

## **Chapter – 4**

### **Data Interpretation and Analysis**

The previous chapter explained the methodology used for this study. In order to achieve the key objectives, this chapter will analyse news stories published in the selected newspaper i.e. The Times of India and Hindustan, and the stories broadcast on Times Now and Aajtak news channels. These newspapers and news channels have been studied in two time periods i.e. the second quarter (April to June) and fourth quarter (October to December) of the year 2013. The key objective of this study is to comparatively analyse the coverage on gender issues in print and broadcast media.

The conceptual framework and literature discussed in the Chapter One and Two is contemplated in this chapter. This chapter also presents the quantitative and qualitative findings of the content analysis of newspaper texts as well as newscasts related to gender. To keep coherence throughout, this chapter consists of broad observations of the unit of analysis, which is the every single news story on gender issue published or broadcast. The researcher has also concurrently analysed and discussed these findings to answer the research questions outlined in the previous chapters.

There is so much hype about the media influence in recent time. Since Anna movement, and then Nirbhaya incident, all have raised the question on the role of Media and pushed society to think about the so called “Fourth Pillar” of the democracy. The debate on the role of media is questionable in both positive and negative sense. Do the media influence the society? Do the media impact any outcome? The question on media also urged to think “whether media influenced these incident or they themselves influenced by these events? Do we have any indicators to check these? In the era of technological advantage, people came in contact with media constantly throughout their daily lives.

Media does play an important role in society to aware them about various events and incidents. Society is influenced by media in so many ways. It is the media for the masses that

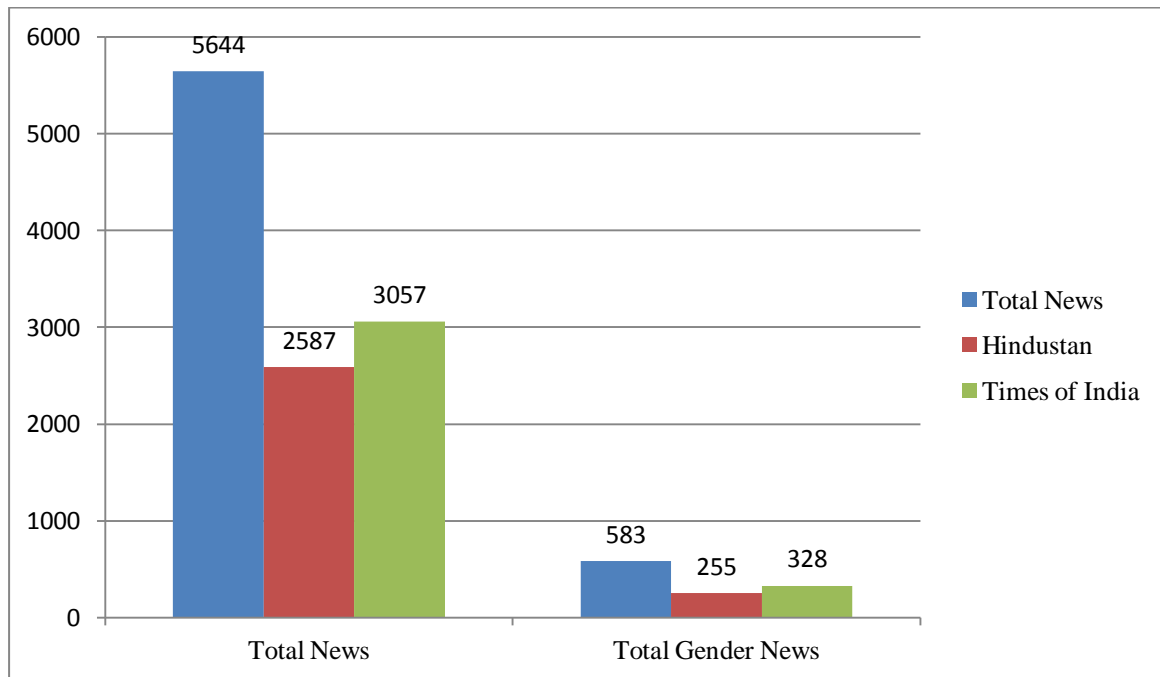
helps them to get information about a lot of things and also to form opinions and make judgments regarding various issues! It is the media which keeps the people updated and informed about what is happening around them and the world. Everyone can draw something from it.

Media is also the major medium to communicate people and the governing body. The report on current events provides frameworks for interpretation and this influence the perceptions of people on the concerning issues. The so called fourth pillar of the democracy came in to the position where a section of the people claim that media is not so trust worthy like earlier in recent time.

Newspaper and Television are the main part of the media and also the main source of various information and opinions. Newspaper is one of those things which are the first priority of the millions of people in the early morning to see the news and the increasing penetration of TV channels provides people visual transformation of the news and makes them interesting and attractive. The present research focuses on the media coverage on Gender issue. During the research period the proposed research studied the two main newspapers in two major languages in India which is Hindi and English. Hindustan was taken for Hindi language and The Times of India has been chosen for English. Similarly it also studied two television news channels namely Aaj Tak for Hindi news and Times Now for English news. The data collection has been done in two quarters, April to June and October to December 2013.

The research data suggests the different aspects of the news on gender issues. In both the newspapers, the total news covered during the study period was 5644. Among them only 583 which is around 10 per cent news appeared on gender issues<sup>1</sup>. The separate category of the newspaper also represented the same proportion like the proportion of total news and gender related news.

**Graph: 4.G1 Coverage on gender related issues in newspaper**

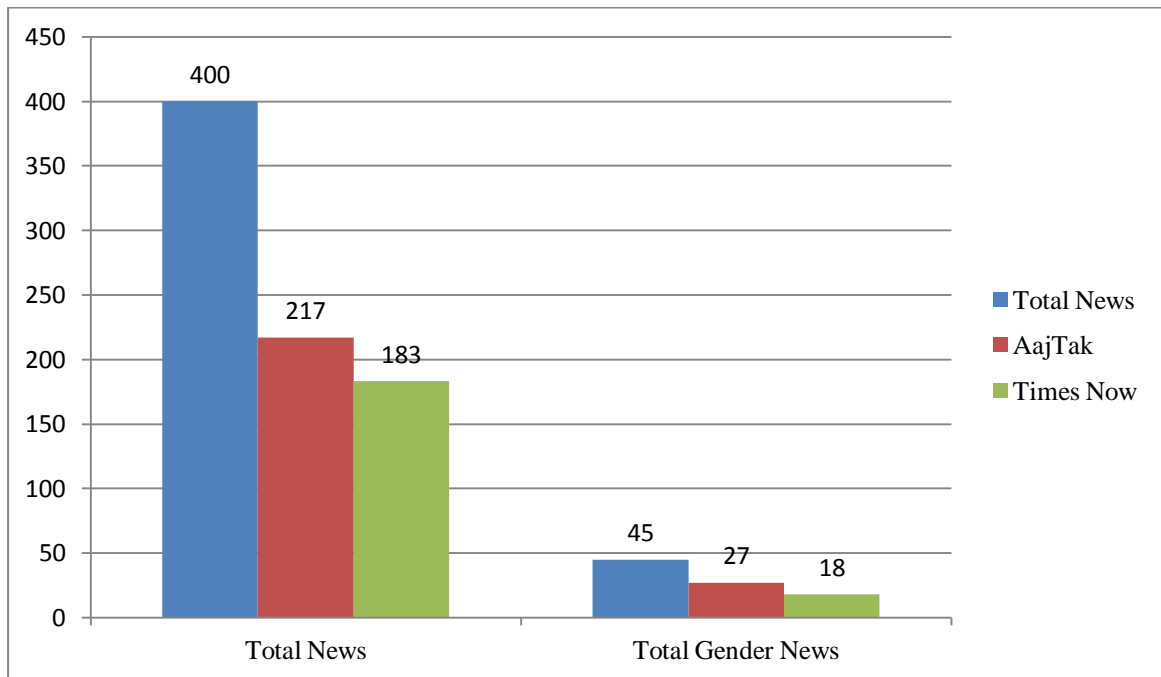


Out of the total news based on gender issue published in both the newspaper. Hindustan (a Hindi daily) has 44 per cent of the total coverage of the gender issue while The Times of India published 56 per cent news on the same issue.

Contrary to the newspaper coverage on gender issue, the TV channel data state a different story. The research data suggest that Hindi channel covered more story or news on Gender issue than English news channel. Total story in television during the study period were 400, among them Aaj Tak aired 217 stories whereas Times Now broadcast 183 stories.

There were 45 gender related news broadcast on the television during the study period. Among them Aaj Tak aired 27 and Times Now aired only 18 news stories<sup>2</sup>.

**Graph: 4.G2 Distribution of total news and gender related news**

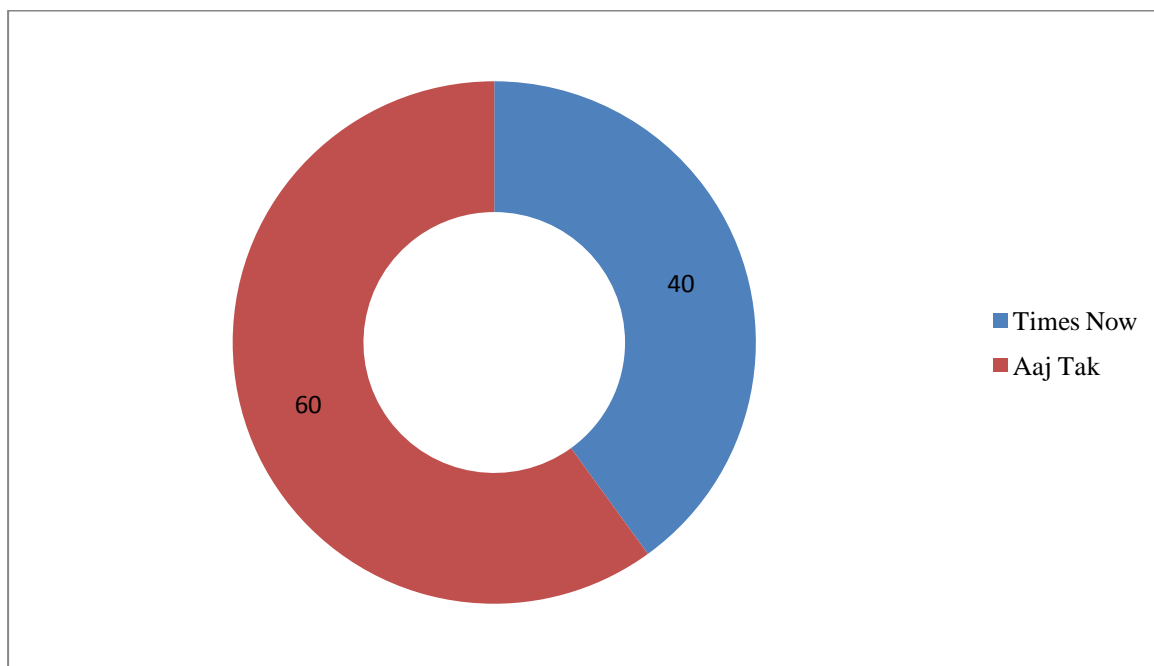


Out of the total gender based stories broadcast, 60 per cent appeared on Hindi channel AajTak while 40 per cent news appeared on English Channel Times Now<sup>3</sup>

The irony of the gender sensitivity for the news channel was that the research has been done after the Nirbhaya rape incident and there was unprecedented concern in the media as well as in the society. If we look the prime time shows (9PM to 10PM) the data show that English Channel Times Now has done a story on gender related issues only in 8 days.

The Hindi channel was more concern on this issue and aired a gender based story in 14 out of the studied 24 days of prime time news broadcast.

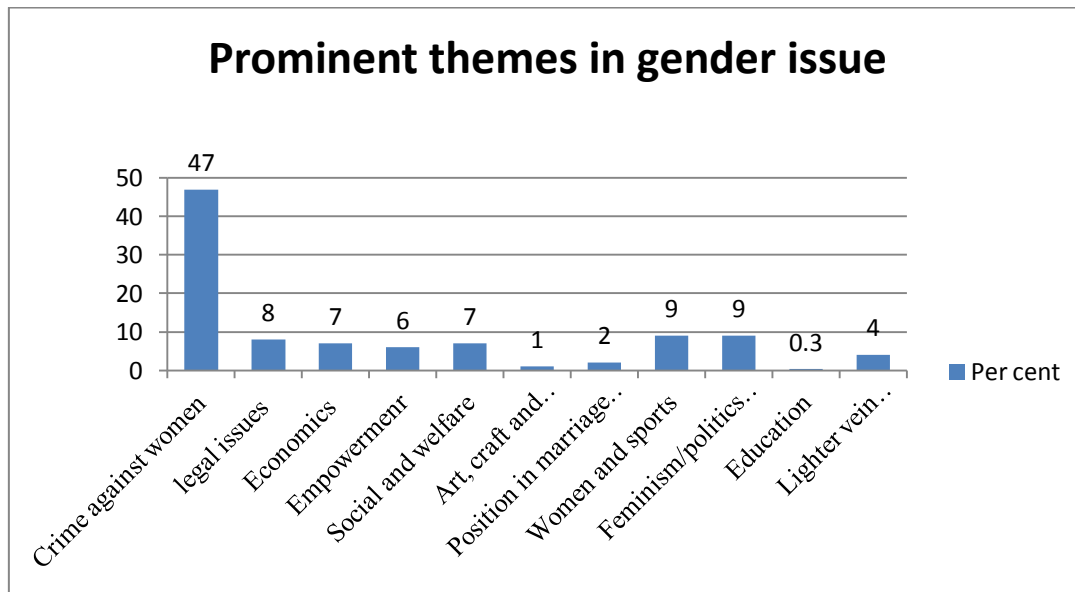
**Graph: 4.G3 Coverage on gender related issue in Television**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

If we look at the nature of gender issue which have been covered by newspaper and TV channels, research data found that crime against women is the prominent theme in the news. As an individual category, Rape is a major issue on gender related news followed by Harassment by police/authorities/others and murder. Among all gender based news in the newspapers, 15 per cent news are on rape issue, while only 7 per cent news was on the harassment by police/authorities/others.

**Graph: 4.G4 Coverage of prominent theme in gender issue**



The graph above represents that the crime against women is the major gender issue among other while the other important issues are legal, sports, Feminism etc. Not much space has been provided for other important gender related issues like Domestic violence, Dowry, Domestic discord, Prostitution, Trafficking etc.

Similar to the newspaper findings, the data depicted the same story for the news channels. In broadcast news, again issue of crime against women is the prominent theme. The interesting finding of the data is that there is no coverage on legal issues, women and sports, women education at all.

While the Feminism/politics and women coverage issue recorded 31 per cent but the findings tells that these 31 per cent coverage on this category is only for the discussion on women politician or women politics. The rest of the story we could see in the following table.

**Table: 4.T1 Various themes related to gender**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Crime against women	51
Legal issues	0
Economics	7
Empowerment	4
Social and welfare	2
Art, craft and literature	2
Position in marriage in family	2
Women and sports	0
Feminism/politics and women activism	31
Education	0
Lighter vein coverage/fashion/features	0

The separate category wise analysis of the newspaper and Television channel tells us the quality and quantity of the media coverage on gender concerning issues. We would describe each and every separate category of the gender news either published in newspaper or portrayed in television channel.

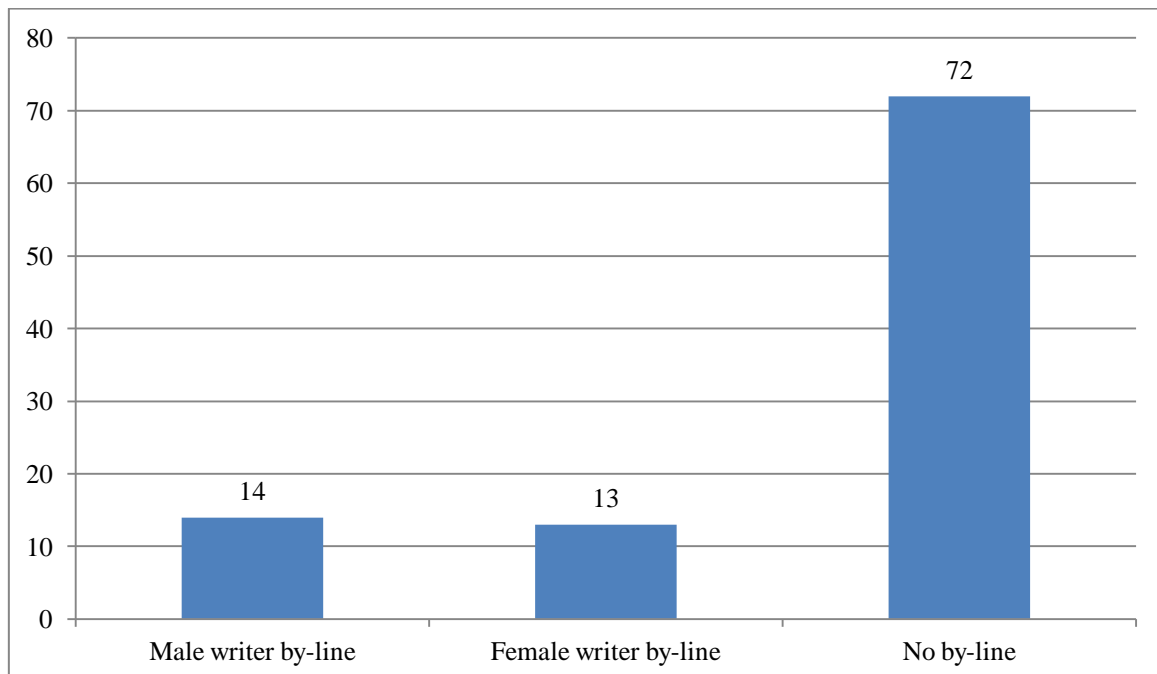
#### **4.1 By-line's by male and female writers in Newspapers**

To understand how the newspapers promote gender parity in news stories, the research study went in-depth and focused on the author of the news. The Research studied how much by-lines related to gender issue were appeared and how many were written by male and female journalists? The total number of by-lines appeared in both the selected newspaper during the research period were 1227, among them 121 appeared in Hindi newspaper Hindustan while

the English newspaper have given much credence to the journalist by giving more by lines than the Hindi one. There were 1106 by-lines appeared in The Times of India.

