CHAPTER-2
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AND METHODOLOGY
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2.1 Literature Review

A literature review is a critical analysis of a segment of a published research literature relevant to a topic under consideration for research work. Its purpose is to create familiarity with current thinking and research on a particular topic, and may justify future research into a previously overlooked or understudied area. The word literature means sources of information or research. The literature informs about the research that has already been conducted on the subject. Therefore, the researcher reviewed all the relevant literature available on the subject area.

A research study on 'Mass Media: The Image, Role, and Social Conditions of Women' conducted by Mieke Ceulemans and Guido Fauconnier focused on women’s image from a developmental or historical perspective. The research systematized, analyzed and evaluated knowledge about the interrelationship between mass media and women's status. The study showed that woman is utilized in advertising to sell products to both male and female consumers by virtue of her two-dimensional role: her role as housewife/mother/wife and her function as a decorative and sexual object. It was found that women are commoditized to sell products. Her body is used to seek attention of consumers. Under the guise of sexual liberation, advertising continues to exploit the traditional image of woman as sex symbol. Further they noted that media images tend to define woman within the narrow confines of her traditional domestic roles and her sexual appeal to man. It is none other than media that stereotypes women’s image. Media has made women as family and house oriented or only to please their male counterparts. Work in the advertising, broadcasting, film and publishing industries is generally divided along sexual lines, which channel and keep women in jobs devoid of status and power, while reserving most influential positions for men. (Ceulemans et al, 1979)

The study by David L. Altheide on 'Media Hegemony: A Failure of Perspective' analyzed the logical and empirical adequacy of media hegemony as an explanation of ideological dominance. It showed that some earlier researchers have uncritically adapted the "dominant ideology thesis" of media hegemony to studies of
TV news and have overlooked findings which challenge their claims about, the socialization and ideology of journalists, whether news reports perpetuate the status quo, and the nature and extent of international news coverage. Despite the shortcomings of the concept of media hegemony, efforts should continue to develop an empirically sound theoretical perspective for locating the news process in a broader societal context. Researchers claimed that those theories focusing solely on television's hegemonic legitimating ages and homogenizing social effects are one-sided and limited. It was also argued through research that an emerging theoretical rationale could benefit from considering how the mass media themselves have altered the social context; rather than being a "dependent" variable of broader social and economic forces, the mass media may well be a key "independent variable" This formulation of media effects could be integrated with a less global version of hegemony, e.g., "hegemonic domains" in bureaucracy and ongoing work of pluralism. Such efforts will go far toward empirical grounding our macro understandings of the media's role in social life. (Altheide, 1984)

Neil M. Malamuth and John Briere in their study ‘Sexual Violence in the Media: Indirect Effects on Aggression against Women’ presented a model hypothesizing indirect effects of media sexual violence on aggression against women. The study found that man’s thought patterns are one of the several contributing factors causing sexual aggression. The research presented correlation between sexually aggressive behaviour and thought patterns condoning sexual violence and sexually aggressive behaviour. Thought patterns were found to convary with a variety of indices of agression inflicting aversive noice to women in the laboratories, self reported potential and actual sexual aggression and status as a convicted rapist. (Malamuth et al, 1986)

Rashmi Luthra in her work ‘Coverage of Women's Issues in the Indian Immigrant Press: A Content Analysis’ selected women’s issues of India Abroad from January to June of 1983 and 1985. A coding system was adopted in defining news stories related to women. These stories included – women as victims of Society, individual woman as victim (of criminal activity), woman/ women’s accomplishments, attempts to change women's condition, individual woman as Criminal, general story (with implications for women as a group) and others. For qualitative analysis, the researcher analyzed the stories in the form of letter to the
The researcher also focused on the sources of the information. She found that women are either covered rarely by the newspapers or covered in an idiosyncratic way, unrelated to a larger perspective or to social causes. Even if the story is related to women, they are left aside in giving their views on particular issue. Most of the times, men’s views are taken on women’s issues. The stories related to women got very little visibility in India Abroad. The stories that are covered in the newspapers are found mostly related to crime. Women’s voices are generally not heard even when the news story is related to women and women's issues. Males have to speak or give their views on the issues related to women. Women are seen invisible from the media content. The researcher found the overall tone of coverage of women's stories as positive (Luthra, 1987).

Ammu Joesph and Kalpana Sharma in their study entitled ‘Between the Lines: Women's Issues in English Language Newspapers’ focused on five prominent issues - dowry deaths, rape, sex determination tests and sati. The coverage of five daily newspapers, four periodicals and two women's magazines about women’s issues was analyzed between 1979 and 1988. The data in the study highlighted that it is only proximity that has a definite impact on the extent of coverage. This is just because masses are keen to know about the happenings of their nearer place. Because of proximity factor, dowry deaths related stories were found more in Delhi-based Hindustan Times during the selected time period as compared to Calcutta edition of The Statesman. Similar case was found in the coverage of amniocentesis and female foeticide. These cases were reported more in the Bombay-based newspapers, The Indian Express and The Times if India, than any of the other three, possibly because the campaign against the misuse of sex determination tests was launched in Bombay. Death of Roop Kanwar in Deorala in sati issue also caught the attention of all newspapers in India. The Hindustan Times was found leading in giving coverage to Roop Kunwar issue as compared to other papers. The issues got greater coverage because of the political interference and conformity with the dominant norms of what constitutes 'news' as explained above. Both the Roop Kanwar tragedy and the Shah Bano controversy got greater space in the newspapers in comparison with other issues because of involvement of law, communal overtones and politically significance. It might be said that the issues that are treated as hard news such as politics, economics and the law and issues related to violence or crime are routinely covered whereas soft
news like social and cultural issues are rarely covered by the papers. The print media generally adopt liberal and reform minded approach in covering women’s issues (Joseph et al, 1991).

