

2017

# Media Monitoring on Contemporary Youth Issues



## **Media Monitoring Report on Contemporary Youth Issues**

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## **Acknowledgment**

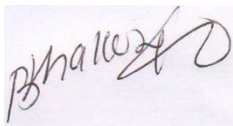
In a bid to analyze how much attention youth issues and activities have gained from mainstream media of Nepal Yuwalaya launched a one-year media monitoring project from July 2016 to June 2017. This report attempts to analyze media contents on some specific issues that are affecting the lives of Nepali youth. It is perhaps the first media monitoring project held in Nepal that analyzed press contents from the youth point of view.

First of all, I would like to thank Mr Diwakar Pyakurel and Ms Sumikshya Khadkafor leading this work. They made a great contribution to the completion of this report by leading and supervising the activities and guiding the reporting associates in data collection, data entry to data analysis and report writing. Likewise, I extend my gratitude to Mr. Saurav Kiran Shrestha for providing guidance to prepare the report and sharing experience of media monitoring that he had led earlier.

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Sanjog Thakuri

President

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Background

National Youth Policy of Nepal defines youth as people of the 16-40 age groups. As per the 2011 census, out of the total population of Nepal, 40.38% is youth; of them 45.8% are men and 54.5 % are women.<sup>1</sup> Despite this, many of them are marginalized and live with perennial problems like unemployment, limited access to opportunities, abuse, violence and discrimination. Even though the necessity of youth's growth and participation has been recognized in state policies and plans, the implementation has become a problem, leaving the most active and largest population in despair.

According to Nepal Labor Survey 2015, every year at least 300,000 to 400,000 youth arrive in Nepali job market seeking job, but only 5% of them are successful.<sup>2</sup> In total, 44.77% of the working population is not economically active. Similarly, many people feel shame while talking about their own sexual and reproductive health rights. Problems faced by young girls in their menstruation, issues of sexual minorities, HIV/AIDs and other related problems are recognized; but there still is a long way to go before they are addressed.

Likewise, deep-rooted patriarchal beliefs which have given birth to various sorts of gender-based violence and problems are other burning issues of the Nepali society. In a study conducted on gender-based violence, it was found that 15% of women have had experience of sexual violence some time in their life and 27% of women have had experience of physical violence.<sup>3</sup> In addition to it, though the legal age of marriage for both girls and boys is 20 years, it has been found that 37% of girls marry before the age of 18 and 10% before the age of 15. Also, 11% of boys are married before the age of 18.<sup>4</sup> Along with child and forced marriage which have been in practice since the ancient time, currently the trend of elopement has also gone up, which has been contributing to the increased share of married children in the society.

Problems of youth are varied and dynamic. But, very less, if any, has been fruitfully done to address them. Most of them go unnoticed and unresolved. Even the youth have not been able to advocate for their age group. For instance, newsrooms of major media houses in Kathmandu have a number of youth journalists and reporters, so one can expect a significant coverage of youth-related issues in the newspapers. But, the reality is disappointing as most of the youth

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<sup>1</sup> <http://therisingnepal.org.np/news/6597>

<sup>2</sup> <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/educated-qualified-no-job-unemployment/>

<sup>3</sup> A study on gender-based violence conducted in selected rural districts of Nepal, Government of Nepal 2012

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/09/08/nepal-child-marriage-threatens-girls-futures>

issues go uncovered. Of course, many young artists and models get featured in the press frequently, but such stories at large fail to represent real situations of Nepali youth in general.

Insignificant and insufficient coverage of youth-related issues in mainstream media is a major concern for youth rights movement of Nepal because media are the fastest way to disseminate information and create awareness. Media coverage is a very reliable means to know the reality of any society and its needs. In consideration of media's strong role in reflection of situation of Nepali youth and addressing a plethora of problems they are in, Yuwalaya, a purely youth-led organization working for and with youth, has made efforts to discuss coverage of youth issues in mainstream Nepali press.

## Introduction

Press media is one of the most effective channels to influence public opinion and shape what people perceive and believe. Also, it is the medium to impart and receive information in the easiest way.

Media monitoring is the process of reading, watching or listening to the editorial content of media sources on a continuous basis after which comes identifying and analyzing contents with specific topics.<sup>5</sup> It deals with the monitoring contents of newspapers, magazines, TV, radio stations etc. With the rise of social media, a new discipline of social media monitoring is also in practice these days. Media monitoring has its own importance. Internationally, it is mostly used by business firms and companies to see the popularity and use of their products. In Nepal, however, media monitoring has been established as a reliable and popular tool of situation analysis in the development sector. It is used by development organizations to analyze press coverage of issues of specific social groups so as to find out perception of their beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Yuwalaya, as a youth-led organization working for and with youth, has been making various efforts to recognize and address multiple issues of the generation. After the massive earthquake of magnitude-7.6 in 2015, it monitored 10 daily newspapers with the objective of accessing youth's involvement in the post-earthquake humanitarian responses. It was the only such project to assess youth's role in post-earthquake relief efforts during that time in Nepal, hence was appreciated by stakeholders for the new endeavor.

Taking responses from our partners and stakeholders as an inspiration and seeing the necessity of overviewing priorities given to youth in the Nepali press, Yuwalaya launched a media monitoring project in July 2016. The one-year project was focused on five thematic areas of Yuwalaya: a) gender equality and social inclusion, b) young people's participation, c) sexual and reproductive health rights, d) youth and livelihood; and e) disaster risk reduction and climate change. Likewise, child marriage was also considered as a cross-cutting theme for the project as its prevalence was found to be responsible in putting youth of Nepal in various problems including those Yuwalaya works on. It is perhaps the first media monitoring project held in Nepal that analyzed press contents from the youth point of view.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cyberalert.com/downloads/media\\_monitoring\\_whitepaper.pdf](http://www.cyberalert.com/downloads/media_monitoring_whitepaper.pdf)



## **Objectives**

The major objective of the monitoring is to assess, from the youth perspective, media coverage on issues of youth, which will represent the density of discussions and discourses of the age group currently undergoing in Nepal.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- a. Assess engagement of youth and their stakeholders in discussions and actions undergoing in Nepal on the six concerned themes
- b. Assess priority accorded to the themes and the Nepali youth population in general by various stakeholders including government, non-government and citizen bodies.
- c. Document events, ideas and thoughts that discuss and take action for improvement in the situation of the six themes in Nepal
- d. Suggest ways and strategies to local, national and international stakeholders working in Nepal on promoting youth engagement in those thematic areas.

## **Methodology**

News reports, editorials, opinion articles, news features and letters to the editors of the selected newspapers were monitored during the project. To achieve specific objectives mentioned above, the following methodology as explained in detail below was applied:

### **1. Study team formation**

Yuwalaya in July 2016 formed a study team to carry out the media monitoring as planned. The monitoring team underwent some changes in its composition in the period of one year so as to meet demands of the project. Members of the team are listed in Annex 4 of this report.

### **2. Selection and subscription of newspapers:**

At first, 10 daily broadsheet newspapers were selected and subscribed for a period of one year from July 2016 to June 2017. Among all the newspapers subscribed, four of them were English and the remaining six were Nepali newspapers. The list of the newspapers are as mentioned below:

- a. Kantipur
- b. Annapurna Post
- c. Rajdhani
- d. Gorakhapatra
- e. Nagarik
- f. Nepal Samacharpatra
- g. The Rising Nepal
- h. Republica
- i. The Kathmandu Post
- j. The Himalayan Times

The newspapers subscribed in the previous projects were subscribed in order to give continuity to the news analysis and monitoring. The selection was made on the basis of their greater popularity, widespread geographic and issue-wise coverage. Further, classification made by the Press Council Nepal, the authorized press monitoring government body, was also considered. The study included eight A+ category newspapers, plus two A category newspapers.<sup>6</sup>

### **3. Clipping and documentation of reports and articles**

The study team began its task by searching the news reports on the related themes from July 2016 to June 2017. At first the team clipped related articles and reports and filed them separately on the basis of newspapers to keep record for the future.

### **4. Categorization**

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<sup>6</sup> See the categorization report: <http://www.presscouncilnepal.org/np/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/ABC-final-result-2071-72.pdf>

As mentioned earlier, the media monitoring was based on six major concerns of youth and aimed to analyze happenings on these themes from the perspectives of youth. Child marriage was taken as an exception as no age restriction was imposed while analyzing reports about the issue. These themes were again divided into subthemes in order to assess the situations in each of the sectors more minutely. The themes along with their subthemes are:

S/N	Themes	Subthemes
1.	Young people's participation	Involvement of youth in politics
		Activities of child clubs and youth clubs
2.	Sexual and reproductive health rights	Issues of sexual minority groups
		HIV/AIDS
		Menstrual hygiene
3.	Gender empowerment and social inclusion	Gender-based violence
		Untouchability
		Caste discrimination and inter-caste marriages
4.	Disaster risk reduction and climate change	Effects of the 2015 earthquake
		Various other calamities
5.	Youth and livelihood	Unemployment among youth
		Skills-based training
6.	Child marriage	Elopement
		Forced and early marriage

Table 1: Themes and subthemes

All compiled and clipped news stories were studied to find out which theme they belong to and categorized accordingly.

### 5. Tabulation of the data

The news reports were tabulated thematically. During the tabulation process, location (province) of the event or incident was also recorded so that it would help find out which areas in the country were more vulnerable or more progressive regarding youth involvement in the issues being discussed.

A format, given in Annex 3 was prepared for tabulation of the data.

### 6. Final analysis and report preparation

Following the tabulation of the data, the final analysis of the news articles were done on the basis of information collected. Then, the analysis was converted into the final report.

## **Definitions**

For the purpose of this research, the following key words have been defined as given below:

**Youth:** People aged 16-40

**Youth issues:** Issues which youth are concerned to; mainly: I) Young people's participation; II) Sexual and reproductive health rights; III) Gender empowerment and social inclusion; IV) Disaster risk reduction and climate change; V) Youth and livelihood; and VI) Child marriage

**Newspapers:** The 10 newspapers listed in Chapter 1 of this report

**News/news articles/reports/stories:** Contents of the newspapers including opinion articles, excluding advertisements and advertorials and standalone photographs

## **Limitations**

Following are limitations of the media monitoring project:

1. Around 10 per cent of total newspapers projected to be covered in this study have been missed due to technical and logistic reasons.
2. Though the selected newspapers were among the most popular newspapers and of highest ranks as per the Press Council classification, they may fail to represent the entire situation. As the top national newspapers, they may have missed to cover some significant issues of local level for not being an issue of national importance.
3. The study is strictly based on the data collected in one year and it may not be totally representative of the overall current situation.
4. The study has not covered weekly and other occasional supplements, standalone photographs, advertorials and advertisements.
5. Some news stories could have cross-cutting themes. However, one story has been kept in one category only for convenience and accuracy about overall coverage of youth issues.
6. Some news reports involving youth have been excluded intentionally as they were not regular events; for example: elections of free students union.