If we look this on the gender level, we find that total no. of by-lines written by male writer is more than double the female writer. Out of the total of 1227 by-lines, 849 by-lines were attributed to male authors while only 378 by-lines were attributed to female journalists. If we consider the number of by-lines on gender issue, we again do not find an optimistic data. The total news stories on gender issues were 583, and among them only 161 news stories appeared in newspaper with a by-lines. Among them Times of India had more by-lines than Hindi daily Hindustan. Times of India had 132 by-lines while Hindustan had only 29 by lines. Of the total by-lines, 14 per cent was written by male writer and 13 per cent written by female writer while 72 per cent was no by-line. The graph below depicts the story of by-lines on gender issue in the newspaper.

**Graph: 4.G5 By-line's by male and female writers in Newspaper**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

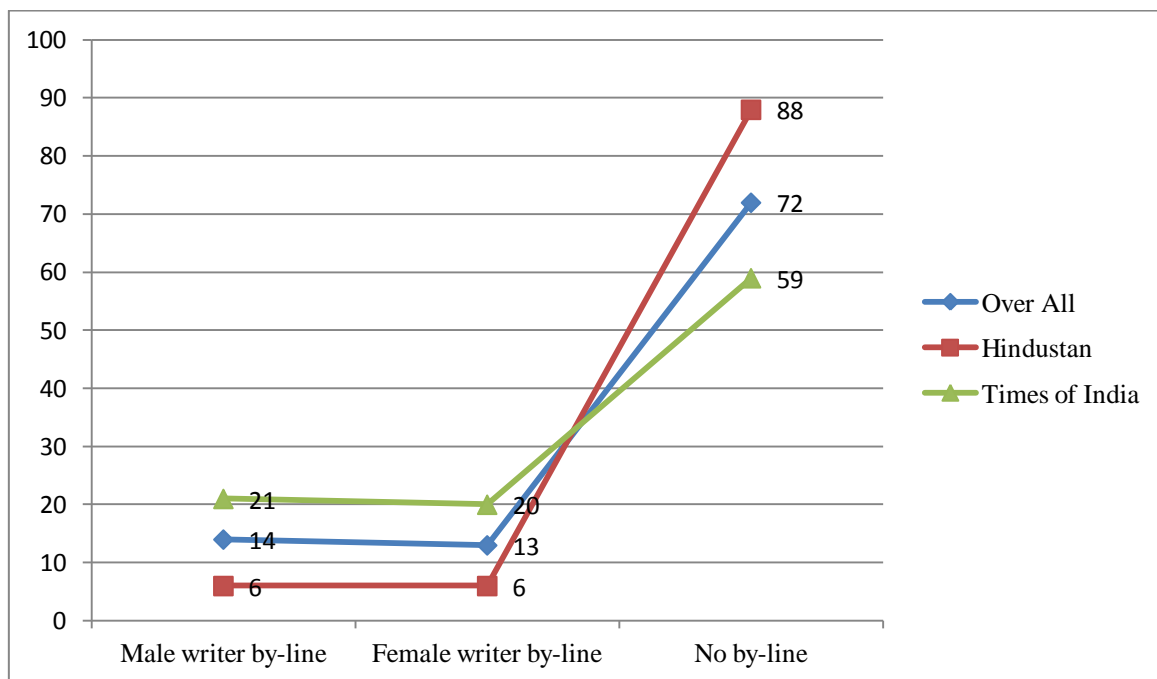


When we look at the distribution of the by lines among Hindustan and The Times of India, data suggest that English newspaper attributed more by lines to its journalists than Hindi one. The study found 21 per cent male journalists by- line in The Times of India while only 6 per cent by line written by male journalists appeared in Hindustan.

The similar pattern is observed for the by- line by female journalists. 20 per cent female journalists by- line appeared in TOI while again only 6 per cent female journalists by-lines were seen in Hindustan. Although some news came from identified journalists or news agencies, however, the researcher found an unusually high rate of unattributed writing. While some of these stories were strictly news related, many of them were more general, social pieces, meaning that the naming of the author was not important.

The prevalence of unattributed writing related to gender is quite important, since many of these media segments served to reinforce gender stereotypes and to promote gender roles and relations that can be quite damaging for society.

**Graph: 4.G6 By-line's by male and female writers in the newspaper**



The notion of gender sensitivity can also be seen in terms of how many letters to editors appeared in the newspaper. There was 113 letter appeared in the letter to editor column, out of them Hindustan listed 68, while The Times of India had listed 45 letters. If we look at the ratio of female writers whose letters were published in the newspaper, we found that out of 113 letters, only 11 letters were written by female writers. Out of these 11 letters to editor, 6 were published in Hindustan and 5 were published in The Times of India.

#### **4.2 The analysis of T.V. reporters in the TV news channels/ Gender parity in news channels:**

As we discuss the importance of the by-lines in the newspaper, the study of TV reporters profile is also important as it gives the indication of gender parity policies of the Television news channel. The total reporters which were visible in the news cast during the study period were 303, and among them 225 were male reporters while only 78 reporters were female. The individual level TV analysis shows that there were total 146 reporters appeared on Aaj Tak channel, among them only 13 reporters were female. The English news channel Times Now

pered better than the Hindi channel. Times Now casted 157 reporters during the research period, among them 65 reporters were female. The below mentioned table summarises the visibility of the reporters.

**Table: 4.T2 Reporters**

	<b>Total reporters visible in the news cast</b>	<b>Male reporter</b>	<b>Female reporter</b>
<b>AAJ TAK</b>	146	133	13
<b>Times Now</b>	157	92	65
<b>Total</b>	303	225	78

*Note: All figures show the total no.*

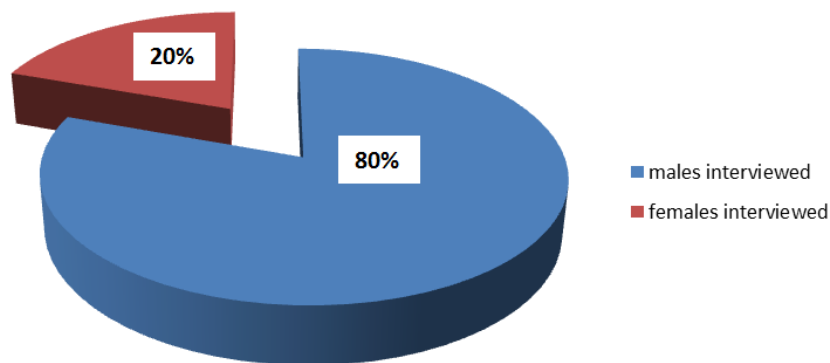
Encouraging women journalists in news content is not seemed to be on the agenda of print as well as broadcast media. This research found that the number of news stories written or presented by female journalists has been far less than that of male journalists. Out of the total stories published in the studied newspapers, 69% stories were written by male journalists while only 31% stories were attributed to female journalists. The English newspaper Times of India is placed better than Hindi newspaper Hindustan in terms of giving by-lines to female journalists in general as well as gender specific news coverage. The Hindi newspaper Hindustan has almost abandoned the practice of giving by-lines to the news stories and only publishes the writer's name in some very specific stories generated from their Delhi office.

As compared to the print media, the television news channels were found to be even worse in promoting women journalists in news presentation. The research data suggests that prime time newscast were dominated by male journalists as news channels used male reporters for news presentation in 75% of the stories, while female reporters were used in only 25% of the news stories.

Another aspect to analyse the gender sensitivity in media is to check the source of information i.e. how much credence the news channel has given to female voices. Here again we found the huge gender disparity. The total number of women interviewed as a source of

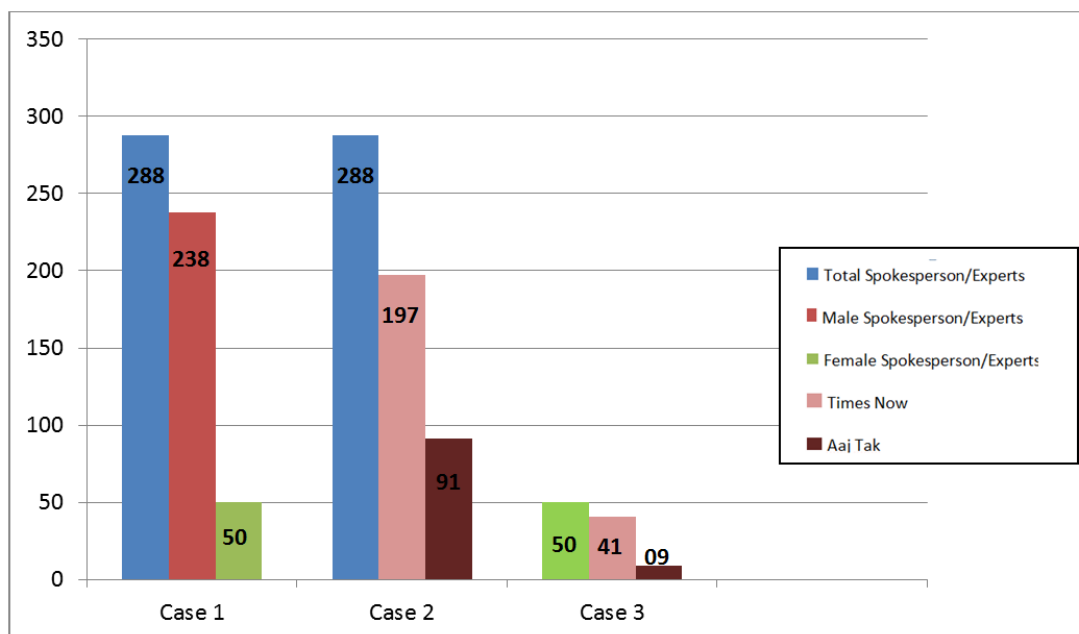
information and opinion was 111, and among them both channel have almost equal share. Aaj Tak interviewed 58 women while Times Now interviewed 53 female as a source of information and opinion. If we look the numbers of males who were considered as a source of information, we find that this number is four times bigger than that of females interviewed as source of information. There were 458 male interviewed by both the channels taken as source of information and opinion, and among them 214 were aired by Aaj Tak and 244 were aired by Times Now. The following graph depicts the comparative picture on the same issue.

**Graph: 4.G7.1. Persons interviewed as source of information/opinion**



If we look at the other source of opinion on the TV channels that is how many spokesperson and expert have been invited for a debate and discussion on the channels, here again the figure indicates a strong gender bias. A total of 288 spokesperson or experts have been called for the TV debates and discussions during the study period by the news channels and among them less than 20 per cent spokesperson were females. Out of the invited 288 spokesperson, only 50 spokespersons were female while there were 238 male spokespersons. Also, of the total 288 spokespersons, Aaj Tak had 91 spokesperson/experts and Times Now had 197. The number of women as a spokesperson or expert called by Hindi news channel was very low. Among the 50 women spokesperson or experts, Aaj Tak had invited only 9 female experts while Times Now invited 41 female experts in the stipulated period.

**Graph: 4.G7.2 Spokespersons/Experts invited in TV debates**

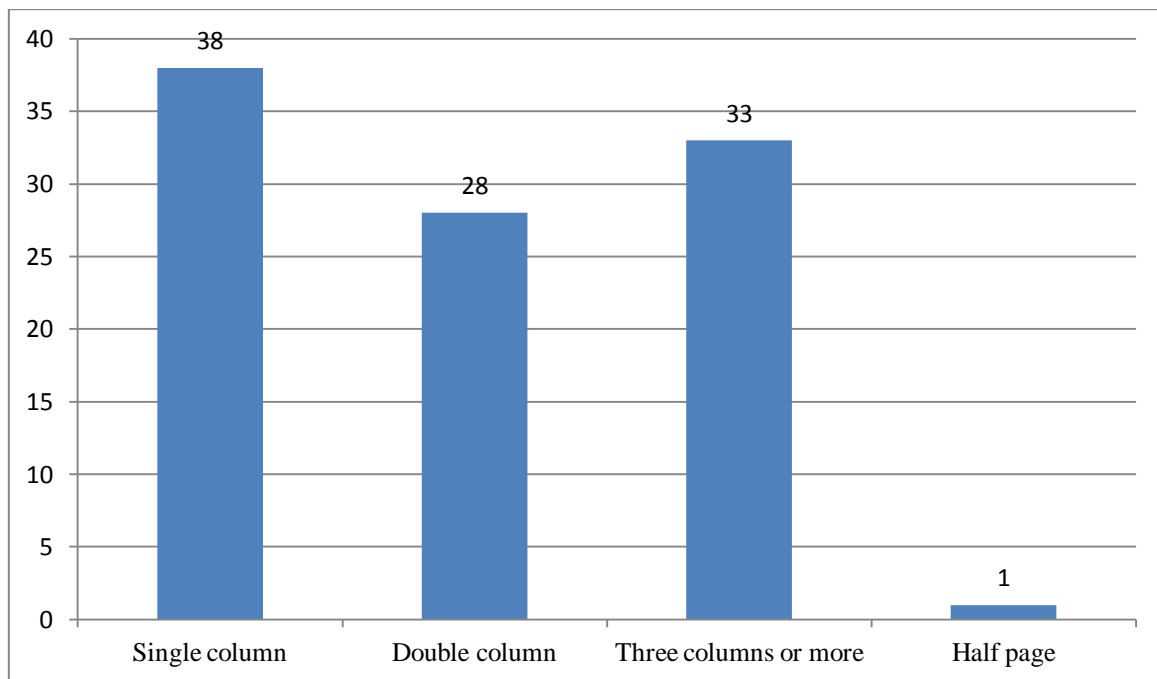


### 4.3 Content and Quantum-Prominence

When we look at the importance of news, it depends on the prominence given to the story by the newspaper or news channel. To check the prominence of the story, the current study suggests four categories and marks them as follows: first is the Single column news, second double column news, third is three and more columns and the last one is the half page story.

Research data suggests that 38 per cent stories on gender issues were single column news, 28 per cent were double column news, 33 per cent news have three and more columns and only 1 per cent news were half pages news. The following Graph shows the prominence of the story.

**Graph: 4.G8 Content and Quantum-Prominence**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

When we look at the prominence of stories in different newspaper, we found that single column news appeared more in English daily newspaper The Times of India. 42 per cent single column news appeared in TOI while in Hindi daily Hindustan, 33 per cent single column news appeared on gender issues.

The story of the double column news is opposite than the single column news. Hindi newspaper produces more gender news in double column than the English daily. Hindustan has 34 per cent double column news and The Times of India has 23 per cent double column news on gender issue. Three and more column news and half pages news are more or less same in both the newspaper. The following table indicates the outcome of the analysis.

**Table: 4.T3 Content and Quantum-Prominence**

	<b>Hindustan</b>	<b>Times of India</b>
<b>Single column</b>	33	42
<b>Double column</b>	34	23
<b>Three columns or more</b>	32	35
<b>Half page</b>	1	None

*Note: All figures are in percentage*

On further analysis of the single column stories on different gender issues, the research found that news or report on rape is predominant as compared to other issues. There were 122 single column reports/stories on gender issues, among them 20 per cent report/story was on rape issue, while the second leading issue was Harassment by police/authorities/others which has only 8 per cent share. Reporting on sex related crime was 6 per cent, the news on murder was 5 per cent and suicide cases reported 3 per cent. Apart from these there were many major genders related issues did not find sufficient place in single column story.

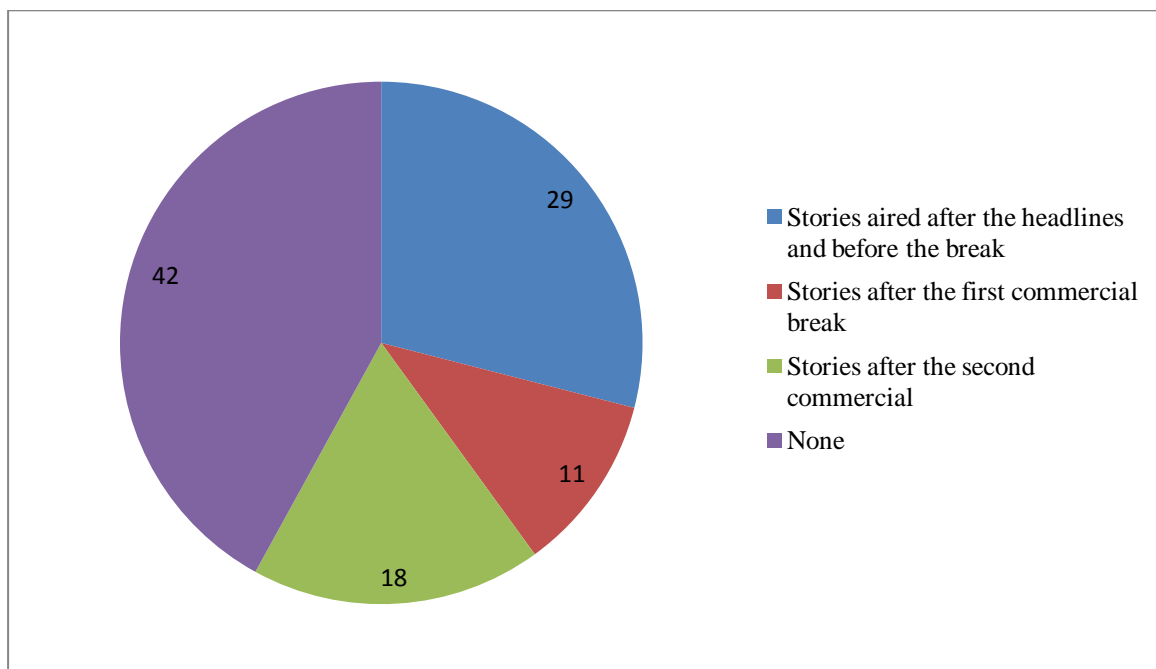
Some of the important gender concern like domestic violence, prostitution, trafficking, desertion, dowry etc. did not recorded even one per cent space as a single column story. The situation of the double column report/story is similar. Here again issue of rape is leading and the importance given on the other issues are same like single column story.

#### **4.4 Prominence of gender stories in News Channels**

To look at the importance of the news on television channel, it depends on the prominence of the story which given by the concerned channel. Similar to newspaper study, to check the prominence of the story the current study suggests three categories and ranked them as follows: first is the Stories aired after the headlines and before the break, second was the

Stories on the gender issue after the first commercial break and the last was Stories after the second commercial break. Research data suggest that 29 per cent stories on gender issues aired after the headlines and before the break. 11 per cent stories aired after the first commercial break and 18 per cent stories aired after the second commercial break. Graph 4.G9 shows the prominence of the story on the basis of different spacing.

