

SURVEILLANCE OF MEDIA ON VIOLATION OF WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

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The Universal Declaration of Human Rights may be regarded as the first landmark in contemporary history in the development of the concept of Human Rights. It is the basic international pronouncement of the inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family. The General assembly adopted it on 10 December 1948 at its meeting in Paris. In the operative part of the resolution the General Assembly while adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed:

"This Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the people of territories under their jurisdiction."

Declaration in its article I and II says that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and "every one" is entitled to all rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration without any discrimination on the basis of race, color, caste, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion. The Declaration also says that a balanced and integrated economic and social development could only contribute towards the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security, social progress and better standard of living and observance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

But in practice, nearly half of people particularly the women are deprived of their human rights because they are not only considered subordinate to men but sometimes not even human beings.

In India women is seen as divine and worshipped as the embodiment of all the virtues on one hand but on the other hand she is discriminated against and victimized by the norms created by the male dominated society. Women have a unique position in every society whether developed, developing or underdeveloped. This is particularly due to the various roles they play during various stages of their life as a daughter, wife, mother and sister etc. in spite of her contribution in the life of every individual human being. She still belongs to a class or group of society which is in a disadvantage position or account of several social behaviors. She has been the victim of tyranny at the hands of men who dominate the society.

Violation of Women's Human Rights: World Scenario

Violence

Gender-based violence against women - female infanticide, sexual trafficking and exploitation, dowry killings and domestic violence - causes more death and disability among women in the 15 to 44 age group than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined¹. During the past 30 years, 30 million women and children have been trafficked for sexual exploitation². An estimated 130 million women worldwide have undergone female genital mutilation and more than 2 million are mutilated every year. 98 percent of Somali women have been mutilated³ Up to 47 percent of women report that their first sexual intercourse was forced⁴. More than 40 percent of women in Columbia report having been physically abused in a current relationship.⁵ In recent years there has been an alarming rise in atrocities against women in India. Every 26 minutes a woman is molested. Every 34 minutes a rape takes place. Every 42 minutes a sexual harassment incident occurs. Every 43 minutes a woman is kidnapped and every 93 minutes a woman is burnt to death over dowry⁶.

Health status

More than half a million women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth every year. Ninety-nine percent of these deaths occur in the developing world⁷. Providing basic maternal and newborn health services to developing countries would cost an average of \$3 per capita per year. However, once complications develop, saving the life of a mother or infant costs about \$230.⁸

Of the estimated 40 million people worldwide living with HIV, about two-thirds are in sub-Saharan Africa, and young women are more than twice as likely to be infected as their male counterparts⁹.

The former Soviet bloc has seen a 50-fold increase in HIV infections, the most dramatic rise in the world, in the past eight years¹⁰.

India is one of the few countries where males significantly outnumber females and this imbalance has increased over time. India's maternal mortality rates in rural areas are among the worlds highest. From a global perspective Indian accounts for 19 percent of all lives births and 27 percent of all maternal deaths.

Access to education

Of an estimated 115 million children who currently do not attend primary school, girls make up 57 percent¹¹. Of the world's 979 million illiterate adults, two-thirds are women¹².

A recent study shows that increases in women's education made the greatest contribution to reducing the rate of child malnutrition, accounting for 43 percent of the total reduction¹³.

More than 24 million girls in Africa are not in school and the overall gender gap in sub-Saharan Africa has widened in the last 10 years¹⁴.

Political power

In 2003, at least 54 countries had discriminatory laws against women¹⁵. Some countries still do not have universal suffrage. Among them are Brunei, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates¹⁶.

Economic status

1. Only 1 percent of the world's assets are in the name of women¹⁷. More than \$7 trillion worth of women's work goes unpaid¹⁸.

2. 1 billion Women live on less than \$2 a day, and 330 million women live on less than \$1 a day¹⁹.

In the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, only 40 women per 100 men are economically active in the formal economy²⁰.

The Commission on the status of Women

The Economic and Social Council, at its first session in 1946, established a nuclear Sub-Commission on status on women. The Council having considered at its second session the reports of the nuclear commission on Human rights and of the nuclear sub-commission on the status of Women decided, by resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946, to confer upon the latter the status of a Full Commission to be known as the Commission on the Status of Women²¹. The Commission is composed of representatives of member states, elected by the council. The membership of the commission was originally set at 15 but was expanded in 1951 to 18 members, and then to 21 in 1961. By resolution 1147(XLI) of 4 august 1966, the membership of the Commission was further increased, w.e.f 1 January 1967, from 21 to 32 members. The members are elected on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution according to the same pattern as established for the Commission on Human Rights²².

