

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology and the steps that have been adopted in this research study. The first section deals with research method and approaches used. The second section is all about the content analysis technique (the primary research method used in this study). The third and fourth sections talk about the selection of news portals and time period respectively. The fifth section focuses on sampling while the sixth section is about the data collection process. The seventh and eighth sections look at the unit of analysis and the subject categories respectively. The ninth section is about the intercoder reliability. The tenth section focuses on the tone of the news stories whereas eleventh and twelfth sections deal with the theoretical framework and the process of data analysis respectively.

3.1 Research Approach

August Comte(1798-1857), a French philosopher, popularised the positivist empirical technique. The positivist method of enquiry is built around the idea that social phenomena may be observed, quantified, and recorded in a manner similar to that used in natural research. Any study whose findings are solely based on verifiable, tangible evidence is considered empirical and several types of research in the fields of business, marketing, management, social sciences, journalism, sociology etc. use the positivist empirical approach. It is based on observation and measurement of the phenomena. Quantitative data is frequently used by positivist researchers. Since the primary concern of this study was to measure the frequency and tone of the news stories therefore a positivist empirical research method has been used in it.

In addition to it, this study has a mixed-methods approach. In order to address the research questions, it incorporates both quantitative and qualitative research designs. Mixed method approach blends the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research, thus allowing for a more comprehensive picture. The results may be more reliable when data on the same subject are analysed using a variety of approaches.

A quantitative research design is a systematic analysis of phenomena using methods like surveys, polls, or questionnaires to collect quantifiable data. When conducting quantitative

research, a large sample size that is representative of the entire population is used hence the outcomes are very reliable. Since its results are numerical, the chances of bias get minimized. Tables, charts, graphs, and other illustrations are used to present the obtained data. In this study, a large amount of data (2736 news stories) had to be analysed so for that purpose quantitative research design was considered.

Qualitative research design is used in various social science fields, including anthropology, sociology, and psychology. In this type of research design, in-depth interviews, focus groups, ethnography, case studies, record keeping, observation, etc. are the most often utilised data collection instruments. It has a more subjective approach. In this study the qualitative research design was used for the tone analysis of the headlines of news stories, to look at the text of the news stories and to analyse the in-depth interviews of subject matter experts.

3.2 Content Analysis Method

In 1952, Bernard Berelson published his book with title *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. He defined content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. He believes that it can help to describe trends in communication content and to compare media or levels of communication. According to Dearing & Rogers (1996) the content analysis is the quantification of meaning in documents where the meaning may be both manifest (obvious) or latent (implied or inferred).

It is a research method for drawing verifiable and reliable conclusions about the contexts in which texts are used (Krippendorff, 2004). Texts can include works of art, photos, maps, sounds, signs, symbols, and even numerical data, and they can all be analysed using content analysis. It is a systematic process designed to assess the content of recorded material (Walizer & Wienir, 1978). It has been described as a research technique by Krippendorff (2004) for establishing reliable links between data and context.

Modern content analysis has its origins in World War II, when Allied intelligence forces kept track of the quantity and variety of popular music played on European radio stations (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). Researchers used content analysis to examine propaganda in newspapers and radio broadcasts following the war. According to Kamhawi & Weaver (2003), content analysis was the most widely used method of data collection reported in

significant mass communication publications between 1995 and 1999. Similar to this, a 2007–2008 informal content analysis of three journals that specialise in mass communication research (*Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, and *Mass Communication and Society*) revealed that content analysis was still a common method, used in about one-third of all published articles (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). Tran (2014) found that it was the most popular approach in online agenda setting research, utilised in 61.5% of research articles.

Venkateswarlu (2018) in his study on Indian press and its coverage of the terrorist attacks used content analysis method to analyse the content of four newspapers. Edmund (2016) used it to find out the image of Nigeria created by British press. Poornananda (1998) employed this method to analyse 1399 stories published in two leading U.S. newspapers *Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post* between 1992 and 1996 to understand the coverage of South Asia in them. Shabir et al. (2011) used it for their study on two leading American news magazines, *Newsweek* and *Time* to find out the image of Afghanistan as portrayed by them from 1991 to 2001 for eleven years. Ramasubramanian (2005) employed it to understand the portrayal of India in the films produced in the US and the UK between 1930 to 2000.

