A Comparison of Crime Reportage in Two Prominent Web Editions of Indian Dailies: The Times of India and The Hindu

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Abstract

The current research paper was accompanied by various standards, with an approach to compare coverage of crime news and bias in various major Web Editions of Indian daily. Two English web editions, The Times of India and The Hindu, were selected for this study. It was found that the Times of India had covered many stories related to crime compared to The Hindu, and Similarly, The Hindu published the crime news with in box along with the picture, compared to the Times of India. This study found that the number of pictures was high and the use of words was reduced. It has also emerged in this study that dailies try to publish the news according to their policies. But biased news coverage cannot be seen or understood in different types of web Editions.

Introduction:

India is the one of the world's largest democracy. It has mass media culture, which is a developed over the centuries, involves a complex structure. Modernization has turned it into a communication network, which retains the 1.30 billion people's democracy. India's newspapers development in world press history is almost unmatched. In any country, the newspaper is an important medium of news communication that executes the work of informing, educating, influencing and entertaining others with the use of words and scenes all over the world. Newspaper is a printed publication appearing daily. It contains news, advertisements and articles on various subjects. The Newspapers play an important role in any society. Media plays a critical role as a bridge between the government and the public. The media keeps giving all these information to the people from time to time about what is going on in every part of the country? Different people read it for different purposes. The Newspapers also play an important role in fighting the menace of corruption, crime etc. and collect public opinion[1]. In the democracy, there should be a skilled and intrepid press. The press is a mirror of society. The first newspaper published in India was the Bengal Gazette. The revolution of digital journalism has caused traditional news platforms, such as newspapers and broadcast television to be on the decline for years (Chyi, 2009)[2]. More than a decade after

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[1] *Camaj, L. (2013). The media's role in fighting corruption: Media effects on governmental accountability. The International Journal of Press/Politics, 18(1), 21-42.*

[2] *Chyi, H. I. (2009). Information surplus in the digital age: Impact and implications. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), Journalism and citizenship: New agendas (pp. 91-107). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum/Taylor and Francis.*

people started using the internet instead of newspaper for any information or entertainment, and after the casualties of this digital revolution in the print media industry, Now, like before, no news comes after one day, due to the internet and online newspaper editions, rather the news can spread all over the country within the minutes. The media, whether it is online or offline are the main source of crime disclosures.

Coverage of Crime News:

The media is also the most powerful tool of communication in developed countries as well as in developing countries. Media helps in promoting things from time to time. In the event of a problem in society, the media plays a positive role. The media plays a crucial role in whether mainstream sources or alternative media sources such as social media, web weblogs and other sources. Media informed the society members, where those events or issues can directly or indirectly affect the common man. The video helps to provide a strong message to the world about right or wrong. Today the media is present around us today, for example we watch television, listen to radio, books, magazines, newsletters etc.

The world is constantly making progress every day towards a better future. But still, people are bound to social problems and directly or indirectly affect people on issues. In the absence of media, we can be unaware of what is going on in the country and the world. Nothing can be done without the support of media in today's world Public communication media helps keep informed and updated about various news, events, social activities, lifestyle, entertainment, and advertisements despite geographical barriers. For example, while sitting in India, anyone can get all the latest news and programs from the UK, or the USA.

Media always has a profound impact on communities and their culture. This different opinion creates the ends of the boundaries of different societies and makes 'globalization'. Media also tells about what is happening in different countries of the world or how they are prepared and how they can see their way of life.

Review of literature:

Barak (1994)[3] wrote about people's different perceptions of crime and criminal justice and concluded: "The mass communication of these perceptions construct a cultural awareness of crime, of victim/offender encounters, and of the administration of justice."

On a similar line, **Neil M Malamuth and James V P Check (1981)[4]** in their study 'The effects of Mass Media exposure on acceptance of violence against women: a field experiment' conducted an

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[3] *Barak, G. (Ed.). (1994). Media, process, and the social construction of crime: Studies in newsmaking criminology. New York: Garland Publishers.*

experimental study with 271 respondents to measure the impact of exposure to films containing sexual violence on their acceptance of sexual violence and rape myths. The study found that such exposure can have an impact on the acceptance and attitude towards sexual violence, however, it differs based on gender of the respondent.

In another study on 'The Coverage of Rape in the Israeli Popular Press', **Korn and Efrat (2004)[5]** analyses the coverage of two rape cases in the daily popular newspaper in Israel. The study found that the newspaper coverage of the rape incidents was stereotyping the victims into the bad girl concept. "The reports tended to focus on the victims' behavior before the rape, emphasizing that they were not sexually innocent" finds the study. The study also found that the coverage largely sustained and supported the prevailing rape myths in the society

Another study, which analysed the content of mass media messages in the form film to study the depiction of sex and rape in them - Images of Sex and Rape: A Content Analysis of Popular Film **(Bufkin, J. & Eschholz, S., 2000)[6]-** found that popular movies which were analysed during the study present a 'rather patriarchal vision of sex and rape.' According to the study, rapes are depicted in the films in such a way that it is being performed by sadistic disturbed lower class individuals who prey on children and vulnerable. The study finds that such a one-dimensional portray.

Dasgupta (1976)[7] in her study of women's issues in four English dailies published in New Delhi in 1975, observed that women's issues received no attention in the six subject categories social, economic, political, art and culture, biographical and other issues. However, the study did not elaborate the methodology adopted for the study.

Davis (1951)[8] in his study on 'Crime News in Colorado Newspapers' found that the crime coverage in Colorado newspapers bore no relationship to changes in state crime rates.

