Findings and Discussion
CHAPTER - V

Findings and Discussion

This study was conducted against the background of the changes in media environment in India, caused by globalisation, liberalization, and advances in new communication technologies, competition among newspapers, television and Internet. These factors have forced the newspaper managements to 'rethink' the traditional practice of media business and philosophy of journalism and started practicing market-driven journalism.

To take on the competition from the television and Internet, while some newspaper houses are launching their own television channels and Internet editions, others are clinching deals with television channels.

This new approach to journalism, which gave rise to redefinition of news values where news of private sphere gets precedence over news of public sphere, packaging is valued over content. Marketing aspects are given importance over editorial matters, pushing the traditionally valued journalist to the background. In fact, managers have replaced editors, and editors
wherever exist, are increasingly devoting more time for managerial issues than editorial matters.

The backgrounds of English language journalists different in several ways: they are more educated, social forward sections compared to language journalists. They are less concerned about social issues than their English counterparts. (?) English language journalists are more feel more insecure than vernacular journalists. with urban background and concerned about.

There is a difference between the English and language journalists, in their assessment on impact of newspapers. English language journalists see less impact on public opinion than language journalists. This may be because of the limited reach of the English newspapers than vernacular papers.

English language journalists feel that the real impact of newspapers on public opinion is less as the reach of English newspapers is less compared to vernacular dailies, they are advertisement -driven than vernacular dailies. English language journalists' emphasis on development role of newspapers is also one of the reasons for their perception of poor impact of newspapers on public opinion than their vernacular counterparts.
To increase circulation, particularly English language dailies are resorting to price wars, resulting in over-dependence on advertising revenue posing a threat to the weaker newspapers. So far this trend to a large extent is confined to English dailies only. For language newspapers, the major source of revenue is still coming from circulation.

These new newspaper management practices, over dependence on advertisement revenue, developments in technologies, government policy decisions like foreign direct investment in print media have raised issues of public importance like future of newspapers and journalism profession, monopoly tendencies, decreasing plurality and cross media ownership.

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

- To find out the social background of journalists,
- To examine the occupational characteristics of the respondents,
- To analyse the attitudes of the respondents towards journalism profession
- To identify determinants of respondents' professional perceptions,
- To explore the respondents' attitudes towards media issues
To compare the differences, if any, between the journalists working in vernacular language press and English language press.

Social background of journalists:

Over 90 per cent of the respondents are males, which shows that journalism is a male dominated profession. The male and female gap is wider among the vernacular journalists than English language journalists.

The median age of the respondents is 33 years, similar to the findings by previous researchers. More than half of the respondents are under 35 years of age, which means, journalism continues be a young profession. Among the language groups, vernacular language journalists are entering the profession at an older age than English language journalists.

Among the respondents, over 80 per cent of the respondents are married. Among language group, 83 per cent of vernacular journalists are married compared to 72 among English language journalists.

Among the married respondents (combined), half of the respondents' spouse work. Among the language journalists, only 32 per cent of vernacular journalists' spouse work as against 41.3 per cent among English language journalists. Thirteen per cent of respondents' (combined) spouse work in
government. An equal percentage i.e. 6 per cent of respondents’ spouse are journalists.

➢ Fifty per cent of the combined respondents are post-graduates. Followed by 38 per cent graduates. Among language categories, 61 per cent of the English language journalists are post-graduates compared to 48 per cent among vernacular journalists. English journalists are better educated than their vernacular counterparts.

Forty per cent of the respondents (combined) studied journalism education. Among the language group, 33 per cent of the vernacular journalists acquired journalism education as against 30 per cent among English language journalists.

➢ Twenty six per cent of the respondents (combined) benefited to some extent by journalism education as against 11 per cent who are benefited to a large extent. Among the language group, 46 per cent of the English language journalists benefited to some extent as against 21 per cent among vernacular journalists. Over 15 per cent of English language journalists are
benefited to a large extent by journalism education. In sum, English language journalists are benefited more by journalism education.

➢ Forty two per cent of the respondents (combined) spent major period of their childhood at village followed by 26 per cent at towns. Half of the vernacular language journalists spent their childhood at village compared to 13 per cent of English language journalists. Forty one per cent of English language journalist spent major period of their school education at district head quarter compared to 11 per cent by vernacular language journalists.

➢ The median salary of the respondents (combined) is rupees 7,500 per month. About 87 per cent of these journalists get monthly salary below 15,000. English language journalists get more salary than vernacular journalists.

➢ Of these two categories, over 90 per cent of vernacular journalists get salary below 15,000 per month whereas 59 per cent of English language journalists fall under this slab.
Sixty six per cent of the respondents (combined) are sub-editor/reporters followed by senior sub-editor/senior reporters. Between language groups, 71.5 per cent sub-editor/reporter cadre compared to 45.7 per cent among English language journalists. English language papers employ more persons at higher level than vernacular newspapers.