Shahwar (2014) used it to study the portrayal of the Muslim World (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq) in the Western print media (*NYT* and *The Daily Telegraph*) in the pre and post-9/11 period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009. Siraj & Ramaprasad (2007) used it to study the image of Pakistan in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* for one-year each pre-and post9/11. Iqbal (2014) used it to study the image of Pakistan reflected by editorials published in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* between 2008 to 2010. Zhang (2016) used it to study the media visibility of China's President Xi Jinping in *The New York Times*.

Ogbodo et al. (2020) did content analysis to understand the global media's framing of COVID-19 crisis whereas Coyne & Archer (2004) used it to analyse 228 hours of British television programs to understand the indirect aggression among British adolescents caused due to television programs. Mastro & Stern (2003) used it to analyse the representations of race in prime-time television advertisements. Dotson et al. (2012) employed it to analyse 1628 news articles in order to understand the media coverage of

climate change in Chile's conservative and liberal newspapers. Barlow et al. (1995) used it to analyse articles about crime appearing in Time magazine during the post-World War II period.

Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) did content analysis of press and television news to understand the framing of European politics by analysing 2601 newspaper stories and 1,522 television news stories. Yoo & Kim (2012) employed it for the analysis of obesity videos on YouTube to examine how the topics of obesity were framed and how obese persons were portrayed on YouTube video clips. Northup & Liebler (2010) used it to understand the beauty ideals projected on the Disney and Nickelodeon television channels. Herbozo et al. (2004) used it to examine body image-related messages in popular children's videos and books.

Rogers and Dearing (1988) measured the media agenda by analysing the content of 6694 news stories regarding AIDS published in the six media outlets (the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, ABC, NBC, and CBS) for 91-months (between June 1981 and December 1988). This was a longitudinal study that used a quantitative content analysis method to examine the coverage of AIDS-related news stories published each month. Similarly, Cho (2007) illustrated how TV newscasts portrayed plastic surgery over the course of three decades.

Content analysis method can be applied for many purposes. One of the advantages of content analysis is its potential to identify developments over long time periods (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). It can be used to assess the image or portrayal of particular groups in society. It can also be used to test hypotheses. It can also be used as a starting point for media effect studies. But there are few limitations to this method as well. Claims about the effects of media cannot be made only on the basis of this.

The findings of a particular content analysis are limited to the framework of the categories and the definitions used in that analysis. Different researchers may use varying definitions and category systems to measure a single concept. This technique is also time consuming and expensive. It can be time-consuming and laborious to analyse and categorize enormous quantities of data. In this study content analysis was considered the best method as it can cope with large volumes of data (here the total number of news stories was 2736).

3.3 Selection of News Portals

The proliferation of the internet has changed the way information is disseminated, sought and received and with this the online agenda setting has emerged as a new frontier for research and theory development in the recent times (Johnson, 2014). Day by day news websites are becoming more popular than the traditional news media sources like newspaper, television or radio. The online readership has been rising globally. With the fast growth of internet network the news portals are emerging as the new grounds for media research. Studies are being conducted on online agenda setting and to explore the influence of news websites on media agendas (Tran, 2014). It is primarily due to these reasons that news portals were selected for the study.

Western media (in this study stands for the news portals of NYT and TG) was chosen for the study because, due to historical reasons they continue to exert power over the global media landscape, information flow, and narrative. The majority of the world's book publishing houses, news organisations, newspapers, magazines, music, movies, advertising, social media networking sites, search engines, radio and television channels are still owned and operated from the Western nations.

According to British media sociologist Jeffrey Tunstall, the US-UK 'news duopoly' is evident even in the 21st century: from international newspapers (NYT, TG) to global news agencies (AP, Reuters); to news magazines (Time, Economist) to financial media (Wall Street Journal/ Financial Times, Bloomberg) to on-line journalism: the US-UK imprint is profound in setting global editorial priorities and news agendas. Hence, the two western nations purposefully selected for this study were the US and the UK.

The Indo-US bilateral ties have been called as one of the most defining partnerships of the 21st century and with the UK India has had a long historical relationship. This was another reason behind the selection of countries. Hence, a purposive sample consisting of two leading western news portals (*theguardian.com* and *nytimes.com*) was taken for the study. The prime consideration for the selection of news portals was their prominence and high worldwide readership. These news portals are influential in setting the agenda in their respective countries and the world. They are followed by intellectuals, policy makers, decision makers and administrators as credible and trustworthy sources of news. These publications are a part of the elite media and the agenda of other news media is often

greatly influenced by them (McCombs, 2014). Both these news portals cover international affairs extensively (Hopple, 1982). Both have been in circulation for over a 100 years and have a rich legacy. They have won several awards for their reporting and media coverage.