In the study 'Media Images, Feminist Issues' Deborah L. Rhode discussed the issue of media’s preference to present as news about women and how it should characterize women's movement. It is matter of great concern that how media should reflect and recast feminist issues. In contemporary era some improvements have been made in press portraits of feminism, feminists, and gender-related issues. We came to know about the happenings in the world through media. Media always plays 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. We are rarely seen in media organization. Women’s issues are also not taken seriously in media because of their under-representation in media. In the late 1940s, only one female journalist appeared on any television news. By 1960, the number had increased to one per network. These female reporters handled "women's" stories, such as those involving political wives, and sometimes filled in as weather girls. In the print media, the small group of female journalists generally had a separate, and anything but equal, status. Most were relegated to work as researchers rather than writers or to positions on the women's page, traditionally limited to food, fashion, furnishings and society "dots and doings". Media also did not give much attention to women and women's issues as well as women’s movements. Analysis began with the absence of women: their underrepresentation in positions of influence; the not-so-benign neglect of women's issues; the premature post-mortems of the women's movement; and ended with media's own contribution to the "demise". Discussion then turned to the way that press coverage can demonize, trivialize, and unduly personalize feminist struggles. The final section included consoling thoughts and proposals for collective action. After reviewing the forces that have increased sensitivity to gender-related concerns, the discussion suggested further strategies to that end. By gaining a better understanding of how media images construct and constrain feminist objectives, we may come closer to realizing them. The marginalization of women occurs not only through failure to represent their perspectives but also through failure to recognize them as independent agents, apart from their relation to men. Although the preceding comments have focused on what
has been wrong in media coverage, there has also been an increasing amount that has been right. The growing number of feminists as journalists, critics, and consumers has made a demonstrable difference in how feminist issues are presented. Of course, not all of the coverage was an unmixed blessing the coverage of many gender-related topics including sexual violence still leaves much to be desired. But the fact that there is substantial coverage, which generally includes feminist perspectives, represents substantial progress. The challenge remaining is to respond to the inadequacies that we can increasingly identify. Much more could and should be done to monitor biases, organize protests, expand coverage, and increase feminists' role within the media. If we are to realize feminism's potential, feminists need a greater voice in shaping its public image. (Rhode, 1995)

A report prepared by Aletha C. Huston, Ellen Wartella, and Edward Donnerstein on ‘Measuring the Effects of Sexual Content in the Media’ investigated the impact on young viewers of sexual content in the media. It examined the methodological options for investigating the effects of sexual content in the media on children and adolescents. It also reviewed relationship between entertainment media and sexual development during childhood and adolescence. The study was convened by a Forum of twenty scholars with expertise in sexuality, sexual development, media analysis, and media effects to discuss these issues. Research was designed to understand the influence of mass media on sexual health. Study suggested that it the need of the hour to consider a range of outcomes – cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, behavioral – either separately or in combination with one other to understand the effects of sexual content in the media. We should also have to be cognizant of vast individual differences in how viewers respond to sexual depictions. The report argued that there is no doubt that portrayal and amount of sex in media have been increasing for the last twenty years. The report reviewed two approaches to sexual development. On the one hand it reviewed healthy sex, or the role of sex in individual mental health and in healthy relationships. On the other hand it showed that sexual health has a narrower focus based in public health concerns about the physical disease, mental health, and social problems that can arise from sexual behavior. The report suggested that researchers can design and conduct important research within these national and local guidelines. And also the researchers should include in its framework theories about sexuality, sexual development, and media effects and future content analyses.
should include cable programming, advertising, news, talk shows and new media. (Huston et al, 1998)

John P. Pierce and Elizabeth A. Gilpin come up with an interesting study on ‘Group News Media Coverage of Smoking and Health’ The study is associated with changes in population rates of smoking cessation but not initiation’, supported by the Cancer Prevention Research Unit, CA. It is claimed that this study is the first to look systematically at the coverage of smoking in the print media and correlate it with the incidence of population smoking behaviour. Objective of this study was to determine whether changes in news media coverage of smoking and health issues are associated with changes in smoking behaviour in the USA. Issue importance in the US news media were assessed by the number of articles published annually in major magazines indexed in The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. Annual incidence rates for cessation and initiation in the USA were computed from the large, representative National Health Interview Surveys (1965-1992). Patterns in cessation incidence were considered for ages 20-34 years and 35-50 years. Initiation incidence was examined for adolescents (14-17 years) and young adults (18-21 years) of both sexes. Results of the research indicated that from 1950 to the early 1980s, the annual incidence of cessation in the USA mirrored the pattern of news media coverage of smoking and health, particularly for middle aged smokers. Cessation rates in younger adults increased considerably when second hand smoke concerns started to increase in the US population. Incidence of initiation in young adults did not start to decline until the beginning of the public health campaign against smoking in the 1960s. Among adolescents, incidence rates did not start to decline until the 1970s, after the broadcast ban on cigarette advertising. It was concluded that the level of coverage of smoking and health in the news media may play an important role in determining the rate of population smoking cessation, but not initiation. In countries where cessation has lagged, advocates should work to increase the newsworthy. It was found that coverage in the print media was correlated with adult quitting behaviour but not adolescent initiation behaviour reflecting the age of consumers of print media. This study suggests that a high emphasis should be given to the role of news media in encouraging adults to change their behaviour for health reasons. (Pierce, 2001)

Research work done by Viwe Ndzamela on ‘Representations of women in women’s magazines’ found that the media, particularly women’s magazines, provide
images that advise and instruct women on how to be a perfect mother, lover and glamorous accessory. These women’s magazines have not only been criticized for misrepresenting women but also condemned for their failure to represent women in a positive light although they claim to target women as their market. The research assessed and analyzed representations of women in selected women’s magazines. The study was a combination of qualitative as well as quantitative analysis. From qualitative point of view it focused on frequency and the manner in which women are represented, while in qualitative interpretation it analyzed women’s roles within those representations. The research focused on the social construction and cultural representation of women in terms of whether they are represented as glamorous sex objects or independent women who are in control of their sexuality. Sampling technique and a combination of quantitative content and in-depth textual analysis, using semiotic methods was used to found out the results. Sampling was used as a technique in the selection and narrowing of the type of content to be analyzed. Purposive or judgmental sampling was used in the study. Thirty-six magazines were selected from a universe of seventy-two. Semiotics was used as a basic tool in analyzing content. The outcome of the study was with conclusions on the basis of Feature articles, Advertisements and Theoretical level. In features, women were seen as independent and in control of their sexuality. Women are portrayed as sex objects in that most advertisements. They are used as a symbol of beauty. Magazines as a form of popular culture do not simply impose their content on readers, they deal with issues that their target market can relate to, interests them and identify themselves with. The study found similarities as well as differences in the representations of women between features and advertisements. Advertisements mainly use pictures and sometimes minimal text. Cosmetic products such as perfumes use women a lot as sex objects and as means to an end for advertising. The impression that they give most of the time is that of fulfilling male sexual fantasy. The woman puts on a nice smelling perfume to attract a man. The pictures used in such advertisements are often of bedroom scenes and the woman is often shown in a seductive mood. However, there are advertisements that are mainly on how the woman can improve herself for her own happiness. Body and facial skin products are a good example. On the other hand features make use of text more than pictures. They represent the woman as capable because they are mainly a guide to the woman’s fantasy. They give the woman the
liberty to live their fantasies. However, commercially, advertisements and features share a similarity in that they both sell something although features are not as direct as advertisements. The feature sells the lifestyle because at the end of the day in order for the woman to live as suggested in the feature, they have to buy products that will help her achieve that. (Ndzamela, 2002)

