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Editor's Desk

It is rather ironic that the leftist liberals who have been the most vocal in expressing their opposition to structures of thought and narratives created by the capitalist system should themselves have been the perpetrators of a tyrannical subjugation of narratives which do not cohere with theirs. This irony hit me right in my gut as I went through the non-mainstream historical narratives of India. What blew my head off was the scale of distortion and concealment of information indulged in by these so-called leftist liberals while recording history for not just scholarly purposes but also for teaching impressionable young minds. Here, it is important to mention that while every historian has a right to theorizing history through the prism of his subjective preferences and prejudices; it is downright criminal to pass off a point of view as fact when teaching young school going students.

The former is innocuous and defensible as a freedom of expression because it can always be contested by other scholars. But the latter is open to the charge of being propagandistic and hence indefensible as it is meant to influence the world-view of young neophytes, who swallow everything in their textbooks as the Gospel truth. At this juncture, a question also raised its head in my mind. What exactly prompted this breed of historians to stoop to this level? Not power, possibly? For intellectuals are far from the portals of political power. Naiveté, then? They could have believed in their point of view so much so that they took it for the whole truth and hence harmless. Not exactly.

The historians who came up with Delhi-centric and invader-oriented histories of India couldn't have been so naïve as not to realize that the boundaries of India extended far beyond the walls of Old Delhi or to stumble at least on the glorious history of Lalitaditya Muktapida in Kashmir, King Dahir in Sindh, the war-like and valiant Ahoms in Assam, and the Vijayanagar empire in South India. The only other reason that could have prompted them to attempt so colossal a whitewashing of Indian history could be their Western orientation. As this answer loomed up, Macaulay's corpse came back to life somewhat like Lazarus rising from the dead. What befuddled me still further was the cheek with which these historians cried hoarse at the so-called rewriting of Indian history by the non-liberal left. Now, this is fake news indeed, and that at its ideological best.

(Ravi K. Dhar)

About the Journal

Mass Communicator has been conceived as an international journal of communication studies with the avowed objectives of stimulating research in communication studies in Indian academia of international level as also to publish research carried out abroad to serve as a window on the multi-dimensional aspects of media and communication research in countries beyond the Indian borders. To this end, the journal is a platform for the publication of outcomes of new and innovative thinking in the subject/profession that follow not only the rigours of academic research methodology but also non-conventional modes of expression such as perspectives and opinion, which often come from media and communication practitioners, be those journalists or development communicators self-interrogating their profession. The scope of research published in the journal is deliberately kept open-ended to facilitate an osmotic interchange of ideas across disciplines with a bearing on media and communication theory.

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ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF ONLINE NEWS IN BANGLADESH

Raisul Islam*

The ' mixed media, ' comprising of mainstream newspapers and electronic media along with ' new media ' of on-line reporters, reporting is rapidly developing. Enormous technological and economic changes have propelled the substantial progress in journalism. Such developments also require ethical framework for operation like any other media. The paper looks into Bangladeshi online news media's ethical and moral standards. Over the past five-six years, the total use of online news media has risen in Bangladesh. The modern form of journalism provides readers the platform of pace, interactive elements, audiovisual presentation and so much more. The study found that a very limited number of online news media operating in Bangladesh follow ethical standards. In many ways, this news medium violated the ethical standards. This study shows the ethics and standards in the presentation of news, coverage style and views and the information they give is imprecise in accurate and quite often stereotyped.

Keywords: Online Journalism, Online News, Sensationalization, Ethics, and standards.

With the coming of new media,, availability of news is readily available. The period for background research, test, rechecking has also shifted and pace and immediacy is becoming important. That's why unforeseen challenges have arisen, such as social trust, sound material, meaning, consistency, equality, objectiveness, and ethics. The reputation of web journalists is debatable of Bangladesh. The viewer checks himself with other media such as print and broadcast, because of numerous malpractices. There are no legal standards for online news media in Bangladesh. Traditional sets of ethical principles are insufficient to guide online news media because the means bring a new dimension of textual, visual, sound and interactive convergence.

The advent of new communication technologies has given the new online media and traditional media an enticing chance and an impediment (Huesca & Dervin, 1991). The development of new media, particularly in terms of the Internet and the World Wide Web, Deuze (1999) said, contributed to a modern form of journalism that was later to be known as ' Web Journalism ' The journalists ' representative model has three dimensions: interactivity, hypertexuality, and integration. The ' web journalism ' trend can be described as ' use of digital technologies for the study, the development and delivery of news and information to an increasingly informed population (Barnhurst; quoted at Deuze, 1999: 378). On the basis of the concept, the effect of the web and computer on reporting can be explored. Due to its role in the collection, production and distribution of information, internet technology has become an essential part of the journalistic process (Deuze, 2003). Technology support journalism is now a staple of all contemporary newsrooms (Deuze, 1999). Almost every major newspaper now has the e-version or just put the whole of it online. Even many minor newspapers have connected to the digital system (Riley et al. 1998). The theoreticians in critical theory and hermeneutics are actively pursuing the thematic trend, each of which has different views on ethics. The following is a high-profile list of ethical problems in digital media development and use (sometimes crimes or symptoms).

Ethics and Online Journalism

The Internet, together with electronic and print journalism, has created a new dimension of journalism. With the aid of online news media, a ton of information can be given in less time. The fast news delivery is the most esteemed subject matter of online media, but it loses its journalistic ethics when it comes to the term objectivity. "Digital journalism gained little or no coverage from researchers maybe due to the fact, in contrast to the abundance of the information, music, private interaction and pornography that few online media activities exists. These fellow students make it much more necessary to adhere to an ethical code, especially in times of increasing public confidence in journalism." (Yeshua,2000). In previous history, the expert in communications assumed that online journalism was viewed by certain moral and ethical obstacles. They claimed that the newest media source, the internet, allows

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a journalist of someone with a modem. Speed and sensationalism are above pinpoint accuracy. The standards will not be accepted by the new media. We're stupid about treating them like they did. For newspapers, this is a gruesome time. -- Portland Oregonian Editor Sandra Mims Rowe. Further on, though, online news reporting has shown its ability to be a significant part of journalism. "It is time to remove the Web of media ills as the scapegoat. It's a tool, it's not a text, and it can be used irresponsibly or as honorably as a newspaper or a TV network."--New York Times columnist Frank Rich (Welch, 1998)

The Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct was developed by the Ministry of Culture, a journalism organization, publishing companies, media owners, academics and the news council. The world's first standardized journalism codes are developed by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). More than 100 nations have the code for reporters. Editorial standards are developed by the British Broadcast Corporation (BBC). Ethical guidelines of reporters can be accessed from the National Union for Reporters, the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ), and the Press Complaints Commission (PPC). The problem, however, is that a code of ethics had previously been formed for print and electronic journalism. The new period of journalism is online. So new form of journalism require new approaches of ethics. There will be a lot of current ethical issues and others arise. The continued development of the Web confuses online journalism morality more and more with a growing relationship with corporate media. With online news media the need to adopt an international perspective, which needs a similar set of values. (Richards, 1999). Graphical distortion, advertising posters on a newspaper website and the connection between publication and advertisement materials are just some of the most ethical questions new media have for reporting. The most important issue of online media is plagiarism and defamation. With online news media, hyperlinks are an important issue. This news media can deliver news and viewpoints of the viewers and other users in one particular section. If online news media provide external links without their consent, the issue of plagiarism or copyright comes into effect. The copyright and proprietary laws continue to apply to the Internet. Some sites load a revised story, which indicates the time of the review but does not leave a trace of the original. There is often no attempt to correct the data for those who read the defective version before then. The ethical and legal issues never end. Discussions are still swirling on enforcing expectations in real life. The internet will be no different because it is struggling to find its equilibrium. (Kelly, 2000) In future, online journalism will probably face a lot of legal and ethical issues. (Palser, 1999).

Following are the objectives of the study;

- To evaluate the Bangladeshi online news media's ethical standards both online version and true online.
- Concentrate on online media photographs.
- Concentrate on the reporting, sourcing, accuracy and delivery of news.

I. Review of Literature

"Ethics is the study of moral behavior and equal human interaction in the context of the best principles possible." (Ward, 2008:137). He said that morality involves pragmatic judgment and the application of values in issues and judgments. McNair spoke about the objectivity and fairness of reporting in order to find the connection between news and ethics. In this, he spoke with the journalist's practical world and urged journalists to behave ethically. Since the practice of ethical journalism is a kind of "building credibility" tool that mobilizes the trust of the public (1998: 65). The theory of journalistic ethics is splintered into the context of journalism ethics in organization. In this connection, media sociologists focus on the restriction imposed by a journalist's routine (McNair, 1994:50). The sociology of journalism ethics should focus on the organizational and external determinants of the way in which ethics, practices and attitudes are structured and shaped. Journalism ethics history can be divided into five phases. Ethics in Journalism's history can be divided into five phases. Media hypotheses on the values and goals of journalism defeat each one. First, the invention of ethical debate in journalism as it arose in the 16th and 17th centuries in Western Europe. In the mid-fifteenth century, the Gutenberg press gave birth to printer-editors, who founded a regular news-press under state control for news books. The second stage was the creation, as a presupposition for the growing press of the Enlightenment public sphere, of a "public ethic," particularly in Britain, France, and America. Journalists declared themselves public tribunes, protecting their freedom from government. (Ward, 2005: 89-173). In the third phase, the notion of a Fourth Estate developed into a liberal press ideology in the 19th century (Siebert, 1956). The fourth stage coincidentally took place during the twentieth century and was critical of the liberal democracy. Production and critique were both reactions to liberal press failures. The "developers" are reporters and ethicists who developed an impartial media professional ethics backed by theory of social responsibility. (Baldasty, 1992; Campbell, 2001). The

fifth stage is a mixed-media stage, in which information is obtained from a mixture of the traditional and new media. Online journalism has redefined the role of journalism as a conversation facilitator and social networks from the professional portfolio. McNair (1998:64) argues that journalism reflects and reflects the historic process of today's society. In other terms, the way reporters view morality is dictated by the social circumstances. The integration of journalism sociology and ethics enables us to broaden the conceptual basis of journalism ethics. When we understand that ethical values are the by-products of social structures, we can see the link between ethics in media and modern communications technology. The history of journalism ethics allows us to understand the tortuous connections of journalism ethics to socio-historical systems. The result of journalistic work and the economic, social and external factors shaping them have been studied by academics. (McNair, 1998:67).

The reason for being curious about how modern journalists perform their work is rather deeper. Journalists report only the most extreme examples of misconduct of their colleagues for reasons of professional self-interest, but perhaps also for reasons of loyalty and it are uncommon for news agencies to correct their mistakes or to examine them in detail. Journalists are qualified to be analytical if they can give an opinion on violations or misconduct openly. (Dickinson 2007:190). Sociology of journalism ethics is urged and imperative not only because the theory is poor in that area, but also because as a result of the technological revolution boundaries of ethics are changing. The link between new media and news is largely supported by technological determinism, where innovation plays an important role in social change. The theory of technological determinism shows that different innovations change journalistic practices. Technology is therefore either listed for offering reporters limitless resources or for the numerous adverse consequences for the value of media services (Wasserman, 2001, Fulton, 2008, Yau and Al-Hawamdeh, 2001). Deuze said (cited by Batos and Moutinho, 2009:2) that the Internet renewed the profession of journalism in three ways. The three aspects are strengthening democracy, technological progress, and online journalism.

Fulton (2008) showed journalists that the effects of new communication technologies and the negative ones on their work are identified, but most felt that the new technology has more positive than negative effects. Gurleyen and Emre (2010) studied how Turkish digital reporters discuss traditional reporting norms, such as objectivity or gate-keeping. They argued that most digital reporters tend to work under conventional reporting boundaries and guidelines. The research provides important results on the interaction for digital journalism but does not concentrate on ethical practices and problems. philosophical issues. Throughout previous studies, reporters were seen in culture as the silos of information. Fulton indicated that "the escape opportunity provided by advanced technology" should be investigated by digital journalists. Bradely focused more on the legal problems of online journalism as new media technologies. He also found that new media innovations have still anecdotally influenced traditional media, particularly in Africa (2001). A Dutch paper reports on the results of a pilot project featuring digital reporters and student journalists who share their observations and perspectives on ethical challenges in the new media; new media ethics were studied (Garcia, 2001). Online relationship development has been seen as virtual communities. Data from a continuing case study of online news reporting suggests the early principles of the decentralized growth of the web community as media organizations identify "virtual geographical area" and disperse "territorial" over the internet. Standard press fusion is to create a new means for human communication through computers and telecommunications. The World Wide Web is an area that enables the building of the global community regardless of geography or time. In the Press as a Change Agent Elizabeth Eisenstein points out that two elements, integrity and print quality, which are largely missing from much of the present-day web coverage, are an intrinsic prestige for print journalism. Manipulation of electronic copies upon printing and loss of publishing power is also alluded to on the grounds of integrity. Other scholars warn about the potential loss of media objectivity and morality, as reporters are allied with different interests, support groups, and business titans. The barrier between ads and data can be dismantled: advertisement, public opinion, branding and media become interconnected as the viewer loses their confidence in journalistic objectivity. Online news coverage is now fluid and is now mostly ' pre-tested. ‘Such differences feed the splitting into easily targetable markets or niches for media users. These niche targets are occasionally described rather than simply geographic, as communities defined by common interests. Traditionally objective reporting is endangered by environmental ads, commercial links, a gauntlet of promotions and the constantly unifying media empires. Media and culture, media and viewpoints are blurring together. Schools of journalism use talent from other areas and online newsrooms. "The information of the electronic publications has fallen in line with the news"

(Harvey, 2000). The content is king says mark Deuze. Message is shaping the viewpoint of the general public. This helps determine the perception: journalists and editors are liable for the knowledge gained through the press and thus create an ideology. "A new type of communicator has reached: the digital reporter" (Deuze, 1998).

Theoretical Framework

This paper presents a reflective practice and journalism ethics approach to answering the question: how ethical is news presentation on the online news media?

Reflective practice

Reflective training requires reporters, publishers, and gatekeepers who focus on their job after the case, to modify their activities (reflection on actions) and to reflect on specific actions and decisions (reflecting in action) in order to improve performance (Schön 1991). Sheridan Burns concludes that constructive training is necessary to create a moral and professional journalistic foundation in journalism practice and to be active in journalistic learning (Sheridan Burns 2004). Journalists can reflect on their own assumptions and take into account their role in society (Sheridan Burns 2004), while journalists can learn how professional practice and journalism standards and ethics inform choices about history and writing. This is a meditation, for instance, on the relative importance of data principles and their ability to form what to do and what not to do (Sheridan Burns 2004). Sheridan Burns conceives these experiments to generate ethical problems that enable the students to explore how the issue can be solved. Sheridan Burns specifically describes contradictions with advancing the future of graduates, the trade interests of the press and the moral analysis of benefit and damage potentials, so that these ethical dilemmas cannot be prevented (Sheridan Burns 2004). In general, journalism education links theory to practice (Bacon 1999) and reflecting on journalism practice using the conceptual basis of news values and journalism ethics enables practitioners and academics to cooperate in identifying practically and presentational patterns and in associating them with principles and research.

Ethical frameworks

The Press Complaint Commission (PCC) and Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) code of principles commits journalists to reporting with honesty, fairness, independence and respect for the rights of others (Amended by the 2012, Adopted in 1996). The code of ethics provided by PCC and SPJ is very much relevant to this research. According to Rosenstiel and Kovach (Rosenstiel and Kovach 2001), there are 9 aspects of journalism; the first dedication to journalism is to find the truth, to expose it; its allegiance is first to the country and to the people; verifying and updating is the central discipline; its practitioners have to preserve freedom from themselves and the media organization;

II. Research Design and Methods

The study will use qualitative content analysis approach based on critical evaluation. Specific techniques for evaluating news communications are very relevant. Critical methods for analyzing the media message are much needed. Critical analysis based on techniques of qualitative content analysis has not been explored for research into the training of online journalists in recent years. To some extent, Qualitative content analysis could be integrated into the study of quantitative data or performed concurrently. The voice of the news text can be interpreted, for instance, by using traditional words and phrases. The following online news media (both Online version of the Newspaper and True online) was examined. The selection was rendered reportedly on a basis of the success of 2019 web indexes and subscriptions. 50 news stories were chosen from these online newspapers based on the importance and popularity of the news.