3.3.1 The New York Times

The New York Times, a daily newspaper (also called as the Gray Lady), was started in 1851 at New York City. According to the information available on the Wikipedia, in 2022, it had 740,000 paid print subscribers and 8.6 million paid digital subscribers worldwide. In circulation figures, it ranked 18th in the world and third in the US. This newspaper is owned and operated by the Sulzberger family since 1896. Until year 2023, the paper has won 132 Pulitzer Prizes, and continues to be the highest recipient of this award. It is regarded within the industry as a national ‘newspaper of record’. Its current editor-in-chief is Joseph Kahn. On 8th September 2011 it started India Ink, the first ever country specific site focused on India. India is almost always in the top ten searched items on the website of The New York Times (Ghose, 2010).

According to Dearing & Rogers (1996), The New York Times was the most reputable American news outlet, and other news organisations paid attention to it when it indicated an issue was newsworthy. It serves as the intermedia agenda-setter in the United States, and a topic's inclusion on The Times' front page establishes its newsworthiness (McCombs, 2014). For example, Radon problem (at New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania), war on drugs, chemical contamination at Love Canal in western New York state, the issue of AIDS became a national agenda only when these issues were published by The New York Times (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). In the United States, The New York Times is regarded as a prestigious newspaper and is commonly used for media research (Kioussis, 2004; Tedesco, 2005)

3.3.2 The Guardian

The Guardian, a British daily newspaper, was first published as ‘The Manchester Guardian’ in 1821. It has a long history of more than two hundred years. Its main office is in London, United Kingdom. Katharine Viner is its current editor-in-chief. The publication is owned by the Scott Trust. Its sister publications are The Guardian Weekly and The Observer. The newspaper also has two international websites, the Guardian Australia

(started in 2013) and the Guardian US (started in 2011), as well as an online edition *theguardian.com*. Since 2018, the paper's main newsprint sections have been published in tabloid format. The Guardian has won British press awards several times for its excellence in news coverage.

The newspaper and its website enjoys global readership including India. The reports published in this newspaper are well researched and taken in high regard in the journalistic fraternity. Many important media research studies have been conducted on this newspaper in the past. Nolan and Marjoribanks (2011) investigated the function of public editors and media governance; Dogan and Dogan (2020) examined the newspaper's reportage on ISIS; Clayton et al. (1993) researched the evolution and consistency of its coverage of science and technology; Shah & Faqir (2020) explored the framing of Kashmir conflict while Fahmy & Kim (2008) interpreted photos of Iraq War published in The Guardian newspaper.

3.4 Selection of Time Period

This is a longitudinal study in which a long time period from June 2009 to May 2019 (a total of ten years) was taken. This was done to understand the gradual image evolution and get a larger picture. This time period has been full of important national and international events taking place in India. Two main national parties having completely different ideologies i.e. Indian National Congress (2009-14) and Bhartiya Janata Party (2014-19) were in power in this time period. During the literature review it was found there was dearth of studies on the contemporary image of India.

Thus, this time period (2009-19) was chosen to understand the image of contemporary India. Instead of January the study was started from June onwards because the Lok Sabha elections ended in the month of May (in both 2009 & 2019) and the new governments came into the power at the end of May both the times. Therefore June 2009- May 2014 (first five years led by the UPA government) and June 2014 to May 2019 (second five years led by the NDA government) have been taken accordingly.

3.5 Universe

To define the universe is to specify the boundaries of the body of content to be considered (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011). The population or universe represents the entire group of units which is the focus of the study. Two dimensions are usually used to determine the appropriate universe for a content analysis- the topic area and the time period. The universe for this study comprises of the entire media based in Western countries (Global North consisting of mostly the developed nations of Europe, North America and Oceania) in the time period between 2009-19.

3.6 Sampling

A sample is a smaller set of data that a researcher selects from a larger population using a pre-defined technique of selection. The number of individuals or observations included in a study is referred to as the sample size. There are various techniques to identify the sample. Purposive sampling has been used in this study to define the sample which according to Wimmer & Dominick (2011) is a type of nonprobability sampling that includes participants, subjects, or items chosen for particular traits or features and removes those who do not fit these standards.

