Breaking Down the Editorials: Examining Content Subjects Published Across Indian Newspapers

Kunal Anand

Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism, Bharati College, University of Delhi

Abstract

The study examines and compares the editorial pages of four highly circulated newspapers: two Hindi dailies, Dainik Bhaskar and Dainik Jagran and two English dailies, Times of India and Hindustan Times. The research looks at the diversity of subjects addressed in their editorials and the presence of any biases. To understand how these newspapers convey different themes, the paper takes into account the socio-cultural and linguistic distinctions between Hindi and English readers in India. The study finds considerable differences in the selection and prioritising of editorial subjects among publications. While certain subjects such as national politics were largely covered, others such as regional affairs differed significantly. The amount of bias was assessed by analysing the tone, framing and balance of arguments in editorials.

The level of ideological bias in Hindi and English dailies was also analysed in the research. The findings highlight how editorial decisions reflect the target audience's preferences, language-specific goals and editorial policies. This study supports a holistic understanding of the function of media in moulding public opinion and emphasizes the necessity of varied viewpoints in journalism.

Keywords: Content, Subject, Bias, Newspapers, Editorial

Introduction

Newspaper editorial pages have a significant impact on forming public opinion, promoting discussion and influencing a society's sociopolitical discourse. They provide a forum for educated conversation while also reflecting the media organization's aims and opinions (Mishra & Pawan Koundal, 2020). This study examines the editorial page content of four highly circulated newspapers in India to investigate the range of topics addressed, the depth with which these topics are treated and the prevalence of bias in editorials.

Newspapers in India serve a broad readership, affected by language, cultural and regional influences. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (2021), Dainik Bhaskar and Dainik Jagran are among India's most popular Hindi newspapers, with millions of readers every day. Similarly, the Times of India and Hindustan Times dominate the English-language newspaper industry, appealing mostly to urban and educated readers. This discrepancy in audience profile frequently leads to divergent content objectives and editing methods (Thompson, 2021). Prior work, including Kumar (2019) and Sharma & Gupta (2020), has underlined the importance of language and geographical context in determining editorial content. They contend that Hindi newspapers focus on regional and national concerns, whereas English Daily stresses foreign events and urban-centric subjects (Haneefa & Nellikka, 2010). However, there is continual discussion over the extent of bias in editorial material. Bias can express itself in topic selection, narrative framing, or the suppression of competing perspectives, as Entman (1993) discusses in his framing theory.

The current study expands on these findings by undertaking a comparative examination of these newspapers' editorial pages. The study takes a comprehensive approach, investigating not just the diversity of subjects but also the underlying ideological tendencies and editorial prejudices. This is accomplished through content analysis, a method Berelson (1952) proposed as a systematic approach to quantifying and interpreting media signals. This study aims to answer critical questions: What are the main topics covered by these newspapers? How do these differ in their editorial priorities and approach to issues? Is there evidence of prejudice and how does it differ across Hindi and English dailies? By addressing these issues, the research intends to contribute to a better understanding of media practices in India and their influence on public debate.

Literature Review

The concepts of content analysis, as articulated by Berelson (1952), are at the heart of editorial content analysis, which emphasises the benefit of carefully understanding media messages. Building on this, Krippendorff (2004) emphasized the need of dependability and accuracy in content analysis, particularly when dealing with bias misunderstandings. Gheyle and Jacobs (2017) expanded on the methodological rigour necessary to produce accurate findings, providing a simple approach for assessing editorial content.

Ban, Jha and Rao (2012) added to this discussion by illustrating how various views are reflected in democratic discussions and shining light on media biases. Bekkers and Tummers (2018) applied these concepts to collaborative innovation in the public sector, connecting editing practices to social transformation. Together, these studies provide a solid framework for investigating the editorial content of Dainik Bhaskar, Dainik Jagran, Times of India and Hindustan Times, with an emphasis on subject diversity and bias.

Method

Content Analysis refers to a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of clear content of communication (Berelson, 1952). This method highlights various patterns that are reflected in a matter. The technique of content analysis is often employed to investigate the themes, phrases, words and ideas in order to quantify them and then interpret in a qualitative manner. It is the only approach that claims to accomplish the aim of exploring the meaning of the text. According to one of the popular definitions of Content Analysis, it is "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (Krippendorff, 2004). This emphasises the inferential character of content analysis, which involves drawing inferences from given premises and samples using an inductive, deductive, or abductive method. Content analysts often utilise certain guidelines for inference (based on current ideas, prior study, or experience) and precise procedural (coding) norms to navigate from unstructured text to solutions to their research questions (White & Marsh, 2006).

