

# **CHAPTER**

## **3**

### **PATTERNS OF COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

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**3.1 What is Research Methodology?**

Research Methodology is a scientific and systematic way to explain or solve research problems. Applications of Research methodology differ with the nature of research problems. A researcher has to operate methodology to solve the research problems. Therefore, the scope of research methodology is wider and deals with research methods (Bhattacharya, 2006).

Research Methodology is a framework of a research plan where the methods, sample, population, tools and statistical analysis techniques are explained. It defines what must be done, how it will do, what data will be needed, what data-gathering devices will be employed, how sources of data will be selected, and how the data will be analysed and conclusions be drawn (Kumar & Nath, 2007)

‘Research’ refers to the systematic method consisting of statement of the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collection of facts and data, analyzing facts and reaching certain conclusions either in form of solution(s) towards the concerned problem or in certain generalizations for some theoretical formulation (Dwivedi, 2012)

**3.2 Why Research methodology is important?**

Every research requires a systematic approach to study the nature of the research. The research methodology tells what the researcher wants to do or find out and help others know how the study is being conducted and it tells why the research is being carried out and what the research did. It is a framework of the entire research problem and to solve the problem with the help of theoretical framework and previous research findings. Research Methodology is more than methods or techniques but it is the thorough step-by-step procedure of the entire process of research work.

### **3.3 Nature of the Research Work**

The research is based on quantitative and qualitative types of research of primary data and secondary data. The primary data is collected through structured interviews with a set of a well-structured questionnaire of editors and journalists working in Manipur. The secondary data are collected through library research of published books, journals, research papers, government documents, advocacy writings, publications of professional and research organisations and publications of civil society organisations and human rights organisations. The systematic collection of secondary data of newspapers contents based on human rights is also studied to assess the nature of presentation and coverage of human rights in local dailies.

Quantitative descriptive research uses quantitative methods to describe what is, describing, recording, analyzing, and interpreting conditions that exist. It involves some types of comparison and attempts to discover relationships between existing variables. Some form of statistical analysis is used to describe the results of the study. Qualitative descriptive research uses non-quantitative methods to describe what is. Qualitative descriptive research uses systematic producers to discover the non-quantifiable relationship between existing variables. All research involves the elements of observation, description and the analysis of what happens under certain circumstances (Singh & Nath 2007).

Qualitative research is based on the measurement or amount. It is applicable to the phenomenon that can be expressed in terms of quantity. On the other hand, qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with the qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomenon relating to or involving quality or kind. It also incorporates analytical research where the facts or information, which are already available material are analyzed and critically evaluate (Dwivedi, 2014).

The research work is based the primary data and secondary data. The primary data is collected through interview scheduled of editors and journalists working in Manipur. To understand their knowledge on human rights and its related issues

and experience working in the conflict region, an opinion survey of editors and journalists was conducted. It also aimed to find out how human rights news stories are gathered and presented in the newspapers. The present study intended to analyze the role of media in the protection of human rights and therefore a critical enquiry of the contents and the process of development of content or gatekeeping are indispensable. The study conducted a systematic collection of secondary data on published newspapers contents and the recorded the frequencies of human rights terms to analyse the role of media in providing content based on human rights issues and evaluation of the human rights coverage in local dailies. The study helped to interpret the position of local dailies on human rights stance.

### **3.4. Methodological Inputs**

Hence as per the need of the study following methodological inputs have been applied to complete the study-

#### **3.4.1 Library Research:**

Library Research includes the collection and analysis of journals, published articles, official records and reports, government publications, publications of professional and research organisations, publications of civil society organisations and human rights organisations, advocacy articles, books, photographs and Content Analysis. The fundamental step of the proposed research is collection and making of a pool of database of information based on related articles on human rights. It has helped to understand or explain a phenomenon. Secondary information such as reports, books, published documents and other secondary information compilation have been analyzed by the methods of library research i.e. preparing a working bibliography, literature review and content reference and analysis.

### **3.4.2 Interview**

Intensive Interviews of Journalists and Editors is one of the essential steps of the proposed research. The study adopted structured interviews and questionnaire method, with a set of well- structured questionnaire. Opinions of Journalist and Editors are crucial. Their point of view on Human Rights issues would give an insight on the reporting, selection and presentation pattern of the story. It helped to understand the relationship between media and Human Rights. Personal interview with the editors and journalists uses a detailed scheduled with open-ended and closed-ended questions. The sampling of editors and journalists are conducted in deliberate sampling design, which is also known as purposive or non-probability sampling. This means that the units of the universe for constituting a sample that represents the universe are selected in purposive or deliberate manner. Again, employing the sampling, convenience sampling is adopted for this particular study on the basis of convenience and ease of access. However, there is the least chance of biased results as the population is homogeneous (Dwivedi, 2014).