In purposive sampling the researcher uses his or her judgement to select population members who are likely to provide information. Multistage purposive sampling has been used in this study. In first stage out of all the western nations two nations the US and the UK were chosen. In the second stage out of all the western media two news portals were selected. Amongst the American media it was *nytimes.com* and amongst the British media it was *theguardian.com*. In the third stage, months were selected via constructed month sampling. Starting from June, 2009 every alternate month of year was chosen for the study till May 2019. For example: 2010 (Jan, March, May...); 2011 (Feb, April, June...) and likewise.

Large samples are likely to give more reliable results with this logic, the researcher had earlier planned to include all the stories published in the ten years. The stories were searched yearly and from the total stories that were obtained 50% was used as the sample (news stories of 60 months). In the fourth stage of purposive sampling, there was the selection of content where only the news stories were selected for analysis. Here, all the

news stories related to India published on both the news portals were identified. Stories which were fully based on India were only included and not the ones in which the word ‘India’ was mentioned just once or twice or as a passing reference.

3.7 Data Collection

Primary data was collected for the study from the archive section of the news portals of The New York Times and The Guardian. The search word “India” was used to find the news stories related to India. Stories which were fully focused on India were only taken and not the ones where its name had been mentioned just once or twice. Many stories that were related to Pakistan and other nations of South Asia were also found in the archives but they were removed carefully. Total 5484 such news stories were found. After that, news stories appearing in every alternate month were selected. The search provided 2736 such news stories out of which 1123 were in *nytimes.com* and 1613 were in *theguardian.com*.

For the in-depth interview, the researcher interviewed the subject matter experts (journalists, scholars and diplomats). The selection of candidates was purposive in nature with the logic to include the experts from different fields. The researcher tried to conduct physical interviews but due to the corona guidelines it was not possible to do so. Later an email questionnaire was sent to the experts.

The following people were contacted for the interview:

The New York Times	Hari Kumar, Suhasini Raj, Jefferey Gettleman, Emily Schmall
The Guardian	Hannah Ellis Petersen, Michael Safi
The Hindu	Suhasini Haider
BBC	Sachin Gogoi
Politicians	Shashi Tharoor (INC), Ram Madhav (BJP)
Academicians	Dr. Jatin Srivastava, Prof. Daya Thussu, Dr. Sanjay Dwivedi
Diplomats	Dr Jamini Bhagwati, Dr. Rakesh Sood

Unfortunately, the response rate was very low and the researcher could get very few replies. Out of the fifteen people the researcher tried to contact, only four replied back: Dr. Daya Thussu, Dr. Jaimini Bhagwati, Mr. Sachin Gogoi, Dr. Sanjay Dwivedi. Correspondents from The New York Times declined to comment due to service rules. Only two interviews could be conducted in the physical mode because of Covid-19 pandemic. Most interviews were conducted via email or phone and their response rate was very thin. There were some other limitations too in the process of data collection. Some news stories could not be found as their web page and link had expired (specially the news stories on the old website of The New York Times).

3.8 Unit of Analysis

Unit of analysis is the smallest element of a content analysis but also one of the most important. In written content, the unit of analysis might be a single word or symbol, a theme (a single assertion about one subject), or an entire article or story. In television and film analyses, units of analysis can be characters, acts, or entire programs. Media content is typically measured in terms of a countable unit for agenda-setting studies, such as the number of story column inches in a set of newspapers, the number of front page stories an issue receives, or the number of seconds an issue gets in a year of TV newscasts.

The unit of analysis for this study consisted of news stories only. The researcher did not examine opinion, editorial, feature article, India Ink blog, book reviews, op-ed, supplements, cartoons, infographics, photographs, news brief, Dealbook column (some available and some are not), Newswallah column (seasonal in nature, was found only in 2012), passing references to India, Marriage & Modern Love column, videos, cartoons etc.

Operational definition of the Unit of Analysis

News Story- A factual presentation of current events in a narrative form with a straightforward style without editorial comment.