For the study, the method of content analysis was utilised where a representative sample of national newspapers was undertaken to conduct content analysis in order to assess and understand the content subjects published across different newspapers. From the universe of all the newspapers in India, a sample frame was reduced to present a manageable and representative subset, out of which the actual sample was taken. The most widely read newspapers published in Delhi were chosen for this study's sample frame based on the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) data for the 2019 Q1–Q2–Q3–Q4 period. The chosen newspapers are known to be extensively read and influential since the IRS data is a trustworthy indicator of newspaper readership and circulation. The table displays the particular newspapers that were selected for the sample frame as follows:

Table 1.1 Newspapers Studied for Content Analysis

English Newspapers	Hindi Newspapers
Times of India	Dainik Jagran
The Hindustan Times	Dainik Bhaskar

Table 1.1 List of Newspapers Studied for Content Analysis, categorized by language. The table includes two English newspapers—*Times of India* and *The Hindustan Times*—and two Hindi newspapers—*Dainik Jagran* and *Dainik Bhaskar*.

A systematic sampling technique was employed to undertake this research. A sampling period of six months starting from between July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, was selected. This time frame was chosen to highlight a thorough understanding of the editorial debate over a period of six months, which is adequate to identify recurring themes and patterns. This six-month period consists of 184 days. Within the 184 days, a sample was taken on the fourth day of each week. 184/4 is the computed interval, yielding 46 samples of 46 days. Out of the 184 days in the six months, a systematic sample of 46 days is chosen on the fourth day of each month. This establishes that a total of 184 (46x4=184) editorial pages and 868 content items had to be examined in the entire content analysis.

The research initially commenced with the formulation of a Code Book, which acted as the foundation for the entire content analysis. The codebook was developed to provide an ordered approach to content subject classification which was further divided into variables. For instance, the category of content subjects had fifteen variables under it such as political, economic, cultural, religion and so on. The variables had to be examined in four newspapers published from the national capital, Delhi, circulated across India. This research analyses the content subject variable used in this study that aligns with the research objectives of the paper. The variables with their respective categories were coded in the SPSS software to comprehend the content of editorial pages present in the four newspapers mentioned as Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, the Times of India and the Hindustan Times. The results are displayed through tables and figures for an easier understanding. Thereafter, the method of content analysis was applied to the presented data to examine the editorial page content to understand content subjects in detail. Wherever the research objectives could be supported through a comparative analysis, cross-tabulations have been employed. The chi-square test was also used to identify whether a relation exists between the cross-tabulations. This gives us insights into the dependent or independent nature of the content subject

variable. Thus, content analysis has assisted the researcher in examining the contemporary debates, narratives, opinions and discourse through the editorial pages of four national newspapers that eventually shape the public sphere at large.

Discussion: Analyzing Editorial Content Subjects in Indian Newspapers

Table 1.2 Name of the Newspapers*Level of Bias Crosstabulation Count and Expected Count

Name of the Newspapers		Not Applicable	Not Biased	Partly Biased	Totally Biased	Total
Dainik Bhaskar	Count	47	123	35	0	205
	Expected Count	25.3	132.7	46.5	0.5	205.0
Dainik Jagran	Count	48	134	48	0	230
	Expected Count	28.4	148.9	52.2	0.5	230.0
Times of India	Count	11	156	64	2	233
	Expected Count	28.7	150.9	52.9	0.5	233.0
Hindustan Times	Count	1	149	50	0	200
	Expected Count	24..7	129.5	45.4	0.5	200.0
Total	Count	107	562	197	2	868
	Expected Count	107.0	562.0	197.0	2.0	868.0

Table 1.2 Crosstabulation of *Name of the Newspapers* and *Level of Bias* showing the observed count and expected count for each category. The table categorizes the levels of bias into four groups—*Not Applicable*, *Not Biased*, *Partly Biased* and *Totally Biased*—for four newspapers: *Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*.

Table 1.3 Name of the Newspapers * Level of Bias Crosstabulation Chi-Square Test

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	82.700[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	97.973	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	40.717	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	868		

Table 1.3 Chi-Square Test results for the crosstabulation between *Name of the Newspapers* and *Level of Bias*. The table displays the Pearson Chi-Square value (82.700), Likelihood Ratio (97.973) and Linear-by-Linear Association value (40.717) along with their respective degrees of freedom (df) and p-values.

The Chi-Square Test was employed to determine the association between newspaper names and their level of bias. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 82.700, with 9 degrees of freedom and the p-value is 0.000. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted, which states that there is a significant relationship between newspaper names and

their level of bias because the p-value is lower than the standard threshold of 0.05 used in social sciences.

The Likelihood Ratio is likewise included, with a value of 97.973 and the same degrees of freedom (9), as well as a significance level of.000. The likelihood ratio is an alternative to the Pearson Chi-Square test for determining the strength of the relationship between two categorical variables. The Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests produce consistent findings, demonstrating the significance of the association. Furthermore, the Linear-by-Linear Association value is 40.717 with 1 degree of freedom and the associated p-value is.000. This test looks for a linear association between the ordered categories of the Level of Bias variable across newspapers. The statistically significant finding reveals a trend or directional relationship between bias levels and certain publications. In conclusion, the Chi-Square test findings show a high correlation between the names of the publications and the degrees of bias indicated. The persistent significance of the Pearson Chi-Square, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear Association tests demonstrates the reliability of these findings.

