



Between democratic ideals and platform pressures: Mapping local media research through bibliometric analysis (1977–2024)

Murad Karaduman ¹

 0000-0002-6700-8547

Muhammet Erdem Duru ²

 0000-0003-4282-9645

Mehmet Arif Arık ²

 0000-0001-9118-3022

Sibel Karaduman ^{1*}

 0000-0001-6237-9624

¹ Akdeniz University, Antalya, TÜRKİYE

² Independent Researcher, Antalya, TÜRKİYE

* Corresponding author: sibelkaraduman@akdeniz.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Local media research has long been pulled between two demands: the normative expectation that local journalism sustains democratic life, and the structural reality of a digitally reconfigured media environment in which the conditions for that work are eroding. This study examines how that tension has shaped the development of the field through a bibliometric analysis of 1,088 publications indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) core collection between 1977 and 2024. Drawing on temporal trends, citation patterns, co-authorship networks, and keyword co-occurrences, the analysis traces both the quantitative expansion and the thematic reorientation of the literature. Two turning points stand out: a 1990s shift toward political participation and community engagement, and a post-2012 turn toward digital transformation, platform dependency, and the integration of social media into local news ecosystems. Geographic concentration in the USA, Spain, Australia, and England, alongside the marginal but growing visibility of Latin American and Asian scholarship, indicates that the field's intellectual map is shaped not only by the substance of local media but by uneven structures of academic visibility. These patterns suggest that local media research has functioned less as a geographically defined subfield than as a theoretical space in which communication scholarship negotiates the tension between journalism's democratic ideals and the structural pressures of an increasingly platformized media environment. The corpus is limited to publications indexed in the WoS core collection, classified under communication, and retrieved through terms appearing in article titles. Just over half of the corpus (552 of 1,088 records) is indexed in the social sciences citation index and almost two-fifths (420) in the emerging sources citation index, which points to a field that is consolidating but still only partially represented in the most established indexes. The article therefore treats the bibliometric record as a visible, indexed part of local media scholarship rather than the whole field and interprets its development through the relationship between democratic expectations, structural media change, and uneven scholarly visibility.

Keywords: local media, digital transformation, bibliometric analysis, community journalism, media sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Local media occupy an uneasy place in contemporary communication scholarship. The literature treats them as keystone institutions of democratic life: sources of civic information, infrastructures of community identity, channels through which political participation is sustained. The economy in which they operate, however, is steadily dismantling the conditions that make such work possible. Newsrooms shrink, advertising migrates to platforms whose logics are indifferent to locality, and the category of “the local” itself is being redefined by digital infrastructures that were not built around it. Local media research has developed in the gap between these two realities, and the field’s growth, thematic emphases, and geographic concentrations cannot be read independently of that gap.

As with any concept of ‘local’ – local politics, local economy, local community – the precise definition of a ‘local media ecosystem’ is no simple task. To describe an ecosystem for analytical purposes, it is possible to start with administrative boundaries (a municipality defined by law), economic boundaries (a media market defined by media companies and advertisers), or the often contested and rarely clearly defined social boundaries that define different communities (our neighborhood, our town, our side of town) (Jenkins & Nielsen, 2018, p. 27). A common definition of local is difficult for countries as a whole. It is seen that countries develop definitions in accordance with their own geographical and cultural structures (Timisi, 2001). Ali (2017), who analyzes studies on local media in various countries, states that the point where the studies differ significantly is the epistemological dimension of defining local. For example, a study from the USA follows a traditional path by assigning terms on the scale of geographically defined units. While this is understandable, this definition is based on an uncritical assumption of default locality that tends to treat locality as a homogeneous unit of consumption of news rather than a complex ecosystem of communities and organizations. In the UK study, a place-based definition is relied upon, while the decision process and concerns are explained. The report for Canada also emphasized the challenges of defining community, local and regional (Ali, 2017, pp. 126-127). Gulyas and Baines (2020, p. 4) argue that there are three key defining characteristics of local media that are universal regardless of which country or region of the world it takes place in, and that these characteristics provide a framework for analyzing all forms of local media and journalism: “geographical socio-political context”, “relationship with society”, “position in macro media ecosystems”.

Local media primarily covers events relevant to small, geographically defined audiences and serves communities that are often overlooked by national or global media (Dimitrakopoulou, 2015). Through close engagement with everyday community life, local journalism contributes to the formation of shared values, norms, and social connections among residents (Yamamoto, 2018). Although operating with limited resources and smaller audiences, local media’s proximity to the community enables it to play a distinctive role in shaping public opinion on local governance, policies, and events. This proximity remains the key factor distinguishing local journalism from national journalism (Frost, 2006, pp. 278-279).

Local journalism is subject to the same normative expectations as journalism as a whole in democratic societies (Moore & Ramsay, 2025). Looking specifically at the expectations of local media, it has been shown that citizens expect local media to inform and educate, represent the views and voices of citizens, and campaign on issues of public interest (Firmstone & Coleman, 2014). Costera Meijer (2010) also identified seven social functions that the public expects from local media in her research on Amsterdam: providing background information, promoting social integration, inspiring, ensuring representation, enhancing local understanding, creating civic memory, and contributing to social cohesion.

One of the most important functions of local media is to contribute to political participation. Local press, as a mediator for the public interest, strengthens citizens’ relationship with local governments (Fowler & Ridout, 2009; Hess & Waller, 2017; Stamm, 1988). Emphasizing that the relationship between local media and civic engagement is complex and multidimensional, Thompson (2021) argues that for rural Americans, the different communication channels used to obtain local news and information are important determinants of civic engagement. The study reveals that in rural areas, local newspapers and online news sites still foster civic engagement, while local television’s influence has waned and may even have negative effects.

Local journalism plays an important role in increasing citizens' voting behavior and their interest in political processes. In their US-based study, Filla and Johnson (2010, p. 688) found that many local governments, especially those outside the central city, are unable to communicate with voters through the major media, and that citizens, especially in areas without daily newspapers, face barriers to learning about their local government and are less likely to participate in elections. During election periods, local media play an indispensable role in reaching voters and shaping voter perceptions through a variety of factors such as the frequency of coverage of political ads, selective reporting tendencies (especially focusing on negative ads), the size of the media market, and the quality of the coverage. Local media not only publicize ads, but also significantly influence voters' opinions about campaigns and candidates by determining which ads are featured and how they are framed (Fowler & Ridout, 2009).

Amidst contemporary digital transformation and information-source diversification, Burger (2025) argues that singular-channel analyses are insufficient for understanding local ecosystems and proposes a "repertoire" approach to local information acquisition. Applying this lens to the 2022 Bern local elections, she shows that print and online local newspapers remain primary information sources and positively influence voter turnout and rational voting behavior, despite digitalization (Burger, 2025, pp. 149-154). She also cautions that, in an era of disinformation and "pseudo-local journalism," researchers must identify specific content types more precisely when participants report general local newspaper use without naming particular titles.

Local media also play a key role in shaping nearby communities (Rivas-de-Roca et al., 2025), capable of initiating social change by foregrounding issues, soliciting different views, and informing decision-making (Nicodemus, 2004, p. 163), and providing reference points through which citizens can build dialogue around shared problems and experiences (Alankuş, 2005, pp. 118-119). Drzewiecka et al. (2019) demonstrate that local newspapers can disrupt the unidimensional national-media discourses on contested issues such as immigration and create alternative spaces of representation. In this respect, local media also function as a "translator of meaning" during global events, transforming external narratives into local "objects of experience and memory" (Morgner, 2017).

According to Męcal (2014), local media face multiple challenges in fulfilling their responsibilities, including political pressures from local actors, technological change driven by the rise of the Internet, shrinking newsrooms, declining resources, financial sustainability problems, and increasing competition from digital platforms. In addition, Maryani et al. (2018) emphasize that the dominance of national media further constrains local journalism by centralizing content production and reducing locally relevant news.

These structural pressures are reinforced by corporate imperatives to prioritize profit, particularly in contexts where powerful local actors function as major advertisers, resulting in limited critical coverage of large corporations and wealthy elites (McChesney, 2016, p. 18). Dalmus et al. (2024, pp. 195-204) examine the impact of digital transformation and diverse revenue models on the Swiss local media sector. Through a quantitative analysis of twelve organizations, the study identifies a significant correlation between financing structures and content quality. Specifically, outlets employing alternative financing such as donations or public funding demonstrate the highest levels of locality and originality, with nearly 99% of content produced in-house. In contrast, while advertising and paywall-based models generate higher news volumes, they rely more heavily on syndicated agency reports, thereby reducing their overall rates of local and original reporting.

