

COVERAGE OF WOMEN RIGHTS ISSUES IN PRINT MEDIA

**(A STUDY OF TWO BENGALI NEWSPAPERS OF
BARAK VALLEY)**

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

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From the findings of previous four chapters on the ‘Coverage of Women Rights Issues in Print Media’ it is clear enough that chapter 3 and chapter 4 are the main chapters in which the subject has been depicted vividly. It is worth mentioning that the researcher has studied the total women rights related news items of both the newspapers thoroughly to extract the overall ‘coverage of women rights issues in print media tried to attend in average all women issues i.e., Dainik Jugasankha 259 news items and Dainik Samayik Prasanga 203 news items. However, concerning the coverage of women rights contents the researcher has found very less numbers of news items belonging to this category. As the main aim of the study is role of print media in creating women rights awareness through the coverage of women rights issues. And the findings of women rights news items in Dainik Jugasankha is 28 and in Dainik Samayik Prasanga is 17. The news reports which are explored with the contents of women laws or provision and any news speak about human rights in general and women rights in particular make awareness on the rights mentioned in the Indian Constitution.

However, concerning the subject related to all women rights news items, almost all emerging topics related to crime violence, development of women are covered by the two newspapers. Even the researcher finds wide coverage of empowermental and developmental issues in column centimeter wise. Though Rape, Domestic violence cases are higher in number of volumes.

As local Bengali dailies of Barak Valley both the newspapers have given priority to local as well as national news items and significantly regional and international news have not been shown negligence.

Through the study, majority headlines are positive in nature which easily catch the attention of the readers also a good approach towards women issues. In respect of other types of news issues both the newspapers published current day to day incidents

maintaining follow-up on women issues which we find in the form of hard news and soft news. These news items are most popular in the study. And also have published in-depth news items in the form of Feature and Article. So, analytical and informative both type of contents are found in the study which certainly indicates a positive effort of print media. Accounted page-wise, these news items are not given priority as maximum news items are placed in the back page which shows the news items have not been given adequate importance. But if analysed fold-wise, women issues are much prioritised than other issues as upper fold is marginally more significant in the enumeration. From the study, a few number of news reports are considered as coming under the “women rights news items” which are published with the information on laws or rights and they have been presented in the most popular form of news items.

The coverage of women related issues and their analyses have tried to highlight the paucity of genuine efforts for bringing out women's issues to the public. This lack of genuinity in respect of quality of coverage on the part of two most popular newspapers in Barak Valley is certainly a matter of concern in this age when women-trafficking, women kidnapping and sexual violations have become unique trends of society.

Thus, the conclusion covers both quantitative and qualitative analysis heading ‘the extent of coverage of women rights issues (Chapter-3) and ‘the nature of coverage of women rights issues by selected newspapers (Chapter-4). The chapter 3 and chapter 4 contain total 17 numbers of table for more transparent analysis of the women rights issues. And the conclusion is drawn followed by the datas of the tables in previous chapters (3 and 4).

Point-wise highlights and an overview on the study-summary:

Table 1.1 : Women related news items per month

For the purpose of detail study the researcher has analysed the number of women rights related news items are published in each of the selected month. It is marked during the study that co-incidentally same number of reports are published in July by both the newspaper. Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Samayik Prasanga are published highest number of news items on women issues in the month of September. In December, Dainik Samayik Prasanga leads by 1 news item.

Thus, the study reveals that Dainik Jugasankha publishes total 259 numbers of women related issues and Dainik Samayik Prasanga publishes total 203 numbers of women related issues from July 2013 to December 2013.

The researcher not only enumerated the quantity of coverage of Women Related issues during the stipulated time schedule but also has identified a number of coincidences and precarious elements in case of both the newspapers in question.

It is curious matter that there is no irregular fluctuation in the quantity of Women Related Issues in any of the months. This certainly indicates no negative tendency in the journalistic efforts of Valley. The newspapers have not been able to procure any irregular amount of news items of the type because their quantity has always remained under a limit.

Table 1.2 : Space allocated to women related news items per month

It is found in the study of space allocation on total women related issues that Dainik Jugasankha has devoted more space on woman issues than Dainik Samayik Prasanga. Maximum space allocates regarding the topic in the month of September by both the newspaper. Extra space have been found to be allotted in the month of September for the simple reason that there was incidences of Women Related facts in more amount then in the previous or succeeding months. But it also indicates the trend that the newspapers are not all together disinterested or inattentive towards those issues which could not show substantial coverage in the other months of our research.

