News Paper Photographs and Election Coverage at Geographical levels: A study of Telugu newspapers

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ABSTRACT

Due to the ever growing competition from television and internet the newspapers have been opting for in-depth analysis, background information, unique coverage, richness of narrative and better visuals which was visible in the pages. According to Sliwinski (2011) images play an important role in promoting the development of civil privileges due to wide circulation, especially during disasters and conflicts. It helps to create a global audience and to enhance better understanding of a common civilization. Many studies explored the issues of proximity and location between the scene and it was felt, spatially and temporally, by focusing on the relationship between mass-produced images of disasters, wars, conflicts, and public reactions to the photos taken as they pay more attention and notice the emergence of a global community of viewers. The researchers tried to find out how the top newspapers presented the photographs in the coverage of politics and election process along with the news, stories and others during the elections held in 2019 in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The study attempted to analyze the focus of news photographs on regional and national issues published by newspapers. Four newspapers

were selected and all the photographs published in a total of three months study period were considered as the sample. The results show that at Geographical level more coverage was given to the state as well as the national level issues compared to the local issues. Though the newspapers belong to the local vernacular languages the agenda has been mostly on the national issues and politics.

Key words: Circulation, News photographs, Global audience, Geographical level

Introduction

The function of mass media in creating societal structures has been studied by theorists from numerous fields, with contemporary news organizations acting as "a material force", that shapes elections, society, and economic cooperation (Hall, 1989). While other theories emphasize how viewers and readers were evaluating the media messages (Morley and Silverstone, 2002), such a viewpoint could hide authority's destructive repetition throughout mass communication (Seaman, 1992). The strong use of expressive action inside the media purposefully interrupts reasonable communication. According to Habermas' (1998) theory political legitimacy that all-political authority arises from public discourse (O'Mahony, 2010). Only propositions were compatible with narrative acceptable media frames that are likely to be communicated to political and public viewers in the content of media attention of policy discussions. And theactors participate within the only confined interpretive regions (McCoy, 1988). The idea that images can accurately depict reality has influenced the usage of photojournalism as that is the primary example of journalistic impartiality (Zelizer, 2007; Nilsson, 2017). Nilsson (2015) mentioned earlier that the newspaper was often considered as that tool with which the public learns about local or distant events and conditions, and the images in those pieces serve as the public's first exposure to such events and situations. They explained that previous research on photojournalism has focused on how news images mediate or transform information and worldviews. Sliwinski (2011) played an important role in image promoting the development of civil privileges due to wide circulation, especially during disasters and conflicts. It helped to create a global audience community and to develop an understanding of a common civilization. They explored the issues of proximity and location between the scene and it was felt, spatially and temporally, by focusing on the relationship

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between mass-produced images of disasters, wars, conflicts, and public reactions to the photos

taken as they pay more attention and notice the emergence of a global community of viewers.

Theoretical Frame Work

The theory of social responsibility states that the press is expected to play an important role by

defining issues, and setting an agenda for the political parties too. The vernacular dailies often

debate and discuss political issues and set an agenda for the political parties. The photograph

remains to be one of the central elements of the opinion section and of the journalistic content.

As a whole in newspapers the photograph stands out from the rest of the content. However, this

genre is used primarily to exercise its role as a political actor, i.e. assessing the decisions made

by the political elite and, above all, proposing new public actions.

Literature Review

The Visual News Patterns and the Boko Haram Insurgence in Nigerian Newspapers were

examined by Odoemelam et al., (2015). Visuals sometimes referred to as news photos, are

channels of communication that play a crucial role in the distribution of news in the print media.

Visuals are utilized for communicating severe concerns like the rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Studies on visual news coverage of Boko Haram are limited, even though they have been done

on textual news reporting of the group. The current research investigates the imagery used to

cover the Boko Haram uprising. News photos in four national newspapers' were analyzed using

the systematic review research approach.

