and the people will be served well, and then we can claim ourselves as the fourth estate. Otherwise, it's like calling myself Dhan Bahadur Whereas I don't have much Dhan (Wealth).

—The end—

I hereby certify that Mr. Ghama Raj Luitel has taken an in-depth interview with me on January 30, 2023, to fulfilment of the requirements of his PhD dissertation. The transcribed texts represent the audio form of the interview.



Professor Parsuram Kharel

Date: July 5, 2023

Babarmahal, Kathmandu.

## Appendix— 3

Code Book for the Content Analysis of Sources in  
Main News of Radio Bulletins

	Name of the Radio Station	Date of the Broadcast:	Location of the radio station:
<b>i) Length of the news bulletin</b>			
1) Less than 15 minutes			
2) 15 to 30 minutes			
3) More than 30 minutes			
<b>ii) Genre of the news</b>			
1) Hard News			
2) Feature News			
3) Interviews			
<b>iii) Type of the news story</b>			
1) Headline news			
2) General News			
<b>iv) Subject/ Topic of the news story</b>			
1) Political / Government			
2) Economic/Business			
3) Social/Legal/ Environmental			
4) Sports			
5) Arts, Media and Entertainment			
7) Crime and Violence			
8) Other			
<b>v) Source: direct or secondary?</b>			
1) Person (direct source)			
2) Secondary Source (Report)			
3) News without any reference to sources			
<b>vi) Number people as news source</b>			
1) 1			
2) 2			
3) 3			
4) 4			
5) More than 4			
6) Not available			
<b>v) Type of the source by region</b>			
1) Local			
2) National			
3) International			
<b>vi) Type of the source by gender</b>			
1) Male			
2) Female			
3) Other			
<b>vii) News story is credited to:</b>			
1) Press Services/ News Agencies			
2) Newspaper Sites			
3) Broadcast sites			
4) Social Media/ Blogs			
5) Reporters			
<b>viii) If news story is produced by reporters, how has it been prepared?</b>			
1) On the basis of field reporting			
2) On the basis of desk reporting			
3) Both			
<b>ix) How credible are the news sources?</b>			
1) Very Credible			
2) Not so credible			
3) Not credible			
4) Do not know			
<b>x) To what degree you agree with the</b>			
1) Agree			
2) Disagree			
3) Neither agree nor disagree			
4) Do not know / Cannot decide			
5) Do not know / Cannot decide			
<b>xi) Would this story be useful for qualitative analysis?</b>			
1) Yes			
2) No			

**Appendix— 4**  
**Radio Newsrooms Observation (Field Work) Module**

**Name of the radio station:**

Nature of the station:

Address of radio station:

Observation date:

Observation time:

**Checklists of newsroom operation**

**1. Status of newsmen**

- a. Number of journalists in the newsroom....
- b. Number of female journalists...
- c. Number of other genders...
- d. Structure of the newsroom:
- e. Number of editors:
- f. Number of copy editors:
- g. Number of reporters:
- h. Nature of the job of the journalists:
  - i. Permanent:
  - ii. Contract:
  - iii. Daily wages:
  - iv. Volunteer:
  - v. Trainee/internship:

**2. Trained human resources in the newsroom:**

- a. Training of 10 months to 1 year
- b. Training of 6-9 months
- c. Training of 3-5 months
- d. Training of 1-2 months
- e. Training of 15-30 days
- f. Training of 7-15 days
- g. Training of 1-6 days

**3. Education level of journalists:**

- a. PhD:
- b. MPhil:
- c. Master:
- d. Bachelor:
- e. Less than Bachelor:

**4. Editorial meeting**

- a. Number of participants journalists
- b. Time of meeting
- c. Review of the previous news bulletin
- d. Projection of news for the day
- e. Assignment

**5. News collection**

- a. Field reporting
- b. People visit the newsroom to provide news information
- c. Meeting with sources at the radio station
- d. Talk to the sources from the newsroom
- e. Press release in paper
- f. E-mail