### **3.4.3 Content Analysis**

The secondary data of contents of published news articles; features, editorials, and letter to editors in the dailies are conducted to assess the coverage on human rights in the selected four newspapers published from Imphal, the capital of Manipur. The images published on human rights related news and articles were also an area of study to comprehend the significance and impact of the stories.

The study of secondary data is used to help in decision-making and drawing conclusions (Bhattacharya, 2006).

Content analysis is a research tool focused on the actual content and internal features of media. It is used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. Texts can be defined broadly as books, book chapters, essays, interviews, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertising, theater,

informal conversation, or any occurrence of communicative language. To conduct a content analysis on a text, the text is coded or broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels--word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme.

Berelson (1952) defined Content Analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. According to the book *The Content Analysis Guidebook* by Kimberly A. Neuendorf 'Content Analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented.'

### **3.5 Assessment of the Result**

The result of the data is interpreted statistically with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) software version 21.0 for windows. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the frequency of human rights coverage in the selected four newspapers. The purpose of using SPSS is to handle sizeable and highly complicated data and performs analyses in an easy manner.

### **3.6 Universe of the study**

The research study is based on Manipur Edition of *Poknapham* and *Naharolgi Thoudang* and the English Edition of *The Sangai Express* and *Imphal Free Press*, a newspaper that only published its English edition. The researcher would examine the samples of published stories/articles, comparing the media content to the real stories, how the news of human rights violations are being reported and study the responses of government on the issue. A comparative study of local newspapers on their coverage on human rights news and articles from Manipur will be conducted.

Imphal is the capital city of the Indian State of Manipur, located in the North-Eastern part of India. The area of the proposed study would be Imphal, as the headquarters of major newspapers in Manipur are located and it is the hub of economic activity of the state. According to Census 2011, Imphal West is the most populous district with 514,683, which covers 18.91 percent of the total population of the state. It ranks the highest literacy rate with 86.70 %. And the literacy rate of the state is 79.85 %.

Total Four newspapers are selected to conduct the study. The research study conducted on Manipur Edition of *Poknapham* and *Naharolgi Thoudang* and the English Edition of *The Sangai Express* and *Imphal Free Press*, a newspaper that only published its English edition.

These newspapers are published from Imphal. Researcher selected these newspapers because of their reach and representation. They are largely circulated dailies in their category and thus they are an appropriate representative of mainstream journalism. The gatekeeping process, standardized production and accountability are the reasons behind the selection of these newspapers.

### **3.7 Profile of Newspapers**

#### **3.7.1 *The Sangai Express***

The *The Sangai Express* was established on 11 September 1999. It is published in two editions-Manipuri and English. In 2012, the circulation of the Manipuri and English editions are approximately 38,000 and 15,000 respectively. The head office of the newspaper is in Imphal West. The editorial policy and news presentation is worth study. In 2016, the circulation of *The Sangai Express* both English and Manipuri edition is 20,000 and 40,000 respectively. The printed area per page is 33.00 cm x 50 cm is 1650<sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup>.

*The Sangai Express* has 12 pages, 1 page all the important news both local and national, 2 pages is fully dedicated to infotainment and advertisement. Page 3 is based on local news and advertisement. 4 page is editorial and articles, page 5 is national news, page 6 and 7 is based on international news, page 8 is based on the run on news of front page, page 9 is based on national news and international

news, page 10 is based on national news. Pages 11 and 10 are respectively given for sports. The dailies have adopted its own style and special rules relating to spellings, abbreviations and uses of border lines and colours. Front page, second, third, page 10, page 11 and page 12 are coloured pages. 'Sangai Digest' is a separate section in front page and continues in the page 8. It has news content highlighted at Skyline with photographs and captions. Special attention is given to certain news with blue coloured stand first and kickers.