A report on ‘Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues’ prepared by Saurav Kiran Shrestha found that media covers issues of children massively on the occasions like Children' Day, Polio, Vitamin 'A', Education Day, SLC. The report was primarily based on the documented newspaper clippings of the first three months of Nepali Calendar that is Baisakh to Ashar 2059 (April 14- July 13, 2002). Eight national daily newspapers were taken for the study. They were: Kantipur (Nepali), Samacharpatra (Nepali), Rajdhani Dainik (Nepali), Gorkhapatra (Nepali), The Kathmandu Post (English), The Himalayan Times (English), Space Time (Nepali) and Himalaya Times (Nepali). The general objective of the study was to analyze the coverage of children issue in the print media and to find out the way of the information flow about children. The report was based on the collection of the news, news features/analysis, news/articles. The study found that both the organizational activities and the education issues were covered by all newspapers. "Organizational Activities" was the first coverage of all newspapers except Space Time and Himalayan Times. The issue of education is first coverage of these two newspapers. In reference to the frequency of all newspapers, Education’ followed the second most covered issue. Five newspapers gave it the second coverage whereas it was on the fourth category. The study also showed that the issue on "Health" stands in fourth position in reference to the frequency of the news/articles published in all the papers. The study found health issues in fourth coverage of 3 out of 8 newspapers. They were Rajdhani Dainik, Gorkhapatra and The Kathmandu Post. It was also revealed that issues like drug abuse, birth registration, children creativity and child trafficking are overlooked issue of all the eight newspapers. Findings showed that the newspapers have a good coverage on children's issues. However, there is a contradiction in the study. The discussion on the findings proved the fact that the driving force for the coverage of most of the issues on children is due to the different organizational activities. The overlooked issues may be the reciprocal result of this lack of investigative journalism in the publication. The other reason may be the lack of enough organizational
activities for the children and exposure. Besides some overlooked issues of children
the study shows the positive and fundamental importance of children and
development in the print media. Overall it was concluded that the newspapers are
doing good work in publishing and disseminating news/articles related to children
issues increasing the civic knowledge. (Shrestha, 2002)

Uma Joshi, Anjali Pahad and Avani Maniar’s paper “Images of Women in
Print Media- A Research Inquiry” focused on the status of women Journalists and
scope of entry of women in journalism. The authors noted that from a situation when
the media was considered to be no place for a woman, times have changed to more
and more women joining the fourth estate. However, at the same time they lamented
that the Indian women as portrayed in the print media are still not without its set of
cultural biases. Further they suggested that to eliminate gender biases Women in
media are to make sure that woman, as subjects of analysis are not presented as the
subordinate sex (Joshi et al, 2006).

Garima Goswami, Deepali Dhawan and Archana Raj Singh came up with the
findings in their study, ‘Content analysis of women’s issues in newspapers’. They
analyzed two Hindi newspapers (Rajasthan Patrika and Dainik Bhaskar). They
identified nine issues related to women (Role of women in home and work area,
Empowerment issues, Successes and achievements of women, Portrayal of women in
advertisements, Career issues, Crime against women, Sexual harassment, Work
exploitation issues and Divorce / Married women’s exploitation issues) and analyzed
their coverage in selected newspapers for the period of one month (1st May 2005 to
30th May 2005). The content was analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The
study reveals that women’s issues generally get space in local pages rather than on
national or international pages of newspapers. These issues are also rarely published
on the front pages. As far as coverage of specific issue is concerned, their results
further indicated that ‘Crime against women’ got more space as compared to other
issues in both the newspapers. Meanwhile, the authors suggested that the newspapers
should give special attention towards covering women’s achievements and career
opportunities related issues rather than merely concentrating on crime against women
(Goswami et al, 2010).

The study conducted by Vandana Nautiyal and Jitendra Dabral on ‘Women
issues in newspapers of Uttarakhand’ focused on the coverage given by newspapers
regarding women’s issues. Two newspapers, ‘Amar Ujala’ and ‘Dainik Jagran’ were chosen for study. They analyzed the coverage given to women’s issues like equality, health, education, sexual harassment, violence, police atrocities and crime against women in newspapers during 2006. Starting from 1 January 2006 every fifth issue of the daily was selected and analyzed throughout the whole year i.e. till December 2006. They focussed separately on all kinds of printed material related to these issues as articles, news stories, analysis, editorials, letter to editor, column etc. They found that developmental issues are rarely found in the newspaper content. Most of the time, most of the stories found in the newspapers are related to sexual harassment of women. Overall women’s issues got not more than one percent space in the newspapers. Newspapers generally try to portray glamorous image of women. Stories related to women’s health, education, status/equality, violence/crime and police atrocities were found to be less in comparison with sexual harassment of women. Although women’s issues are found in the content of both the Hindi newspapers in form of news items but these issues didn’t get adequate attention in Analytical stories, Editorials, Columns and Articles (Nautiyal et al, 2012).

It was revealed in the study done by Nguyen Thi Thu Ha on ‘Gender Ideologies in Vietnamese Print Media’ that despite a very positive representation of Vietnamese women, gender inequality is discursively reconstructed by the media. The study aims to investigate gender (in) equality in a more comprehensive way by looking at both the public and domestic spheres to argue that gender equality in either sphere does not necessarily entail gender equality in the other. Turning to the context of Vietnam as an advanced Asian country in terms of promoting gender equality, the study was concerned with what is the quality of that equality? Nguyen Thi Thu Ha explores the gender representations in a number of Vietnamese media articles published on and related to International Women’s Day - March 8, 2010 to find out the gender ideologies that prevail. Adopting a feminist critical discourse analysis perspective the study draws on a systemic functional framework for multimodal text analysis. Taking a feminist CDA perspective the study focused on the representations of Vietnamese women in the print media to find out the social expectations on them in both the public and domestic spheres. The research was carried out using various approaches and methods such as sociolinguistics and ethnography, corpus linguistics, conversation analysis (CA), discursive psychology, CDA, and feminist post-
structuralist discourse analysis. The study was a critical discourse analysis of gender inequality; hence, it attempted to raise people’s awareness of the underlying cause of gender inequality in the Vietnam society. The study found that besides the glorification of women’s roles in the public domain and their equal status in the society in liberal terms, traditional Confucian expectations of them in the domestic domain still persist. The ever-rising social responsibilities and the ‘monolithic’ traditional roles of Vietnamese women together pose an unfair challenge for Vietnamese women. (Nguyen, 2012).