Objective:

The research has been conducted to study the following objectives:

1. To study and analyze the nature and type of crime reported in the newspapers.

2. To study the crime stories most often reported in the newspapers.

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[4] *Malamuth, N M, Check, J V P (1981), The effects of Mass Media Exposure on Acceptance of Violence against Women: A Field Experiment, Journal of Research in Personality, Volume 15, Academic Press*

[5] *Korn, A. & Efrat, S. (2004) The Coverage of Rape in the Israeli Popular Press, Violence Against Women 2004; 10; 1056-1074 Sage Publications.*

[6] *Bufkin, J. and Eschholz, S. (2000), Images of Sex and Rape: A Content Analysis of Popular Film, Violence against Women, Vol 6. No. 12, 1317-1344, Sage Publications*

[7] *Dasgupta, Kalpana, 1976, Women on the Indian Scene, New Delhi, Abhinav Publications, p. 16.*

[8] *F. James Davis, "Crime News in Colorado Newspapers," American Journal of Sociology 57, no. 4 (Jan., 1951): 325-330.*

Research Methodology:

   This study was based on qualitative content analyses of crime news and its coverage by Indian dailies (online versions) in English. The newspapers (online versions) have chosen for content analyses, with their types & corresponding latest online readership figures.

Time Period – The time period chosen for data collection for this study was from 1st April 2018 to 30th June 2018, that is, 3 months period. **Sampling** – Sampling for the content analyses was done using the advanced extraction by Key Words in Context (KWIC) option in Leximancer v3.5, known as the „Web Crawl. Web data extraction using KWIC gives highly accurate and selective web data, tailored for qualitative data analyses. The web crawl'feature in Leximancer v3.5 requires website URLs to be put in by the user for data mining from web contents. Web Crawl also allows the researcher to extract web textual data using user-defined KWICs. Table No. - 1 shows the name of the newspaper, its corresponding URL links and the globally-defined KWICs (applied on the entire web crawling for all links). **Methodology** – Automated, computer-assisted qualitative content analyses technique was chosen for the news discourse analyses. Automation in qualitative textual analyses helps the researcher to save money, time, and not having to bother too much about inter-coder reliability.

Table No.-1

Newspapers	Web URLs
The Times of India	**https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/**
The Hindu	**www.thehindu.com**

Data Analysis:

Table No.2
Comparison on the basis of the number of Page:

Newspaper	Total no. of pages	News dedicated to Page
The Times of India	16	2 to 5
The Hindu	24	2 to 3

Sources: Primary

Interpretation:

   The Above table No.-2 explains that both the online newspapers covered their news o total number of pages. The Times of India covered it all news in 16 pages while The Hindu covered all the news in 24 pages. Maximum time the crime news covered by the newspapers is to 2 to 5 pages in both online editions.

Table No. -2
The Online Newspapers Considered In Content Analysis

(News Stories, Feature Stories, Editorials and Total News Items Obtained After Web Crawling)

Name of Newspapers	No. of News Stories	No. of Feature Stories	No. of Editorials	Total No. of News items
The Times of India	46	14	11	71
The Hindu	52	7	9	68
Total	98	21	20	139

Sources: Primary

Interpretation:

From the above table no.-1 it is revealed that in Times of India highest numbers of crime stories were reported (37) followed by The Hindu (68). However, The Times of India (96,067.91sq cm) gave highest space coverage to crime stories followed by The Hindu (86,242.24sq cm).

Table No.-3

Crime Stories Most Often Reported

Crime	Online Edition			
	The Times of India		The Hindu	
	News	Space Coverage (sq cm)	News	Space Coverage (sq cm)
Murder	12	45,683	16	49,873
Kidnapping & Abduction	7	7,474.30	3	3,944.32
Rape	16	11,123.69	15	16,466.72
Dacoit	3	10.57	3	11.67
Robbery	2	22.57	4	44.57
Riots	1	10.89	1	12.97
Arson	2	09.56	3	12.64
Total	**43**		**45**	

Interpretation:

The above table no-3 predicts that the stories which are most often reported related to rape (31). Total number of stories covered in the two national dailies is 139 out of which The times of India covered 71, The Hindu reported 68 each. Murder news was reported by The Times of India is 12 and 16 by The Hindu. Almost Dacoit, Robbery and Riots are reported same in both the online edition. Highest space coverage is given to stories related to rape (The Hindu - 16,466.72 sq cm, and Times of India - 20,133.69 sq cm) followed by crime involving kidnapping & Abduction (The Times of India - 7,474.30 sq cm, and The Hindu- 6,944.32 sq cm). Least coverage is given to Riot and Robbery (The Times of India - 22.57 sq cm and 10.89 sq cm The Hindu 44.57 sq cm & 12.97sq cm) respectively.

Conclusion:

Crime News has been covered in both online news papers. Most of the news deals with rape and murder. While news related to other crime is almost denied. However, it is the responsibility of the national media to include all news related to crime in a good way in its newspaper. In these online edition news papers, it has also been seen that the regional event has been covered less and news of cities like Metro has been principally printed. Almost all online news papers have dared to publish crime-related events prominently. The media is not just a monitor but can play an effective role in creating opinion on important issues and incidents in society and even the government takes appropriate and quick action. Regardless of the increasing synergy between traditional and online publications, there has been a definite "we" and "them" relationship among journalists of both media. Many times it has been seen that the print media implement the law correctly in comparison to the electronics media.

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