Convention for Women's Rights

The commission on the status of women has done commendable work. The commission has requests the International Labors Organization (ILO) to promote the principle of equal work and to complete a convention and recommendation on this subject. The ILO adopted two instruments in 1951 in furtherance of the above request. Similarly, it has asked the UNESCO to encourage equal opportunities for women in Election. An important milestone in United Nations work with respect to the advancement of women was the declaration of the elimination of discrimination against women adopted by the General Assembly on Nov 7, 1967. The object of this convention is to implement equality between men and women and to prevent discrimination against women, in particular such specific forms of discrimination as forced marriages, domestic violence and less access to education, health care and public life as well as discrimination at work²³.

On December 10, 1974, the General Assembly proclaimed 1975 as International women's Year. The year was devoted to promote equality between men and women to ensure the integration of women in the development efforts and to recognize the importance of women's increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among states and to strengthening of world peace.

On December 7, 1975, the social and humanitarian committee of United Nations unanimously adopted a resolution proclaiming the decade 1976-85 as "UN Decade for

Women to be devoted to the world plan of action to ensure their equality in society. The action plan was the same as recommended by the International Women's conference held at Mexico City in 1975, and its corner-stone was: Equality, Development and Peace. More recently the commission has been concerned with practices measures to ensure the implementation of women's rights. The Vienna declaration and programmed of action called for increased integration of women's rights into the United Nations Human Rights system. In furthermore endorsed the need to recognize the particularly of women's rights and the developments of means to implement them, including the more vigorous implementation of the connection on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The declaration on the elimination of violence against women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, calls on all states to take measures to prevent and punish violence against women, with the mandate to examine the cause and consequence of violence against women²⁴.

Surveillance of Media:

In a democratic setup, the government is elected by the people representing the interests of the majority and securing the interests of minority. The press in this process ensures the best possible participation of interested parties, helps people to choose between real alternatives by providing information on them, encourages debate on issues taken up by various parties and performs the 'watchdog' function of protecting against the tendency of the state to abuse the rights of its citizens. The role of media in early liberal thought was defined mainly in terms of watchdog, the expectations from this medium widened with the development of mass society. The Hutchins commission, in 1947 in the US, specified the additional role of the press which was to provide full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the days events in a context which gives them meaning, to serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism and be common carriers of the public expression: to give a representative picture of a constituent groups in society and goals and values of society. With such developments, media occupied a significant role in society. Today, media acts as a cornerstone of democracy which imparts information on public issues and through which citizens convey their opinions to policy makers.

Violation of Women's Human Rights and coverage by Newspapers:

One may legitimately question the democratic role of media in representing women's concerns and their participation in this public space. Women form half the world's population and have acquired political citizenship in most of the societies. Yet their concerns and status have remained marginal within the social, economic and political structures. Media expose so many women's issues related to different fields like fashion, achievements, health, movements, politics, films, romance and sex also. Presence of women in news is very broad subject to analysis. Many women related stories may be covered only for fulfillment the aims of political parties, market, male viewers or readers and media also. Plethoras of facts are released by many organizational reports show that there are so many incidents full with women's cry. In every hour many women may be raped, tortured or discriminated by male dominated society in world. Media reveals time to time these kinds of reports but is these enough or there is some requirement to improve in its attitude. This study analyzes the nature and importance of women's human rights related issues covered by national newspapers. The comparative study of two national English daily namely Hindustan times and The Times of India is being shown with different aspects.

Selection of Newspapers and Period of Study-

There are five national English dailies in India which rank as the nation's representative as a quality press (Merrill and Fisher, 1980). They are Hindustan times, The Times of India, The Hindu, The Statesman and The Indian Express. In this analysis only two newspapers were taken because of those availability and circulation in city.

Year 2006 were selected to study the contents of the selected newspapers. In view of the voluminous data, the scope of the study was narrowed down further through systematic sampling. Thus, starting from January 2006 every fifth issue ensured equal representation of each day in week in the data. The total number of newspapers (issues) analyzed are 146 (73 issues each paper).

Methodology:

Content analysis was used to investigate the nature and importance of the coverage of Women's Human Rights violation related issues in the newspapers. Although accumulating numerical data is the primary purpose of content analysis, the

quantitative highlights the qualitative aspects of coverage.

Analyses :

To analyze the violation of human rights related coverage regarding women printed in newspapers, equality, health, education, sexual harassment, violence, police atrocities and crime against women related issues were selected. All kind of printed material related to these issues as articles, news stories, analysis, editorials, letter to editor, column etc were taken also for analyses.

**Print Area of the Newspaper
Table: (A)**

Newspapers	Average no. of pages	Area of per page (length × width) Sq.cm	Average Print Area of single issue (Sq.cm)
Hindustan Times	24	51×33=1683	40,392
The Times of India	24	52×33=1716	41,184

It is shown from above table that average no. of pages in Hindustan Times and The Times of India are 24. Print area of single issue of Hindustan Times, and The Times of India, is 40,392 Sq.Cm and 41,184, Sq.cm. respectively.