Table 1.4 Name of the Newspapers * Level of Bias Crosstabulation

Name of the Newspapers	Not Applicable	Not Biased	Partly Biased	Totally Biased	Total
Dainik Bhaskar	5.4%	14.2%	4.0%		23.6%
Dainik Jagran	5.5%	15.4%	5.5%		26.5%
Times of India	1.3%	18.0%	7.4%	0.2%	26.8%
Hindustan Times	0.1%	17.2%	5.8%		23.0%
Total	12.3%	64.7%	22.7%	0.2%	100.0%

Table 1.4 Crosstabulation of *Name of the Newspapers* and *Level of Bias* showing the percentage distribution across four bias categories—*Not Applicable*, *Not Biased*, *Partly Biased* and *Totally Biased*. The percentages are calculated for each newspaper (*Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*) and reflect their contributions to the overall total.

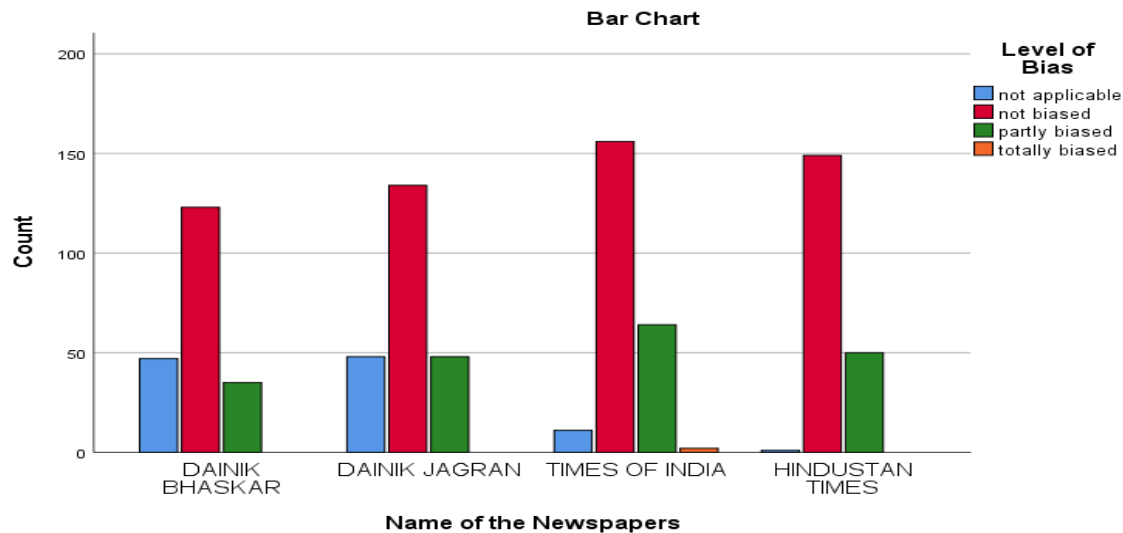Fig 1.1 Name of the Newspapers * Level of Bias Crosstabulation

Figure 1.1 *Name of the Newspapers* and *Level of Bias* Crosstabulation. This figure visually represents the distribution of bias levels (*Not Applicable*, *Not Biased*, *Partly Biased* and *Totally Biased*) across four newspapers: *Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*. The figure highlights that the majority of responses fall under the "Not Biased" category, followed by "Partly Biased" and the "Totally Biased" variable.

The table 1.4 and bar Fig 1.1 draw a comparison between four widely circulated newspapers published in Delhi for the year 2022 (July to December) and the level of bias they possess. The table consists of:

- Two Hindi Daily – Dainik Bhaskar and Dainik Jagran
- Two English Daily – Times of India and Hindustan Times

The statistical findings present that in Dainik Bhaskar 14.2% of the editorial page content is not biased, 4% are partly biased, 5.4% are not applicable for biases and none are totally biased. For Dainik Jagran, 15.4% come under the category of being not biased, 5.5% as partly biased, 5.5% not applicable and 0 being totally biased. Similarly, from an aggregate of 26.8% of editorial page content, the Times of India accounts for 18% being not biased, 7.4% partly biased, 1.3% not applicable and 0.2% being totally biased. Lastly the second English daily newspaper namely the Hindustan Times, out of a total of 23% editorial page content, 17.2% are not biased, 5.8% is partly biased, 0.1% content comes under not applicable and none are totally biased. Therefore, the data in the table will assist in analysing the possible reasons for these newspapers to be considered biased.

Level of Bias. When any content is presented with bias in newspapers, it signifies that there is a preference or unjust favouritism for a particular viewpoint, ideology, person or organization. It also includes expressing an opinion and reporting it to influence the reader's emotions (Haneefa & Nellikka, 2010). Here, for easy comprehension of data, the level of bias has been categorised into Not biased (64.7%); Partly biased (22.7%); Totally biased (0.2%); and Not applicable (12.3%). The categories state the unreasoned arguments and opinions which further leads to the subjectification of content.

Subjectivity is favouritism and sloppy reporting instead of fair and accurate; it means taking sides instead of being unbiased; and it means being an interested and committed insider instead of being a detached outsider (van Zoonen, 1998, pp. 128–129). Amidst all four newspapers, the Times of India has the highest number of not biased, partly biased and totally biased content accounting for 18%, 7.4% and 0.2% respectively. It may be assumed that the presence of more non-editorial pieces (columns and articles) provides space for more opinions and fewer factually backed arguments. Hence, the probability of producing subjective editorial page content increases.