- g. Social media
  - h. Online surfing
  - i. Radio listening
  - j. Television watching
  - k. News agencies news
  - l. Telephone interview
  - m. Taking news from the reporters
  - n. Copying news from the online
- 6. News writing**
- a. Dry or with voices story
  - b. Based on own reporting
  - c. Based on the press releases
  - d. Based on the online portals
  - e. Based on radio, television
  - f. Based on the news agencies
- 7. News submission to the desk**
- a. To the subeditor
  - b. To the coordinator
  - c. To the shift in charge
  - d. To the director
  - e. To other colleagues
  - f. Non to anyone
- 8. News editing and finalization**
- a. Structural editing
  - b. Language editing
  - c. Rewriting
  - d. Fact-checking
  - e. Source reliability checking
  - f. Returning to the reporter to add the fact, quote, source, and dimensions of the story
- 9. Deadline**
- a. Before 30 minutes
  - b. Before 20 minutes
  - c. before 15 minutes
  - d. before 10 minutes
  - e. before 5 minutes
  - f. No deadlines
- 10. News monitoring**
- a. Assignment to monitor the news
  - b. No one assigned to monitor the news bulletin
- 11. After the news bulletin broadcast news meeting or discussion**
- a. Review meeting after broadcasting the news bulletin
  - b. No meeting

## Appendix— 5

### A Structured Set of Questions for the Radio Manager/News Chiefs

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a PhD Scholar researching 'RADIO News Sources' at Tribhuvan University. I have completed the Content Analysis of sample news bulletins. To analyse the findings from the content analysis as qualitative data, I designed some questions to answer. Please, be assured that your opinions and data will be used only for this purpose and the secrecy of the data will be maintained. I hope you will support me to complete my study. For your kind information, the following questions have been designed based on the findings of the content analysis. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Ghama Raj Luitel, 9851116464

25/01/2023

1. What is the condition of the financial and physical infrastructures in the newsroom? Is it sufficient in your opinion?
2. What is the condition of human resources such as editors, reporters, stringers, and infrastructure in the newsroom? Is it enough for the accuracy and diversity of news sources?
3. The result of the content analysis found that priority is given to the government and politicians/ political parties as sources compared to other sectors. How does it happen?
4. It is found that mostly, your radio station is relying on a single source of news. What is the reason behind it?
5. Why are the people living in the capital city and the urban areas given priority as news sources instead of those living in rural areas in your radio?
6. Why are women, minorities and Dalits in low priority as news sources on the radio?
7. Mostly, the radio news on the radio is found based on secondary sources. In your opinion, what are the factors that affect radio newsrooms to reach first-hand sources?
8. It is found that the elite voices (City vs. village, man vs. women, Brahmin/Chhetri vs. Dalit, businessperson vs. small trader and so on) have easy access to the newsroom instead of the common people as a news source. In your opinion, why are radio stations not inclusive when it comes to news sources?
9. In your opinion, what is the reason behind the factors (social, political, economic, and cultural) in the society affecting the newsroom in the selection of news sources?
10. Why is there a lack of balance in source selection in the news on the radio?
11. How do you analyse the objectivity maintained by the radio newsrooms when nearly one-third of the news was broadcast without mentioning the source?
12. Why did most of the headliners of the main news bulletin find power elites? Please reason behind it.
13. It has been found that more than 80 percent of headline news was broadcast without giving credit to no one. To what degree the news is authentic and credible to the audiences?
14. If the radio broadcasts a one-sided or incomplete picture of any event, how will it affect society?
15. In your opinion, what major steps does the radio station need to take to improve the weaknesses related to news source selection?

## Appendix— 6

### A Structured Set of Questions to Experts

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a PhD Scholar researching 'RADIO News Sources' at Tribhuvan University. I have completed the Content Analysis of sample news bulletins. To analyse the findings from the content analysis as qualitative data, I designed some questions to answer. Please, be assured that your opinions and data will be used only for this purpose and the secrecy of the data will be maintained. I hope you will support me to complete my study. For your kind information, the following questions have been designed based on the findings of the content analysis. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Ghama Raj Luitel, 9851116464