Violation of Women's Human Rights related coverage in Newspapers during 2006

Table: (B)

Name of Newspapers	Single issue	Total (single×73)	Area (in Sq.cm)	
			Women's Rights related issues	Percentage
Hindustan Times	40,392	29,48,616	12,384.00	0.42
The Times of India	41,184	30,06,432	12,326.00	0.41

With regard to above table it is to make clear that the total number of each newspaper taken for analysis were 73. The above table shows that the total percent of covered area for women's human rights related issues in the Hindustan Times and The Times of India, is 0.42 percent, 0.41percent, respectively. It shows that the space given to women's human rights related issues is too less.

To analyze the nature of these published coverage, it was categorized in different fields like health, education, sexual harassment, status/equality, violence/ crime and police atrocity related issues. Area of published material (sq.cm) was measured in these categories separately. The analysis in percentage is shown in table below.

Nature of women's Human Rights violation related Coverage during 2006

Table: (C)

Nature of coverage	Hindustan Times		The Times of India	
	Area (sq.cm)	Percentage	Area (sq.cm)	Percentage
Health	1424.16	11.50	308.20	2.5
Education	24.76	0.20	924.40	7.5
Sexual Harassment	3653.28	29.50	3266.40	26.5
Status/Equality	3727.58	30.10	4005.95	32.5
Violence/Crime	3467.54	28.00	3759.43	30.5
Police Atrocity	86.68	0.70	61.62	0.50
Total	12,384.00	100.00	12,326.00	100

The above table reveals that in 'Hindustan Times' 11.50 percent health related women's human rights issues were covered while in 'The Times of India' 2.5 percent coverage was given to these issues, which is too less in comparison. In 'Hindustan Times' only 0.2 percent of education related issues were covered but on other hand, 7.5 percent coverage was given for education related issues in 'The Times of India', which is much more than 'Hindustan Times'. The big number of coverage was given to sexual harassment related issues i.e. 29.5% in 'Hindustan Times' while in 'The Times of India' 26.5 percent coverage was given for sexual harassment related issues. 'Hindustan Times' gave maximum 30.10 percent space to discrimination against women i.e. status/equality related issues and 'The Times of India' also gave maximum coverage to discrimination against women related issues (32.5) i.e. status / equality. Violence or crime against women is also shown also in large amount as 28 percent in 'Hindustan Times' on other hand these issues were covered 30.5 percent in 'The Times of India'. The coverage of violation of rights in police custody is less i.e. 0.70 percent in 'Hindustan Times' while police atrocity related issues were also got least coverage only

0.5 percent in 'The Times of India'.

Importance of Women's Human Rights Violation related Coverage during 2006

The form of covered story shows mostly the importance of covered story e.g. editorial is written on very crucial issues. The above table shows the way of women's human rights violation related coverage in both of paper. Hindustan Times gave its 10.4 percent space of editorial to these issues in one year and 8.3 percent for article. Near about half of stories (58.5) are in form of news and depends on incidents. The reactions of readers reflect in the form of letter to editor, which occupied only 2.2 percent. Columns are the forum of discussion and these types of issues got 18.5 percent space in it. Analysis of these issues were got least 2.1 percent in one year. On the other hand Times of India gave 7.4 percent of its space for these types of issues in editorial and 7.1 percent in article. Here also news covered more than half 58.2 percent space, letter to editor covered 2.0 percent, column covered 16.4 percent and analysis were wrote 8.9 percent on these topics.

CONCLUSION

The above study reveals that print media keep watch but not sufficient on violation of women's human rights related issues. Present analyses of nature of women's human rights violation related coverage exhibits that status/equality related issues were covered prominently by both of newspapers i.e. 30.10 in Hindustan Times and 32.5 percent in The Times of India. The space covered by sexual harassment and crime/violence related coverage was in minor than status/equality related coverage and higher than education, health, and police atrocities related coverage. Above study also reveals that both the English newspapers Hindustan Times and The Times of India gave nearly equal space to women's human rights related coverage i.e. 0.42 and 0.41 percent respectively.

The above analyses of importance given by newspapers to women's human rights related coverage shows that a major part of coverage is devoted to news items i.e. 58.5 percent in Hindustan Times and 58.2 in the Times of India while the space for editorials, written on these issues were given only 10.4 percent in Hindustan Times and 7.4 in The Times of India. Articles also were not written in sufficient manners in both of newspapers while the analysis were published lowest i.e. 2.1 percent in Hindustan times and letter to editor were published minimum in Times of India i.e. 2.0 percent. Columns were published sufficiently in both of newspapers i.e. 18.5 percent in Hindustan Times and 16.4 percent in the times of India during 2006.

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