Lakshmi Mishra in her book ‘Women’s issues: An Indian Perspective’ opined that it is necessary that people in general be made aware of the reality in respect of the lower position of women in society. It is based different women’s issues namely women in family and society, access of girls and women to education, impact of science and technology on women, women and politics, image and role of women in Hindi drama and theater, women development role of media, women and work and work and her identity, role of voluntary organizations on women’s development, national women’s information centre and the programmes of Government of India for women’s development. The study highlighted that the main reason for women’s ill treatment in the society can be seen in their lack of access to education, exploitation at workplace, and stereotyped portrayal by the media. Need for acknowledging the contribution of women in literature, music and fine arts along is emphasized. The role of voluntary organization and the establishment of a national Information Centre is necessary for the integrated development of women. (Mishra, 1992)

Missing: Half the Story (Journalism as if Gender matters) edited by Kalpana Sharma (2010) is a collection of gender sensitive writings in journalism by media leaders, working journalists and students of media studies. The study is divided into three parts mentioning the issues like women’s movements and the battle of sexes and the growing gender sensitivity. It was observed that there was not much focus on gender in curriculum of Journalism and media studies. Through articles written with Gender perspective in the work it was explained how gender sensitive journalism can contribute in construction of a healthy environment for women. The study dealt with articles that deal with the conceptual framework for addressing various issues such as violence and conflict, health and sanitation, sports, business, politics, economics and environment. Gender, as the book says, has been ‘mainstreamed’ with remarkable
success over the last few decades. From being a little used word — and then used mostly with reference to objects in certain languages, such as French, or Hindi — it has taken over much of public discourse, forced changes in public policy and become a separate field of study and research in universities.

This collection of essays looked more closely at some of the political and social developments in India through the prism of gender and the way in which media has reacted to news about women. This is an important exercise, of course, because media is often discriminatory not only in its language but also in what it considers ‘newsworthy’. However, there seems to be a slight disconnect between what the book seeks to do and the way it is structured. The opening essay began with suicide, and one naturally assumes that it is going to critique the way in which media covers suicides, particularly of women. But it discussed women in general — their status at the beginning of human society, and how patriarchy became the oppressive force through which all aspects of women’s lives are controlled. The next essay critiqued narrow definitions of gender, starting with athlete Cater Semenya’s ordeal, and closer home, Santhi Soundarajan’s suicide attempt after she failed a gender test. The third essay went back to discussing women’s movements, from Sappho to the Therigatha nuns to modern feminist organisations like Stree Sangathan. Their struggles against dowry are discussed, as well as recent successes like the Domestic Violence Act. The fourth essay listed some common gender insensitive phrases used by the media and suggested alternatives. Naturally, one is led to believe that this is basically a book targeted at journalists and media students. The rest of the essays all dealt more specifically with the way Indian media responded to any given women’s issue. Sameera Khan’s essay on violence against women and the way mainstream newspapers have been reporting it is insightful and put together with examples, so that she does not seem to be talking only of concepts but also something that involves the current crop of journalists much more directly. This book touched on issues journalists must look at as they go about documenting our world, and points at ways to right the gender imbalance in media coverage. (Sharma, 2010)

Siuli Jana and Sanghamitra Lahiri in their study ‘Women Issues: Political and Economic Perspectives’ (2012), is an attempt to create a diffusion of awareness about women’s status. The study reveals that not much has changed for women since independence and there is a wide gap between the set targets and achievements. This
trend also prevails globally that women’s own lack of political will, lack of public responses and lack of women’s own awareness has contributed to their inadequate development.

This study focused on the political and economic dimensions of women’s issues. Along with explaining the basic concepts of gender inequality and gender empowerment, the significance of women’s studies as an academic discipline is discussed. The book contains 13 chapters in total out of which four deals with the status of Indian women in politics while six discusses the economic status of Indian women with a different perspective. In-depth study of the Indian women’s movement is also made in one of the chapters.

Other issues discussed in the study are the basic concepts like gender and society, women in ancient India and suffrage movements in the USA and UK. It has a separate chapter on the United Nations and women’s issues which discusses human rights and violence in women’s contexts, UN conferences and the Millennium Development goals. Jana and Lahiri further discuss the politics in South Asia focusing on women in local government in India and women’s reservation bill. Concepts and strategies of economic development are discussed in the next section of the study where effects of globalization and policies and programmes for women’s development in India are examined. The last section of the book explores the problem of women workers and women’s movements.

This work provides a holistic picture of constrains faced by women in India when it comes to their economic and political empowerment. Jana and Lahiri conclude that sensitizing politicians, economic policy makers, judges and above all the society is needed to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women. (Jana et al, 2012)

In a study entitled 'Women in Indian Society' (2001), Neera Desai and Usha Thakkar have come up with a cohesive picture of the changing perceptions of the status and role of women in Indian society. Interesting observations are made on the challenges during the process like the ever-growing volume of material on women and the current and crosscurrents of events. With their work Desai and Thakkar have attempted to trace Indian women’s journey towards gender equality in the fast changing politico- economic backgrounds. The study tries to explain the unanswered
causes of gender discrimination and gender injustice and at the same time looks into the issues confronting women in their march towards de facto equality.

The broad theme of the study is exploring the ways in which major social changes have affected the position of women. It highlighting the invisibility of women’s work in family and society and through providing data on women’s participation in different sectors of employment, explores the complex issue of women’s work. Another chapter focuses gender differences and regional differences in women attaining education at various levels. Matriline and patriline patterns of households and contemporary family structures are further discussed for analyzing difference between myth and reality. The study also examines women’s political participation as a voters, candidates and elected members of Parliament. Further the role that law and state can play in the direction of women’s justice and empowerment is discussed in detail.

The addressed readers of the work are not academicians but the general mass anxious to understand women’s status in the society. Therefore, the authors have not attempted to debate on the nature of the women’s movement or of the state or other issues that have been engaging activists and scholars of contemporary women’s studies. Instead attention is drawn onto certain issues affecting women’s lives which if not seriously addressed might negate whatever has been achieved so far by women and humanity. Authors conclude that the journey of the Indian women is a tale of resilience and courage.

National Commission for Women recognizes the significant role of media in spreading awareness, promoting alternatives, empowered images of women, breaking down stereotypes and shaping mindsets. With the purpose to gender sensitization the media, NCW has made several initiatives like setting up of ‘Media Watch Group’ to recommend specific cases that the Commission could take up with the Government and the Press Council of India and conducting study on people’s perception on obscenity and violence on television which was followed by a meeting with editors of newspapers and magazines. In the same direction the Press Institute of India was also commissioned to do a study on the status on women journalists which was a response to the felt need of a separate detailed study on the women in electronic media with so many women entering into it. (Desai et al, 2001)
‘Status of Women Journalists in India’ is the report of the detailed study on the status of women journalists in India, proposed by the then chairperson of the National Commission for Women, Dr Poornima Adwani in 2002. The report was an outcome of the discussions during national conference of women journalists, organized by the Central Social Welfare Board and Women Networks where women journalists spoke of their travails, lack of mobility and basic facilities in most media organizations. A detailed though comprehensive questionnaire in three languages seeking information on a gamut of issues, was prepared through a brain storming session with 20 journalists and member of NCW for this purpose and was distributed to journalists across the country. Six researchers who were well known journalists were appointed to the report.

