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Webometric Study of World's Top Daily Newspaper Websites: An Evaluation

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Abstract:

This study aims to evaluate world top daily newspaper websites selected from newspaperland.com, a web directory of world newspapers, magazines, news sites, and newspaper publishers (https://www.newspapersland.com/). A total of 20 newspaper websites are selected and are to be evaluated on the basis of selected Alexa indexes from Alexa Internet tool for the purpose of this study. Data such as the traffic rank (both home country and global), search traffic percentage, sites linking in, bounce rate percentage, daily time on site, the average number of pages viewed by users, the percentage of home country users and the percentage of foreign users for each newspaper websites are to be collected from Alexa databank by searching each of the newspaper in Alexa Internet tool. To fulfill the objective of the study, the collected data are tabulated and analyzed. Based on the obtained data, it can be seen that in the case of home traffic rank (i.e., publication country) Daily Nation (Country: Kenya) and Philippine Daily Inquirer (Country: Philippines) both has the highest traffic rank (Rank: 05) whereas China Daily (Country: China) ranked lowest (Rank: 206). In global traffic ranking New York Times of U.S. ranked first (Ranking: 96). The search traffic percentage of Daily Post Nigeria and Daily Nation are very poor. The highest search traffic percentage is 71% for Hindustan Times. New York Times has maximum number of sites linking. The highest bounce rate of Irish Independent shows its performance is weak as compared to others. The daily time spent on a particular newspaper website by the visitors is maximum for Daily Nation of Kenya. The Asahi Shimbun of Japan has the height percentage of home country users. One can trace the dominance of Indian users on newspaper websites like People's Daily, Khaleej Times, Dawn and USA Today.

Keywords: Webometrics, Newspapers, Websites, World, Alexa Internet, India

Introduction:

Information today is core to our everyday life. From the very beginning of a day everything we do require some kind of information. Not only our personal life, even the society in which we live is a knowledge society. There are various sources of information. One such source is Media: both print and electronic. Print media especially Newspapers have been a source of information from a very long time. It has time and again acted as a source to various happenings of the world, research and development activities, national and regional news, sports news, etc. Thus, it acts as a link between people of local, regional and national level and also connects people with the government.

With the changing time and development in Information and Technology people now rely more and more on internet to search information. As a result, over the years an increasing need has been felt by the Newspaper publishing houses to develop newspaper websites or online versions of the printed newspaper. Gradually almost every newspaper now has either a website or an e-print version. This has helped the readers get more up-to-date and real time news.

However just developing a newspaper website is not sufficient. Like any other website it requires certain structuring and organization so that it is user friendly and readers spend more and more time in the newspaper website. One way to evaluate whether a newspaper website is up to the mark or not is by carrying out a webometric study using an evaluating tool.

Dr. Khalid & Dr. Ahmed (2014) in their study shows that press is a magnificent gift to the mankind and is highly indispensable. It does a splendid job and performs a crucial role as a communicator. Pandit & et. al. (2016) in their study "Marathi News Paper Websites: A Webometric Study" gives a clear idea about Marathi newspaper websites status in terms of their performances on the web based on the eight indexes of Alexa internet evaluation tool. It shows that most of the Marathi newspaper websites do not act successfully on the web and need much attention. Similarly, some high traffic ranking newspaper showed weak performance in some of the attributes whereas some low traffic ranking newspapers performed comparatively better in some of the attributes. Odeyemi (2017) conduct webometric analysis of Newspaper websites in Nigeria to determine the web impact assessment of websites and carried out by using Alexa Internet tool to evaluate 17 leading Nigerian Newspaper websites. Das & Aich (2020) both worked on 30 Bengali newspapers websites and suggests to all administrators of Bengali newspapers websites to do the reconstructing of their official websites so as to attract more visitors. One can trace the impact of 'Alexa Internet' tool while webometric study of selected newspapers through the work of Naheem (2016) and Muthuraja, S., & Veerabasavaiah, M. (2018). On the basis of literature search it may be asserted that there is hardly any work that focuses on the webometric study of world top newspapers. Hence, a need was felt in this regard.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives for this study are mentioned below:

- To find the Traffic Rank (Home Country and Global) of each newspaper websites

- To find out the Search Traffic Percentage of each newspaper websites

- To study the Sites Linking In to the newspaper websites

- To find out the Bounce Rate Percentage of the websites

- To study the Daily Time on Site of each of the newspaper websites

- To find out the Average Number of Pages Viewed by Users

- To find out the Percentage of Home Country Users of each of the newspaper websites

- To find out the Percentage of Foreign Users of each of the newspaper websites

- To find out the Dominant country other than Home Country of the newspaper websites

- To study the Role of India in terms of performance for each of the newspaper

Scope and Coverage:

The present study is restricted to World top daily newspaper websites as per the Web directory of world newspapers, magazines, news sites, and newspaper publishers (https://www.newspapersland.com/).Worlds top twenty daily newspapers have been taken into consideration.