The universal significance of local journalism is consistently evidenced across diverse geographical contexts. A review of the literature from the Americas to Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the UK and Oceania reveals a consistent theme of making visible the role of news media in connecting people and promoting a sense of local identity (Hess & Waller, 2017, p. 59). Indeed, Nielsen (2015), as cited in Moore and Ramsay (2025), describes local newspapers as key media that, if threatened or removed, could have disastrous effects on many parts of the democratic ecosystem.

There is no doubt that the digital revolution has affected local media as much as it has affected mainstream and global media. The digital revolution has provided opportunities for local media to expand their reach through online platforms and created new forms of interaction between journalists and audiences. This transformation has raised fundamental debates regarding the meaning of "local" and the appropriate practices of digital journalism at the local level.

The increasing use of digital and online media has created both new opportunities and challenges for local journalists and audiences. Journalists are required to develop new skills to meet the demands of the digital environment, while audiences' growing participation in news production necessitates the internalization of basic journalistic norms and practices. In this context, enhancing media literacy among audiences has become increasingly important (Hastjarjo, 2017, p. 26).

Digitalization has diversified local news ecologies by expanding distribution channels and reshaping how local news is produced, accessed, and interpreted. Audiences now engage with local news through multiple platforms and with varying motivations, leading to fragmented understandings of what constitutes "local" news. Although traditional news outlets remain relevant, social media and community-based platforms have become central actors in local information flows. This transformation underscores the need for both researchers and practitioners to reassess prevailing definitions of news and audience perceptions in the digital age (Gulyas et al., 2019).

Based on semi-structured interviews with local newspaper managers, Arslan (2023, p. 68) identifies the main advantages of local online journalism as speed, cost efficiency, content and format diversity, continuous updating, and the circulation of news through social media. At the same time, respondents highlight major challenges, including information pollution, inadequate technological infrastructure, shortages of skilled personnel, declining advertising revenues, and the absence of clear legal regulation. Despite these constraints, local media organizations continue to emphasize their commitment to news production and their capacity to respond to emerging challenges, even as alternative sources of local information proliferate. They remain cautiously optimistic about the future of local news in an increasingly digital and platform-dominated environment, drawing on long-standing relationships of trust with their audiences (Jenkins & Nielsen, 2018, pp. 42-43). However, empirical evidence points to a severe economic crisis in local journalism. Examining the relationship between the British local press and the BBC, Cairncross (2024, pp. 104-105) reports a 21% decline in local newspaper circulation in the UK during the first half of 2023 compared to the previous year, alongside the closure of 320 local newspapers between 2009 and 2019 (see also Shapiro et al., 2022). This decline is primarily attributed to the migration of local advertising to online platforms and changing media consumption habits, as audiences increasingly devote time to mobile devices rather than print news. While digitalization has profoundly reshaped local media's functions and social value, monetizing digital news products remains a persistent challenge (Hradziushka et al., 2020, pp. 89-90). In response, local media organizations increasingly experiment with alternative audience engagement strategies, product innovation, and collaborative alliances as pathways to sustainability (Beamish, 1998, p. 152).

Based on in-depth interviews with US-based local digital news outlets, Pantic (2022) shows that sustainability strategies primarily rely on producing locally focused and original content, addressing issues neglected by major media, effectively using digital technologies, and increasing content diversity through volunteer contributions. Contemporary scholarship further problematizes the meaning of "local" under conditions of globalization and digital communication. Nagel and Broersma (2024) emphasize the changing configurations of locality, while Kejanlioğlu (2005, p. 91) argues that, in a global communication environment enabled by transnational media and the Internet, it is neither possible nor desirable for local media to remain confined to strictly bounded geographical areas. Similarly, Alankuş (2005, p. 99) conceptualizes today's media environment as *global-localized*, and Nygren (2019, p. 63) highlights the increasing entanglement of local and global social relations, news flows, and public discussions.

Emphasizing the reimagining of local media through the Internet, Wang and Guan (2025) argue that the replacement of traditional local media with Internet-based forms ranging from formal media mergers to grassroots initiatives simultaneously produces centralizing and decentralizing dynamics. The dissolution of local mainstream media weakens local discursive power by subordinating it to nationally oriented digitalization agendas. Conversely, the emergence of Internet-based local media reflects the efforts of district-level actors to reclaim local discursive authority within an increasingly platform-driven media environment.

Ay (2022) argues that the concept of community media should be used instead of local journalism. According to the researcher, if the world is a "global village", all news is local, which is perhaps why we should talk about communities rather than "local" (p. 34).

With the proliferation of Internet technology, scholarly interest in *hyperlocal media* has increased, positioning it as a key concept in contemporary local journalism research (Karlsson & Rowe, 2019; Kurpius et al., 2010; see also Negreira-Rey & López-García, 2021). Hyperlocal media generally refers to media content focused on a specific geographical area or small community and is often conceptualized as a micro-level form of local journalism that seeks to give voice to communities overlooked by national and regional media (Negreira-Rey & López-García, 2021).

With this expanded visibility, hyperlocal media has been increasingly associated with democratic and community-oriented functions. Successful initiatives can provide diverse local content, amplify authentic local voices, foster community cohesion, and hold public authorities accountable (Radcliffe, 2012, p. 3). At the same time, hyperlocal projects vary considerably in their motivations, journalistic practices, ethical orientations, and social roles. While nonprofit initiatives tend to emphasize community values, for-profit models prioritize financial sustainability, and professionally trained journalists often demonstrate stronger adherence to ethical norms and editorial autonomy. Nevertheless, regardless of organizational form, hyperlocal media initiatives retain the potential to play significant roles within their local communities (Tenor, 2018, p. 1074).

A closely related discussion has grown up around news deserts and local information ecosystems. Instead of asking whether a single outlet survives, it asks whether a community still has regular access to local news that is original, reliable and civically useful. Napoli et al. (2017) propose a scalable way of assessing local journalism against community information needs, while Abernathy (2020) uses the term news deserts for places left with little or no credible local reporting. The present corpus captures only part of this discussion. Some of this work is indexed through titles built around “local news,” “information needs,” “news deserts” or “local information ecosystems,” rather than the title terms used here. And this is not just a technical matter. Some vocabularies enter international indexes more easily than others, and that unevenness is part of what the corpus reveals.

Given this fragmented yet expanding body of research, a systematic mapping of local media studies is needed to identify dominant themes, intellectual trajectories, and structural gaps in the field. Bibliometric analysis offers a suitable method to address this need.

At the 2018 European Communication Conference, panelists reaffirmed the critical role of local media as an innovative pillar of democratic societies, notwithstanding prevailing structural and economic constraints. To address these challenges, the panel emphasized public policy interventions, such as direct subsidies for online media and educational funding to bolster innovation. Furthermore, Jenkins (2019, pp. 228-230) highlights a multifaceted research agenda necessitated by the current landscape: measuring content diversity within consolidated markets, investigating political and financial pressures on journalists, evaluating the efficacy of revenue strategies, and examining evolving methods for community engagement.

Existing review studies on local journalism and related fields have largely relied on narrative or thematic syntheses, which are valuable for conceptual discussion but provide limited insight into the field’s structural development. By contrast, bibliometric analysis makes it possible to identify publication trends, influential authors and sources, co-authorship patterns, and thematic clusters in a systematic and reproducible way. In this sense, the present study complements earlier review-based work by offering a data-driven map of how local media research has evolved within WoS-indexed communication scholarship. This is where the bibliometric method helps. It cannot replace close reading of national or regional traditions, but it can show how the internationally indexed part of the field is put together: which terms keep recurring, which authors and countries are most central, and which areas stay only weakly visible.