Table 1.3 : Extent and Frequency of the coverage on women related news items

The study reveals that coverage of total 259 number of women related news items are allotted 13089.71 column-centimeter space in Dainik Jugasankha and in Dainik Samayik Prasanga total 203 number of women related news items are devoted 9616.5 column-centimeter space in six months i.e., July 2013- December 2013.

Table 1.4 : Frequency of the format of news items

Analysing the frequency of the format of all news items related to women rights determines which type of format are frequently used in the selected local dailies. The study indicates that hard news and soft news are considered as most popular form of news items have been used for covering women related issues in both the newspaper.

Hard news stands in the first position in Dainik Samayik Prasanga whereas second in Dainik Jugasankha and soft newsstands in first position in Dainik Jugasankha while second in Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

The study reveals that article and feature are in third and fourth place in Dainik Jugasankha. Dainik Samayik Prasanga also maintains the same format strategy for coverage of Women Issues as article in third position and feature in fourth positioning 6 months of the study.

Frequency of editorial and photo news is very less in Dainik Samayik Prasanga on such issues. Only one editorial is published in the month of August and one photo news is published in October by Dainik Samayik Prasanga. But Dainik Jugasankha publishes 5 number of editorial and 5 number of photo news during the period.

The study indicates that only 1.16 percent women issues are found in the format of letters to the editor. Other news are found 2.70 percent though op-ed, awareness adds, filler and book review are together fall under this category. Thus, frequency of letters to the editor is found few in number. There are no such issues come in the format of letter to the editor from September to December in Dainik Jugasankha.

On the other hand, the category of Others is found 4.93 percent that is more than letter to the editor 1.49 percent in Dainik Samayik Prasanga as the category of Others is sub-categorized in op-ed, filler, book review and awareness add.

Concerning women issues the researcher finds that both the newspaper have attempted to give coverage of day to day incidents or happenings in the society and also followed up ongoing incidents in priority base. As maximum number of reports have been published in the form of Hard news and soft news, apparently they have given importance in Articles and Features too for covering women issues. In case of Dainik Jugasankha, in the month of August, almost all categories of news related to women issues have been published. This unfortunately has not happened in case of Samayik Prasanga in any particular month of the study. This may indicate a variation in the approach towards women issues among the important dailies of the valley.

Table 1.5 : Extent of the content of women rights related issues in space

Findings of the extent of the contents related to women rights issues in terms of col.cm reveals that empowerment issues are given more space in both the newspaper. As it is in the first position among all other contents in Dainik Jugasankha and second position in Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

The study shows that contents related to rape are in second position in terms of col.cm by Dainik Jugasankha while in Dainik Samayik Prasanga contents of rape is in first position.

Domestic violence stands in third position by Dainik Jugasankha while fourth place in Dainik Samayik Prasanga. Other violences and crimes are in third position in Dainik Samayik Prasanga and in Dainik Jugasankha the contents of other violence and crime stands in fourth position.

The study finds coverage on the contents of kidnapping and abduction are more than sexual harassment in Dainik Jugasankha. In Dainik Samayik Prasanga, extent of coverage of sexual harassment is more than kidnapping and abduction in terms of col.cm.

Reports related to education are little less comparatively to dowry in Dainik Jugasankha. In Dainik Samayik Prasanga, the extent of coverage of contents of dowry is more than issues of education in col.cm.

The study explores that the space covered by the contents of gender inequality, child marriage and prostitution are very less i.e., 2.10 percent, meagre of 0.96 percent and a meagre of 0.46 percent respectively in Dainik Jugasankha. Extent of the coverage of contents gender inequality, child marriage and prostitution are little in Dainik Samayik Prasanga too.

Gender inequality is little 0.48 percent, child marriage and prostitution related contents are little 0.35 percent and 0.11 percent respectively.

An intensive study into the space coverage of various issues in both the newspapers reveals that the extent of coverage of news for various issues is more or less proportional to the space allocated for them. Another positive sign is that women

empowerment issues have been given greater space in column – centimeter wise than all other issues and certainly this is a quite encouraging trend for our print-media.

Table 1.6 : Coverage of women rights news stories in terms of number

This table is one of the important findings of the study. The study reveals that 10.81 percent news reports belong to women rights related news items in Dainik Jugasankha and 8.37 percent are in Dainik Samayik Prasanga from total number of coverage on all women rights related news items in terms of frequency. It is an attempt to focus on the number of coverage of women rights issues through the total number of coverage of women rights related news items. Contents of the reports which are related to women laws and its provisions and on the rights mentioned in the Indian constitution are specifically considered as Issues of women rights in the study.

Table 1.7 : Extent of coverage of women rights issues in terms of space

Another major analysis of the study is to find out the space devoted to the coverage of women rights issues in both the newspaper. From the findings of the table only 12.49 percent space allotted specifically to the women rights news items in Dainik Jugasankha and only 16.54 percent space in Dainik Samayik Prasanga from the total space of all women rights related news items published during the study period. So, less amount of space covered by the women rights issues in mentioned two local dailies of Barak Valley.

Table 1.8 : Extent of the news format of women right issues in terms of space

The focal point of the study is ‘coverage of women rights issues in print media’ to study more elaborately it is important to analyse the extent of format of news items particularly the ‘women rights issues’ covered by the two newspapers of Barak Valley. The table plays an important role as it is analysed the space covered in the format of news items in terms of column-centimeter.

From the technical view point major types of news formats have been chosen for the coverage of women rights issues by Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Samayik Prasanga. The study also finds that both the newspapers devote maximum space to hard news from the total covered space of women rights issues.

Table : 2.1 : The area of coverage of news items in two newspaper

To study the area of coverage of news reports only hard news and soft news are taken for analysis. And total 188 news issues are found as hard and soft news in Dainik Jugasankha and total 164 news items in Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

Being local newspapers, publishers of both the newspapers have given first priority to local reports on women rights related news items.

The study finds national news got second rank after local news in terms of number of women rights related news items published by both the newspaper. The two newspapers have also given priority to those news which already have focused in the national and international level and the news which were limelighted in public, NGOs and political level.

In Dainik Jugasankha international stories related to women rights related news items have given less priority, so regional news has been given more priority than international news. On the other hand in Dainik Samayik Prasanga international stories are more prioratised comparative to regional news.

Thus, the study explores, in North East region and Assam in particular, there are numbers of local as well as regional newspaper being published regularly. To attract the attention of the local readers and to carry on a sustained readership the focal point of the major newspapers are locale based. So the readers can get satisfaction about regional news from various regional newspapers, if any. But as the readers of particular locality are always interested about their local sentiment, problems, plight and reflection of their day to day social, political and cultural activities and prospects and for these reason both the newspapers have adopted the way of focusing on local based news to satisfy their readers. And it is also to be noted that readers of a particular locality, which is geographically situated at a remotest frontier of eastern India, i.e., Barak Valley, feel beneficial if they are given national news coverage along with local of their demand.

Table 2.2 : News formats of women rights related news items

For the purpose of qualitative analysis, it is important to study the format of the women rights news presentation in the mentioned dailies. To analyze the importance

given by the newspapers to the women's issues in the pattern of stories are classified as hard news, soft news, feature, article, editorial, letter to the editor, photo news, and others.

According to the study, news reports (hard news and soft news) are considered as most popular in category related to women rights issues in both the newspaper as hard news remains newsworthy for a significant time period and demands immediate reporting and soft news does not require timely publication on a specific event, mostly human interest stories are published in the format of soft news. Dainik Jugasankha publishes more soft news comparative to hard news. Dainik Samayik Prasanga publishes more hard news than soft news. Article and feature occupy third and fourth place respectively in both the newspaper. Thus, the analysis of the study reveals that these two Bengali dailies are equally concerned about in-depth issues and factual too on the mentioned topic. In Dainik Jugasankha and in Dainik Samayik Prasanga the space given is more or less same with little difference in coverage. Less concern in women rights related topic, editorials cover considerable less space in comparison to hard news, soft news, feature and article in both the newspapers. But Dainik Jugasankha confers more space than Dainik Samayik Prasanga in so far as editorials are concerned.

Letters to the editor reflect the pulse of the people and their viewpoints are important in shaping public opinion. A meagre quantity of letters are found on women rights related topic in both the newspaper and it is even very less in Dainik Jugasankha than Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

The issues which are exclusively published only with photo along with caption are also few in both the newspapers i.e., 1.93 percent in Dainik Jugasankha and 0.49 percent in Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

Others category of news items include Op-ed, book review and awareness add are given more priority than editorial and letters to the editor in both the newspaper Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

Table 2.3 : Nature of headlines of women rights related news items

The significance of this study lies with the nature of newspaper headlines as an effective means which portray importance in priority basis regarding the subject related to all women's rights issues.

For analyzing the nature of headlines the researcher has taken only foremost important type of news items i.e., hard news-soft news, articles and features. It is important for qualitative purpose of the study.

Among three categories of headlines, Positive headlines are in first position, Negative headlines are in second position in both the newspapers. So, neutral headlines stands in next by the two Newspapers.

Thus, from the researcher's point of view both the newspapers have successfully presented the headlines interestingly and are being able to attract the attention of the reader. This study analyses conceptual impression of headlines of researcher and importance is given mainly on the reader's point of view.

Table 2.4 : Nature of Contents of news items on women issues

Contents of the story plays an active role to create awareness on the topic. To study the 'Coverage of women rights issues' in print media the researcher has analysed all women rights related news items i.e., hard news, soft news, feature and article as these are the important type of news items format. Contents are differentiating on two aspects. One is Analytical and another is Informative.

55.65 percent news are analytical in Dainik Jugasankhya while 47.34 percent in Dainik Samayik Prasanga. 44.35 percent reports are considered as Informative news in Dainik Jugasankha whereas 52.66 percent are informative news in Dainik Samayik Prasanga from a total of published news items.

So, the quality of the coverage of the news stories indicates that both Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Samayik Prasanga have maintained balance in publishing the contents of reports on the subject related to all women rights issues. As they published both informative and analytical story with some differences in numbers.

The subject related to rights, laws and provisions or its effects are found less in the contents of news reports published in both the selected newspapers in the north-east region of Barak valley. These text fall under any kind of news contents as the coverage of analytical or informative news related to women rights emerged as an important issue to create awareness and empowerment in the developing region.

Table 2.5 : Contents of women rights issues

Almost all type of areas related to the subject of women issues are taken for the study. And the frequency in terms of number of different type of issues define which type of issues are covered mostly in two local dailies.

Rape cases are highest in numbers and the second highest news stories are Domestic violence's in both the newspaper. The most important type of issue is empowerment issue as it encourages readers in real meaning. Dainik Jugasankha stands in third position while fourth position in Dainik Samayik Prasangaon such issue. Other violence and crime issues are in third position in Dainik Samayik Prasanga while such issues are in fourth place in Dainik Jugasankha. Kidnapping and abduction cases are fifth place in Dainik Jugasankha whereas Sexual harassment issues are in fifth position by Dainik Samayik Prasanga.

Dowry related stories are found 1.54 percent and 2.96 percent in Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Samayik Prasanga respectively. There are very few numbers of news stories are found on Prostitution, Women Education, Gender Inequality. Women employment related news story, female foeticide, widow and child labour related issues are not published in both the newspaper from July 2013 to December 2013.

The data of leading national dailies related to woman oppression it is clear that the rate of oppression is increasing with alarming rate in the following years. As per National Crime record Bureau data reported 97 cases of foeticide are registered across the country in 2015 which is decreased compare to 107 cases in 2014. But there are many unregistered cases. A report of The Indian Express updated in Jan.23, 2015 by Reuters where the PM launched the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme in Panipat saying that such discrimination reflects mental illness of society and also criticised the doctors involved. The scheme is implemented in 100 districts. To fight with this emerging cruelty Supreme Court announced that State Governments give incentives

to every family with a girl child and take all steps to spread awareness among the families, apart from pursuing criminal prosecution under the pre-conception and prenatal Diagnostic techniques act, in cases of female foeticide (Indian Express in Nov 26, 2014).

Table 2.6 : Types of editorial

Editorial is an important section for both newspaper reader and publisher house. So, in this study the researcher has analysed the nature of contents of editorials separately. Cent percent of editorials are published in favour of women. The nature of editorials are categorized in three parts namely, favourable, unfavourable and neutral.

A number of editorials have been published on women-issues in both the dailies. Although editorials do come within the arena of power news content, they reflect the view point of the prominent journalists towards the issues. These views are virtually the societal view and they are often responded by the readers. So, the editorial attempts must be considered positive efforts on print media.

Table 2.7 : Pagewise placement of women rights related news items

To know the newsworthiness of women rights related news items in the selected local dailies page wise placement analysis is important. The placement of a story in a newspaper indicates the importance and significance attached to the story. The study finds that women rights related stories rarely make front-page news in the two selected newspapers. Majority women rights related news items are consigned to the inside pages. As per the story-line is concerned of the published news items on the mentioned topic, it is justified the placement of the story.