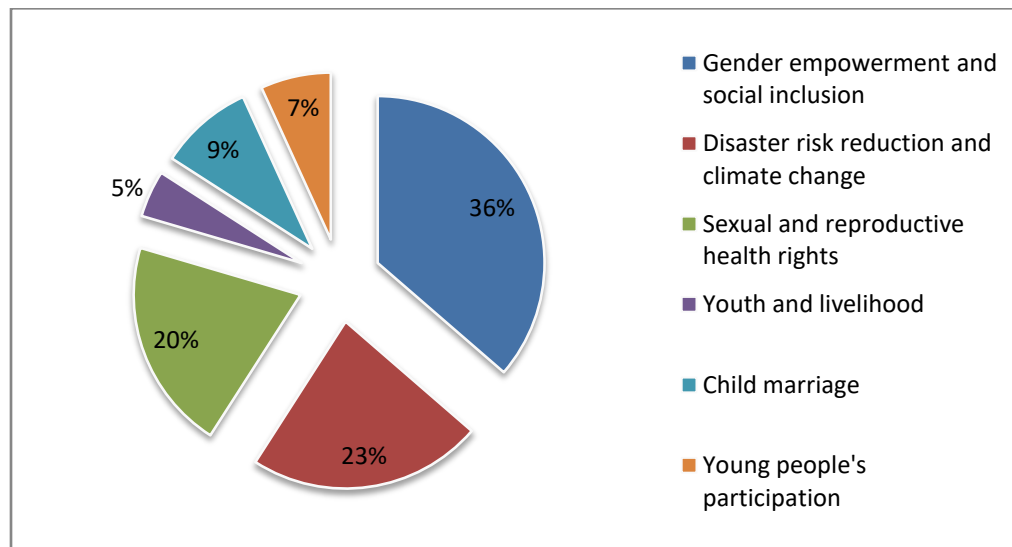
## Chapter 2

### Newspaper-wise Findings

#### The Kathmandu Post

The Kathmandu Post in total has published 44 news stories/articles regarding youth's involvement in issues of gender empowerment and social inclusion, young people's participation, sexual and reproductive health rights, youth and livelihood, disaster risk reduction and climate change and child marriage from July 2016 to June 2017. Among the 44 news stories, eight were published with pictures.

Most of the news reports were about gender empowerment and social inclusion, and disaster risk reduction and climate change. In total, there were 16 news reports with the theme of gender empowerment and social inclusion. Issues of untouchability, violence against widows, dowry, women empowerment, rape, domestic violence, acid attack, caste discrimination and trafficking were included in these stories. Similarly, 10 news reports regarding disaster risk reduction and climate change were published with primary focus on effects of floods, landslides, lightning and effects of the 2015 earthquake.



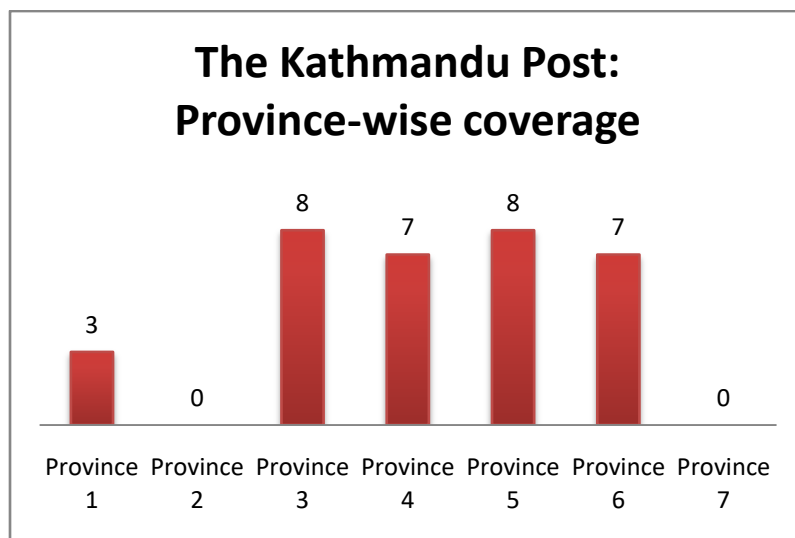
*Figure 1: Coverage in the Kathmandu Post*

There were nine news reports in sexual and reproductive health rights category and they were about lack of knowledge and awareness regarding reproductive health, safe abortion, issues of sexual minorities and excessive bleeding after childbirth resulting in death. Two news stories had raised the issue of livelihood by discussing skill-based training opportunities. Four reports were published about child marriage and they discussed role of poverty, weak implementation of laws

and penetration of technologies in giving a rise to the problem. Three news stories were published about young people's participation.

Location-wise, there were eight reports from Province 3 and 5 each, seven from Province 4 and 6 each and three from Province 1. The newspaper did not have any report about the issues under discussion from Province 2 and 7. All news reports from child marriage were from Province 6 only.

Other 11 news stories covered either a national range or were cross-provincial.



*Figure 2: The Kathmandu Post: Province-wise coverage*

## The Himalayan Times

On reviewing the newspaper, 52 news stories were found covering youth-related news from July 2016 to June 2017. Among them, six news articles were published with pictures.

There were 20 news stories related to gender empowerment and social inclusion whereas the least covered theme was young people's participation. The theme was featured in only three stories.

The news stories under the category of gender empowerment and social inclusion were focused on gender-based violence, trafficking, inter-caste marriage, untouchability, caste-based discrimination, gender equality and empowering girl children. Youth and livelihood-related news stories covered issues of unemployment among youth and the effects of foreign employment, labor, excessive use of drugs and narcotics, smuggling, bombing and involvement in other criminal activities like trafficking. The news articles in child marriage category discussed the increasing trend of elopement in an early age, different researches about child marriage, plus measures taken to stop or minimize such practice. Likewise, on the topic of sexual and reproductive health rights, the news stories were more focused on menstruation, safe and unsafe abortions, HIV/AIDS and issues of sexual minorities. An article was found on effects of the 2015 massive earthquake on youth while most stories in the disaster risk reduction and climate change category were more focused on landslides and lightening. Young people's participation was covered with reports of discussions and national conferences related to climate change and youth involvement in politics.

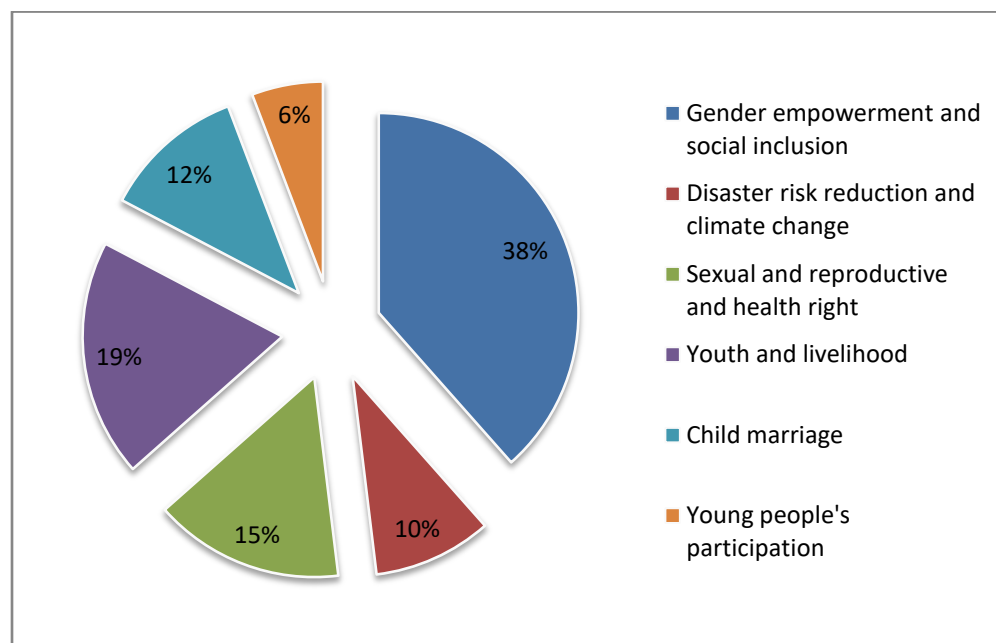
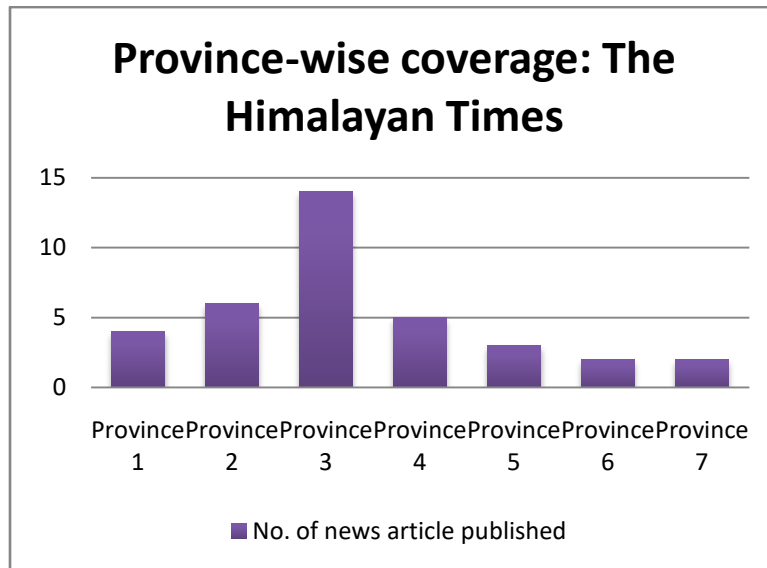


Figure 3: Coverage of youth-related issues in The Himalayan Times



While reviewing the geographical distribution, most stories came from Province 3 and least from provinces 6 and 7. Total 16 stories covered the entire country, but not any specific region, or they could be put in more than one province.



*Figure 4: Province-wise coverage: The Himalayan Times*

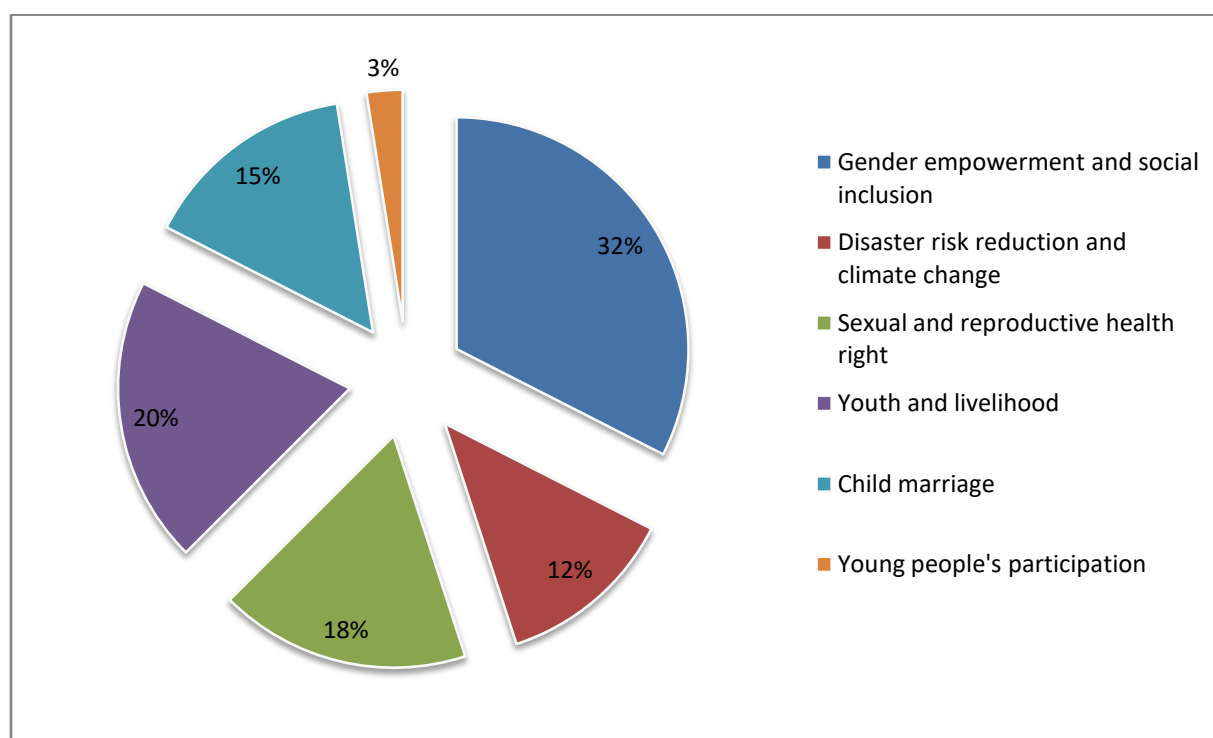
## Republica

Total 40 news stories were published in Republica on the themes being discussed. Of them, 26 articles had pictures as well.