Methodology:

The Web directory of world newspapers, magazines, news sites, and newspaper publishers (https://www.newspapersland.com/) is considered for choosing the worlds' top twenty daily newspaper websites for this study.

A Webometric study of the chosen newspaper websites is carried out with the help of Alexa Internet evaluation tool.

The URLs and place of publication of these newspapers were collected from their official websites. After that, each and every newspaper website was searched from 17th April - 18th April 2021 in Alexa Internet and the data is collected. Then obtained data is tabulated and analyzed to find out the answers of the above-mentioned objectives of the study.

Table 1: World's Top Daily Newspapers:

Sl. No.	Name	URL	County
1.	China Daily	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/	China
2.	Daily Mail	https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/index.html	U.K.
3.	Daily Nation	https://nation.africa/	Kenya
4.	Daily Post Nigeria	https://dailypost.ng/	Nigeria
5.	Dawn	https://www.dawn.com/	Pakistan
6.	Hindustan Times	https://www.hindustantimes.com/	India
7.	Irish Independent	https://www.independent.ie/	Ireland
8.	Khaleej Times	https://www.khaleejtimes.com/	U.A.E.
9.	New York Times	https://www.nytimes.com/	U.S.
10.	People's Daily	http://en.people.cn/	China
11.	Philippine Daily Inquirer	https://www.inquirer.net/	Philippines
12.	The Asahi Shimbun	http://www.asahi.com/ajw/	Japan
13.	The Australian	https://www.theaustralian.com.au/	Australia
14.	The Globe and Mail	https://www.theglobeandmail.com/	Canada
15.	The Guardian	https://www.theguardian.com/international	U.K.
16.	The Sun	https://www.thesun.co.uk/	U.K.
17.	Times of India	https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/	India

18.	USA Today	https://www.usatoday.com/	U.S.
19.	Wall Street Journal	https://www.wsj.com/	U.S.
20.	Washington Post	https://www.washingtonpost.com/	U.S.

Source: https://www.newspapersland.com/

Table 1 lists out world top daily newspapers as per https://www.newspapersland.com/ along with their place of publication and URL. The table shows top twenty daily newspapers of the world. It can be seen that there is total four newspapers published from U.S., three newspapers from U.K., two from India and China each, and one each from the other listed countries.

Table 2: URL Extension (Domain Specific):

Sl. No.	URLs extension (Domain specific)	Number of Websites	Percentage
1.	.africa	01	5%
2.	.au	01	5%
3.	.cn	02	10%
4.	.com	11	55%
5.	.ie	01	5%
6.	.net	01	5%
7.	.ng	01	5%
8.	.uk	02	10%
Total		20	**100%**

Table 2 shows the URL extensions of the newspaper websites that are selected for the study. It is clear from the table that there are eight types of URL among which .com extension is the most commonly used URL extension followed by .uk and .cn respectively.