3.9 Subject Categories

All the news articles which were found fit based on the above parameters were coded into subject categories using MS Excel worksheet. Keeping research questions and objectives of the study in mind, six main themes and thirty-five sub categories were created following

an inductive approach. The operational definitions for each of them have been provided below:

Sl No.	Theme	Sub- Categories
1.	Political	Defence, Governance, International Relations, Internal Security, Domestic Politics, Protests
2.	Social	Corruption, Crime, Education, Human Interest, Human Rights, Law, Urban Issues
3.	Economic	Banking, Business, Domestic Economy, Poverty
4.	Cultural	Fine Arts, Cinema, Food, Fashion, Literature, Performing Arts, Sports, Tourism, Spirituality
5.	Scientific	Agriculture, Environment, Energy, Health, Research & Development
6.	Miscellaneous	Accident, Awards, Obituary

Table 3.1: Themes and sub-categories

Theme 1: Political Image

1. Defence- News related to defence deals, acquisitions, wars, surgical strikes, military involvement, protection of the borders, skirmishes along the border lines.
2. Governance- News related to steps being taken by Indian government in centre and the states.
3. International Relations- News related to India's bilateral ties, diplomatic efforts etc.
4. Internal Security- News related to insurgency, Naxalism, terror attacks, violence in Kashmir.
5. Domestic Politics- News related to legislation, parliament, legislative assemblies, elections, political parties and other democratic processes.
6. Protests- News related to express strong dislike or oppose something.

Theme 2: Social Image

1. Corruption- News related to dishonest or illegal behaviour of public officials or those in authority.
2. Crime - News related to activities that break the law such as Rape, murder, communal violence.

3. Education- News related to teaching- learning process, schools, colleges or universities etc.
4. Human Interest- News which people find interesting because it describes the experiences, feelings, human emotions etc.
5. Human Rights- News related to rights of children, women, elderly people, labour, LGBTQ community etc.
6. Law- News related to the laws of the land.
7. Urban Issues- News related to the issues of urban areas of India.

Theme 3: Economic Image

1. Banking- News dealing with banking and monetary institutions such as SBI, RBI.
2. Business- News dealing with investments, mergers, acquisitions etc.
3. Domestic economy- News dealing with Indian economy, policy changes and decisions taken by the government and finance ministry etc.
4. Poverty- News related to inequality.

Theme 4: Cultural Image

1. Fine Arts- News related to art galleries, paintings, exhibitions, works of sculpture
2. Cinema- News related to Indian film industry (South Indian, Bollywood etc.)
3. Food- News related to Indian cuisines etc.
4. Fashion- News dealing with fashion shows, new trends and styles.
5. Literature- News related to literary events, book launching etc.
6. Performing Arts- News related to Indian music, dance and drama.
7. Sports- News dealing with achievement of sportspersons, organizing of events etc.
8. Tourism- News related to tourist activities in India.
9. Spirituality- News dealing with spirituality and yoga.

Theme 5: Scientific Image

1. Agriculture- News related with farmers and other farming activities.
2. Environment- News related with climate change, natural disasters, environmental pollution, wildlife, exploitation of natural resources, efforts for the conservation of environment and biodiversity.
3. Energy- News related to renewable energy and other energy sources.

4. Health- Stories related to public health
5. Research & Development (R&D) - News stories related to innovation in science, technology, space sector of India.

Theme 6: Miscellaneous Image

1. Accident- News related to some unexpected accidents i.e. road accidents, railway accidents, bridge or flyover collapse etc.
2. Awards- News related to prizes given to Indian citizens.
3. Obituary- News published on death of a prominent person which talks about their life and achievements.

3.10 Data Coding Sheet

Code sheet is the most important element in content analysis. It is a tool for gathering data in a scientifically sound manner. The code sheet was prepared incorporating the themes and sub-categories and it has been attached in the annexure.

3.11 Reliability

Wimmer & Dominick (2011) argue that a study is reliable when it yields identical results after repeated measurement of the same material. Intercoder reliability refers to levels of agreement among independent coders who code the same content using the same coding instrument. There are numerous ways to calculate intercoder reliability. In this study, the reliability was calculated using Holsti's (1969) formula. According to which: Reliability = $2M/N_1 + N_2$ where M is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree, and N_1 and N_2 are the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder, respectively.

When using Holsti's formula, the majority of published content analyses typically claim a minimum reliability coefficient of about 90% or higher, and of about .75 or above when using pi or kappa. According to this formula, the reliability coefficients of 90% or greater are nearly always acceptable, 80% or greater is acceptable in most situations, and 70% may be appropriate in some exploratory studies for some indices. In this study, intercoder reliability was derived to find out what kind of image of India was created by the tone of the headlines of the news stories (Favourable, Unfavourable, Neutral). Two coders (N_1 -

Researcher himself) and (N₂ - Fellow Research Scholar colleague) coded 10% of stories each from The New York Times and The Guardian and the percentage of total reliability obtained was 86% which makes the results highly reliable.