Before the 2014 general election, Ramana Murthy (2013) examined the editorials of

newspapers Andhra Jyothi, The Hindu, Eenadu, and Deccan Chronicle published between 2009

and 2013. The study made an effort to evaluate the four newspapers' editorial emphasis on

national and local concerns. The publications in the newspapers focused more on public and

people's concerns than on state issues. As a national newspaper, The Hindu published 291

editorials concerning national matters and 37 editorials on state-specific subjects. Interestingly,

the Deccan Chronicle, an English-language daily with its highest readership in the region and a

base in Hyderabad, published just three editorials on local concerns throughout the research

period, compared to 293 editorials concerning national political matters. The same is apparent

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for *Andhra Jyothi*, which published fewer editorials (123) concerning national political issues than state political concerns. *Eenadu* published 114 editorials for the national category and 81 for the state category. Despite being in government, the BJP earned additional editorial commentary within *Deccan Chronicle* and *The Hindu* than any other political organization. Additionally, compared to the BJP, the two Telugu newspapers published higher editorials, mainly on the Congress party. According to the survey, *Deccan Chronicle* and *The Hindu* treated the BJP less

Research methodology

positively in respective editorials.

The purpose of the present study is to ascertain the differential coverage given to political themes in news photographs of select newspapers.

The specific objectives of the study are to

1. find out the frequency of photographs allocated to various categories in the sample dailies during the study period of March, April and May months of 2019 i.e., during elections;

2. make a comparative analysis, in terms of frequency of various subject categories in the photographs of sample of newspapers during the study period;

3. find out the differences in the frequency of photographs for the political parties during the study period; and

4. There is also a significant difference in the frequency of various categories of photographs based on the geographical region.

The study adopted a content analysis method to understand the contents of news photographs of sample newspapers published from the state of Andhra Pradesh. Content analysis is a method of analysis used for this study as it enables the researcher to observe how content is presented as a part of communication (Kerlinger, 1973). According to Dremers and Nicholls (1987: 10), content analysis is one of the three major methods of precision journalism, the two other methods being survey research and field experiment.

Selection of newspapers. Keeping in view of their circulation, geographical location, and the language four newspapers were selected for the present study. They are the largest circulated Telugu newspapers *Eenadu*, *Andhra Jyothi*, *Sakshi* and *Vartha* published in the state of Andhra pradesh. The photographs published in those four newspapers were taken for analysis from the

months of March, April and May 2019 as general elections were held in May, 2019 for the Lok Sabha and Assemblies. The study assumed importance as it attempted to ascertain the stance of the newspapers on the political parties in the state and also at the national level during this election period. The universe for this study comprises all the editions of the four selected dailies published during the above mentioned period and the same were considered as the sample. The data analysis was carried out by framing of Code sheet and studied 14 subjects that include general, political as well as development related news photographs.

Data analysis

The Overall coverage of Photographs of news coverage of Main Edition of the selected dailies shows that among all the four Telugu Regional Newspapers *Sakshi* got more number of photographs published and followed by the *Eenadu, Andhra Jyothi, Sakshi* and *Vartha*. Priority was given to other subjects followed by politics and development (Table 1).

	Categories	Eend	adu	A	J	Sak	cshi	Var	tha
		fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
1	Politics	2075	24.6	2766	30.1	2850	25.5	1865	24.3
2	Development	1260	15.0	1014	11.1	1288	11.5	942	12.3
3	Other subjects	5090	60.4	5403	58.8	7049	63.0	4867	63.4
	Total	8425	100.0	9183	100.0	11187	100.0	7674	100.0

Table 1 Distribution of photographs of political parties verses at other subject matter.

With regard to the distribution of the photographs as per the geographical levels in almost all dailies national parties are in first place followed by state and others. In *Eenadu* national category is in first place (50.8 %) followed by state (42.3 %), foreign (6 %) and local (0.9 %). In *Andhra Jyothi* also national is in first place followed by state (40.1 %), foreign (4.9 %) and local which is very far at (0.2 %). In *Sakshi* again national is in first place (51.9 %) followed by state (42 %), foreign (5.7 %) and local (0.4 %). In *Vartha* national (65 %) is in first place followed state (29.2 %) foreign (5.6 %) and local (0.2 %) (Table 2).