### **3.7.2 Imphal Free Press**

*Imphal Free Press* was established on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1996. It is an English edition newspaper contributes towards dissemination of news and information to the people of Manipur keeping in mind that there is a balance of news presentation. Despite its low circulation, it is considered to be one of the most trusted newspapers in the state and therefore mostly read by bureaucrats and other individuals who prefer reading real news. The circulation is approximately 16,427 copies per day. In an average, the circulation is 10,000 – 12,000. The printed area per page is 33.2 cm x 52.5 cm is 1743<sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup>

*Imphal Free Press* contains 8 pages. First page and page 8 are coloured pages. Page 1 focuses on the important events of the day both local, some times national and international news are found in the front page, when the news has major impacts on the world. Page 2 editorial and features; page 3 is based on national news. Page 4 is state and regional news, where news in front pages continues, page 5 is international news. Page 6 is divided into two segments Health & Science and Society & Lifestyle. Page 7 and 8 are dedicated to sports. Lines are used in separating news from another and segmentation of sections. No skyline new content is given in *Imphal Free Press*. The editorials on Saturdays are given a special titled 'Saturday Leader'. First and the last page (page 8) are printed in coloured.

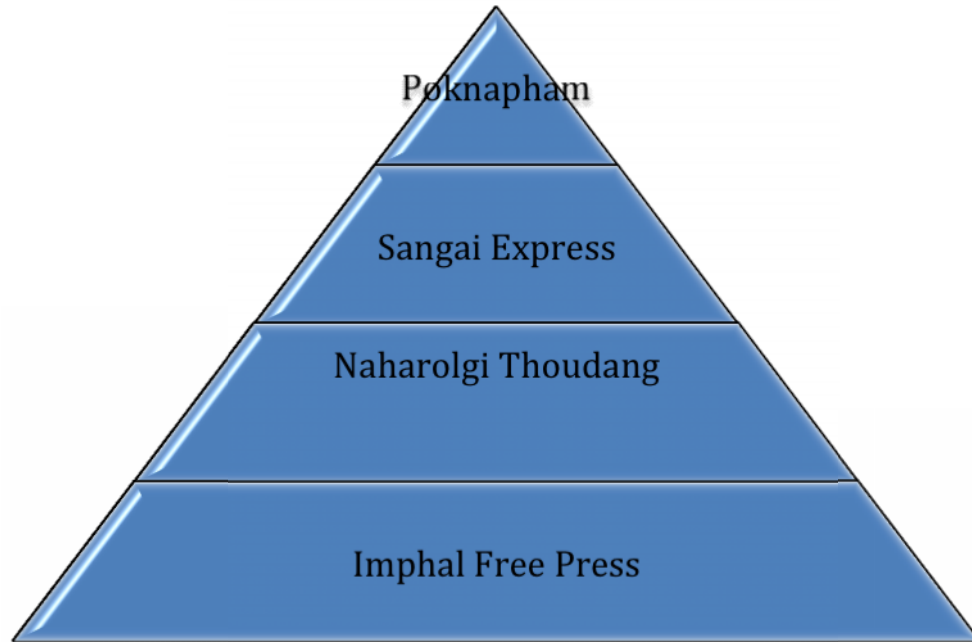


### **3.7.3 Poknapham**

*Poknapham* is the largest circulated newspaper in Manipur. Approximately 45,000-50,000 copies are circulated every day. *Poknapham* was started on February 2, 1975, by Ibomcha from Thanga and registered under 'Register News of India (RNI) in the same year. Its head office is at Keishampat, Imphal West. The People's Chronicle", a sister publication, an English daily was launched at Hotel Classic on September 06 2012. It is an English Edition of the vernacular paper *Poknapham*. The status in the state is Class "A". The overall paper size is 35.00 cm x 54 cm. per page i.e., 1890 <sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup> and the printed area per page is 33.00x 51 cm is 1683 <sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup>. *Poknapham* contains 12 pages altogether. First page showcases the main news of the day. Page 2 is based on international news. Page 3 is based on national news. Page 4 is both the mixture of national and international news, page 5 is based on local news, page 6 is editorial and features, page 7 is based on features, Page 8 and 9 are based on local news, page 10 is based on state and regional news. Page 11 is based on sports. Page 12 focuses on weekly entertainment news from the state. Front page, second page, page 11 and page 12 are coloured pages. Skyline news is given under the masthead of the news