Median experience of the respondents (combined) is eight years. Twenty nine per cent of respondents (combined) have experience of six to 10 years and half of them has below ten years experience. Thirty five per cent of English language journalists have experience below five years, compared to 20 per cent among vernacular language journalists. Journalists in English newspapers are staying longer in the profession than vernacular newspaper journalists.

Half of the respondents (combined) worked in one newspaper, followed by 25 per cent in two newspapers. Over half of the vernacular journalists have worked in one newspaper compared to 37 per cent among English language journalists. Among English language journalists over one-third
worked in two newspapers compared to 23 per cent by vernacular language journalists.

> Over 13 per cent of the respondents (combined) left newspapers for better pay followed by promotion (9.2 per cent) and job security (4.9 per cent). There are no difference between English and vernacular language journalists for leaving the organization.

> Only 39.5 per cent of the respondents (combined) have union membership. Between the language groups, 42 per cent vernacular language journalists are union members compared to 28.3 per cent among English language journalists.

> Over 87 per cent of the respondents (combined) are willing to continue in journalism profession. Among the vernacular language journalists, over 86 per cent are willing to continue, compared to 78 per cent among English language journalists.

> Among those who want to leave profession, 11 per cent of the respondents (combined) are willing join television medium, followed by
government. There are no differences between the language groups in respect of next job preference.

➢ Only 14 per cent of the respondents (combined) are willing to permit their children into journalism profession as against 45 per cent opposing. More English language journalists i.e. 17.4 per cent preferring their children to join journalism compared to 13 per cent of vernacular journalists.

➢ There are very few journalists from socially backward sections, as over seventy per cent of the respondents (combined) belong to open category, compared to 23.5 per cent from backward community. Respondents from scheduled caste and tribe communities constitute less than three per cent. Among English language journalists, over 80 per cent are from open category as against 63 per cent among vernacular newspapers. No SC and ST are represented among English language journalists.

➢ Eighty four per cent of the respondents (combined) are Hindus, followed by Muslims 8.4 per cent. Among the vernacular language journalists, 89 per cent are Hindus as against 67 per cent among vernacular
language journalists. Christians constitute 11 per cent among English language journalists as against 8.7 Muslims.

> Over 45 per cent of the respondents (combined) joined journalism to reform society followed by 25 per cent to express views. Salary was important for only 10 per cent of the respondents. When it comes to vernacular language journalists, 48 per cent joined journalism to reform society compared to 39 per cent among English language journalists.

> For 39 per cent of English language journalists, scope to express views was the next important reason to join journalism. With regard to the reasons for taking up journalism, there are some similarities and differences between the two groups.

> Over 27 per cent of the respondents (combined) always get freedom to report on the topic of their choice and 25 per cent rarely get chance to report on topic of their choice. Among the two language groups, English language journalists enjoy more freedom than vernacular language journalists.
Nearly 35 per cent of the respondents (combined) get complete freedom to edit a story as they wished. Between the language groups, vernacular journalists enjoy more freedom in editing a story compared to vernacular language journalists.

Over 82 per cent of the respondents (combined) are very satisfied or satisfied with their present job. Nearly 20 per cent stated that they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their job. Among vernacular language journalists, over 84 per cent are either satisfied or very satisfied with their job compared to 80 per cent of vernacular language journalists. This shows that respondents are fairly satisfied with their job and there are no differences between language groups.

Nearly 30 per cent of the respondents (combined) get satisfaction from writing on matters of significance and from creativity. For vernacular language journalists, writing and editing matters of significance are the greatest source of satisfaction. For the English language journalists, writing matters which make an impact and chance to be creative are two important
sources of satisfaction. Only four per cent rated salary as the important source of satisfaction among combined and language groups.

➢ For respondents (combined) major source of complaint with their job is job insecurity 19.5 per cent followed by salary. Interestingly, 21 per cent of the respondents stated that they have no complaint with their job. For 30.4 per cent of English language journalists, major complaint was job insecurity as against 16 per cent among vernacular journalists. There are significant differences between two groups in this respect.

➢ For about half of the respondents (combined), the present job met their expectations. About 41 per cent of these respondents it was below their expectation. For about 48 per cent of English and vernacular language journalists, the present job was up to their expectation. Half of the English language journalists feel that their present job was below expectation.

➢ Among the respondents (combined) only 24 per cent are under contractual employment. Between the two language groups, 40 per cent of the English language journalists are under contract system against 20 per cent in the case of vernacular journalists.
Among the respondents (combined), 12 per cent feel that contract system creates job insecurity, may result in play-safe attitude (6.6 per cent) and effects objectivity. Between the language groups, English language journalists see job insecurity (13.9 per cent) followed by effect on objectivity and independence and low initiative. There are some similarities and difference between the two groups in this area.

Sixty per cent of respondents (combined) rated morale in their newsroom as very high-to-high and over 16 per cent rated as low. The rating of morale in newsroom by language groups is similar to combined group and there is no difference between them.

