CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

5.1 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

This study engages *framing theory* as the theoretical framework for this study. As stated by Bryant and Miron (2004), nowadays, framing theory has taken over from agenda setting and cultivation theory as the most commonly applied research approach in the field of communications science. The most frequently cited definitions of framing theory came from the renounced researcher Entman.

According to Entman, Framing is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described. (Entman 1993)

If we decode the frames constructed by the media, we can infer multiple meanings from the constructed texts. According to Bateson (1972) a frame specifies the relationship between several connected elements in a text. More specifically this relationship can lead to a better understanding of the issue or topic that is covered in the text. Thus, any message contains two elements: firstly, the specific content and secondly, a frame that does something to the manner in which the message is interpreted.
Tankard (2008) also details various news features that commonly convey frames. They are headlines and kickers, subheads, photographs, photo captions, leads, etc.

Wong (2004) has summarized four major dimensions of framing that could be studied for the news. They are 1) presentation of news items (their size and placement); 2) news topic items (or what issues are included in the frame); 3) cognitive attributes (or the specific details of issues included); and 4) effective attributes (tone of the picture).

Additionally, Weaver (2007) has mentioned that frames can be studied by means of systematic content analysis or more interpretive textual analysis alone.

Van Gorp (2007) also ascertained that some researchers opt for a rather qualitative approach in analyzing media frames, such as discourse analysis, while others apply traditional content analysis or other quantitative methods.

In Media studies, frames are considered a part of three interlinked models of priming, framing and agenda-setting. They have been developed in research as approaches to explain the effect of media on all kinds of groups, and vice versa (Scheufele, Tewksbury 2007).

In media-effect studies, a branch of communication sciences, ‘agenda setting’, ‘priming’ and ‘framing’ are differentiated from one another. To understand further Price et al., (1997) observed:

Agenda setting and priming research stipulate that story selection can alter audience judgments by shifting the odds those particular issues will come to mind easily. Consequently, audience estimates of issue importance (in the case of agenda setting) and approval of public actors (in the
case of priming) are affected. Framing research proposes that media messages, by emphasizing some aspects of a problem rather than others, can put people in mind of very different considerations when they contemplate the matter and form opinions about it.

In addition to the aforementioned clarifications, Berelson (1952) defines Quantitative Content Analysis as “a research technique for the systematic, objective, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”.

Similarly Holsti (1968) says that Quantitative Content Analysis is any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages.

Kerlinger (1986) has also defined that content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

5.1.1 Relevance of Framing Theory in Quantitative Content Analysis

Douglas (2003) convincingly argues that the communication studies, functional theory paved the way for several approaches and techniques in modern communication research, including media effects, uses and gratifications, agenda-setting, framing, cultivation theory, and the spiral of silence theory. To be sure, the media and conflict have been studied from the perspective of a variety of mass media theories, including framing theory (Mary S. Mander ed., 1999).

Framing defines how news media coverage can shape mass opinion by using these specific frameworks to help guide their reader to understanding. By examining media framing theory and applying this in an analysis of mainstream and alternative media sources, several developments
appear. These developments highlight how news sources are able to influence public perception.

The framing theory has developed from the need for analyzing possible effects of biased information in mass media. It is presumed that classical public consciousness has given way to a media consciousness in which journalists function as ‘gatekeepers’. The media are the ones who decide which information should be published as news and which should never reach the public. Awareness of the power of the media to interpret issues in the public consciousness leads to competition among various actors to dominate this channel as spokesperson in order to promote their own interpretation. To this end, actors follow rules of the media. (Gerhards et al. 1998)

Framing has also been studied in the communication context, where research has confirmed its importance in defining conflict, interpreting and reinforcing conflict dynamics, and ultimately resolving conflict by bringing divergent frames into alignment through reframing. (Roy J. Lewicki, Barbara Gray & Michael 2003)

5.1.2 Framing: History and Theory in Media and Conflict

Media framing is the way in which information is presented to its audiences.

Goffman (1974) was the first to concentrate on framing as a form of communication and defined “framing” as a “schemata of interpretation” that enables individuals to “locate, perceive, identify and label” occurrences or life experiences.