Among the six themes, the newspaper has given the priority to gender empowerment and social inclusion by publishing 13 news articles relating to various sub-themes including gender equity, gender-based violence, untouchability, caste discrimination, women and gender empowerment. Only three stories were published related to young people's participation.

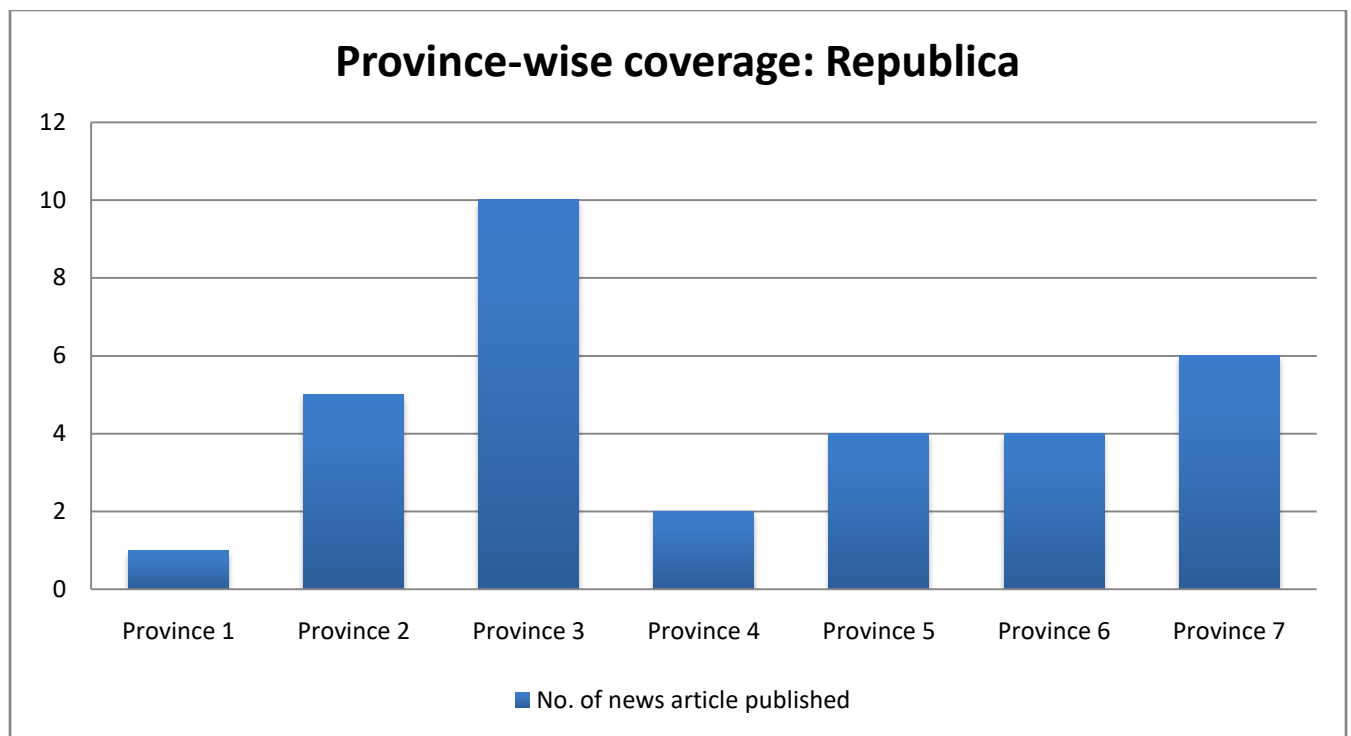
Eight news articles on the topic of youth and livelihood have focused on investment in youth (entrepreneurship opportunities), unemployment, skill-based works and trainings. Stories of sexual and reproductive health rights have sub-themes of menstruation, lack of proper medical treatment to women and death due to excessive bleeding.

Child marriage has been discussed in six stories. Among them, one is about the arrest of a groom thanks to initiatives taken by various community organizations.



*Figure 5: Coverage of youth-related issues in Republica*

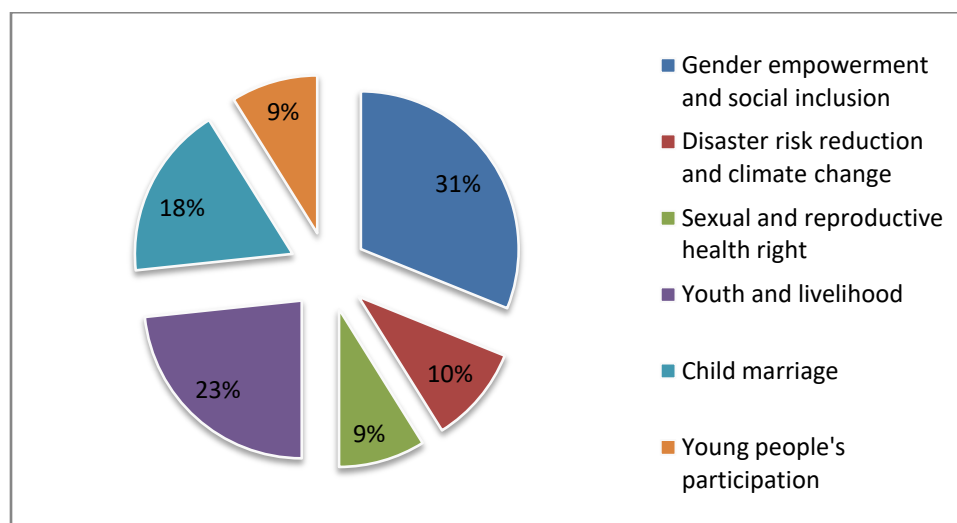
In Republica too, most stories came from Province 3. Province 1 was the least covered region by the paper regarding these themes. Total eight stories covered the entire country or more than one province.



*Figure 6: Province-wise coverage: Republica*

## Kantipur

In total, 90 news articles were found published in Kantipur, among which 43 news articles were published with pictures.

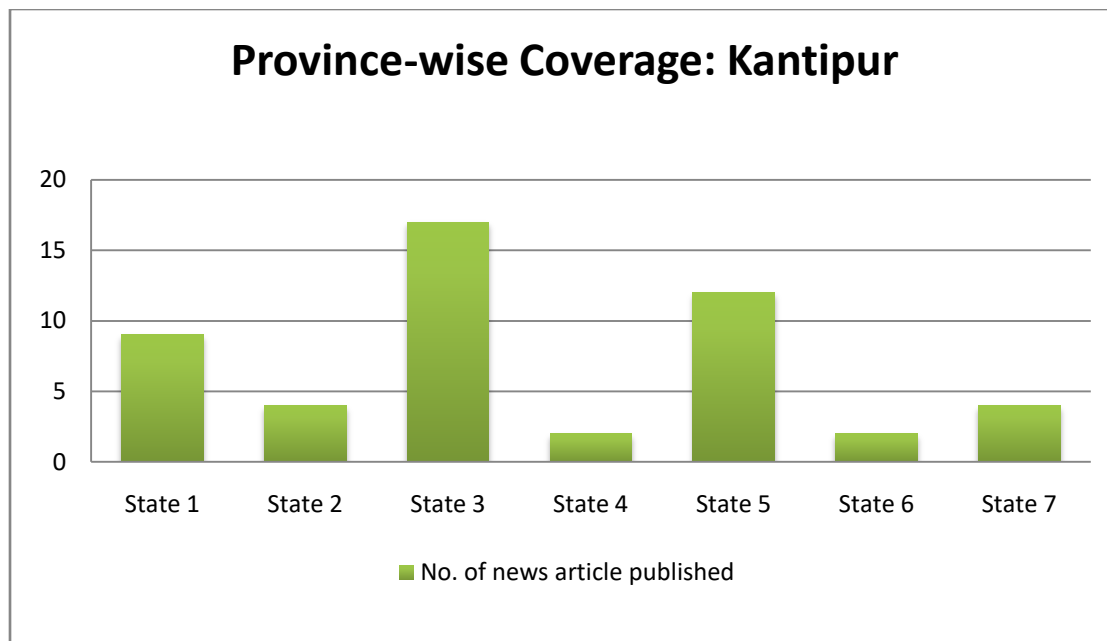


*Figure 7: Coverage of youth-related issues in Kantipur*

Thematically, gender empowerment and social inclusion-related news stories were highly prioritized by this newspaper. Gender-based violence (including rape, gang rape, trafficking, domestic violence, sexual harassment and sex-selective abortion) and caste discrimination were very much covered by the paper. On youth and livelihood, 21 news stories were published about skill-based training and work, unemployment, youth in drug smuggling and abuse and other crimes, involvement in entertainment sector, poultry farming, apiculture, animal husbandry and foreign employment.

Likewise, Kantipur has covered most news stories (16) related to child marriage in comparison with other newspapers included in the study. The sub-themes discussed, however, were quite similar.

In terms of geographic distribution, Kantipur also followed the trend of other newspapers as most stories came from Province 3. Provinces 4 and 6 were least covered by the paper.