### **3.7.4 Naharolgi Thoudang**

*Naharolgi Thoudang*, a newspaper with a bold slogan ' A newspaper dedicated to the cause of Human Rights', is a Manipuri language newspaper with a circulation of approximately 25,000 copies in and around the state. The newspaper covers news from every sphere as possible. Khoirom Loyalakpa is a publisher as well as the editor. The newspaper is a printed in broadsheets having 8 columns. The overall paper size is 35.00 x 54 cm. per page i.e., 1890 <sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup> and the printed area per page is 33.00 cm x 51 cm is 1683 <sup>cm<sup>2</sup></sup>. Front page is based on the important news of the day. Page 2 is based on editorial and features. Page 3 and page 4 are focused on state news, Page 5 is based on national news, Page 6 is based on international news, Page 7 and page 8 are focused on sports. It has Skyline news under the masthead. Red lines are used to draw segregation among the news.



**Fig. 3.2.** Pyramid representing Circulation of the four selected newspapers. *Poknapham*- 45,000-50,000 copies daily; *The Sangai Express* 20,000 copies daily; *Naharolgi Thoudang* 25,000 copies daily; *Imphal Free Press* 10,000 – 12,000 copies daily



Fig.3.3. Masthead of the four selected newspapers- The *The Sangai Express*, *Imphal Free Press*, *Poknapham* and *Naharolgi Thoudang*

**3.8 Samples**

There are about 29 dailies published and circulated in an around the state of Manipur. Among these newspapers, there are 19 Manipur dailies, 7 English dailies, and 9 local dialects. It is difficult to study all the contents of these newspapers because of time constraint but through a representative selection of the subject appropriate study can be conducted. Therefore, the proposed study is confined to the study of only 4 major dailies, having wide circulation and readership i.e., two vernacular dailies – *Poknapham* and *Naharolgi Thoudang*;

and two newspapers in English Edition of *The Sangai Express* and *Imphal Free Press*. The findings of the study would be generalized. The period of the study covered duration of One year i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 till 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013. It is estimated that a sample of 365 copies of each daily to be collected for the study. This means that approximately 1,460 sample copies were studied.

The study of the content of the selected newspapers relied on the published news items and stories on human rights issues from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 till 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013. However, the sample of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013 was unobtainable to the researcher. Therefore, the study is conducted on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013, and the sample size was large enough to carry out the study and generalizability is drawn from this sampling.

### **3.9 Sampling**

Sampling is one of the fundamentals of research methods and design. A small group from the entire group is the sample, and selection of the sample group is called sampling. The sample of the study is based on Purposive Sampling. It is a type of non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling focuses on sampling techniques where the units that are investigated are based on the judgment of the researcher. The purposive sampling of 4 major dailies published in Manipur, having wide circulation and readership i.e., two vernacular dailies – *Poknapham* and *Naharolgi Thoudang*; and two newspapers in English Edition of *The Sangai Express* and *Imphal Free Press*. The findings of the study would be generalized. The period of the study covered duration of One year i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 till 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013. However, samples of dailies published from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 till 31<sup>st</sup> October is able obtained. The sample size is large enough to draw generalizability of the result.

Purposive sampling of the above-mentioned newspapers that carry news articles, features, editorials, letter to editors, images, and stories related to human rights issues would be selected for content analysis. The study of the human rights contents including terms relating to human rights and human rights violations based on violence against women, violence against children and terms that are

associated with Armed Forces Special Powers Act. The proposed of the study focused on the published human rights stories and not to study the unpublished related news items. Purposive Sampling of selective groups of journalists and Editors of newspapers would be taken for an interview scheduled with the set of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

### **3.10 Variables**

The interpretation and analysis of the content is based on the following variables:

#### **3.10.1 Frequency of terms**

The occurrence of terms related to human rights are recorded and studied. The terms that associated with human rights such as human rights, human rights protection, human rights violations, women's rights, child rights, indigenous people's rights, tribal rights and all the rights recognized under United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The terms are examined and calculated in percentage.

#### **3.10.2 Area/Space of the story (context of coverage size of items, columns)**

The presentation of news in the newspaper, size and area of the columns, measurements of the columns and the size of the pictures, images and photographs, the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts would be determine and present in an objective manner.

#### **3.10.3 Treatment of the story (emphasis/direction of coverage)**

The treatment of the news stories related to human rights would be studied. How the reporters and editors present human rights news and articles on their newspapers. The angle of the presentation of news would examine through content analysis. The colouring and sensitization of new presentation are examined if any. The particular terms related to the issue of human rights are selected and the frequency and usage of these terms are recorded and studied. For

example, the terms human rights, human rights violations, terms that are related to violence against women such as rape, molestation, murder, human trafficking violence against children child rape, child trafficking and AFSPA and its associated terms such as repeal AFSPA, fake encounter, extra-judicial killings, from Sharmila are some of the examples followed in the study.