Table 2 Distribution of frequency of photographs as per the geographical levels.

Categories	Een	adu	Andhra	Jyothi	Saks	shi	Vari	tha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
Local	72	0.9	14	0.2	43	0.4	16	0.2
State	3564	42.3	3685	40.1	4702	42.0	2240	29.2
National	4276	50.8	5033	54.8	5809	51.9	4990	65.0
Foreign	513	6.1	451	4.9	633	5.7	428	5.6
Total	8425	100.0	9183	100.0	11187	100	7674	100.0
Mean	210	6.25	2295	5.25	2796	.75	1913	8.5
Std Dev	2122.0)34148	2451.	.669	2884.	937	2264.	.109

Chi value= 509.784

C.value= 16.91898

SUMMARY

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Eenadu	5	16850	3370	11362688
Andhra jyothi	5	18366	3673.2	13994852
Saakshi	5	22374	4474.8	20321404
Vaartha	5	15348	3069.6	10469799

ANOVA

Source of						
Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	5480295	3	1826765	0.130138	0.940769	3.238872
Within Groups	2.25E+08	16	14037186			
Total	2.3E+08	19				

Table 3 Coefficient of Correlation of photos distributed in geographical locations

	Eenadu	Andhra Jyothi	Saakshi	Vaartha
Eenadu		.996	1.000	.928
Andhra Jyothi	.996**		.998	.957
Saakshi	1.000**	.998**		.935
Vaartha	.928	.957*	.935	

Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at various geographical levels shows that with regard to frequency more number of photographs was found in national category followed by state, local and foreign categories.

Table 4 Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at various Geographical levels

Ca	tegories	Eenadu		AJ		Sakshi		Vartha	
		fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
1	Local	23	1.1	-	-	15	0.5	8	0.4
2	State	1013	48.8	1380	49.9	1761	61.8	733	39.1
3	National	1037	50.0	1379	49.9	1065	37.4	1123	60.0
4	Foreign	2	0.1	7	0.3	9	0.3	9	0.5
	Total	2075	100.0	2766	100.0	2850	100.0	1873	100.0

When the researchers studied News Photographs published in the perspective of Local level and its Coverage in sample newspapers it has been found that in *Eenadu* in Local level category TDP (34.9%) is in the first place followed by others (26.1%) and Congress, YCP and JSP each (13%). In *Andhra jyothi* in Local level category is covered Nil. In *Sakshi* it has been observed that YCP (26.5%) is in the first place followed by TDP (19.9%) whereas Congress, BJP, Communist and SP shared each (13.4%) in third place. In *Vartha* in local level category BJP (37.5%) is in the first place followed by TDP (25%) and whereas Congress, YCP and JSP shared (12.5%) in third place (Table 5).

Table: 5 Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at local level

Categories	Eei	nadu		AJ	Sa	kshi	Va	ırtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	fr
Congress	3	13.0			2	13.4	1	12.5
ВЈР					2	13.4	3	37.5
Communist					2	13.4		
SP					2	13.4		
BSP					0			
IADMK					0			
DMK					0			
TMC					0			
RJD					0			
TDP	8	34.9			3	19.9	2	25.0
YCP	3	13.0			4	26.5	1	12.5
JSP	3	13.0			0		1	12.5
MIM					0		0	
Others	6	26.1			0		0	
Total	23	100			15	100	8	100

When the researcher studied Photographs published in the perspective of State level and its Coverage in sample newspapers it has been found that in *Eenadu* in State level category TDP (54.8%) is in the first place followed by YCP (19.2%) whereas JSP (11.1%) is in third place. in *Andhra jyothi* State level category TDP (54.9%) is in the first place followed by YCP (19.8%) and JSP (8.7%) in third place. In *Saakshi* it has been observed that YCP (66.9%) is in the first place followed by TDP (22%) and whereas BJP (4.6%) is in third place. In *Vartha* in state level category TDP (45%) is in the first place followed by YCP (28.8%) and whereas JSP (11.3%) is in third place (Table 6).