25/01/2023

- 1 Result of the content analysis found that priority is given to the government and politicians/ political parties as sources compared to other sectors. How do you analyse this finding?
- 2 It is found that radio stations mostly rely on a single source of news in their bulletins. What is the reason behind it?
- 3 How is the credibility of news when anonymous sources are cited in news stories? (For example, it was found that more than 80 percent of headline news was broadcast without giving credit to any sources)
- 4 What is the reason that most of the headlines of the main news bulletins of radio stations are about politicians and government officials?
- 5 How do you analyse the objectivity maintained by the radio newsrooms when nearly one-third of the news was broadcast without mentioning the source?
- 6 It is found that the elite voices (City vs. village, man vs. women, Brahmin/Chhetri vs. Dalit, businessperson vs. small trader and so on) have easy access to the newsroom instead of the common people as a news source. In your opinion, why are radio stations not inclusive when it comes to news sources?
- 7 To what degree do you feel the news coverage by radio stations is biased? Why or why not?
- 8 The process of selecting and verifying sources seems weak in the radio newsroom, for example, news/editorial meetings, reporting, diversity, and accuracy in sourcing. What are the reasons behind it?
- 9 When it comes to truthfulness how do you evaluate the radio news bulletin? Please, answer with specific examples/ cases, if any.
- 10 In your opinion, what is the reason behind the factors (social, political, economic, and cultural) in society affecting the newsroom in the selection of news sources?
- 11 What major steps do radio stations need to take to address the weakness in source selection?



## b. Programme Schedule of Radio Sagarmatha

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>रेडियो सगरमाथा एफएम १०२ बोम्बो ४ मेगाहर्ट्ज</b> <b>कार्यक्रम तालिका २०७९/०६/१० देखि २०८०</b></p>							
विहान	आइतबार	सोमबार	मंगलबार	बुधबार	बिहीबार	शुक्रबार	शनिबार
६:००-७:००	रेडियो सबर पब्लिक (२०६२/११/१९ देखि ६:००) - पत्रपत्रिकाको संगालो, विहानी कुरा, जानकारी मौसम ( विहानी टोनी )						
७:००-७:१०	रेडियो कुराकानी मुल्लोचना मानन्धर	रेडियो कुराकानी डा. प्रकाशराज रेग्मी (२०६९/०१/१८)	रेडियो कुराकानी भैरव रिवाल	रेडियो कुराकानी भूपण तुलाधर	रेडियो कुराकानी डा. दिनेश भुज	रेडियो कुराकानी ज्योति बार्जिया	रेडियो कुराकानी (कृष्ण श्रवाली )
७:१५-७:३०	सानेपानी र सरसफाईका कुरा आनन्द गौतम		कानूनका कुरा अधिवक्ता सविन थप्ट	खानी	शिक्षाका कुरा डा. लक्ष्मण श्रवाली	खानी	संरक्षणका कुरा शिब राज मडु
७:३०-८:००	बातावरण डबली	जवाफदेहीता र सबधार टिप्पणी ( १५मि)	बीमा साक्षरता		सफल उद्यमी	शिक्षा डबली रोशना मुल्ला	प्रकृति र जनबापु परिवर्तन पाकि
८:००-८:३०		उजिले बाजेको पालामा पुनः प्रसारण	सैद्धान्तिक उत्तरदायी बाल संरक्षणका लागि पहल			अपाइताका सवाल	
८:३०-८:४५	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण	रेडियो कुराकानी पुनः प्रसारण
८:४५-९:००	हालघान	हालघान	हालघान	हालघान	हालघान	हालघान	हालघान
९:००-९:३०	मिमिरे भाका, गीत						
९:३०-९:००	मिमिरे भाका, गीत						
९:००-९:१०	युवा पुस्ता गीत	युवा पुस्ता	युवा पुस्ता	युवा पुस्ता	युवा पुस्ता	युवा पुस्ता	तामाङकाड- जुद्ध योन्जन
९:१०-९:४५	मुनास - सुरज विर बजाधार्य	मुनास - खानी	मुनास - तरेश अमाल्य	मुनास - सुरज यन्जनकार	मुनास -	मुनास -	मुनास - अनिल मान महर्जन
९:४५-९:२०	हालघान						
९:२०-९:४५	मुल्ला मन्था	मुल्ला मन्थमा	मुल्ला मन्था	मुल्ला मन्थ	मुल्ला मन्थ	मुल्ला मन्थ	मुल्ला मन्थ
९:४५-९:५०	हालघान						
९:५०-९:६:००	मन्थाइ चौतारी गीत चौतारी	लोकभाका गीत	लोकभाका	धर्तीधरका गीत	लोक गीत		मन्थाइ चौतारी
९:६:००-९:६:४५	मेरा गीतहरू	जुद्ध योन्जन संगीत बाटिका	संगीत बाटिका	संगीत बाटिका	संगीत बाटिका	संगीत बाटिका	रंगमाताका गीत
९:६:४५-९:७:००	हालघान						
९:७:००-९:८:००	खानी						ललितपुर सरोकार
९:८:००-९:९:४५	नुकामारी	नुकामारी	नुकामारी	नुकामारी	नुकामारी	नुकामारी	नुकामारी
९:९:४५-९:९:५५	हालघान (२०६२/११/१२ बुधवारदेखि)						
९:९:२०-१०:००							
९:९:३०-१०:००			पिरियडका कुरा				
१०:००-१०:४०	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा	आजका कुरा
१०:४५-११:००	बीबीसी नेपाली सेवा (२० मर्श २०६२)						
११:००-११:४५	गीत						
११:४५-१२:००	हालघान						
राती	आइतबार	सोमबार	मंगलबार	बुधबार	बिहीबार	शुक्रबार	शनिबार