The study reveals that women in the regional, vernacular press are lagging far behind their colleagues in the English language press. Finding of vast difference in the wages earned by those in English national newspapers and those in the regional media was a shocking fact. The survey also showed the reluctance of several newspapers in employing the women because they would take maternity leave or have to be provided transport after night duty. Sexual harassment at work was also found to be a reality through the survey. It is claimed that this report is not just narrations of facts and figures but an in depth study written in a lucid, readable style. (Adwani, 2002)

‘Feminism in India’ (2004) is an extremely informative collection of research studies edited by Maitrayee Chaudhuri where the material has been selected from a large mass of several decades of feminist writings scattered in journals and books, pamphlets, manifestoes, speeches, and official documents. This is a collection that brings together the writing of prominent Indian academics and activists. It includes debates on feminism in the context of Indian culture, society and politics, and explores its theoretical foundations in India.

The book provides an overview of the conceptual history of the idea of feminism in India. The inevitable association with western feminism, the status of women in colonial and independent India, and the challenges to Indian feminism posed by globalization and the Hindu Right are discussed in different sections of the work. (Chaudhuri, 2004)

A study entitled ‘Women and the Indian print media: Portrayal and Performance’ (1992) was undertaken by Rama Jha explores the portrayal of women
in the Indian press. Jha noted that despite the global and faster outreach of the electronic media, it is the printed world which gets permanently passed on to people’s psyche.

The author further claims that with the declaration on 1975 as International women’s year by the U.N., women’s movement gained strength India and in eighties many educated women started choosing journalism as a profession which was till recently considered a bastion of men. Since then women journalists have become a part of the women’s networking and have been informing the public about the government’s stand on the women’s question. Their important role in helping to ‘reach’ the voice of women to the policy makers is also highlighted in the study.

The study is divided into two parts, first deals with the portrayal of women in print media, while the second discusses the performance and career graph of women journalists. Methodology adopted for the research is personal interviews with about 100 women journalists in four metropolitan cities i.e. Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

Other than the introduction and conclusion there are four interesting chapters in this work. One of which, ‘The martyred Heroines’, deals with the portrayals of women in Indian newspapers; while the other, ‘Setting the perspective right’, discusses how women journalists handle women’s issues. Other two chapters, ‘The hurdle race’ and ‘Sisters in solidarity’, deal with the women journalists’ struggle against cultural biases and women journalists as a part of women’s network respectively. The research highlights the constraints with which the women journalists working in the mainstream newspapers. (Jha, 1992)

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques employed by Nandini Prasad in her work entitled ‘A pressing matter: Women in Press’ (1992). First two chapters discuss the overall status of women in contemporary India and their media status and power in particular. Further a reasonably comprehensive content analysis is made of the facts like the type of items covered, format of coverage, source of coverage, placement and display of coverage, context of coverage, urban/rural breakup, main actresses/actress in the story, slant of coverage and size of coverage etc. Further the extant and kind of coverage given to women namely, coverage to health and nutrition, to public policies of women’s development, to social issues related to women, to legal issues concerning women, sexual harassment at work
place, destitute women and to other women related topics etc are discussed in detail. (Prasad, 1992)

‘Women’s issues are predominantly event-oriented in the press coverage’, is the finding of a research named ‘Women, Democracy and the Media: Cultural and Political Representations in the Indian Press’ (1998), conducted by Sonia Bathla. The impetus of this research lay in feminist political theory which argues that democratic political foundations have been gender biased and suffer from various discrepancies. This is found as preventing the participation of women in the political/public sphere and limit their role as political citizens.

The research stands back from a media centric approach and analyses the media’s coverage to women’s issues within a broader socio-political and political scenario in the India society. The study has adopted a multi-dimensional approach and has taken its reference points from various macro and micro frameworks like culturalist approach, feminist media research, social organization of news, the agenda setting model and the movement media relationship. Content analysis was used to investigate the coverage of women’s news/ issues in the press. Five national English dailies in India namely The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), TOI (Mumbai), The Hindu (Chennai), The Statesman (Calcutta) and The Indian Express (Mumbai) has been analyzed for four different years of significance( 1981, 1985, 1989 and 1993). Apart from usual variables like months, date, day, and page number, the major characteristics noted were type of item, year, author of item, news classification, actors quoted/ referred to, items covered in magazine supplement or mainstream paper and theme/ issues of the item. Semi structured interviews with open ended questions focusing on various dimensions were used to elicit information from journalists and women activists.

The study first contextualizes women in the democratic media and explains the gendered democracy. The manufacturing of the cultural consensus by the coverage of women’s issues in the press is further discussed. Interlocking of media and feminism as the ennui and the antagonism has been highlighted. Sonia sees media in today’s democratic society as a platform and, where various interests can be brought together and claims that in a democratic setup the press ensures the best possible participation of interested parties. It also helps people to choose between real alternatives by providing information on them, encourage debate on issues taken up
by various parties. It is realized that the expectations from this medium has widened with the development of mass society. Because media today is a carrier of public opinion and plays a crucial role in giving voice to people. The research reveals that most of the news stories focused on violence/crime because of the fact that they fit neatly into the media’s reutilization and are easy to obtain from regular sources. (Bathla, 1998)

Graeme Burton remarks in his work ‘Media and Society: Critical Perspective’ (2005) that ‘The media industries are meaning producers’. He explains that it is the power of these meanings, that shapes relationships, exercise influence, models reality, generates behaviors of domination and feelings of subordinations. This study takes a holistic and dynamic view of the relationship between media and society containing a range of views and debates about the media. The study gives a fair view of a range of critical positions while subscribing to a political economic model.

The key issues that the study deals with are deconstruction of media texts, exploring audience relationship with texts, questioning problems with measuring effects of violence, women’s magazines, popular music, advertisements and its relationship with the media audience, and television soaps etc. Other issues discussed in the work are effects, implications and consumption of technology in media, relationship of media with sports and effects of globalization on media.

The study starts with comments about critical perspectives on media institutions, with a political economy perspective on the relationship between media and society. It then examines media texts in general with emphasis on deconstruction in order to tease out meanings. Following chapter looks at people as audience for texts and for media. The work also explores narratives, representations, realism and genres. The idea is to get the readers thinking and make them ask their own questions on the represented fair range of established views in the text. Need for investigating how changes in the array of forces that exercise control over cultural production and distribution limit or liberate the public sphere, is emphasized in the research. It is suggested that two issues need direct attention; first the pattern of such institutions and second the nature of the relationship between state regulations and communication institutions. (Burton, 2005)

Elizabeth M. Perse made a study on how to control, enhance or mitigate the impact of the mass media on individuals and society in his book entitled ‘Media
Effects and Society’ (2001). Parse’s study is based on the assumption that the mass media do have effects and it is an agent to a variety of shifts and changes in people and institutions. Study claims that new media forms and content often serve as stimuli to violence.

