



## EDITORIALIZING OF NEWS IN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS: A STUDY OF THE HINDU AND THE TRIBUNE

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*This research was conducted to know the editorialized content as well as plurality of views presented in news stories of two English National Dailies; The Hindu and The Tribune. The study was determined about analysing the 'editorializing' (views of people and newsman) presented in news, making a factual/straight news story an opinionated piece of writing and measuring the 'plurality of views' (people's views/statements) in the news stories. Both the qualitative and quantitative content analysis was employed to measure the extent of editorializing straight news stories as well as the frequency of usage of multiple viewpoints of sources in the news stories. The findings showed that both the papers were practicing the act of editorializing in straight news stories with 4% of difference. The Tribune with 75% of editorialized stories was engaged in this practice more than The Hindu with 71% of opinionated stories. Editorialized content influences the credibility among readers. While measuring the frequency of views plurality in news stories, The Hindu was leading with 36.66% of stories having more views than The Tribune with only 25% of news items with plural views of sources. Inclusion of more people's views makes news story more credible among readers. Therefore it is recommended that the press must keep ethical codes of journalism into consideration and allow its journalists to make interpretation of the content of news stories for making it understandable for readers. Presence of plurality of quoted statements or attribution of authority sources of society should be there in the news story which increases credibility among readers.*

**Keywords:** *Editorializing, Ethics of Journalism, Opinionated Content, Multiple Views, Factual Views, Objective Reporting.*

### Introduction

In mediated world the information travels faster and reaches every nook and corner of the globe, shrinking the once wide world into a global village. Since the discovery of movable type to World Wide Web (www) the change in technology is so fast and rapid that the pace is beyond comprehensive and control. However on the other hand, the societies across the globe hook to the earlier pace of paradigmatic changes and technological changes in general are employed to fasten the social belts, not to bombarding the current social systems.

Media acts as a bridge between government and its citizens. It can be called as a corner stone of democracy. It imparts news on public issues where both the policy makers and public can share their opinions, behaviours and attitudes. In other words, media is said to be the "Voice of People" which carries the public opinions to nations' development.

The media plays a significant role in society in general. The media not only plays an important role in shaping the values of society but also reflects those values. The media is a chronicler of events, an informer, an educator, a transformative space and a tool to change society. It has the capacity to make a very positive contribution towards social change.

Sometimes journalists face some pressures from outside which modify the nature of news story. Pressure act like constraints for journalist to cover the story. Like any organisation, press organisation to follow some kind of format for the coverage, selection, publishing of news story. It reflects the press behaviour. Press said to be the fourth estate, but according to B.G. Verghese, it is no more the fourth estate but the first and important estate of democracy. It plays very important part in democratic country like India.

News is a social product. It operates and functions with the social ethos and pathos. News has always influence the social economic and political processes. It's a myriad of activities wrote in a specific format called news and unwinding of process reveal the social construction of the news. News, as an old tradition percolates down to the deep social understanding and affects the society. It's the culture and tradition of any civilized society, though it may come in different media.

Martin Mayer (1993) explained all news items compete for attention with all other news items. The decision on what is 'news' today is therefore a function of the intensity of the competition. Omega and Nwachukwu (2013) news story, an account of an event possesses distinct characteristics of immediacy, factuality and objectivity.

The old quote "news is not when a dog bites a man but when man bites a dog" is not appropriate in this present time. It is not news which we didn't know yesterday. But news is something beyond what we see through our eyes and hear by our ears. In



this present time, news does not occur but it is made to occur. News not occurs but itself but is created. The events are created to make news. Today, the component of media – News is consumed by all. News is a kind of information; bring home every kind of knowledge regarding society. It also brings change in the mindset of people about social, political, economical, cultural and other spheres of life. Now the time, News has greater and more exposure to information and communication to the larger audience than before.

