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The Mouthpiece Is Mum: Analysis of Two Dailies of Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract:

Since time immemorial, mass media has been a trusted entity in society providing people with information, education and entertainment. The mass media has been a vehicle for the oppressed, voiceless and weaker section of the society. But with changing times, media has lately shifted its foci of attention from real issues that concern the masses to more petty matters. The news values have deteriorated so much so to carve in new segments like Yellow Journalism, Paid News etc. Even media has come under scanner following the trend of commoditising women, portraying them as entertainment products and overlooking the ground realities. The present paper aimed at conducting a Content Analysis of news items related to women published in two popular daily newspapers of Arunachal Pradesh. The study reveals the attitude of mass media in this underdeveloped state in India towards the women, providing scant attention to real issues pertaining to women. Women issues are not really coming to fore in media platforms and it is suppressed in the glittering darkness of media mechanic of profit making.

Keywords: Media, Women related news, portrayal of women.

1. Introduction

Mass media has a placenta connection with the prevailing attitude and values in a society. Be it any issue under the sun, news coverage reflects the way people assess an issue. Other way round, media has also potentially set the agendas for the people to read an issue, in media's chosen way. In modern day mass media, coverage of women related issues also needs to be examined to find out the ground reality. Theoretical empowerment and its practical implications are to be assessed in the light of media coverage of women issues. Women have been denied a mainstream position in media in terms of addressing issues concerning them. However women have been used as appeals to sell a product or service, often in a redundant and inglorious way. Portrayal of women in media has been a topic debated by feminist and learned section of the society. It has been seen that media today has shaped alike a platform for fetching profit compromising their ethics. Most of the time media portray women as a commodity; best examples are the television advertisements. Women are shown as a pleasure tool for audience in the media world. Media has faced criticism for exposing women in different angles to earn money.

2. Objective

To find out the amount of media attention women issues grab in newspapers of Arunachal Pradesh. The study aims at comparing news coverage of news on women or women related issues in two leading dailies from the state of Arunachal Pradesh in India, Arunachal Times and Echo of Arunachal.

3. Methodology

To conduct the study, two leading dailies from the state of Arunachal Pradesh in India, Arunachal Times and Echo of Arunachal will be studied for a period of 30 days (January 1-31, 2015). News contents of two newspapers will be analysed and their relative attention towards women related news will be examined. The study would reveal kinds of women stories that are mostly covered in these newspapers and the content (story) reported. The stories will be categorized and the area of positioning (page no.) was found out. Also the space given to individual story (column cm) will be measured. The analysis of the content between the two leading dailies will be compared so as to find out which newspapers gives more coverage to the women related issues or news on women. The content analysis will also help us to understand what kinds of news on women are covered in these newspapers along with placement of the stories.

4. Significance of the study

In this era of information revolution, Media is considered to be storehouse of information that can be used for public discourse. The impact of media and its coverage of issues open up plethora of possibilities in defining the status of society. It is also known as the vehicle of information through which messages are being carried to the large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience. In India media plays a vital role in defining the society. But in reality it has been seen that media today has drifted away from its primary duty of

sensitizing the society. The study would be useful in finding out whether in Arunachal Pradesh, an underdeveloped state in India; media is playing any different role towards empowering the women. Media is seen as a driving agent in bringing development in any society. The study will unearth the real role that media is bringing to the fore in developing states like Arunachal Pradesh, India.

5. Limitations of the Study

1. Unavailability of Newspaper on daily basis for the remoteness of the area where the study was conducted(Ziro, Lower Subansiri District, PIN- 791120, Arunachal Pradesh).
2. Limited period of study.

6. Data Analysis and Findings: Table 1

Date	No. of story covered	Column in cm.	Area of positioning	Category of news
1/1/15	4 stories	49cm	Page 2	Entertainment(4)
2/1/15	No data available			
3/1/15	1 story	22cm	Page 2	Entertainment(1)
4/1/15	6 stories	129.6cm	page4/6	Entertainment(4)/sports(2)
5/1/15	2 story	24.1cm	Page3	Politics(1)/entertainment(2)/sports(1)
6/1/15	1 story	48cm	Page 8	Sports(1)
7/1/15	1 story	37.7cm	Page2	Entertainment(1)/sports(1)
8/1/15	3 stories	55.4cm	Page 2	Entertainment(2)/empowerment(1)/ sports(1)
9/1/15	2 stories	61cm	Page2	Entertainment(1)/sports(1)
10/1/15	No data available			
11/1/15	5 stories	86.9cm	page7/8	Sports(3)/politics(1)/entertainment(1)
12/1/15	2 stories	56cm	pagePage1	/Entertainment(2)
13/1/15	4 stories	89.4cm	page1/2	Entertainment(2)/sports(2)
14/1/15	2 stories	34cm	Page2	Entertainment(1)/empowerment(1)
15/1/15	No story Reported			
16/1/15	4 stories	91.8	Page8	Sports(2)/entertainment(2)
17/1/15	3 stories	63.5cm	Page8	Sports(2)/entertainment(2)
18/1/15	4 stories	113cm	page7/8	Entertainment(2)/sports(2)
19/1/15	No story			
20/1/15	3 stories	56.1cm	page6	Politics(1)/sports(1)/entertainment(1)
21/1/15	2 stories	53.1cm	Page1	Empowerment(1)/entertainment(1)
22/1/15	3 stories	46.9cm	page2	Entertainment(3)
23/1/15	6 stories	131.9cm	page5/3	Entertainment(1)/empowerment(3) /sports(2)
24/1/15	1 story	29.6cm	page2	Entertainment(1)
25/1/15	3 stories	37.3cm	page1/2	Empowerment(1)/entertainment(1)/ sports(1)
26/1/15	1 story	20cm	Page2	Entertainment(1)
27/1/15	No data available			
28/1/15	2 stories	37.5cm	page8	Sports(1)/entertainment(1)
29/1/15	4 stories	68.5cm	Page 8	Sports(1)/entertainment(3)
30/1/15	3 stories	50.7cm	page2	Entertainment(2)/politics(1)
31/1/15	1 story	17.6cm	page2	Entertainment(1)