Chapters in this text are not just comprehensive summaries of various areas of media effects, instead the synthesis of different theories intends to increase reader’s understanding of the process of media effects and stimulate their interest in new and creative approaches to research on media effects. Each chapter presents a theoretical explanation to guide the analysis of media effects and provide the explanation for understanding how those effects come about.

First chapter presents reasons for the importance of the study by providing an overview of the study of media effects. Elizabeth discusses a brief history of the ‘received view’ of the study of media effects further and provides simplified explanations of the process of media effects through four models of media effects namely Direct effects, Conditional effects, Cumulative effects and Cognitive-Transactional effects. Chapter three discusses media effects in critical times of crisis in the society while media effects on public opinion, is discussed in the chapter four. Next two broad chapters in the text focus on learning from the mass media and cover the socialization effects of mass media. The study through this focus on the acquisition of the stereotypical schemes and the social learning of inappropriate and/or unhealthy behaviors.

Perse organized theories in the research into those that provide primarily cognitive explanations, those with psychological explanations based on audience arousal reactions and those that hold that media violence is not the cause of aggressive behavior. Further the study includes discussion of some of the controversies that surround this area of research, because they illuminate some of the larger issues in studying media effects. It is clear through this research that the study of media research will be ongoing with the development and extention of the new media technologies. The study very well explains how the four models of media effects can be applied to new areas of study. (Perse, 2001)

Uma Singh through her interesting work ‘New Women and Mass Media’ (2001) seeks to examine men and women’s perception of the new woman. The research explores the attitude of the society towards the liberated women, perception
of media portrayal of women and the consequent changes in the socio-cultural imagining of woman vis-a-vis media personnel’s perception and presentation of women.

The research makes it apparent that if the status of women is to register any improvement, the channels of communication make all the difference. It claims that if it is the media which is responsible for the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes, it is again the media which propels the women’s movement forward. Uma has put through the microscopic scrutiny a subject of current interest and of great relevance.

The study is one of its kind as the earlier studies done on media portrayal of woman were undertaken focusing on one or two of the mass media whereas this study focuses on four major mass media viz. press, television, radio, and short films/quickies. Singh’s main finding of the work is that there is a medium level of perception of the new woman and the attitude towards the liberated woman is highly positive. She stresses that this perception and attitude are greatly influenced by both personal and communication variables and mass media exposure.

Uma makes some startling revelations in her study of correlation between age and education and awareness. The study makes some valuable suggestions like she asks that instead of portraying feminism as a sectarian ideology, attempts should be made to protest against role models of men and women by feminists. Study suggests that stereotypes often lead to unconscious discrimination and to mental depression that eventually causes suicides and deaths of innocent women. This further ends up perpetrating wrong that are justified on the grounds of gender of the individual. (Singh, 2001)

‘Women’s coverage can be summed up as a series of hits and misses’ is a statement made by Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sharma in their study entitled ‘Whose News: The Media and Women’s Issues’, (1994). Joseph and Sharma made a detailed and systematic study of the portrayal of women in and the coverage of issues of special concern to women as an outcome of their engagement with women’s groups. The study seeks to enhance the understanding of the media’s perception and presentation of women’s issues.

Two major media – the press, in English as well as in four regional languages and television was focused for this research work. The researchers examined in detail the coverage given by a cross section of newspapers and magazine to five women’s
issues that attracted media attention over a period of about 10 years. In this process, some insights into press responses to the different campaigns launched by women’s movement during this period were also gained.

The Study is divided into two parts. Part I gives background and context of the study and is further divided into two sections. Section A of part I on daily newspapers; deals with issues of dowry deaths, rape, the Shah Bano controversy, sex selection and the Roop Kanwar Tragedy while the Section B of this part discusses news magazines and women’s magazines separately. Part II of the book is on the language press which explores the coverage of women’s issues in the Hindi press, the Tamil press, the Bengali press and the Gujarati press in detail. The later section includes updates on the present situation vis-à-vis women’s magazines and to what is referred as ‘general interest magazines’. Joseph stresses that we still have miles to go before gender equality becomes a reality in and through media. She asserts that in the present scenario the question ‘Whose News?’ remains critical and demands an urgent answer. (Joseph et al, 1994)

‘Women and Journalism’ by Deborah Chambers, Linda Steina and Carole Fleming (2004) offers a comprehensive analysis of the roles, status and experiences of women journalist in the United States and Britain. Drawing on a variety of Sources, and dealing with a host of women century primers to Pamla Zahn and Kate Achi the authors investigate the challenges women have faced in their struggle to establish their reputations as professionals, with a particular focus on news journalism. The book provides an account of the gendered Structuring of journalism in print, radio and Television and speculate about women’s role in the new sector of online journalism comparing women’s advancement in journalism in United States and Britain. Further, it identifies a number of key differences and they showed continents that operate against women’s progression in journalism in both countries. The authors argue that a gendered organization of newsroom culture means that women are marginal in field of “serious that compact to male colleagues women journalists are often considered open to criticism on their sex lives, parental status and appearance from audiences and management alike. The book examines the strategies women have adopted to gain power in a male dominated media environment by charting women’s independent press, radio, television and Internet initiatives in the Unites States and Britain: From the suffrage press to spare Rib in the UK from the abolitionist
campaigners to off our Backs and Ms Magazine in US, and from women’s community radio, television news programs to women’s Internet newsgroups in both countries. In stark contrast to the accent on women’s rights in alternative news media, however, mainstream women journalists are Central to the recent rise of a style of journalism distinguished by an emphasis on confessional Therapy News and market-led post feminism. The authors conclude by addressing women’s contribution to public discourse and their potential future role in the age of interactive news media and ask whether the concept of the “public sphere” is relevant to women in journalism (Chambers et al, 2004).

‘Women and Media: A critical Introduction’ by Carolyn M. Byerly and Karan Ross is a thoughtful cross-cultural examination of ways in which women have worked inside and outside mainstream media organizations since in 1970. The book provides an overview of the key issues and developments in feminist media critiques and interventions over the last 30 years. The authors recount and analyze the first hand narrative of nearly 100 women media activists whose work has contributed to the making of a feminist public sphere that has moved women leaders and agendas more forcefully into their societies. This highly original empirical base and the Model of women’s Media Action that the authors developed from it, provides a unique account of women’s struggles to improve, create and otherwise employ media in pushing for social change. They argued that news and feature articles about women’s experiences have increased in range and scope over the past three decades. However, there is a worrying trend in the commodification of women’s bodies where they are being reduced to less than the sum of their body parts. (Byerly et al, 2006).