Table: 6 Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at State level

Categories	Een	adu	A	J	Sak	kshi	Vai	rtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
Congress	28	2.8	58	4.2	41	2.3	47	6.4
ВЈР	60	5.9	78	5.6	81	4.6	47	6.4
Communist	19	1.9	30	2.2	20	1.1	4	0.5
SP	0		3	0.2	0		0	
BSP	0		2	0.1	2	0.1	1	0.1
IADMK	0		0		1	0.1	0	
DMK	1	0.1	1	0.1	0		0	
TMC	1	0.1	5	0.4	0		0	
RJD	2	0.2	1	0.1	0		0	
TDP	555	54.8	757	54.9	386	22.0	329	45.0
YCP	195	19.2	274	19.8	1178	66.9	211	28.8
JSP	112	11.1	120	8.7	32	1.8	83	11.3
MIM			0		1	0.1	0	
Others	40	3.9	51	3.7	19	1.0	11	1.5
Total	1013	100	1380	100	1761	100	733	100

When the researcher studied News Photographs published in National category in *Eenadu* BJP (33%) is in the first place followed by Congress (29.8%) whereas others (19.9%) is in third place. In *Andhra jyothi* BJP (36.9%) is in the first place followed by Congress (25%) and others (19.7%) is in third place. In *Sakshi* also it has been observed that BJP (33.7%) isin the first place followed by Congress (26.6%) and whereas others (19.9%) in third place. In *Vartha* also it is BJP (34.3%) which is in the first place followed by Congress (30.9%) and whereas others (18.9%) in third place (Table 7).

Table 7 Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at National level

Categories	Eena	du	A.	J	Sak	shi	Vai	rtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
Congress	309	29.8	345	25.0	283	26.6	347	30.9
ВЈР	342	33.0	509	36.9	359	33.7	385	34.3
Communist	24	2.3	24	1.7	9	0.8	16	1.4
SP	27	2.6	50	3.6	31	2.9	31	2.8
BSP	14	1.4	25	1.8	15	1.4	18	1.6
IADMK	9	0.9	5	0.4	4	0.4	5	0.5
DMK	22	2.1	7	0.5	6	0.6	7	0.6
TMC	26	2.5	57	4.1	27	2.5	34	3.0
RJD	10	1.0	23	1.7	11	1.0	19	1.7
TDP	21	2.0	32	2.3	22	2.1	26	2.3
YCP	22	2.1	23	1.7	77	7.2	14	1.2
JSP	4	0.4	2	0.1	2	0.2	5	0.5
MIM			7	0.5	7	0.7	4	0.3
Others	207	19.9	270	19.7	212	19.9	212	18.9
Total	1037	100	1379	100	1065	100	1123	100

When the researcher studied Photographs published in the Foreign category in *Eenadu* Congress (50%) is in the first place followed by BJP (50%). in *Andhra jyothi* under Foreign category BJP and YCP shared each (28.6%) is in the first place followed by Congress, TDP and others shared equally(14.3%). In *Sakshi* in Foreign category YCP (55.6%) is in the first place followed by Congress (33.3%) and whereas BJP (11.1%) was relegated to the third place. In *Vartha* also national party BJP (100%) is the only one to get coverage, whereas all the other parties are Nil (Table 8).