A relationship between the level of bias and the circulation of the newspaper can be derived from the data in the table as the Times of India having relatively higher partly editorial page items (7.4%) is the most widely circulated English newspaper in India as of April 2022. The nature of the public sphere can be established from the given statistical information. The term public sphere deals only with its normative connotations which specifies ideal characteristics of public communication as well as a condition conducive to their realization and helps to evaluate critically existing communication in print media. Therefore, it is interesting to note that relatively biased newspapers attract greater readership which reveals the nature of the public sphere.

Language plays a crucial role in observing the extent of bias of a particular newspaper. A conclusion can be drawn from the above table that English newspapers tend to publish comparatively more biased editorial page pieces than Hindi newspapers. Dainik Bhaskar and Dainik Jagran accounted for 4% and 5.5% partly biased news content respectively which are fewer than Times of India and Hindustan Times as they published 7.4% and 5.8% partly biased content. As India is a country with a majority Hindi-speaking population, therefore, with the presented data this can be deduced that opinion-making in the public sphere may not impact the Hindi-speaking population because English newspapers are relatively biased. This can also be concluded that

within a period of 6 months, nearly 22.9% biased editorial page content is published every six months year within which the English-speaking population of India will be largely influenced by the biased opinions presented through the widely circulated English newspapers.

Table 1.4 Content Subject 1 * Level of Bias Crosstabulation Count and Expected Count

Content Subject		Not Applicable	Not Biased	Partly Biased	Totally Biased	Total
Political	Count	0	80	78	0	158
	Expected Count	19.5	102.3	35.9	0.4	158
Economic	Count	2	57	6	0	65
	Expected Count	8.0	42.1	14.8	0.1	65
Social	Count	51	65	17	2	135
	Expected Count	16.6	87.4	30.6	0.3	135
Cultural	Count	3	23	9	0	35
	Expected Count	4.3	22.7	7.9	0.1	35
Sports	Count	0	22	3	0	25
	Expected Count	3.1	16.2	5.7	0.1	25
International Relations	Count	1	56	24	0	81
	Expected Count	10.0	52.4	18.4	0.2	81
Legal	Count	0	66	13	0	79
	Expected Count	9.7	51.1	17.9	0.2	79
Science and Technology	Count	0	37	6	0	43
	Expected Count	5.3	28.8	9.8	0.1	43
Environment	Count	3	28	6	0	37
	Expected Count	4.6	24.0	8.4	0.1	37
Human Development	Count	2	38	5	0	45
	Expected Count	5.5	29.1	10.2	0.1	45
Manufacturing	Count	3	22	8	0	33
	Expected Count	4.1	21.4	7.5	0.1	33
War and Peace	Count	2	25	1	0	28
	Expected Count	3.5	18.1	6.4	0.1	28
Religion	Count	40	28	13	0	81
	Expected Count	10.0	52.4	18.4	0.2	81
Inequality	Count	0	8	7	0	15
	Expected Count	1.8	9.7	3.4	0.0	15
Justice	Count	0	7	1	0	8
	Expected Count	1.0	5.2	1.8	0.0	8
Total	Count	107	562	197	868	868
	Expected Count	107.0	562.0	197.0	868.0	868.0

Table 1.4 Crosstabulation of *Content Subject 1* and *Level of Bias* showing the observed and expected counts for each category. The table presents data across various content subjects, such as *Political*, *Economic*, *Social*, *Cultural*, *Sports* and others, distributed into four bias levels—*Not Applicable*, *Not Biased*, *Partly Biased* and *Totally Biased*. The Political category has the highest counts across bias levels, while categories like Justice and Inequality show the lowest counts. The observed counts are compared with expected counts to identify deviations, providing insights into how bias levels vary across different content subjects.

Table 1.5 Content Subject 1 * Level of Bias Crosstabulation Chi-Square Test

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	353.370[a]	42	.000
Likelihood Ratio	328.462	42	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	28.934	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	868		

Table 1.5 Chi-Square Test results for the crosstabulation between *Content Subject 1* and *Level of Bias*. The table displays the Pearson Chi-Square value (353.370), Likelihood Ratio (328.462) and Linear-by-Linear Association value (28.934), along with their respective degrees of freedom (df) and p-values.

To investigate the relation between the Content Subject 1 and the level of bias, a Chi-Square Test was used. The corresponding p-value came out to be 0.000 and the Pearson Chi-Square value is 353.370 with 42 degrees of freedom (df). Since the p-value is much less than the standard cutoff of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted, which holds that there is a significant correlation between Content Subject and the level of bias. Therefore, findings indicate a high correlation between the subject of bias and the content subject.

The Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear Association tests likewise provide significant p-values (less than 0.05), supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis and establishing the existence of a meaningful association. The likelihood ratio is 328.462, with 42 degrees of freedom and a p-value =.000. The Likelihood Ratio test, an alternative to the Pearson Chi-Square test, validates the strength of the link. Both tests produce consistent findings, supporting the conclusion that there is a substantial association between Content Subject 1 and Level of Bias. The Linear-by-Linear Association test result is 28.934 with one degree of freedom and the associated significance value is 000. This test determines if the ordered degrees of bias have a linear connection with the content subjects. The significant finding implies a directed relationship, in which the amount of bias grows or decreases systematically across content subjects. Therefore, the Chi-Square test findings show a strong association between Content Subject 1 and Level of Bias. The Pearson Chi-Square, Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-Linear Association test all yield statistical significance, indicating a significant relationship and probable trends in bias levels across content subjects.

Table 1.6 Content Subject 1 * Level of Bias Crosstabulation

Content Subject	Not Applicable	Not Biased	Partly Biased	Totally Biased	Total
Political		9.2%	9.0%		18.2%
Economic	0.2%	6.6%	0.7%		7.5%
Social	5.9%	7.5%	2.0%	0.2%	15.6%
Cultural	0.3%	2.6%	1.0%		4.0%
Sports		2.5%	0.3%		2.9%
International Relations	0.1%	6.5%	2.8%		9.3%
Legal		7.6%	1.5%		9.1%
Science and Technology		4.3%	0.7%		5.0%
Environment	0.3%	3.2%	0.7%		4.3%
Human Development	0.2%	4.4%	0.6%		5.2%
Manufacturing	0.3%	2.5%	0.9%		3.8%
War and Peace	0.2%	2.9%	0.1%		3.2%
Religion	4.6%	3.2%	1.5%		9.3%
Inequality		0.9%	0.8%		1.7%
Justice		0.8%	0.1%		0.9%
Total	12.3%	64.7%	22.7%	0.2%	100.0%

Table 1.6: Crosstabulation of *Content Subject 1* and *Level of Bias* showing the percentage distribution across bias categories—*Not Applicable*, *Not Biased*, *Partly Biased* and *Totally Biased*. The table highlights the percentage contributions of each content subject (e.g., *Political*, *Economic*, *Social*, etc.) to the total distribution. The "Not Biased" category accounts for the largest percentage (64.7%) across all content subjects, followed by "Partly Biased" (22.7%).
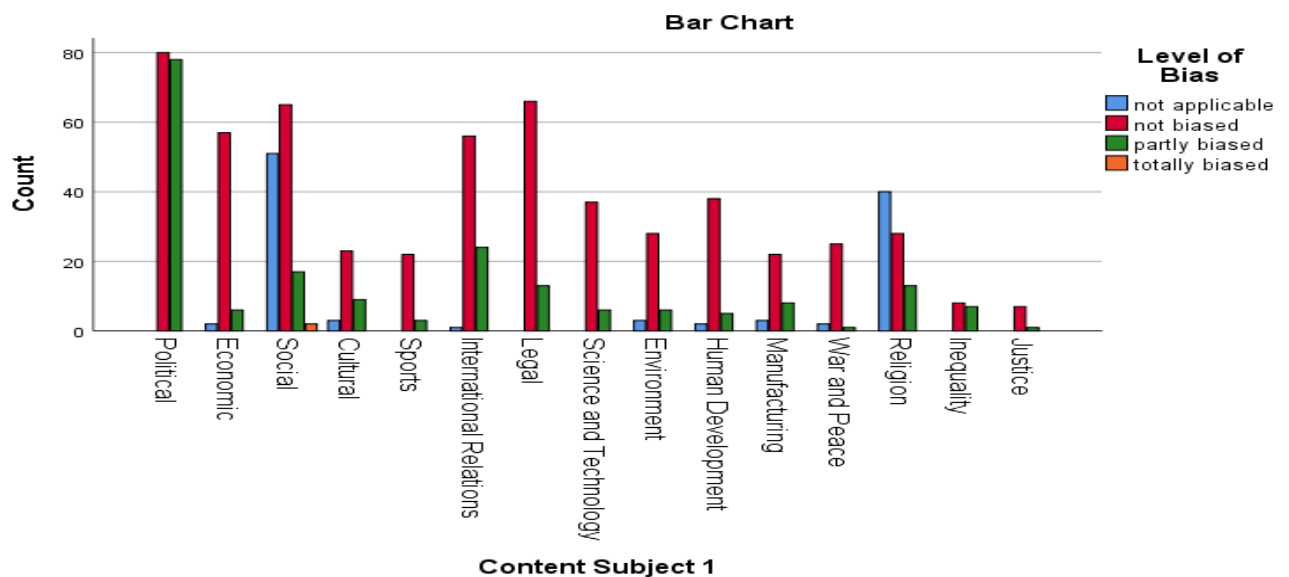
Fig 1.2 Content Subject 1 * Level of Bias Crosstabulation

Table 1.7 Content Subject 1 * Name of the Newspaper Cross Tabulation Count and Expected Count

Content Subject		Dainik Bhaskar	Dainik Jagran	Times of India	Hindustan Times	Total
Political	Count	40	47	31	40	158
	Expected Count	37.3	41.9	42.4	36.4	158.0
Economic	Count	9	11	26	19	65
	Expected Count	15.4	17.2	17.4	15.0	65.0
Social	Count	56	39	21	19	135
	Expected Count	31.9	35.8	36.2	31.1	135.0
Cultural	Count	7	10	11	7	35
	Expected Count	8.3	9.3	9.4	8.1	35.0
Sports	Count	3	1	15	6	25
	Expected Count	5.9	6.6	6.7	5.8	25.0
International Relations	Count	11	14	25	31	81
	Expected Count	19.1	21.5	21.7	18.7	81.0
Legal	Count	12	13	36	18	79
	Expected Count	18.7	20.9	21.2	18.2	79.0
Science and Technology	Count	13	3	19	8	43
	Expected Count	10.2	11.4	11.5	9.9	43.0
Environment	Count	7	10	6	14	37
	Expected Count	8.7	9.8	9.9	8.5	37.0
Human Development	Count	7	17	12	9	45
	Expected Count	10.6	11.9	12.1	10.4	45.0
Manufacturing	Count	9	6	11	7	33
	Expected Count	7.8	8.7	8.9	7.6	33.0
War and Peace	Count	6	6	7	9	28
	Expected Count	6.6	7.4	7.5	6.5	28.0
Religion	Count	22	45	5	9	81
	Expected Count	19.1	21.5	21.7	18.7	81.0
Inequality	Count	1	5	7	2	15
	Expected Count	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.5	15.0
Justice	Count	2	3	1	2	8
	Expected Count	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.8	8.0
Total	Count	205	230	233	200	868
	Expected Count	205.0	230.0	233.0	200.0	868.0

Table 1.7 Crosstabulation of *Content Subject 1* and *Name of the Newspaper* showing the observed and expected counts for each newspaper (*Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*) across various content subjects (e.g., *Political*, *Economic*, *Social*, etc.). The table compares the actual counts with the expected counts for each cell, highlighting variations in the distribution of content subjects across newspapers.

Table 1.8 Content Subject 1 * Name of the Newspaper Cross Tabulation Chi-Square Test

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	165.752[a]	42	.000
Likelihood Ratio	166.380	42	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.188	1	.664
N of Valid Cases	868		

Table 1.8 Chi-Square Test results for the crosstabulation between *Content Subject 1* and *Name of the Newspaper*. The table presents the Pearson Chi-Square value (165.752) and Likelihood Ratio (166.380), both with 42 degrees of freedom (df) and a p-value of .000, indicating a statistically significant association between content subjects and newspapers. The Linear-by-Linear Association value (.188) with a p-value of .664 suggests no significant linear trend.

The Chi-Square Test investigates the relationship between Content Subject 1 and the name of the newspaper. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 165.752 with 42 degrees of freedom and the related p-value is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted, therefore, there is a relationship between the Content Subject 1 and the name of the newspaper, because the p-value is much lower than the standard threshold of 0.05 used in social sciences. The Likelihood Ratio test confirms this conclusion, with a p-value of less than 0.05.

The Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square is a similar test to the Pearson Chi-Square, with a value of 166.380 and 42 degrees of freedom (df). The p-value for this test is also.000, confirming the statistical significance of the relationship between the two variables. The Likelihood Ratio test is a strong alternative to the Pearson Chi-Square, especially when assumptions like cell count distribution are significantly broken. The third row shows the Linear-by-Linear Association value, which is 0.188 with one degree of freedom (df) and a p-value of.664. This test determines whether there is a linear trend or link between two variables. Given the p-value of.664, which is substantially larger than 0.05, there is no indication of a significant linear trend. The significant Chi-Square results show that Content Subject 1 is associated with the names of the newspapers, implying that various newspapers may stress different variables of Content Subject.

Table 1.9 Content Subject 1 * Name of the Newspaper Cross Tabulation

Content Subject 1	Dainik Bhaskar	Dainik Jagran	Times of India	Hindustan Times	Total
Political	4.6%	5.4%	3.6%	4.6%	18.2%
Economic	1.0%	1.3%	3.0%	2.2%	7.5%
Social	6.5%	4.5%	2.4%	2.2%	15.6%
Cultural	0.8%	1.2%	1.3%	0.8%	4.0%
Sports	0.3%	0.1%	1.7%	0.7%	2.9%
International Relations	1.3%	1.6%	2.9%	3.6%	9.3%
Legal	1.4%	1.5%	4.1%	2.1%	9.1%
Science and Technology	1.5%	0.3%	2.2%	0.9%	5.0%
Environment	0.8%	1.2%	0.7%	1.6%	4.3%
Human Development	0.8%	2.0%	1.4%	1.0%	5.2%
Manufacturing	1.0%	0.7%	1.3%	0.8%	3.8%
War and Peace	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	3.2%
Religion	2.5%	5.2%	0.6%	1.0%	9.3%
Inequality	0.1%	0.6%	0.8%	0.2%	1.7%
Justice	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.9%
Total	23.6%	26.5%	26.8%	23.0%	100.0%

Table 1.9 Percentage distribution of *Content Subject 1* across different newspapers (*Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*). The table shows the percentage share of each content subject (e.g., *Political*, *Economic*, *Social*, etc.) within each newspaper, as well as the overall percentage across all newspapers.