3.12 Tone of the News Stories.

The purpose of using the tonal analysis was to find how the news portals framed the image of India. The direction and tone of the news story was evaluated on a three-point scale: favourable, unfavourable and neutral. Headlines were the prime focus of this analysis but the overall sense that the news story gave was also kept in the mind while deciding the tone.

Favourable image of India: If the headline of a news story reflected progress, advancement, economic growth, individual success, co-operation, political and economic stability, achievements or if it reflected India fighting against crime, corruption, terrorism, poverty; resolving conflict and good governance were considered favourable in their tone.

- India successfully launches first hi-tech telescopes into space (29th Sept 2015, TG)
- Bill on Crime Against Women Passes in India (21st March 2013, NYT)
- India: turning waste into sustainable employment opportunities (13th Sept. 2013, TG)
- India Reports an Increase In Wild Tiger Population (28th March 2011, NYT)
- India's Mars rocket Mangalyaan blasts off (5th Nov 2013, TG)

• This article is more than 7 years old

Now India is growing fast it's time to update our tired image of the country

Jason Burke



There is no immediately obvious reason why a colony that was exploited for 200 years before winning its independence should align itself with western powers



Source: theguardian.com, 14th Feb. 2016

Unfavourable image of India: If the headline of the news stories emphasized corruption, crime, conflict, poverty, starvation, violence, terrorism, communalism, disasters, accidents, human right violations, prevalence of diseases etc. and had a negative tone then they were considered to be unfavourable in their tone.

- TB deaths creating villages of widows in rural India (21st Jan. 2011, TG)
- As Grain Piles Up, India's Poor Still Go Hungry (7th June 2012, NYT)
- India: hundreds of men accused of sexual violence stand in elections (21st Dec 2012, TG)
- Nun Raped During Robbery at Convent School in India (14th March 2015, NYT)
- Pollution from car emissions killing millions in China and India (17th Dec 2012, TG)

● This article is more than 7 years old

India is being ruled by a Hindu Taliban

Anish Kapoor



Narendra Modi is clamping down on tolerance and freedom of expression. In Britain we have a responsibility to speak out against it



David Cameron and Narendra Modi share a joke at the start of the Indian prime minister's visit to Britain. Photograph: Facundo Arrizabalaga/EPA

Source: theguardian.com, 12th Nov. 2015

Neutral image of India: The headlines that reflected neither positive nor negative conditions were considered to be neutral in their tone. News stories which presented all the sides of a story in an in-depth manner were also considered as neutral.

- Priyanka Chopra Is a Tech Investor, Too (3rd Oct. 2018, NYT)
- Indian Soldier Found Alive After Five Days Under 'Massive Ice Boulders' on Himalayan Glacier (9th Feb. 2016, NYT)
- Arvind Subramanian Said to Be Top Pick for India's Chief Economic Adviser (22nd Aug. 2014, NYT)
- Sachin Tendulkar falls short of century in final Test match (15th Nov. 2013, TG)
- India's deadly heatwave set to continue (28th May 2015, TG)

🕒 This article is more than 9 years old

Sachin Tendulkar falls short of century in final Test match

- **Batsman dismissed for 74 in Mumbai**
- **Darren Sammy catches India legend off Narsingh Deonarine**



🎬 Sachin Tendulkar's final Test match: thousands of Indian cricket fans bid farewell - video
Guardian

Source: theguardian.com, 15th Nov. 2013

3.13 The Theoretical Framework

Agenda setting theory

The concept of agenda setting was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in an original article which was published in Public Opinion Quarterly in 1972. They studied the agenda setting effect of the mass media in the 1968 American presidential campaign. They measured it by counting the number of news articles, editorials and broadcast stories in the nine-mass media that served Chapel Hill. In this study, they found

an almost perfect correlation (+.98) between the rank order and salience of the five issues on the media agenda (measured by their content analysis of the media coverage of the election campaign) and the same five issues on the public agenda (measured by their survey of the 100 undecided voters) (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). For example, foreign policy was ranked as the most important issue by the public, and this issue was given the most attention by the media in the period leading up to the election. They concluded from their analysis that the mass media set the agenda for the public.

According to this theory, the news media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are and this is reflected in what the public perceives as the main issues which deserve their attention (McQuail, 2010). The mass media presents certain issues frequently and prominently with the result that large segments of the public come to perceive those issues as more important than others. The more coverage an issue receives, the more important it appears to people.

