

# Coverage of women in Print Media and Gender Education: A study of Hindi newspapers

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**Abstract:** Women said to be a weaker sex has proved her in different fields but still she is considered as a second sex. Their contribution in the society is diverse. Media technologies can potentially serve as a tool to empower women. A wide variety of material has been published in newspapers, but they talk very little about women. Women are rarely given professional coverage with regards to key business, political and economic issues, and this gender bias also extends to other spheres such as news, sports and leisure. This lack of representation of women has deep consequences on the image of women. This paper poses to present the coverage of women in the newspapers. For this, the study of two newspapers 'Dainik Bhaskar' and 'Dainik Tribune' has been done for a period of a week. The quantitative as well as qualitative analysis has been done to get the true picture of the study. The study concludes that, the coverage of women in newspaper is very less as compared to the coverage of men. . They are almost invisible in the economic and professional interventions. When women appear in the news, they are mostly projected as passive victims or passive reactors to public events in news media newspaper reports portray women in a much more depressing and degrading manner.

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## Introduction

In the modern times where each nation of the world is struggling to prove its supremacy over the other, a new kind of environment is building where the competition between nations is extending in different directions. This is the world of scientific revolution, technological revolution and cultural revolution. And with all these the human lives are also transforming.

India has a large population which could have been prove as its strength, to be in the queue of developed nations. But because of its social attitudes toward women, where she is always suppressed by the social system, she cannot prove her potency most of the times.

Women said to be a weaker sex has proved herself in different fields- sports, drama, art, culture, politics, information technology etc. but still she is considered as a second sex. Their contribution in the society is diverse. They are divers and drivers of the society. May be see or space their performance has ever been appreciated. But still she is in fact struggling and establishing herself to stand parallel to men. Even in developed societies, there are many dark shades in the lives of women.

Media is widely recognized to play a substantial role in promoting and disseminating information. It is considered as a strong social development agency. Media technologies can potentially serve as a tool to empower women. A wide variety of material has been published in newspapers, but they talk very little about women. Women are rarely given professional coverage with regards to key business, political and economic issues, and this gender bias also extends to other spheres such as news, sports and leisure. This lack of representation of women has deep consequences on the image of women.

In the past few years though there has been an improved and increased reporting of issues related to women in the media particularly in the print. However, women's visibility in the news is still dominated by sensational stories of glamour, sex, domestic violence and other forms of violence.

## Description of the study

This paper poses to understand what is happening on the ground vis-à-vis coverage of women in the newspapers. It covers a study of two newspapers- Dainik Bhaskar and Dainik Tribune to determine how much coverage is devoted to women in both newspapers. Dainik Bhaskar because it is popular newspaper and is widely read and appreciated and Dainik Tribune because it is established by the historical The Tribune Trust, which made its appearance before independence and played a vital role of social responsibility towards the nation.

For this, two newspapers have been studied for a week, to analyze the coverage of women quantity and quality wise.

Key measurements included:

1. average of total number of women stories
2. percentage of women stories under different categories
3. the number of women photographs

### **Limitation of the study**

This paper does not cover the advertising content of the newspapers; it covers only news and photograph content. Also it does not include the supplement pages of the newspapers but it covers the local editions.

### **Objective of the study**

The primary aim of this work is to analyze the media coverage and representation of women. For this purpose, a gender-based analysis of news coverage, professional intervention, participation in the political debate, and sports reports has been carried out.

### **Findings**

The dainik tribune paper consists of 12 pages and on an average it covers 10 news stories on a single page. Out of the total news stories 7 percent of the news stories are related to women. Of these 2.16 percent are related to rape, molestation and abduction; 1.36 percent stories are related to murder, suicide, dowry and domestic violence; 1.2 percent of the total stories are related to women in politics at central, state and regional level; 0.6 percent stories covers women in demonstration and raising voice towards empowerment; sports covers 0.5 percent, 0.34 percent stories relates women in cultural practices; 0.52 percent stories covers the punishments and verdicts by courts who committed crime against women and 0.2 percent stories covers women themselves committing crime. Once a while there are also some stories which cover women who go beyond the social thoughts and changed the traditions.

Now, another paper Dainik bhaskar, is also on the same track. It consists of 16 pages of main news paper, sometimes less and more too. And 4 pages of local edition. On an average the paper covers 7 news stories on a single page. Out of the total news stories 6 percent of the stories are related to women. Among them, 0.9 percent of the news stories are of rape and molestation; 0.75 percent stories covers murders and suicides; 1.2 percent of the news stories covers women in politics; sports covers 0.15 percent; crime committed by women covers 0.75 percent, 0.45 percent stories covers punishment and verdict of courts who committed crime against women, 0.75 percent of the stories speak about demonstrations, raising voice for empowerment and the NGO activities and 0.9 percent stories tell the inspirational and motivational tales in which women are proving themselves.

The photograph content of both the news papers has different kind of shade of women. While dainik tribune is more towards gray tone, dainik bhaskar seems to be more colourful. Dainik tribune is more towards celebrity photos or political women on front page. On an average the paper covers 6 photographs of women daily. Of these 2 -3 photos are of celebrity and 2-3 are of women in politics, 1 photo is of women in sports but it covers more of foreign player and less of Indian player, and once a while there are also photos in which women are shown in demonstrations and some time she is shown in misery conditions.

The paper Dainik Bhaskar covers an average of 10 photographs daily covering women. 1 or 2 photographs covers political women, 1-2 photographs covers women in demonstrations, 2-3 photos shows women celebrity, 2-3 photo are related to women in entertainment shows, and other are sometimes shown in sports, religious activities, cultural activities, professional women, and doing fun and sometimes romance.

### **Conclusion**

It has been emerged out of the study that the present newspaper coverage is more tilted towards men. The coverage of women in newspaper is very less as compared to the coverage of men. Women in newspapers are mostly in reports on domestic violence, sexual abuse and family issues. Women involved in crimes also make their place in the papers. Coverage of women in sports is very little. They are almost invisible in the economic and professional interventions. Even the worse fact is that, while men clearly have their voice heard on national issues, but women are not. Women are referred to as average citizens and rarely as experts. When women appear in the news, they are mostly projected as passive victims or passive reactors to public events in news media. They hardly appear as speakers or participants in public event. Also, newspaper reports portray women in a much more depressing and degrading manner. Though they

make women as a hero sometimes in editorials and features but that is occasionally. The reports of newspapers represent women who need sympathy. It presents a picture of under-representation of women in specific areas.

News related to women though still marginal, but have started occasionally occupy important slots like the editorial, feature news, front-page news etc. However, women's visibility in the news is still dominated by sensational stories of glamour, sex, domestic violence and other forms of violence. Stories like women managing with adversity or building their lives are largely missing. Issues affecting women, their vast experiences and their lives, barely find their way into the mainstream media.

On the whole it was observed that the handling of gender issues need more care and understanding. Best if those who cover these issues are sensitive towards and are well versed with gender problems. On the whole, gender issues need a good gender education in its background.