This study does not only aim to track publication trends. Its main contribution lies in showing how local media research has moved from a relatively dispersed body of studies toward a more structured field shaped by democracy, community, digital transformation, and media sustainability debates. At a more fundamental level, it argues that the way local media scholarship has structurally evolved in terms of its thematic priorities, geographic concentrations, and citation patterns is closely tied to unresolved tensions in communication theory between the normative expectations placed on democratic journalism and the structural realities of an increasingly platformized media environment. The study treats the bibliometric record not as a neutral inventory of scholarly production but as evidence of how the field has organized its attention, what it has theorized, what it has measured, and what it has left at the margins. The structural patterns it reveals are

read here as traces of an unresolved theoretical question: how communication research has tried to hold together the democratic claims made on local journalism and the platformized conditions in which that journalism now operates. For this reason, the article does not claim to speak for every national, regional or non-English tradition of local media research. Its claim is narrower and stays closer to what the evidence can show: it examines how local media scholarship becomes visible within the WoS-indexed Communication corpus, and how that visible record is organized around democracy, community, digital transformation and unequal academic circulation. What the article offers is therefore an interpretation, not a universal claim. These patterns make it possible to read the field through the tension between democratic expectations and platform pressures, but they do not capture every way local media are studied beyond this corpus.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The database for the study was created through the Web of Science (WoS) core collection due to factors such as diversity, volume, and ease of use (Merigó et al., 2015) and high-quality publications (Donthu et al., 2021). The WoS was selected primarily due to its comprehensive indexing and coverage of high-quality journals, offering robust citation data essential for bibliometric accuracy. Although the dataset mainly reflects publications in English and from Western academic systems, the methodological framework employed here can also be adapted to regional databases, non-English publications, and emerging scholarly outputs that are less visible in WoS-indexed communication research. This choice also sets the epistemic boundary of the article. WoS provides stable citation metadata and makes network analysis possible, but it gives stronger visibility to English-language journals and to publishing systems that are already well established in international indexing.

The dataset was retrieved from the WoS database on 5 October 2024 using a structured search strategy. The search was conducted specifically in the Title field to ensure a high level of topical relevance and to avoid studies that are included in the database but are not directly related to the subject of local media. The exact search string used was: "local media" OR "local journalism" OR "local press" OR "local newspapers" OR "local radio" OR "community media" OR "regional newspapers" OR "regional media". These keywords were combined using the Boolean OR operator to capture different expressions referring to local and regional media systems. In addition, the NOT operator was used during the filtering stage to exclude document types that are not considered scholarly research outputs, including theatre reviews, retractions, retracted publications, news items, notes, corrections, letters, and meeting abstracts. The title-based design was chosen for precision. It reduces the risk of including studies that mention local media only in passing, but it also excludes relevant work that uses nearby terms such as "local news," "community journalism," "hyperlocal journalism," "proximity journalism," "local information ecosystems" and "news deserts." These exclusions are deliberate, not an oversight. The discussion returns to them as evidence that some vocabularies make local media scholarship more visible in indexed databases than others.

The initial dataset consisted of publications in the category of "communication" between 1977 and 2024, including research articles, proceeding papers, works in progress, review articles, books and book chapters. Following the retrieval stage, the dataset was screened according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. To improve data quality, a manual data cleaning process was conducted in Microsoft Excel, which involved removing duplicate records and checking the dataset for missing or incomplete bibliographic information. Records with incomplete or irrelevant information were either completed where possible or excluded, resulting in a final dataset of 1,088 publications. Analyses were conducted using the free software VOSviewer (version 1.6.19), after filtering out texts that were not subject to academic review and removing noisy data. The overall filtering process is shown in [Figure 1](#). VOSviewer is a bibliometric data analysis and mapping software that allows bibliometric data to be examined in full detail. It provides features such as zooming, panning, and searching in the data visualizations it creates, making it an accessible and effective tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks.

This study employs bibliometric analysis, a method based on quantitative data and statistical techniques. It enables large bibliographic datasets to be analyzed systematically, although the results remain shaped by database coverage, search design and analytical choices (Donthu et al., 2021). Bibliometric analysis combines performance analysis, which evaluates the productivity and impact of authors, institutions, countries, and

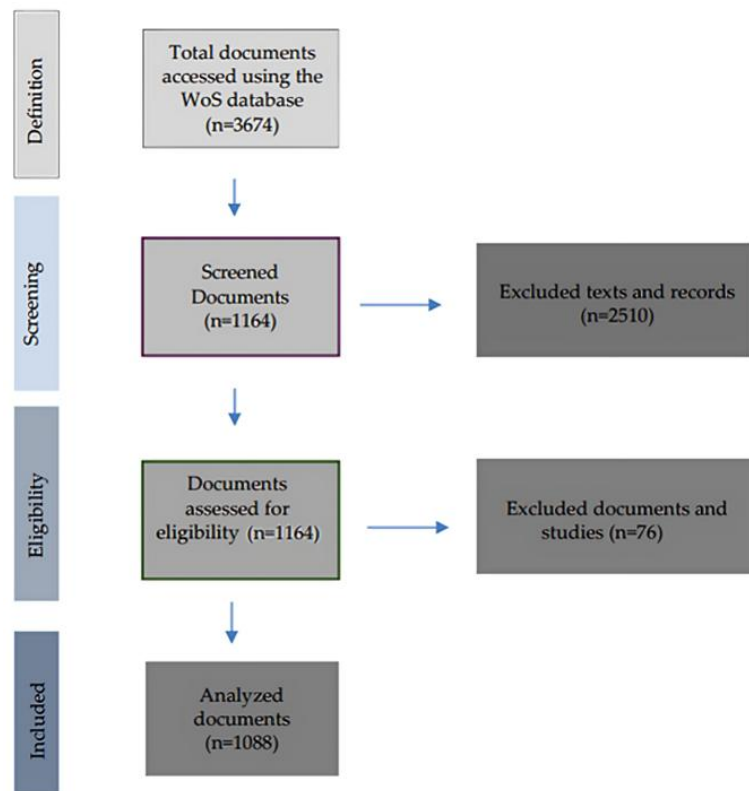


Figure 1. Data set creation steps (created by the authors)

journals, with science mapping, which traces collaborations, citation flows, and intellectual interactions in the literature (Donthu et al., 2021). Within this framework, the study addresses the following research questions in order to identify the main publication patterns, influential sources, co-authorship structures, and thematic trends in local media research:

- RQ1:** How has WoS-indexed communication scholarship on local media developed over time in terms of publication volume, index visibility and citation patterns?
- RQ2:** Which thematic clusters and keyword patterns structure the corpus, and how do they reflect movement from community, participation and democratic functions toward digital transformation, platform dependency and sustainability?
- RQ3:** How are author-, institution-, and country-level co-authorship patterns distributed across the corpus, and what do these patterns reveal about centrality, peripherality and inequalities of scholarly visibility?
- RQ4:** Which adjacent concepts and absences can be identified through the corpus design, particularly in relation to news deserts, local information ecosystems and non-English or regionally indexed scholarship?

In order to analyze the intellectual structure and formal characteristics of the literature examined within the scope of the study, bibliometric techniques such as citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence, co-citation analysis and co-authorship analysis (Kurutkan & Orhan, 2018), which are among the science mapping techniques, were used. The two kinds of analysis are meant to be read together, not in isolation. Performance indicators show scale and visibility, and science mapping helps make sense of how themes, co-authorship patterns and citations are organized. To trace how the field's thematic priorities moved over time, an overlay visualization based on average publication year was generated in VOSviewer, with keywords colored accordingly.

This study has several limitations related to the search strategy and data collection process. First, wildcard or truncation operators were not used, as the selected keywords were already designed to capture the most commonly used terminology in the literature on local and regional media. However, it is acknowledged that

certain lexical variations may not have been captured by this specific search query. Second, the dataset reflects the state of the WoS database as of 5 October 2024, which means the figures for 2024 reflect only partial-year indexing and should not be read as a year-end value. Since bibliographic databases are continuously updated and back-indexed, future searches conducted at a later date may produce slightly different results due to newly indexed publications or metadata updates. In addition, because the dataset was limited to the WoS core collection, the communication category, and title-based search results, the findings should be interpreted as a map of WoS-indexed communication scholarship on local media rather than an exhaustive representation of all local media research. It is worth noting, however, that this limitation is not simply a weakness to be acknowledged and set aside. The fact that the dataset is heavily weighted toward English-language and Western-indexed scholarship is itself a finding, one that points to how knowledge production in global communication research remains unevenly distributed. More specifically, the search strategy was not designed to capture every study concerned with local news or community information. It captures studies that make local, regional or community media visible at the title level within WoS Communication records. Future work can build parallel corpora using Scopus, regional indexes, multilingual search terms and adjacent concepts such as news deserts, proximity journalism and local information ecosystems.

RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section of the study, the findings will be examined under two subheadings: Performance Analyses and Science Mapping Analyses.

Performance Analysis

Studies on the subject were published between 1977 and 2024. However, the number of studies published in 1977-1990 was limited to only two. The first study in the field of local media is Morgan's (1977) "Newspapers and politics: Regional newspapers in the U.S. and the U.K.". The study aims to understand the influence of the media on governments and politics by comparing the political news coverage of regional newspapers in the USA and the UK. Using the examples of NY (USA) and Merseyside Region (UK), the study examines how the regional press presents political news and the effects of this news on politicians, bureaucrats and the public. The most important point of this study in terms of local media is that it questions what kind of political news coverage regional newspapers have different from national newspapers. The first study published after a gap of nearly 13 years is by Bybee (1990) and is titled "Constructing women as authorities: Local journalism and the microphysics of power". The study specifically questions how women are represented in local news and how they are included in the processes of knowledge production. In explaining the marginalization of women in the media, Bybee (1990) extends Gaye Tuchman's concept of "symbolic annihilation" to show how knowledge production in the media is shaped by social power relations. This study is important in showing that local journalism is not only a space that gives voice to local communities, but also a mechanism that reproduces social power relations.

Since 1990, it is possible to say that the interest in local media research has increased compared to previous years. Although the 1990s was a period when globalization gained momentum, paradoxically it was also a period when localization gained importance. As global brands and media companies grew, the preservation of local identities and the power of local journalism began to be discussed in academic circles. On the other hand, media monopolization increased in many countries during these years and large media groups gained power in the national and international arena. This has put into question the capacity of local media outlets to engage in independent journalism. Academics have turned to analyzing the situation of local media in the face of large capital groups. The impact of local media on the democratization process, its importance in the reconstruction of the public sphere and the role it plays in the formation of local identity have also shifted academic attention to local media. This reading should be taken as context, not proof. The bibliometric data show that publication activity rose; explaining that rise through media concentration, globalization and renewed attention to locality is a historically informed interpretation, not a causal claim the data can test.

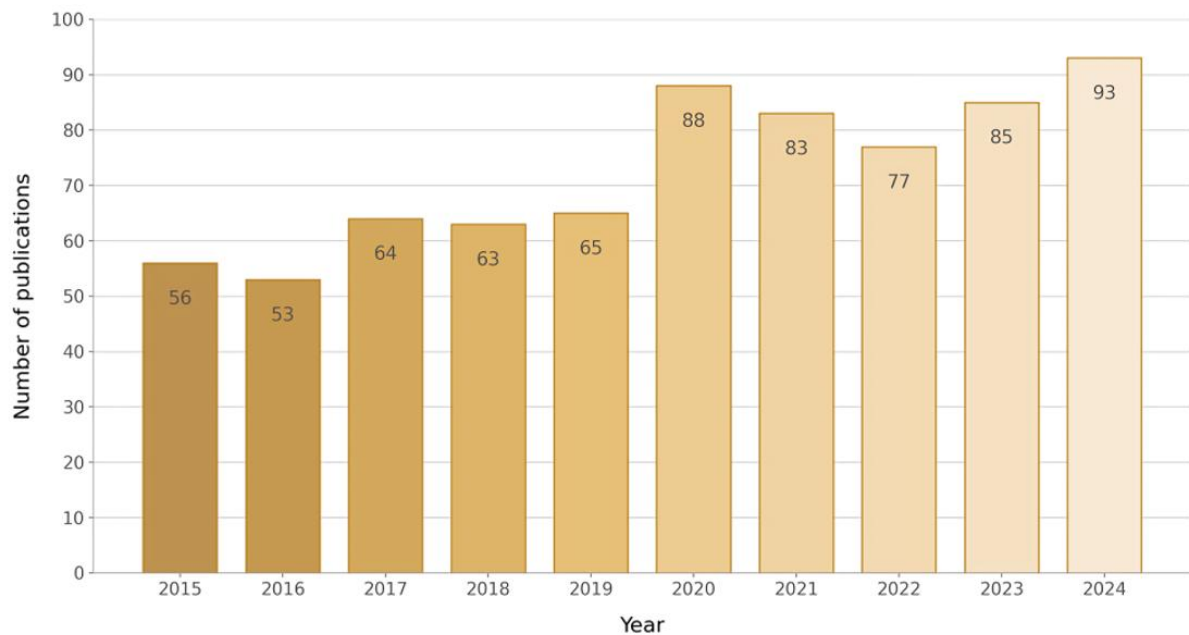


Figure 2. Distribution of publications by year, 2015-2024 (created by the authors)

The second breakthrough for local media research was observed in 2012. While a few studies were produced annually until this year, more than 50 studies have been added to the literature every year since then. The most important point here is the digital transformation, new media technologies and especially the increase in the use of social media. After 2012, studies on local media increasingly focused on digital platforms, social media, and mobile news environments. This transformation has led to radical changes in both journalistic practices and the media economy, and the academic field has not been able to stay away from analyzing these changes. The data support the timing of this intensification. The connection with digital transformation is inferred from the thematic vocabulary that becomes more visible in the later corpus and should not be read as a single-cause explanation.

The publication curve declines across 2021 and 2022 after the 2020 peak (Figure 2). One possible contextual explanation is that pandemic-related disruption temporarily altered both local media operations and scholarly priorities. The bibliometric data do not test this mechanism, however, so the explanation is treated as a hypothesis rather than a causal finding.

Publication volume rises again in 2023 and 2024, returning to and then exceeding its earlier level. The curve establishes this recovery in output, but it does not identify the external factors that produced it.

The indexes in which the studies on the subject are included are given in Table 1. This distribution provides important clues about the academic prestige, accessibility and scientific impact of the studies in the field.

The first point to consider here is that the second largest group is the emerging sources citation index (ESCI) (38.603 %). ESCI includes journals indexed by WoS but not included in more established indexes such as SSCI. The fact that a significant proportion of studies on local media are included in journals in ESCI shows that the field is developing but is still underrepresented in top-level indexes. Arts & humanities citation index (2.206 %) has a more limited share. This shows that local media studies are dominated by social sciences but are less represented in humanities journals.

Table 1 shows that books also have an important place in the field of local media. Book citation index - social sciences & humanities (8.640 %) is the most important indicator supporting this situation. This rate reveals that a significant portion of local media studies are also included in academic books and book chapters. Since books provide a suitable platform for long-term theoretical discussions and large-scale case studies, this result can be considered as an important finding regarding the academic development of the field.

Finally, it is seen that academic outputs related to local media studies are also included in indexes such as conference proceedings citation index - social sciences & humanities (2.390 %) and conference proceedings

Table 1. Distribution of publications by indexes

Index	Record count	Percentage of 1,088
Social sciences citation index (SSCI)	552	50.735%
Emerging sources citation index (ESCI)	420	38.603%
Book citation index - social sciences & humanities (BKCI-SSH)	94	8.640%
Conference proceedings citation index - social sciences & humanities (CPCI-SSH)	26	2.390%
Arts & humanities citation index (A&HCI)	24	2.206%
Conference proceedings citation index - science (CPCI-S)	8	0.735%
Science citation index expanded (SCI-EXPANDED)	1	0.092%
Book citation index - sciences (BKCI-S)	1	0.092%

Note. WoS index categories are not mutually exclusive because some records are assigned to more than one index, the counts and percentages exceed the corpus total and 100%

citation index - science (0.735 %), but these rates show that the field is opened to academic discussions through conferences, but local media studies are largely directed towards peer-reviewed journals.

Beyond index distribution, the authorship pattern in the dataset shows a moderately concentrated structure, in which a limited group of scholars contributes repeatedly while the majority of authors appear with one or two publications. This core-periphery configuration is typical of maturing research fields and indicates the presence of stable research hubs alongside a wider, more transient scholarly base. The dispersion of author affiliations across different national contexts reflects the field's gradual internationalization.

The 10 most cited studies on the subject are listed in [Table 2](#). The most cited article, Shim's (2006) "Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia", does not directly examine local media, but its prominence is itself instructive: it indicates that highly cited work in this field tends to engage with the global-local nexus rather than locality as a self-contained category. The parallel rise of local media studies and globalization scholarship since the 1990s reinforces this observation.