Reviewing the coverage of mass media over a long period of time can give an insight into the way it shapes and sets the agenda. For example, some issues receive prominent coverage than others while there are some others which receive very little coverage. The size of headlines for individual articles, the length of articles, and the page numbers on which articles appear, the frequency of coverage of a particular issue, the tone of the news stories, words and phrases used are some of the ways in which a newspaper sets the agenda. The time allotted to an issue on the news bulletin, the timing of the programme, photos and videos used to depict something, words used by the anchor to describe an issue, the frequency of appearance etc. are ways in which the television sets the agenda. Similarly, other mass media including the online mediums too follow a similar pattern and play a vital role in the process of agenda setting.

While many concerns vie for the public's attention, only a select number are successful in doing so, and the news media greatly affects how we see the most crucial issues of the day (Mc Combs & Reynolds, 2009). The public opinion is formed in accordance with the kind of media coverage an issue gets. According to Cohen (1963), the press may not always be successful at telling people 'What to think' but it is highly successful in informing its readers 'What to think about'. The articles selected for the reader by the newspaper's authors, editors, and publishers have a varied impact on how people perceive the world.

The process of creating the agenda is comprised of the media agenda, the public agenda, the policy agenda, and the interplay between these three elements. There may be significant overlap between the amount of coverage given to an issue by various mass media.

The agenda of the media gradually and incrementally shapes the public's agenda on a given issue. As the total quantity of media messages regarding an issue rises over time, the audience is convinced that it is significant. In the longitudinal agenda setting research, the data is collected at several intervals in time, making it simpler to monitor long-term change.

Research in the recent times has demonstrated that the nature of agenda setting effects has altered with the advancement of online media communication. Mainstream mass media entities still exert their agenda setting power, but they are no longer a sole force (Tran, 2014). The time required to examine agenda setting has decreased due to the instantaneity and speed of internet communication. Online information is delivered, sought, received, processed and exchanged constantly in a 24-hour cycle, often in real time. Information received through web-based systems typically prompts responses very immediately. The way an agenda is set has altered as a result of the changing media landscape.

One of the important influences on the media agenda suggested by recent research is the content of other media. In particular, it appears that the elite media, such as the New York Times, can set the agenda for other media. This process is known as intermedia agenda setting. Rather than the drug problem being more prevalent in society, intermedia agenda setting was more responsible for the drug issue's prominence in American media in 1985 and 1986. In fact, actual drug use did not rise dramatically in 1985 and 1986, although mass media coverage of the issue did (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

The agenda-setting effects of communication media are widespread. Winter & Eyal (1981) studied the agenda setting effects on the civil rights issue by comparing front-page New York Times content and national public opinion from 1954 to 1976. Atwater et al. (1985) studied the effect of agenda setting on the environmental issues. Palmgreen & Clarke (1977) studied it with local and national issues and found that network television was exercising a stronger agenda-setting influence than newspapers at the national level. There

are more than 400 empirical evidences of agenda-setting effects in different countries such as the United States, Japan, Spain, Argentina and Germany. These effects have been observed across a diversity of public issues such as economy, civil rights, drugs, environment, electoral campaigns, crime, foreign policy etc. (McCombs, 2014).

3.14 Data Analysis

All the 2736 news stories were divided into six themes and thirty-five sub-categories. These news stories were then coded accordingly and all the categorized news stories were entered in MS excel sheet. All the themes and sub-categories were properly defined so that they were mutually exclusive. The sheets were then analysed manually. Amount of media coverage was measured by counting the frequency of the news stories and calculating the percentage. Tone of the headlines (favourable, unfavourable and neutral) was also calculated in the similar manner after using the Holsti's formula for the intercoder reliability.

Media agenda was measured on the basis of Ray Funkhouser's study (1973) which analysed the relationship of the media agenda and the public agenda in three weekly news magazines (Time, Newsweek and US News) on a yearly basis from 1964 to 1970 (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). Graphs and flow charts were developed wherever necessary. Word cloud to understand which words were used mostly in the headlines was prepared using Bjorn's Word Cloud designer software. Of, all the 2736 headlines the word India was used for the highest number of times (1785 times) but it was excluded as all the stories were related to India itself. Similarly, prepositions (on, with, after, by); verbs (is, am, are); conjunctions (and, but); articles (a, an, the); pronouns (whom, someone) etc. were not included in the counting.

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