‘Gender Setting: New agenda for Media Monitoring and Advocacy’ by Margaret Gallagher (2001) argues that despite the breakdown of traditional patterns of regulation there is a role for local action to promote diversity in the Media. Focusing on the media portrayal of gender, more particularly the media’s role in reproducing and reinforcing patterns of discrimination against women in society, the book aims to unify the hitherto disparate strands of academic research and feminist activism in the form of gender media monitoring aimed at policy critique and practical change. Research findings and monitoring experiences from North and the South are brought together to demonstrate how with varying level of resources and expertise, women groups have developed monitoring models, that can be effective in widely different
media content drawn from countries as diverse as Canada, India, Spain, Jamaica, Australia and South Africa. These approaches have lessons for everyone concerned about media democracy and diversity in the new information age (Gallagher et al, 2001).

‘Women, Media and Politics’ by Pippa, Norris (1997) is one of the primary fault lines running through the contemporary American Politics. The political agenda has become deeply polarized by such issues as affirmative action, abortion right and welfare reform. In short, gender politics, once regarded as marginal has emerged as one of the core dividing lines in identifying politicians, parties, issues and the voters in America. Not surprising the way media loves gender politics has long been a matter of contention. The issue at the heart of this book is whether as critics suggest media coverage of women in America reinforces rather than the dominant culture, Thereby contributing towards women’s marginalization in public sphere. This collection of original essays by twenty one top academics and journalists is the first book to systematically examine the impact of the media on women’s power America. It focuses on how the role of American Women as citizens, political leaders and feminist activists has been influenced by media for better or worse in recent decades. Using multi-method approaches involving survey, content analysis, focus groups interviews and personal experience, the author analyzed the role of women as journalists. (Norris et al, 1997).

‘Delights, Desires and Dilemmas: Essays on Women and the Media’ by Ann C. Hall (1998) cover a wide range of subjects, from advertisements for women’s stockings to the life and death of Princess Diana, the Question of the representation of women in the media has been an important one for feminists over the past three decades. The diverse collection of essays represents three major trends in feminist media studies: the liberal feminist perspective, which focuses on the media’s tendency to misrepresent and oppress women; the post modern perspective, which illustrates the ways in which women can participate in, enjoy, and sometimes subvert the dominant media; and the more recent attempts to identify and challenge the subtle backlash that threatens to obligate feminist gains (Hall, 1998).
2.2: Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To measure space allocated to women’s issues in the mainstream Urdu, Hindi and English newspapers in the country.
- To ascertain the importance given to women’s issues in their front page coverage in the newspapers under study.
- To find out the source of news related to women’s issues in the newspapers under study.
- To find out the allocation of space to different categories of women’s issues.
- To make a comparative assessment on the coverage of women’s issues in the Hindi, Urdu and English and newspapers both quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

2.3: Hypotheses of the Study

H1: Mainstream English daily provides more coverage to women’s issues than Hindi and Urdu dailies.

H2: Maximum coverage to women’s issues is given in the form of news stories.

H3: Because of their sensational nature events/issues related to rape and sexual violence gets more coverage in all newspapers.

H4: Women’s issues are generally covered by male reporters from male perspective.

H5: Newspapers give maximum space to sensational stories related to women.

H6: While representing women’s issues, journalists adopt sensational frame.

2.4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Media texts are objects produced with the explicit example of engaging an audience. These texts comprise a torrent of materials and produce a flood of meanings. Media texts tell stories; they have a narrative. Narratives are about storytelling and story meaning. The analysis of texts is a process of deconstruction
that investigates the operations of texts, their constructions, the way they produce the meanings, what those meanings may be. The idea of representation is central to understanding the production of meaning through texts. (Burton, 2009).

There is difference between believing that media have long-term attitudinal effects on their audience, and setting this up as a hypothesis to be proven. And further, that given audiences are not society as a whole. Nor are individuals who may be influenced separate from the audience as a whole. This depends on assumptions about how one defines women’s issues in a given medium, how one categorizes types of women’s issues and then how one measures incidents - by number, for example, or by times space given to them. Therefore content analysis method was adopted to carry out the study in order to track down the coverage of women’s issues in English, Hindi and Urdu newspapers. Content analysis is a specific research approach used frequently in all areas of the media. The method is popular with mass media researchers because it provides an efficient way to investigate the content of the media such as the number and types of news items in the print media.

In 1952, Bernard Berelson published Content Analysis in Communication Research, which signaled that the technique had gained recognition as a tool for communication scholars. Since that time, the method has achieved wide popularity. In 1968, Tann Erbium and Greenberg reported that content analysis of "newspapers, was the largest single category of master's theses "in mass communication. Recent concern over the portrayal of violence on television and the treatment of women and minority groups in both print and television has further popularized the content analysis technique among mass media researchers.

Many definitions of content analysis exist; Walizer and Wienir (1978) have defined it as any systematic procedure which is devised to examine the content of recorded information. Krippendorf (1980) defined it as a research technique for making replicable and valid references from data to their context. Kerlinger's (1973) definition is fairly typical: content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

Kerlinger's definition involves three concepts that require elaboration. First, content analysis is systematic. This means that the choice of the content to be analyzed is made according to explicit and consistently applied rules: sample
selection must follow proper procedures, and each item must have an equal chance of being included in the analysis. It also means that the evaluation process must be systematic: all content under consideration is to be treated in exactly the same manner. There must be uniformity in the coding and analysis procedures, as well as in the length of time coders are exposed to the material. Systematic evaluation simply means that one and only one set of guidelines for evaluation is used throughout the study. Alternating procedures in an analysis is a sure way to confound the results.

Second, content analysis is objective. That is, the personal idiosyncrasies and biases of the investigator should not enter into the findings; the results of an analysis should be the same if replicated by another researcher. Operational definitions and rules for classification of variables should be explicit and comprehensive enough that other researchers who repeat the process will arrive at the same decisions. Unless a clear set of criteria and procedures are established that fully explain the sampling and categorization methods, the researcher does not, meet the requirement of objectivity, and the reliability of the results may be called into question. It should be noted, however, that perfect objectivity is seldom achieved in a content analysis. The specification of the unit of analysis and the precise make-up and definition of relevant categories are areas where individual researchers must exercise some subjective choice.

Third/content analysis is quantitative. The goal of content analysis is the accurate representation of a body of messages. Quantification is important in fulfilling that objective, since it aids researchers in the quest for precision. Additionally, quantification allows researchers to summarize results and report them with greater parsimony. Lastly, quantification gives researchers additional statistical tools to use that can aid in interpretation and analysis.

