

COVERAGE OF DALIT ISSUES IN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Government of India considers Dalits as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Dalits are being discriminated by the upper caste people from several centuries in India. Dalits are treated in very inhuman manner. They are also called as untouchables. Upper caste people always keep them away from their places. Dalits are always portrayed in media as victims of violence. In this context it is very necessary to know the space given to the dalit issues in English Newspapers. Content analysis method was applied and Newspapers reports on Dalit Issues, special stories, editorials, interviews, photos, and letters to the editors are accounted for the study. Two leading English Newspapers namely, The Hindu and Deccan Herald were selected for the study. The study shows that there is less coverage about dalit issues in English Newspapers.

Keywords: Dalit Issues, Coverage, English Newspapers

Introduction: Dalits are the people, who are being neglected by the society since centuries. They are also called as Untouchables. The government considered Dalits as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The word Dalit was derived from Sanskrit word "Dalita" which means that Fissure, Break, Crack. As Dalits were not in a position to attain their rights on their own, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar took a much appreciated step by providing them all the basic rights through Indian Constitution.

Today we are living in a technological era. Everyone is talking about Digital India, Development of India and such heavy weight issues. But, even today Dalits are yet to come to stage where in they can raise their voice against atrocities mooted upon them by upper caste people. If they speak, they are being ostracized. They are not being allowed into public places, temples etc.

Dalits are always portrayed in media as victims of violence. Media has the responsibility of bringing equality in the society. In this matter it is very necessary to know the space given to the dalit issues in English newspapers. Newspapers reports on Dalit Issues, special stories, government schemes, editorials, interviews, and letters to the editors are accounted for this research.

Review of Literature: C. Suresh Kumar (2015) in his study 'Blogosphere: An emerging platform for dalits'

voice in India' stated that blogs are significantly utilized by the educated Dalits to air their voices without fear and to write about issues neglected and forgotten by the mainstream media.

V. Ratnamala (2012) in her study stated that media often omits violence against dalits in the name of proximity. Dalit issues are confined within the news value proximity. The dalit news is considered only as local news and the atrocities against dalits find difficulty in reaching other places. Media neglects to cover the caste based violence against dalits.

Objectives of the Study:

- To know the space given to the dalit issues.
- To analyze the stereotyping of Dalits in Newspapers.
- To study how Dalits are represented in news reports in the Print Media

Methodology: In this particular study Content Analysis is used to find out the solution for the selected research problem. The methodology opted for this study is Structured Sampling Method. Two English Newspapers i.e. The Hindu and Deccan Herald have been taken into account. Three months' newspapers i.e. May to July 2016 have been taken for content analysis. A total 24 issues have been selected for the study.

Results and discussion:

Table 1: Different categories published8 in The Hindu Newspaper

Items	Area (sq. cm)	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Advertisements	89001.89	33.34%	652	30.91%
Politics	42367.85	15.87%	335	15.88%
Development	22314.28	8.36%	101	4.79%
Sports	25202.59	9.44%	324	15.36%
Art and culture	14158.51	5.31%	96	4.55%
Education	11470.25	4.3%	60	2.85%
Crime	8813.91	3.31%	98	4.65%
Business and Commerce	9943.75	3.73%	151	7.16%
Law and Order	5101.11	1.92%	38	1.81%
Agriculture	3113.76	1.17%	18	0.86%

International news	5086.41	1.91%	69	3.28%
Environment	3280.93	1.23%	32	1.52%
Religion	1970.22	0.74%	18	0.86%
Letters to the editor	2139.81	0.81%	38	1.81%
Others	992.93	0.38%	17	0.81%
Obituary	818.19	0.31%	10	0.48%
Health	764.4	0.29%	12	0.57%
Editorial Articles	19203.18	7.2%	28	1.33%
Dalit Issues	1248.02	0.47%	13	0.62%
Total	266991.99	100	2110	100

Table 1 represents the main issues covered by The Hindu newspaper. It shows that majority space of 89001.89 sq. cm (33.34%) is occupied by advertisements and has 652 (30.91%) items, followed by, 335 (15.88%) political news items occupying 42367.85 sq. cm (15.87%). Developmental Issues measure up to 22314.28 sq. cm (8.36%) and are 101 (4.79%) in number, while, sports covering 25202.59 sq. cm (9.44%) and there are 324 (15.36%) sports

news. Art and Culture occupy 14158.51 sq. cm (5.31%) carrying 96 items (4.55%), followed by Education which amounts to 11470.25 sq. cm (4.3%) and are 60 (2.85%) in number. Crime occupy 8813.91 sq. cm (3.31%) carrying 98 (4.65%) items.

Less amount of area, i.e. 1248.02 sq. cm (0.47%) is given to Dalit Issues and are 13 (0.62%) in number. Dalit Issues are given the less coverage in The Hindu Newspaper.