Online Version of Newspaper	True Online News Portal	Online Portal of TV channel
www.prothomalo.com	www.bdnews24.com	www.somoynews.tv
www.jugantor.com	www.banglanews24.com	www.ntvbd.com
www.dhakatribune.com	www.banglatribune.com	www.jamuna.tv
www.ittefaq.com		www.ekushey-tv.com
www.kalerkantho.com		
www.janakantha.com		
www.manabzamin.com		
www.bangladeshpratidin.com		
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III. Results and Discussion

Indicators for analysis

The research also reflects earlier on the framework of reflection. While online news content is highly interactive with the viewer, the press will adjust the errors (as they had done previously). The study found such examples.

Source and Attribution

The reporters will try informed, coherent information

from all related backgrounds and ideologies. Throughout compliance with the Ethical Code (PCC), reporters should always choose news sources that are reliable and provide the name and qualifications of sources easily, so that viewers may assess the accuracy of these reports. Media should not create sources or imaginary situations. Reporters shall classify sources as far as possible. The public has the right to as much data as to the accuracy of sources. Anonymity in the source was noticed in this study. The most unethical activity is commonly described as the use of anonymous sources.

On November 09, 2019, posted in nayadiganta.com named, "The bodies of those who have been rescued from a lorry in Britain are Muslims in Uighur, China." The reporter listed al Jazeera as an origin of this evidence, but in al Jazeera's article, it did not confirm the origin of the dead body. Al Jazeera in their report said that "The announcement has raised speculation that the victims could have been Uighurs, Muslim citizens who live in the west of the country and who are harshly persecuted by the state". Here they use the word speculation which means assumption or rumor. (See picture-1) The study found that the reporter did not give any details in any reference about the report titled*:* "Pakistani executed for fart at the mosque," posted on bangladeshpratidin.com on 2 July 2019. The study also identified that the item first published in a world news daily report. It's some form of a satirical paper. In their own statement, "The World News Daily Report takes full responsibility in its own declaration for the sarcastic character and fictitious content of its posts." (Picture-2) The title "The mass graves discovered in north Kashmir of 2,900" emerged on 4 October 2019, published in jugantor.com, somoynews.tv and janakantha.com. The reporters didn't mention the news source. In the newspaper The Hindu on December 03, 2009, the particular issue has indeed been written. (Picture-3)

Accuracy and Verification

The pace of online news reporting which hampers the quality of material is a strong issue of the media critic. The emphasis is mainly on speed and immediacy, which are still the core principles of online journalism (Lassica, 2001). According to the PCC, "The press must be careful that inaccurate information like photographs is not released, deceptive or manipulated." (PCC, 2012) The study found that coverage of online media was inexactly inaccurate. On November 24, 2019, posted in kalerkantho.com. the reporter did not mention the source of information and the picture used in this specific news in the news item " Anti-Jewish post by Ronaldo in support of Palestinian journalist". Nonetheless, the source of information and accurate imaging must be stated in compliance with the code of principles. (See picture-4) Another report named "The first computer in South Asia was in Bangladesh" published in banglanews24.com dated 01 November 2019 the study revealed that the information provided concerning the first ever computer in South Asia in Bangladesh is not correct. In Bangladesh we had computer in 1968 is true but this is not the first ever computer in Asia. The reporter failed to examine the facts. (See picture-5) "Samrat has taken to Pashuram by helicopter" published in Ittefaq.com and Somoy.tv dated 06 October 2019 the journalists here have again struggled to determine the related information. Samrat was indeed sent to central prison in Keraniganj in Bangladesh. (See picture-6) In dhakatribune.com, manabzamin.com and kalerkantho.com reports named "At the end of the work, the contractor returned the government 1.5 million taka" (13, 10 and 12 October 2019), The study discovered that the news provided by the media is incorrect. All this information that is being spread about the contractor Tayyab is false. And he himself is admitting it later. (See picture-7) In another news published on somoynews.tv in 22 October 2019 entitled "Gold is found underneath the ground." Basically, it was about theft and the reporter did not give sufficient evidence and information. (Picture-8)

Gender and Ethics

"Journalists and media houses shall not use discrimination or sexist language, according to a Gender Code for Media Ethics. Journalists and media houses must not necessarily portray women as members of the lower secondary group. The commercialization of the female body, and the unrestricted sexualized and pornographic views of women depicted in reporting, is no longer a matter of journalists and media companies." (Garcia-Rojas Claudia, 2012). In jamuna.tv and somoynews.tv the study found a report named dated 22 October 2019 "The woman from the DC office in Jamalpur was fired", here the reporter used stereotypical word like 'That woman, Offensive status'. (Picture 9 and 10) A further somoynews.tv article, posted on 27 October 2019, quoted an offensive word and image as "woman elopes with a lover because her husband has given no eggs to eat". (Picture-11). The same problem appeared on the 30th October in the news published by ntvbd.com The reporter did not use here neutral words and pictures as well. (Picture-12).

The gender code of ethics for the media states that "journalists and media houses shall not publish the identity (name and images) without the informed consent of the victim of rape and the victim of sexual violence and other sexual offenses." (Garcia-Rojas Claudia, 2012).

There are three common reasons for reporters not to identify the victims of rape. First and foremost, rape is distinct from other offenses because culture also condemns the victims. The reputation of being a rape victim has been derogatory. Second, victims of rape have a less chance of reporting the crime they know their names are published in the news. Third, victims of rape are not being compensated fairly by the public, and this is why they should be compensated individually. (Mc. Bride, 2003). The reports published in October 31 by banglanews24.com with title "School student arrested in Vandaria rape case" failed to abide by the ethical gender code. The reporter mentioned the name of the school and the identification of the victim. (Picture-13). In the report of 11 December 2019 on somoynews.tv titled "Uncle arrested for raping child in Narayanganj", here the reporter gave victims school description (Picture-14) and another article, published on the same website on 4 December 2019, headlined "The bank officer accused of rape 4 kids in Lalmonirhat," revealed how the incident occurred. The tone and angle of the story is negative. The reporter is just made the report sensationalized. (Picture-15). The Gender code of ethics for the media pointed out not to glamourize violence against women and sexual minorities.

Image and Ethics

In the field of photo-journalism ethics, in part, the Code of Ethics reads by the National Press Photographers Association: photographic and video images can reveal great truths, expose wrongdoing and neglect and inspire hope and understanding and connect people worldwide through a visual language. Photographs can also be extremely harmful when they are disgustingly intrusive or manipulated. (Daniel R. Bersak ,2006). The growth of new photo technologies has posed fresh ethical questions. Photographs and videos are included. Today the photographer in the new media claims that brutality is the best image they can capture but that violates the morality of values. For example, in 31October 2019 In the news "Saudi Arabia raises eyes of wrestling girls" reported by ntvbd.com and somoynews.tv, the reporter used a sensual image of the women wrestlers, and many audiences were often repelled and insulted at the picture. (Picture 16 and 16.1) bdnews24.com posted news on 15 February, "Drug addict murdered his friend", in this news reporter or subeditor used a picture of a dead body laid in the hospital. (Picture 17) The media presented a horrible picture of the dead body in 21 August 2019 at banglanews24.com in the news titled "The father's body found who jumped to save his child". But the code of principles recommended that we do not publish horrendous photographs of the dead bodies. The press will honor the dignity of the deceased. But in Bangladesh online news media are staples of American Journalism. If it bleeds, it leads in several newsrooms is a common, unpublished sentiment. The explanation for this perceived paradox is that many people are drawn and intrigued by these tales, which seem to be creating an impression that hurts them. (Picture 18). In 30 October 2019 ntvbd.com has a news named "The flame becomes drawn to the actress after the dance." here the media used a trendy picture of the actress which completely breaching morals. (Picture 19). ntvbd.com published more heartless pictures. In 26 May, 2019, they gave news titled, "Single mother throws her baby in shame". They used the picture of the single mother but mistakenly they used another girls picture in leu of the related picture. The Code of Ethics was specifically infringed. The NPPA specifies that ' Editing is essential for the quality of the content and context of the photographic images. Do not distort or change the pictures or audio so that audiences or misrepresented topics may deceive. (Picture-20)

Jugantor.com posted on August 17, 2019 news entitling "Passenger pours warm water over the face of the air hostess without getting the desired seat.". They used a symbolic photograph. And the news was first published in the daily mirror in 16 December 2014. (Picture-21) The study found many repulsive images. In October 23, 2019, somoynews.tv published a news named "Wife tied to and beat her husband and lover in a lamppost" here they publish a picture taken from internet without any verification. It was really an illustration of another Indian news story. (Picture-22)

Ethics and Sensationalization

The media is now an industry that makes profits. There is no distinction between online news and mainstream media. It looks up and reports news from time to time that is more entertaining than worth news. This kind of sensational journalism is unfortunately ruining the credibility of honest journalist who seeks truth and is blurring the line between entertainment and news. The study found the headlines on jugantor.com (01 August 2019) and banglatribune.com (31 July 2019) as "Zakir Naik is Malaysia's threat: Mahathir Mohamed". This analysis was sensationalized. This is a completely false perceived news media report. The actual statement was "Dr M: Zakir Naik is an 'unwelcome guest' Malaysia can't send away". (Picture-23) In prothomalos.com news reported in July 24, 2019 titled, "By using the territory of Pakistan, terrorists attack India: Imran Khan". The description and the details of this news were absolutely predisposed. The medium is trying to create sensation. The reports from ndtv.com they took incorrectly.

According to ndtv.com, Imran khan said, “Until we came into power, the governments did not have the political will, because when you talk about militant groups, we still have about 30,000-40,000-armed people who have been trained and fought in some part of Afghanistan or Kashmir," said the Pakistani prime minister." The medium added that, "I repeat one thing again. It is in the interest of Pakistan that we do not allow any armed militias in our country. We had suffered. The country has suffered sectarian attacks. We have had the worst situation. It has affected our investment. It has destabilized us." (Picture-24) A news item in jugantor.com (11 May 2019) is called "Saudi crown prince defends China's right to put Uighur Muslims in concentration camps". Jugantor has selected daily news from daily telegraph. But the data was distorted by the daily telegraph. The actual quote was “Saudi crown prince defends China's right to fight 'terrorism”. (Picture-25) Another news item published on ittefaq.com, somoynews.tv, ntvbd.com, janakantha.com (26 September,2019) titled, “Saudi Crown Prince on Killing of Jamal Khashoggi”. But the actual statement is, “It happened under my watch. I get all the responsibility, because it happened under my watch.” (Picture-26)

Distasteful content and invasion of privacy

Though reports cannot be published without someone being insulted or upset, reporters will work to keep the news free and available to a vast array of points of view without causing a gratuitous infringement. While some use of the "dirty" terminology may be appropriate, reporters will determine whether there is any better way to present the data or whether the request is as offensive as possible. The study found offending contents in the online news media. In news named, “Yes Mithila and I have been alien: Fahmy” published in ekushey-tv.com dated 05 November 2019, is entirely a repulsive content and invasion of one’s privacy. (Picture-27) But according to the ethics journalists should not publish distasteful news. Ethics codes deal in large part with privacy issues in order to reduce damage and fairness. The SPJ explicitly recognizes the difference between public and private persons, suggesting that private individuals should have the ability to have more control over their own lives. "Everyone's personal privacy can only be explained by an overwhelming social need" (1996). The code requires empathy and tolerance in working with children, those who criticize and those who are different. Similarly, the code of the Radio Television Electronic News Association requires for "special care" in child news, recognizing that it demands a greater level of privacy than adults (2000). In its language, the National Association of Press Photographers (NPPA) deals with public and private problems. The preamble notes that the organization "recognizes the need for everyone to be fully aware of public events." In somoynews.tv only unpleasant content and pictures are contained on the entertainment page. In addition to somoynews.tv, most online news portals also have reprehensible content. The study found news of invading privacy. somoynews.tv published news dated 27 October 2019 named “marriage to the dead body of the young woman, remained in one place”. This news invading privacy in four ways, firstly invading Private facts secondly use unfitting photographs, thirdly Appropriation of the news and fourthly the content. (Picture-28). In jugantor.com dated October 21, 2019 named “married at the age of 69 and after 71 as father”, this kind of news is absolutely the invasion of others privacy. (Picture-29).

Language and Ethics

Somoynews.tv published news titled (27/10/2019), “They jumped up and attacked me.” Here the reporter used informal language and unceremonious picture of the victim. (Picture-30). Another news published on the same news portal in 26 October, 2019 named, “fire, shoot, shoot” (Picture-31) and in 31 October titled, “Lindsay is in ‘Platonic Relationship’ with Mohammed Bin Salman” (Picture-32). Here they also used catchy headline and photographs which may mislead the readers.

IV. Conclusion

The study has three general conclusions. First, the online news media of Bangladesh do not follow journalistic fundamentals of ethics in the majority of cases. Second, online media in Bangladesh mostly focuses on distasteful material, sensationalize news and gossip journalism/ article. The news stories of the news story are also inaccurate. Thirdly, the study showed that the online news media listed did not follow the code of ethics. Historically, the reliability and honesty of the reporting have made print media more trustworthy. Electronic media can be trustworthy, but their speed and audiovisual advantages make the journalist hurry to copy. Online news media can provide comprehensive reports and data, but it does have a question with reliability and reputation.

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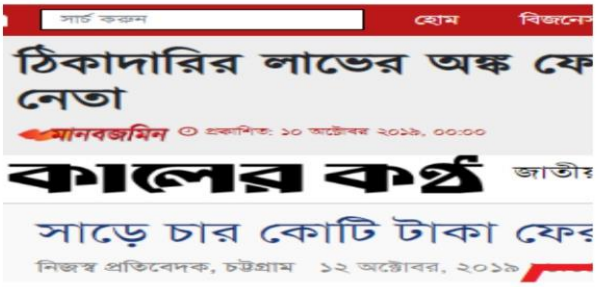
Appendix:



Jamuna Television
7 mins ·
বললেন ছাত্রলীগের আলোচিত সেই সাবেক নেতা...

BD NEWS
'আমি ওই প্রকল্পের মূল ঠিকাদার নই, ৪ কোটি টাকা ফেরত দেয়ার কথা বলিনি'

জামালপুরের ডিসি কার্যালয়ের সেই নারী বরখাস্ত

ডিম খেতে না দেয়ায় স্বামী ছাড়লেন নববধূ

য় ধর্ষণ মামলায় স্কুলছাত্র গ্রেফতার

ডেস্ট | বাংলানিউজটোয়েন্টিফোর.কম | আপডেট: ২০১৯-১০-৩১ ৬:৩৬:৫৫ পি.এম

ছবি: সংগৃহীত

Ntv online
English
Home Photo Video Live TV
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অনলাইন ডেস্ক
৩১ অক্টোবর ২০১৯, ১৮:৩২

মাটির নীচে মিলল ১৩ ভরি স্বর্ণ

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অনলাইন ডেস্ক
৩০ অক্টোবর ২০১৯, ২১:৩০ | আপডেট: ৩০ অক্টোবর ২০১৯, ২১:৩৩

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সৌদিতে শুরু হচ্ছে নারীদের রেসলিং

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119 Share

উজ্জল হোসেন। ছবি: বাংলানিউজ

ছেলেকে বাঁচাতে নদীতে ঝাঁপ দেওয়া ব্যক্তির মরদেহ উদ্ধার

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ভুল ছবি

জাতীয় রাজনীতি অর্থনীতি আন্তর্জাতিক
সিট না পেয়ে বিমানবালার মুখে গরম
অনলাইন সংস্করণ
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s://www.mirror.co.uk › News › World news › Air Asia
they weren't seated together, causing chaos in mid-air be

KORM
স্বামী ও প্রেমিকাকে ল্যাম্পপোস্টে বেঁধে পেটালেন স্ত্রী

Misquoted
বাংলা ট্রিবিউন

পাকিস্তান থেকে সন্ত্রাসীরা ভারতে হামলা চালিয়েছিল : খান

যুগান্তর
প্রচ্ছদ >> আন্তর্জাতিক
চীনের উইঘুর মুসলমানদের নিপীড়নে সৌদি যুবরাজের সমর্থন
যুগান্তর ডেস্ক
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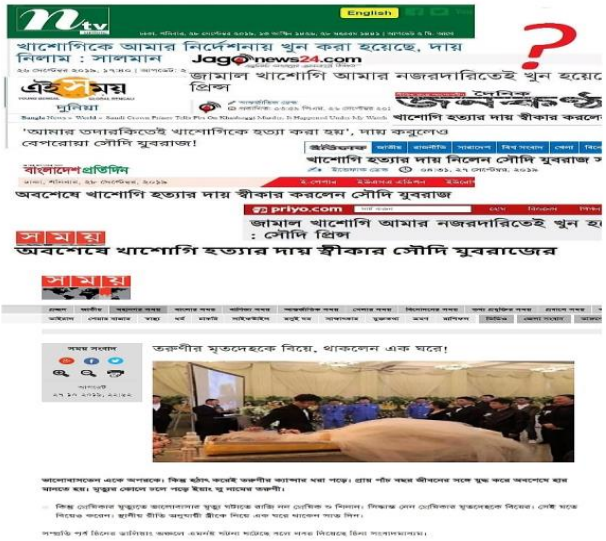
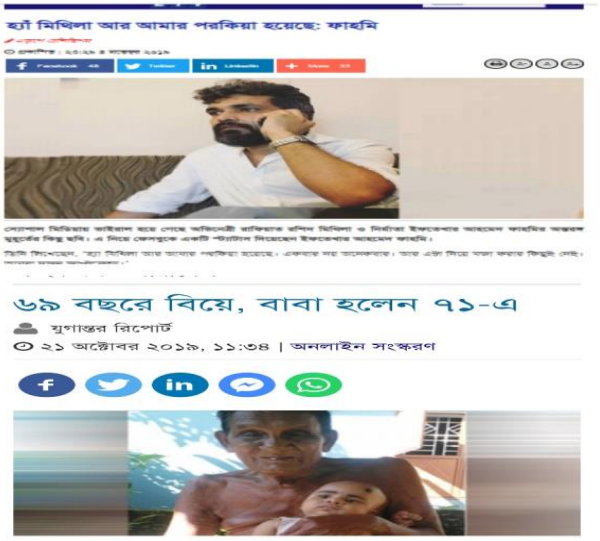

English
খাশোগিকে আমার নির্দেশনায় খুন করা হয়েছে, দায় নিলাম : সালমান
Jago news24.com
জামাল খাশোগি আমার নজরদারিতেই খুন হয়েছে প্রিন্স
অবশেষে খাশোগি হত্যার দায় স্বীকার করলেন সৌদি যুবরাজ
priyo.com
জামাল খাশোগি আমার নজরদারিতেই খুন হয়েছে : সৌদি প্রিন্স
অবশেষে খাশোগি হত্যার দায় স্বীকার সৌদি যুবরাজের
তরুণীর মৃতদেহকে বিয়ে, থাকলেন এক ঘরে!


হ্যাঁ মিথিলা আর আমার পরকিয়া হয়েছে: ফাহমি
৬৯ বছরে বিয়ে, বাবা হলেন ৭১-এ
যুগান্তর রিপোর্ট
২১ অক্টোবর ২০১৯, ১১:৩৪ | অনলাইন সংস্করণ

COVERAGE OF INDIAN PARLIAMENTRY ELECTIONS 2019: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRIME-TIME NEWS COVERAGE OF TOP THREE NEWS CHANNELS

Shilpi Jha*

During the last decade, no other mass media platform has changed the way it perceives, creates and disseminates content, as News on Indian Cable Television. Private News Channels in India have often come under severe criticism for reducing news and ground reports to prime-time panel discussions and endless sessions of allegation and counter accusations. General Elections, the biggest festival of any democracy and a huge visual spectacle are supposed to bring tremendous opportunity of varied content creation and showcasing different issues from ground reporting for understanding the real issues and concerns of voters and capturing the pulse of the nation This is also a time for them to mobilize resources for better coverage of pan nation news since there is a better inflow of revenue through political as well as government advertisement. 2019 general elections, however, saw more of views created from inside the newsroom studios than on ground coverage of news. This research picked up top 3 news channels India based on average BARC ratings and captured the prime-time news coverage during the period of general elections 2019, beginning with the announcements of dates and ending at the last round of voting (11th March-18th May). The content analysis of the top channels Aaj Tak, ABP News and India TV (selected based on weighted average of BARC ratings during the time period) has been categorized based on them being news dominated vs opinion dominated and ground reporting vs studio chats. Analysis of content differentiation among the channels has also been taken into consideration

Keywords: General Elections, News Channels, News Coverage, Opinion, Content Analysis, BARC Ratings

There is no denying the fact that news channels of the present day are operating in a fiercely competitive market. With over 400 hundred satellite channels registered as news and current affairs channels, having a total of 7-8% share of total television viewership, every single eyeball and every single minute of audience engagement is fought for. With most of the coverage dependent on major events unfolding during the day, TV news channels do not have the luxury to enjoy appointment viewership of even their most loyal set of audience. News channels in India are also losing their audience to similarity and often duplication of choices provided by their competitors. Rasmus Kleis Nielson, Director, Reuters Institute of Journalism, in his extensive report titled 'Ten Years that Shook the Media World, published by Reuters Institute writes 'The impact of the increased choice available to many people has been particularly clear in the patterns of television viewing around the world. Many major channels have lost a larger proportion of their viewers over the last decade than paid printed newspapers have of their readers. Today, every minute of programming is competing against dozens and often hundreds of alternatives, and even the most successful large channels are gradually losing audience to more specialized competitors.' (Neilson, 2012).

In such an environment, elections are considered a time of opulence for the news media industries. For them, this is no less than a festive period, albeit one which comes every five years. Since it is a scheduled event, it gives channels ample time to plan their content creation and dissemination strategies as well as innovate to achieve differentiation among their peers. Recently concluded 2019 general elections considered the most expensive election in India till date were no different for satellite news channels which were backed by a spike in viewership during run up to the final polling and counting days. Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) data showed that the top five Hindi news channels saw a jump of 66% in year on year viewership during the election weeks (Malvania, Urvi; 2019). While during the counting week, Hindi news channels grabbed 95% rise in viewership from the previous week. (ibid) High on funds and viewership, elections probably are also time for news channels to redeem their fast eroding credibility among viewers with the help of some research based, backed by facts and ground report stories.

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High viewership also results in spike in interest from advertisers across the sectors who are ready to open their purse strings for the otherwise cash strapped TV news industry. For political parties and individual politicians alike, elections are a limited window to connect with their voters through advertisements, and TV with the mass reach becomes their prime choice. Flush with funds from political parties and individual politicians, news channels also have a lot of leg room to flex for their expenditure budgets. According to a forecast by Group M, world's leading media investment company, television advertising was expected to grow by 14% to touch Rs. 80,678 crore in 2019 backed by the Lok Sabha polls and cricked world cups. Political parties were expected to spend Rs. 300 crore on advertising on news channels during the run up to the elections. While the election advertising spending may go up to Rs. 1,000 crore, it's the television which is expected to take the lion's share (Tiwari, Saumya; 2019). Not only do the channels get more advertisements, the ad slots are also sold to the political parties and candidates at a premium. 2019 election political spending were also expected to result into shooting up of advertisement rates, doubling in some instances. On polling, counting and government formation days, viewership surges and advertisement rates go up to as much as Rs. 2 lakhs for a 10 second slot. (Bhushan, Ratna; Laghate, Gaurav, 2019).

In an all favourable situation like this, when they enjoy unprecedented attention both from audience and advertisers, news channels are expected to reach out to their audience with much sensible, research-based news reports and treat them with quality journalism in the otherwise cluttered and infested with endless opinionated talking, occupying most of the screen space. This is also the time for them to claim their eroding credibility among their audience. The objectives of this research is to find out if Indian news channels actually succeeded in justifying their claim of in-depth reporting to their audience during the elections or not.

I. Research Design & Methods

The research analyses prime time news content broadcasted by three most viewed news channels in India during the entire course of the general elections 2019. The elections were announced by the Election Commission of India, the apex body responsible for conducting fair and transparent elections in the country, on 10th March 2019 and model code of conduct for political parties came under place immediately. Elections were conducted in the entire country in 7 phases from 11th April to 19th May and counting took place on 23rd of May. The time frame under consideration for the study was from 11th of March to 18th of May, since 19th May, after the last phase of elections was the day when news channels were anyways expected to go ahead with their exit poll results and analyses.

Channels were selected based on the weighted average or their weekly ratings during the 10-week period This work of research has picked up top 3 news channels India based on average BARC ratings and captured the prime-time news coverage during the period of general elections 2019, beginning with the announcements of dates by the election commission on 10th March till the last round of voting on May 19th 2019. This accounts for 70 days of broadcast and 10 cycles of rating by the television audience rating agency, Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) The top 3 channels during the time period according to the BARC data were, Aaj Tak, India TV and Republic Bharat whereas ABP news was on the 4th position. However, due to unavailability of recordings of Republic Bharat, the channel which was launched on 1st February 2019, barely 6 weeks before the time frame of this research, the paper has taken ABP news as its third data point. These three channels accounted for 48% of total news viewership during the elections.

Time-band: Content was analysed during the traditional prime- time band of 8pm to 11pm (Neilson.com, 2011) for all sample channels. This band is considered to be the traditional prime time for news channels. Although, the 24-hour format has changed the way news is perceived and disseminated by channels and every bulletin from 7am to midnight has its own subset of target audience, evening bulletins are still considered to have maximum spike in audience seeking hard news thus resulting in news channels saving their most savoured content for the evening slots and replaying most important developments during the day. For the study, content analysis of the top channels Aaj Tak, India TV and ABP News has been categorized based on theme of being news dominated vs opinion dominated and ground reporting vs studio chats. Analysis of content differentiation among the channels, for select days, has also been taken into consideration.

Bulletin Break-up: The sample channels, as expected, had their most popular news anchors as in-charge of shows during the slots under study. While none of the three channels under consideration had a studio panel discussion as a standard format during the three hours of prime time, drift was seen in between for a day or two. While most of the times there were fixed slots for anchors during the period under observations, there were some variations observed when the concerned anchor was doing a live chat show from some outstation location thus

needing another anchor replacing them in the studio. It was also observed that the bulletins for all channels will begin around 2-3 minutes before the beginning of hour. Like 8pm bulletin will start at 7:58.

Aaj Tak: Aaj Tak prime time was dominated by 3-4 of its most well-known actors like Anjana Om Kashyap, Shweta Singh and Chitra Tripathi, with names like Rohit Sardana, Nishat Chaturvedi, Neha Batham and Saeed Ansari filling in for some slots. Another popular face, Rahul Kanwal was also seen conducting in field long format interviews. During the 3-hour period, Aaj Tak had allocated two slots of 10 minute each for round up of 100 most important news of the day at 7:58 and 8:58 named Sau Shahar, Sau Khabar (Hundred cities, hundred news) and Shatak (Century) Aaj Tak. Barring a couple of changes, these two roundups, anchored by different anchors, were almost identical. There was another round up section focused only on the updates on election. The main news bulletins initially had two 50-minute shows named Special Report at 8:05pm, anchored by Anjana Om Kashyap and Khabardar at 9:05 pm anchored by Shweta Singh. The shows saw anchors like Chitra Tripathi and Rohit Sardana in between as well. 10 pm slots named as 10Tak (Till 10) had Chitra Tripathi at the helm followed by another 30minute slot named Vishesh (Special) anchored by different faces. From 1st April till the first week of May the first hour of prime time 8-9pm was divided into two slots, the first one named 'Rajtilak', was a 20mins live talk show from different parts of the Hindi belt, starting from Ahmedabad and travelling through Gujarat, Rajasthan, UP, Bihar, MP and Chandigarh, anchored in turns by Anjana, Nishant and Shweta, followed by the standard studio anchored second half. Weekend bulleting on the most popular Indian news channel were reserved for long format interviews, 'Shwetparta' a weekly show anchored by Shweta Singh along with some music and comic relief thrown in like 'Chunavi Kawaali'

ABP News: ABP News had the maximum number of short interjectors in the form of news round ups during the election weeks prime time. They also continued with their viral news wrap ups from across the globe along with the election coverage. During the detailed news bulletins, the channel relayed a 8:05-8:30 show named 'Siyasat ke Daavedaar' or 'Siyasat ka Sensex' followed by another slew of quick round ups like Election Viral, Viral Fatafat, Top 10 news etc right up to the beginning of the next hour. 9:00pm bulletin named 'Masterstroke' had popular anchor Rubika Liyaquat till 9:30 which would further be taken over by channel's managing editor and lead anchor Sumit Awasthi in the show titled 'Sumit Awasthi Tonight'. The last hour of the prime-time slot was dedicated to an hour long show named Ghanti Bajao (Ring the bell) anchored by Anurag Muskaan which would take up 2-3 reports and issues and ask the viewers to give a missed call on the number constantly flashing on the screen if they agreed with the channels take on the issue. The show also asked the viewers to record their short video on the issue which had a chance of finding a place on the show during the successive days. Later during the elections, the channel introduced a weekly show aired of Saturdays named 'Vansh' chronicling the history and emergence of powerful political families of Indian politics likes the Gandhi, Thackeray and Yadav clans.

India TV: India TV had the least number of programmes during the prime slot since for the news roundups, all its bulletins were had hour long runs. The slot would begin with the show titled 'Haqiqat Kya Hai', anchored mostly by Saurabh Sharma or Pankaj Bhargava, followed by the daily staple of Viral videos from around the world and 50 important news wrap up of the day. 9-10 pm slot was reserved for the channel owner and editor- in- chief Rajat Sharma's popular show 'Aaj Ki Baat' The last hour of prime-time on India TV had another hour of special programme which would pick any one issue to be discussed at length during the next hour. The 10pm show was anchored by different anchors or be even anchored by any bureau reporter from their respective city. The longest series aired during the slot was 'Modi aur Musalmaan'(Modi and Muslims) which was reporter's account of collected through the Muslim dominated areas of the Hindi heartland. Several evenings, this show was also seen to air re-run of 'Aap Ki Adalat', which is a renowned weekly talk show hosted by Rajat Sharma. This way, India TVs 10pm bulletin was the most haphazard show aired among all the hours studied under the ambit of this research.

II. Results & Discussion

Detailed analyses of over 600 hours of news footage has provided invaluable inputs about the way news is perceived, manufactured and presented by the news channel. The qualitative news analyses have been further classified into three broad categories, **Content**, **Presentation** and the **Role of Reporters** in the entire news television ecosystem. Since the prime focus of this research is to find out the share of in-depth field reporting in the total content created by sample channels, it has taken the liberty to investigate how reporters fared on their respective channels and how much of the screen-time was given to them. Analyses reflected upon very important insights:

1. **Content:** Former political editor of BBC Andrew Marr in his book 'My Trade: A short history of British Journalism' writes, "There is no better protection against the special pleading and the salesmanship of PR machines than decently paid and experienced journalists, trusted inside their organizations to use their judgement." However, Indian TV channels have decided to look the other way on this advice. As academician and veteran journalist, Sandeep Bhushan in his book, 'The Indian Newsroom: Studio, Star and the Unmaking of Reporters' writes, Long format research-based stories do not seem to have left with any place in the current day newsrooms. Every stakeholder is interested in the status quo. TV news has been co-opted by the establishment. It is quite simply a discourse of, and for, power masquerading as information for the public good. (Bhushan, Sandeep; 2019). It is common knowledge now that insightful news gathering is much more expensive than studio based talking heads, it was probably achievable for the channels during election time, however the research found that most reports, spanning anywhere between 6-12 minutes of duration were driven by events and reactions of news makers, leaving very limited time and space for issue based in-depth report. Here are the major trends drawn about content:

a. **On News Channels 'Outrage is Rewarded':** In their book, 'The Outrage Industry: Political Opinion Media and the New Incivility', American political scientist Jefferey M. Berry and sociologist Sarah Sobieraj observe, "Outrage is a genre that is recognizable and provocative. Its point of entry into the political world is through response." (Berry, Jefferey M.; Sobieraj, Sarah, 2016). Not only did the TV news bulletins recognize the power and potential of outrage, they also rewarded it with their sole currency, air-time. Most glaring example of this reward was the case of BJP candidate from Bhopal, Sadhvi Pragya Thakur. Pragya, an accused in the Malegaon blast case, known for her outrageous and provocative comments was the most featured candidate after Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi by all sample news channels. Right from the day of the announcement of her candidature to her remarks on, anything she did or said inevitably found place in the prime-time slots. India news did 'Aap Ki Adalat' on her while ABP's special show dedicated to her was called 'Sadhvi ki 3rd degree ka sach.' The programme included with staged dramatic adaptation with professional actors and three reporters from field. The day Pragya gave her controversial statement about martyred ATS chief Hemant Karkare (thewire.in, April 19), Aaj Tak's dedicated show on her was named 'Sadhvi ki Satyakatha'. From her statement about being involved in the demolition of Babri masjid, to her vote seeking antics, everything made headlines. Pragya was constantly glorified and her candidature was not put in right perspective. Another much covered candidate was Samajwadi Party candidate from Rampur, Azam Khan. His outrageous statements including Ali vs Bajrang Bali and demoing comments against rival BJP candidate Jaya Prada were a regular staple for evening slots. UP Chief Minister Yogi Aadityanath, despite not being in the foray, but campaigning for BJP candidates in UP, Bihar and West Bengal was accorded more air time than major BJP leaders like Rajnath Singh and Ravi Shankar Prasad.

b. **Events Takeover Issues**: Be it Priyanka Gandhi's Ganga yatra or Modi's relentless campaign, events were always accorded more airtime than issues. On 12th March, India TV spent over 1.3 hours talking about Priyanka Gandhi's speech and comparing it with that of Indira and Sonia's speeches. While analysing Ganga yatra of Priyanka Gandhi, channels talked about her travel plans and compared it with Modi's campaign in 2014. Vox-pops from locals and by standers invariably focused more on winning chances of candidates.

c. **Modi Makes up for Lack of Field Reporting:** A random glance on TV screens during the elections could have revealed their dependence on PM Narendra Modi's crowd drawing speeches and antics to fill up their screen, the extent of it was quite revealing during the research. He could be the content even on the days there was no news from him. During Navratra, India News and ABP dedicated half hour each of prime-time on one day on Modi's relentless campaign during navratras describing details about his routine and speculating about his source of energy. While India TV named the programme 'Modi ki Tapasya', ABP decided to call it 'Modi ki Shakti Sadhana' The day Modi cast his vote in Ahmedabad, every channel devoted 15-20 minutes to his meeting with his mother, with India TV leading the flock and with a 30mins curtain raiser a night before, about Modi's prospective programme with his brother's interview. Rajat Sharma's 'Aaj Ki Baat' would invariably have 20-25-minute chunk of Modi's sound bites from his rallies during the day.

d. **Graphics and Dramatic Recreation are Good Substitutes Too:** During the first week after the announcement of elections, all three news channels in question were more interested in justifying and gathering proof of India's air strike on Balakot than

in elections. However, most of these shows, were played with the help of 3D graphics and dramatic representation. Aaj Tak did one show on 11th and two on March 15th during consecutive hours. While the other two played their shows on 15th of March. Caste and religion wise analysis of constituencies were another fancy all channels picked, again with the help of 3D animation. Sadhvi Pragya's story was another favorite where dramatic adaptation was used.

e. Television Adopts Clickbait Trick: While Clickbait is a tried and tested trick for online content providers to attract more traffic by use of inciting and provocative headlines, news channels are also not far behind. Apart from such headlines, anchors were constantly indulged in outrightly asking viewers not to change the channel since something big was to be aired. On ABP news, 10pm anchor was also seen urging audience to watch the report till the end since the channel had created it with a lot of efforts. Other ways of obvious self- promotion were evident too. For example, on 10th April, a day before the first phase of polling, India TV aired a 15-minute preview of their popular show Aap Ki Adalat, hosting the then Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, right at the beginning of its 9pm show Aaj Ki Baat. The entire show, however, was aired just 45 minutes later at 10:00pm.

2. State of Reporters: Reporters, are eyes and ears of television news networks. Presence of reporter on location translates into bringing in credibility and authenticity to any report. Television news is the result of team work where reporters are given equal opportunity to share the limelight with anchors. Elections are a good time for them to use their expertise and contacts to create content rich, visually appealing reports. Quality and quantity of reports and involvement of reporters were measured and analyzed in as part of the study.

a. Anchors are Stars while Reporters Shrink in Stature: Television news is the result of team work, where anchors enjoy their share of screen space from studio and newsroom while reporters bask in the glory of credibility and authenticity from the field, also claiming their bit of screen time. However, this trend seems to be seizing on Indian television to the extent that many a times entire slots appear to be one person show. Most astounding example was India News' 10pm show Aaj Ki Baat anchored by editor-in-chief Rajat Sharma. The one-hour show has invariably had Rajat Sharma speaking for 90% of time, interrupted only by sound bites and at times chat with one of the reporters. This was an endless cycle of visuals, explanation and analyses by one anchor. Likewise, ABP News' 9:30 slot 'Sumit Awasthi Tonight' would typically pick one story followed by chat with one guest, remotely connected with the studio through satellite. Even more stark was the weekly show on Aaj Tak 'Shwetpatra' anchored by Shweta Singh. The show, translating to the term 'White paper' will have in-depth analysis of one issue ranging from Kashmir issue to problems in West Bengal, had all anchor links as well as voice-overs solely done by Shweta, completely denying any credit to the research and production teams.

b. Reports are not Driven by Reporters: While reports in India TV did not have any sign-offs, not even that of a bureau report, very few reports had anchors signing off from the field. In Aaj Tak even when there were reporters in the field, reporter sign offs will be suffixed by bureau report essentially implying that desk team had provided its input in packaging the entire report. In television dictionary this may also mean that some of the sound bites were procured from the agency feeds. Most coveted interviews were taken by star anchors doubling as reporters. However, PM Modi's interview in Purulia by the bureau reporter was one of the very few exceptions. Similarly, report on water crisis on Purulia was one of the handful of ground reports done by Aaj Tak. ABP was the only news channel which highlighted the reporters name in the credits and throughout the report. ABP news also was the only channel among the three which aired on an average 1-2 stories per week which were based on factual field reporting. The reports like the one on 'a cluster of village on Maharashtra-Andhra border where voters had two voter ids and would vote twice', or how households had no money to get their gas cylinders refilled under Ujjwala Yojna and Aadivasi's in Madhya Pradesh were forced to mortgage their ration cards, all aired during the 10pm slot 'Ghanti Bajao' were few but great to watch amidst endless opinionated content.

c. Reporters are Mere Numbers than Names and Faces: While reporters were mostly ignored during the election coverage, their mentions did matter to news channels mostly as marketing gimmicks. Like on every polling day Aaj Tak would claim that their number of reporters in field covering stories was equal to the number of seats being voted for. The graphic plates claiming so would be displayed constantly from a day prior to polling. However, these reporters would not be seen anywhere during the primetime shows. Interestingly, the much-repeated reporter graphic plates would also have the

prime-time anchors at the top shown as reporters. Similarly, starting March 25th ABP News ran a series on its state wise internal opinion poll claiming it to be the outcome of the on-ground analysis done along with local reporters in every Lok Sabha constituency. While the channel had a disclaimer before the beginning of the series, claiming it to be an attempt to understand the mood of the nation, it completely refrained from clarifying whether the said reporters were only inhouse or inputs from reporters of other organizations were taken as well. The series which ran for over 2 weeks, saw the screen space being shared between anchor Sumit Awasthi and another anchor positioned at the channel's 'election data center.' It also had representatives from various political parties for panel discussions every evening. However, none of the shows in the series had any of the ground reporters present. Neither the shows had any reporters sharing or justifying their views, nor were their names mentioned by anchors at any point of time. India TV, however, had the least number of reporters in the field. The news reports shown during prime-time did not have any sign offs, not even that of the bureau or desk. Bureau reporters, however, were used several times as presenters of special programmes like on 12th April, channels Ahmedabad bureau chief presented a special programme on Modi's relationship with muslims which was based on once incident mentioned in one of the several books written on Modi about how a muslim neighbour was allowed to stay by Modi's father for one year to complete his school education after he lost his father who happened to be a close friend of Modi's father. The person in question, Abbas Momin was mentioned several times during the programme and even quoted by the reporter anchor, but his sound bite, as essential proof for reporter being on ground, was nowhere to be seen. The programme also kept referring to an incident when Modi stopped his speech mid-way during Azaan as justification of Modi's special bonding with muslims of the nation. This incident had taken place on 3rd of March. The only reporter driven series done by India TV during the 10pm slot was named 'Modi aur Musalmaam' where reporter was seen travelling through muslim dominated areas of Hindi belt, asking them about their expectations and apprehensions on Modi.

d. Reporters are Needed During Accidental News breaks: While in the current operational set up of 24x7 news, every other piece of development is breaking news, reporters were able to justify their alliance with their channel only during real breaking news scenarios. Like during the period under study, reporters were seen to be active participators in news formation on the day when the foot overbridge on Chhatrapati Shivaji railway terminus collapsed on 14th March killing six people. 3-4 reporters from all three channels were present at the location, constantly providing updates and interviewing witnesses, officials and politicians. Shortly after this on 17th March after the death of former defense minister and Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar, reporters were seen to be providing constant updates from ground zero on the as well as political developments in the state. Coincidentally, both developments first broke during the prime-time band and quickly claimed all the airtime available for the rest of the evening. Among poll related activities, reporters from ABP News and Aaj Tak were seen in field reporting violence during polling in different parts of West Bengal.

3. **Presentation:** News on television is as much about presentation as it is about ground report. Visual storytelling with its grammar and aesthetics is equally important Television storytelling has traditionally been about crisp writing were words are complementing visuals, not repeating them. However, lack of field reporting is reflecting in the way reports are being created on television.

   a. News reports are longer, intertwined with each other: News bulletins, across the three channels, consisted of two distinct formats, news round-ups and long reports. News round ups, a constant staple of primetime news bulletins, will have top 50 or 100 news updates from the day, with roughly 6-8 seconds allotted for each update, took around a quarter of the time allotted for news sans advertisement breaks. The rest of the bulletin was reserved for detailed news reports. These reports were longer, averaging 6-7 minutes per report, much longer than the traditional practice of 2-3 minutes per report. In some cases, like news about an alleged viral letter written by ex-army men to the president to instruct political parties to refrain from dragging armed forces into electoral politics was given 12 minutes by Aaj Tak during the 9 pm bulletin. On the same day, ABP news aired this piece of information in a 10-minute report. Similarly, the

   b. Long Reports do not mean more information: While it was very rare to find 2-3 minutes reports to justify the traditional crisp story telling model followed by news channels, long reports did not essentially mean fresh information infused in them. Information is repeated in one story and voiceovers

often state what is obviously seen in the visuals. For example, in one of the reports on a controversy during roadshow of BJP candidate from Gurdaspur, Sunny Deol, ABP News used a graphic arrow to point out the presence of Booby Deol standing beside his brother on the truck. Graphic arrow pointing was however, mostly done by ABP news. In another report on Rahul Gandhi's roadshow in Amethi, channels spent many good minutes establishing Priyanka Vadra's son Rehan along with the family trying to establish if Congress had found its scion.

c. **Packages are made of allegations and counter allegations:** In the age of outrage, bites are all that matter. They are the fuel for television, driving bulletins. But news content solely based on bites is a farce. It fractures reality into smaller bits and prevents the viewers from making sense of the larger context. (Bhushan, 2019). This in a nutshell describes news television of the present day. On the first day of voting, the first 4 out of 5 headlines on Aaj Tak were about allegations and counter allegations in speeches of Modi, Rahul, Smriti and Priyanka respectively followed by the update on polling. Controversial statements will always takeover news content in almost every bulletin on all news channels. Rahul Gandhi's Rafale allegation was given more time than feasibility of NYAY scheme. For every bite there is a counter bite inserted, voice overs comprising of explanation and frequent use of file soundbites to make a point, stretching packages beyond the scope of their visual grammar.

d. **Locations are Props:** During elections, star anchors were constantly seen city hoping through the Hindi heart belt, hosting their live shows. In most cases, locations were only for the sake of it and had no bearing on the issues related to them. Aaj Tak's 8 pm slot 'Rajtilak' hosted by Anjana, Nishant and Shweta Singh in different phases from locations starting from Ahmedabad and travelling through states like Gujarat, UP, Bihar, Bengal and MP etc had the anchor establishing the location amidst wild frenzy of the local crowd who would seem more eager to be seen on the national television than the issue. While the second and third legs of the show hosted by Nishant and Shweta did have one ground report before beginning the allegation-counter allegation shouting of local leaders, Anjana would only concentrate on the taking part in the 18-20-minute band. ABP News' 'Ghanti Bajao' always anchored outdoors had no report or other details about the place. Anchor would announce the location and move on to the reports of the day. In some cases, there were some curious locals, eager to be on TV, were also seen to share the screen spaces with anchor, but beyond that, location had no relevance to the bulletin. Although this hour on ABP had the maximum number of sensible reports shown, it had no connection with the anchoring location. ABP's 9pm 'Masterstroke' whenever anchored from outstation, had no bearing on the relevance of the location. India TV made no such attempts of even connecting with the locals on ant if its shows.

e. **Content Differentiation is Replaced by Presentation Differentiation**: With more and more news derived from the events, the channels were bound to have 60% similarity in their choice of news headlines and coverage during prime-time bulletins. However, channels try to bring in the difference with their style of presentation. The much awaited and hard to get interview of PM Narendra Modi came to the top three channels nonetheless, albeit after his most talked about interaction with actor Akshay Kumar which aired on 23rd March. While ABP news was the first to get PM's appointment on 5th April, Aaj Tak had it on 26th March and India News had to wait the longest till 4th May. The treatment was however different for all of them. While, ABP News chose the conventional sit-in format at PM's at his residence with prime-time anchor duo, Sumit Awasthi and Rubika Liyaqat, for India News it was owner cum editor cum prime-time anchor Rajat Sharma. Sharma decided to go with Jawaharlal Nehru stadium for the venue with huge crowd continuously chanting Modi-Modi. The set up was much like a Fox of CNN one for Presidential debate, sans the balancing act of having the Prime Ministerial candidates from other major parties. However, audience were given a chance to ask questions to the PM. Aaj Tak in its trademark style decided to go all out with a walk through, sit-in, on cruise format in Varanasi with three, star anchors, Anjana Om Kashyap, Shweta Singh and Rahul Kanwal taking turns to ask questions to the prime minister. If the interviews were judged by their content differentiation, most of them concentrated around Modi's thought about his tenure and issues related to internal security, relationship with Pakistan, nationalism and election strategy. Counter questions were limited and so were follow up questions. India TV however, concentrated more on glorifying the PM's larger than life persona and talking mostly about his equation with

world leaders and his public life, thus completely circumventing critical issues like economy. Issues like mob lynching and polarization and outrageous language used by politicians were not talked about by any channel.

f. **Bollywood scenes and music are big ally for engaging presentation TV News:** News channels did not miss a single chance to fill in their air time with music and movie scenes. This meant giving ample airtime to candidates like Sunny Deol, Hema Malini or Shatrughan Sinha. On one evening, Sunny's cult 'dhai kilo ka haath' dialogue was repeated as many as 15 times on all three channels. Even Bhojpuri was accorded high respect with a special show dedicated to three Bhojpuri actor-singers, Manoj Tiwari, Ravi Kishan and Nirhua. Haryanavi singer Sapna Choudhary was another big draw.

III. Conclusion

Money may be flowing easily for news channels during elections but spending it on time and manpower consuming in-depth issue-based news coverage is not what the channels have decided to spend it on. They have rather chosen to go with easy to come, event-based reporting and freely available attack and counter attack sound bite formats from political rivals which were anyways free flowing during the run up to the elections. In the fierce competition between news channels, while every eyeball and every minute of tune in time counts, Outrage has certainly been their best bet to grab them. In a scenario when they get a feedback on the audience engagement through TRP daily, this strategy certainly seems to have helped them in staying at the top of the chart along with keeping their expenditure in check. Although, more reporters were seen in field towards the last leg of elections, the total number of issues covered and ground reporting done did not justify the number of reporters channels claimed to have deployed around the country.

The research has considered only top three channels as per the viewership numbers and not based on their impact on higher socio-economic segments and decision makers of the country. This has left English news channels out of ambit who have very limited viewership as compared to their Hindi counterparts. The research also does not delve into the analysis of objectivity or biasness of news coverage which can be a matter of further research. Since only prime-time content was analyzed, any coverage which was shown during the day or early evening has not been analyzed. However, considering most of major news tends to be compressed during the prime-time bulletins, one doubts if any in-depth coverage will miss out the selected time band. Coverage of 'Outrage' is one major take away of this piece of research. Such was the extent of outrage during the campaign trail as was the air-time spent on it, there can be a separate in-depth piece of research based only on outrage analysis.

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PORTRAYAL OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN INDIAN PRESS- A STUDY OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF TRIPLE TALAQ ISSUE

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Media play an important role in the portrayal of image of any community, political leaders, or people. Navasky said that: "It is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind" (Navasky cited in Zelizer & Allen, 2002). The images of race, caste, community, and religion as perceived by the media have long been of interest to researchers as they signify the attitude of majority communities towards smaller groups. No religious community has generated so much heat and debate than the Muslims in the world have. In 2017, the right wing NDA government supported the abolition of Triple Talaq to provide gender justice to Muslim women paving way for national debate. The move was overwhelmingly welcomed by the Muslim women who consolidated their strength by forming an organization and openly took on the religious clerics. The Government determined to enact the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill brought it before the House in December 2017. Triple Talaq issue took media by surprise, as they never anticipated the support of Muslim women. Media gathered all the courage to address the issue mainly because it has been raised by Muslim women and the Apex Court appeared to be supportive of divorced Muslim women. TV channels gradually opened up followed by print media to cover the historic issue. The vulnerability of media secularism and the lack of a clear-cut media policy on this significant issue prompted this study. The study shows that there are variations in the slants and frames in Triple Talaq stories in the press. The Indian press has portrayed a mix of favourable and unfavourable slants of the Muslim women. However, contrary to popular belief, the degree of favourable slant is higher than unfavourable ones, illustrating a change in the attitude of the press to the sensitive issue of Muslim women.

Keywords: Triple Talaq, Muslim Women, Maintenance, Supreme court, Gender perspective.

Media play an important role in the portrayal of image of any community, political leaders or people. Navasky said that: 'It is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind'(Navasky cited in Zelizer & Allen, 2002). The images of race, caste, community and religion as perceived by the media have long been of interest to researchers as they signify the attitude of majority communities towards smaller groups. No religious community has generated so much heat and debate than the Muslims in the world have. Muslims all over the world have been viewed with suspicion owing to the rise in fundamentalism and terrorism. The negative image portrayed by the media in the past has reinforced the public's stereotypical and prejudiced perception of the Muslims. The treatment of Muslims—the largest minority group—in a pluralistic society like India has been the subject of debates and discussions. India is a secular republic where the citizens enjoy equal right to practice a religion of their choice. The Hindus are the majority community in the multi-religious Indian society and the minority community consists of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and others. India has 150 million Muslims (2011 census) constituting 15 percent of the total population, which intriguingly is the combined population of Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

India, the largest democracy in the world, has a free press and the constitution has guaranteed freedom of speech and expression (Article 19(1) a) to its citizens. Media play a significant role in a pluralistic society like India in constructing the image of Muslims—the largest minority community in a Hindu majority nation. Religion is a highly sensitive issue and many communal riots have marked the history of post-colonial Indian society, creating more void between the religious communities. In a democracy like India, the liberal media that are in the hands of private business groups are expected to profess secularism. Unfortunately, the secular credentials of the Indian press are questioned after the *Babri Masjid* incident on 6 December 1992.

Sociology of Muslims in India

Muslims are 150 million constituting 13.4 percent of India's population. State wise, Muslims are in majority in Jammu and Kashmir with 68.31 percent whereas they are highly concentrated in the states of Assam (34.22%),

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West Bengal (27%), Kerala (26.56%), Uttar Pradesh (19.26%) and Bihar (16.87%). Over 10 million Muslim population lives in 4 states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar. Out of 593 districts in India, Muslims are found to have heavily concentrated in 76 districts out of which Muslims are found to be in majority in 20 districts. More Muslim population is found in urban (16.9 percent) than rural (12 percent) areas. More than one third (36 percent) of Muslims live in urban areas which is higher than national average of 28 percent of population living in urban areas.

National average of Muslims shows 73.2 million are literate with literacy at 68.5 percent. Muslims have high rate of illiteracy at 31.5 percent and is very high when compared with other minorities like Jains, Buddhists, Christians, and Sikhs. Comparison of Muslims with Hindus shows that illiteracy among Hindus is comparatively low at 26.7 percent to that of 31.5 percent in Muslims. National average of Muslim male and female literacy shows disparity with that of Hindu males and females. Literacy rate of Muslim males and females is lower than their counterparts in Hindus. Muslim female average is lowest with 51.9 percent and shows highest rate of female illiterates. The rate of illiteracy among Hindu women is equally high but lower than that of Muslims implying female literacy is low across both religions.

Indian Muslims and Triple Talaq

In the post partition days, India became Independent but then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru did not approve the idea of Hindu Motherland unlike Pakistan, which when British divided India in 1947, was founded as a nation for Indian Muslims. India embraced secularism meaning right of citizens to profess any religion and therefore all minority religions were treated on par with majority Hindu religion separating religion from the state. India never became homeland for Hindus and were subjected to the law of the land in family maintenance, property and marriage whereas Muslims were allowed to follow religious Sharia-based family law. Accordingly, Muslims were subjected to Triple Talaq which meant man's right to divorce his wife by rejecting her three times and paying little compensation. However, Hindus followed the family law of the land as per the Indian constitution, and many of the Hindu temples were taken over by the government for better governance. There was always suspicion in the minds of Hindu majority about the intentions of secularism, as it was perceived to be in favour of Muslims. Over the years, Muslims have become victims of vote bank politics and the Hindus have nursed negative feelings about the largest minority community in India.

Shah Bano Begum Case

Shah Bano case is a watershed in the history of Indian Muslim personal law where a Muslim woman for the first time in Independent India won the right to get alimony from her divorced husband but the then ruling Congress party nullified the verdict through an enactment to appease Muslim community. The case filed by a Muslim woman Shah Bano Begum demanding maintenance after divorce opened a Pandora's Box and put politicians and Muslim religious leaders in quandary.

In April 1978, a 62-year old Muslim woman, Shah Bano filed a petition in the court of law demanding maintenance from her divorced husband Mohammed Ahmad Khan who had granted her triple talq. She challenged Muslim Personal law that required the husband to provide maintenance for the *iddat* period after divorce as she and her five children had no other source of maintenance. All India Muslim Personal Law Board supported the husband and argued that courts cannot interfere in matters pertaining to Muslim Personal Law and is violative of The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937 that gave legal power to Board to decide on matters of divorce, maintenance, and family issues. The judgement in favour of Shah Bano instilled optimism in the minds of thousands of Muslim women to make legitimate claims after divorce/Talaq. It is a historic case considered to be one of milestones in Indian Judiciary as the case fought for the protection of rights of Muslim women. The Apex court upheld Muslim women's right to alimony and set a historic precedent by considering the rights of Muslim women in matters of marriage and divorce in regular courts on par with the women of other religions.

The judgement delivered in 1985 pronounced that law is applicable to all Indian citizens including Muslim women regardless of their religion and gave orders for maintenance to Shah Bano. The case addressed the issue of equality of citizens irrespective of religion before the law. The excerpts of judemenet that recognized women's claim for treatment with equality and dignity in marriage:

Justice Y.V. Chandrachud : 'Section 125 was enacted in order to provide a quick and summary remedy to a class of persons who are unable to maintain themselves. What difference would it then make as to what is the religion professed by the neglected wife, child or parent? Neglect by a person of sufficient means to maintain these and the inability of these persons to maintain themselves are the objective criteria, which determine the applicability of section 125. Such provisions, which are essentially of a prophylactic nature, cut across the barriers of religion.

The liability imposed by section 125 to maintain close relatives who are indigent is founded upon the individual's obligation to the society to prevent vagrancy and destitution. That is the moral edict of the law and morality cannot be clubbed with religion.'

However, Shah Bano case shook the Indian polity creating a battle between religious leaders and government. The then ruling political party, Congress rejected the verdict of the highest court involving the largest minority group in India. Muslim religious leaders rejected the verdict as a direct interference in the Muslim Personal Law. The government under pressure from minority leaders nullified the progressive judgement by enacting the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights of Divorce) Act, 1986 in Indian Parliament. Ultimately, Shah Bano had to withdraw her case and the cause of Muslim women became a victim of the politics of minority appeasement.

Triple Talaq practice

Triple talaq is a practice of dissolving marriage among Muslims giving rights to the man (husband) to divorce his wife by saying Talaq three times in a row for an irrevocable, instant divorce, the discrimination faced by women within Muslim law. It is a verbal divorce, hanging over the head of Muslim women like the Damocles sword. The Indian Muslim Law Board claims that triple talaq is a Personal Law and therefore government cannot modify the rules that are governed by religious book, holy Quran.

Globally the custom is banned in over 22 countries including Muslim countries but is in practice in secular country like India. The practice criticized for being unilateral, arbitrary biased against Muslim women who have no say in dissolving of marriage. Subsequent judicial pronouncements in India have upheld the right of Muslim women for claims of maintenance under Section 125 of Criminal Procedure Code. Shah Bano's case and the enactment of Muslim Women Protection of Rights on Divorce Bill of 1986 to supersede Supreme Court verdict led to mobilization of women's organizations to voice their concerns and to demand reform in Personal Law. Muslim women remained voiceless and less vocal since Independence and neither the government nor the political party was willing to help women fearing reprisal from religious leaders, fundamentalists, and political parties. Even media neglected the issue of need to reform Muslim personal law and to protect women's constitutional rights to equality, as there is no editorial policy in the coverage of Muslim issues. Media concentrates more on news pertaining to majority population and diversity is never reflected in the Indian media since Independence. Media is wary of Muslim League and Jamaat-e- Islami as these parties have expressed their concern about erosion of Muslim cultural identity owing to administrative or judicial interventions and have vehemently opposed reforming Personal Law. Hence, governments have avoided legislative measures to institute legal reforms underlining the need for women's organizations to voice demands at national level by empowering Muslim women through education and employment opportunities. In 1986 the impact of Shah Bano case on Muslim society showed Muslim men to be more vocal and politically influential to the extent of getting a parliamentary ordinance that nullified the most progressive judgment of India's top court and accepted a retrograde step in law governing Muslim marriage, divorce and maintenance. In 2014 election manifesto of Right Wing BJP political party promised to reform Triple talaq imbroglio under the constitution. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi argued that Triple talaq is an issue of gender equality and not a matter of faith. According to *Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan* (BMMA) survey, 92 percent Muslim women wanted triple talaq to be abolished. Seven decades after Independence, four Muslim women led by Shayara Bano, 35 year old resident of Uttarakhand, approached Supreme Court in 2015 challenging the validity of triple talaq on grounds of violation of fundamental rights. The petitioner Shayara Bano approached the Apex court after her husband of 15 years divorced her by sending a letter with Talaq written thrice. These women initiated public discussion of discriminatory practices of Islam, attracting the attention of government and organizations to resolve the issue of triple talaq demanding right to equality.

The Supreme Court on August 22, 2017 declared the practice of triple talaq unconstitutional, and arbitrary that violates Article 14 and 21 of Indian constitution and protected the rights of minority women. The government enacted an ordinance, The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Ordinance 2019 that encountered legislative hurdles prompting the Law Ministry to reissue the ordinance for the third time in less than a year by the President of India. Its earlier attempts to get the ordinance promulgated in Parliament did not succeed owing to objections raised by opposition political parties due to vote bank politics and minority appeasement. Since the Bill could not get parliamentary approval, a fresh ordinance was issued in February 2019. It makes 'declaration of *talaq-e-biddat*, a crime – in any form either spoken, written or in electronic form or in any other manner whatsoever, shall be void and illegal'. The government rejected the demand of the opposition

political parties to refer the Bill to Joint Parliamentary Committee before passing into law. The proposed Ordinance is meant to protect the rights of married Muslim women and prevent dissolving of marriage by the practice of instantaneous and irrevocable *'talaq-e-biddat'* by their husbands. It will provide the rights of women to claim subsistence allowance, and custody of minor children. The ordinance became a compelling necessity as 430 instances of Triple Talaq were reported between January 2017 and September 2018 despite Supreme Court annulling it in August 2017. Muslim men were divorcing their wives on flimsy grounds and even via WhatsApp.

The ordinance has kicked off a political battle with opposition political parties accusing the government of political gimmick with an eye on votes of Muslim women in the 2019 Parliamentary elections. Muslim leaders have criticized the ordinance as a direct interference in the Muslim Personal Law.

The triple talaq issue gained momentum after the Judiciary played a key role in giving progressive verdicts in many petitions seeking alimony/ equality for Muslim women in different cases. In a landmark case concerning women's right to worship in Mosque, the court was instrumental in approving in November 2016, the entry of Muslim women into the famous Haji Ali Dargah, 15th century shrine in Mumbai. It was a bitter battle fought by Muslim women claiming women's rights to enter Mosque and worship. The court ruled that the restriction violated women's fundamental right to equality.

Indian Muslim women were not visible in public discourse in the post independent India. It was Shah Bano case that heralded the attention of Indian society to the plight of Muslim women. Indian media relegated Muslim issue to the background and did not provide platform for debates, and discussion till 1980s. Media did not give voice to Muslim women even during Shah Bano case in 1986 as the nation was recovering from the riots and wounds in the aftermath of assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and media was pre-occupied with the newly appointed regime headed by Rajiv Gandhi, the son of slain leader Indira Gandhi. Shah Bano case provided an opportunity for media to portray Muslim women but the media was more pre-occupied with political events consequently marginalizing the social issues of the minority community. Indian media had no definite editorial policy as far as minority in general and Muslims in particular are concerned till the Babri Masjid episode in 1992 shook the nation. But this issue did not make Muslim women visible in public discourse. However, it was Gujarat communal riots in 2002 that gradually revealed the plight of Muslim women who suffered at the hands of the rioters. The Apex court in India gave final verdict in the infamous Bilkis Bano case in April 2019 convicting perpetrators of crime of sexual violence during communal riots in Gujarat and awarded compensation to the survivor Bilkis Banu, a Muslim woman.

There has been a sea change in the attitude of the press between the *Babri Masjid* incident (6 December 1992) and the Gujarat communal riots (February 2002). The Gujarat riots tested the credibility of the Indian press. Some of the mainstream Indian English dailies took a radical stance of opposing communal and fascist forces for the first time in the history of Indian press. The study endorses this transformation (Usharani and Kapur, 2011). The Gujarat riots incident is therefore regarded as a watershed in the history of Indian press where the progressive frame and favourable slant of Muslims in the major English dailies showed the beginning of a long journey to evolve a secular media policy unlike its western counterpart that continues to profess a stereotypical image of the Muslims, expressing widespread hostility in the aftermath of 9/11 (Usharani and Kapur,2011).

Indian media has broken stereotype but is selective in taking up issues of communal riots, mob lynching and beef eating involving Muslim community. It has neglected the social agenda ignoring the plight of Muslim women who have to fight patriarchy, poverty, low educational attainment and issues of triple talaq, hijab and polygamy.

It is not only Indian politics that has failed Muslim women but it is Indian media too that has been selective by marginalising these women. Media in India refrained for long from reporting on religious practices and customs related to women and as a result there is widespread misconception with regard to Muslim women in the minds of general public. People in India perceive Muslim women as hapless and vulnerable people who are extremely conservative and shun liberal ideas. There is very poor understanding of Muslim women owing to negative portrayals in media.