Over the past few years, the symbols and messages contained in the mass media have become increasingly popular research topics in both the academic and the private sector. Public relations firms use content analysis to monitor the subject matter of company publications, and some labor unions have recently begun performing content analyses of the mass media in order to examine their image. Content analysis in the mass media often makes use of medium variables, those aspects of content that are unique to the medium under consideration.
Three mainstream dailies (one from each language) of India selected for the study were- TOI, DJ and RRS from January 2005 to December 2010. The content analysis takes frequency of occurrence into account and it results in quantifying the data, which also paves the way for sound judgment. It makes it clear that the greater frequency means the greater significance. Therefore the present study has attempted to analyze the frequency of appearance of news items for drawing conclusion on this count. The study under investigation was started from January 01, 2005 to December 31, 2010 for examining the issues of women in the mainstream English, Hindi and Urdu dailies of India. The year 2005 was taken because The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act was passed in the same year. The issues related to women appeared in newspapers from 2005 to 2010 were taken for study. For the purpose of analysis, the researcher has employed systematic random sampling method. Systematic random sampling is a type of probability sampling technique. With the systematic random sample, there is an equal chance of selecting each unit from within the population when creating the sample. The systematic sample is a variation on the simple random sample. Rather than referring to random number tables to select the cases that will be included in the sample, the researcher selects units directly from the sample frame. Occasionally, selecting sample units at random can introduce logistical challenges that preclude collecting data efficiently. If the chance of introducing a bias is low or if ideal dispersion of sample units in the population is a higher priority that a strictly random sample, then it might be appropriate to choose samples non-randomly. Like simple random sampling, systematic sampling is a type of probability sampling where each element in the population has a known and equal probability of being selected. The probabilistic framework is maintained through selection of one or more random starting points. Although sometimes more convenient, systematic sampling provides less protection against introducing biases in the sample compared to random sampling. Estimators for systematic sampling and simple random sampling are identical; only the method of sample selected differs. Therefore, systematic sampling is used to simplify the process of selecting a sample or to ensure ideal dispersion of sample units throughout the population.

First sample was taken as the newspapers published on January 01, 2005. Following the random sampling method, the newspapers published after every seven
days were taken from each language. For example on January 01, 2005 there was Saturday. So the next newspaper was from next week’s Sunday flowing the next weeks’ Monday and so on. The sample constituted of 275 newspaper copies from each language. There were a total of 825 newspaper copies taken into account for the purpose of the study.

**Unit of Analysis:** The unit of analysis here referred to the actual thing counted when coding which were tested based on prominence, frequency of reports, quality of reports, tone of reports and source of reports. Frequency is determined by the degree of the coverage of women’s issues. Prominence is determined by the placement of each item on women’s issues on different pages of the newspapers. Front page appearance signifies that the news stories are the most important for that day while those that appear on the back page are regarded as semi important. The inside story pages are counted as least important stories and they usually appear from 2nd page to the last page before the back page. The source of a report can be identified which refers to sources of newspaper’s own reporters/ correspondents or news agencies. They could also be identified with a by-line or unidentified which implies that the stories were written without a by-line. The unit of analysis was a story/ item that referred to women’s issues. A coding sheet was prepared with content categories and units of analysis. The data were entered into the coding sheet for each story/ item.

**Content Categories:** These are categorised as Articles, Special Stores News Stories, editorials, Letters to Editor, Ear Panel Photos, feature Stories, Reports, Interviews, Cartoons, Photo Captions, opinions, and News Stories

**Prominence:** News media 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. The agenda setting influence of the news media not necessarily restricted to grabbing the audience attention towards a specific issue, it also develops public understanding and perspective on a specific direction. The importance given to a particular event/issue depends on its appearance in the front page, inside page or back page are measured and analysed.

**Frequency of Coverage:** The number of times issues related to women are appeared in different newspapers under study has been measured.

**Sources:** Newspapers’ own reporters/correspondents, by-lined and unidentified
Categorization of Women’s Issues: Our perception and understanding about the world to a large extent determined by the mass media. As a result the issues to which media projects as important will become issues of importance for the people. In order to assess the importance given by newspapers to different issues, the researcher has categorized the women’s issues as follows: divorce, dowry death, female infanticide, female foeticide, Kidnapping, maintenance, domestic violence, matrimonial dispute, rape, police harassment, property, murder, attempt to murder, sexual harassment, acid attack and miscellaneous. The quantification of the units with respect to these categories is performed by using the methods of enumeration of space allocated, frequency of occurrence and the percentage. The space allocated for each category was measured in column centimetres using a ruler. Square Centimetres is the area equal to a square that is one centimetre on each side used for measuring newspaper space and symbolically represented as cm$^2$.

**Instruments of Data Collection**

The instrument of data collection for the study was the coding sheet which contained the parameters of analysis. Coding sheet is a peculiar instrument in content analysis. Content analysis in respect to this research was designed to compare media content to the real world i.e. coverage of media in issues related to women. This technique is used to obtain data from the manifest content of the newspapers thereby describing communication content. Content analysis was used in this study to determine the direction, prominence and frequency given to stories concerning women’s issues.

**2.5: Agenda Setting Theory of Mass Media**

 Though McCombs and Shaw introduced the agenda-setting theory through their Chapel Hill, North Carolina study in 1972, the genesis of the idea behind this theory goes back to Walter Lippmann’s 1922 book, Public Opinion. According to Lippmann the thought process of the public and the pictures they are drawing in their heads about the outside world largely influenced by the mass media. It is not possible for the general public to have a firsthand experience about world outside there. Here mass media come to their rescue and become a primary source of information. Lippmann had claimed that the media acts as a mediator between people and the outside.
Benard Cohen further expanded the idea of Lippmann. According to him the role of the press not necessarily restricted to dissemination of information. As he noted: “The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling readers what to think about.” (Cohen, 1963). The agenda-setting function of mass media basically based on this idea of Cohen. McCombs and Shaw further expanded Cohen’s theory by presenting their more thorough study. In 1968 they had undertaken a study on the media coverage on presidential campaign and found that the main effect of the news media was to set an agenda. In fact mass media sets the order of importance of current issues as well as sets the terms of reference for the debate on those issues.

Our perception and understanding about the world to a large extent determined by the mass media. As a result the issues to which media projects as important will become issues of importance for the people. Elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent in the public mind. The news media not only disseminates factual information to audiences about different issues but also educates them about how much importance to attach to a specific issue in accordance with the importance given to it by the news media. News media 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. The agenda setting influence of the news media not necessarily restricted to grabbing the audience attention towards a specific issue, it also develops public understanding and perspective on a specific direction.

The media agenda plays an influential role in determining the public agenda. However, Information and cues about object and attribute salience provided by the news media are far from the only determinants of the public agenda. In a democracy, people at large have sufficient wisdom to determine the course of their nation, their state, and their local communities. Hence, the agenda-setting function of the mass media implies a potentially massive influence whose full dimensions and consequences have yet to be investigated and appreciated (Shaw, 1979:101). The salience of objects in the mass media is linked to the formation of opinions by the audience. With the increasing salience of atrocities against women in the news media, for example, more people move away from a neutral position and form an opinion.
about these atrocities. At the same time media sets its agenda only when its audiences perceive their news stories as relevant.

References:


