

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Total news hole of all the selected newspapers is 3687680 col. Cm out of which 23308 col. Cm space is devoted to the issues related to women empowerment. 0.63% of the total news hole is devoted to the issues related to women empowerment.

Total 634 stories appeared in all the newspapers on the theme under study during the period of study.

The study also shows that in all the newspaper's, stories related to women empowerment issues find its place mostly in inside pages. The study shows that all the newspapers publish more than 77.77 per cent stories on women empowerment issues in inside pages.

The study also shows that Assamiya Pratidin carries highest number of stories (125) on issues related to women empowerment followed by Dainik Agradoot (119 stories) and Dainik Jugasankha (113 stories). The Sentinel carries 98 stories, Danik Purvoday carries 91 stories and The Assam Tribune carries 88 stories on the issues under consideration.

In this regard the language (Assamese, Bengali and Hindi) press is doing much better job as compared to the English newspapers.

Dainik Purvoday places highest percentage (25.77 percent) of the total number of stories on women empowerment issues in the front page followed by Dainik Jugasankha (24.77per cent).

The analysis shows that out of the total space on women empowerment issues, Assamiya Pratidin devotes the maximum space (27.77 per cent) to positive coverage followed by The Assam Tribune (24.82 per cent), Dainik Purvoday (24.62 per cent), The Sentinel (23.77 per cent) and Dainik Agradoot (23.58 per cent). Dainik Jugasankha publishes lowest percentage of total space to the women empowerment issues to the positive coverage.

Out of the total space on women empowerment issues Assamiya Pratidin devotes maximum percentage (40.10 per cent) on negative coverage, followed by Dainik Purvoday (34.27 per cent).

Out of the total space on women empowerment issues Dainik Jugasankha devotes the maximum space on neutral coverage (50.37 per cent), followed by Dainik Agradoot (47.28 per cent).

Out of the total number of stories on women empowerment Dainik Purvoday publishes the maximum number (30.76 per cent) stories, which are positive in nature. In this regard The Sentinel stands at second position (24.48 per cent), Assamiya Pratidin stands at third position (24.8 per cent), The Assam Tribune stands at fourth position (23.86 per cent) and Dainik Agradoot stands at fifth position (22.68 per cent) Dainik Jugasankha publishes lowest percentage of the positive stories out of its total stories on women empowerment issues.

Format analysis in terms of frequency shows that out of the total number of stories on women empowerment issues, the Dainik Purvoday publishes the maximum percentage of stories in news format (85.71 per cent). In this regards Dainik Agradoot stands at second position (83.19 per cent), Dainik Jugasankha stands at third position (83.18 per cent), Assamiya Pratidin occupies fourth position (83.2 per cent), The Sentinel remains at fifth position (76.53 per cent) and the Assam Tribune occupies sixth position (75 per cent).

The Sentinel carries the maximum percentage of Editorials (5.10 per cent) followed by The Assam Tribune (4.54 per cent), Dainik Jugasankha (3.53 per cent), Dainik Agradoot (2.52 per cent), Dainik Purvoday (2.19 per cent) and Assamiya Pratidin (2.4 per cent).

The Sentinel carries the maximum percentage of Articles (5.10 per cent) followed by The Assam Tribune (4.54 per cent). The Assam Tribune publishes the maximum percentage of Features (5.68 per cent) followed by Assamiya Pratidin (5.6 per cent).

Dainik Jugasankha carries the maximum percentage of columns (3.53 per cent) followed by Dainik Purvoday (3.29 per cent).

In terms of distribution of space to analytical content, Assamiya Pratidin contributes the highest amount (40.51 per cent) of space followed by Dainik Agradoot (35.95 per cent).

On informative contents Dainik Purvoday contributes the maximum amount of space (71.64 per cent) followed by The Sentinel (66.84 per cent).