Looking at [Table 2](#) as a whole, the fourth, sixth and seventh studies engage most directly with local media, while the others use 'local' within broader arguments about citizenship, political participation, community integration, cultural hybridity and the public sphere. Their citation prominence is therefore not accidental: McLeod et al. (1996), Scheufele et al. (2004), McLeod et al. (1999), and Kang and Kwak (2003) provide reusable models of communication and civic participation; Shim (2006) speaks to the global-local nexus; and Nielsen (2015) and Darr et al. (2018) offer widely applicable accounts of the democratic consequences of local-news decline. Ball-Rokeach et al. (2001) provide a communication-infrastructure model of neighborhood belonging, Beaudoin and Thorson (2004) link media effects to social capital across rural and urban settings, and Strömbäck (2011) offers a multidimensional framework for examining mediatization and perceived political influence across national and regional media. Publication age and cross-field relevance also increase the opportunity to be cited, so the ranking is treated as evidence of intellectual reach rather than as a simple hierarchy of quality. Self-citation does not account for the standing of the seven leading works: removing citations by each work's own authors leaves the first seven positions unchanged in the 20 July 2026 ranking ([Table 2](#)).

The most cited authors on the subject are presented in [Table 3](#). Scheufele, D. A., who ranks first in the list of the most cited researchers, is also included in the list of the most cited studies. Among these studies, the co-authors of the one published with the title "Social structure and citizenship: Examining the impacts of social setting, network heterogeneity, and informational variables on political participation" are also on the list of most cited authors, ranking in the ninth, tenth and eleventh places. All of these authors are academics working in different branches of the communication field. Another study in which Scheufele, D. A. is one of the authors is "Understanding deliberation: The effects of discussion networks on participation in a public forum", which ranks fifth in the list of most cited studies. McLeod, J. M., who is the first author of this study, ranks second in the list of the most cited academics and is also a co-author of the study titled "Community integration, local media use, and democratic processes", which ranks fourth in the list of the most cited studies. Several authors of the most cited studies also appear among the most cited authors presented in [Table 3](#).

Table 2. Top 10 most cited articles, with and without author self-citations

Article	N	MPY	TC	TCSC
Shim, D. (2006). Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia. <i>Media, Culture & Society</i> , 28(1), 25-44.	338	17.79	364	356
Ball-Rokeach, S. J., Kim, Y.-C., & Matei, S. (2001). Storytelling neighborhood: Paths to belonging in diverse urban environments. <i>Communication Research</i> , 28(4), 392-428.	277	11.54	305	263
Scheufele, D. A., Nisbet, M. C., Brossard, D., & Nisbet, E. C. (2004). Social structure and citizenship: Examining the impacts of social setting, network heterogeneity, and informational variables on political participation. <i>Political Communication</i> , 21(3), 315-338.	250	11.90	261	241
McLeod, J. M., Daily, K., Guo, Z., Eveland, W. P., Jr., Bayer, J., Yang, S., & Wang, H. (1996). Community integration, local media use, and democratic processes. <i>Communication Research</i> , 23(2), 179-209.	208	7.17	221	208
McLeod, J. M., Scheufele, D. A., Moy, P., Horowitz, E. M., Holbert, R. L., Zhang, W., Zubric, S., & Zubric, J. (1999). Understanding deliberation: The effects of discussion networks on participation in a public forum. <i>Communication Research</i> , 26(6), 743-774.	177	6.81	184	173
Nielsen, R. K. (2015). Local newspapers as keystone media: The increased importance of diminished newspapers for local political information environments. In R. K. Nielsen (Ed.), <i>Local journalism: The decline of newspapers and the rise of digital media</i> (pp. 51-72). I. B. Tauris.	118	11.80	133	130
Darr, J. P., Hitt, M. P., & Dunaway, J. L. (2018). Newspaper closures polarize voting behavior. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 68(6), 1007-1028.	115	16.43	145	136
Beaudoin, C. E., & Thorson, E. (2004). Social capital in rural and urban communities: Testing differences in media effects and models. <i>Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly</i> , 81(2), 378-399.	104	4.95	110	97
Strömbäck, J. (2011). Mediatization and perceptions of the media's political influence. <i>Journalism Studies</i> , 12(4), 423-439.	99	7.07	103	98
Kang, N., & Kwak, N. (2003). A multilevel approach to civic participation: Individual length of residence, neighborhood residential stability, and their interactive effects with media use. <i>Communication Research</i> , 30(1), 80-106.	99	4.50	110	108

Note. The second column reports WoS times cited as recorded on 5 October 2024 and is retained unchanged because citation counts are dynamic; The two right-hand columns report a supplementary check conducted on 20 July 2026; Author self-citation was identified when at least one author appeared in both cited and citing records, multiple overlaps were counted once; Name variants were verified using full names, initials, and WoS ResearcherID information; Across the ten works, self-citations account for 126 of 1,936 citations (6.5%), ranging from 1.8% to 13.8%; Within 20 July 2026 counts, excluding self-citations leaves the first seven positions unchanged; The study by Beaudoin and Thorson (2004), tied for eighth before self-citations are removed, falls to tenth; Kang and Kwak (2003) remains eighth, while Strömbäck (2011) moves from tenth to ninth; None of the ten works was authored by the present study's authors; N: Number of citations (5 October 2024); MPY: Average citations per year (through 2024); TC: Times cited (20 July 2026); & TCSC: Times cited without self-citations (20 July 2026)

Table 3. Most cited authors

Author	Number of articles	Number of citations	Connection strength
Scheufele, D. A.	2	427	10
McLeod, J. M.	2	385	13
Shim, D.	1	338	0
Nielsen, R. K.	5	296	2
Ball-Rokeach, S. J.	2	277	2
Kim, Y.-C.	1	277	2
Matei, S. A.	1	277	2
Moy, P.	3	267	13
Brossard, D.	1	250	3
Nisbet, E. C.	1	250	3
Nisbet, M. C.	1	250	3

The last point to note here is Nielsen, R. K., whose work focuses on changes in news media, political communication, and the role of digital technologies in both. He is on the list of most cited authors with five studies, while only his study titled "Local newspapers as keystone media: The increased importance of diminished newspapers for local political information environments" is on the list of most cited studies.

When we evaluate the most cited studies and the most cited authors together, it shows that local media studies are intertwined with social participation, political communication and cultural dynamics. While the most cited studies emphasize the role of local media in democratic processes (McLeod, J. M. and Nielsen, R. K.) and cultural interactions (Shim, D.), **Table 3** reveals both the theoretical and methodological contributions of leading figures in the field (Scheufele, D. A. and McLeod, J. M.). However, the fact that some studies are not directly focused on "local media" shows the breadth of the scope of bibliometric analysis. This emphasizes

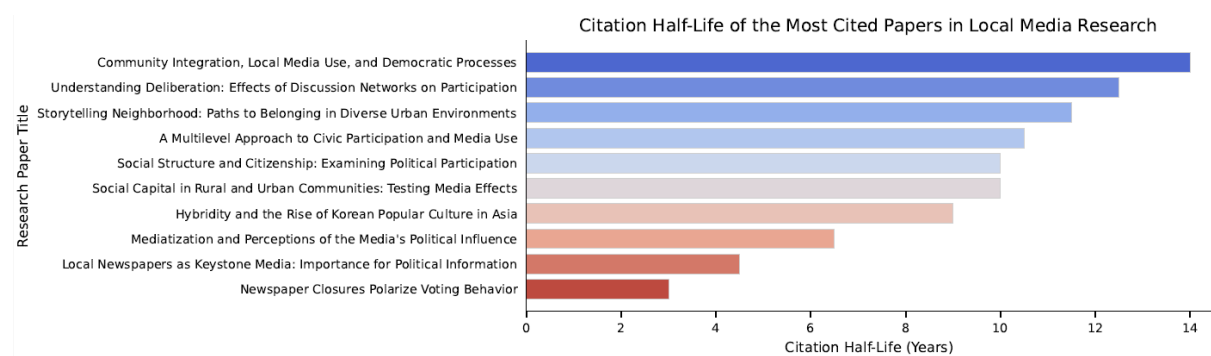


Figure 3. The citation half-life analysis (created by the authors)

Table 4. Countries with the most publications

No	Country	Record count	Percentage of 1,088
1	USA	291	26.746%
2	Spain	102	9.375%
3	Australia	95	8.732%
4	England	90	8.272%
5	Russia	50	4.596%
6	Canada	32	2.941%
7	China	30	2.757%
8	Netherlands	28	2.574%
9	France	27	2.482%
10	Sweden	26	2.390%
11	Argentina	24	2.206%
12	Brazil	22	2.022%
13	South Africa	20	1.838%
14	Germany	17	1.563%
15	Portugal	16	1.471%

the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the indirect effects of local media. Moreover, while authors with high linking power were found to be more influential, stand-alone studies (e.g., Shim, D.) were also observed to stand out in terms of citation performance.