## c. Programme Schedule of BFM

Program Grid								
Theme	Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Evening Vibes	5-6am	Nepali Pop	Hindi Song	Nepali Hindi Mix	Nepali Pop	New Hindi	Nepali Pop	Mix Max
	6-6:30am	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS
Morning Melody	6:30-7am	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody	Hindi Melody
	7-8am	Radha Nisha	Radha Nisha Sponsored- By: Wai, Wai	Radha Nisha	Radha Nisha	Radha Nisha	Radha Nisha	Radha Nisha Sponsored By Khukuri Tel
Morning Mania	8-9am		Janasvastyha Bahas/Kailash Sir		B Music	B Music	Srastha Ra Srijana Vin Kumar	
	9-10am	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS/Sajha Sarokar
Morning Melody	10-11am	B Music Nepali				Adhunik Song		Life Rocks-Anjila
	11-12 Noon	Astro & More-Nisha			Food-Corner-Nisha		Char Sansar-Radha	
Flash Back Melody	12-1pm		Beauty Parlor Radha	Bolly Top-10 Ranjana		Forever Hits-Nisha		
	1-2pm	Title Track-Nisha		Apan Mithila-Radha		Suno Sunau Ranjana	Bollywood Top-10 Repeat	
Tea Time	2-3pm	News/Hindi Remix	News/Hindi Latest	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS /
	3-4pm	Nepali Film Song				Rojat Tapal Ko Indu		
Move And Groove	4-5pm	Look Geet	Look Geet		Look Geet			
	5-6pm	Guess What? Susmita	B Music	Title Track-Repeat	15 Sec- Dipendra	Musical Treat Dipendra	Forever Hits-Repeat	
Pop Beat	6-6:30 pm	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS	NEWS
	6:30-7pm	B Music Hindi						
Melody Mashti	7-8pm		Janasvastyha Bahas-Repeat	All About Love-Nisha	Forever Hits-Repeat		VAR Show-Subhashish	
	8pm	Sivkshya-Sandesh D			Prem Sanes-Ranjana			
Melody Mashti	8:45pm		BBC Nepali Sewa	BBC Nepali Sewa	BBC Nepali Sewa	BBC Nepali Sewa	BBC Nepali Sewa	BBC Nepali Sewa
	9:15-10PM	All About Love-Repeat	Prem Sanes Ranjana					Mid Hindi Film
Good Night	10-11pm	News/ Hindi Oldies	News/ Hindi Gazal	News/ Hindi Gazal	News/ Hindi Gazal	News/ All about Love-Repeat	News/Hindi Oldies	News/ Title Trac Repeat

### d. Programme Schedule of Radio Nepal (Morning)

रेडियो नेपाल  
मिति २०८०/०३/१२ देखि लागू हुने केन्द्रीय प्रसारण र वाग्मती प्रदेश प्रसारण केन्द्रको नियमित कार्यक्रम प्रसारण तालिका  
बिहान