From this study the researcher finds that hard and soft news is the most common format of the coverage of the issues related to women empowerment. In each of the six newspapers more than 81.38 per cent of the stories related to women empowerment appear in hard and soft news format. Among the six-selected newspaper the Sentinel publishes more editorial both in terms of space and frequency. Pratidin and Dainik Agradoot publish highest number of features on the issues related to women empowerment followed by Assam Tribune and Dainik Jugasankha. The sentinel publishes highest number of letters to the editors followed by Assam Tribune and Pratidin. The sentinel and Agradoot publish highest number of articles followed by The Assam Tribune and Pratidin.

Findings also reveals that 75.55 per cent of the stories related to the issues of women empowerment were informative in nature and only 24.44 per cent stories were presented in analytical way. All together 479 out of 634 total stories were informative in nature and only 155 stories were analytical in nature. Out of total 634 stories 158 stories were positive in nature while 222 were negative in nature and 264 stories were presented in a neutral way. 24.92 per cent stories were positive in nature while 35.1 stories were negative in nature.

Government authorities/ministers are most frequently quoted source in all the newspaper. Pratidin and Agradoot quoted government authorities/ministers more than English newspaper. Police is the second most frequently quoted source in all the newspaper followed by NGO's.

All the newspapers published highest number of stories under crime category. Altogether 106 stories appeared under crime categories. Social welfare schemes and programmes was the second highest category in terms of number of stories published. Altogether 55 stories appeared under this category. Domestic violence was the third highest category with 48 stories. Law and amendment remains the fourth category

with 39 stories. Economic conditions and movements were fifth and sixth category with 38 and 36 stories respectively.

Crime was the most common category in all the newspapers 16.71 per cent stories were focused on crime. Altogether 24.29 per cent stories focused on crime/ violence. This is in the line of the result in Sonia Bathla's study "Women Democracy and the Media- Cultural and Political Representation in the Indian Press (1998). He concluded "a major percentage of news stories focused on violent of the crime".

Some of the findings of the findings of the present study contradict with the result in Dasgupta's study (1976). In her study of women's issues in four English dailies published in New-Delhi in 1975, she observed that women's issues received no attention in the six subject categories: social, economic, political, art and culture, biographical and other issues.

Some of the findings of the findings of the present study also contradict with the result in Ammu Joseph's and Kalpana Sharma's study Whose news? They concluded that issues concerning health are poorly covered (Joseph and Sharma, 2006, p.74). This can be seen in contradiction to the present study, where 30 out of 634 articles had women's health as main topic.

.90 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with the coverage of women issues in the newspapers they read. 18.33 per cent of the respondents are not satisfied because the newspapers covers mostly negative news related to women issues. 33.33 per cent respondent believes that all women issues do not reflected in the newspaper. 41.66 per cent respondent said that burning issues concerning women do not get reflected, while 6.66 per cent respondents are of the opinion that coverage of women issues is very less.

100 per cent of the sample agrees that newspapers can play an active role in women empowerment.

100 percent of the respondents agree that Newspapers can alter attitude of the male towards women.

90 per cent of the respondents agree that if more and more women become journalists they will cover more and more women issues.

CONCLUSION

The finding of the study proves that the coverage of issues related to women empowerment is not very significant in the newspapers. The Assamese and Bengali newspaper provides more space on women empowerment issues. The overall coverage of women empowerment issues by the selected newspaper is very low. The percentage of news related to issues of women empowerment out of the total news hole is awfully low in each of the six newspapers under study. In terms of frequency the Assamese and Bengali language newspaper publishes more news items on women empowerment issues in comparison to the Hindi and English newspapers. The study also shows that Assamese and Bengali daily assign more space to the issues of women empowerment than the English and Hindi Dailies. The language dailies are mainly read by common people and hence, possess great potential to influence people about various issues related to women empowerment. In this regard, the Assamese and Bengali newspapers are doing comparatively good work than the English and Hindi newspapers. It seems that the English and Hindi newspapers are lagging behind in covering women empowerment issues.