#### **3.10.4 Balance**

The balance of news presentation by the reporters and editors of the press follows the policies and norms of the newspaper organization. There are agencies, which provide financial assistance to the newspaper organizations. Funding agencies can be political or individual. The policies of newspaper organization can be influenced by political, individual and other pressure groups.

#### **3.10.5 Placement of items**

Placement of the news is important to study. The placement of the stories related to human rights issues is an essential part of the content analysis. If the news contains maximum news value, then the news is likely to be placed on the front page with striking and bold headlines.

#### **3.10.6 Sources of Information**

The analysis of the source of news and information would be a necessary step to take up in order to find out whether there is any sign Pseudo-Journalism follows by the newspaper organization. If the news items on human rights are published after gathering from other newspaper organization or pressure groups. This would lead to biasedness and the journalistic ethics will be in vain.

#### **3.10.7 Attributions**

The analysis of quotations from experts, resource persons, and influential persons proved to be a significant part of the research. Quotes from politicians, government officials, police, social activists, lawyers, experts in the field of human rights carry new angle and perspectives. The frequency and repetitions of

persons in the news story will be recorded. This finding gives new insights to the study of rights and safeguarding human rights. The opinion of experts reflects their views on the issue and gives an impact to the readers.

### **3.10.8 Authentication**

The study of the authenticity of news sources plays a key role in publication. It is important to study and analyze the news source, whether the story is directly collected by reporters or taken from agencies

### **3.11 Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection is one of the methods employed in conducting the present research operations. The primary data of the study was collected with the help of interviews- Personal interview, e-mailing of questionnaires, and schedules. Fifty percent of editors and journalists are conducted with the help of personal interview. The study covers an aggregate of 30 editors and journalists. 15 editors and journalists were conducted personal interviews, 5 were interview via email and another 10 conducted interview schedules.

Employing library research and content analysis collected the secondary data. Secondary data are collected from libraries, state archives and newspapers archives. The collection of secondary data to conduct a content analysis on newspapers, the sample of newspapers was collected on a daily basis as the study is covered under the research duration and the evaluation of content analysis is not based on historical records of newspapers contents. The sample is collected and recorded on regular basis. The raw data are prepared manually and computer-aided programmes such as Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel are used for drawing tables, chart and bars.

### **3.12 Tools**

The tools used in the present study are interviews scheduled of editors and journalists, library research based on the subject of study; newspapers contents based on human rights and Computer-aided programmes and tools are

incorporated in the study for calculations and presentation of the results in tables, graphs, charts and bars.

### **3.12.1 Interview Schedule**

The selective group of editors and journalists was taken as a purposive sample. For the proposed study, sets of open-ended questions are framed in a flexible manner. The questions are systematic and in order. The set of questions follows simple and direct questions with an element of probing. In this manner, the maximum responses and point of views of the journalists and editors are expressed. Transcripts of interviews are recorded both in paper and tape recorder. Well-structured questionnaire is sent through email. The Internet has used a medium to correspond with editors and journalists. Schedules are conducted through direct contact with the respondents and filled out by the interviewer and not by the respondents.

### **3.13 Problems faced by researcher**

The researcher faced hurdles while sample collection of newspapers due to the inability of the hawker to bring the newspapers on regular basis. The researcher was unable to conduct interviews with some editors due to inability to get access to editor's office. Due to holiday and unavoidable circumstances such as newspaper hawker strikes, the study could not base on the daily publication of the concerned period. The methodology of Content analysis is more tedious and time-consuming if done manually.

It is estimated that a sample of 365 copies of each newspaper to be collected for the study. However, the research could not obtain all the 1,460 sample of newspapers due to press holidays and strikes of hawkers union and non-publication of newspapers on few specific days due to threats from armed organisations.



### **3.14 Delimitations of the study**

- The study is based on a study of four newspapers- two English dailies and two Manipuri dailies.
- The study is limited to a period of one year, from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012- 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013.
- However, the sample is collected from 1<sup>st</sup> November till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013 as it is easy to study practically.
- The content analysis is done manually. Quantitative analysis is done with the help of statistical analysis.