In light of these data, it can be concluded that local media studies are addressed in both micro (community level) and macro (cultural-political) contexts, while academic influence is balanced between collaborative networks and specialized studies.

The citation half-life analysis reveals a clear distinction between foundational and emerging research in local media studies (Figure 3). Older papers, such as those on community integration and political participation, exhibit longer citation half-lives, indicating their enduring academic influence. In contrast, newer studies on digital transformation and media decline accumulate citations rapidly but may plateau sooner. This trend suggests a shift in research priorities, with contemporary scholars focusing more on the challenges of digital journalism, AI-driven media, and misinformation. However, the long-term impact of these emerging topics remains uncertain compared to the sustained influence of traditional media theories. This is better read as a current pattern than as a forecast of future impact, since newer topics have had less time to build long citation records.

Table 4 presents the geographical distribution of publications in local media studies. The dataset is led by the USA (291 publications, 26.7%), followed at a considerable distance by Spain (102, 9.4%), Australia (95, 8.7%), and England (90, 8.3%). Russia ranks fifth with 50 publications, while contributions from China, Argentina, and Brazil place these countries among the top twelve. Two patterns deserve closer attention. First, the prominence of Spain, second only to the USA, reflects the active investment of Spanish-speaking communication scholarship in local and hyperlocal journalism research, sustained through journals such as *Profesional de la Información*, *Comunicar*, and a network of Galician and Catalan research groups. Second, the visibility of Russia, Argentina, Brazil, and China complicates the conventional narrative of an Anglo-American-dominated field: scholarly production on local media is geographically less concentrated than it first appears, even if its citation visibility remains uneven. Together, these patterns suggest that the field has

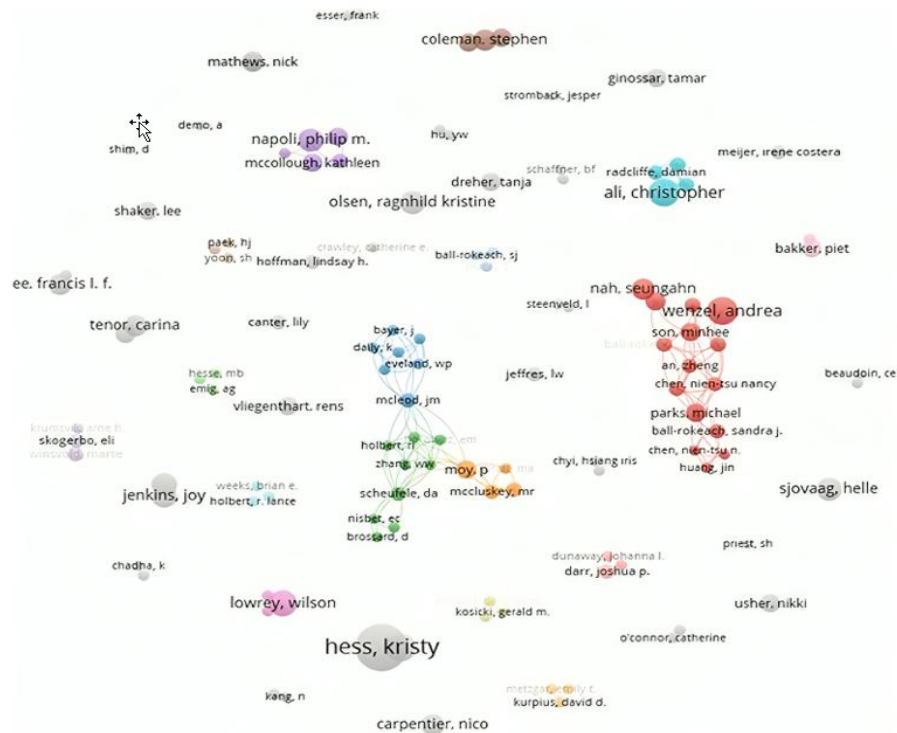


Figure 4. Author-level co-authorship network (created by the authors)

developed an internationalizing profile, although productivity is still distributed asymmetrically across regions and along the lines drawn by indexing, language, and citation infrastructures. Productivity and visibility do not always line up. A country may appear frequently in the publication count without occupying an equally central position in country-level co-authorship or citation networks, while another may have fewer publications but stronger links to highly cited clusters. Country labels follow the WoS country/region field exactly; accordingly, England is retained rather than recorded as UK.

The language distribution of the dataset also shows that English overwhelmingly dominates local media research indexed in WoS. This pattern suggests that English occupies a dominant position in global academic communication and remains closely associated with wider visibility and citation reach. English continues to be the dominant language in academic literature in terms of reaching a wider audience, receiving more citations and being able to interact internationally. Moreover, publications in local languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, and Russian) are rarely searched in global databases such as Scopus or WoS. So, this finding is partly about how academic indexing works, not only about the geography of local media research.

Science Mapping Analyses

Author-level co-authorship analysis was performed to reveal collaboration patterns in the literature. With cut-offs of at least one publication among the 1,714 authors and at least 50 citations, the analysis produced a co-authorship map of 121 authors organized in more than 20 clusters (Figure 4). The largest and most densely connected cluster (red) consists of communication scholars based at US institutions in California, Florida, and Minnesota, reflecting a research network shaped by shared geographic, institutional, and disciplinary affiliations. Three adjacent clusters (green, blue, orange) form an interconnected sub-network around political communication and civic participation research, with figures such as McLeod, J. M. and Scheufele, D. A. functioning as bridges between them. A separate, smaller cluster centered on Hess and Waller represents the Australian local journalism research tradition, which forms a relatively self-contained collaborative environment. Outside these central clusters, the map has a lower-density structure. Many authors are attached to the field through small teams or isolated collaborations. The field is therefore not organized around one unified international network, but around several partially connected research traditions.

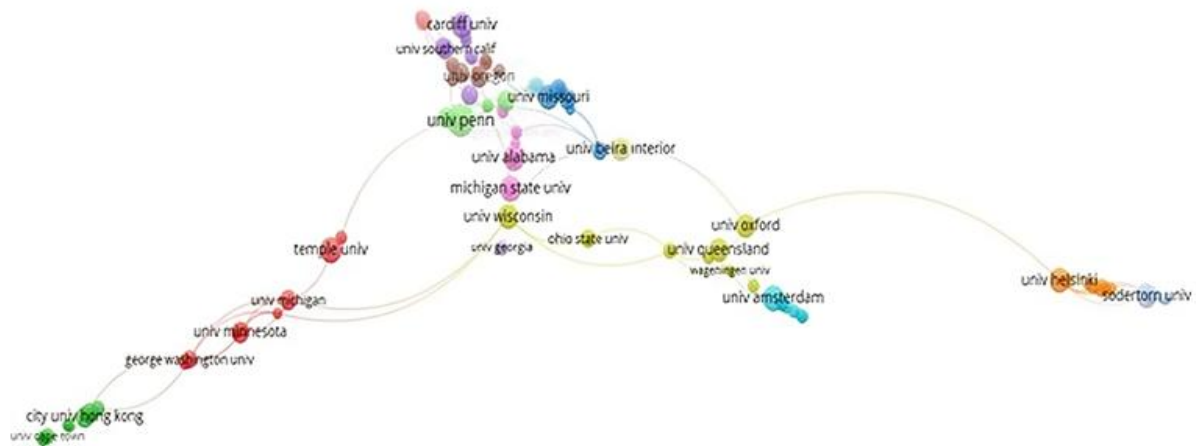


Figure 5. Institution-level co-authorship network (created by the authors)

