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Title: Coverage of Kashmir Conflict by Newspapers

Abstract

Beyond the role of communicating news, the press has become a powerful institution to influence human activity. Wherever there is a conflict in any part of the world, the media activity increases, developing immense interest to coverage and war. Moreover, the environment in which it operates and reflects it influences the content of media. With the ever rising competition between the various media organizations, every organization craves for its target audience. Here the study tries to analyze how the newspapers have covered the conflict ongoing in Kashmir and how the treatment to particular event varies from one newspaper to another. The content of these newspapers is manipulated by various influences – ideological, political, administrative, etc. The main objective of the present study is to analyze the portrayal of Kashmir conflict by the Indian national and local newspapers. The research explained how newspapers have covered the Kashmir conflict.

Objectives of the Study

- a) To analyze the coverage of Kashmir conflict by reports and stories, which form part of newspaper coverage.
- b) To map out the extent of coverage given to the 19 case studies undertaken in the research by the various newspapers through different sources.
- c) To find out the most repeated blaming party mentioned in a newspaper for an incident or casualty covered by newspaper within the 19 case studies.

d) To analyze comparatively how local and national newspapers have portrayed the attack on various religious groups in their news stories.

e) Comparatively analyze the usage of language by newspapers undertaken to identify the armed groups, active in Kashmir.

Methodology

Qualitative method of research has been used in the study undertaken. Within the framework of content analysis, discourse analysis is employed to analyze the data collected by researcher.

The period for the proposed research is 16 years, from 1989 to 2005. Accordingly, 19 such events are chosen as case studies to achieve defined objectives of research & are analyzed through the back files of two local newspapers, *The Kashmir Times*, and *Srinagar Times* and two national newspapers, *The Times of India* and *The Indian Express*.

Major Findings

The study is based on 4977 news stories, as the table below shows. As we go through the table, comparatively hard news reports (3651= 73.35%) are found more published than the soft news (1326= 26.64%) stories. Among the four newspapers *Kashmir Times* did more stories, i.e. 1757 (35.3%), followed by *Indian Express* with 1329(26.7%), *Srinagar Times* with 1086 (21.82%) and *Times of India* with 785 (15.72%).

Of the national newspapers, *Indian Express* (570=22.6%) placed the Kashmir conflict on front page more frequently than *Times of India* (269=10.6%). Similarly, in national newspapers the news about Kashmir is published more on the other pages than being placed on the front page. Some of the results seen in the present research show that the local newspapers covered the Kashmir conflict more vigorously than National newspapers.