Table: 8 Distribution of photographs of Political Parties at Foreign level

Categories	Eer	nadu	A.	ΛJ	Sa	kshi	Va	rtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
Congress	1	50.0	1	14.3	3	33.3	0	
BJP	1	50.0	2	28.6	1	11.1	1	100
Communist								
SP								
BSP								
IADMK								
DMK								
TMC								
RJD								
TDP			1	14.3				
YCP			2	28.6	5	55.6		
JSP			0					
MIM			0					
Others			1	14.3				
Total	2	100	7	100	9	100	1	100

The local level frequency wise coverage shows that compared to all the four dailies *Eenadu* covered more frequently(49) than others i.e *Sakshi* (28) has covered more number of photographs than the other three followed by *Andhra jyothi* and *Vartha* is in last place. In *Eenadu* art is in first place followed by crime and General Human interest (GHI) together and third place was shared by women and development. In AJ a large chunk belongs to GHI and the others belong to Eco, Crime, SC ad ST as well as Art. In *Sakshi* also Crime is in first place followed by GHI and Sports. In *Vartha* also Crime is in first place followed by GHI, Government and Development (Table 9).

Table: 9 Distribution of photographs of various Subjects at local level

Categories	Een	adu	A	J	Sak	zs h i	Var	rtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	fr
Government	2	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5
War	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Economics	3	6.1	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Crime	9	18.4	1	7.1	18	64.3	4	50.0
Accidents	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Science	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
PH	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Art	12	24.5	1	7.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
GHI	9	18.4	10	71.4	8	28.6	2	25.0
SC/ST		0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Women	6	12.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sport	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	7.1	0	0.0
Development	6	12.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5
Total	49	100.0	14	100.0	28	100.0	8	100.0

The state level frequency wise coverage shows that compared to all the four dailies *Sakshi* has covered more number of photographs than the other three followed by *Eenadu*, AJ and *Vartha* is in last place. The individual newspaper frequency shows that in *Eenadu* Development (21%) in first place followed by Art (20%) and GHI (19%). In *Andhra jyothi* GHI (26%) is in first place and Art (21%) and Crime (18%) stood in second and third places. Whereas in *Sakshi* GHI (27%) is in first place followed by Crime (22%) and Art (22%) are equally shared in second place and Gov (9%) is in third place. The subject wise category analysis shows that in *Vartha* Art (35%) is in first place and GHI (21%) is in second place and Crime (15%) is in third place (Table 10).

Table: 10 Distribution of photographs of various Subject categories at State level

Categories	Eer	nadu	A	J	Sak	zshi	Vai	rtha
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	fr
Government	372	15	230	10	260	9	175	12
War	5	0	4	0	2	0	2	0
Economics	10	0	7	0	4	0	1	0
Crime	416	16	408	18	654	22	219	15
Accidents	112	4	102	4	157	5	53	4
Science	32	1	39	2	45	2	26	2
PH	6	0	31	1	13	0	1	0
Art	508	20	494	21	651	22	536	35
GHI	482	19	607	26	798	27	332	21
SC/ST		0	8	0	39	1	6	0
Women	53	2	74	3	49	2	12	1
Sport	9	0	38	2	33	1	15	1
Development	546	21	263	11	236	8	129	9
Total	2551	100	2305	100	2941	100	1507	100

At national level the frequency wise coverage shows that in half of the sample dailies development is in first place and in the other two Art replaced it. In *Eenadu* Development (21%) is in first place Art (19%) and GH (16%) stood in second and third places whereas in *Andhra jyothi* Development (20%) is in first place followed by sports (19%) and GHI (17%). In *Sakshi* Art (31%) is in first place and Development (22%) and GHI (18%) are in second and third places. In *Vartha* Art (29%) is in first place followed by Development (20%) and GHI (16%) (Table 11).