Fig 1.3 Content Subject 1 * Name of the Newspapers Crosstabulation
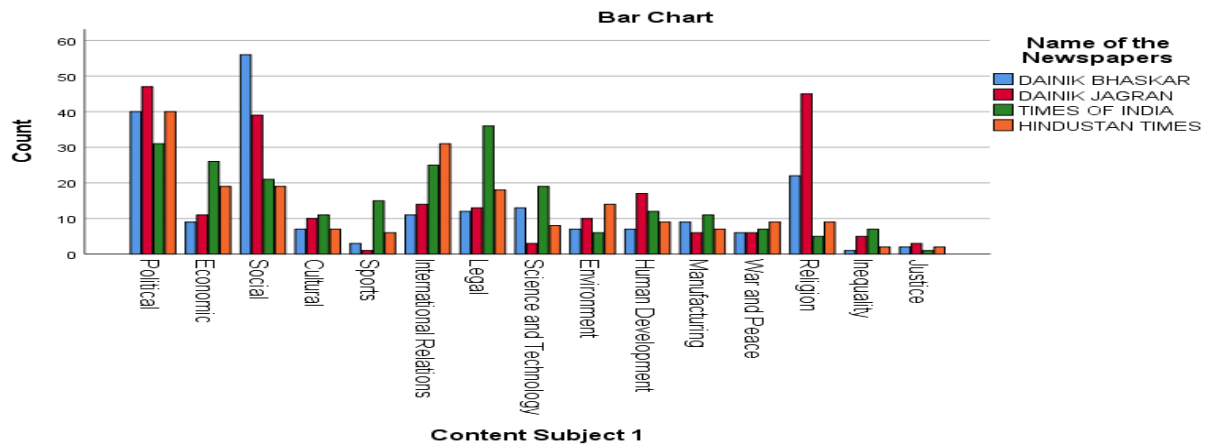

Fig 1.3 Crosstabulation of *Content Subject 1* and *Name of the Newspapers*, illustrating the distribution of various content subjects (e.g., *Political*, *Economic*, *Social*, etc.) across different newspapers (*Dainik Bhaskar*, *Dainik Jagran*, *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*).

The data presented in Table 5.15.2, explores various subjects that are prevalent in newspaper items and the level of possible bias they may have. From the dataset above, it can be concluded that political content subjects are biased in comparison with all the other possible subjects present on an editorial page. The partly biased political content subject accounts for 9% of partly biased content. This results in the formulation of a misleading public sphere where political divisions are deepened, making it difficult for the citizens of the country to find common ground. Within the political content subject, political corruption is a dominant issue

prevailing in the country. Dainik Jagran has produced a relatively higher number of political pieces from July to December 2022. According to Table 1.16, as Dainik Jagran reported 5.4% political content across four largely circulated newspapers in India, it may be assumed that the comparative chances of producing more partly biased editorial page content lie with Dainik Jagran only. Also, Dainik Jagran has the highest readership in India accounting for 5.59 crore by the Indian Readership Survey (IRS). Therefore, when the maximum number of political content that is too partly biased (5.4% in Table 5.15.2) is consumed through Dainik Jagran which is even publishing a maximum number of political items (26.5% in Table 1.16), the opinions in society will automatically be biased. This deduces that the polarised and biased perspectives of the majority of the population can lead to the emergence of unrest and conflicts among people.

A society is seen as a collection of people who frequently live close to each other within a specific geographical or social space. They share different cultures, norms and values that are required to form a community. But this can take a toll if the information surrounding society comes out to be biased. As per the findings of Table 5.15.2, 7.5% of the social content subjects are not biased, 2% are partly biased and 0.2% coverage regarding the society are completely biased. According to Table 1.16, the relatively maximum number of social content subjects are published by Dainik Bhaskar which is 15.6% of total social content among all the newspapers. The newspaper also publishes content inclusive of all the content subjects which indicates that Dainik Bhaskar being the most widely circulated Hindi newspaper in India, places social content above any other content subject. As a consequence, the Hindi-speaking majority population of India accounting for 43.36% (2011 Census) will have a biased notion relating to societal content and their respective issues (*Language Census 2011: Surge in Hindi and English Speakers; Tribal Language Speakers Decline*, 2018). Therefore, the quality of the public sphere especially in the Hindi-speaking region with respect to relationships, interactions and community building will diminish.

Table 5.15.2 showcases another prevalent content subject area which comes out to be International Relations as in a span of six months, 0.1% comes under being not applicable, 6.5% are not biased, 2.8% are partly biased and none are totally biased content. Such biased editorial page content regarding foreign affairs or international relations could disturb India's relations with other countries. The foundation of trust is then put to challenge by the biased news items and the diplomatic, political, economic and cultural international ties will be seen under suspicion by the host countries and vice versa. From the dataset in Table 1.16, the prominent newspaper for 'international relations' as a content subject and the impact on its readers can be determined. The Hindustan Times publishes a relatively higher number of items on their editorial page that have international relations as the dominant subject, substantiated by 3.6% from all the newspapers. The opinions of the public sphere will then impact the bond between countries and their willingness to invest in the betterment of their partnered country.