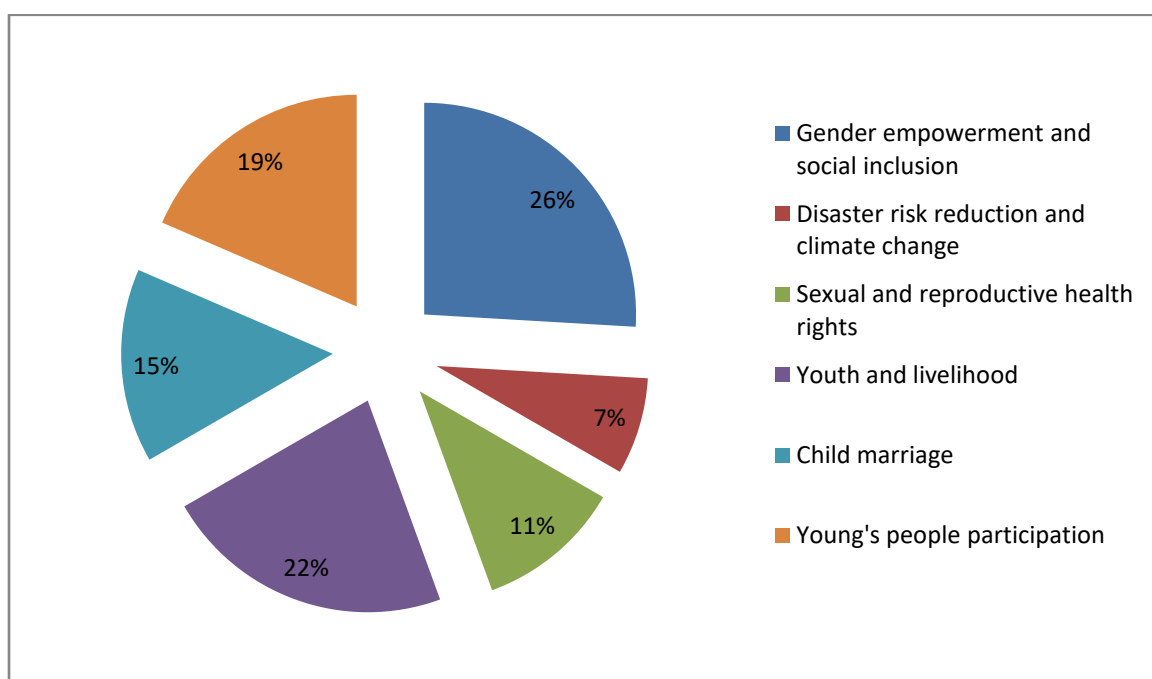


*Figure 8: Province-wise Coverage: Kantipur*

## Gorkhapatra

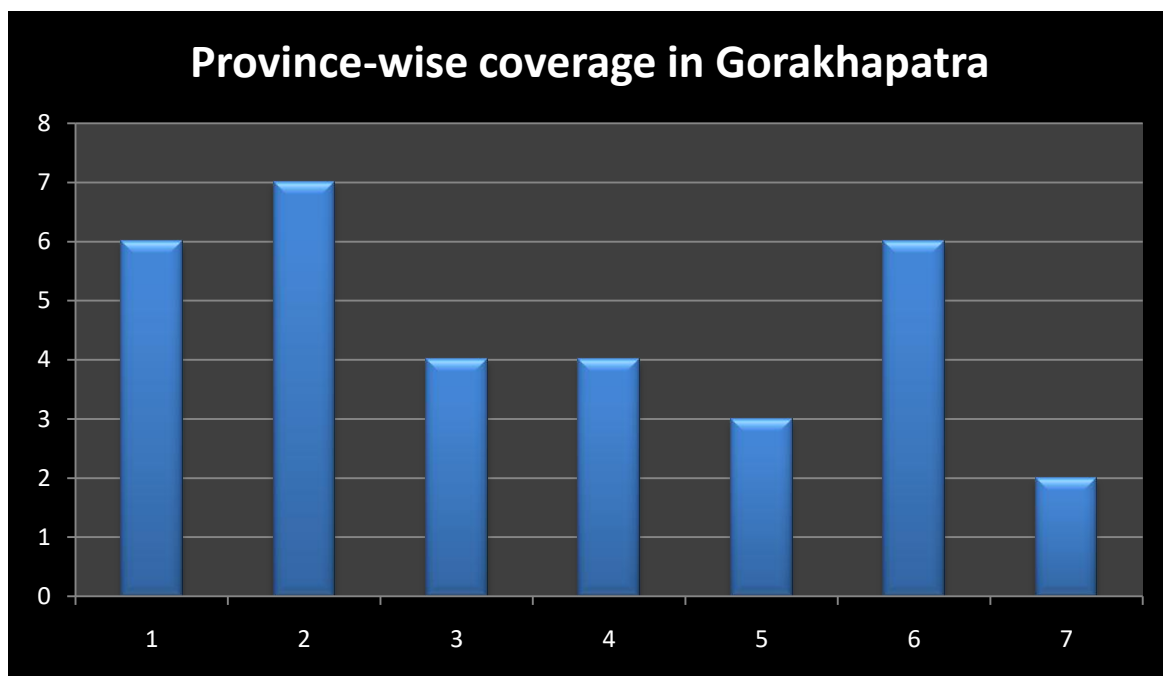
Total 28 news items related to the listed themes were found published in Gorkhapatra from July 2016 to June 2017. Among them, 11 news stories had pictures.

Issues-wise, seven news stories related to gender empowerment and social inclusion were found and it was the mostly covered theme by the paper.



*Figure 9: Coverage of youth-related issues in Gorkhapatra*

Province-wise, Gorkhapatra has a quite different record. Whereas the highest number of stories in most of the papers would be from Province 3, Gorkhapatra has got most stories from Province 2 followed by provinces 1 and 6. Least stories have been covered from Province 7.



*Figure 10: Province-wise coverage in Gorakhpatra*

## The Rising Nepal

The least number of news items related to the themes of this project were found in The Rising Nepal. There were only eight stories and only one has a picture.

There were three news stories about child marriage and young people's participation each. Gender empowerment and social inclusion; and disaster risk reduction and climate change were covered in one story each. Two other themes were not covered.

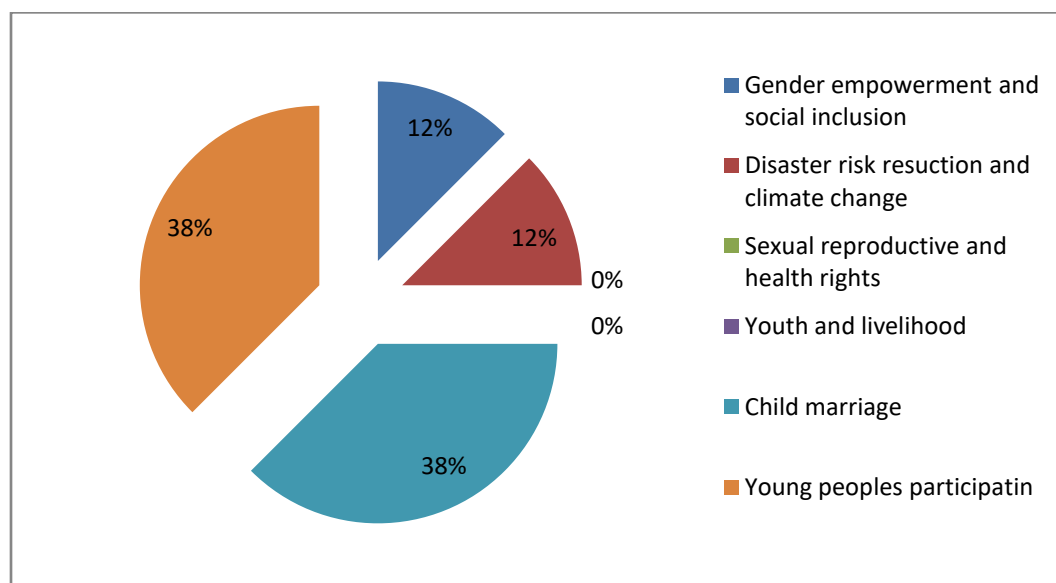


Figure 11: Coverage in The Rising Nepal

Province-wise, five of eight stories were from Province 3.

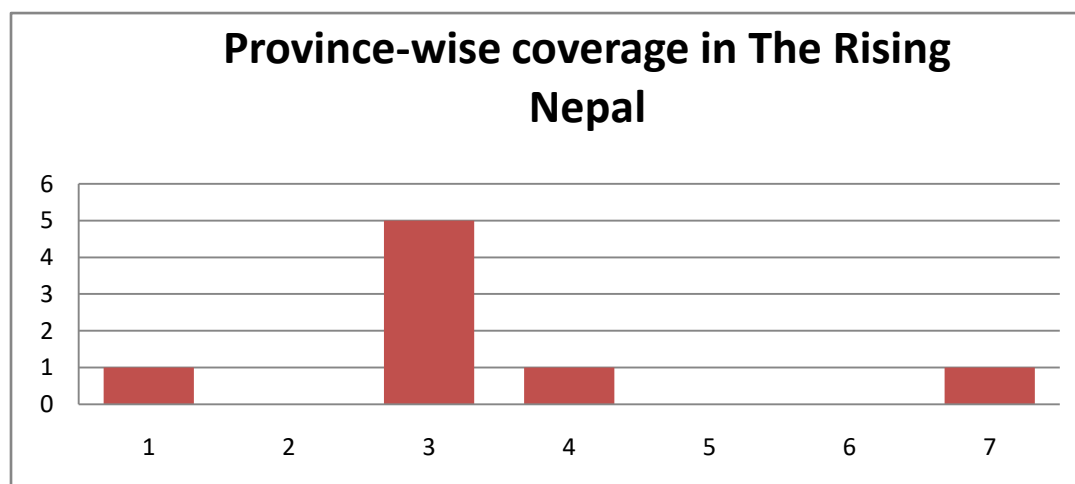


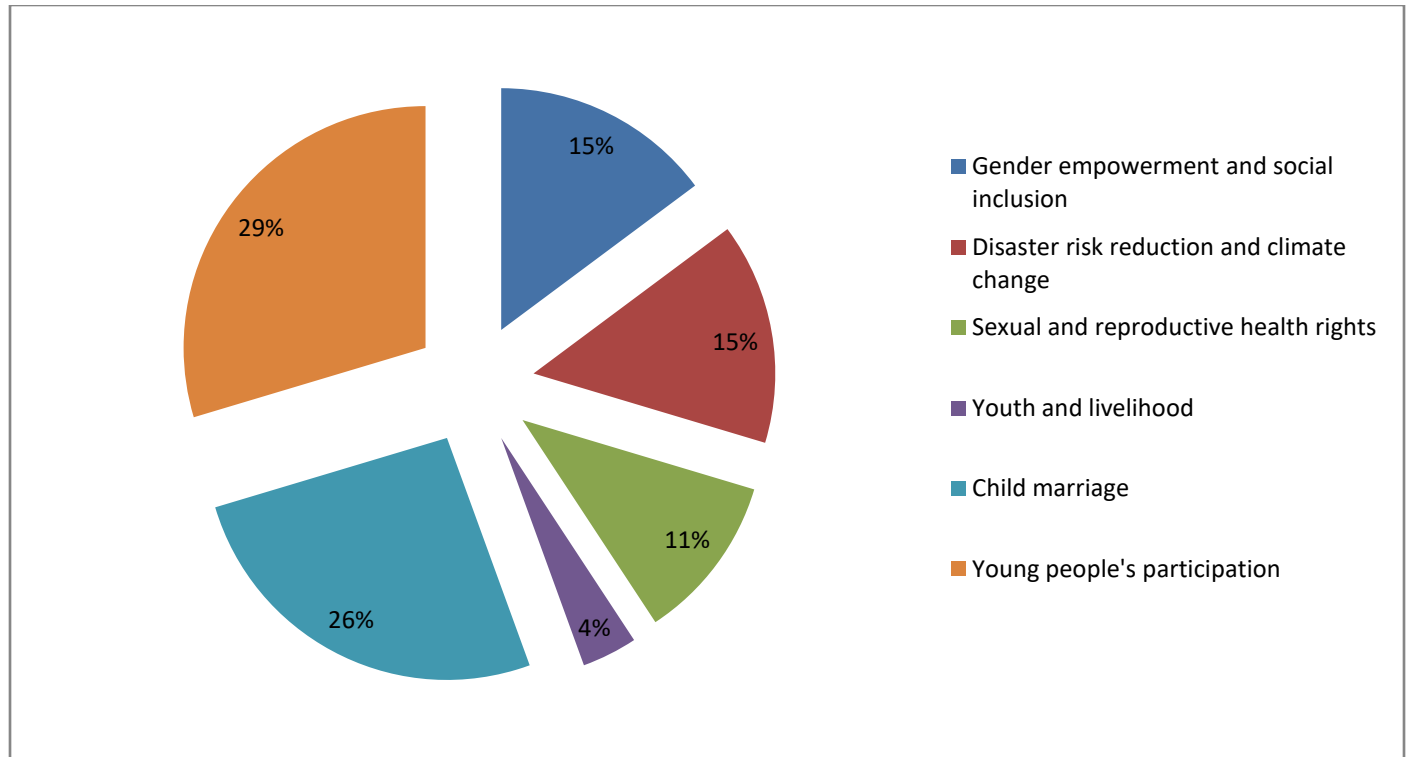
Figure 12: Province-wise coverage in The Rising Nepal



## Nepal Samacharpatra

Nepal Samacharpatra published total 27 news stories related to youth's involvement in the related themes. Among them, nine stories have carried supporting pictures.