I. Review of Literature

Muslims and media have generated lot of interest among researchers across different countries. Previous research suggests negative and stereotypical portrayals of Muslims in media (Alsultany, 2012; Dixon & Williams, 2015; Saleem & Anderson, 2013; Saleem, Prot, Anderson, &

Lemieux, 2015; Saleem, Yang, & Ramasubramanian, 2016) and mainstream Western media view Islam as antidemocratic (Farouqui, 2009). Negative portrayals of Muslims is not just confined to Western Media but even Arab news media controlled by Arab regimes have manipulated the fears of ordinary Arab people by playing up negative stereotypes of the West. (el-Aswad, 2006) Media images of Muslims (in Britain) are informed by official definitions of Islam that serve elite interests and that these change over time to political purposes (Poole, 2002) underlining influence of oriental discourse of Islam on media ideology.

Many studies endorse the premise that portrayal of Muslims in media is alien and in a study on representation of Islam and Muslims in the British press, the study argues that ' treatment of British Muslims and Islam is Un-Britishness and are portrayed as alien linking to the development of 'racism' and the so called 'Islamphobia' in media (Saeed 2007). Minority groups particularly Muslims have invariably become part of negative discourses (Hartmann and Husband 1974). 'Media marginalizes minority voices, thus, they are virtually ignored or invisible (Saeed 1999). The study on American media coverage of British Muslims has revealed a 'shift from a sympathetic tone towards British Muslims to an open hostility …' (Greenberg and Miazhevich, 2012). Many studies have been conducted on integration of Muslim non-whites into multiculturalism. Similarly, studies on Non-white Muslims also point out stereotypical coverage of the community in majority press irrespective of their colour. Findings show that White British Muslims have led to a new discourse that 'challenge hegemonisation of social representations in majority and minority press' (Amer Amena and Howarth Caroline, 2017).

People form their perception of Muslims on the basis of their portrayal in the media as they have limited social contacts with minority groups and therefore the ' role of media as a sole provider or primary definer' (Halll 1978) become crucial (Van Dijk 1991). It is strongly argued that 'media hold a powerful position in conveying, explaining and articulating specific discourses that help represent (and misrepresent) minority groups' (Cottle 2000, 2006). In a study of Australian Muslims, it is argued that ' interpretation of the media discourse as defiantly anti-Muslim and the perception of the media as a powerful purveyor of public opinion has impacted on the construction of Australian Muslim identity' (Aly 2016).

Studies have pointed out about the homogenization of Muslim population in Western media (Karim, 2003) and illustrates that media overwhelmingly associate Muslims/Islam with negative connotations and distortions in Western media (Karim, 2003). Previous research has focused on emergence of new concept of Islamphobia that represents different type of racism based on 'culture and religion rather than colour' (Allen, 2005). Islamophobia was coined to draw attention to unfounded hostility towards Islam. A new discourse was born to defend Muslims and Islam to check anti-Muslim prejudice (Runnymede Trust 1997). A new narrative argued that there is distinction between Islamophobia and anti-Muslimism (Halliday, 1999).

Majority of the studies hold media responsible for creating negative images of Muslims worldwide (Aswad Sayed, 2013). Studies have also pointed out inadequacy of conceptual framework used in studies on Western media representations of Islam and Muslims. The researchers argue that Western media studies have analysed media coverage based on theories of Orientalism, cultural racism and Islamophobia and hence are defective. Instead, the study recommends adopting an alternative dialogical model of analysis (Faimau Gabriel, 2015) as it is more appropriate in understanding social relationship. Majority of theses on this subject criticise media inadequacies and unpreparedness in dealing with Muslims leading to bias and prejudice in their reporting. The very lack of cultural depth among both conveyers and consumers of information through the mainstream media has meant the spread of the sense of having understood Islam without any inkling that their information may not have any objective basis (Mahizhnan, 2002).

Mass media play a crucial role in building the image of any society. Noshima Saleem cites Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge who call the media as "first rate competitors for the number one position as international image former" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). The studies on portrayal of Muslims in India are scarce. One of the studies on post- Gujarat riots and media has found that some of the English newspapers have framed Muslims progressively in early and mid 2000 when both the state of Gujarat and the central government were ruled by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) political party professing *Hindutva*. Confronting the ruling political party both at the state and nation level by the English press to defend the minorities is a milestone in the history of Indian press that will go a long way in renewing the faith of the minorities in the fourth estate. (Narayana Usharani & Kapur, 2011). This is reflective of emergence of secular tendencies in the media though it may not

reflect the opinion of the majority of Hindus in India who still harbour a stereotypical image of Muslims (Narayana Usharani & Kapur, 2009).

II. Research Design & Methods

Objectives

- To measure content of Triple Talaq in Indian press
- To study the news frames of Triple Talaq stories
- To study portrayal of Muslim women in Triple Talaq stories

Content analysis is a time tested scientific method used extensively in media studies as it facilitates analysis of text, photographs, words and typographical treatment of content. It is employed to make systematic quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of print media content to measure and evaluate the slant of news. Content analysis was used to analyze the portrayal of Muslim women in Triple Talaq news to identify frames like positive meaning favourable, negative or stereotypical and neutral, adopted by journalists.

India is the largest newspaper market in the world with over 6,700 publications and over 260 million copies circulated per day. The researcher has selected top mainstream Newspapers enjoying high circulation in India and Online Media as well. The Times of India, The Hindustan Times, and The Hindu, media giants in India are the three major newspapers selected based on circulation and demographic reach in India. The period of study is between 2016 - 2019. A total of 195 stories were selected with a yearly distribution of 9 (2016), 40 (2017), 76 (2018), and 70 (2019) that is proportionate to the number of stories published in that year. Stories generated represented all months and spread over 22 months between 2016 - 2019. News reports, Articles, Editorials, and Photographs were selected through a search of online editions of mainstream newspapers. The stories were drawn from the e-edition of the three newspapers. Online media sites were also searched for stories. The keywords and phrases used are, 'Muslim women and Talaq', ' Triple Talaq Bill', Triple Talaq Judgement', and ' 'Muslim personal law board and Triple Talaq'. The stories were selected using simple random sampling technique by preparing a list of all stories generated between 2016-2019 and one third of stories were randomly selected. The sampling technique yielded 195 stories consisting of 151 news reports, 38 Articles , 6 Editorials and 153 photographs. A total of 106 stories including photographs from the Times of India, 117 from the Hindustan Times, 90 from The Hindu, and 35 from Online media were finally selected for the study. Sampled news stories were coded in 3 categories where first category provided the list of sampled stories and the date of the news. Second category coded the number of stories, words of each story and news focus. The last category coded the specific news frames of each story as positive/ favourable, negative/stereotypical and neutral. Favourable meant Muslim women rejecting Triple Talaq practice, supporting Talaq Bill, asserting gender rights and equality and approaching court/police by victims of Triple Talaq. Unfavourable meant women supporting Triple Talaq practice, endorsing views of Muslim Personal law Board, and Opposing Talaq Bill. Two doctoral research scholars were trained in coding and were responsible for coding. Using Holsti's formula (Holsti, 1969), an average inter-coder reliability score of 97 percent was obtained for the variables. The research scholars independently coded the sampled stories after the inter-coder reliability was established.

III. Results & Discussion

Frequency of News

The frequency of news, word length and news focus of Triple Talaq issue covered in Indian Newspapers and Online media between 2017-19 were analyzed. The stories were sub categorized into News reports, Articles, Editorials, and Photographs for the purpose of analysis. There were a total of 348 stories including photographs of all combined media published between 2017–2019. The sampled print and online media covered (Table -1), a total of 151 (43.4 percent) News reports, 38 (10.9 percent) Articles, 6 (1.7 percent) Editorials and 153 (43.9 percent) Photographs. The Hindustan Times carried (Table -1), highest number of stories (117) followed by The Times of India (106), The Hindu (90) and Online Media (35). The highest number of news reports were published in Times of India (58) whereas The Hindu (3) carried highest number of editorials and Online media (17) comparatively covered more articles than print. Regarding photographs, The Hindustan Times (58) carried highest number of photos. The Times of India (21293 words) (Table -2) published highest wordage for news reports whereas the Hindustan Times (11163) carried highest wordage in editorials and articles. Online media due to infinite space carried highest wordage (16814 words) devoted to articles. The Hindu published least wordage among all newspapers in the category of news reports whereas the Times of India carried least wordage in articles and editorials.

Word length of Stories

The number of words of stories was quantified (Table -2) and it shows that the Hindustan Times stories had more

words (29493 words) for 59 stories than The Hindu reports (24706 words) for the same number of stories. Online media comes last but carried only articles devoting 16814 words. The Mean size of the stories reveal (Table -2) that Online media stories have a high mean average of 989.1 owing to infinite space. Among mainstream papers, The Hindustan Time stories have highest mean average of 499.9 whereas the The Hindu has a better mean size with 418.7 than the Times of India (384.4). The maximum and minimum word limit of news stories in Times of India is 872 and 130 words respectively whereas it is 992 and 150 in The Hindustan Times, and 724 and 57 words in The Hindu. Of all the papers, Hindustan Times has carried longest news report and the Hindu, the shortest. In the news reports, (Table -2) the highest mean size is 447.1 (the Hindustan Times) and lowest is 367.1 (the Times of India) whereas in articles highest is 1257.4 (The Hindu) and lowest is 620.2 (Hindustan Times) (Table -2).

News Coverage on Triple Talaq

Triple Talaq is an issue that drew the attention of politicians, government, judiciary, religious leaders, intellectuals, women's organization, Muslim women, and Talaq victims. Eleven different responses were identified and measured in content analysis of news reports, articles, editorials and photographs. Regarding news reports, (Table -3), a total of 151 sampled stories were analyzed. Times of India (58) published highest news reports followed by The Hindu (52), and the Hindustan Times (41). Among the mainstream newspapers, (Table -3) issue based analysis shows that the highest response was given in support of Triple Talaq Bill (25.2 percent) news followed by opposition to the same Bill (23.2 percent). Attributing to political motives news got a third highest response (13.2 percent) whereas fresh Talaq cases during public debates on religious practice of divorce received more attention and coverage (12.6 percent). Further, Triple talaq from gender rather than religious perspective received least coverage (4.6 percent). Accepting court judgement received 6.0 percent whereas policy issue on Muslim Women received 5.3 percent coverage. Reports on supporting Triple Talaq practice received very low coverage (1.3 percent) whereas rejecting Triple Talaq practice got better media treatment (6.6 percent) (Table -3).

Regarding articles and editorials (Table -3), a total of 44 stories were published in both mainstream and online portals. The study shows that more stories supported Supreme Court judgement that declared the practice of Triple Talaq a criminal offence (22.7 percent) than opposition to the Talaq Bill (18.2 percent). Support to the Bill (18.2 percent), Rejecting the practice of Triple Talaq (11.4 percent) and giving gender perspective to a issue muddled with religion also drew good coverage (13.6 percent) illustrating that cumulatively media gave more coverage to reforms in Muslim marriages than endorsing religious practice of Triple Talaq in articles and editorials.

Photographic coverage of Muslim women (Table-4) is one of the distinctive factors of Triple Talaq coverage in Indian print and online media. The use of photographs with almost all types of stories marked the media treatment of one of the most controversial issues since independence involving Muslim community in India. A total of 153 photographs were published during the period of judicial and legislative interventions. Photographic coverage consisted more of contextual photographs than that of real incidents. The contextual photographs of Burkha clad women (26.1 percent) became common visual element in majority of the stories (Table-4) than actual event photos (19.0 percent). Same photographs of Muslim women were repeated in all newspapers and online media. File photos of politicians (23.5 percent) including Prime Minister Modi (2.6 percent) and Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi (0.7 percent) showed heavy dependence of press on file photos. Photographs of real events showing Burkha clad women in support of Triple Talaq Bill as well as the Supreme Court Judgement received more coverage (13.1 percent) than Muslim men (0.7 percent) and women (5.2 percent) opposing it. Recent photos of Triple Talaq victims received moderate coverage (9.2 percent). Contextual photographs of Supreme Court and Parliament buildings supported 19.0 percent coverage enriching the Triple Talaq stories (Table -4).

The focus of entire study is the portrayal of Muslim women in the treatment of Triple Talaq issue in Print and Online media. This was measured using three frames namely positive to Muslim Women, Neutral and Negative to Muslim women. The findings show (Fig.1) that over 57.4 percent of stories portrayed Muslim women in positive frame, 36.4 percent portrayed negatively and 6.2 percent remained neutral. Among the media that showed positive frame (Fig.2), the Hindustan Times (41.1 percent) tops the list followed by The Hindu, and the Times of India. The Times of India scores over other papers in negative portrayal of Muslim women (40.8 percent) than The Hindu (38.0 percent). Both Times of India and Hindustan Times score high in neutral news frame with highest percentage of stories (41.7 percent).

The analysis of performance of individual newspapers reveals (Fig.2) that the Hindustan Times published over

80.0 percent of stories with positive frame and is the highest among all newspapers. The Hindu and online portals carried more positive frame stories than the Times of India.

Frame wise, (Fig. 3) the mean size of positive stories is 484.4 higher than negative frame stories (440.8) and 710.4 is the mean size of neutral stories. The mean size of neutral stories is higher than stories with positive and negative frames.

Hypothesis

A. Number of Words with Positive Slants/Frames:

H_0: There is no significant difference in mean words with POSITIVE slants/frames across three mainstream Newspapers.

It is observed from the one way ANOVA result depicted in Table 5 that there is no significant difference ($F_{(2,101)} = 0.623$, $p = 0.538$, $p > 0.05$] in the size of the story with POSITIVE slants/frames across three circulations of Newspapers. Hence, we accept the null hypotheses (H_0) and reject the alternative hypotheses (H_1). In essence, the mean number of words with POSITIVE slants/frames does not significantly differ between the *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* and between *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* and between *Times of India* and *The Hindu*, between *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* newspapers and so on.

B. Number of Words with Negative Slants/Frames:

H_0: There is no significant difference in mean words with NEGATIVE slants/frames (words) across three mainstream Newspapers.

It is observed from the one way ANOVA result depicted in Table 6 that there is no significant difference ($F_{(2,61)} = 0.2493$, $p = 0.091$, $p > 0.05$] in the size of the story with NEGATIVE slants/frames across three Newspapers. Hence, we accept the null hypotheses (H_0) and reject the alternative hypotheses (H_1). In essence, the size of the story with NEGATIVE slants/frames score does not significantly differ between *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* and between *Times of India* and *The Hindu*, between *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* newspapers and so on.

C. Number of Words with Neutral Slants/Frames:

H_0: There is no significant difference in mean number of words with NEUTRAL slants/frames (words) across two mainstream Newspapers namely *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*.

Independent t-test result:

It is observed from independent t-test result depicted in Table 7 that there is no significant difference (t-value = 0.734, $p = 0.479$, $p > 0.05$] in the NEUTRAL slants/frames across two sets of Newspapers. Hence, we accept the null hypotheses (H_0) and reject the alternative hypotheses (H_1). In essence, there is ***no statistical evidence*** to conclude that the size of the story with NEUTRAL slants/frames significantly differ between *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* newspaper.

The contentious Triple talaq issue opened Pandora's Box in a conservative society like India where diversity defines the demography. The litigious issue divided the media as Indian media has never taken a stance on the issue of Muslim women. Media looked more vulnerable than Muslim women and failed the community by publishing reports from political perspective and contextual photographs. Muslim women were more courageous enough to come before press to give interviews and information but press lacked preparedness and failed to walk an extra mile to do justice to the contentious issue. Perhaps, media is more open and aggressive in coverage of majority issues than news pertaining to Muslim women. It received more coverage because of Modi factor and media portrayed politician's perspective of the issue than looking it from the view point of Muslim women. Public failed to hear the voice of Muslim women and Media viewed the whole issue through the magnifying glass of its impact on Modi government than helping distraught women.

According to the study, there were more positive reports than negative reports in overall media coverage of Triple Talaq issue. Positively, media gave greater visibility to Muslim women and about a religious practice that was never discussed in public meetings and discussions. Politicians spoke more candidly and openly about the pros and cons of the Bill and the Supreme Court verdict but such discussions were more political and media could not go beyond these political statements. Muslim women were seen but not heard says the analysis.