Writing news with objectivity is a good journalism practice. When any information is reported in factual manner without any writers' views, it is said to be the objective piece of writing but if reporter add views in the news story, it becomes editorialized piece. *John Soloski* (1989) contented that the objectivity as the most important aspect and specific aspects of news professionalism like news judgment, selection of sources and structure of news beats all flows through it. *Bernard Roscho* (1975) objectivity resides in the behavior of the journalist rather than news stories them. Journalists seek out the facts and report them as fairly and as balanced a way possible. For them objectivity does not mean that they are impartial observer of the events as it does for the social scientists. Later *Soloski* suggested that it is obligatory for any journalist to seek out facts from all legitimate sides of an issue then, report the facts in an impartial and balanced way.

### Statement of the Problem

News is a highly specialized form of reporting of any event/issue. It emphasizes truth, fairness, balance, fairness and objectivity. A news story is a report of event and a form of objective writing. It is now an interpretative writing with inclusion of views/opinions of writer as well as people involved in the story, the way it is done in editorial, feature story, advertorial, commentary and cartoon etc. But in this present scenario, the opinionated content can be easily seen in news reports. Whenever a journalist introduce his/her opinions in news report, it presents an interpretation of events, so to help readers to perceive news in a better way as intended by editor of newspaper. Though it goes against the ethical codes of journalism or journalistic practices, this type of interpretative/editorialized news stories puts a clear picture of world happenings to its readers. But access of anything is bad. If interpretation is biased then it may harm the credibility of credibility. So this research was conducted to find the extent these English Dailies engaged in the act of editorializing news.

### Objectives of the Study

- To study the editorialized content (newsman/journalist's views)of The Hindu and The Tribune;
- To study the pluralistic views (people/source's views) presented in news stories of The Hindu and The Tribune;
- To compare the newspapers in terms of their editorialized content as well as plurality of views present in news stories.

### Research Questions

1. What is the extent of *Editorialized Content* found in the news stories of the newspapers The Hindu and The Tribune?
2. What is the frequency of *Plurality of views* found in the leading news stories of front page of The Hindu and The Tribune newspapers?

### Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

**Theories:** The study is based on two mass communication theories one is The Social Responsibility Theory and the second on is Media Dependency Theory. The reason behind the selection of these theories is that the press revolves around a tripartite system includes Mass Media, Audience and the Society. The responsibility of press lies under this system.

- a) **The Social Responsibility Theory (SRT):** This Social Responsibility Theory of press is associated with “the Commission of the Freedom of Press” in United States at 1949. It has been stated in the book “Four theories of Press” (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm) that pure libertarianism is out dated and obsolete, there is need to make a way for replacement of Libertarian theory with the Social responsibility theory. During 20th century, most of the developing countries and third world nations have used this theory. This theoretical approach was a result of broadcasting and media ethics. Early communication administrators such as Robert Hutchins (head of the Commission on Freedom of the Press) expressed his concern over code and ethics of communication and mass media in Libertarian media cultures. Early followers of the theory believed that mass media should also have some kind of contribution to its societal improvement. The Committee on a Free and Responsible Press (1947) expressed the view that the press should provide a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning. SRT allows the press to have a responsibility towards its public/society without any censorship. This theory lies between both Authoritarian theory and Libertarian theory because it gives media



freedom in one hand and ethically controls in other hand. SRT helped in creating professionalism in media by setting up a high level of accuracy, truth, and information.

- b) Media Systems Dependency Theory (MSD):** This Theory was developed by American communications researchers Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in 1976. The theory suggests that media and their audiences should be studied in the context of larger social systems. There is an internal link between media, audience and society. The audience learns little from the real life, so they use media to get more information to fulfill their needs. MSD ties together the interrelations of all three components mass media, audience and society; these all depends on each other and form a tripartite system. At its core, the basic dependency hypothesis states that the more a person depends on media to meet needs, the more important media will be in a person's life, and therefore the more effects media will have on a person. Media dependency theory is a systematic approach which studies the effects of mass media on audiences. It also studies the interactions between media, audiences and social systems.