Table 3: Data obtained using Alexa Internet Tools

Sl. No.	Name of Newspaper	Traffic Rank		Search Traffic (%)	Sites Linking In	Bounce Rate (%)	Daily Time on Site	Pages Viewed	Users Percentage	
		Home country	Global						Home Country (%)	Foreign Country (%)
1.	China Daily	206	1,465	51%	31,228	68.3%	1:54	3.1	81.03%	18.97%
2.	Daily Mail	35	292	25%	71,996	54.9%	4:59	2.22	13.8%	86.2%
3.	Daily Nation	05	2,561	11%	2,488	47.7%	5:15	2.6	78.43%	21.57%
4.	Daily Post Nigeria	12	2,345	19%	3,549	48.8%	4.36	3.0	83.66%	16.34%
5.	Dawn	15	956	37%	13,414	50.00%	4.35	2.39	55.94%	44.06%
6.	Hindustan Times	94	835	71%	10,915	59.7%	2:22	1.78	77.9%	22.1%
7.	Irish Independent	37	17,863	50%	6,469	75.1%	1:52	1.40	57.6%	42.4%
8.	Khaleej Times	21	4,077	33%	4,199	53.4%	3:58	2.88	59.1%	40.9%
9.	New York Times	38	96	38%	163,756	59.4%	3:17	2.57	65.3%	34.7%
10.	People's Daily	-	76,677	32%	4,400	69%	1:20	1.50	-	-
11.	Philippine Daily Inquirer	05	464	37%	19,251	59.6%	4:02	2.09	53.9%	46.1%
12.	The Asahi Shimbun	109	1,252	32%	14,664	58.6%	2:24	1.98	95.2%	4.8%
13.	The Australian	162	8,966	31%	8,455	46.1%	3:38	2.33	74.2%	25.8%
14.	The Globe and Mail	135	4,369	40%	20,831	64.7%	2.52	1.89	63.7%	36.3%
15.	The Guardian	28	175	45%	48,793	61.7%	2.41	2.68	11.5%	88.5%
16.	The Sun	120	1,770	56%	13,607	74.8%	2:25	1.50	23.7%	76.3%
17.	Times of India	12	139	68%	31,462	50.9%	3:40	2.76	81.1%	18.9%
18.	USA Today	139	430	57%	56,091	67.1%	2:18	1.53	77.8%	22.2%
19.	Wall Street Journal	161	462	29%	70,713	64.%	2:58	1.93	71.1%	28.9%
20.	Washington Post	79	200	34%	70,439	54.2%	3.02	2.78	63.3%	36.7%

Source: https://www.alexa.com

Results and Analysis:

Traffic Rank (Home Country and Global):

Table 3 depicts that in the case of home traffic rank (i.e., publication country) Daily Nation (Country: Kenya) and Philippine Daily Inquirer (Country: Philippines) both has the highest traffic rank (Rank: 05) whereas Times of India (Country: India) Daily Post Nigeria (Country: Nigeria) both ranked 2nd (Ranking 12) in traffic rank. China Daily (Country: China) ranked lowest (Rank: 206) in this traffic ranking. It can also be found from the above table that People's Daily (Country: China) newspaper website has no traffic rank.

In global traffic ranking New York Times of U.S. ranked first (Ranking: 96), Times of India (Country: India) ranked second (Ranking: 139) and People's Daily (Country: China) is lowest in rank (Ranking: 76,677).

Search Traffic Percentage:

Table 3 shows search traffic percentage of both organic and paid promotions of a particular daily newspaper. The highest search traffic percentage is 71% for Hindustan Times followed by Times of India (68%), USA Today (57%), The Sun (56%) and others respectively. It should be also noted that search traffic percentage of Daily Post Nigeria (Nigeria- 19%) and Daily Nation (Kenya - 11%) are low.

Sites Linking In:

The sites linking in column in table 3 shows the number of websites in the common crawl that links to a given website. In this case, New York Times has maximum number of sites linking i.e., 163,756 followed by Daily Mail (71,996). Washington Post (70, 439) is just behind Daily Mail. USA Today (56,091) has also good number of links. Daily Nation's sites linking (2,488) is very low compared to others.

Bounce Rate Percentage:

Bounce Rate (%) = Visits that access only a single page (#) / Total visits (#) to the website.

Following the above formula, it is clear that if the bounce rate is low, the performance of the website is good, if not, then vice-versa. Table 3 shows that the daily newspaper 'The Australian' has the lowest bounce rate (46.1%) followed by Daily Nation (47.7%) and Daily Post Nigeria (48.8%). Bounce rate of The Sun is 74.8% i.e., not good. The highest bounce rate 75.1% is for Irish Independent shows its performance is weak as compared to others.

Daily Time on Site:

Table 3 depicts that the daily time spent on a particular newspaper website by the visitors is maximum for Daily Nation of Kenya (5.15). Daily Mail (4.59) picks second spot. Daily Post Nigeria (4.36) and Dawn (4.35) picks 3rd and 4th place respectively. It is also clear from the table that half of the newspaper's websites' is below 3 in terms of daily time spent and People's Daily (China) stands last in this section.

The Average Number of Pages Viewed by Users:

China Daily holds the first position in terms of average pages viewed by users per day (3.1). Daily Post Nigeria is almost close to it (3.0) and it holds second position. Khaleej Times (2.88) holds third position.

The lowest number of average pages view by visitors is 1.40 by Irish Independent.

The Percentage of Home Country Users:

This column shows percentage of users of newspapers according to their origin country. The Asahi Shimbun of Japan has the height percentage of home country users (95.2%) in comparison to others. The Guardian of U.K (11.4%) has the lowest user's percentage as home country users. It is also clear from the above table that no data found for People's Daily newspaper of China.