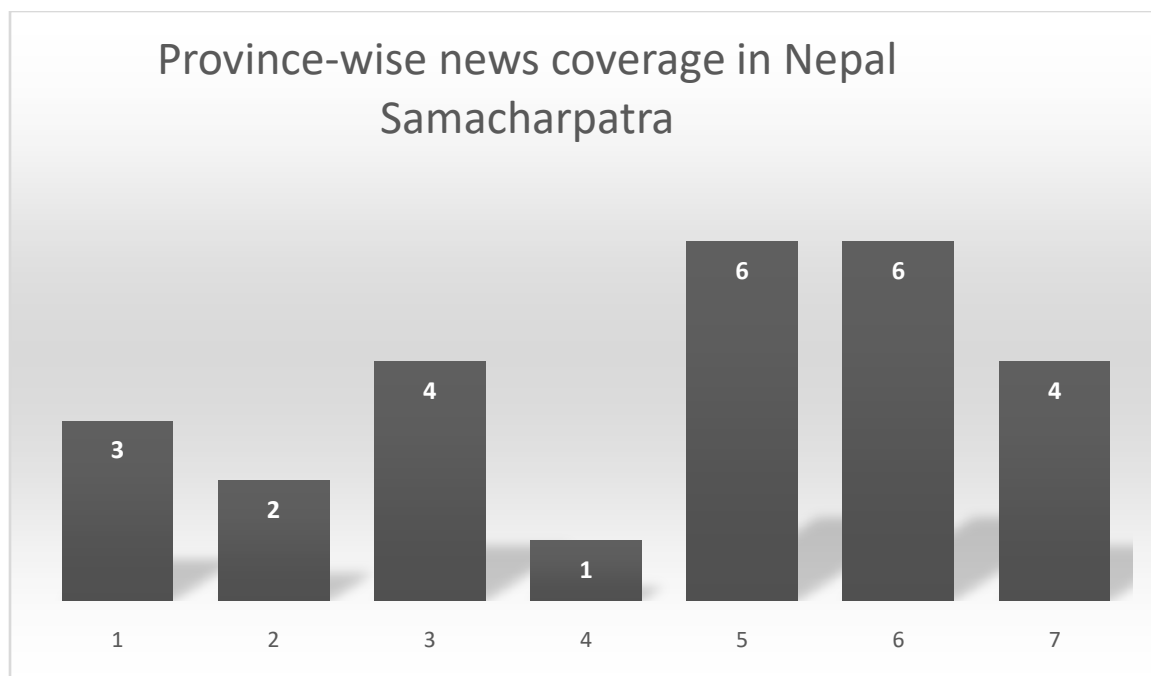
Maximum news stories were about the themes of young people's participation and child marriage, eight and seven respectively.



*Figure 13: Coverage in Nepal Samacharpatra*

There was only one news story in the paper about youth and livelihood which included the problem of unemployment among youth in our country.

Province-wise, the newspaper carried most stories from province 5 and 6, followed by 7 and 3.



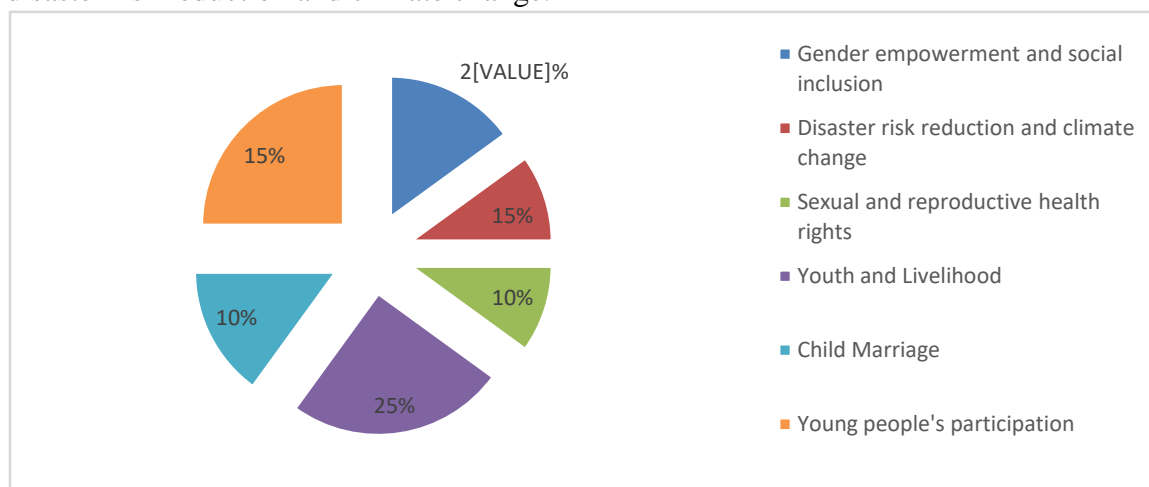
*Figure 14: Province-wise news coverage in Nepal Samacharpatra*

## Nagarik

In total, 20 news stories about the themes were published in Nagarik from July 2016 to June 2017. Eight of them had pictures.

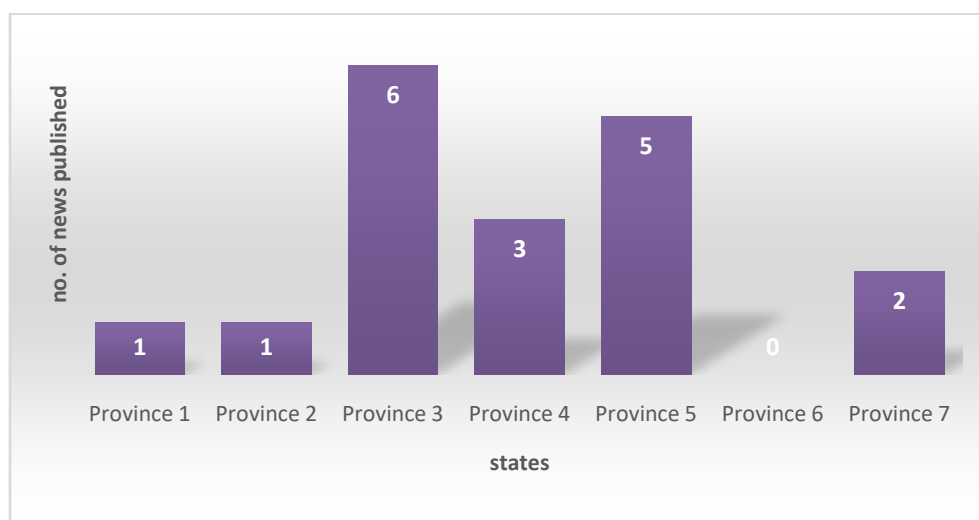
The newspaper has given equal importance to youth and livelihood and young people's participation as five news items were found on each of these themes.

Similarly, there were three news stories each on the theme of child marriage and gender empowerment and social inclusion; and two each on sexual and reproductive health rights and disaster risk reduction and climate change.



*Figure 15: Coverage of youth-related issues in Nagarik*

Province-wise, there were six stories from Province 3, which observed the highest coverage, followed by five from Province 5, three from Province 4 and two from Provinces 1 and 7 each. Province 6 has not been covered.



*Figure 16: Province-wise coverage: Nagarik*

## Rajdhani

The monitoring team collected 32 news stories from Rajdhani. Among the articles collected, 10 were published with pictures.

Of total news stories, those about child marriage were in the highest number (10). Likewise, eight news stories were about gender empowerment and social inclusion; and they were mainly focused on different forms of gender violence.

There was only one news item about sexual and reproductive health rights.

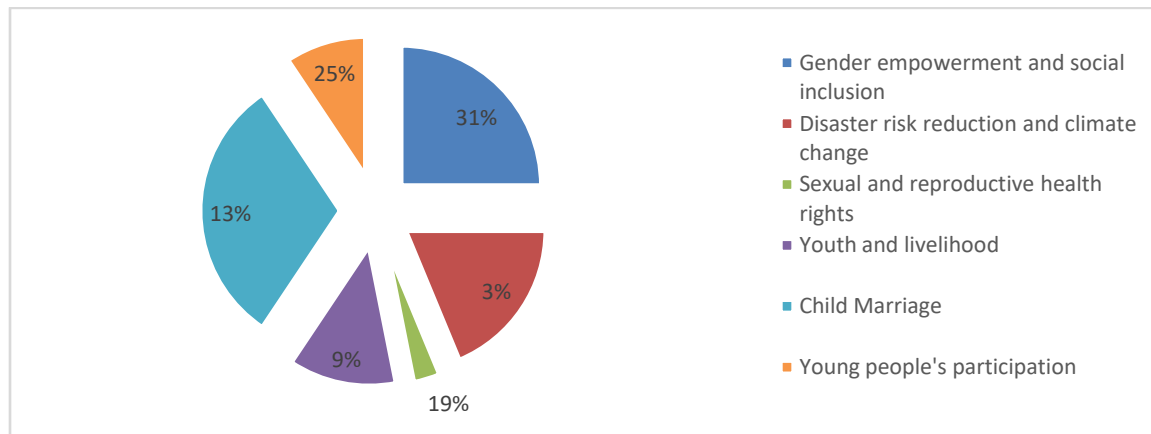


Figure 17: Coverage of youth related news in Rajdhani

Province-wise, Province 3 received the highest attention as 10 news stories were from this province. The newspaper did not report any story from Province 1.