### Review of Related Literature

Editorializing is a practice in journalism, where journalist introduces his reasonable interpretation one's thoughts and self comments in the form of endorsement, reflecting discretion. The term editorializing refers to the association of views or opinions in news items. Editorialize came from word editorial, which means written by an editor. This term was coined in 1856 means, "introduce opinions into factual accounts".

*Sushil Kumar Singh & Brij Kishore Kuthiala* (2009) asserted that the paradigm hegemony of news practices is fairly expressed by the process of editorializing of the news stories. The study also revealed that considering news as only information, those days have been gone in the past. Now the time, the trend of editorializing across the news media whether print or electronic is pertinent which helps to understand news story in better way. There is a close resemblance between television and newspapers in the nature of editorializing. The study suggested that there is a need if standardization across media where facts and opinions can be inserted fairly.

*Sunny Mabize & Otikor Sameul* (2015) observed that the practice of editorializing in news by the newspapers owners affects the credibility among its readers and also flouted the ethics of the press. By comparing the editorializing content of two Nigerian newspapers(owned by political leaders) it was found that ownership not only affected the straight news stories which were severally partisan but also defeated the core objectives of journalism and the moral duty which are guided by ethical code of conduct. It was suggested through this study that, the concerned authorities should initiate some strong measures against the media owners not to interfere in editorial content of paper, along with this there should have a regular review contents and of activities of press with a view to ensure compliance with professional and ethical code of conduct.

*John Maxwell* (2012) discussed the essentials for journalist regarding editorializing. Journalists need to avoid using adjectives reflecting their opinions or their prejudices; there should be an instant identification of that person, whenever someone is quoted; any story whether in favourable and unfavourable statements about someone or something, the identifiable person should attributed; it is legally permitted to disguise bias as fact. Journalist has the privilege to be present on the behalf of the public for what he is paid for. The position of reporter does not guarantee wisdom or confer omniscience whether he is highly paid or not.

*Margret A. Blanchard* (1998) conferred from period 1960-1980, the usage of the term editorializing got increased in numbers by 56% during 1967 to a high 78% in 1972. But from the period mid 1980s, the usage of the term get decline due to change in business condriions. Ban on editorializing affected badly too many broadcast nations. Even Industry too didn't give its favour to use this term during 1990s. The practice of editorializing got declined due to up selling of sponsors and audiences. There were very few people who were following the practice of editorializing protested as ban invaded their Freedom of Speech.

*Naveed Saleh* (2013) when a news or feature article injects author's opinion, the writer is editorializing. He disagreed with this practice of editorializing followed by media by stating it as a poor journalistic practice. Editorializing included the assumption the audience members "know" what writer referring to.

*Kyle Stokes* (2014) in his blog asserted that the journalism that makes a difference today goes beyond stenography, it contextualizes, it questions, it reveals the underlying power structure of the institution being covered.



Murthy et. al. (2010) found that presentation of news stories has been changed along with time and technology and growing trend of treating news as a commercialized commodity for mass consumption. News of crime, legal disputes, politics, economic, social and development took a back seat. The appearance of front page is being prepared attractive and catchy.

Ellen Hume (1996) concluded that the news organisations are facing challenges. The competition is increasing and audience is shrinking day by day which need quality, reliable and useful information product on which citizen can act. The selection of medium is not problematic but selection of the message is quite a challenging task. Objectivity is very important in any message to let journalist perform his work.

Juhani Pajunen (2008) found that the theoretical study of news is helpful in practice as well as detecting any biasness from the news stories. The majority of news articles were neutral and slightly biased clearly shown that objectivity has been preserved relatively well in the articles analysed. Another finding show that it is worth stressing that analysis of news stories cannot be totally objective. No two different analysts would bring same interpretation of news stories selected for the study.