It may seem to be a retrogressive trend that majority women related news items have been placed in the inside of both the dailies and hardly a few items can be found in the front. But it is a matter of consideration that these dailies have been meant for general news and so it is not always expected that they would always given priority to women related news items.

Table 2.8 : Foldwise position of women rights related news items

For newspapers, items are judged to have high or low priorities based on an item's placement within the paper because different parts of a newspaper have different

attention values (Budd, 1964; Gabriel, 1988). To study the structural position of women rights related news items more keenly, the researcher is very minute about stories, its placements as well as the fold placement of the two newspaper i.e., above the fold and below the fold.

In comparison of two newspaper on placement of news items, Dainik Samayik Prasanga has given more prominence to women issues than Dainik Jugasankha during the period of the study.

Table 2.9 : News formats of women rights issues

It is also an important aspect of the qualitative study to find out the format of news items published on women rights issues in term of number. As the centric point of the study is ‘coverage of women rights issues in print media’.

The table 2.9 finds that five cardinal formats of news items have been published for coverage of women rights issues in Dainik Jugasankha and in case of Dainik Samayik Prasanga as many as 3 formats have been covered. Virtually this indicates successful efforts of these newspapers in this field.

Recommendations :

More frequency of coverage of women right issues is needed in Dainik Jugasankha and in Dainik Samayik Prasanga for overall empowerment of women and more emphasis should also be given to bring awareness among the readers. Though in some particular month there are even a considerable difference in coverage, yet more space for the coverage of women right related issues are highly recommended for the overall development of women of all section, particularly the marginalised section and for the development of the society as a whole.

The study reveals that in six months of coverage, the total women right related issues have been given very less space in the editorials in both the newspapers. Only a single editorial is published in the month of August in both the newspapers. This trend and approach are to be channelised into proper direction, i.e., towards a direction which may lead to women’s empowerment and social development.

With some differences of space allocation (column-centimeter wise), the study shows that in total six months (July 2013 to December 2013) Dainik Jugasankha covers 259

numbers of news and Dainik Samayik Prasanga covers 203 numbers of news on the women rights related issues.

In the six months of study, the coverage of Women Related issues, column and centimeter wise, has been calculated in detail for a pin-pointed understanding of the concern. From July 2013 to December 2013, Dainik Jugasankha covers 13089.71 col.cm and Dainik Samayik Prasanga covers 9616.5 col.cm.

News means information. Information about any issue which is important. Coverage of analytical or informative news related to the subject of women rights issues are emerging as an important topic to create awareness and empowerment in the developing region. So, the study indicates that Headlines - presentation of these news stories are positive in nature which could grab the attention of readers. Only some more in-depth coverage is recommended along with the news stories which are only regarding informed about the related ongoing issues.

Along with various types of news issues on the subject of women rights related news items, empowermental issues are in third position in Dainik Jugasankha and fourth position in Dainik Samayik Prasanga. This is an eye-catching step of these two local Bengali dailies as it encourages women to enjoy their rights and also develop people on various contexts. But some coverage should be done on the issues related to female foeticide which is totally absent during the study period. Female Foeticide is one of the major problems in India. And also concentration is needed on the issue related to prostitution, human trafficking and child labour which are co-related to each other. Human trafficking is one of the burning issues where close to 80 percent of the human trafficking across the world is done for sexual exploitation and rest is for bonded labour. India is considered as the center point of this crime. As per the Government statistical report, in every eight minutes a child is missing in our country. According to National Crimes Record Bureau, in 2013 female kidnapping cases (55,225 in numbers) has been four times in comparison to its male counterpart. Also the sex trafficking ratio is highest in the North-Eastern part of India. In Assam nearly 6,137 female kidnapping cases are reported by National Crimes Record Bureau on the year 2016.

It is a matter of encouragement that both the newspapers are deeply concerned about women right related issues. Day by day more importance is also given in the issue.

Local, regional and international women's right issues are really demanding more concern. In recent years news source is enormous for the newspaper houses. With the help of balance, in allocation of space is recommended for the overall development of the society. Newspaper is said to be the forth pillar of democracy. It is very difficult to run a big house newspaper from a remote place like Barak Valley in particular. Running of such house is a whole time economics. But there is no doubt about it that newspaper is big business house for a big section of readers. Expectations are great from readers' part. These expectations are to be calculated prudently. Readers mean people, people are dreamer. People have dream. Fulfilment of dream is to be orchestrated and arranged by the newspaper houses always with a healthy balance toward a positive direction.