Table 2: Different categories published in Deccan Herald Newspaper

Items	Area (sq. cm)	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Advertisements	84014.19	32.55%	592	29.8%
Politics	40367.17	15.64%	312	15.7%
Development	21314.28	8.26%	110	5.54%
Sports	22102.51	8.56%	311	15.65%
Art and culture	11158.21	4.32%	103	5.18%
Education	10510.25	4.08%	69	3.48%
Crime	7013.92	2.72%	102	5.14%
Business and Commerce	9043.75	3.5%	121	6.09%
Law and Order	4101.91	1.59%	31	1.56%
Agriculture	4213.76	1.63%	18	0.91%
International news	4094.41	1.59%	58	2.92%
Environment	3180.28	1.23%	33	1.67%
Religion	1270.22	0.5%	11	0.56%
Letters to the editor	3139.81	1.22%	31	1.57%
Others	912.93	0.35%	12	0.61%
Obituary	808.19	0.31%	9	0.46%
Health	924.4	0.36%	14	0.71%
Editorial Articles	28103.12	10.89%	29	1.46%
Dalit Issues	1848.02	0.72%	21	1.06%
Total	258121.3	100	1987	100

Table 2 indicates that majority space of 84014.19 sq. cm (32.55%) is occupied by advertisements and has 592 (29.8%) items, followed by, 312 (15.7%) political news occupying 40367.17 sq. cm (15.64%). Developmental Issues measure up-to 21314.28 sq. cm (8.26%) and are 110 (5.54%) in number, followed by sports covering 22102.51 sq. cm (8.56%) and there are 311 (15.65%) sports news. Art and Culture occupy 11158.21 sq. cm (4.32%) carrying 103 items (5.18%),

followed by Education which amounts to 10510.25 sq. cm (4.08%) and are 69 (3.48%) in number. Crime occupy 7013.92 sq. cm (2.72%) carrying 102 (5.14%) Crimes.

Less amount of area, i.e. 1848.02 sq. cm (0.72%) is given to Dalit Issues and are 21 (1.06%) in number. In Deccan Herald Newspaper Dalit Issues are given the less coverage during selected month.

Table 03: Categories of Dalit related issues published by The Hindu:

Category	Area	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Crime	224	18%	2	15.38%
Violence	557.34	44.7%	4	30.77%
Protest	89.4	7.16%	3	23.08%
Law and Order	55.09	4.41%	1	7.69%
Government Schemes	215.19	17.24%	2	15.38%
Editorial	107	8.56%	1	7.69%
Total	1248.02	100	13	100

According to table 3, The Hindu has covered 224 sq. cm (18%) and 02 (15.38%) Crime News related to Dalit, followed by 04 (30.77%) Violence on Dalit covering 557.34 sq. cm (44.7%). Protests covered 3 (23.08%) items with 89.4 sq. cm (7.16%) space and 1

(7.69%) with space 55.09 sq. cm (4.41%) covers law and order. Government Schemes 215.19 sq. cm (17.24%) and 02 (15.38%), followed by 01 (7.69%) Editorials covering 107 sq. cm (8.56%).

Table 04: Categories of Dalit related issues published by Deccan Herald:

Category	Area	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Crime	398.4	21.6%	4	19.1%
Violence	599.38	32.43%	4	19.1%
Protest	368.72	20%	3	14.3%
Law and Order	139	7.52%	2	9.52%
Government Schemes	219.41	11.87%	6	28.6%
Editorial	123.11	6.66%	2	9.52%
Total	1848.02	100	21	100

According to table 3, Deccan Herald has covered 398.4 sq. cm (21.6%) and (19.1%) Crime News related to Dalit, followed by 04 (19.1%) Violence on Dalit covering 599.38 sq. cm (32.43%). Protests are 3 (14.3%) covering 368.72 sq. cm (20%) and 2 (9.5%) Law and Order, of the space 139 sq. cm (7.52%). Government Schemes 219.41 sq. cm (11.87%) and 06 (28.6%). Editorials covering 123.11 sq. cm (6.66%), 2(9.52%) are in number.

Conclusion: Dalit issues are always neglected by the Mass Media. Newspapers are also carrying less issues regarding Dalits. But when comparing the two English Newspapers, Deccan Herald and The Hindu, the

coverage of Dalit issues has increased in Deccan Herald. The Newspapers are publishing Dalit related issues very rarely. It can be concluded that two leading English Newspapers are giving the space for Dalits' Violence, Crime and Protest issues the most, but neglecting the developmental aspects of Dalits. It is the responsibility of the newspapers to build equality in the society. Newspapers should publish reports, news, development and success stories, editorials, government schemes related Dalits. Dalits are also human being. They have right to live. So it is the duty of newspapers to make them to get the better lives.

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