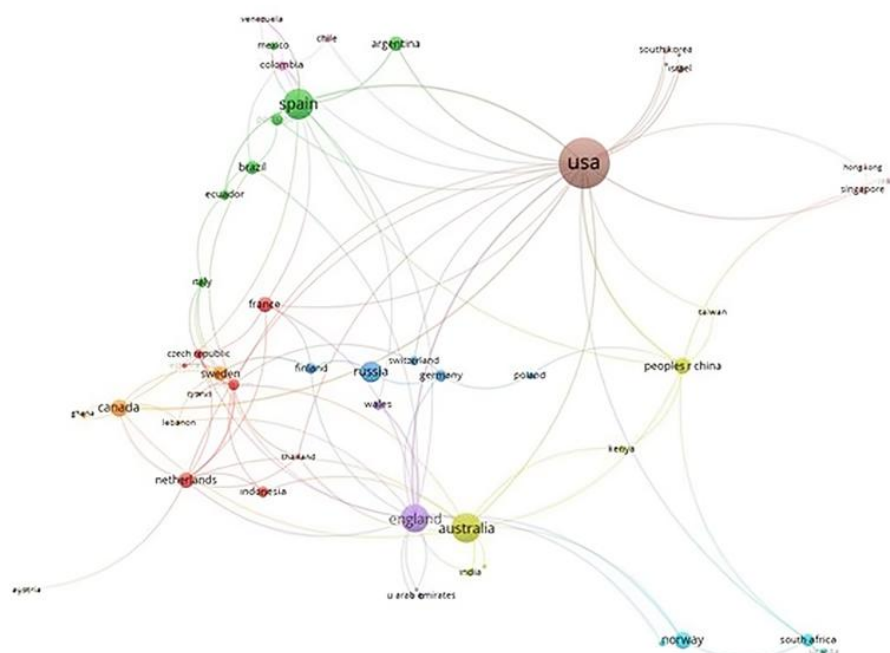


Figure 6. Country-level co-authorship network (created by the authors)

A second, institution-level co-authorship analysis, with a cut-off of at least 2 publications across 839 organizations, produced a co-authorship map of 266 institutions (**Figure 5**). The most productive institutions are Deakin University (22 publications), Lomonosov Moscow State University (17), and the University of Pennsylvania (16). Institutional co-authorship networks are organized along regional lines: a dense US cluster anchored by the University of Pennsylvania (with Michigan, Missouri, and Alabama), a European cluster centered in the Netherlands, Belgium, the Czech Republic, and Sweden, and an East Asian cluster spanning Hong Kong, Singapore, and mainland China. Geographic and cultural proximity continues to structure institutional co-authorship in the field. Here too, productivity and network influence come apart. Productive institutions increase the volume of the literature, while central institutions help shape the routes through which concepts, methods and citations circulate.

Figure 6 illustrates country-level co-authorship patterns in local media studies. No cut-off point was applied, and all 78 countries with at least one publication were included in the analysis. The map reveals that country-level co-authorship is unevenly distributed, with a limited number of countries occupying more central positions in the co-authorship network. These central countries maintain stronger and more frequent co-authorship ties, while many others are connected through weaker or sporadic partnerships. Regional clusters are observable, indicating that geographical proximity and shared academic contexts continue to

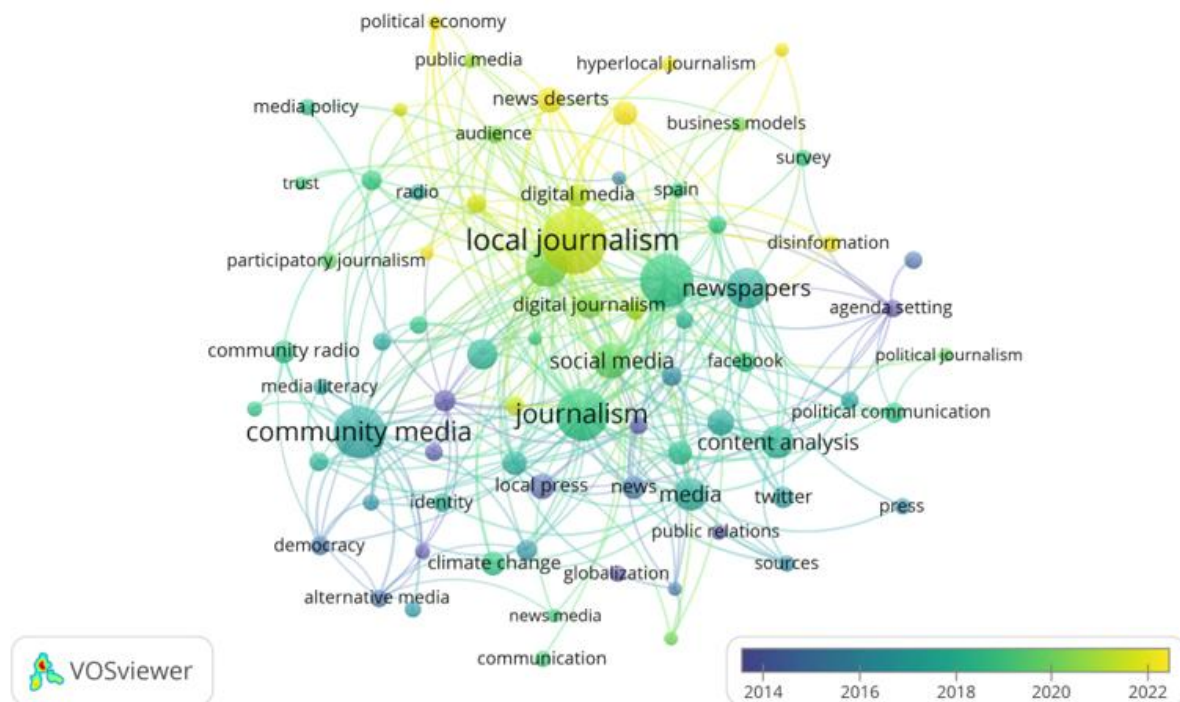


Figure 8. VOSviewer overlay visualization of keyword co-occurrence by average publication year (the color scale runs from purple/blue [earlier average publication years], through green, to yellow [later average publication years]) (created by the authors)

Keyword overlay analysis provides additional bibliometric support for the temporal interpretation of thematic change. In the map colored by average publication year (**Figure 8**), concepts such as “community media,” “democracy,” “alternative media,” and “participatory journalism” are associated with relatively earlier average publication years, whereas terms such as “hyperlocal journalism,” “news deserts,” “business models,” and “disinformation” appear closer to the recent end of the temporal scale. Concepts such as “social media” and “digital journalism” occupy an intermediate position. This early-to-recent spread fits the reading of the post-2012 growth as a turn toward digital transformation, platformization, sustainability and territorial inequalities in access to local news.

Methodological trends should be read cautiously. The categories in **Figure 9** were identified from available bibliographic information, abstracts, keywords and visible methodological descriptors, not from full-text coding of every publication, so the figure and its percentages are best taken as an indicative map of methodological signals rather than a definitive classification.

Taken together, the temporal, index and citation results answer **RQ1**; the keyword co-occurrence and overlay maps answer **RQ2**; and the author-, institution- and country-level co-authorship networks answer **RQ3**. **RQ4** is answered through both presence and absence: news deserts appears late and peripherally in the overlay map, while local information ecosystems, non-English scholarship and regionally indexed work remain weakly visible or outside the title-based WoS corpus.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has mapped the development of local media research through a bibliometric analysis of 1,088 publications indexed in the WoS core collection between 1977 and 2024. The findings indicate that local media scholarship has evolved from a relatively fragmented and low-volume area into a more internally differentiated field, increasingly shaped by debates on democracy, community, participation, digital transformation, and the reconfiguration of news ecologies. In this respect, the study demonstrates not only the quantitative expansion of literature, but also the gradual consolidation of local media as a recognizable and multi-layered domain within communication research. More precisely, it has mapped the internationally