### Research Methodology

The study comprising population of 120 items, comprising 60 news stories from both the newspapers have been studied to analyse which paper is more inclined towards the editorializing news stories which breach the code of conduct. The researcher has taken *news stories* for the study instead of any editorial, article, human interest stories or any column (as these have certain degree of subjectivity), because news stories are supposed to be fully objective. The news stories were taken from January to June of the Year 2014. In the time period of six months, 20 editions have been selected. Three first leading news stories on the front page of each edition were taken for analysis of editorializing. This choice was made because the stories that are put on front page are usually deemed important by editorial staff of paper and its readers.

- a) **Sampling Technique:** The Random Sampling Method was adopted in selecting newspaper and its editions for study. Among 181 editions (6 months), 20 editions were selected from each newspaper.
- b) **Unit of Analysis:** The unit of analysis was the straight news stories only, avoiding any feature story, article, editorial etc. 'The straight news gives a straight account of events in a factual and objective manner without embellishment'.(Sunny Mbazie & Otikor Sameul).
- c) **Research Instrument:** The main research instrument for the analysis was the *Coding Sheet*, as it guided the process of information from the two English Dailies.
- d) **Data Collection:** Newspaper was the Primary source of data collection. The data used for study was obtained from *The Hindu* and *The Tribune*.
- e) **Technique for Data Collection:** To conduct this research, researcher employed *Quantitative & Qualitative Content Analysis* to fulfill the objectives. Quantitative data was analysed using frequency and percentages, while qualitative content analysis used description of observations expressed in predominantly non-numerical terms. This type of study is made when researchers want to focus on message qualities that are unique, rather than generic.

### Content Analysis

Content analysis is a scientific process of investigating both qualitative and quantitative information of the oral, printed and audio visual messages within a context in view of the intended and perceived meanings. Here it is appropriate to discuss the news stories as mass produced messages contained both intended and perceived meanings. The editor's treatment of the news stories as a policy of the organization bear intended messages. The messages are perceived by the consumers of mass media based on their own experiences.

Kuthiala Brij Kishore (1999) define content analysis as *a scientific process of investigating both qualitative and quantitative information of the oral, printed, and audio-visual message within a context in view of the intended and perceived meanings*. He emphasized the need of content analysis of public communication to determine the nature of messaging between the public and the organizations. To understand communication, there is need to reveal the infinite number of content or messages these mass media of communication - newspapers, radio and television contains.

Sushil K. Singh and Brij Kishore Kuthiala (2009) define content analysis is a highly flexible method which can be used by Communication & Journalism scholars, journalists and other professionals in media. This method is useful for studying the content of mass media communication like news. News as mass produced messages which contained both intended and perceived messages.

### Analysis of Findings

At the individual level of analysis, news represents the outcome of a reporter's expert judgment and personal motivation. Without interference from manipulative sources or demanding news organizations, this perspective might argue, reporters



supposed to produce a newspaper news content which accurately represents a well rounded look at the day's events without any personal or vested opinion in the story.

**RQ; 1: What is the extent of editorialized content found in the news stories of *The Hindu* and *The Tribune*?**

**Table 1,Editorializing of news stories**

Sr.No.	Editorializing	The Hindu (%)	The Tribune (%)
1	Only Information	7(11.66%)	7(11.66%)
2	People's Views	49(81.66%)	47(78.33%)
3	Newsman's Views	43(71.66%)	45(75%)
4	Both sides Views	27(45%)	21(35%)

When a reporter adds his opinionated text in any reporting of news event, it becomes an editorialized piece of writing. Modern day writing is not solely an information piece but it is contextualized form of writing where news writers do not simply puts information in a news story but they put their opinions to make things understandable for the reader.

The above table shows that both the papers have equal percentage of informational news stories in their newspapers. Both have 11.66% of informational stories only not containing any viewpoint of either people or journalist. 75% of the news stories having journalist's views in *The Tribune* whereas *The Hindu* has 71.66% of the news stories having opinionated content i.e. journalist's views.