Referring to the findings in Table 5.15.2, the world is an amalgamation of issues regarding many other relevant areas that report partly biased editorial page pieces such as economic (0.7%), cultural (0.1%), sports (0.3%), legal (1.5%), science and technology (0.7%), environment (0.7%), human development (0.6%), manufacturing (0.9%), war and peace (0/1%), religion (1.5%), inequality (0.8%) and justice (0.1%). Every content subject has its own significance to be taken

care of but biased reportage of any of the content subjects will have its influence on the majority of other areas because when we talk about a nation nothing can be seen in isolation. As per Table 1.16, the Times of India publishes the maximum number of editorial page content (26.8%). Therefore, the most widely circulated newspaper is not necessarily free from biases and should be read and understood with caution. The selective exposure to a particular opinion will reinforce the existing beliefs of the readers. As a result, biased and selective public discourse will replace the harmonious and extensive nature of the public sphere.

Conclusion

Findings reveal the two constituents, politics and society drive the public sphere. The dataset revealed that political subjects accounted for 18.2% of all editorial page coverage, making it the most widely covered topic across all newspapers. The emphasis on political subjects informs the public about government policies, choices and institutional activities, therefore keeping those in power responsible. Newspapers shape public opinion, encourage civic participation and build a more participatory democracy by providing continuous coverage. The issue arises when political content includes 9% of the partly biased content as well. This high share of skewed political information adds to the creation of a misleading public sphere, widening political differences and making it difficult for citizens to find common ground.

Similarly, societal content subjects also received substantial attention, accounting for 15.6% of the editorial coverage. This emphasis on society reflects the media's role in promoting awareness about societal problems such as injustice, gender inequities and poverty. For example, the Oxfam Report 2022 highlighted extreme economic inequalities and the Oxfam Digital Divide-India Inequality Report 2022 identified major gender differences in digital access (*Survival of the Richest: The India Story | Oxfam India*, 2022). Therefore, the findings highlight the importance of language, audience demographics and editorial practices in influencing media narratives. These distinctions not only reflect India's socio-cultural variety but also shape how readers perceive and interact with public debate. This study adds to our understanding of media practices in multilingual cultures, emphasizing the need for balanced and inclusive editorial content to foster informed public discourse. Future studies might broaden these observations by looking into the impact of digital platforms and public input on editorial decision-making, resulting in a more dynamic understanding of media influence in the modern day.

Acknowledgement

References

Thompson, L. S. (2021). Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC). *Lexikon Des Gesamten Buchwesens Online*. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004337862_lgbo_com_011063

Language Census 2011: Surge in Hindi and English speakers; Tribal language speakers decline. (2018, July 6). Jagranjosh.com. https://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/language-census-2011-surge-in-hindi-speakers-south-indian-language-and-urdu-speakers-decline-1530869001-1

Gheyle, N., & Jacobs, T. (2017). *Content Analysis: a short overview*. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321977528_Content_Analysis_a_short_overview

Krippendorff, K. (2004). Reliability in Content Analysis: Some Common Misconceptions and Recommendations. *Human Communication Research*, *30*(3), 411–433. https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/30.3.411

Berelson, B. (1952). Content Analysis in Communication Research. *American Sociological Review*, *17*(4), 515. https://doi.org/10.2307/2088029

Dubey, D. (n.d.). Indian Journal of Law and Legal Research HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF MEDIA IN INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS. In *Indian Journal of Law and Legal Research*. https://hcommons.org/deposits/objects/hc:59722/datastreams/CONTENT/content

Arenilla, M. (2010). *Concepts in Democratic Theory.* Springer. Retrieved March 2, 2022, from fhsu.pressbooks.pub: https://fhsu.pressbooks.pub/orientationpolisci/chapter/chapter- 5/

Ban, R., Jha, S., & Rao, V. (2012). Who has voice in a deliberative democracy? Evidence from transcripts of village parliaments in south India. *Journal of Development Economics*, *99*(2), 428–438. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2012.05.005

Barber, B. R. (2014). Participatory Democracy. *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, 2650–2654. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118474396.wbept0752

Bekkers, V., & Tummers, L. (2018). Innovation in the public sector: Towards an open and collaborative approach. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *84*(2), 209–213. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852318761797

Mishra, R., & Pawan Koundal. (2020, June 27). *Print and Online Newspapers: An Analysis of the News Content and Consumption Patterns of Readers*. ResearchGate; unknown. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342490801_Print_and_Online_Newspapers_An_Analysis_of_the_News_Content_and_Consumption_Patterns_of_Readers

Haneefa, M., & Nellikka, S. (2010). Content Analysis of Online English Newspapers in India. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, *30*(4), 17–24. https://doi.org/10.14429/djlit.30.292

Survival of the Richest: The India Story | Oxfam India. (2022, January 15). Www.oxfamindia.org. https://www.oxfamindia.org/knowledgehub/workingpaper/survival-richest-india-story