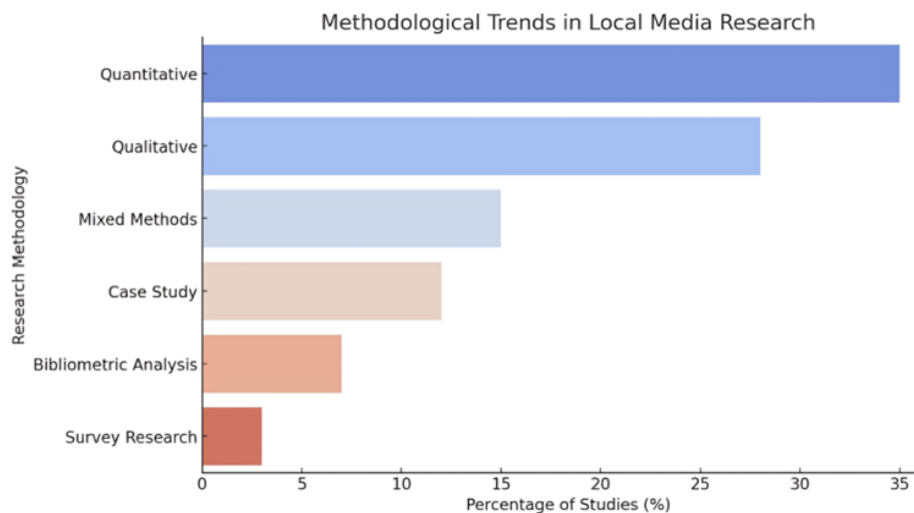


Figure 9. Indicative methodological trends in local media research (the percentages are based on visible bibliographic indicators, abstracts, keywords and methodological descriptors rather than full-text coding of every publication; they should not be read as a definitive classification) (created by the authors)

indexed segment of this scholarship as it appears in WoS Communication records. How the field appears here depends on database coverage, language and indexing practices, not only on how local media research has actually developed.

Looking at the temporal distribution, two distinct moments of intensification stand out. The first became more visible in the 1990s, when scholarly attention to local media expanded alongside wider concerns about media concentration, globalization, local identity, and the democratic function of journalism. The growth of the literature during that period can be read as part of a broader attempt to reconsider the place of local media within the public sphere, particularly in relation to civic participation, community representation, and the communicative infrastructure of democracy. The second major shift emerged after 2012, when the field increasingly turned toward digital transformation, platform-based distribution, social media, and changing audience practices. What stands out here is not merely an increase in the number of studies, but a reorientation of the field itself: local media research becomes progressively more attentive to hybrid news environments, participatory forms of communication, and the institutional pressures generated by digital infrastructures. These two moments are therefore better read as intensifications in the bibliometric record, not as sharp historical breaks. They mark points where particular vocabularies and concerns became more visible in the indexed literature. What the co-authorship data reveals is a field structured around a relatively limited number of recurring contributors, alongside a wider peripheral body of authors who enter the literature more intermittently. Such a configuration is typical of a maturing research area: it reflects the presence of stable scholarly centers capable of sustaining conceptual continuity, while also leaving room for thematic diversification and intellectual mobility. At the same time, the concentration of highly cited work around particular authors and clusters indicates that the development of the field has been shaped by a set of influential interpretive frameworks, especially those concerned with community integration, civic life, media use, and democratic processes. This reinforces the argument that local media research has been historically anchored in questions that are at once empirical and normative. This evidence supports the three-layer interpretive framework summarized in [Table 5](#).

The layers are analytical dimensions rather than sequential stages. The democratic-local layer identifies the normative work expected of local media; the structural-digital layer identifies the technological, economic and institutional conditions that enable or constrain that work; and the visibility-epistemic layer identifies the indexing, linguistic and geographic filters through which scholarship becomes legible as 'the field'.

Read together, the framework links normative claims to operating conditions and then asks how both are filtered by systems of scholarly visibility. It can therefore be used beyond this corpus to distinguish what local media are expected to do, the structures under which they do it, and which accounts of those relations become academically visible.

Table 5. Three-layer interpretive framework and its bibliometric grounding

Layer	Definition	Bibliometric evidence in this study
Democratic-local	The normative functions expected of local media: community connection, representation, participation and accountability.	Keyword patterns around community media, democracy, political participation and civic engagement; earlier average publication years for community media and democracy; highly cited work linking local media use and local-news decline to democratic outcomes (Darr et al., 2018; McLeod et al., 1996; Nielsen, 2015).
Structural-digital	The technological, economic and institutional conditions that enable or constrain those democratic functions, including platform dependency and sustainability.	Post-2012 publication intensification; later average publication years for hyperlocal journalism, business models, news deserts and disinformation; intermediate positions for social media and digital journalism in the overlay map.
Visibility-epistemic	The indexing, linguistic, geographic and terminological filters through which scholarship becomes visible as the field.	The WoS communication and title-search boundary; SSCI (50.7%) and ESCI (38.6%) shares; concentration in the USA (26.7%), Spain (9.4%), Australia (8.7%) and England (8.3%); English-language dominance and weak visibility of adjacent or regionally indexed vocabularies.

A further pattern revealed by the analysis is the marked geographical concentration of scholarly production. The USA, Spain, Australia, and England occupy the most central positions in the literature, while contributions from Latin America and Asia, though more visible in recent years, remain comparatively limited. A related asymmetry is evident in the predominance of English-language publications. These findings are important not only in descriptive terms, but also for understanding how the field has developed. They suggest that the international map of local media scholarship is still shaped by uneven structures of academic visibility, linguistic circulation, and database inclusion. As a result, what appears as the dominant intellectual profile of the field may also reflect the selective visibility of particular research traditions, rather than the full diversity of local media experiences across different political and cultural contexts. This geographic imbalance is not only a descriptive finding. If the theoretical frameworks that currently shape the field have been developed primarily within a limited number of national contexts, then the normative assumptions embedded in the literature – including widely held claims about local journalism's role in democratic participation – may say more about specific institutional arrangements than about local media in general.

From a methodological standpoint, this study contributes by providing a structured account of publication trends, citation patterns, co-authorship networks, and thematic concentrations within the sampled literature. In doing so, it complements narrative and thematic reviews by offering a more systematic picture of the field's internal organization and long-term development. At the same time, the scope of the conclusions should be interpreted with appropriate caution. Because the analysis was limited to the WoS core collection, the Communication category, and title-based search results, it does not claim to represent the entirety of local media research. Rather, it offers a bibliometric map of WoS-indexed communication scholarship on the subject. This limitation should be considered when interpreting the results. Making the corpus boundary explicit is part of what the article contributes. It shows that bibliometric mapping can do more than count publications: it can also ask which parts of a field become visible through international indexing systems. The findings suggest that local media research remains a vital area of inquiry precisely because it sits at the intersection of enduring democratic concerns and rapidly transforming media environments. The evolution of the literature reflects a double movement: continuity in the normative significance attributed to local journalism, and change in the technological, institutional, and conceptual conditions through which that significance is understood. These trajectories also carry implications for communication policy: as local media systems become increasingly dependent on platform infrastructures, the question of who defines, funds, and regulates 'the local' is no longer merely a journalistic concern but a structural question about communicative power in democratic societies – one that warrants sustained theoretical attention within the field. Future research can build on this mapping by engaging more directly with underrepresented regions, strengthening comparative perspectives across media systems, and tracing how emerging thematic clusters develop over time. Such efforts would not only broaden the empirical reach of the field but also strengthen its ability to explain how the meaning and function of "the local" are being redefined in contemporary communication research. Future bibliometric work on local media would benefit from three extensions. First, WoS results should be compared with Scopus and regional databases to test how database choice alters the intellectual map. Second, multilingual searches should be used to capture local media scholarship that does not circulate

primarily in English. Third, topic modelling, bibliographic coupling and AI-assisted full-text mapping may help trace concepts that remain weakly visible in title-based searches, including news deserts, proximity journalism and local information ecosystems.

Author contributions: **MK:** conceptualization, methodology, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing; **MED:** data curation, formal analysis, investigation, visualization, writing – original draft; **MAA:** formal analysis, visualization, writing – review & editing; **SK:** methodology, project administration, supervision, writing – review & editing. All authors approved the final version of the article.

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Ethics declaration: This bibliometric study uses bibliographic metadata retrieved from the WoS core collection and does not involve human participants, personal data, animals, or interventions. Therefore, ethics committee approval was not required. Informed consent was not required, because no individual participants were involved in the study. The dataset consisted exclusively of bibliographic metadata. No sensitive or identifiable personal information was collected or processed.

AI statement: During the preparation of this work, the authors used DeepL Translator for translation purposes. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the text as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the published article.

Declaration of interest: The authors declared no competing interest.

Data availability: Data generated or analyzed during this study are available from the authors on request.

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