Qualitative analysis shows that Media focused more on issues that harmed the interest of Muslim men than women in the discussions on the *Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill 2018*. 'Arrest of husband and non-bailable offence' clause in the Bill received more media attention relegating the plight of women to the background. Gender bias characterized

media reports that highlighted the clauses that effected Muslim men than women. The original Bill, introduced and passed in the Lok Sabha on December 28, 2017, made instant divorce a non-bailable offence; the government amended the bill to make it bailable after confronting critical media reports. Excerpts of majority of reports on quantum of punishment to the man;

'This law is not about empowering Muslim women but penalizing Muslim men' (Daily Opinion, November 11, 2018). Media was more obsessed with 'Modi factor' in the Triple Talaq issue and saw it from political perspective missing out the viewpoint of the women at grassroots level. The voice of Muslim women pointed out the gender justice and equality factors but the same were neglected in most of the media reports. The reports focused more on political one-upmanship than on uplifting the status of women by tackling the issue of desertion of wife and children in marriages. Perhaps the issue got wide coverage because of intervention of Right Wing Political party - BJP lead government which advocated *Hindutva* and it was feared that the ruling party will use this to poll advantage. The voice of Muslim women was lost in the din of political cacophony.

The wide coverage of 453 stories including photographs showcased the face of Muslim women hidden behind the Burkha but could not create a platform for discussing the real issues bothering the community. Muslim women holding placards were voicing the agenda of political parties and organizations like Personal law Board that undoubtedly became lead stories in newspapers and the news occupied front page for several weeks. Unlike Shah Bano Case Verdict and the subsequent ordinance enacted in Parliament in 1986, the Triple Talaq issue brought more women to the centre stage unseen in the history of Independent India.

Indian Media broke the stereotype in the coverage of Minority Muslims in general and Muslim Women in particular by running Talaq story on front pages and giving consistent coverage in mainstream media. Reports of Muslim men supporting women on Triple Talaq issue were very few but significant. Excerpts of reports that portray progressive attitude of Muslim men are significant but were lost in the din of stereotypical portrayal of the issue;

"Last year, hundreds of Muslim men responded to a call ….. statement they issued read, "We, …. believe that gender equality and justice are human rights issues which must be as much a matter of concern for men as for women. If anything, it is more so men's obligation to cry a halt to patriarchy, particularly when it is sought to be perpetuated in the name of God. We, therefore, fully support the campaign launched for the abolition, and declaration as illegal, of triple talaq (instant divorce) and nikaah-halala as being practiced in India." (Hindustan Times Dated Dec 17, 2017)

The media portrayal reinforces the perception of Muslim women being vulnerable and conservative. Majority of Media reports did not reflect the women's resolve to fight for gender equality but some reports did portray this image but they are far and few;

"The truth is that it is not just the law or social activists who have driven the fight against triple talaq. It has been Muslim women themselves. They have openly challenged the orthodoxy and refused to accept that the All India Muslim Personal Law Board's regressive clergy has any overriding right to tell them how to run their lives…" (Hindustan Times Dated Dec 17, 2017)

Readers in their comments in social media were highly critical of the stance taken by The Hindu newspaper in its Editorial (Sept. 20, 2018). Some of the comments read (The Hindu, Sept 20,2018). ;

" A progressive newspaper supports a regressive Practice "

" What a fall of The Hindu. Just wordy support for the cause and mask is falling apart"

IV. Conclusion

Triple talaq judgement and enactment of Bill defined historic moment in the annals of judicial and legislative history. Media known for maintaining silence on Muslim issues gave visibility with wide coverage publishing news reports, editorials, articles, and photographs. The portrayal of Muslim women was not stereotypical but favourable. However, collective voice of women petitioners did not get justice as media failed to recognize the rise of new generation of women who will not suffer in the guise of religious practices. Media portrayed women who approached the court as supporters of Modi and right wing political party. Triple talaq is neither a political nor a matter of faith. It is about gender justice. Media failed to bring in gender perspective to Triple Talaq and reported it from the political perspective relegating the voice of Muslim women to the background.

The study shows that there are variations in the slants and frames in Triple *Talaq* stories in the press. The Indian press has portrayed a mix of favourable and unfavourable

slants of the Muslim women. However, contrary to popular belief, the degree of favourable slant is higher than unfavourable ones, illustrating a change in the attitude of the press to the sensitive issue of Muslim women. The study shows that news media of Hindu majority India broke stereotype in the coverage of Triple *Talaq* issue but fell short of highlighting the human face of the problem. Nevertheless, this coverage does not help much in perceiving the Muslim community in India differently.

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Table 1: Media coverage of Triple Talaq stories 2016 – 2019.

Type of Story	Times of India	Hindustan Times	The Hindu	Online Media	Total	%
News reports	58	41	52	-	151	43.4
Articles	1	16	4	17	38	10.9
Editorials	1	2	3	-	6	1.7
Photographs	46	58	31	18	153	43.9
Total	n=106	n=117	n=90	n=35	n=348	100.0

Table - 2: Wordage of reports published in sampled print and online media 2017-2019.

Media	Times of India	Hindustan Times	The Hindu	Online Media	Total	Mean Size
Number of Stories	n=60	n=59	n=59	n=17	n=195	-
Words & Mean Size of News Reports	21293	18330	15904	-	55527	**367.7**
Mean Size	367.12	447.1	305.8	-	-	
Words & Mean size of Articles & Editorials	1772	11163	8802	16814	38551	**876.2**
Mean Size	886	620.2	1257.4	989.1		
Total Words	23065	29493	24706	16814	94078	-
Mean size of the story	**384.4**	**499.9**	**418.7**	**989.1**	**-**	**482.5**

Table 3: Triple Talaq News Reports – Articles - Editorials Published in Print & Online.

News Reports													
*** Codes**		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**Total**
Newspapers													
Times of India	f	14	2	-	2	14	2	-	12	3	3	6	**58**
	%	24.1	3.4	-	3.4	24.1	3.4	-	20.7	5.2	5.2	10.3	
Hindustan Times	f	4	3	2	6	5	7	-	1	-	5	8	**41**
	%	9.8	7.3	4.9	14.6	12.2	17.1	-	2.4	-	12.2	19.5	
The Hindu	f	17	2	-	2	19	-	-	7	-	-	5	**52**
	%	32.7	3.8		3.8	36.5	-		13.5		-	9.6	
Online Media	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total – News Reports		**35**	**7**	**2**	**10**	**38**	**9**	**-**	**20**	**3**	**8**	**19**	**151**
%		**23.2**	**4.6**	**1.3**	**6.6**	**25.2**	**6.0**	**-**	**13.2**	**2.0**	**5.3**	**12.6**	**100.0**
Articles & Editorials													
Times of India	f	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	**2**
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	
Hindustan Times	f	-	6	-	4	1	6	-	1	-	-	-	**18**
	%	-	33.3	-	22.2	5.6	33.3	-	5.6	-	-	-	
The Hindu	f	3	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	**7**
	%	42.9	-	-	14.3	14.3	28.6	-	-	-	-	-	
Online Media	f	5	-	-	-	6	2	1	2	-	1	-	**17**
	%	29.4	-	-	-	35.3	11.8	5.9	11.8	-	5.9	-	
Total Articles & Editorials		**8**	**6**	**-**	**5**	**8**	**10**	**1**	**3**	**-**	**3**		**44**
%		**18.2**	**13.6**	**-**	**11.4**	**18.2**	**22.7**	**2.3**	**6.8**	**-**	**6.8**		**100.0**

Table-4: Photographic Coverage of Triple Talaq Issue in Newspapers/Online Media – 2017-2019.

Media/ Code*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total	%
Times of India	-	-	-	13	-	22		9	2	46	28.1
Hindustan Times	1	9	6	14	-	9	1	11	7	58	37.9
The Hindu	2	6	-	8	1	5	-	9	-	31	20.3
Online Media	1	5	2	5	-	-	-	-	5	18	11.8
Total	4	20	8	40	1	36	1	29	14	153	
Percent	2.6	13.1	5.2	26.1	0.7	23.5	0.7	19.0	9.2		

***Code: 1**. PM Modi; 2. Burkha Clad Muslim women in favour of Triple Talaq Bill /Judgment; 3. Burkha Clad Muslim women Protesting against Talaq Bill / Judgment; 4. Burkha Clad Muslim women; 5. Muslim men protesting against Bill; 6. Politicians; 7. Rahul Gandhi; 8. Supreme court/ Parliament; 9. Talaq victims.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA between mean words with POSITIVE slants/frames and different newspapers.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	245630.8	2	122815.4	0.623	0.538
Within Groups	19915772	101	197185.9		
Total	20161403	103			

Table 6: One-way ANOVA between mean number of words with NEGATIVE slants/frames and different newspapers

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	130546.5	2	65273.24	2.493	0.091
Within Groups	1597249	61	26184.41		
Total	1727796	63			

Table 7: Independent t-test of NEUTRAL slants/frame across the two newspapers.

SLANT/ FRAME	Media	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
NEUTRAL	Times of India	5	872	636	0.743	0.479
	Hindustan Times	5	645	249		

Note: As there is no Neutral slant/frames found in 'The Hindu', this newspaper is not considered.

Fig: 1: Slant and Frame of News Stories Published in Print and Online Media (2017-2019).

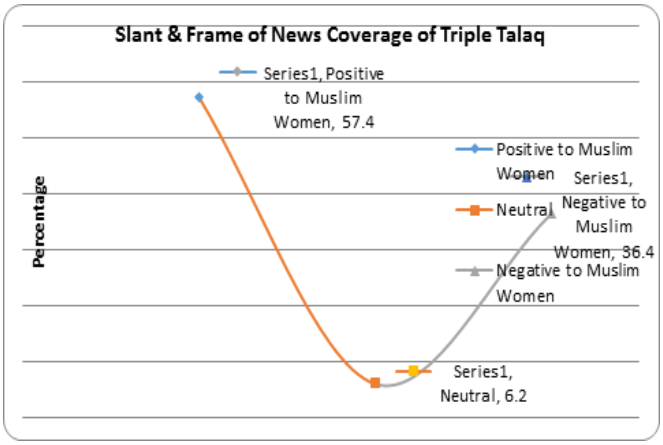


Fig: 2: Performance of Media in Slant and Frame of News Stories Published in Individual Newspapers and Online Media (2017-2019).

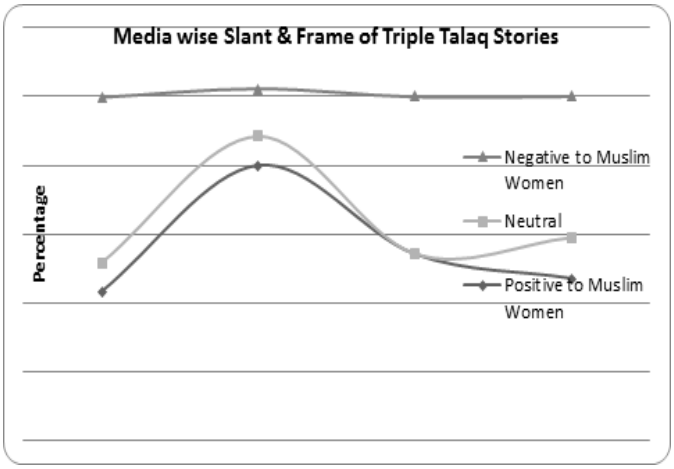
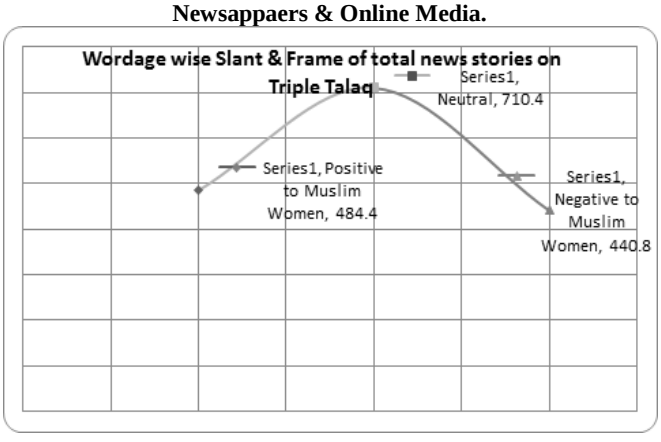


Fig.3: Slant and Frame of mean size of all Stories on Triple Talaq published in Newsappaers & Online Media.



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PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN ADVERTISEMENTS: A REGULATING PERSPECTIVE

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India is a country where women population is 631 million against the total population of 1.3 billion (sex ratio is 943 females per 1000 male). "The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women." On the contrary, the Indian television has portrayed the image of women in an unrealistic manner. Most advertisements project distorted image of woman, cigarette ads like "Wills", in which a half-dressed woman with her male counterpart is seen enjoying the charm of smoking or of soft drink "Frooti", where a woman is quenching her thrust in again a revealing dress in a swimming pool. In most of the television advertisements only the sexual signification of a female is being exploited for attention. The simple reason for it is that the sensational portrayal of women in advertisement helps to attract attention of the target audience in favour of a respective product or service. Advertisements like "Slice" (Soft Drink), many type of Deodorants, Body Spray like "Engage", "Axe", "Wild Stone" and products for men are quite sensuous in projecting women models. In many two and four wheeler advertisements and advertisement of E-commerce website of second hand products also have been using women models often as glamorous and self-centred. This paper aims to identify the important legal and constitutional provisions for women, in India, with special reference to Representation of women in advertisements. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act was passed in 1986. It is an Act to prohibit indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, and figures or in any other manner and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The paper would also bring out the legal provisions, and questions its applicability to advertisements. "The Union Cabinet decision to extend the scope of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act of 1986 (IRWA) to cover the indecent portrayal of women through audio-visual digital media including SMSs, MMSs, etc., shows a light of hope, as it is a law focused towards preventing indecent portrayal of women in general." A historical case study approach was done to trace the evolution and bring out the landmark judgments in favor of women and their representation in advertisements.

Keywords: Legal Provisions, women in advertisements, Representation in Media.

India is one of the mostly populated countries of the world where the population as of 2015 is 1.32 billion accounting for about 17% of the world's population, the female population is about 639 million while the male population is about 643 million with a sex ratio of 943 females for 1000 male. "Today's India offers a lot of opportunities to women, with them having a voice in everyday life, the business world as well as in political life. However, in a vast country like India - spanning 3.29 million sq. km, where cultural backgrounds, religions and traditions vary widely - the extent of discrimination against women varies from one societal stratum to another and from state to state - some areas in India being historically more inclined to gender bias than others."

Provisions ensuring rights of Indian women

Post-Independence provisions have been introduced to improve the social condition of women and to give them a platform where they can utilize their potential for betterment. The provision which empowers the status of women is Constitutional and Parliamentary.

Constitutional provisions to ensure dignity of women

Lot of provisions have been introduced through constitution to ensure dignity and self-respect to the women at large. The social and legal rights have been safeguarded. Article 14 of Constitution of India ensures equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. Article 15 ensures that no

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one should create any sort of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of them within the territory of India. Article 16 ensures equal employment opportunity to every citizen of India. Article 39 ensures the benefit of the directive principles of state policy to the women. Article 42 ensure caste a duty on every employer to ensure just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief. Article 243 ensures reservation of seats in gram panchayat for women.

Parliamentary provisions

After Independence just like constitutional provisions, various parliamentary provisions have also been undertaken to ensure providing dignified life to Women.

1. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
2. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
3. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
4. The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1956
5. Civil Procedure Code, 1973
6. Indian Penal Code, 1960
7. Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
8. Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929
9. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
10. National Commission of Women Act, 1990
11. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948
12. Bonded Labor System Abolition Act, 1976
13. The Special Marriage Act, 1954
14. Foreign Marriage Act, 1969
15. Indian Divorce Act, 1969
16. The Indecent Representation of Women Prohibition Act, 1986
17. Guardians & Wards Act, 1869
18. Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

The portrayal of gender as a product in advertisements well documented. With emergence of women as consumers there has been a subtle change in the nature of advertisements that are put out which appeal to women as consumers, rather than showing them for the purpose of attracting. Women play a very significant role in advertising today both as consumer and influencers. The depiction of women in advertising has been a hot topic of debate now. Fragmenting the female body parts or exhibiting women in indecent posture is rather disgusting. In doing so a woman is used as a commodity. The increasing popularity of television and its ability to reach a vast audience with illiteracy being no barrier led to the idea of using television as a channel for information on development among several government and administrators. The media should enable projection of women in a decent and dignified way and promote respect and dignity to women avoiding negative portrayal of women. The media professionals need to be sensitised on gender issues and a system of rewards may be developed for those who are able to portray women in positive manner. Likewise, stringent punitive action should be taken against those who defy the norms. New innovative decent presentation of women, based on Indian culture and society through media must be introduced. A strong legislative effort coupled with a wide spread social awareness with morality and ethics is needed to fight objectification of women.