Table: 11 Distribution of photographs of various Subject matter on National level

Categories	Eenadu		AJ		Sakshi		Vartha	
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	fr
Government	274	8.5	130	3.6	154	3.2	205	5.3
War	5	0.2	1	0.0	7	0.1	3	0.1
Economics	57	1.8	44	1.2	66	1.4	45	1.2
Crime	236	7.3	359	9.8	351	7.4	361	9.3
Accidents	71	2.2	50	1.4	41	0.9	34	0.9
Science	92	2.8	51	1.4	42	0.9	42	1.1
PH	1	0.0	5	0.1	2	0.0	2	0.1
Art	623	19.2	701	19.2	1479	31.2	1126	29.1
GHI	526	16.2	635	17.4	871	18.4	601	15.5
SC/ST		0.0	6	0.2	6	0.1	0	0.0
Women	168	5.2	275	7.5	216	4.6	89	2.3
Sport	520	16.1	679	18.6	483	10.2	575	14.9
Development	666	20.6	718	19.6	1028	21.7	784	20.3
Total	3239	100.0	3654	100.0	4746	100.0	3867	100.0

At Foreign category level the frequency wise coverage shows that in *Sakshi* is in first place followed by *Eenadu*, *Vartha* and *AJ*. In specific dailies in *Eenadu* sports (40%) is in first place followed by Crime (13%) and Government (10%). In *Andhra jyothi* also sports (38%) is in first place followed by Crime (18%) and Science (10%). In *Sakshi* also sports (38%) is in first place and Crime (17%) and Art (13%)have followed it. In *Vartha* wherein sports (39%) is in first place followed by Crime (25%) Government (11%) (Table 12).

Table: 12Distribution of photographs of various Subject categories at foreign level

	Eenadu		AJ		Sakshi		Vartha	
	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%	fr	%
Government	51	10.0	24	5.4	43	6.9	48	11.2
War	10	2.0	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0
Economics	2	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.3	0	0.0
Crime	64	12.5	79	17.8	108	17.4	107	25.1
Accidents	10	2.0	26	5.9	13	2.1	10	2.3
Science	39	7.6	43	9.7	42	6.8	17	4.0
PH	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Art	40	7.8	39	8.8	81	13.0	25	5.9
GHI	34	6.7	27	6.1	51	8.2	19	4.4
SC/ST		0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Women	16	3.1	4	0.9	23	3.7	6	1.4
Sport	203	39.7	168	37.8	234	37.6	167	39.1
Development	42	8.2	33	7.4	24	3.9	28	6.6
Total	511	100.0	444	100.0	622	100.0	427	100.0

Discussion and Suggestions

Compared to other subjects, politics and development are covered extensively during the elections. But it is in the form of a skewed approach. The newspapers have their own preferences and seem to be following their own agenda. In the state of Andhra Pradesh all the four sample newspapers are catering to the telugu readers of the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Eenadu and Andhra jyothi are considered to be very close to the Telugu Desam party (TDP) which was in power at the time of 2019 elections. Whereas Sakshi which is considered to be their hard core competitor is known very well to the common man because it is the newspaper owned by YSRCP, a strong opposition to TDP. Hence it is understood that the media revolve around TDP and its allies Eenadu and Andhra jyothi and YSRCP and its publication Sakshi. Despite their affiliation to the parties all the news papers have been found to be prioritizing the coverage to the national and state parties. Local parties are getting very meager coverage. But in that area also their allied parties are getting big share. Same is noticed in local and foreign in which the allied parties' activities are covered. Though Telugu newspapers are very much regional and vernacular in nature they seem to be concentrating on national as well as international issues. It is found simultaneously that not all parties' especially regional parties were not given much priority and limited to only a few like Congress, BJP etc. even in state level coverage all the parties are not given equal importance.

Suggestions

Based on the above observations, suggestions are made to make the content more people supporting which in turn can help in strengthening democracy.

- The pattern of discrepancy and glaring bias exhibited by the sample newspapers should be dispensed with and the cardinal principal of objectivity shall be adopted which is turn shall equip the voters with impartial, objective, true information rather than in a polarized manner.
- ➤ Apart from the national parties the other parties also shall be given considerable space rather than being mere critics.
- Even if not the major chunk at least a minimum of coverage is justified if the concerned are active in the field and working for the public.

➤ Photographs related to parties which are active in fighting on the issues of public importance should be given more coverage so that the onus of understating and decisions to adopt should be raised on a particular line lies with the readers i.e. the voters themselves.

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