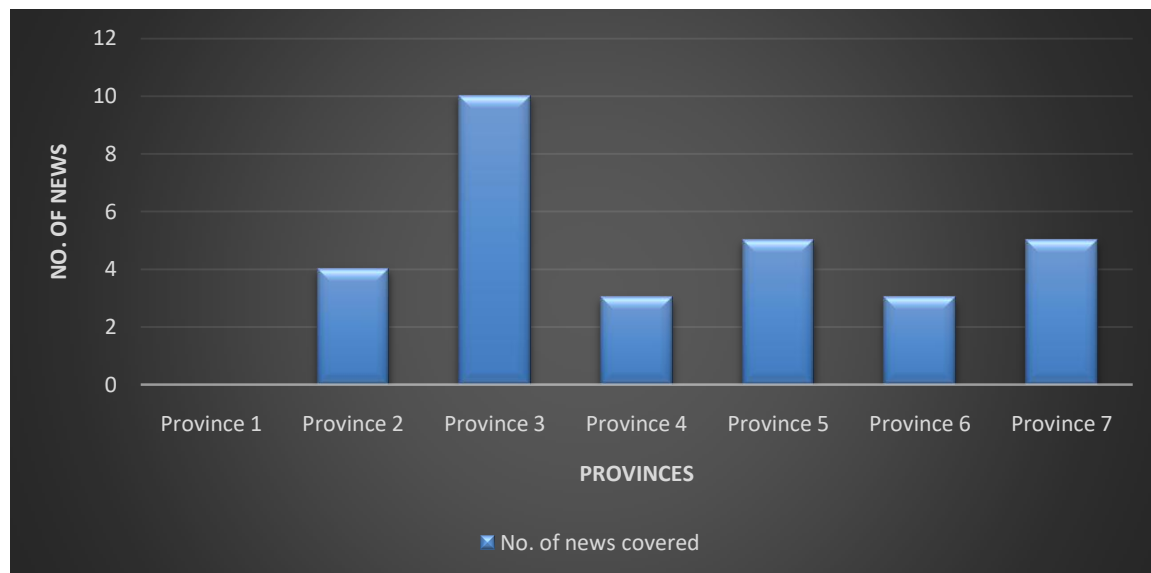


Figure 18: Province-wise coverage in Rajdhani

## Annapurna Post

Total 37 news stories were collected from Annapurna Post in total. Out of them, 19 news stories were supported with pictures.

Annapurna Post has also prioritized child marriage over other issues and total 14 news stories have been published on this theme. The least covered was sexual and reproductive health rights; there were only four stories in the category.

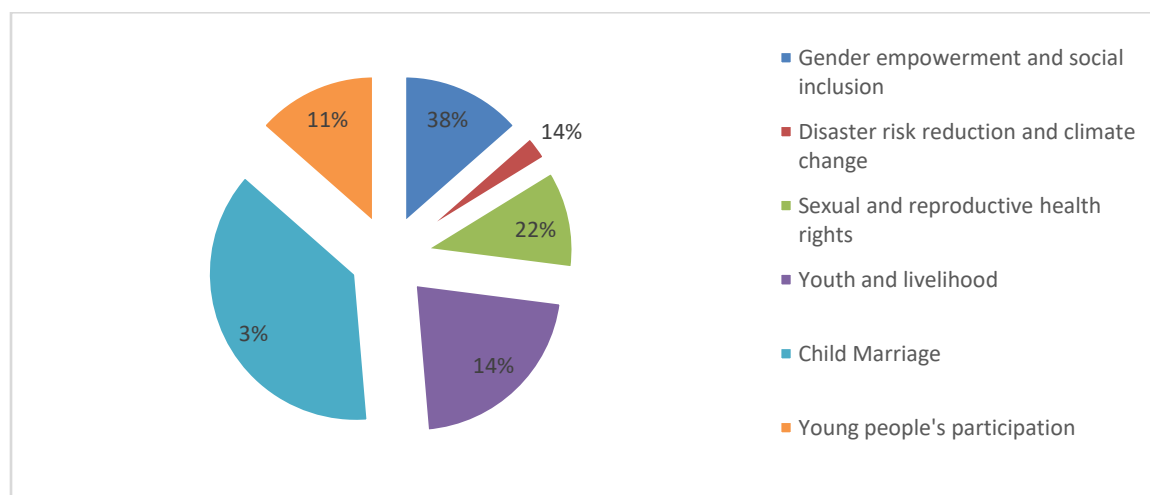


Figure 19: Coverage of youth-related issues in Annapurna Post

In this newspaper, Province 5 received the most significant attention. Province 3, most covered region in most of the newspapers has shared the second priority with provinces 1 and 2. Provinces 6 and 7 have been least prioritized.

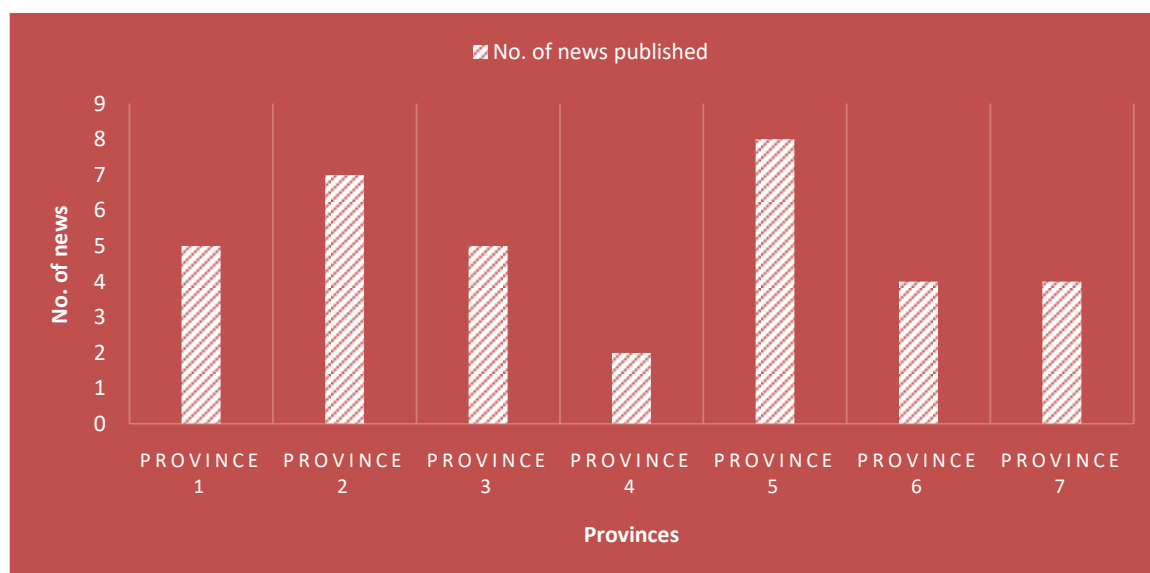
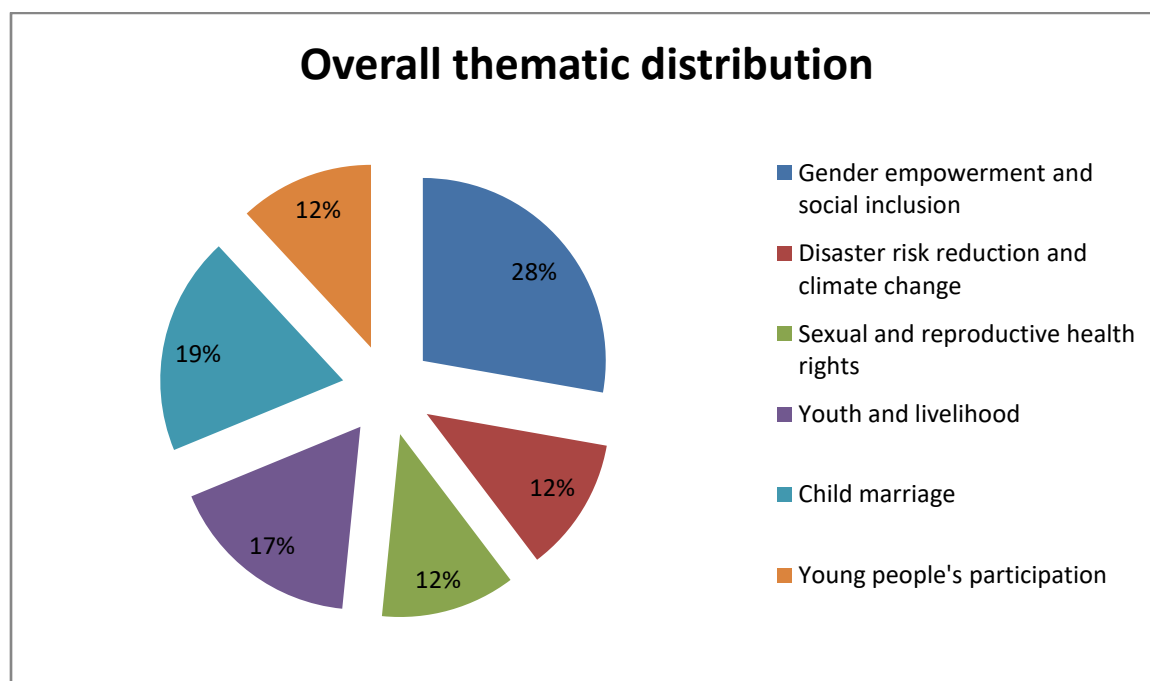


Figure 20: Province-wise coverage in Annapurna Post

## Chapter 3

### Major Findings and Discussions

#### Thematic distribution



**Figure 21: Overall thematic distribution**

Among 378 total news reports considered for the study, the highest number of news stories was about gender empowerment and social inclusion. There were 105 stories on this theme, which is 28 per cent of the total. Following gender empowerment and social inclusion were child marriage (73), youth and livelihood (65), sexual and reproductive health rights (45), youth people's participation (45) and disaster risk reduction and climate change (45).

Many news stories were found to be cross-thematic, which could fall under different themes. On those situations, the news stories were included and studied in only one theme, which could be the most suitable, for convenience of the research team and accuracy of data.