Table 1: Arunachal times from January 1-31, 2015

Analysis for Arunachal Times

Total no. of days studied=31 days

No. of days newspaper available=28 days

No. of days newspaper unavailable=3 days

No. of days no stories on women reported= 1 day

Total area of column cm covered on women story=1,619.5cm

Average column cm covered per day on women story=52.241cm

Date	Number of stories covered	Column cm. covered	Area of positioning	Category of news
1/1/15	2 stories	38.5 cm	6	Entertainment
2/1/15	No data available			
3/1/15	3 Stories	39.8 cm	6	Entertainment
4/1/15	No data available			
5/1/15	No data available			
6/1/15	4 Stories	69 cm	6and 7	Entertainment and sports
7/1/15	5 Stories	79.3 cm	6	Entertainment, empowerment and crime
8/1/15	5 Stories	62.4 cm	6/7	Entertainment and sports
9/1/15	4 Stories	66.9 cm	6	Entertainment and sports
10/1/15	5 Stories	63.9 cm	6	Entertainment and political
11/1/15	4 Stories	73.9 cm	6/7	Entertainment and sports
12/1/15	3 Stories	26.8 cm	6	Entertainment and sports
13/1/15	6 Stories	68.1 cm	6	Entertainment and investigative
14/1/15	2 Stories	82.5 cm	6	Entertainment
15/1/15	No Data available			
16/1/15	5 Stories	82.5 cm	6/7	Entertainment, sports and political
17/1/15	5 Stories	70.4 cm	6/7	Entertainment
18/1/15	3 Stories	10.63 cm	6/7	Entertainment
19/1/15	5 Stories	106.3 cm	6/7	Entertainment
20/1/15	5 Stories	108.6 cm	6	Entertainment
21/1/15	1 Story	11.1 cm	2	Entertainment
22/1/15	1 Story	15.6 cm	6	Entertainment
23/1/15	4 Stories	60.3 cm	6/7	Entertainment
24/1/15	6 Stories	64.1 cm	6/7	Entertainment
25/1/15	5 Stories	86.9 cm	6	Entertainment
26/1/15	1 Story	52.9 cm	7	Entertainment
27/1/15	No data available			
28/1/15	5 Stories	90.7 cm	6/7	Entertainment
29/1/15	4 Stories	43.96 cm	6	Entertainment
30/1/15	6 Stories	90 cm	6	Entertainment
31/1/15	4 Stories	84.1 cm	6	Entertainment

Table 2: News coverage of Echo of Arunachal

No. of days newspaper was studied=31Days

No. of days Newspaper was available=26 Days

No=5 DAYS. Of days Newspaper was not available= 5 days

Total area in terms of column cm (women related stories) covered=1566.69 cm

Average column cm per day=53.53 cm

7. Findings and Conclusion

From the content analysis of the data collected from two dailies of Arunachal Pradesh, it is observed that newspapers have given more space to the entertainment stories relating women and hence are only reinforcing the idea of women as commodity in the modern society. Generally this has been the trend in all the mainstream media platforms and newspapers in Arunachal Pradesh are carrying forward the same legacy. A little place is allotted for sports news centred on women and most of them are wire stories. Issues pertaining to women in modern day society like domestic violence, crimes against women are not covered at all. This questions the very role of media being the watch dog in modern day society. The print media is giving least attention to bring the real issues and can be termed as a failure in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Local reports are pertaining to women and women related issues are almost invisible. The print media houses are busy in assembly line production of news taking celebrity news (having women). This is actually a very alarming trend so as to where do media go from this juncture. Drifting away from if the prevailing trends are continuing, with tendency of fetching wire news more especially in small scale print organisations and more stress on gossip and celebrity news; media

will lose more of its value and potency in the society. The myth of mouthpiece is mum in reality and darker implications may follow in days to come.

8. References

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