Among the respondents (combined), 22 per cent rated their newspaper quality as excellent, 51 per cent good and 22 per cent as fair. Among the English language journalists, 17 per cent rated their newspaper quality as excellent, 61 per cent as good and 13 per cent as fair. Among the vernacular journalists, 24 per cent rated the quality of newspaper as excellent, 48 per cent good and 22 per cent fair.
Nearly 60 per cent of the respondents (combined) justified the use of hidden mike to record secret conversations and 59 per cent of them opposed journalists' claiming themselves to be some body for getting information. Other practices, which the journalists justified are using government documents without permission and paying for information.

Between the language groups, both groups which justified the use of hidden camera and using government documents/letters without permission. The two groups where they disagreed in reporting practices are: 80 per cent of the English language journalists would not approve revealing the source.

Eighty-five per cent of the respondents (combined), rated the function of newspapers to provide information to the public very quickly as extremely important. It was followed by newspaper's function watchdog of the society (78.8 per cent) and concentrating on news, which is of importance to the widest public. More than 55 per cent felt that it is extremely important for the newspapers to analyse events and play development role. When it comes to language groups, for 87 per cent of the vernacular language journalists,
bringing quick information is extremely important compared to 78.3 per cent by English language journalists. On the functions of newspapers, the two groups are similar with respect to functions of analysis, watchdog, entertainment and signaling trends. The areas where they differed are: investigating government claims, development role and discuss government policy.

On the performance of the newspapers’ function, half of the respondents (combined) rated extremely well, the function of brining information to the public very quickly. The next best-rated function is watchdog of the society. The performance of the newspapers rated poorly is providing entertainment and developing intellectual skills. When it comes to language groups, vernacular language journalists rated the quick information function as high, whereas English language journalists rated giving news to the widest possible public. On the performance of newspapers, where the two groups differed are functioning watchdog of society and development role. The areas where the two groups agree on newspapers functions are: analysis, signaling trends and developing intellectual skills.
For the respondents (combined), important challenge faced by journalism is advertiser's influence followed by commercialism and self-censorship among journalists. Between the language groups, vernacular journalists see major threat to journalism from newspapers' commercialism, whereas 30 per cent English language journalists see threat from advertisers.

Half of the respondents (combined) feel that newspaper should have strong influence on public opinion and 44 per cent stated that newspaper should have very strong influence on public opinion. When it comes to language groups, almost equal percentage of English and vernacular journalists feel that newspapers should have strong influence, whereas 46 per cent vernacular language journalists think that newspapers should have very strong influence on public opinion. Among, the English language journalists, 8.7 per cent think that newspapers' influence on public opinion should be poor.

Over sixty per cent of the respondents (combined) think that the real impact of newspaper on public opinion is strong. Between the language
groups, over ninety per cent of vernacular language journalists see the real impact as very strong or strong. Whereas 74 per cent English language journalists see newspapers' real impact as very strong to strong. Interestingly, 21 per cent of English language journalists see actual newspapers impact as poor.

➢ Among the respondents (combined), 77 per cent think that television will become a dominant medium. On the future of newspapers, language newspaper journalists expressed similar views.

➢ Over sixty per cent of the respondents (combined) consider source as important factor in deciding news worthiness. This is followed by readership studies 52.7 per cent per cent and pressure groups 47.3 per cent. Both vernacular and language journalists think on similar lines.

➢ Among the respondents (combined), 38 per cent ranked teacher as an important occupation in society. Politicians were ranked second, civil servants third and journalist fourth in importance. Between the language categories, both vernacular and English language journalists ranked teachers as number one occupation followed by politician. While vernacular
journalists ranked civil servants as third, English language journalists ranked both civil servants and doctors as third.

> Journalists satisfied with their job are likely to perceive morale in their newsroom as high and also rate newspaper quality as excellent. However, respondents satisfied with their job may not stay with the organization.

Discussion

Are the vernacular language journalists different from English journalists. In terms of social background they are different and come from two different worlds. Their educational backgrounds and schooling are different. They are from socially well off families compared to their language counterparts.

Their occupational backgrounds are different. They enter the profession at an early age compared to their vernacular counterparts. Hop jobs less frequently than vernacular journalists.

The source of satisfaction is, to some extent differ for the two groups. High Job insecurity among English journalists may be because of more contractual system prevalent among them. The same is mentioned clearly in response the question on impact of contractual system of employment.
The two groups see the challenges faced by the advertisers' impact. This may be because of the English newspapers over reliance on advertisements. English language journalists are more concerned about their personal benefits like creativity, prestige seems they more concerned about.

The fact that complaint with the present job is salary, means the journalists are not satisfied with regard to salary. It seems that the respondents are not worried about the entry of foreign media to as they seems to have resigned to it. On the whole, it seems that the journalists are more concerned about material benefits, than service.

Regarding the function of newspapers, the surprising result is that they still think that bringing latest news to the reader is extremely important even in this age of television channels.
Suggestions for further study

The following areas are suggested for further studies:

➢ a comparative study can be done by including journalists working in radio, television, internet and newspapers.

➢ a study of psychological profile of journalists can be examined

➢ a study with bigger sample size at national level may be taken up

➢ similar study to compare rural journalists can be attempted

➢ studies on specialized journalists like business reporters or sports reporter may be conducted