Portrayal of women in advertisements

Most advertisements project a very different image of woman, for example the ad of cigarette like "Wills", in which a half-dressed woman with her male counterpart is seen enjoying the charm of smoking or a soft drink act like "Frooti", where a woman is quenching her thrust in a swimming pool. It is a fact that in an oriental patriarchal society, the audience prefer to see women more as glamorous to attract attention. There is a belief that sexual portrayal of women can lead to increase in the sales a product. Advertisements like "Slice" (Soft Drink), many type of Deodorants, Body Spray like "Engage", "Axe", "Wild Stone" and men's garments rather anything or everything can by promoted or sold through using a woman model.

Objectives of the study

To study the provisions and contents of the constitution and law for Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986, Amendment Act of 2008 and Bill 2012.

Historical Case Study Approach

Content Textual Analysis of Secondary data.

Prohibition of Indecent representation of Women and Children Act, 2008

"Indecent representation of women" means (i) depiction of women as a sexual object which is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interests; or (ii) depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman, her form or body or any part thereof in such a way as to have the effect of being indecent or derogatory to or denigrating women; or which is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals." "The Indian Penal Code 1960 contains S. 292 which deals with the sale of obscene books, pamphlet, inter alia representation which shall be deemed to be "lascivious or appeals to the prurient interest", which can include obscene advertisements. Indian Penal Code is included as safety legislation to prevent the indecent representation of women in advertisements, because "Indecent Representation of women can be obscene',

which means that a law curbing obscenity can help. The Act punishes the indecent representation of Women, which means "the depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman; her form or body or any part thereof in such way as to have the effect of being indecent, or derogatory to, or denigrating women, or is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals. It states that no person shall publish or cause to publish or cause to be published or arrange to take part in the publication or exhibition of any advertisement which contains indecent representation of women in any form. 'In the Act, advertisement' includes any notice, circular, label, wrapper or other document and also includes any visible representation made by means of any light, sound, smoke or gas. The Amendment suggested by the National Commission for Women suggests to amend the definition to "advertisement' includes any notice, circular, label, poster, wrapper or other document and also includes any visible representation made by means of any laser light, sound, smoke, gas, fibre, optic electronic or other media" It states that no person shall produce or cause to be produced, sell, let to hire, distribute, circulate or send by post any book, pamphlet, paper, slide, film, writing, drawing, painting, photograph, representation or figure which contains indecent representation of women in any. The Commission has also suggested the addition of the word "Derogatory" along with "indecent".[14] In Section 6 on Penalty, the words 'and with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees' shall be substituted with the words 'and with fine which may extend to ten thousand rupees' and the words 'in the event of a second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term of not less than six months but which may extend to five years and also with a fine not less than ten thousand rupees but which may extend to one lakh rupees' shall be substituted with the words 'in the event of second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term of not less than six months but which may extend to five years and also with a fine not less than fifty thousand rupees but which may extend to five lakh rupees'. According to the National Crime Records Bureau claims a decrease of cases of Indecent Representation of women -decreased by 46.5% (from 2,917 in 2005 to 1,562 in 2006). While it is Andhra Pradesh that has recorded 86.2 percent of cases at in the National level under the Act. In April 2006, a Madurai court issued non-bailable warrants against leading actress for "posing in an obscene manner" in photographs published by a Tamil newspaper. The report stated that the two actresses had failed to comply with earlier summonses for the same reason, hence the issuance of the warrants. The petitioner submitted that the paper had published "very sexy blow-ups and medium blow-ups" in its issues December 2005 and January 2006 issues, and which allegedly violated the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986, Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act 1956, and the Indian Penal Code Section 292 (Sale of Obscene Books). As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data which is available upto 2014, a total of 895, 453, 141, 362 and 47 cases were reported in the country under Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 during last five years i.e. 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014."

Obscenity under the law: A review of cases

Some of the significant cases studies found during review of empirical literature are:

1. Ranjit D. Udeshi v. State of Maharashtra Citation: AIR 1965 SC 881 Judges: M. Hidayatullah, P.B. Gajendragadkar, K.N. Wancho, J.C. Shah, N. RajagopalaAyyangar Facts: The appellant was prosecuted along with the other partners of a bookstall which was found to be in possession (for the purposes of sale) of the unexpurgated edition of the book, Lady Chatterley's Lover. The partners were charged under Section 292, Indian Penal Code (IPC)1 for certain obscene passages in the book. The Court dismissed the appeal with the following assertions:

a) "Where obscenity and art are mixed, art must so preponderate as to throw the obscenity into a shadow or the obscenity must be so trivial and insignificant that it can have no effect and may be overlooked.

b) "The test to adopt in India is that obscenity without a preponderating social purpose or profit cannot have the constitutional protection of free speech and expression, and obscenity is treatment of sex in a manner appealing to the carnal sides of human nature, or having that tendency."

2. Samaresh Bose and Another v Amal Mitra and Another Citation: AIR 1986 SC 967, (1985)4 SCC 289 Judges: AmarendraNath Sen, R.S. Pathak Facts: Samaresh Bose, the first appellant, is a well-known writer of Bengali novels and stories, and the author of a novel called Prajapati, which was published in SarodiyaDesh, a journal of Bengali literature with wide circulation. Sitangshu Kumar Dasgupta, the second appellant, was the publisher and the printer of the journal at the relevant time. On 2 February1968, Amal Mitra, a young advocate, made an application in the Court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta complaining that the novel, Prajapati, "contains matters which are obscene and both the accused persons have sold, distributed, printed and exhibited the same which has the tendency to corrupt the morals of those in whose hands the said SarodiyaDesh may fall." Both the accused persons were said to have committed an offence punishable under Section 292 of the Indian Penal Code and

under Section 292 read with Section 109 IPC (abetment). Both the accused persons were convicted of charges under Section 292 by the Chief Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta. In order to decide this, the court looked at whether or not the novel Prajapati was obscene. Whether references to kissing, descriptions of the body and the figures of female characters in the book and suggestions of sex acts by themselves have the effect of depraving and debasing, and encouraging lasciviousness among, readers of any age, and must therefore be considered obscene.

3. K. A. Abbas v. Union of India and Another Citation: AIR 1971 SC 481 Judges: M. Hidyatullah, J.M. Shelat, G.K. Mitter, C.A. Vaidyalingam, A.N. Ray Facts: The petitioner produced in 1968 a documentary film in 2 reels (with a running time of 16 minutes) called a Tale of Four Cities. In this film brief scanning shot of the red light district of Bombay is shown, with the inmates of the brothels waiting at the doors or windows, was included. The petitioner applied to the Central Board of Film Certification for a 'U' certificate for unrestricted exhibition of the film but the Committee was willing to grant only an 'A' certificate. On the petitioner's representation that the movie portrayed no obscenity, he was informed that he would get a 'U' certificate provided he deleted certain portions from the red light scene. he purported to contrast the luxurious life of the rich in the four cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi, with the squalor and poverty of the poor, particularly those whose hands and labour help to build beautiful cities, factories and other industrial complexes. Issues: Decision: The Court, relying on the Khosla Committee Report, 19682 and precedents from Indian, American and British case law, said that pre-censorship was valid (in the context) and an exception to the right to freedom of speech and expression had been provided under Article 19(2).
4. Bobby Art International & Others. v. Om Pal Singh Hoon& Others Citation: 1996 AIR (SC) 1846 Judges: S.P. Bharucha; B.N. Kirpal Facts: A writ petition was filed by the first respondent to quash the certificate of exhibition awarded to the film, "Bandit Queen." The film was based on a book which had been in the market since 1991 without objection. Issues: Whether the portrayal of frontal nudity, rape and violence in the movie, 'Phoolan Devi,' were obscene, indecent and denigrating to women. Decision: The Court reversed the decision of the Delhi High Court. It held that since the Tribunal (Censor Board) had viewed the film in "true perspective" and granted the film an 'A' certificate, and since Tribunal was an expert body capable of judging public reactions to the film, its decision should be followed. The Court dismissed the first respondent's writ petition. The Court observed that a film that illustrates the consequences of a social evil necessarily must show that social evil.
5. PratibhaNaitthani v Union of India Citation: AIR 2006 (Bom) 259 Judges: Lodha R.M. and Karnik D.G Facts: PratibhaNaithani, a political science teacher in St Xavier's College, Mumbai, aggrieved by the telecast of "adult and obscene films shown by the electronic media" and "obscene photographs" in the print media, filed a writ petition before the Bombay High Court. The Court held that a number of television channels were violative of the programme code under the Cable TV Network Act and the Cable TV Network Rules. The Court issued a number of orders while hearing the case. Decision: The Court held that the adult viewer's right to view films with adult content is not taken away by Clause (o) of Rule 6(1). "Such a viewer can always view Adult certified films in cinema halls. He can also view such films on his private TV set by means of DVD, VCD or such other mode for which no restriction exists in law." The Court held that the restriction upon cable operators and cable service providers that no programme should be transmitted that is not suitable for unrestricted public exhibition did not violate their right to carry on trade and business. The Court further held that only films sanctioned by the CBFC, under the Cinematograph Act and Rules, as suitable for "unrestricted public exhibition" could be telecast or transmitted on Cable TV.
6. Ajay Goswami v. Union of India & Others Citation: AIR2007SC493 Judges: AR Lakshmanan & Tarun Chatterjee Facts: The petitioner's grievance was that the freedom of speech and expression enjoyed by the newspaper industry is not balanced with the protection of children from harmful and disturbing materials. The Court dismissed the petition, but observed that the Central Government should seriously look into, and make appropriate amendments to, the provisions of Section 14(1) of the Press Council Act, 1978 in accordance with the request made by the Press Council of India to arm it with the authority to recommend official de-recognition of newspapers for government advertisements or for an appropriate period or withdrawal of the accreditation granted to a journalist to facilitate functioning and also to claim concessions in railways, etc.
7. Director General, Directorate General of Doordarshan& Others v AnandPatwardhan and Another Citation: 1996(8)SCC433 Judges: AR.

Lakshmanan&Lokeshwar Singh PantaFacts: The case was filed by independent filmmaker Anand Patwardhan challenging Doordarshan's refusal to telecast his documentary titled, "Father, Son and Holy War." The documentary portrayed issues such as patriarchy, violence, fundamentalism, suppression of women, etc. Part I of the film was given a 'U' Certificate and Part II was given an 'A' Certificate by the Censor Board. In response to a writ petition filed by Doordarshan, the Bombay High Court asked the television network to take a decision within six months. There are scenes of violence and social injustices but the film, by no stretch of the imagination, can be said to subscribe to any of that. The depiction is meant to convey that such social evils are evil. There cannot be any apprehension that it is likely to affect public order or incite commission of an offence. The Court observed that the documentary was given two awards at the 42nd National Film Festival in 1995, conducted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, after being adjudged best investigative film and best film on social issues. It was, therefore, highly irrational and incorrect to say that such a film promotes violence, that its production quality was unsatisfactory and that it had no specific message to convey. The Court also held that a documentary couldn't be denied exhibition on Doordarshan simply on account of its "A" or "UA" certification.

8. R. Basu v. National Capital Territory of Delhi and Another Citation: 2007CriLJ4245 Judges: A.K. Sikri J Facts: Mr. Arun Aggarwal, a practising advocate, filed a complaint before the learned Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) against Star TV, Star Movies and Channel V, naming persons responsible for the day-to-day affairs of these channels or the various cable operators transmitting these channels. According to the complainant, the obscene and vulgar TV films shown and transmitted through various cable operators amounted to obscenity and, therefore, the accused persons had committed offences under Sections 292/293/2946 IPC and under Section 6 read with Section 7 of the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986. Decision: The High Court held that for the two films without censor certificates the petitioners could not claim immunity from Section 292 IPC. The Court observed that the legislature had enacted the Cable Television Network (Regulation Act) to tackle the "problem" of obscenity, and a Programme Code had also been introduced. "Various statutory safeguards for regulating transmission on cable television networks in India have been provided therein. The petitioners have to abide by these guidelines and laws relating to the electronic media, keeping in mind the sentiments and social value of the Indian society, while relaying its programmes." In a nutshell, Prohibition of Indecent Representation of Women and Children Act, 2008 The Act "Indecent representation of women" means depiction of women as a sexual object which is lascivious or appeals to the prurient interests; or depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman, her form or body or any part thereof in such a way as to have the effect of being indecent or derogatory to or denigrating women; or which is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals." The word, obscenity as the dictionaries tell us, denotes the quality of being obscene which means offensive to modesty or decency; lewd, filthy and repulsive.

The Ambit

The Indian Penal Code 1960 contains S. 292 which deals with the sale of obscene books, pamphlet, which can include obscene advertisements. "'In the Act, advertisement' includes any notice, circular, label, wrapper or other document and also includes any visible representation made by means of any light, sound, smoke or gas.' the Amendment included fibre, optic electronic or other media into the earlier list.

Penalty

The Punishment could range from imprisonment for a term of not less than six months but which may extend to five years and also with a fine not less than ten thousand rupees but which may extend to one lakh rupees'. Total no. of cases reported*: Year 2010 - 895 Cases, 2011-453 Cases, 2012 -141 Cases, 2013-362 Cases, 2014 – 47 Cases. As per data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Amendment Bill, 2012

- Seeks to broaden the scope of the law to cover the audio-visual media and content in electronic form, or hoardings, SMS, MMS etc.
- The self-regulating agencies like ASCI, Press Council of India, Central Board for Film certification need to adhere to their guidelines in respect of indecent representation
- Re-emphasize the role of National Commission of Women to organize awareness programmes.

A few significant cases

- Movie- Bandit Queen
- Book – Lady Chatterly's Lover
- Documentary- Tale of Four Cities

- TV Network Channels
- Advertisements- Axe Effect, Tuff Shoes, Bike, Strata Wall tiles, Crab Tree Switches, Fast-track, Levistrauss

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 was enacted to prohibit indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner. The Act, however, in its present form, relates primarily to the print media. Since the enactment of the Act, technological revolution has resulted in development of new forms of communication, such as, internet and satellite based communication, multi-media messaging, cable television etc. It has, thus, become imperative to widen the scope of the law so as to cover such forms of media on one hand and to strengthen the existing safeguards to prevent indecent representation of women through any media on the other. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Amendment Bill, 2012 seeks to broaden the scope of the law to cover the audio-visual media and content in electronic form, prescribing stringent penalties which would act as deterrent to violation of the law. The Bill also proposes to strengthen the enforcement mechanism under the law by specifically authorizing police officers not below the rank of Inspector to enter any premises and carry out search and seizure of any material, if there was reason to believe that an offence under the Act has been or is being committed.

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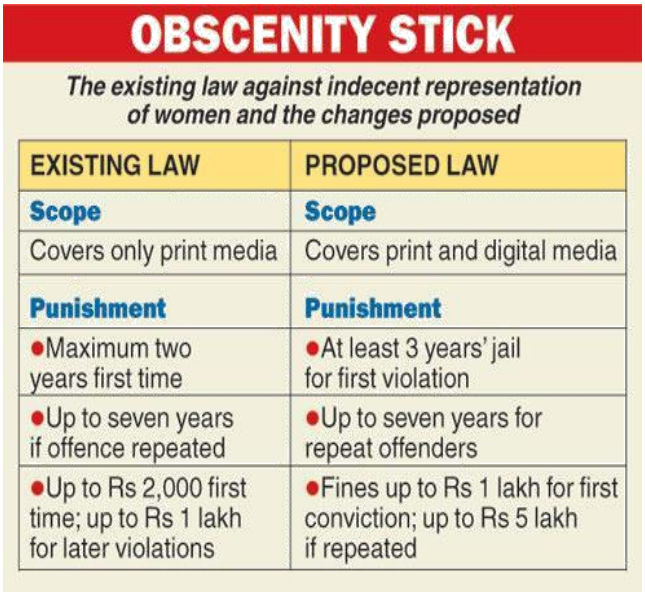
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