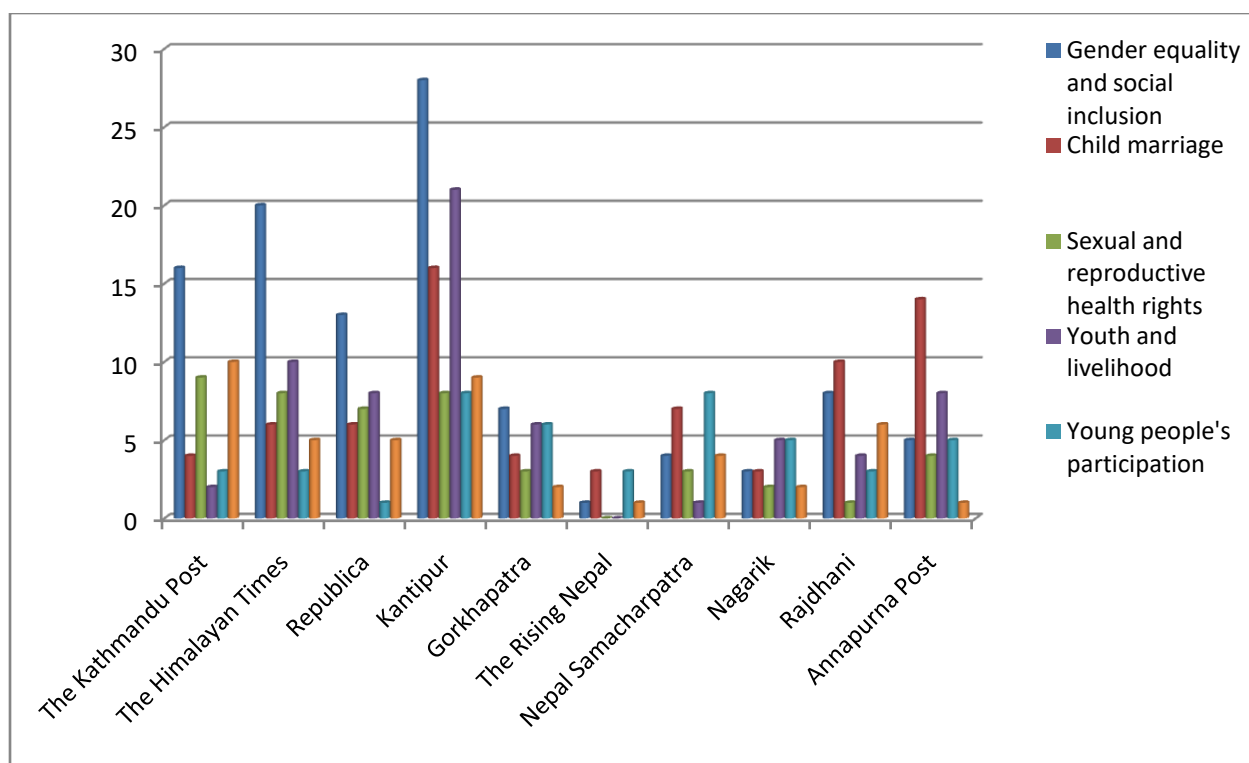


Figure 22: Newspaper-wise thematic distribution

The analysis shows that issues of gender empowerment and social inclusion are gradually getting prioritized by the press. On the other hand, child marriage has also become an issue in public sphere; therefore it has also received significant attention from newspapers. Comparatively, other four themes have received less coverage from the media.

## Issues in the themes

### i. Gender Empowerment and Social Inclusion

As presented in the above figure, among selected six categories, gender empowerment and social inclusion is on the top in most of the newspapers. It has also been observed that most of these reports were about gender-based violence and violence against women. The abundance of such reports shows that there is an undesirable increase in the violence against women and children including rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence. There even were the cases of women being burnt alive in the name of disputes between spouses and inadequate dowry. Such cases show that the efforts to address gender issues are still not enough and many women are suffering just because of being a woman.

However, there were some positive news about women being empowered with skills-based trainings and efforts to eliminate untouchability as well.

### ii. Child Marriage

Of total news stories studied, 19% of the stories are about child marriage. The news reports highlight a dual trend: whereas efforts to end child marriage are getting stronger in policy and practice at local, national and international levels; it is equally increasing. There have been reports about researches and studies carried out to assess situation of child marriage in different places as well as initiatives taken by local, national and international, government and non-government actors to free society from the bad practice. But, reports about cases of child marriage have also been carried in almost equal quantity.

Another interesting observation is that while parents were blamed for forcing children to marry at an early age earlier, these days many girls and boys in late adolescence choose to elope with their boyfriends/girlfriends defying parental orders. Newspapers have given a considerable space to cover life of such couples after early marriage.

### iii. Youth and livelihood

News stories related to youth and livelihood have a share of 17% of the total news stories. Under this theme, mainly the topics like involvement of youth in entrepreneurship, foreign employment or any other income-generating activities have been covered. Few inspiring and motivating news articles relating to entrepreneurship were found, but the news stories related to inter-country migration of youth were found in abundance. Some of them stated that many villages have been unable to carry out agricultural and other productive activities as almost all the young persons have left the village in search of better job opportunities. This signifies that though some of the youth are being motivated to start their own businesses rather than being employed, the trend has a long way to go before it is adopted by the majority. Also, there is a lack of proper opportunities and exposure for youth to develop and prosper.

Furthermore, the involvement of youth in addiction and smuggling of drugs and narcotics has also been pointed out by these reports. Youth's involvement in various criminal activities including murder, rape and abduction has also been highlighted by the newspapers, which can be taken as a result of failure to find right livelihood options for them.



#### iv. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Under the theme of sexual and reproductive health rights, abortion-related news stories were found in abundance. Issues of both safe and unsafe as well as self-decided and forced abortion have been published. Whereas it is positive that cases of safe abortion are increasing as it might be a need to save the life of women or on occasions in which conception takes place by force, the rise in unsafe and forced abortion cases is very alarming because it shows people are still not aware much about sexual and reproductive health rights. Few news stories have also highlighted the sex-selective abortion is still in practice, which is a challenge for all organizations working for gender equality.

There are a few news stories related to sexual minorities, deaths during childbirth and menstruation hygiene including the Chhaupadi tradition, which forces menstruating women to stay in narrow sheds during their period. In overall, about two-third news stories considered in this category depicted problems in the sector whereas one-third were about positive changes taking place against the problems.

#### v. Young People's Participation

Young people's participation has not been able to shine much in the newspapers. There is very less coverage related to involvement of youth in politics. Of course, political activities of youth had been highlighted by almost all newspapers before, during and after local level elections held in May and June 2017. But, the coverage is quite bleak at other times.

Initiatives taken by youth and child clubs at local level to bring about positive changes in their community and society have been covered with a positive and encouraging perspective by the newspapers. However, there are a low number of such stories and not enough attention has been given to change-making efforts of youth at the local level.

Similarly, youth's participation in different programs in order to formulate or change policies and their effective implementation has been observed well by many newspapers. The participation of youth was seen comparatively more in changing environmental policies. In overall, the coverage shows that youth's participation has been recognized at some level, but there is still a lot to be done for their meaningful participation.

#### vi. Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change

There were a lot of news stories related to floods, landslides, lightning and other natural calamities. Youth were found to be one of the most vulnerable populations in natural disasters. Reports covering the life of survivors after the devastating earthquake in 2015 have also continued to receive equal priority, though it is on the decline. There were sufficient stories to portray general conditions of life, but stories focusing on impacts of the earthquake on youth were very few.

## Geographic distribution

Geographically, among 378 news stories published, the highest number of reports was from Province 3. Total 82 news reports were published from this province. Following it was Province 5, from where total 54 news stories had been published. Besides those covering national issues and few cross-thematic stories, less than 35 stories were published from other five provinces.

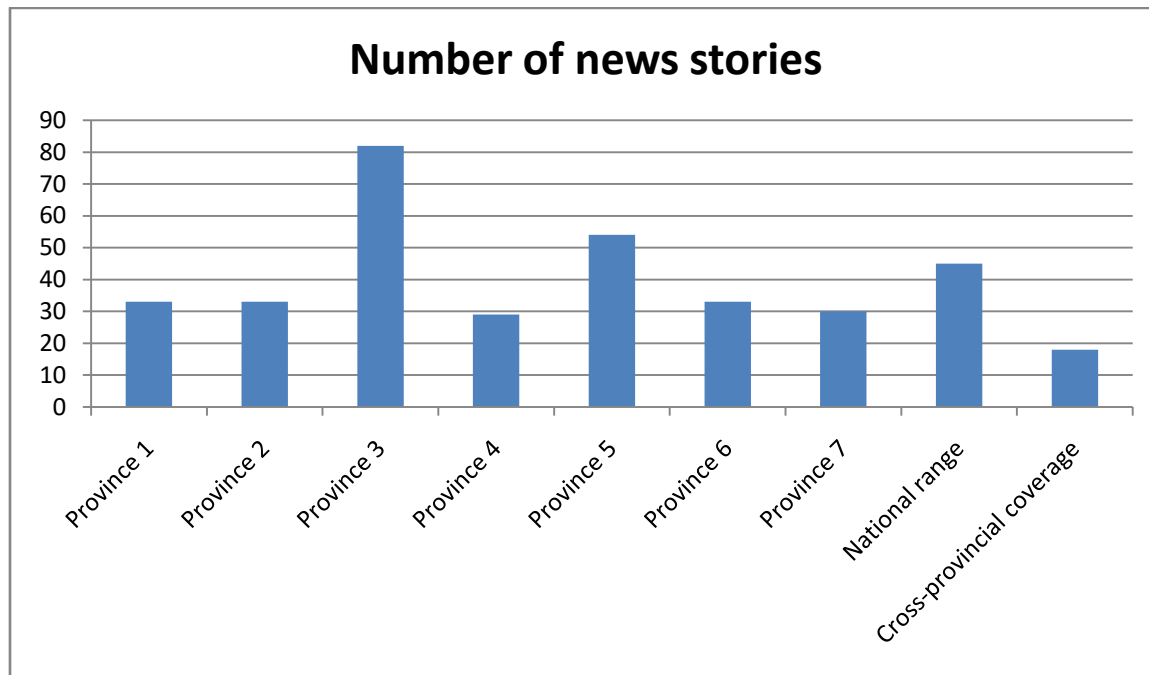


Figure 23: Geographic distribution of news stories

The unequal distribution of news coverage seems directly proportional to the level of infrastructural development in these provinces. Province 3 is the most happening region of the country as the capital city is located here. Likewise, Province 5 has held the second position as it has major cities like Nepalgunj, Tulsipur and Butwal. More than 20 per cent of news stories originating in Province 3 is evident of the fact that activities conducted for the development of youth is also capital-centric. The second position of Province 5 shows such activities are then focused on major cities of the country.

The findings are evident of the fact that mainstream media are biased toward the capital and major city. But, they also suggest that youth residing and working in the capital as well as other major cities have a greater responsibility to make youth of other regions aware about their rights and responsibilities and take all of them together in the development process.

	Province 1	Province 2	Province 3	Province 4	Province 5	Province 6	Province 7	National range	Cross-provincial	Total
<b>The Kathmandu Post</b>	3	0	8	7	8	7	0	7	4	44
<b>The Himalayan Times</b>	4	6	14	5	3	2	2	9	7	52
<b>Republica</b>	1	5	10	2	4	4	6	7	1	40
<b>Kantipur</b>	9	4	17	2	12	2	4	29	11	90
<b>Gorkhapatra</b>	6	6	3	3	3	5	2	0	0	28
<b>The Rising Nepal</b>	1	0	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	8
<b>Nepal Samacharpatra</b>	3	2	4	1	6	6	4	1	0	27
<b>Nagarik</b>	1	1	6	3	5	0	2	0	2	20
<b>Rajdhani</b>	0	4	10	3	5	3	5	0	2	32
<b>Annapurna Post</b>	5	5	5	2	8	4	4	3	1	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>378</b>

Table 2: Geographic distribution of news stories

### Newspaper-wise distribution

Of total 378 stories, Kantipur was attributed to most stories. It has published total 90 stories related to selected youth issues during the observation period. Following this are The Himalayan Times and The Kathmandu Post, which have published 52 and 44 news reports respectively.

From the bottom, The Rising Nepal has covered the issues in the least number as only eight stories were found published. Nagarik, Nepal Samacharpatra and Gorkhapatra have followed the list.