**Graph: 4.G9 Prominence of the Story in Television**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

Once we look at the prominence of story on the basis of different channels, we get the major difference among them. Data show that English Channel is giving importance to the gender issues. Although the overall stories aired after the headlines and before the break were 29 per cent, the English channel Times Now broadcast 33 per cent of these stories while AajTak aired only 26 per cent stories after the headlines and before the first break. The same story could be seen in the case of the stories which were aired after the first commercial break. 17 per cent stories were aired on Times Now and only 7 per cent story was aired on AajTak after the first commercial break, while the overall response was 11 per cent.



The overall response for the third category of the stories which aired after the second commercial break was 18 per cent but Times Now telecast 28 per cent news while AajTak telecast only 11 per cent. The table 4 indicates the outcome of the study in different news channel. One important observation was that, out of 18 gender news on the English news channel Times Now, 5 news stories did not get elaborated on the channel. They only appeared in headlines. The position of Hindi channel was even worse than the English one. Out of 27 news stories on gender related themes, 18 news stories were confined to the headlines only and the news channel did not consider them worthy for further detailing.

**Table: 4.T4 Prominence of gender stories in different channels**

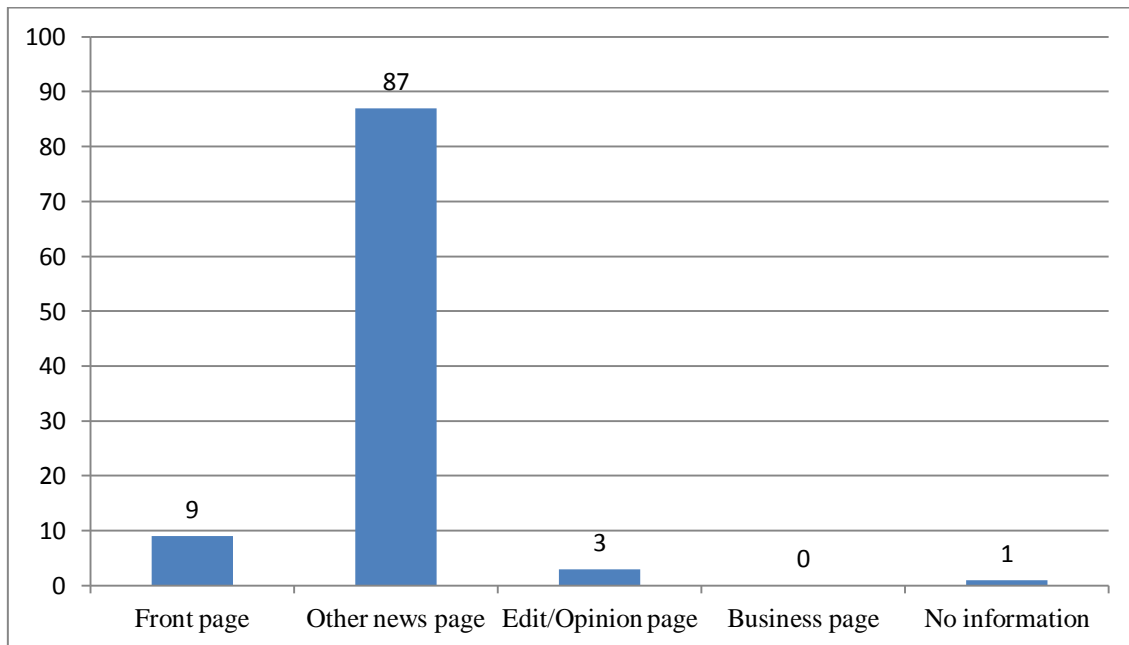
	<b>Times Now</b>	<b>AajTak</b>
<b>Stories aired after the headlines and before the break</b>	33	26
<b>Stories after the first commercial break</b>	17	7
<b>Stories after the second commercial</b>	28	11
<b>None</b>	22	56

*Note: All figures are in percentage*

#### **4.5 Content and Quantum-Placement**

When we look at the importance of the news, it depends on where that news has been placed by the concerned newspaper. To check the placement of the news we look the different categories and find that only 9 per cent news on gender issues appeared on the front page of the newspaper. 3 per cent stories have occupied the place on editorial and opinion page and 87 per cent gender related news appeared on the other pages of the studied newspaper. The following graph describes the distribution of the news on different newspaper.

**Graph: 4.G10 Content and Quantum-Placement in newspaper**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

Also, if we look at the framing of gender based stories, the study find that only 19% or 99 stories had thematic frame as a dominant frame and 83 per cent or 484 stories had episodic frame with a reporting style of narrative used, whereas in thematic frame the reportage style of narrative has been used.

As far as front page coverage of stories on gender issues are concerned, only 9 per cent of the total stories studied during the period found their place on the front page and both the newspaper share the same coverage in percentage. In terms of quantity, out of the total 53 front page stories, The Times of India published 30, while the Hindi newspaper Hindustan published 23 stories concerning women. However, the nature of the news on page one reveals the same trend of sensationalism.

Out of the 53 stories, 8 stories were related to rape, 2 of murder, 3 of suicide, 8 on harassment, 1 on revenge/acid attack and 3 on sex crimes. The majority of front page stories i.e. 59 per cent are reports on crime against women. Issues like development, women's representation and social or welfare related stories found their place only once on the front

page in the entire study period. The plight of domestic workers also made a page one story on three occasions, thanks to the high profile people involved in the abuse of their domestic help. But major gender concerns like women’s right, women entrepreneurs, their participation in decision making, even their health issues are either not found newsworthy or conveniently pushed to the other pages of the newspaper.

Once we look the placement of the news on the basis of different newspaper, we would get the not much difference among them. Data show that English and Hindi newspaper gave the same importance to the gender issues. Overall the percentage of the gender news as front page was 9% and this ratio is same in both newspapers. Almost similar situation is happening on the placement the gender news on other pages. There was 87 per cent news appeared on other pages and among them 86 per cent in Hindi daily Hindustan and little more 88 per cent in The Times of India. In terms of editorial and opinion pages, Hindustan gave more space than The Times of India. The details of the story placement on different channels could be seen in table 5 below.

**Table: 4.T5 Content and Quantum-Placement**

	<b>Over All</b>	<b>Hindustan</b>	<b>Times of India</b>
<b>Front page</b>	9	9	9
<b>Other news page</b>	87	86	88
<b>Edit/Opinion page</b>	3	4	1
<b>Business page</b>	None	None	None
<b>No information</b>	1	None	2

*Note: All figures are in percentage*

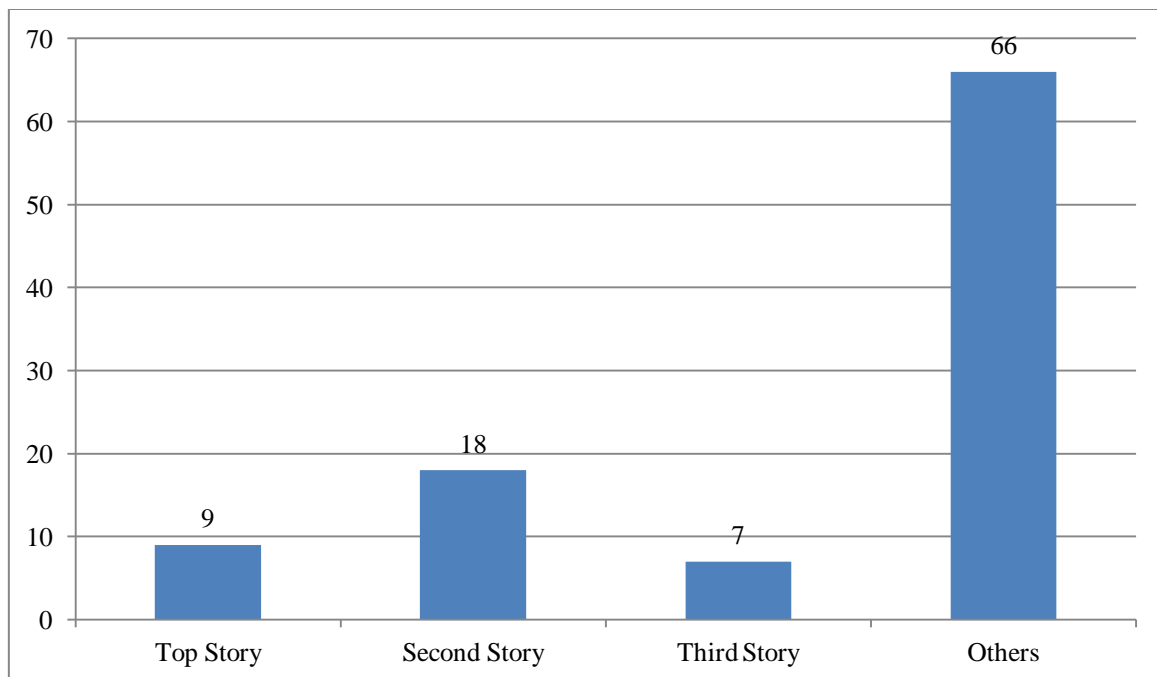
Again, if we look at which gender related issue did get frequent placement in the newspaper, the research found that the incident of Rape and the incident of Harassment by police/authorities /others have more coverage on the front page of the newspapers. 15 per cent report/story on each of these two issues had appeared on the front page of the newspapers. While the percentage of news on suicide and sex crimes appeared on front page

was 6 per cent each, incident of murder got 4 per cent and Revenge and Acid attack got 2 per cent coverage. If we look at the other pages for this news coverage, the story was very similar with some differences in their percentage. Interestingly, none of the newspaper find it prudent to write an editorial on any of the gender theme. The issue of domestic violence did not get space either on edit page or the front page in any of the newspaper.

#### 4.6 Gender stories placement in Television channel

To check the importance of the news in television channel, we need to see where that news has been placed by that channel. To check the placement of the story the present research segregates whether the gender related story has been made a top story, a second story, or a third story in the chronological order of their broadcast. Research data suggest that there were only 9 per cent stories aired on gender issues that were placed as top stories while 18 per cent were aired as second story and 7 per cent as third story.

**Graph: 4.G11 Story placement by the news channel**

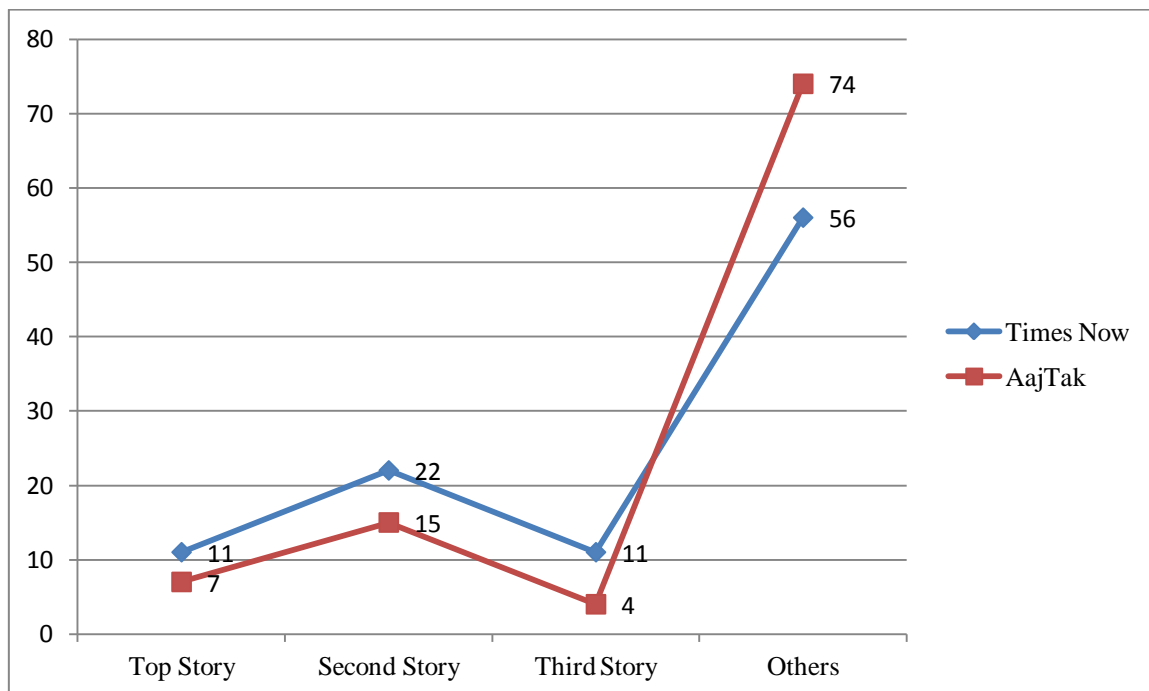


*Note: All figures are in percentage*

When we look at the placement of gender related story on both channels, we get some difference among them. Data show that English Channel is giving more importance to the gender issues and thus presented the gender news as a top story more than the Hindi channel. Overall the percentage of the gender news as top story was 9 per cent but English channel Times Now has aired more top story on gender issues than the Hindi channel AajTak during the study period. The similar pattern has been observed on the placement of gender news as a second story. Overall, there were 18 per cent stories aired as a second story on the prime time news casts, but among them 22 per cent gender based stories were aired as a second story on Times Now while 15 per cent were aired on AajTak.

The overall response for the gender based news aired as third story on studied news channels was found to be 7 per cent but again, Times Now aired 11 per cent of these stories while AajTak aired only 4 per cent. The details of the story placement on different channels could be seen in graph 4.G12.

**Graph: 4.G12 Story Placement by different channels**

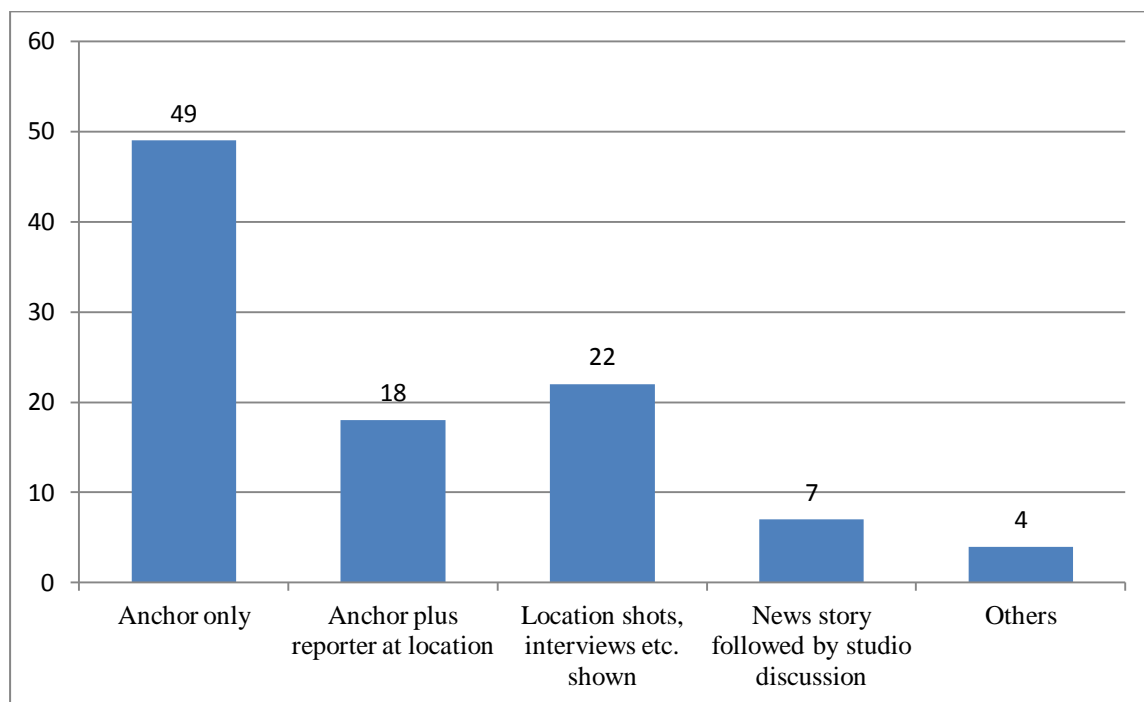


#### 4.7 Focus given to gender stories on Television

To see the focus given by the news channels to the gender related stories depend on how much time has been given to that story, how the story is treated and what kind of factors are involved to depict the story? How the story has been presented? Who lead the story and how it is framed? Whether anchors only have read the news or have done some background research? The research data show that 49 per cent gender news were presented by Anchor only, while 18 per cent gender related news also covered the reporter's analysis at the location. 22 per cent news stories had location shots and the reporter took interviews of the various persons related to that event.

There are some stories which had the studio discussion with the experts. Research data suggests that 7 per cent news stories on gender related theme were followed by a studio discussion with the experts deliberating on the different aspects of the news story.