The Percentage of Foreign Users:

Apart from home country, foreign country users have good impact on each and every newspaper website. Table 3 gives us a clear picture that the percentage of foreign country users of the newspaper The Guardian is higher (88.5%) than its' home country and it is also takes the highest position in terms of foreign country users percentage and it is followed by Daily mail (86.2%). Third position is taken by The Sun (76.3%). Apart from that, Philippine Daily Inquirer (46.1%), Dawn (44.06%), Irish Independent (42.4) and Khaleej Times (40.9%) have good number of foreign users.

With the help of table 3, it can be seen that there is a good impact of foreign users in every daily newspaper website. The below table is created to show the dominant country (Foreign) other than home country in terms of users.

Table 4: Dominant country other than Home Country

Sl. No.	Newspaper Name	Foreign Country Name	Percentage of use
1.	China Daily	U.S.	3.07%
2.	Daily Mail	U.K.	13.8%
3.	Daily Nation	U.S.	7.39%
4.	Daily Post Nigeria	U.S.	2.87%
5.	Dawn	India	11.42%
6.	Hindustan Times	U.S.	6.9%
7.	Irish Independent	U.S.	21.3%
8.	Khaleej Times	India	12.6%
9.	New York Times	Japan	6.3%
10.	People's Daily	India	14.6%
11.	Philippine Daily Inquirer	U.S.	18.03%
12.	The Asahi Shimbun	U.S.	2.2%
13.	The Australian	U.S.	7.6%
14.	The Globe and Mail	U.S.	21.3%
15.	The Guardian	U.S.	33.2%
16.	The Sun	U.S.	26.2%
17.	Times of India	U.S.	6.3%
18.	USA Today	India	3.2%
19.	Wall Street Journal	Japan	4.3%
20.	Washington Post	Japan	10.8%

Table 4 depicts that there are only four countries i.e., U.S, India, Japan and U.K that dominates every newspaper apart from home country. It can also be seen that among 20 newspaper websites 12 websites are dominated by Unites States' users, 4 websites are dominated by Indian users, 03 websites are dominated by Japan and only 01 website is dominated by United Kingdom's users.

Role of India in terms of performance:
(Finding position of two newspaper websites of India out of 20)

Traffic Rank (Home Country):

- Times of India (Home Traffic Rank 12) – 2nd position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (Home Traffic Rank 94) – 10th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

Traffic Rank (Global):

- Times of India (Global Traffic Rank 139)– 2nd position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (Global Traffic Rank – 835) – 9th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

Search Traffic Percentage:

- Hindustan Times (71%) – 1st position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Times of India (68%) – 2nd position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

Sites Linking In:

- Times of India (31,462) – 7th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (10,915) – 14th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

Bounce Rate:

- Times of India (50.9%) - 5th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (59.7%) - 12th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

Daily Time on Site:

- Time of India (3:40) - 7th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (2.22) - 16th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

The Average Number of Pages Viewed by Users:

- Time of India (2.76) - 5th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (1.78) - 16th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

The Percentage of Home Country Users:

- Time of India (81.1%) - 3rd position out of selected 20 newspaper websites
- Hindustan Times (77.9%) - 6th position out of selected 20 newspaper websites

India as Dominant country other than Home Country:

As a dominant country other than home country, India dominates 4 country's newspaper websites (table-4). They are listed below:

Sl. No.	Newspaper Name	Home Country Name	Percentage of use of Indian Users
1.	People's Daily	China	14.6%
2.	Khaleej Times	U.A.E.	12.6%
3.	Dawn	Pakistan	11.42%
4.	USA Today	U.S.	3.2%

Table-5: Indian Users Impact on other country's newspaper websites

Conclusion:

The above study provides a clear idea about the status of the World top newspaper websites based on the data collected from Alexa Internet evaluation tools. The result of the study clearly indicates that although the world's top twenty newspaper websites have been considered yet

a lot of developments in each of the newspaper websites are still required. Newspaper website "People's Daily" of China needs attention in respect of their home traffic ranking and user percentage. Popular newspaper websites like 'The Guardian" also must consider taking steps to improve home country user's performance. Two valuable newspaper websites of India performed very well in all attributes except bounce rate and daily time on site of Hindustan Times.

To conclude, it can therefore be said that the study will help the developers of the newspapers websites to design the websites in such a way that it attracts more visitors, improve the traffic rank, increases the time spent on the websites and thereby reduces the bounce rate of their websites. It will also help them to look into the current short comings and therefore consider a re-structuring of the newspaper websites.

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