*The Hindu* leads in providing its reader more exposure to more number of views of people (who are involved in the story or event) in the news stories so to make news story more credible. Plurality of people's views in story makes news credible. *The Hindu* has 81.66% of stories having people's views and *The Tribune* has 78.33% of stories having statements of people. Presence of views (arguments) of both the parties involved in the story makes it balanced. Single point of view or one sided view from one party makes news story a biased piece of writing. *The Hindu* has more percentage i.e. 45% of news stories having balanced views from each party involved in the event/story. *The Tribune* comprises 35% of news stories which contain both side view points and balanced views from each party.

**RQ; 2: What is the frequency of Plurality of views found in the leading news stories of front page of *The Hindu* and *The Tribune*?**

**Table 2,Plurality of Views in News Stories**

Sr.No.	Views Plurality	The Hindu (%)	The Tribune (%)
1	Only Information(No Views)	7(11.66%)	7(11.66%)
2	One View	18(30%)	20(33.33%)
3	Two Views	13(21.66%)	18(30%)
4	More than Two Views	22(36.66%)	15(25%)

Plurality is defined in terms of number of views (people involved in the issue, news event) expressed in news stories. Good journalism requires the description/viewpoints of every party or sources must be involved in the story. Since journalism is an act performed in haste covering all viewpoints is the major challenge, newsperson has to achieve highest level of plurality even in the restrains. For good journalism it can be hypothesized that higher the number of viewpoints covered greater is the plurality and maximum plurality is the ideal to be achieved.

The above table shows the distribution of plurality in news in these two newspapers. The presence of views of sources in news stories in both newspapers varies according to the collection of data. Researcher has found out percentage of *views of sources* in the news story.

Similarly in previous table of editorializing, both these papers have same percentage of stories having no views, only information i.e. 11.66% only. *The Hindu* gave preferences to include as many as viewpoints of sources in its stories. It has more percentage of people's views which were more than two in numbers in the news stories. It comprises 36.66% of news stories have views more than two. *The Tribune* has 25% of news stories having views more than two.



*The Tribune* too gave preference to views of people/sources but in case of One View or two views. 33.33% of stories with one view only published in *The Tribune*. *The Hindu* has less percentage i.e. 30%. There is only 3% of difference between both papers. 30% of stories having two views of parties were comprised in *The Tribune* and *The Hindu* has only 21.66% of stories which have two views. In this case, having two views/statements of any source in news stories doesn't mean that those stories are balanced. Those statements or views might belong to one side party in the event/issue.

### Conclusion

The research was carried out to find whether these two English Dailies i.e. THE HINDU and THE TRIBUNE follow the practice of editorializing in their news content or not. If they follow, then how much and up to what extent it has been followed.

The findings revealed that these both the papers editorialize the news content by inclusion of journalist's own viewpoints into the story. The practice of editorializing news stories influences the journalistic practices of journalism – objectivity, accuracy, truthfulness, unbiased and balanced story. The extent of editorializing has been compared by measuring their variables. According to result, *The Tribune* followed the practice of editorializing the news content by putting its more views in the news stories than *The Hindu*.

Views plurality (people/source) could be seen in both papers, *The Hindu* lead by giving more importance to majority of views than *The Tribune*. *The Hindu* emphasized not only on majority of people's views but making news story balanced was its priority. Taking more and more viewpoints parallel from both the parties (involved in event) was essential for *The Hindu*. *The Hindu* readers were more exposed to opinions and statements than *The Tribune*. *The Tribune* also gave importance to views but lesser than *The Hindu*.

The result of the study indicates that the paradigm of news practices has been changed through the time. Readers are not being served with only information of any event but they are being served interpretative news stories. Today's readers get interpretation of events, so that they could get the news beyond just information. The study depicted that there is similarity in editorializing practice between English Dailies. There is a growing trend of interpretative reporting in news practices in Indian Print media. This interpretative reporting involves the comments, views/opinions or the interpretation of journalist about the event. This editorializing practice helps reader to understand the news in a better way.

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