**Graph: 4.G13 Focus on the story on Television**

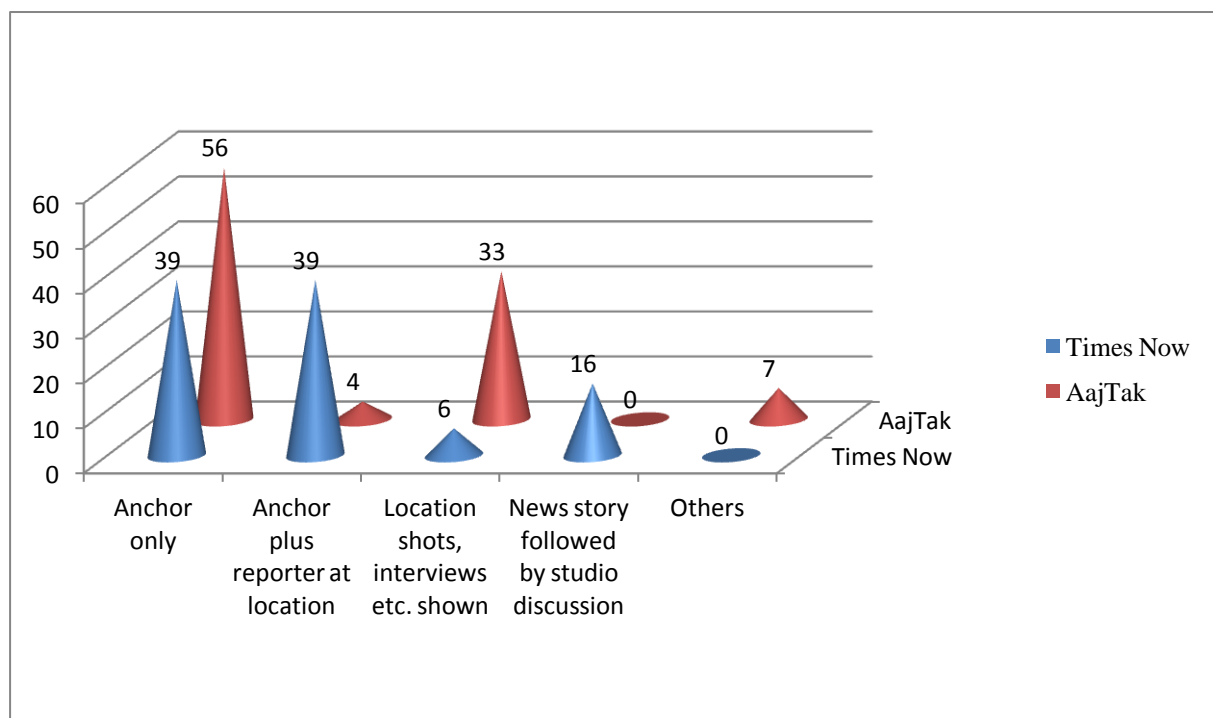


*Note: All figures are in percentage*

When we look at the channel wise division on how the gender based stories have been reported, we find that Hindi channel AajTak produced more news which were presented by Anchors only and covered locations shots, interviews etc. The difference with English channels is very high but if we see whether they have done any studio discussion on the issue we find that AajTak fared poorly in this. Data suggest that 56 per cent gender news on Hindi channels is presented by only the Anchors while the ratio of the English channels Times Now is 39 per cent for the same.

In the context of anchor plus location reporting Times Now has 39 per cent stories falling under this category but AajTak fared badly on the same count and they presented only 4 per cent news which were reported by anchors and reporters as well. In the case of Studio debate and discussion Times Now has better record. During the research period, 16 per cent news on the gender based themes has been discussed in the Times Now studio with the experts. There was not a single studio discussion on AajTak in the same period. The table below indicates the overall outcome of the study.

**Graph: 4.G14 Kind of story presented in television channel**

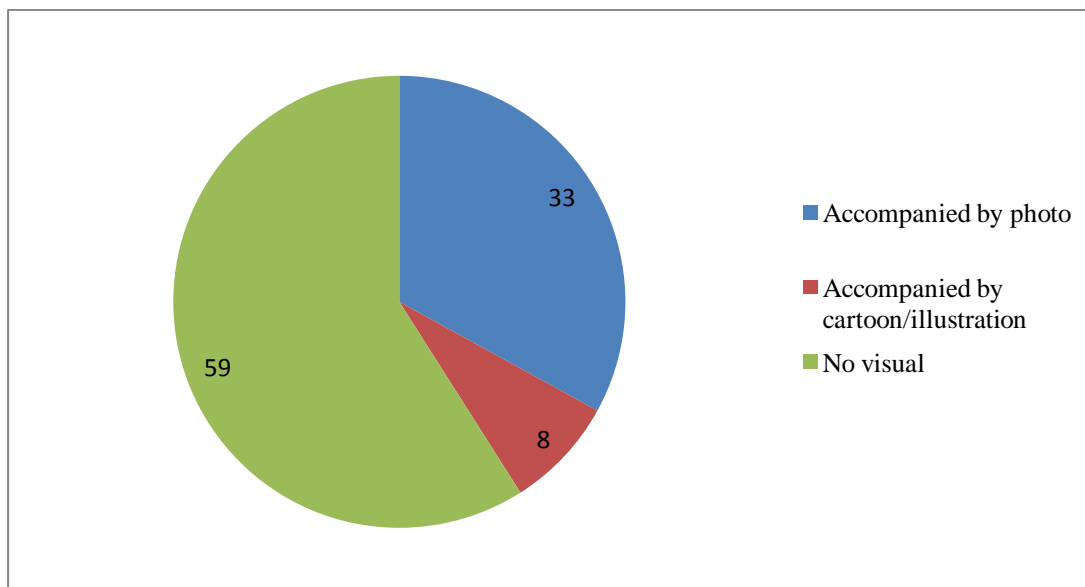


Also, if we see the framing of the news story, data suggest that televisions are poor in framing thematically the gender related story. The researcher found that Times Now has only 3 stories out of 18 and Aaj Tak has also only 3 stories out of 27 gender related story which had a thematic frame. The rest has only episodic frame.

#### 4.8 Accompanying visual (s)

Visuals enhance the prominence of any news. News could be more attractive if it depicts some visuals. The research data suggests that in the studied newspapers, 33 per cent news related to gender were accompanied by photo, only 8 per cent accompanied by cartoon/illustration while 59 per cent news did not has any visuals.(Graph 4.G15).

**Graph: 4.G15 Accompanying visual (s) in newspaper**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

If we look at the further division among both the newspaper, we found that more or less both are giving same space for visuals. 31 per news accompanied by photo appeared in Hindustan and 34 per cent in TOI. If we look at the news accompanied by cartoon, we find that 9 per cent of these news appeared in the Hindustan while 8 per cent news in TOI was accompanied by cartoon.



**Table: 4.T6 Accompanying visual(s)**

	<b>Hindustan</b>	<b>Times of India</b>
<b>Accompanied by photo</b>	31	34
<b>Accompanied by cartoon/illustration</b>	9	8
<b>No visual</b>	60	58

*Note: All figures are in percentage*

Media's fascination for events rather than processes became amply clear the moment we focus on the news stories on gender followed by features/editorials/supporting story or box. Only 5 per cent that is 30 out of 583 stories on gender issues are followed by feature/editorial or the supporting story/box. That means majority of the gender related stories were treated as isolated events and no attempts were made by the newspaper to further analyse the issue.

Times Of India fared slightly better as 22 out 328 stories were followed by a supporting story/feature/editorial which comes to 7 per cent as compared to Hindustan where only 8 out of 255 stories or 3 per cent stories were followed by a feature or supporting story. The following table describes their distributions.

**Table: 4.T7- gender stories followed by feature/editorial or the supporting in newspapers**

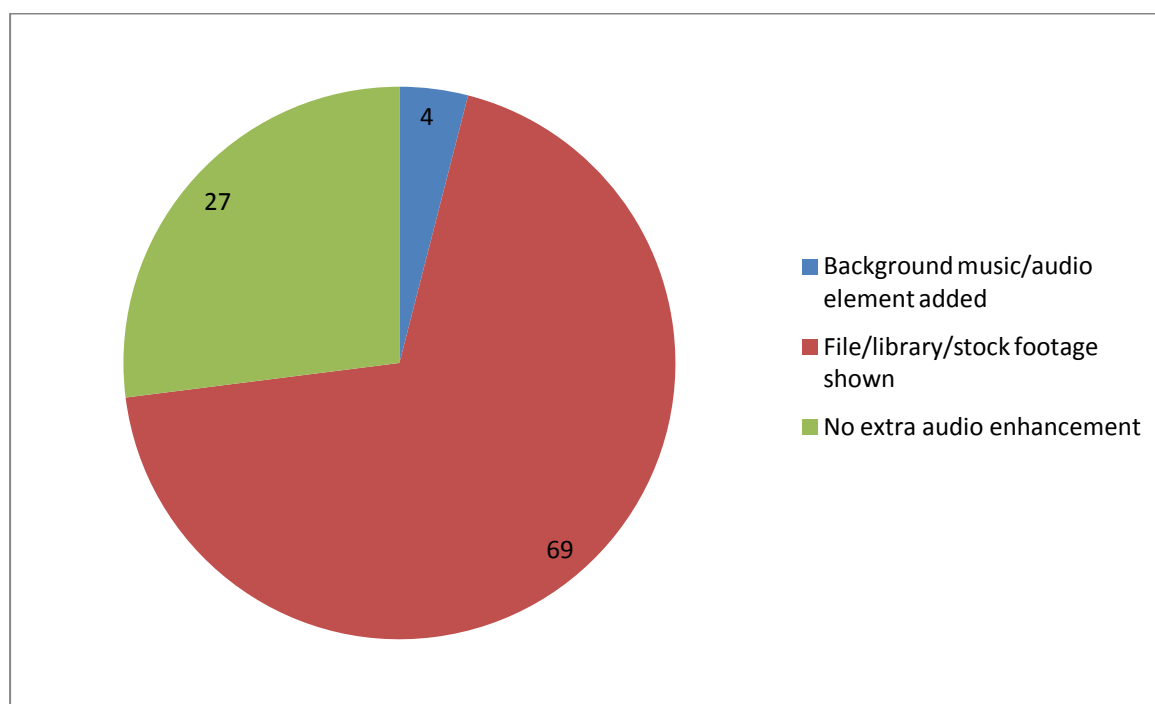
	<b>Over all</b>	<b>Hindustan</b>	<b>Times of India</b>
Gender based stories followed by feature/editorial or the supporting story	5	3	7

**Note:** all figures are in percentage

#### 4.9 Visual/audio value additions in Television channel

For television channels the interest on any news depends on how that story has been packaged i.e. how the background of that story has been composed. The audio and visual composition makes story interesting to the viewers. The findings of the present study indicates that only 4 per cent of the story which covered the gender issue in broadcast media had the background music or audio elements added while 27 per cent had shown the file/library/stock footage. Majority of the gender related stories i.e. 69% had no audio enhancement.

**Graph: 4.G16 Visual/audio value additions in Television channel**



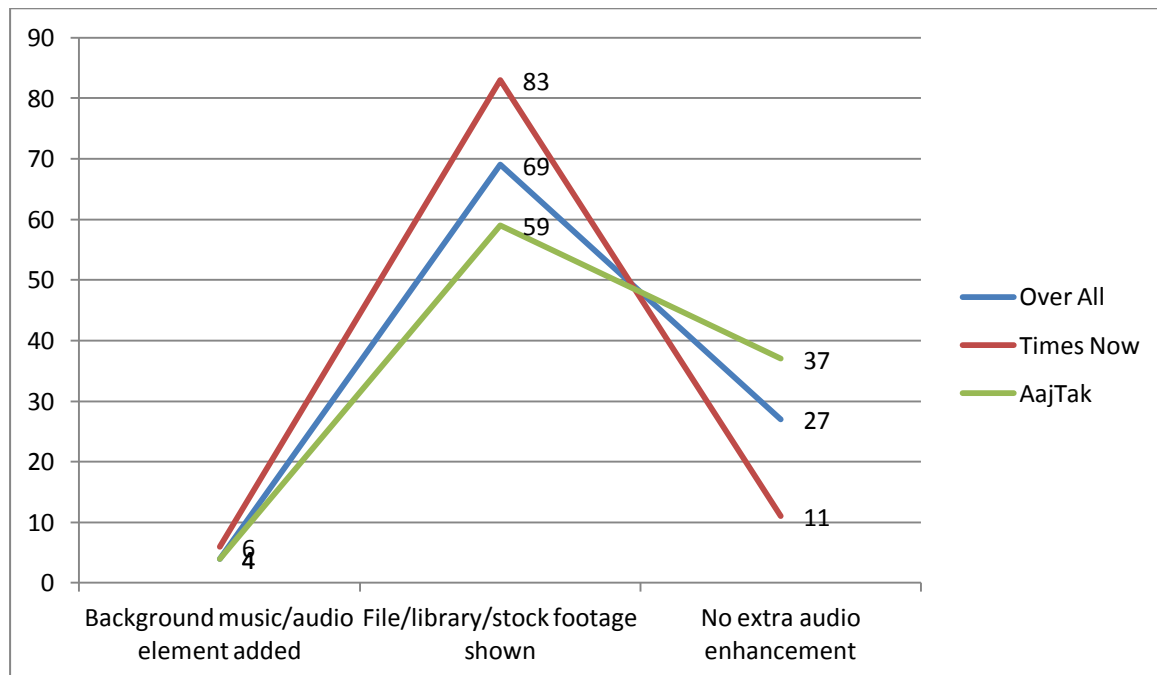
*Note: All figures are in percentage*

When we look at the audio/visual treatment of gender based stories on both the channels, we get the notion that there is a very less gap between them. Data show that Times Now has given more importance to the gender issues. Although the overall percentage of the gender based stories with background music or audio elements added were only 4 per cent but Times now was slightly ahead than AajTak. The same trend can be seen in the case of the stories

which have shown file/library or stock footage. Times Now had 83 per cent gender news which has shown file/library or stock footage while AajTak had 59 per cent stories showing the same.

There is much difference between the news channels in terms of gender related stories with no extra audio enhancement. AajTak had 37 per cent gender news which had no extra audio enhancement while Times Now had only 11 per cent. Table 3 indicates the different figures for the both channels.

**Graph: 4.G17 Visual/audio value additions by channels**



#### 4.10 Coverage on crime/violence/oppression against women in Newspaper

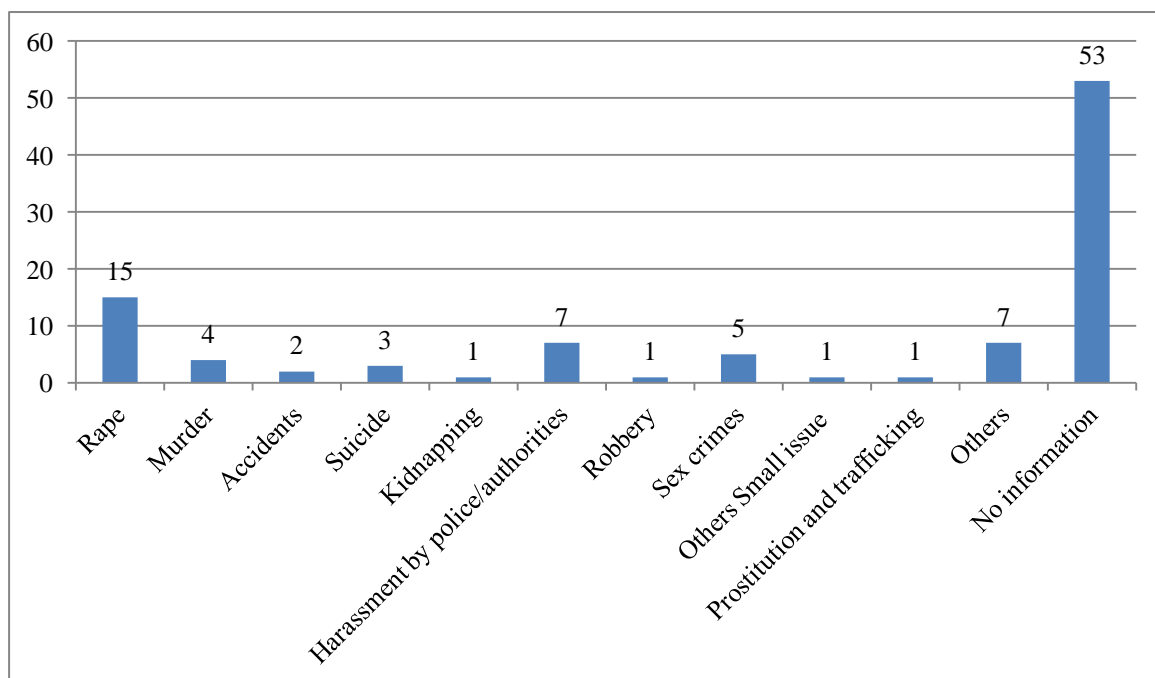
Violence against women is the leading debate in the contemporary societies. There is much concerned on this and lots of incidents happen despite the many laws have been enacted. News on rape is the leading news on the issue of crime against women. Of the total news which is based on gender issue, 15 per cent news was related to rape. Going for the in depth

analysis of the data, the researcher found that out of total 85 stories on rape, 51 per cent were brief or single column stories, 22 per cent in double column and 29 per cent were three column or more. Majority of these stories that is 91 per cent were published on the other pages and surprisingly 76 stories have no by-lines reflecting a casual and routine approach of reporting a heinous crime as rape.

The second major issue on crime against women was the harassment by police/authorities. 7 per cent news was found to be of harassment by police or authorities. Out of total 42 stories, 18 were single column, 10 double column and 14 three column stories.

It was surprising to note that 32 out of 42 stories had no by-lines whereas 4 have male by-lines and 6 have female by-lines. 8 stories were on the front page and 34 on the other pages. Murder and suicide are the other major issue. The same pattern can be seen in news reporting of murders where out of 24 stories, 11 were single column, 7 were in double column and 6 were three column or more. Only 2 out of 24 stories related found their place on the front page that and 22 were on the other pages. 20 out of 24 stories have no by-lines and other four were written by male journalists.

**Graph: 4.G18 Coverage on crime/violence/oppression against women in Newspaper**



*Note: All figures are in percentage*

If we look at the selected newspapers coverage on the news related to the violence against women the data suggest that Hindi newspaper produced more news on rape. The table below indicates the various issues related to crime against women.

**Table: 4.T8 Coverage on crime/violence/oppression against women**

	Over All	Hindustan	TOI
<b>Rape</b>	15	17	13
<b>Murder</b>	4	6	3
<b>Accidents</b>	2	1	2
<b>Suicide</b>	3	3	2
<b>Kidnapping</b>	1	1	1
<b>Harassment by police/authorities</b>	7	8	7
<b>Robbery</b>	1	1	1
<b>Sex crimes</b>	5	4	5
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	1	None	1
<b>Revenge/acid attack</b>	1	1	Negligible
<b>Others Small issue</b>	1	1	1
<b>Prostitution and trafficking</b>	1	2	1
<b>Others</b>	7	7	6
<b>No information</b>	53	49	56

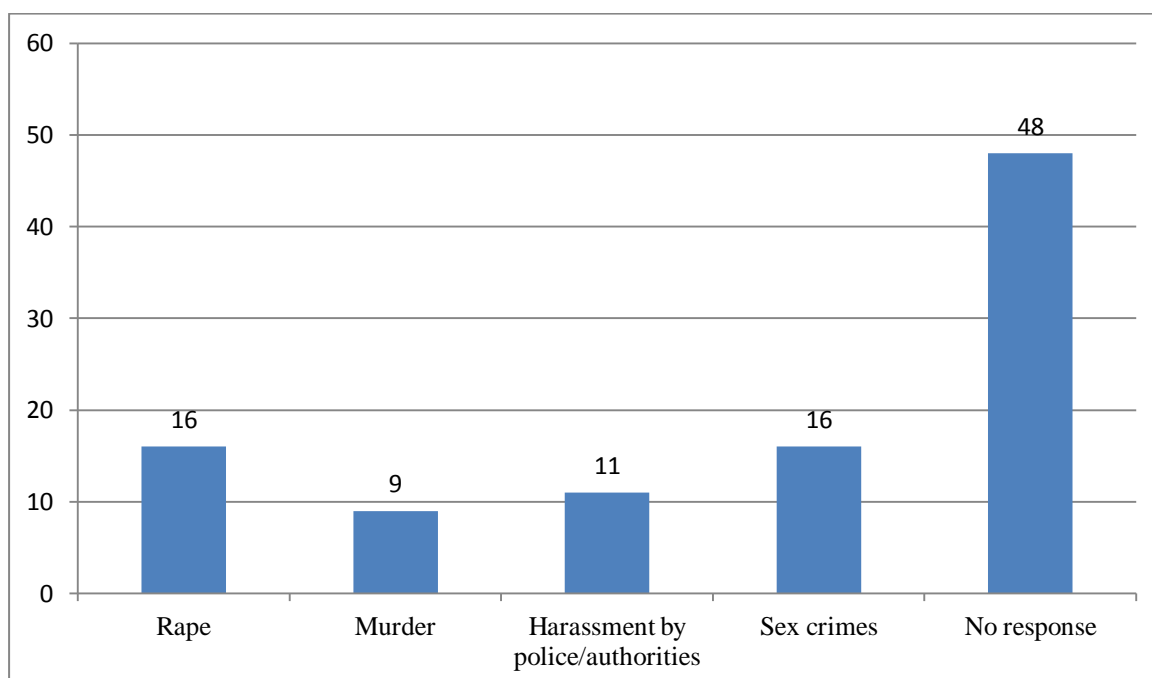
*Note: All figures are in percentage. The other small issue includes domestic discord, desertion, unwed mother etc.*

#### 4.11 Coverage on crime/violence/oppresion against women in Television

The Nirbhaya incident in December 2012 in Delhi has raised the big voice against the issue of violence against women in our society. Media especially electronic media played an aggressive role in stirring masses against such heinous crime against women. But do the same media have been giving the same time and importance to the other gender related crime or other cases apart from Nirbhaya case?

The study revealed that out of total news which are based on gender themes, 16 per cent news were related to rape. The second most covered issue was the sex crime with 16 per cent news stories and the next most covered issue was harassment by police/authorities. 11 per cent news stories related to harassment by police or authorities were broadcast by the news channels. 9 per cent news stories were found to be related to the murder of any women.

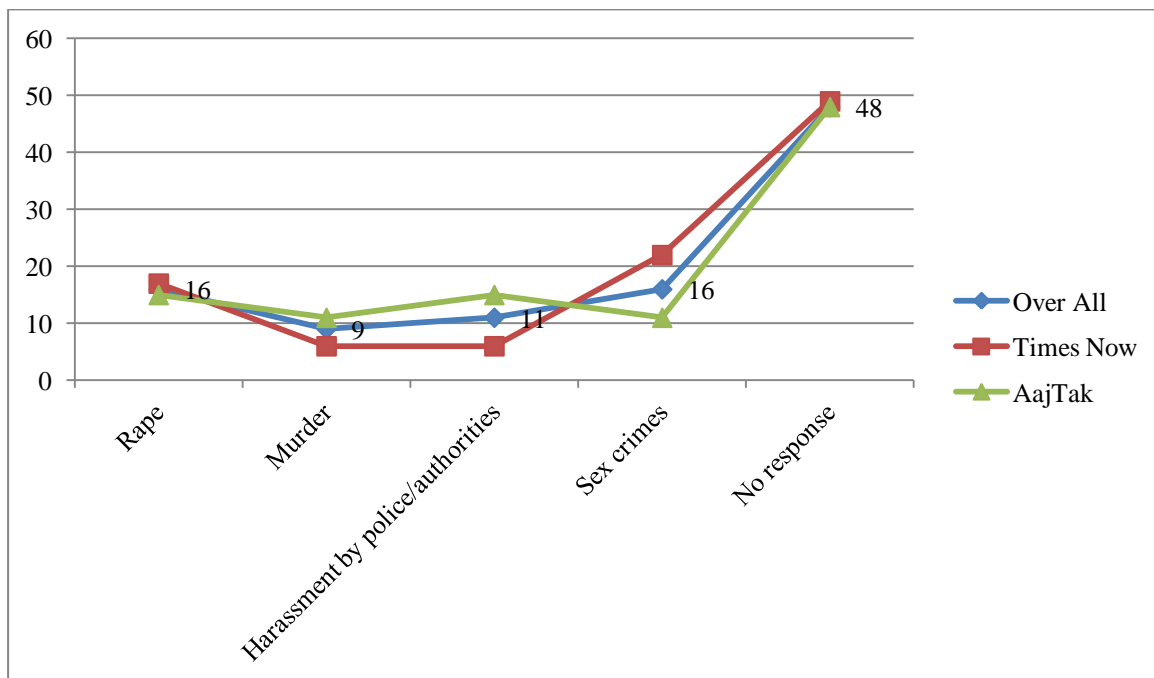
**Graph: 4.G19 Coverage on crime/violence/oppresion against women in Television**



Note: All figures are in percentage

If we analyse the coverage given to gender violence by two selected channels, we found that there is no major difference among them. Both Hindi and English news channels have more or less given same space for the coverage on crime against women.

**Graph: 4.G20 Coverage on crime/violence/oppression against women**



#### 4.12 Coverage on Legal Issues

The coverage on legal issue is found to be very poor in both print as well as broadcast media. The total newspaper coverage on legal issue is only 8 per cent and among them the coverage on major legal issues are very low. All the major legal issues have less than one per cent coverage in the newspaper. There is only 0.2 per cent coverage on personal law. Same picture emerged with the other legal issue. The coverage on labour law is also very poor and it is only 0.3 per cent, while the coverage on women right is 0.5 per cent and coverage on marital issue is little more than one per cent.

The following table indicates the newspaper coverage on various legal issues. The interesting finding in this coverage is that while there is abysmally low percentage of news stories in

different sub themes of legal issues, majority of the news stories fall under other legal issues category indicating some trivial and cursory approach adopted by the newspapers towards gender and legal themes.

**Table: 4.T9 Distribution of Legal Issue**

Legal Issue	Per cent
Personal Law	0.2
Labor Law	0.3
Women rights as human rights	0.5
Marital (dowry, divorce, safety etc.)	1.2
Other Legal Issue	6.7

*Note: The rest had no opinion*

If we look at the news channels coverage on legal issues, we find that there is no single coverage on the above legal issues by both television news channels.

#### **4.13 Coverage on economics and gender**

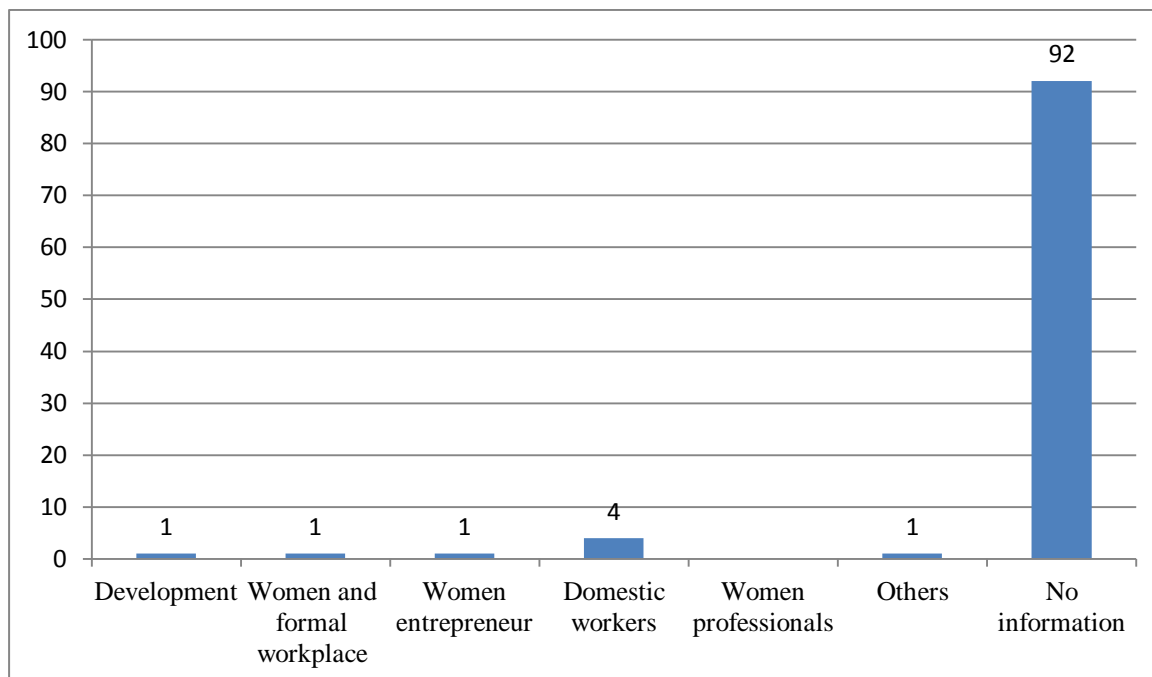
Economics is the major concern in India in recent time but if we look at the news on economics and gender theme, we found that there are very less news in both Newspaper and Television news channel. A total of 8 per cent coverage was devoted to the category of economics and gender in the studied newspaper.

Although the coverage itself is very low but even this percentage is attributed to some cases of the plight and torture of domestic helps by high profile people in Delhi. Out of 40 stories under this category, 22 were on domestic help. The issue dominates in both the TOI and Hindustan as 15 out of 27 stories in TOI and 7 out of 13 were devoted to the plight of domestic help. Development and other issues concerning economics and gender didn't get



media glare as less than 1 per cent coverage was given to development theme by both the newspapers. The graph below depicts the representation of these issues in the newspapers.

**Graph: 4.G21 Coverage on economics and gender issue in newspaper**



Note: All figures are in percentage

The coverage on economics and gender issues were found to be very poor in the Television news channel. There was no coverage at all in the English news channel under this theme. Hindi channel has given some importance to these issues but they were very less. The table below details the coverage in both the news channel.

**Table: 4.T10 Coverage on economics and gender**

	Over All	Times Now	AajTak
Women entrepreneur	2	None	4
Domestic workers	5	None	7
N.A.	93	100	89

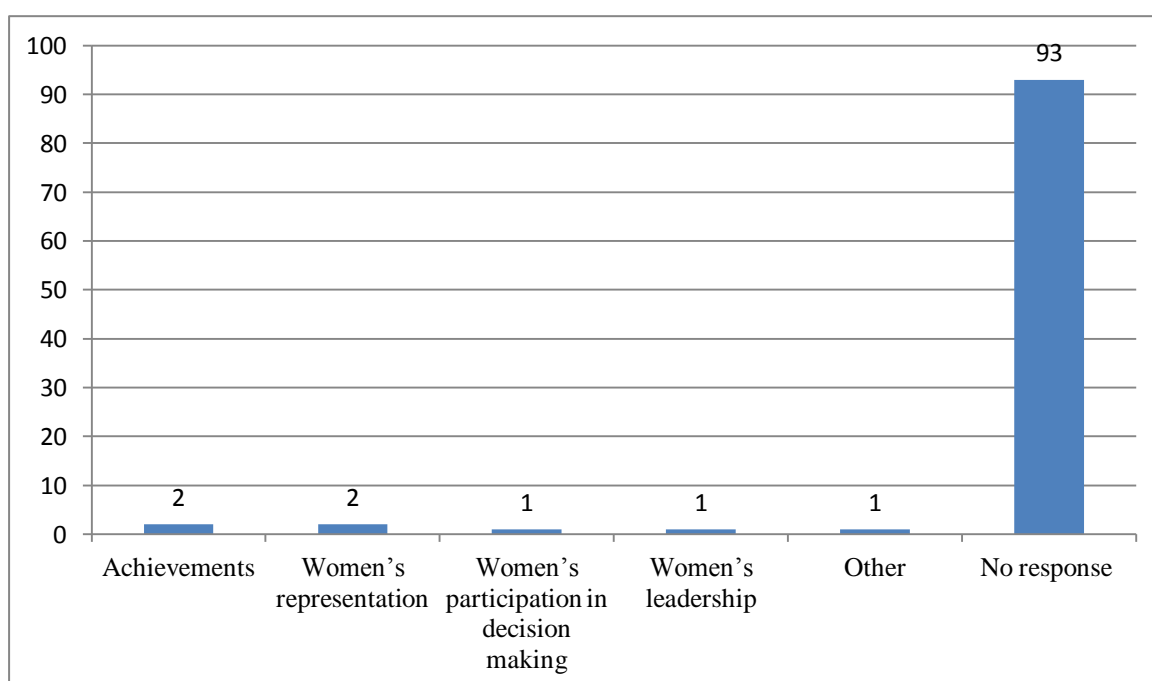
Note: All figures are in percentage

#### 4.14 Empowerment coverage

Empowerment is the core political issue and women empowerment is the idea which is more relevant for the contemporary India. The data on the coverage of women empowerment are very discouraging and do not depict any positive hope. There were only 2 per cent news under one of the sub themes of women empowerment i.e. women achievement. Women reservation is the hot issue in politics but data suggest that newspapers devoted only one per cent coverage to the issue of women's representation.

Women's participation in decision making and women's leadership also got only one per cent coverage of the total gender related news appeared in the both newspaper

**Graph: 4.G22 Empowerment coverage in Newspaper**



**Note:** All figures are in percentage

When we look at the division of the news related to the women empowerment in two newspapers, the research data suggest that out of total 7 per cent coverage of empowerment

theme,, The Times of India fared comparatively better featuring 8 per cent stories related to empowerment as compared to only 3 per cent in Hindustan. However in both the papers individual achievements outshined any other form of empowerment coverage. 42 per cent of stories under this category were of individual achievements in Hindustan whereas Times of India has 37 per cent.

Issues of women’s participation in decision making and leadership issues had a meagre coverage of 1 per cent in Times of India and no coverage in Hindustan.

**Table: 4.T11 Empowerment coverage in newspaper**

	Over All	Hindustan	Times of India
Achievements	2	1	3
Women’s representation	2	None	3
Women’s participation in decision making	1	None	1
Women’s leadership	1	None	1
Other	1	1	1
No response	93	97	91

**Note:** All figures are in percentage

The empowerment coverage on the television news channels has been found to be equally low. Only 4 per cent news with empowerment theme was broadcast on the television channels. However, all these stories were about the women’s representation.

The channel wise distribution of the coverage on the above mentioned issues are not different from the overall pattern and the figures of different channels are not encouraging.

**Table: 4.T12 Empowerment coverage in Television**

	Over All	Times Now	AajTak
Women's representation	4	6	4
No response	96	94	96

**Note:** All figures are in percentage

#### 4.15 Coverage on social and welfare issues related to women

The present research found mix coverage on social and welfare issues related to women but the figures are not too optimistic. The major focus of the newspapers on social and welfare theme related to gender was women security. The coverage on women security is 3.4 per cent while the second most covered issue was pre-natal and child care. The table below depicts the story on various social and welfare issues.

**Table: 4.T13 Coverage of social and welfare issues in the Newspapers**

Issues	Per cent
Family Planning	0.2
Pre-natal and childcare	0.9
Health	0.7
Women's security	3.4
Malnutrition of women and child	0.2
Child marriage	0.3
Others	1.4

**Note:** Rest indicates no information

If we look at the Television coverage on social and welfare issues related to women, the research data is quite depressing. There is only a single story covered under the said theme during the entire study period. This single news story was broadcast by Times Now and was related to the sub theme of children's education. The Hindi news channel AajTak drew a blank on this issue.

#### **4.16 Coverage on art/craft and literature related to women**

The coverage on art/craft and literature related to women doesn't seem to be newsworthy to the media. The figure indicates less than one per cent coverage on the issue. Under this theme, the only newspaper coverage was found to be news stories about women writers.

The English newspaper The Times of India carried out only one story about a women writer whereas the Hindi newspaper Hindustan published three stories on the same during the entire study period.

The research data of the television news channel is even more dismal as far as the coverage of art/craft/ and literature news related to women is concerned. While the Hindi news channel AajTak broadcast a single story on music sub theme, the English news channel Times Now drew a blank on this issue.

#### **4.17 Coverage on women's position in marriage and family**

The trend of poor coverage of gender based themes in the media continued with the issue on women's position in marriage and family. The research found only 2 per cent newspaper coverage on this issue. Major focuses under this theme were Inter caste/intercommunity marriage and widow's issues.

The following table details the different stories published under this theme.

**Table: 4.T14 Newspaper coverage on women’s position in marriage and family**

Issues	Per cent
Marriage	0.3
Inter caste/intercommunity marriage	1.4
Widow’s issues	0.2
Others	0.5

Broadcast media’s coverage of stories on women’s position in marriage and family theme was found to be even more dismal with only a single story on widow’s issue telecast on the Hindi news channel AajTak during the entire study period. The English news channel Times Now did not carry any story on this theme.

#### **4.18 Coverage on women and sports**

All national dailies have dedicated sport pages which covers the sporting events within and outside the national boundaries. However, when it comes to the issue of gender parity, the participation of women in sports and the coverage of women sports events have been pathetic in terms of quantity as well as quality. The same trend has been found by the researcher in the present study while analysing the data. Only 9 per cent of the news was published, pertaining to women sports, in the selected newspapers during the study period. Comparatively, the Hindi newspaper Hindustan gave more emphasis to women sports events giving 11 per cent coverage, whereas the English newspaper TOI accorded only 8 per cent coverage. However, there is an interesting trend found in both the newspaper.