The most common content categories are crime, social welfare schemes and programmes, domestic violence, Law and amendments, economic conditions, women's, health, and education. It can be said that, Newspapers show more interest in publishing stories about crime, accidents, or domestic violence than stories about their health, education, professional abilities, achievement etc.

. The most common topics of articles about women's empowerment issues in The Assam Tribune, The Sentinel, Dainik Agradoot, Pratidin, Dainik Jugasankha and Dainik Purvoday are: Crime, social Welfare Schemes and programmes for women, domestic violence, Law and amendments, Economic condition, Women's movement, Women's health, Education; Human rights.

. The English and Hindi newspapers do not report on women's empowerment issues as much as the Assamese and Bengali language newspapers do.

. The most common sources quoted in all the newspapers under study are Police government Authority/ Minister.

. The Assamese and the Bengali language newspapers give maximum coverage to the

issues of women empowerment both in terms of frequency and space as compared to the English and Hindi newspapers.

. In contradiction to previous research within the gender and media field this study shows that Processes do sometimes become news.

Newspapers have become one of the powerful and influential mediums for the masses that help them to get information about a lot of things and also to form opinions and make judgments regarding various issues. It keeps the people updated and informed about what is happening around them and the world. The media has the power of educating people, the good and the bad. Soldering its social responsibility, the press should perform a noble mission of enlightening people and discouraging gender based discrimination. Press can change opinions because they have access to people and this gives it a lot of strength and this strength should be utilized for empowering women. Newspapers play very constructive role in the society by giving voice to the voiceless and vulnerable sections of the society. It can make people aware about the need of women empowerment. Newspapers have an impact on its readers, so it is very important that they should portray the real socio-economic, cultural and political status of women.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be concluded that women empowerment issues are not receiving the kind of attention and importance that it deserves in the context of the Indian society. No doubt newspapers have started covering these issues but still the desirable coverage is waiting. This study reveals quite dissatisfactory picture of the coverage of the issues related to women empowerment by the newspapers. The overall presentation and coverage of women empowerment issues by the newspapers is a matter of serious concern. It becomes very clear that the coverage of women empowerment issues by the newspapers is though not very negligible; still lot of improvements needs to be done in this regard. Lack of interest and awareness about the status and numerous problems of women in India on the part of journalists, editors etc. may be a factor for such situation. Media is expected to function as a watchdog and fourth pillar of democracy but the findings of the study reveal very dissatisfactory result in this regard. From the study it can be inferred that newspapers either do not consider women empowerment issues as

newsworthy or they lack general interest in covering women empowerment issues. There is an urgent need of the practice of gender sensitivity on the part of the reporters and editors. The socio-economic and political status of the women in Indian society demands more concentration on development journalism with a gender dimension. Editors and reporters should be aware about the development process of the country. They must have a clear understanding of the various problems and issues of the women. There should be a sense of strong commitment and on the part of the journalists and editors that they should involve themselves in highlighting the issues of women. Newspapers should appoint full time reporters to cover women issues. Attempts should be taken to formulate and implement broad national communication policies.

From the study it can be said that the newspapers are not promoting balanced portrayal of women in their multiple roles. There is an urgent need to develop a more holistic approach towards women empowerment. Newspapers should take a leading role in promoting diverse role of women in the society. Newspapers should project their multiplicity of roles, life styles, achievements, problems and struggles. They should chalk out proper strategies to promote gender equality and gender justice. However this demands gender sensitivity among media owners and managers as well as the working journalists. There is an urgent need to make the contents of newspapers more meaningful and useful to women.

In other words, the press has not put concerted efforts to discuss serious issues that concern women and prepare the women to play their rightful and equal role in the society. To alter the situation, we will have to regularly monitor the media and point out the merit as well as demerits on a continuous basis. Perhaps the women's organization could create a media-monitoring cell for the purpose.