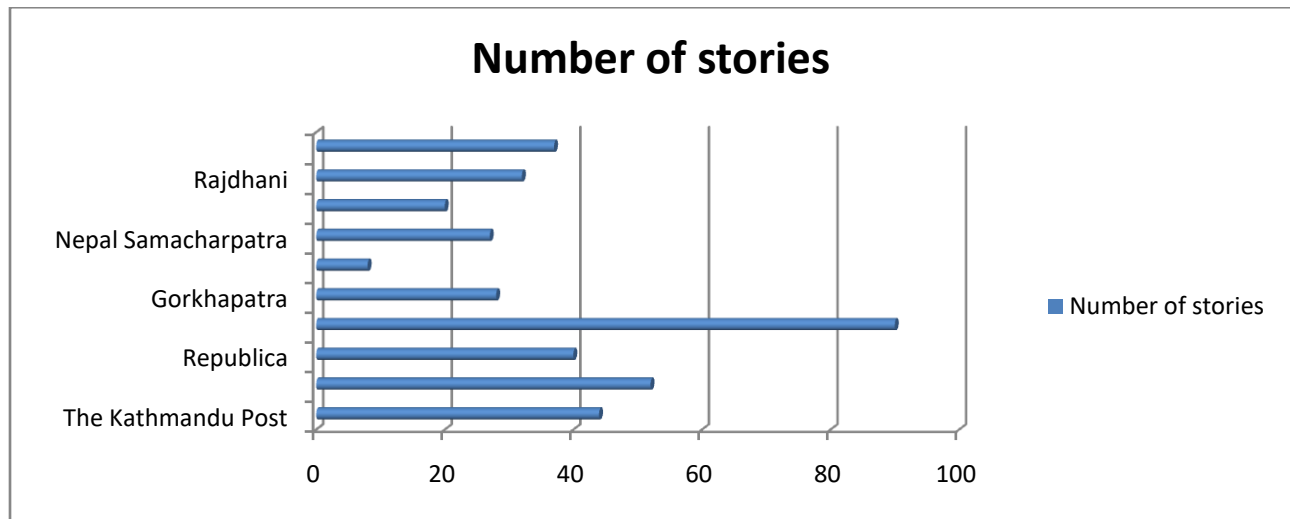


Figure 24: Newspaper-wise distribution of news stories

The coverage trend seems quite natural as Kantipur is apparently supposed to be the largest selling newspaper of Nepal. It has reporters in almost all districts of the country, has more pages than other newspapers; therefore it is not a surprise that more number of news stories have been found published in the paper. Likewise, The Himalayan Times and The Kathmandu Post are considered big newspapers in the sector. However, the number of stories published by them is just a few more than half of Kantipur's coverage.

On the other hand, The Rising Nepal has the fewest pages in its regular edition among the 10 newspapers listed out. Therefore, its coverage of youth issues being quite pessimistic is also natural. But, it is surprising that Nagarik, also considered a big media house, has published fewer stories than many other newspapers. It is noteworthy that the English daily from the same media house, Republica, has published quite more news stories about youth issues than Nagarik. It can be suggestive of the fact that English newspapers have given more priority to youth issues than Nepali newspapers also because most of urban youth are attracted to English newspapers than Nepali ones these days.

## Overall observation

Issues concerning youth are dynamic and they evolve with time. Youth prioritize different issues in different places and times. They have to deal with different problems in different contexts. Yet, it can be said that there are some issues which last longer and which require involvement of youth to improve their situations in the society. Issues of gender empowerment and social inclusion, young people's participation, sexual and reproductive health rights, disaster risk reduction and climate change, and child marriage are some of the agendas which last longer and which youth need to invest themselves in.

Mostly in rural areas, women and girls are victim of violence and discrimination. Even in few places of urban areas, violence and discrimination against women and girls is still prevalent. There were cases of women being burnt alive for bringing insufficient dowry, and also the news reports about death of women due to the lack of proper health care had been published frequently. In Nepal, gender-based violence still largely means violence against women as cases of violence against men are seldom reported in the press whereas violence against sexual minority is very nominal.

Cases of sexual harassment and rape are being reported more frequently. Whereas it is very sad that such cases still occur in Nepal frequently, the cases coming into limelight through media and legal procedures is quite helpful for the victims to get justice. The same observation applies to issues in sexual and reproductive health rights sector. As discussed earlier, increased reports about abortion can be taken in both positive and negative lights.

It is generally considered that children and elderly are most vulnerable populations during natural disasters. However, youth have also been found equally affected and held back by such disasters. Natural disasters have directly affected career opportunities and potential livelihood options available to youth. As the most active demographic groups and equally affected by the disasters, youth have to play the most active role in disaster risk reduction and coping with climate change effects. Analyzing media contents in past one year has shown that youth have realized this need; yet their involvement is not sufficient enough as their society has expected from them, both at policy and implementation level.

Menstruation is still a big issue in many parts of our country. The conservatism toward this issue and the traditional belief that the women/girls are impure while menstruating thus they should live separately is still in practice in both urban and rural areas. Whereas it is harsher in remote villages of mid-western and far-western Nepal in the form of Chhaupadi tradition, women of many ethnic groups in most of other parts including urban areas are forced to stay away from religious activities and kitchen during their period. But, many women/girls take this exclusion among other forms of discrimination as their fate and they believe it is a punishment that they are receiving for being born as a girl child. The most effective way to get rid of this problem is awareness and education. If religious and community leaders are made aware about these issues, they can effect changes in their society.

Young people are found to be more focused on their education and skill improvement than in politics and other public issues from social, cultural and economic spheres. Generally, it is not a problem as they have to secure their stable future before making changes in the society and country. However, given the political instability of Nepal, it is desirable that youth intervene in

mainstream politics and make positive changes. But, the reality is more frustrating when we see many youth opt for foreign employment and education while there few are willing to stay in Nepal and start their own business. The involvement of youth in drug addiction and smuggling is something which everyone in the society should worry about.

Child marriage is a social problem which has been hampering the life of thousands of children for ages. Due to poverty and tradition, child marriage is still prevalent in many of Nepali societies. Moreover, a recent development is that many adolescents choose to elope at an early age as they fear their family and society with disapprove of their relationships. Many students drop out of education and end up marrying. Early marriage leads to mental pressure and physical exploitation.

These observations have shown that the themes discussed in this study are some of the areas which require youth's involvement to make changes in the society. You have to work in these sectors and make changes because these are the issues directly affecting them. If youth do not realize it on time, the problems continue to exist in Nepal and they will affect future generations as well. Youth have to take initiatives for changes in these sectors to improve the situation of their generation and make life easier and better. Problems identified for this study demand youth's active participation for the sake of themselves, their society and country.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Conclusion**

It is generally believed that media are mirrors of society. They do not only reflect what happens in the society, but also set agendas and priorities of their audience. Media and society have two-way relationship; while media follow what happens in the society, they also make the society follow what they carry in messages. Readers, viewers and listeners of media are so much influenced by the messages they receive that they think what media prioritize are their priorities whereas they can ignore what media ignore.

With the rise in access to literacy and information technologies, media's influence on audience is ever increasing, not only in Nepal, but in the entire world. Recent innovations have caused tremendous changes in media technology and modes of message production and consumption. Online media are on the rise and radio broadcasters are losing their audience to smart news portals. People have also begun raising questions how long "traditional" print media will survive as new media's penetration in the mass communications sector is unprecedentedly increasing these days.

Yet, in the context of Nepal, daily broadsheet papers seem not at all threatened by recent changes. They have been perceived as the most credible and most standard forms of communication mediums by general audience as well as media critics and analysts. It is thought that their presentation is more prudent and careful, and closer to reality and truth. Consequently, they have a greater influence among members of the general public as well as policy-level officials. In overall, broadsheet dailies are the most valued means of mass communications in Nepal and a study into their contents can be helpful in analyzing what is going on in the society and what media are trying to set as significant agendas for the audience.

Youth is the most active demographic group; hence youth of any society have a responsibility to contribute to make positive changes in their society. They should be the change that they want to see. However, they need to be provided with a conducive environment to work toward the changes they want to see. They should be supported by various actors and factors of the society to meet their mission. There needs to be cooperation and coordination from other stakeholders. This is where media have a role to play. Media, as both reflectors and shapers of the society, also reflect what youth of the particular society are doing and have a strong influence on them on what they need to prioritize.

A study into news contents of 10 major Nepali and English national newspapers for the span of one year has shown that issues concerning youth of today have significantly covered by the newspapers. Whereas some issues like child marriage and gender empowerment have become more significant issues, concerning all groups of Nepali society, also due to media's priority

setting; some other significant issues like young people's participation in social activities, and disaster risk reduction and climate change have not been prioritized by the media yet. Though newsrooms of mainstream media houses have been chock-full of youth journalists, the coverage of issues concerning the generation is not sufficient in comparison to the seriousness of the issues.

Nevertheless, the overall coverage and changes being seen in the sector are satisfactory. It can be expected that with the development of an aware and active newspaper audience among Nepali youth, the newspapers will accord more priority to their issues and agendas so that the youth get sufficient support from media in their journey toward change.



## **Suggestions and Recommendations**

Based on findings of this research, the following suggestions and recommendations can be provided.

### **A. To media**

- I. Because youth have the greatest responsibility in developing any society, they should be the priority audience group of media. Media should produce appropriate contents targeting youth and help them get engaged in activities concerning them.
- II. Whereas media's prioritization of gender empowerment and social inclusion, and child marriage is noteworthy; they should expand their coverage on other significant issues concerning youth including disaster risk reduction and climate change, young people's participation, sexual and reproductive health rights, and livelihood.
- III. Youth activism is gradually getting momentum in all parts of the country. Media should not center themselves in the capital and major cities, but be more inclusive in giving priority to issues, events and incidents from all provinces and regions of Nepal.
- IV. Big media houses' coverage of youth issues is quite encouraging. However, some newspapers' coverage of the issues is below the level of satisfaction. Government publications like Gorkhapatra and The Rising Nepal have also not prioritized topics which youth are concerned to. All the newspapers should consider youth as their potential audience group and accord a high priority to their issues.

### **B. To youth, youth organizations and youth activists**

- I. Youth organizations and activists should engage media as much as possible in their regular and special activities so that media will also prioritize and promote their issues.
- II. However, they should not feel discouraged even if media do not give priority to their activities, but continue working to achieve set objectives.
- III. They should carefully study media contents about issues they are working on and engage themselves in constructive conversation with media so that both the sides can give the best support possible to each other.
- IV. They can take the help of media contents to prioritize their themes and activities.

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### Annex 3: Tabulation format

#### Media Monitoring on Contemporary Youth Issues Monthly Reporting Format

<b>Name of the newspaper</b>	<b>Gender empowerment and social inclusion</b>	<b>Child marriage</b>	<b>Sexual and reproductive health rights</b>	<b>Youth and livelihood</b>	<b>Young people's participation</b>	<b>Disaster risk reduction and climate change</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>The Kathmandu Post</b>							
<b>The Himalayan Times</b>							
<b>Republica</b>							
<b>Kantipur</b>							
<b>Gorkhapatra</b>							
<b>The Rising Nepal</b>							
<b>Nepal Samacharpatra</b>							
<b>Nagarik</b>							
<b>Rajdhani</b>							
<b>Annapurna Post</b>							
<b>Total</b>							

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