The data reveals that these newspapers gave more importance to the international women sports events as compared to the national events. Out of 29 stories published in the Hindustan on women sports, 21 or 73% stories were related to international women sports events and similarly, of 26 stories published in TOI, 18 or around 70% stories were of international events of women sports. The abject apathy towards the coverage of the national women sports events shows the biased approach of the Indian press and the society as well, which

considers sports as a male bastion and gives little importance to women sports. Kane and Greendorfer (1994:90)<sup>4</sup> state that the wrong kind of messages sent by the media, those that further entrench 'appropriate' feminine roles rather than accurate athletic roles, could possibly do more harm to societal acceptance on women in sport than no attention at all. This notion denotes that the media has the power to reinforce stereotypes on women in sport

Television news channels fared even worse as not even a single story was telecast on women sports, whether national or international, by the Times Now and Aajtak during the entire study period. Women have made great strides in sport in recent years and the way in which media portray these sporting achievements is critically important to dislodging negative stereotypes and overcoming discrimination of women in sport. Rodgers and Dearing (1988:148)<sup>5</sup> state that issues which are not given attention by the media will hardly be disseminated beyond their points of origin. The media, therefore, need to reflect reality and not the deeply embedded community attitudes and stereotypes about women in sport.

#### **4.19 Coverage on Feminism/ Politics and women activism**

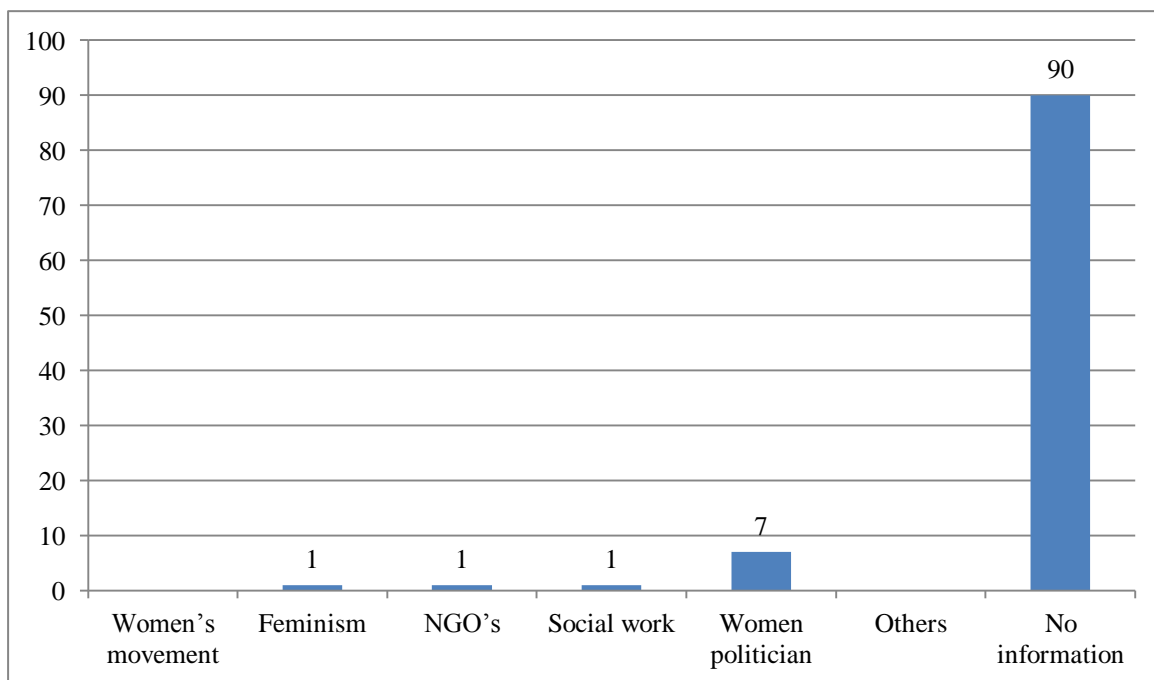
There is fair amount of talk on Feminism in the contemporary world. There is growing demand for the women participation in the public domain. Over the last quarter century, some improvement has been made in press portraits of feminism, feminists, and gender-related issues. Yet much still needs improvement. At issue is what the media choose to present (or not to present) as news about women and how they characterize (or caricature) the women's movement. This issue deserves greater attention from those interested in social movements in general and the women's movement in particular. The press is increasingly responsible for supplying the information and images through which we understand our lives (Hall 1977, 340-42)<sup>6</sup>.

The study tries to locate the situation of the women activism and politics through the lens of newspapers and television channel debates. The research data reveals that around 10 per cent coverage has been attributed to the issues related to Feminism, Politics and women activism by the newspapers<sup>7</sup> in which TOI is slightly ahead as compared to the Hindi newspaper Hindustan which published 7 per cent news related to this theme. However, in both the newspapers, majority of the news stories under this theme covered are related to women politicians, whereas issues related to Feminism, women movements, non-governmental

organisations activities and social work were found almost missing or had scanty media coverage during the entire study period<sup>8</sup>. For any social movement, the media play a crucial role in shaping public consciousness and public policy. Journalists' standard framing devices of selection, exclusion, emphasis, and tone can profoundly affect cultural perceptions (Gitlin 1980, 3-7; Goffman 1974, 10-11)<sup>9</sup>.

Even the coverage of women politicians which amounts to only around 7 per cent of the total coverage is paltry and reflects a gender bias because of the fact that political news dominates the coverage in newspaper on any given day. In quantitative terms this is a common conclusion, though in line with previous research studies on gender bias in the coverage of male and female politicians (Braden, 1996<sup>10</sup>; Bystrom, 1999; Goodnow, 2010; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991<sup>11</sup>; Niven & Zilber, 2001<sup>12</sup>; Witt, Paget & Matthews, 1994<sup>13</sup>), which arrived at the conclusion that female politicians often receive less coverage, benefitting of a worse media treatment compared to their male counterparts.

**Graph: 4.G23 Coverage on Feminism/ Politics and women activism in newspaper**



**Note:** All figures are in percentage



The table show the poor coverage on Coverage on Feminism/ Politics and women activism in different newspapers.

**Table: 4.T15 Coverage on Feminism/ Politics and women activism**

	Over All	Hindustan	Times of India
Women's movement	None	None	None
Feminism	1	None	1
NGO's	1	None	1
Social work	1	None	1
Women politician	7	6	8
Others	None	None	None
No information	90	93	89

**Note:** All figures are in percentage

#### **4.20 Coverage on Feminism/ Politics and women activism in Television**

The broadcast media remained disinterested and failed to telecast any news story on feminism, women's movement or other related themes. The only issue covered under this theme was of the women politicians which constitute around 31 per cent of the total coverage on gender issues. Comparatively, Times Now provided more space for women politicians telecasting 39 per cent of the stories while AajTak gave 26 per cent coverage for women politicians. The table below depict the figures.

**Table: 4.T16 Coverage on feminism/politics and women activism**

	Over All	Times Now	AajTak
Women politician	31	39	26
No response	69	61	74

**Note:** All figures are in percentage

#### 4.21 Coverage on women and education

It seemed that issues of women and education have been a non-issue for the media. Research data suggest that both the print as well as broadcast media have shown lack of interest to portray the situation of women education in India. Data indicates that only 0.3 per cent coverage given by the newspaper on the issue of women and education while Television did not cover a single story on the same issue.

#### 4.22 Coverage on lighter vein issues (fashion/ features)

The last category of the research parameters which studied the coverage on gender related lighter vein issues like fashion or features also get less space in the media but it has more space than many other important issues related to women. The study found 4 per cent coverage given by the newspaper on the issue and the table below indicates the issues covered under this theme.

**Table: 4.T17 Coverage of lighter vein issues in the Newspapers:**

Issue	Per cent
National	1.2
International	1.5
Interviews (models, designers, etc.)	0.2
Others	1.0

The television channels were silent on this theme and did not cover a single story on this issue.

## 4.23 Research Questions:

### *4.23.1 How and to what extent do the print and the broadcast media report gender issues?*

More than the quarter of the century after the women's movement blew the lid off domestic violence, first through the campaign against the dowry related violence and subsequently, by bringing other forms of gender based violence within families out of the closet where they had until then been conveniently hidden, media reports on such crimes do not seem to have changed a great deal. They still treat most incident of violence against women, especially within the homes, as staple of crime beat, warranting little more than the largely unthinkable, unquestioning reproduction of news items arbitrarily selected from the police hand-outs to fill the inside pages of the day's newspaper. Cases against cruelty against women in marital homes have been increased from 1605 cases in 2013, to 2487 in 2013.

These statistics were placed by police before Supreme Court which was hearing a case related to slapping of a woman activist, who along with others, were protesting against the police inaction in the rape of a 5 year old girl child in New Delhi's Gandhi Nagar. However, this study shows that the coverage on domestic violence is a meagre 0.3%, with only 2 stories, one a single column story and the other is a three column story. Both these stories had been published by TOI, incidentally written by male journalists. Hindi newspaper Hindustan draws a blank as far as stories on this issue are concerned.

The apparent banality of the meagre coverage on domestic violence and other form of violence and the implied triviality of the crime themselves, conveyed by the haphazard, careless manner in which they are reported, render them so ordinary, mundane and predictable a feature of daily life that they barely enter reader's consciousness, let alone impinge on their conscience.

The "media implicitly tell us how to rank the importance of public issues according to the amount of press coverage devoted to an issue", said Carolyn Waldron, in an article published by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)<sup>14</sup>. In other words, a topic that does not get adequate and appropriate media coverage tends to be perceived as unimportant. Accordingly,

public awareness of domestic violence cannot be affected if such stories are either not reported at all, or reported in a manner that does not catch the attention of, make sense to, and enhance the understanding of the audience.

The meagre coverage on dowry and murder related issues reveal the preoccupation of the press with events rather than processes. In the period surveyed, very few stories care to look more closely at the processes and the institutions in Indian society that had given birth to such a phenomenon. Although the condemnation was universal and no attempt was made to justify the phenomenon, much of the analysis remained superficial.

The media's benign neglect of a phenomenon that still claims the lives of more than 8000 women every year in India and around 150 lives in Delhi during 2013<sup>15</sup>, according to the official statistics, must be at least partly responsible for the apparent public ignorance of and indifference to what continues to be a major problem. As feminist lawyer Flavia Agnes has observed "After about a decade of campaign, the news about a women's murder no longer made sensational copy. Hence it was relegated to a three liner in the inside pages of newspaper, which readers could conveniently skip over." (Flavia Agnes, "wife- murder and Judicial pronouncements", *The Asian Age*, 2 Nov. 2004)<sup>16</sup>.

Newspapers approach towards gender issues can be easily understood as only 5% or 30 out of 583 stories published during the study period were followed by feature/ editorial or a supporting story/box.<sup>17</sup> That means, majority of the gender related stories were treated as an isolated events and no attempts were made by the newspapers to further analyse the issue. Times of India fared slightly better as 22 out of 328 stories were followed by a supporting story, feature or an editorial, which comes to 6.7% as compared to Hindustan, where only 8 out of 255 stories or 3% stories were followed by any supporting story.

Broadcast media's concern for gender issues is found to be even more dismal as in majority of prime time news telecast there was not even a single story related to the gender theme. The Hindi news channel AajTak could not find any gender related story in 42% of their prime time news while the English news channel Times Now, faring even worse, did not cover any

gender specific news story in 67% of their prime time News hour. In majority of the case, the gender based news which was deemed fit to be aired on the prime time news broadcast, could only found mention in the headlines with no follow-up coverage or a studio debate.

The power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is an immense and well-documented influence. Not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the news media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of the emphasis placed on it in the news. Newspapers provide a host of cues about the salience of the topics in the daily news – lead story on page one, other front page display, large headlines, etc. Television news also offers numerous cues about salience – the opening story on the newscast, length of time devoted to the story, etc. These cues repeated day after day effectively communicate the importance of each topic. In other words, the news media can set the agenda for the public's attention to that small group of issues around which public opinion forms.

**Women on Page One-** The front page is the most important page of a newspaper. It is the face that beckons the reader and a good indicator of what follows. It is what passers-by will have chance to look at, and so it represents the showcase that might determine whether or not they will end up buying the newspaper. Thus, the stories of the front page are carefully selected to catch the attention of a large number of potential readers. The top left-hand position of the front page is considered the most prominent and is referred to as the Lead. Generally, the more important news items appear on the top half of the front page as this is the most visible part of the paper when folded in half on news-stands. The next most important position on the front page is the “anchor” position, that is, the news items spread across the bottom of the front page. Every day, newspapers editors meet and discuss to choose what they believe are the newsworthiness stories of the day to constitute the next day's front page.

There is practically no difference in percentage term, as far as front page coverage of stories on gender issues are concerned as 9% of the total stories studied during the study period found their place on the front page and both the newspaper share the same coverage in percentage.<sup>18</sup> In terms of quantity, out of the total 53 front page stories, The Times of India

published 30, while the Hindi newspaper Hindustan published 23 stories concerning women. However, the nature of the news on page one reveals the same trend of sensationalism. Out of the 53 stories, 8 stories were related to rape, 2 of murder, 3 of suicide, 8 on harassment, 1 on revenge/acid attack and 3 on sex crimes. The majority of front page stories are i.e. 58.5% are reports on crime against women. Issues like development, women's representation and social or welfare related stories found their place only once on the front page in the entire study period. The plight of domestic workers also made a page one story on three occasions, thanks to the high profile people involved in the abuse of their domestic help. But major gender concerns like women's right, women entrepreneurs, their participation in decision making, even their health issues are either not found newsworthy or conveniently pushed to the other pages of the newspaper.

Almost similar trend has been observed in the broadcast media where 9% of the total gender based stories were considered as top stories by both the news channels and majority of the gender related stories i.e. 66% are insignificantly placed in the newscast.<sup>19</sup>

***Gender based violence and Media-*** Out of the total 583 stories analysed during the study period, nearly half or 274 stories (47%) were related to crime or oppression against women. The Times of India published 145 stories (44.2%), related to crimes committed against women, while Hindustan printed (50.58%) under the same category.

The dominant themes within the coverage were 85 stories of rape (31%), 24 stories of murder (8.75%), 42 stories of harassment (15.32%), 9 stories of accidents(3.28%), 16 stories of suicide (5.83%), 5 stories of kidnapping (1.82%), 2 stories of dowry (.72%), 4 stories of revenge/acid attack (1.45%), 2 stories of domestic violence (.72%), 28 stories of sex crimes (10.21%), 1 each on domestic discord, desertion and unwed mother (.36% each), 4 stories on prostitution, (1.45%) and 39 (14.23%) on other oppression against women.

Out of the 85 stories on rape, 43 or 50.58% were brief or single column stories, 18 or 21.17% in double column and 24 or 28.23% were three column or more. Majority of these stories i.e. 77 or 90.6% were published on the other pages and only 8 stories or 9.4%, found their place

on the front page. Surprisingly, majority of these stories i.e. 77 or 89.4% have no by-lines reflecting the casual and routine approach of reporting a heinous crime as rape. The same pattern can be seen in the news reporting on murders, where out of 24 stories, 11 or 45.8% were single column, 7 or 29.16% double column and 6 or 25% of the stories were three column or more. Only 2 out of 24 stories (8.33%) found their place on the front page. 20 out of the 24 stories had no by-lines and other 4 were written by male journalists.

Going by the content of the stories, it becomes evident that rapes, especially gang rapes have been paid particular attention by both newspapers. Special focus is found on the victims who are young, educated and middle class even though horrifying situations are faced by the impoverished girls and women residing in the rural parts of India, which somehow missed the media glare. This reflects distinct urban bias.

By sensationalizing rape, reporters may evoke undue fear in readers (Dowler, 2006)<sup>20</sup>, distort the reality of rape so that it seems glamorous or sexy, represent rape as being more about sexual desire than violence and domination (Dowler, 2006)<sup>21</sup>, or exaggerate the physical violence used in the typical case of rape (Soothill & Walby, 1991)<sup>22</sup>. Benedict (1992)<sup>23</sup> asserted that by creating a sensational and dramatized story, reporters often either paint the victim as innocent and naïve (the prototypical virgin), or sensual and seductive (the prototypical vamp). This creates a false reality that oversimplifies rape, and forces each separate case to fit a typical mould. For example, TOI dated 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2013, published an unusual headline covering the entire page, “5 yr. old raped and tortured for 45 minutes:”

Similar trends are observed in the broadcast media as gender violence dominates the news discourses. Around 52 per cent of the gender related stories were found to be crime committed against women and most frequently covered issues under this theme are rape and sex crimes which shared 16 per cent coverage each while the next frequently covered issues were harassment and murder. Both Times Now and AajTak had more or less same space for the coverage of crime against women<sup>24</sup>.

Because media reports are a primary means by which the public understands sex crimes, these findings have important implications for how people develop attitudes about victims, perpetrators, and the act of rape itself.

**Gender and Economics-** A total of 7% coverage was devoted to the theme on economics and gender by the newspapers during the study period.<sup>25</sup> Although the coverage itself is very low but even this percentage is attributed to some cases of the plight and torture of domestic helps by high profile people in Delhi. Out of 40 stories covered under this theme, 22 or 55% stories were on the domestic help's plight. The issue dominates in both the TOI and Hindustan as 15 out of 27 stories in TOI (55%) and 7 out of 13 stories in Hindustan (53%) were devoted on the issue of domestic help. Development and other pertinent issues like women and formal workplace, agricultural workers etc. missed the media glare as they may not be considered newsworthy and serious enough issues to be debated and deliberated in the public sphere.

News channels were also found to be passive on the gender and economics theme as a similar 7 per cent coverage was attributed to the same. However, surprisingly the English news channel Times Now did not broadcast a single story under this theme, whereas on Hindi news channel Aajtak, a single story on women entrepreneur and a couple of stories on domestic workers were aired during the entire study period<sup>26</sup>. Even the lone story on the women entrepreneur '*Nari Shakti ka NaMo mantra*' aired on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at AajTak was a speech given by Mr. Narendra Modi at the FICCI's Ladies cell in New Delhi with sound bites of some politicians and women entrepreneurs, but a studio discussion with experts on such an important issue was missing.

**Women Empowerment-** Media plays an important part in the struggle for women's empowerment. UNESCO acknowledges media's crucial role in the gender equality process. Within the project "Women make the news" UNESCO stresses "the importance of having a balanced and fair representation of both women and men in the media as well as diversity of voices and opinions in order for the media to complete their democratic responsibility"

India is the second largest developing nation in the world. At the same time, it is the largest democracy. The press sets its own agenda and is an important opinion-maker in the Indian society. Since the country is going through an important phase socially as well as economically, it is interesting to see how the newspapers approaches women's empowerment and gender inequalities.