समय	आइतवार	सोमवार	मंगलवार	बुधवार	विहीवार	शुक्रवार	शनिवार
४.५६	शंखध्वनि/राष्ट्रियगान						
५.००	प्रारम्भिक उद्घोषण/ पशुपतिनाथको आरती गायन						
५.१०	जीवन विज्ञान (१५ मी)						
५.२५	अध्यात्म सन्देश (२५ मी)						
५.५०	संस्कृतमा समाचार						
६.००	समाचार						
६.०५	अखबार						
६.३०	अन्तरसंवाद						
६.५०	PSA, सूचना, विज्ञापन						
७.००	समाचार						
७.२५	बीमा सचेतना रेडियो कार्यक्रम (१५ मी)	सञ्चार तथा सूचना (२० मी)	सञ्चार र विकास (१५ मी)	कानूनका कुरा (१५ मी)	वैदेशिक रोजगारी (१५ मि)	संसद गतिविधि (१५ मी)	आर्थिक नेपाल (१५ मी)
७.४०	स्वदेश गान	स्वदेशगान	सामाजिक सुरक्षा कोष सचेतना कार्यक्रम (१५ मी)	तीति अनुसन्धानमा लाग्ने प्रजातन्त्र (२.५) (१५ मी)	महिला भावाञ्ज (१५ मी) र २ र ५ जागरण गीत (१/३)	स्वदेश गान	धितोपत्र तथा वस्तु विनिमय (१ र ३ सूचना हास्यो अधिकार (२.५)
८.००	अङ्ग्रेजीमा समाचार						
८.१५	पोषणका लागि मुना १० मी	स्वदेश गान	जागरण गीत	आयका नारी (चन्दा विष्ट)	पोषणका लागि मुना १० मी	भूमि प्रशासनमा प्रविधि र सुशासन कार्यक्रम (१५ मी) २ र ५	स्वदेशगान
८.२५	स्वदेशगान				स्वदेशगान		
८.३०	हाम्रो जीवन कार्यक्रम (रमाकुमारी डुङ्गाना)	रुपांतरण (मुकुष भण्डारी),	शैक्षिक महत्त्व (टेकराज शर्मा)	"	समृद्धिका पाइला (हरि गिरी),	स्वदेश गान	
९.००	समाचार						
९.१०	नेपाल भाषामा समाचार						
९.२०	स्पष्ट नागरिक कार्यक्रम (राजतकुमार फाकी)	हाम्रो सत्कृति हाम्रो परम्परा कार्यक्रम (हेमनाराय उप्रेती)	प्रश्नको सन्देश (२५ मी)	विषय परिवेश कार्यक्रम (प्रता शर्मा)	आधुनिक गीत	तनन सन्देश (मुकुष भण्डारी)	आधुनिक गीत
	आधुनिक गीत						
१०.००	समाचार						
१०.०५	सेवीकाली (विहानी वि.क.)	एकै रचनाकारद्वारा रचित गीतहरू	म्युजिक मन्त्र (दिशाकर शर्मा)	लेकमेली कार्यक्रम (राजेश्वर भण्डारी)	एकै सङ्गीतकारद्वारा सङ्गीतमय गीतहरू (प्रमिला गजुरेल)	साहित्य संसार (ताराप्रसाद बस्ती)	एकै गायक/गायिकाद्वारा गाईएका गीतहरू
११.००	समाचार						

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : प्रायोजक संस्थाकै तर्फबाट उत्पादित

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : रेडियो नेपालको तर्फबाट उत्पादित

## Programme Schedule of Radio Nepal (Day)

### दिउँसो

समय	आइतबार	सोमबार	मंगलबार	बुधबार	बिहीबार	शुक्रबार	शनिबार
११:०५	सिलसिला कार्यक्रम (हरि गिरी) कात्तिकदेखि	हाम्रो चासो (रीता तिमल्सिना)	शुभेच्छा कार्यक्रम (रीता तिमल्सिना)	सङ्गीत सन्देश (विद्या चौधरी)	सप्तरङ्गी कार्यक्रम (सावित्री के.सी.)	पुवा संसार (दुर्गा अधिकारी) आधुनिक गीत	जीवन यात्रा कार्यक्रम (उषा जोहनी)
११:५५	प्रोग्रामो/सूचना/विज्ञापन						
१२:००	समाचार						
१२:०५	संगीताञ्जली (राम अविरेल)	के तिम्रो मेरो साथी बन्थ्यो ? (सुष्मिणी पोखरेल)	जीवन सुख कार्यक्रम (चन्द्रा विष्ट)	म्युजिक एण्ड क्वीज (दुर्गा निरौला)	लोकलहरी कार्यक्रम (नरहरि न्यौपाने)	समर्पण (राम थापा)	सम्झना र सन्देश
१२:१५	"	"	"	"	"	"	सम्झना र सन्देश
१२:४०	"	"	"	"	"	"	
१२:५५	प्रोग्रामो/सूचना/विज्ञापन						
१:००	समाचार						
१:०५	अधिल्लो दिनको कृषि कार्यक्रमको पुन प्रसारण						
१:२०	लोक गीत	म्युजिक क्याफे (सुर्य बामा)	पुराना सम्झना (मोक्ष रमणी)	अतीतका गीत (दुर्गा अधिकारी)	सिने संसार (रमा हुङ्गाना)	फ्यानबक्स (अनिता आचार्य)	लोक गीत नाटक
१:५५	प्रोग्रामो/सूचना/विज्ञापन						
२:००	बङ्गोनीमा समाचार						
२:१५	प्रदेश प्रसारण अन्तर्गत सातै प्रदेशबाट छयुद्धे कार्यक्रमहरू						