Looking at the empowerment coverage in the present study, the scenario is anything but encouraging. A total of 6% coverage by the newspapers was found under the empowerment theme. The Times of India is definitely placed better as 8% of the stories covered by the paper, during the study period, were related to the women empowerment, as compared to only 3% stories in Hindustan. However, in both the papers, individual achievements outshine any other form of coverage. 42% of the stories under this category were of individual achievements in Hindustan, whereas TOI had published 37% of the achievement and success stories. Issue of women participation in the decision making got a meagre 1% coverage in TOI while the Hindi newspaper Hindustan showed a negation and did not publish a single story on the subject. Also news stories on women leadership, and representation were less than 1% of the total coverage under the empowerment theme. Besides the disproportionate coverage, the content of the stories also put women in a poor light.

Examples of the three stories on women representation in the 16<sup>th</sup> April of TOI, placed side by side, along with the photographs with their male counterparts, reflects the patriarchal attitude and makes a mockery of elected women councillors. The report under the headline, “Women placeholders on their family seat”, states that:

*“During each house meeting, the visitors’ gallery at Civic Centre- headquarters of South and North corporations is packed with menfolk from the women councillors’ family. Although rules do not permit outsiders to witness the proceedings, an exception was made after 50% seats were reserved for the women in the corporation.”*

In the accompanied photograph, the councillor is seen standing alongside her brother. The other headline on the same page, “Reservation means business as usual, by proxy” also corroborates the same story that how women councillors are utterly dependent on their menfolk to carry out their responsibilities. The highlighted statement, above the photograph says, “Hoorbano who represents Qasabpura, relies on her son Mohd. Imran Ismail, an ex-councillor”. This reiterates the notion that gender mainstreaming and not the quota system is a way towards a gender equative and sensitized society. The stories also confirms the gender bias prevails in the patriarchal set up, showing women as a weak and incapable of taking a

decision on their own.

The striking contrast can be seen in not so bold headline on the same page, “*but younger lot strikes a more confident note*” where the story puts a question whether young, educated and well-connected women councillors have managed to bring about any change in their area and in the functioning of the corporation and the answer seems to be given by the caption of the accompanied photograph which says, “foreign returned Ankita Saini complains about systemic hurdles.”

The lone story on women representation in Hindustan, published on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013, was Congress Vice president arguing for 50% reservation for women in the All India Congress Committee. Probably because of Rahul Gandhi, the story find its place on the front page as no follow up article or editorial were seen reflecting the position of the newspaper.

The news channels fared even poorer with a dismal coverage of 4 per cent on women empowerment theme. Research data reveals that only a single story has been aired by both the channels on women representation issue and other pertinent issues of women empowerment like development, women in decision making or women leadership could not garner broadcast media’s attention. The manner in which the news channels packaged their single effort for providing a platform for some serious deliberations on the issue of women’s representation indicates the approach of broadcast media towards serious gender issues. Instead of debating on the reasons for lack of social and political will for gender parity, the debate on the English news channel Times Now was framed and focused on Rahul v/s Modi. (*Has Narendra Modi score over Rahul? Times Now, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2013*)

**Gender and Legal Issues-** Apart from constitutional provisions, the judicial pronouncements and at times, some form of activism, shakes the unequal gender equations and instil some sort of gender justice. By covering these issues, media creates a “public sphere” for the debate and deliberations in the society. In the present study, although the selected newspapers gave around 8% coverage pertaining to legal issues, and TOI emerged as a shade better with around 9% coverage as compared to Hindustan, which accorded around 8% coverage, the nature of the content can be termed anything but satisfactory. The TOI had published only 1 story each on personal issues like labour law. Similarly, Hindustan published 1 story each on Labour Law issues and marital issues.

An interesting trend found in the content analysis of both the newspaper was that majority of the stories, 24 in TOI and 15 in Hindustan pertains to the other legal issues. In case of TOI, the legal developments which have taken place in the international arena have found their resonance in the paper, whereas in case of Hindustan, barring a couple of similar reports, more focus has been placed on legal developments within India. For example:

- Irish docs rejects motion on abortion control (TOI 7<sup>th</sup> April 2013)
- US lifts age bar on morning after pill (TOI 7<sup>th</sup> April 2013)
- New succession law to allow Willkat's 'daughter' to be queen (TOI 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013)
- Morning after pill legit for 15 year olds in US (TOI 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013)
- In UK, forced marriage is a criminal offence now (TOI 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013)
- Kuwait woman gets 11 year jail for anti-emir tweet: Kuwait court (TOI 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013)
- Jolie's stunt double sues Murdoch firm in US over phone hacking (TOI 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013)
- Anukampa niyukti ke baad punar vivah sahi : Allahabad High Court (Hindustan 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013)
- Vivah kanoon par ek raya nahin (Hindustan 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013)
- Garbhashaya nikalne par Bihar sarkar ko notice (Hindustan 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013)
- Dushkarma pidita punarwas raashi paane ki hakdaar: Delhi High Court (Hindustan 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013)

Another noticeable trend found in the study is that both these newspapers were reticent and did not questioned or commented on some of the controversial court judgements through their editorials or opinion articles and often coined a catchy headline giving a general inference out of a judgement on a specific case. For example, a story published on the front page in TOI, on 25<sup>th</sup> Dec.13, "*Rape charges by married women different*", a ruling given by the Kerala High Court, and the supporting story on the inside page," *HC: Rape charges by married women needs more scrutiny*" the court opined that:

*“Unlike in the case of a virgin victim, the case of married women stands on a different footing and needs more corroboration.”*

Instead of interpreting and analysing, the paper remained silent on the judgement. Similarly, a story in Hindustan on 26<sup>th</sup> May 13, again on the front page, *“Duskarma ke aadh me blackmail kar rahi hai mahilayen”*, reports about a high court judgement on a particular case but the story ends up in suggesting that majority of the women are misusing the Rape Laws to blackmail the menfolk. The story is not only insensitive but is even heavily biased towards the women.

Whereas print media remained hesitant on taking a position on controversial legal discourses, the broadcast media drew a blank as far as the coverage of legal issues is concerned. Not even a single story was aired by either of the news channels on legal discourses or interpretations during the entire study period.

***Gender and Social Discourses***-The only issue dominating newspapers in the coverage of social and welfare theme is found to be the concern for women’s security during the study period. As many as 20 stories were published, making almost 3.4% of the coverage. This may be due to various rape and molestation incidents occurred in Delhi. One article on the editorial page was also published on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013 in Hindustan, *“Jaago Bharat”*, which was basically a story from the Gulf News (UAE) about child mortality rate and lack of facilities for pre-natal childcare and nourishment for women in India.

News channels interest in social and welfare theme was found to be pathetic as only a single story had been aired by Times Now during the entire study period on the related theme. The Hindi news channel AajTak drew a blank as no story was aired on the social and welfare theme related to women. The lone story of gender related social and welfare theme aired on Times Now on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013, *‘I Lead the Change’* campaign, narrates the kind gesture of a policeman in bearing the cost of education of a poor girl. This further reiterates media’s fascination for events rather than processes. (Ammu Joseph, 2006)<sup>27</sup>

In view of the above discussion, it can be inferred that the media reports related to gender was found to be very one dimensional both in print as well as in broadcast media.. Majority of the coverage was focused on events based news stories, meaning that they reported an event or action without reporting on any general trends. Editorial position on important issues related to gender was missing and opinion pieces were scarce on the issue. While strict news coverage is important, the heavy emphasis of gender-based issues in news segments meant that gender coverage in the media had very little context. Readers learned about certain incidents and events; however, they were often not told the significance of these events. In order for media coverage to improve, it is essential that issues of gender be discussed not only in strict news coverage, but also in opinion pieces, news analysis, and other mediums. Therefore it can be safely concluded that gender issues have yet to find their place in the media discourses, both in print as well as broadcast media.

#### ***4.23.2 How is broadcast media fared in terms of giving importance to gender issues as compared to the print media?***

Television is still most efficient, rapid and generalized mass communication tool. Millions of people living worldwide reach information and details about both local events and international developments via the television news. The news item is prepared via several stages ranging from selection and ext. writing to the presentation. The news item is shaped under influence of broadcasting policy and the ownership structure of the channel in addition to the individual contribution made by the reporter. Gatekeeper directs the topic to be processed, events and the presentation way of the event, before news items are collected, and he evaluates the resultant news item and ensures that particular perspective is added to the news item. Impartial or judgment-free information cannot be considered. The word information implies the power in all senses and it is not possible to advocate impartiality of the power.

Each word, concept, sentence and image of the news item carries an implication. Television causes non-considerable costs for human from the economic perspective and high-order information, entertainment and relaxation are enjoyed against minimal intellectual effort. Television carries worldwide events, together with audio-visual components, inside the house

of the audience. Television is most intensely watched at night hours. For television broadcasting, this period is referred as prime-time. Prime-time is the most important broadcasting period for a television channel. The most valuable program of this interval is the primetime news bulletin.

Today, the audience of television news is more crowded than the readers of all newspapers. The live show is the most effective tool of the television news. The privilege of real-time witnessing the event, where it occurred, is enjoyed only by the audience of the television news. However, this privilege is not only realized by the speaker, but also by news reporter, camera and the cameraman. Television is a mass communication tool which enjoys the superiority of converting the event immediately into news and broadcasting it. It really optimizes this superiority. News is defined as prestigious program of a television channel. In accordance with this approach, television channels attach extra importance to news programs and the news desk. News reporters make the best effort to convey best images and scenes to the audience. Audio-visual images of all events can be real time sent to the air show via satellites. Thus, the event can be immediately processed into news. Timeliness is one of inherited characteristics of the news and thus, this characteristic is fully met.

As stated by McLuhan, the broadcast technique of mass communication tools shapes the hearing, thinking and behaving styles of the audience. After television is introduced into the human life, it started to influence and change culture, life style, beliefs and value judgment. The fact that the television has undeniable position in the life of people lead to the concepts of “mass society”, “popular culture”, “culture industry” and “mass culture” which are sociologically defined and are intensely studied. Television is one of most important inventions of the 20th century. In addition, it is a significant economic, social and culture case and field (Serim, 2007: 25).

**Coverage-** Although the percentage of news coverage on gender issues in the studied newspaper and news channels is almost the same i.e. 583 stories related to gender issues out of total 5644 stories published in the selected newspapers and 45 news stories out of total 400 news stories telecast on the news channels. However the distribution of gender news and print and broadcast media reveals a different story. While in print, the English newspaper The

Times Of India, leads in publishing gender related stories<sup>28</sup>, in broadcast media, the Hindi news channel Aaj Tak has the lead in broadcasting gender related news<sup>29</sup>

***Gender Parity in News Reporting***-The proportion of presence of male and female journalists in print and broadcast media also indicates a certain gender bias. Although the English newspaper TOI leads in terms of by-lines written by male and female journalists, but the majority i.e. 67% of by-lines were attributed to male journalists while only 33% were written by female journalists. The Hindi newspaper Hindustan has almost abandoned the practice of giving by-lines and only gives by-lines in some very specific cases. Apart from the apparent gender bias, the high rate of gender stories with no by-lines<sup>30</sup> shows the casual approach of the newspapers towards gender issues and treats them as mere events rather than socio-cultural or political processes. This is in sync with the findings of Ammu Joseph in her study “Whose News?”

The same trend of gender disparity is reflected in broadcast media where the ratio of male and female reporters is much skewed. During the study period more than 70% reporters were males whereas less than 30% reporters were females. Furthermore, news channels had given very little credence to the female voice as source of information and opinion. The research data has unequivocally reflected that throughout the study period male opinion has been sought extensively on varied issues whereas women’s views and opinions are not much looked for<sup>31</sup>. The involvement of women in television debates in the form of experts or spokesperson was found to be even low as compared to the male invitees.<sup>32</sup> The study found that Hindi channel Aaj Tak fared poorly in terms of gender parity as compared to the English news channel Times Now. These outcomes substantiate the assertions of many feminist media theorists. Curran and Gurevitch (1996:184)<sup>33</sup> state that since mass media are in the hands of male owners and producers, they will operate to the benefit of a patriarchal society.

This means that women will not be given the coverage they deserves simply because male media bosses may be of the view that issues concerning women are trifling as compared to other male dominated issues like politics and governance.. According to Butler and Paisley (in Van Zoonen, 1994:17)<sup>34</sup> the media function in a counterproductive way and one of the reasons for this is the dominance of male editors, producers and journalists whose gender socialisation causes them to reproduce society’s dominant values. Van Zoonen (1994:219)<sup>35</sup>

reiterates that the under-representation of women in news results in part from the male dominance among reporters.

*Discourses on Feminism and Women activism in Print and Broadcast Media*-Question of gender bias in the media coverage of political actors has received particular attention from academics belonging to various research fields. Many scholars from political science, journalism and communication have investigated the media coverage of male and female candidates running for office, politicians and first ladies, underlining that gender stereotypes continue to create problems for female politicians (Bartels, 1993; Bystrom, Robertson & Banwart, 2001<sup>36</sup>; Gidengil & Everitt, 2003<sup>37</sup>). In quantitative terms, a common conclusion, though in line with previous research studies on gender bias in the print and television coverage of male and female politicians (Braden, 1996<sup>38</sup>; Bystrom, 1999; Goodnow, 2010; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991<sup>39</sup>; Niven & Zilber, 2001<sup>40</sup>; Witt, Paget & Matthews, 1994)<sup>41</sup>, which arrived at the conclusion that female politicians often receive less coverage, benefitting of a worse media treatment compared to their male counterparts.

Major part of these studies focus on textual coverage of politicians showing that female candidates for political office receive less coverage, their electoral prospects are more negatively evaluated, and the focus is often on “soft” issues compared to coverage of male candidates, which concentrates on “hard” topics.

However, the above mentioned research studies outlining a quantitative gender bias in the coverage of male and female politicians focused on verbal media representations. Although more scarce, studies on gender bias in visual coverage (Dan & Iorgoveanu, 2013<sup>42</sup>; Goodnow, 2010<sup>43</sup>; Semetko & Boomgaarden, 2007<sup>44</sup>) stresses that gender differences started to fade. In other words, from a quantitative perspective, visual communication seems more balanced and less gender biased. Analysing the coverage on Feminism, Politics and women activism, the present study found that women movements missed the media glare completely and Feminism and other NGO’s actions received less than 1 per cent coverage in the print media. News stories on women politicians received 7 per cent coverage<sup>45</sup> even though the ruling party president has been a women and we have three women chief ministers ruling in three important states of India. On the contrary, broadcast media has better covered the



women politicians devoting 31 per cent of the coverage to them<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, together with a range of scholars whose analyses were conducted in other political contexts (Dan & Iorgoveanu, 2013<sup>47</sup>; Goodnow, 2010<sup>48</sup>; Major & Coleman, 2008; Semetko & Boomgaarden, 2007<sup>49</sup>; Smith, 1997), the researcher found support for the idea that broadcast media's treatment of female politicians is definitely on a better footing as compared to the print media.

*Social and Welfare discourses on gender in print and broadcast media*-Media's focus towards the social and welfare issues related to women have been found to be dismal in the present study and both print as well as broadcast media failed to provide a platform for debate and deliberations on the related issues. According to World Bank reports, India is among the highest ranking countries in the world for the malnutrition of women and child and malnutrition contribute to more than one third of all child deaths but the print media devoted less than 1 per cent coverage on the same and broadcast media didn't even consider the issue worthwhile to give any coverage in their prime time telecast. This clearly reflects that issues of social welfare of women are not on the agenda of the Indian media and broadcast media has miserably failed in covering these issues. The finding is in sync with the Agenda setting theory which reiterates that media tends to highlight certain issues while others are left out. The coverage of specific issues often leads to policy action by politicians due to the publicity received from the media. Social problems must receive adequate media attention to be deemed "public issues" (Rogers & Dearing, 1992)<sup>50</sup>.

A related problem in media coverage involves the polarization of women issues. All too often, the media achieves "balance" by presenting extreme positions on both sides of a complicated question. What drops out of that debate is anything sensible in between. This kind of polarized coverage is not, of course, unique to women issues. Simplified spectacle and sensationalist rhetoric win out on many subjects (Gitlin 1980<sup>51</sup>; Bennett 1988, 40<sup>52</sup>; Tannen 1994<sup>53</sup>). But the women's movement consistently attracts more than the customary share of skewed sound-bites.

For example, in covering public protests, reporters commonly offer a sampling of the most radical comments and then make special efforts to interview hostile onlookers or "regular" women on the street who are alienated from such rhetoric. One consequence of this juxtaposition is that feminists appear in highly charged circumstances likely to yield polemics, while their opponents appear in more contemplative settings, conducive to more "reasoned" responses (Gerbner 1978<sup>54</sup>; Kamen 1991<sup>55</sup>). Another result is that debates among women are cast as catfights. Men remain above the fray as seemingly objective onlookers, never opponents, in the feminist struggle (Douglas 1994)<sup>56</sup>. Such coverage undercuts claims to sisterhood while masking male resistance to gender equality

From the above analysis, it can be safely concluded that though television has become a pervasive and powerful medium of communication in India but the coverage of gender issues and portrayal of Indian women on the television is far from satisfactory and is not in sync with their real concerns. In majority of the themes and sub themes related to the gender discourses, the content analysis has proved that broadcast media is way behind the print media, both in terms of quantity as well as quality.

#### ***4.23.3 How news stories on gender issues are framed and to what extent the coverage by media is episodic or thematic.***

In the newspaper studied in the present research, 17% or 99 stories had thematic as a dominant frame and 83% or 484 stories had episodic frame with a reporting style of narrative used. On the contrary, in the thematic stories reportage style of narrative was used.

In both the newspapers there was substantially more episodic than thematic framing, giving a straight answer to Research Question 3. The finding of this research study is in sync with a previous study undertaken by Carlyle, Slater and Chakroff<sup>57</sup> who look at the question of episodic (i.e. events-based) versus thematic framing (2008). Their two-year study of newspapers on gender issues and violence against women in the United States found that 88.3% of stories in their substantial sample used episodic framing. These stories tended to be

individualised and they ignored the ‘social factors that help segregation and perpetuate violence’.

When a comparison is made between the two newspapers, the Hindi newspaper Hindustan is slightly better in placing thematic frames in gender related stories as compared to the English newspaper TOI. A glance at the editorial coverage of both the newspaper will substantiate the argument. The Hindi newspaper is ahead in terms of number of articles on edit page.<sup>58</sup>

For the Television news content, if we see the framing of the news stories, data suggest that news channels are poor in framing thematically the gender related story. Both Times Now and AajTak used the thematic frame in only three (3) gender based stories each, during the entire study period. The rest of the stories had only episodic frames. The researcher looked beyond the episodic and thematic nature of the frames used in the stories related to gender issues and dig deep in analysing the different frames employed in the news stories. Previous research has suggested that news about politics and the economy is often framed in terms of conflict or in terms of the economic consequence of events, issues, and policies (see Gamson, 1992<sup>59</sup>; Graber, 1988<sup>60</sup>; McManus, 1994<sup>61</sup>; Neuman et al., 1992<sup>62</sup>). In a content analysis of more than 4,000 news stories from Dutch national television news, the conflict and economic consequences frames were found to be among the most common frames used in the presentation of political stories (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).<sup>63</sup>

Because previous research has established the predominance of the conflict and economic consequences frames in different national contexts, the researcher focus his cross-media comparative study on these two frames

The conflict frame, as discussed by several researchers, refers to disagreement between individuals, institutions, or countries and emphasizes the points of divergence between conflicting parties (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Patterson, 1993)<sup>64</sup>. This way of framing events and issues is consistent with research on more general news values, in which the presence of conflict is consistently listed as one of the most important criteria for identifying which events will become news stories (e.g., Eilders, 1997; McManus, 1994; Staab, 1990)<sup>65</sup>. Research on news values<sup>66</sup> points to the importance of conflict<sup>66</sup>. The presence of conflict is consistently listed as an essential criterion for a news story to make it into the news, not only

because it “sells”<sup>67</sup>, but also to meet professional standards of balanced reporting. It is also argued that, by framing news in terms of its (economic) consequences for the audience, the journalistic news values of proximity and relevance are translated into news,

Conflict is also a type of media framing that is employed in the production of news. Framing refers to the ways that newsmakers cast stories, highlight what is figure and ground, and impute meaning and motives. "Figure" is what takes center stage in how one sees a situation, while elements that form "ground" fall to the background or the periphery of a situation. Aspects of a story that become figure often influence how newsmakers cast the definition of an issue, problem, or event. Framing a situation as a conflict highlights incompatibilities, disagreements, or oppositional tensions between individuals, groups, and institutions. In the U.S., conflict is one of the most commonly used media frames in coverage of politics and crime, second to a responsibility frame. A responsibility frame focuses on what or who was responsible for the problem, who should alleviate it, and what type of action is needed to address it.

For operationalization of the conflict frames, the researcher drew largely on measures developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)<sup>68</sup>. The conflict frame scale consisted of four items:

- (a) “Does the news story reflect disagreement between parties/individuals/groups/countries?”
- (b) “Does one party/individual/ group/country reproach another?”
- (c) “Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem/issue” and (d) “Does the story emphasize the achievements and/or actions of an individual/party versus the achievements and/or actions of another individual/party?”<sup>69</sup>

In addressing the most prominent frame used by TV news channels, the researcher found that conflict frame was most highlighted by Times Now in their reporting, while it was less used in Aajtak, which used human interest frame more in its reporting on gender issues. Conflict frame used predominantly shows the purpose of the TV news channel Times Now to advocate and uphold the interest of its viewers. This finding is in line with the communicative objectives in framing stated by Pan & Kosicki (1993)<sup>70</sup>.

#### ***4.23.4 What is the editorial orientation of the newspapers and news channels towards gender issues?***

***Editorial Orientation in the newspapers-*** The part of the modern-day newspapers where the marketplace of ideas may still exist is in the editorial pages. “The newspaper editorial page is where a vigorous political, cultural, and social discussion and debate is most likely to take place and thus is a likely focus of an analysis of newspaper content as evidence of a thriving – or dying – marketplace of ideas” (Hallock, 2007, p. 16<sup>71</sup>) Unlike the hard-news pages of a newspaper, the editorial page provides a venue for arguments, interpretation and the exposure of bias (Mott, 1940)<sup>72</sup>. Newspapers identify issues and advocate causes in their editorials, and serve as a public forum for the introduction and discussion of issues of public concern in their letters to the editor and columns (Hynds, 1976)<sup>73</sup>.

In the traditional concept of newspaper functions, elements within the editorial pages can play a variety of roles (Mott, 1940)<sup>74</sup>. The editorial pages can frame and explain issues and events in language that the community can relate to. They may urge action on behalf of the readers or politicians. They may act as crusaders by running a series of articles on a particular cause. They may help shape public opinion by influencing leaders in various social, economic, and political groups within the community. The editorial pages may also help develop the newspaper’s own sense of responsibility by choosing among subjects that will best serve the development and interests of their community (Mott, 1940)<sup>75</sup>. Coifalo (1998)<sup>76</sup> wrote that editorial pages, specifically the op-ed page, are an important part of any newspaper: “It encourages public discourse in an open forum of ideas that nurtures the community involvement so necessary to the effective functioning of government and democracy at all levels”.

Each section of the editorial page has a purpose and role in the public forum offering explanation and interpretation of the day’s events (Mott, 1940)<sup>77</sup>. Editorial pages of most newspapers consist of five parts: editorials, columns, letters to the editor, supplemental data, and cartoons. Although editorial pages differ from newspaper to newspaper, they essentially contain the same components.

Editorials are the opinions or positions of the newspaper on issues and events. The editorial is un-by lined, written by one or more of the members of the newspaper's editorial board which generally consists of the editorial page editor and various editorial writers. They characterize the institutional opinion of the newspaper shaped by the editorial board. Recommendations and endorsements are made on what the board perceives to be in the best interests of the community in which they operate (Mott, 1940)<sup>78</sup>. Some editorial boards explicitly state a philosophical stance that provides the context in which the newspaper seeks to function.

During the research study, while no editorial was found in The Times of India and Hindustan on gender related issues, a total of 15 articles were found in the editorial page which were related to some or the other of the women's concern, in which, the Hindi newspaper Hindustan had 9 such articles (on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 26<sup>th</sup> May, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 17<sup>th</sup> December and 25<sup>th</sup> December) while the English newspaper The Times of India shared 4 articles (on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> May, 15<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December). The Times of India not only fared poor in terms of quantum but also in the content of the edit page articles which are supposed to ignite the debates and deliberations on issues of interest in public sphere and also display the orientation of the newspaper. The content analysis reflects the cursory and superficial treatment given to gender issues by the newspaper. For example, on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013, one of the headlines on the front page of TOI says, *Dalits attacked for inter-caste marriage, flee Haryana village*, a story about the anger of upper caste people of Kaithal towards Dalit families as one of their man had dared to marry a girl from the upper caste. However, the editorial page, instead of enriching its readers on ramification of caste conflicts on an emerging modern society, printed a brief, single column story under Snap Judgement, *Eyes wide shut*, suggesting that men have more difficulty in guessing feelings from women's eye over other men's.

The same sense of trivialisation and preoccupation of media towards celebrity culture was reflected in the coverage on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013. An unnecessary debate on a flimsy statement by an actress finds four columns on the editorial page. A statement of actress Sonam Kapur saying, *“those wanting to be actors but not stars are lying”* had a Times View as well as a Counter-View.

*“A person should be judged by her talent, not age”*, was the heading of the interview of Sushma Verma, the prodigious 13 year old daughter of a daily wage labourer, published in the editorial page of TOI on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013. No doubt, the achievements of the young genius is worth mentioning and demands coverage but the focus of the interview, as suggested by the headline, is on the young age which has been a major constraint in pursuing higher education and seeking a seat for the medical. Yet again, media’s penchant towards individual accomplishments and events rather than processes became evident from this coverage. No discussion or questions were raised about the access and quality of education for a girl child in the poor and underprivileged section of the society.

In terms of quality of coverage, the number of editorial articles is particularly telling because it indicates how seriously the editorial hierarchy of a paper takes note of an issue. They constitute in one way or the other to the visibility of and debate on a particular issue. It is evident from the study that the leading newspaper of the English press, The Times of India, failed to deliver any opinion or editorial on important gender issues like oppression against women, their empowerment or social and welfare issues related to women, which only reiterates that the mainstream newspaper lacks or even may not even have a conscious policy towards gender sensitivity and does not ensure the incorporation of the perspectives of women and other powerless groups into press coverage.

As compared to TOI, the Hindi newspaper ‘Hindustan’, is found to be better when the quantum and contents of its editorial page is analysed. During the study period, the paper published 9 (nine) articles on different issues ranging from crime against women to malnutrition, women discourses in Rajendra Yadav’s writings and society’s approach towards sex crimes. On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013, an article of senior journalist Kamar Wahid Naqvi titled *“duskarm ke virudh chahiye ek abhiyan”* published in the editorial page, stressed that making only stringent laws against rape will not suffice and other systemic changes like police and judicial reforms and creating awareness for gender justice are needed. On the same page, in Cyber Sansar column, an article *“Yakeen karo ladki”* tries to bolster the morale of women and girls by painting a positive impression of Delhi which has given confidence to thousands of girls to pursue their dreams and ambitions.

*“Jago Bharat”*, a translated version of an article of “Gulf News”, also find its place on the editorial page of Hindustan dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013 raising concern about the prevailing child mortality rate and lack of facilities for pre natal childcare and nourishment for women in India. The article stressed the urgent need for raising education bar among women and measures to end malnutrition and gender discrimination. Similar sentiments were echoed in the opinion article by Venkatesh Mannar, President Micronutrient Initiatives, published on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013 titled *“kuposhan mita kar he hoga arthic vikas”* in which he emphasised the need of good nutrition during pregnancy as well as during the first year of the child. He cited the article published in the British Medical Journal “The Lancet” that around 45% children die due to malnutrition every year. Economists have emphasised that if we overcome malnutrition, the growth rate can reach 11%. Mr. Mannar also stressed the need of Public Private Partnership to eradicate malnutrition.

Showing concern towards the victims of rape and sexual exploitation, the excerpts of a speech given by Sunita Narayan in Mysore was published on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2013 in the editorial page of Hindustan. Ms Narayan runs an NGO “Prajwalla” for the girls who are victim of sex crimes. Under the headline *“aayiye bacha le inn masoomo ko”* she hits out at the approach of the society towards these victims and calls for sensitivity and cooperation. Continuing with the issue, Anushka Shankar’s article *“taaki hamari na ka matlab na ho”* published on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013 in the edit page regarding the sexual crime against women, raised the bar of the debate on gender sensitisation and equality and suggested that the menace is a challenge for the humanity and men should also be included in the deliberations on how to effectively put a check on sex crime against women.

However, media’s fascination towards celebrity and their success stories became evident when an interview with film actress Vidhya Balan was published on the edit page of Hindustan on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The headline *“apni tarah rahena shuru kiya to sab theek ho gaya”* suggests there may be some emphasis on women empowerment, but the whole interview was focused on the film career of the actress. Even on the opposite page, under the literary section *“padhiyega jaroor”*, all the four referred books of worth reading were of



male writers reflecting a certain gender bias on the part of newspaper, as the paper could not even suggest a single book written by a women writer to its readers. Similarly the article of Pushpa Matiree on famous Hindi writer Rajendra Yadav, published on 30<sup>th</sup> October was almost like a memoir where Ms Matiree lauded the efforts of Mr. Rajendra Yadav and how he initiated women discourses in his writings. However, the article fell short of raising the issue of contemporary women and their reflections in the current scenario of Hindi literature.

The dissonance between the editorial position taken by the newspaper and the bias in their news coverage or choice of headlines reveals a central feature of the press in India: structural adhocism. Themes that fall within the conventional definitions of hard news such as politics, economics and the law are automatically commented upon. News related to these, as well as to events with a component of violence, is routinely carried because this is seen as the real business of newspapers. Equally significant aspects of a nation's life such as the social and the cultural, which are traditionally considered as soft areas, are covered if and when journalists on the staff are able and willing to write on them. This may be one of the reasons of the dismal coverage found for the social and welfare theme related to gender in the present study.<sup>79</sup>

Editorial writers in these newspapers who have made such subjects their primary area of concern, either out of conviction and choice or by default, because these are the only issues left, as others have been taken by their more senior colleagues, have found that there is practically no discussion on the position their newspaper should take. Thus, for instance, in those cases which are clearly "women issues", such as rape or dowry death, the individual edit writer is generally left to more or less guess the ostensible policy of the newspaper on such issues, resulting in contradictions , inconsistency and lack of coherency. This does not signify a change in the newspaper's stand but reveal that it never had one.

***Editorial orientation of the news channels-*** The phrase " media is the message and live debate is the story", seems to be true for the prime time newscasts of television channels these days as broadcast media business is less about delivering news and more about the live TV debates. It is not difficult to fathom why. Generating original news content for TV is very expensive whereas live debates are cheap. They also provide a lot of tension and drama; ideal

for luring viewers who have been reared on a diet of entertainment. This means hard time for TV reporters. The news agency ANI provides bytes across channels, and deprives reporters of the chance to do some ambush journalism. The changing economics of the broadcast media is changing the nature of political debate on TV and in effect changing journalism. There is little demand for reporters willing to run to deliver the message.

Panel discussions on television are a substitute for the freewheeling discourse that animates the “real” public sphere. As a substitute, they enjoy certain advantages and suffer from some disadvantages. The substitution is affected by the construction of panels where each participant is carefully selected to establish the inclusion of multiple perspectives based on identity, experience, and expertise. The participant could be a political spokesperson, an expert on a specific subject, or an authority in a certain field, a professional, or a “notable.”

Such panels are therefore marked by the individual’s depth, insight, understanding of a particular domain of knowledge or experience, and the discussion is a collective exercise in sharing the insights, understanding the public at large, namely the audience or rather the individual in control of the remote.

The individual in control of the remote suggests that the person within his sphere has greater power than others who may be also present, since the remote controller’s choice becomes by default the choice of all others present. Enticing the person in control of the remote to choose one particular channel and remain glued to it is therefore a serious consideration of those who work on putting together the participants on the discussion panels.

While anchors or “hosts” can put participants or “guests” through the wringer or make them turn cartwheels, implying that the anchor or the host is omnipotent, there is nevertheless a two-way transaction happening during the course of such discussions. A participant’s “performance” could swing the choice or conclusion in favour of or against, or for a specific argument on a particular issue. This makes the rest of the panel spectators, albeit occasionally, vocal. When that happens, it changes the balance that the panel was meant to

represent and the outcome is unexpected because one or more persons functioned unpredictably. Since discussions are not scripted performances, the possibility of the unexpected happening is ever present. The result could be of consequence for the public at large or an embarrassment for the anchor and the television channel.

The careful framing of the discussion and the sense of being in control raises questions on why there is a surprisingly low level of participation amounting to absence of women from discussions on news television channels. This suggests that there is a bias reflected in the low rates of participation of women in discussions. As reflected through the data, a total of 288 spokesperson or experts have been called for the TV debates and discussions during the study period by the news channels and among them less than 20 per cent spokesperson were females. Also, the number of women as a spokesperson or expert called by Hindi news channel was very low<sup>80</sup>. The inclusion-exclusion bias is not only limited to the selection of specialists, spokespersons, and public persons but also extend to the presence of women as anchors or reporters. During the study period, a total of 303 reporters were visible in the prime time newscasts on Aajtak and Times Now and out of them, there were 225 male reporters and 78 female reporters.<sup>81</sup> The research study inferences are in sync with Van Zoonen's (1991) assertion that underrepresentation of women in news, results in part from the male dominance among reporters

The construction of the public sphere for television that so clearly reflects bias calls into question how it is imagined inside the studio in the first place. It raises the issue of whether women's expertise, experience, insight, understanding, knowledge, and power is disregarded, denied, perhaps ignored in the constructed public sphere. This implies that entry into the public sphere is regulated by a latent or apparent patriarchal prejudice, exercising authority, mimicking at another level, the authority exercised by the individual armed with the remote, making his choice perforce the choice of all others. When choice or selection becomes a matter of exercising power or reflecting authority, the absence of women from discussion indicates a framing bias.

This is borne out by two other days when women were missing from the discussions – the days on which the Railway Budget and the Union Budget were presented in Parliament. Nor

were women present in the discussions organised during the political crisis over passenger fare hikes proposed in the railway budget. The exclusions are important because underlying the absence is the bigger issue of women's status, with all its implications for autonomy of choice, decision-making, and authority. The absence of women during discussions on the Railway Budget implies that mobility is not a matter on which women independently make decisions, reinforcing the stereotype that the woman submissively follows where the man leads.

When the Union Budget was under discussion, the exclusion implied an equally strong prejudice; money matters are a male domain. Asking a woman's reaction on the street is not the same as engaging them in a peer group discussion. It is all very well when women declare that they are "sickened" by events or incidents; but this is a reaction. It does not reflect either expertise or experience.

The perhaps unintentional exclusion or significantly low presence of women during discussions points to several disturbing patterns. In fact, there are some women who are regularly invited to the discussions on multiple news channels. It could be, because the opinions of those women participants were widely known and consequently predictable. The implication was obvious: these responses would not disturb the universe. It is strongly felt that there could be a multi-layered bias at work in the choice of panellists that resulted in the stereotyping of women as participants that reinforced their "subordinate" status in society.

Why anyone would imagine that the other gender cannot handle a verbal duel is difficult to conceive, unless women as a whole have been typecast. When some women are singled out for inclusion as discussants or commentators and their reaction, as opposed to response, is emotional, then it does reflect typecasting.

In making women appear voiceless and consequently powerless, there is a confirmation bias at work, just as there is a framing bias in the selection of panellists. The imagined public sphere of television studios is not the real public sphere, where thousands of women lead and participate on critical issues of power, politics, and policy.

#### **4.24 Conclusion:**

This chapter analysed news stories related to gender themes from two newspapers i.e. The Times of India and Hindustan and two news channels namely Times Now and AajTak, published and broadcast during second( April to June ) and fourth( October to December) quarter of the year 2013. It further presented the quantitative as well as qualitative findings of the thematic content analysis of newspaper texts and news cast stories content from the selected newspapers and news channels. News stories related to gender were analysed and interpreted using various themes and subthemes. The research questions of the study were also answered in the light of the outcome of the content analysis. Based on the analysis and interpretations, conclusions and recommendations have been made in Chapter Five.

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<sup>2</sup> See Graph: 4.G2

<sup>3</sup> See Graph 4.G2

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- <sup>29</sup> See graph 4.G2
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- <sup>31</sup> See graph 4.G7.1
- <sup>32</sup> See graph 4.G7.2
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