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : प्रायोजक संस्थाकै तर्फबाट उत्पादित

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : रेडियो नेपालको तर्फबाट उत्पादित

## Programme Schedule of Radio Nepal (Evening)

### बेलुकी

समय	आइतबार	सोमवार	मंगलवार	बुधवार	विहीवार	शुक्रवार	शनिवार
६:००	मैथिली भाषामा समाचार (वर्दिवासको प्रसारण हुक)						
६:१०	प्रदेश समाचार						
६:२०	कार्यक्रम झलक						
६:२५	बालवाटिका कार्यक्रम (दीक्षा अबस्थी)	बालवाटिका कार्यक्रम (रीता तिमल्सिना)	स्वास्थ्य गतिविधि (टंक खनाल) कात्तिकदेखि	बाल गीत	बालवाटिका कार्यक्रम (विमला राई)	सतकारी रेडियो कार्यक्रम (१/३) (१५ मी) अन्य बालगीत	बालवाटिका कार्यक्रम (दीक्षा अबस्थी)
६:४०	कृषि कार्यक्रम (१५ मी)						
६:५५	सूचना/सन्देश/विज्ञापन						
७:००	समाचार						
७:२५/७:३०	घटना र विचार	घटना र विचार	शीलिक कार्यक्रम (१५ मि.)	घटना र विचार	घटना र विचार	घटना र विचार	शीलिक कार्यक्रम (१५ मि.)
७:४५	समर्पण राष्ट्रका लागि (१२ मि) १ र ३ आधुनिक गीत	प्रहरी कार्यक्रम (१५ मी)	लोक गीत	लोक गीत	प्रहरी कार्यक्रम (१५ मी)	काठमाण्डौ उपत्यकामा खानेपानी (२,४) (१० मी)	फरक प्रसन्न कार्यक्रम (श्रीकृष्ण प्रसाद सिंखडा)
८:००	अङ्ग्रेजीमा समाचार						
८:१०	नेपाली सैनिक (३० मी)	ज्ञानविज्ञान कार्यक्रम (टेकबहादुर ऐर)	लोक गीत	स्वरोजगार कार्यक्रम (टंकनाथ खनाल)	समानता (भिम घिमिरे)	आदर्श जीवन (नवीन दाहाल)	नेपाल एण्ड विप्लोण्ड (कीशाल घिमिरे)
८:२५	”	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)	विषयगत श्रव्य पाठ प्रसारण (३० मी)
८:४५	आधुनिक गीत						
८:५५	प्रोमो/सूचना/विज्ञापन						
९:००	समाचार						
९:२०	हाम्रो बोली (विशा चौधरी)	हाम्रो संस्कृति हाम्रो परम्परा कार्यक्रम (पुन प्रसारण)	हाम्रो स्वास्थ्य (पुन प्रसारण)	विश्व परिवेश कार्यक्रम (पुन प्रसारण)	गीतिकथा (मनुका कुँवर)	मिर्गीला बचाऔं अभियान कार्यक्रम (१५ मी) दुरसुदुर कार्यक्रम (टेकबहादुर ऐर)	साहित्य संसार (पुन प्रसारण) (ताराप्रसाद बस्ती)
९:००	हिन्दीमा समाचार						
९:१०	सिलसिला (पुन प्रसारण) (हरि गिरी)	विम्व प्रतिविम्व (प्रमिलागनुरेल)	गजलगांगा (राम अविरेल)	अतीतका गीतको कार्यक्रम (पुन प्रसारण) (दुर्गा अधिकारी) शालीन तगीत (गानन)	मधुरिमा (हिन्दीगीतको कार्यक्रम) मुकेशकुमारमिश्र	रोधी (नरहरि न्यौपाने)	सेरोफेरो कार्यक्रम (प्रज्ञाशरद)
९:१०	समाचार						

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : प्रायोजक संस्थाकै तर्फबाट उत्पादित

◆ प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम : रेडियो नेपालको तर्फबाट उत्पादित

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