Entman (1993) modernized this definition by specifying that “to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a ‘perceived reality’ and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a
specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or a treatment recommendation”.

Today, media effects can be characterized as ‘social constructionism’. Mass media constructs social reality by “framing images of reality . . . in a predictable and patterned way” (McQuail, 1994).

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), “Media discourse is part of a process by which individuals construct meaning, and public opinion is part of the process by which journalists . . . develop and crystallize meaning in public discourse”.

By incorporating media framing with agenda setting, priming and bias, Entman (1993) believes that readers can better comprehend how and why framing occurs in the media. “Agenda setting serves as the first function of framing as it defines the problems worthy of government attention.” Priming is “the goal, the intended effect, of strategic actors’ framing activities”. Agenda setting will always occur, even if it is not pervasively biased. However, when paired, agenda setting and priming have the ability to create widespread bias. Bias, as defined by Entman is “consistent patterns in the framing of mediated communication that promote the influence of one side of conflicts over the use of government power”.

Consumer culture has penetrated the business of media through the use of framing, agenda setting, priming and bias, which facilitates its commerce.

Through detailed theoretical discussion the researcher applies the framing theory to meet the research objectives of the study. The news events covered by the media could affect how readers of the news understand the actual events. Mostly, they build their opinion based on how the news story was framed and their own individual frames. In this situation studying the
media, framing is an important variable to consider and along with framing research, the agenda-setting theory of communication research should also be acknowledged by some of the scholars.

Both, the media framing theory and the agenda-setting theory of communication provide an insight to how the media can influence their audience.

To sum up these two theories, De Vreese (2005) summarizes that, “a frame is an emphasis in salience of different aspects of a topic. While agenda-setting theory deals with the salience of issues, framing is concerned with the presentation of issues”. The main purpose of this study was to examine the role of media in the presentation of police lawyer conflict to the readers and framing theory plays an important role in the research.

5.2 NEED AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Media’s role in the coverage of conflict prevention and resolution has come under heavy criticism. The research findings on the conflict studies have unanimously articulated that media reports of conflicts have magnified the conflict, sustained the violence and propagated messages of intolerance. Media of all types have one of the most important roles in promoting and establishing the principle of non-violence in conflict resolution. Media propagates the message and values directly. It creates big impact among people. With the availability of audio-visual, audio media with print media, the importance of media has grown manifold. India is encountering armed, religious, caste, linguistic, ethnic, water, border, communal conflicts etc. Research studies on the role of media in the pre, during, and post conflict situation do not lead to positive findings. Again and again they have reiterated the negative role of media in the conflict situation. Media professionals are not even equipped to handle local violence efficiently and ethically. Most of the times, media reports instigate violence further. Research studies on this
subject are very vital to develop conflict resolution frame work and improve
the standard of the media profession. Limited systematic research work has
been carried out in the field of conflict and regional media. Hence the current
research work has come not a moment too soon.

5.3 CONTENT ANALYSIS

The case study method and the content analysis have been used in
this study. As stated by Tejas Patel in his media conflict resolution research:

The content analysis, due to its application in examining any
piece of writing or occurrence of recorded communication, is
currently used in a vast range of fields, from marketing and
media studies, to literature and rhetoric, ethnography and
cultural studies, sociology and political science and many
other fields of inquiry. (Patel 2003)

Kimberly A. Neuendorf has defined Content Analysis:

Content Analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis
of messages that relies on the scientific method (including
attention to objectivity, inter-subjectivity, a priori design,
reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability and
hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types
of variables that may be measured or the context in which the
messages are created or presented. (Neuendorf 2002)

The researcher has confined the method of research to Quantitative
Content Analysis for this study.

Twenty major factors that are relevant to the objectives of the
study, with sets of variables that influence each of the factors, were identified
by the researcher after the review of the available literature.
The operational framework of the factors and their respective variables is detailed below:

1. **Theme** was classified into five variables according to the idea the story conveys. The variables are ‘general,’ ‘legislation,’ ‘problem,’ ‘demonstration,’ and ‘violence.’

2. **Page Placement** identifies the page of the newspaper in which the story was presented, and it partly reveals the importance attached by the newspaper organization to the conflict news story. The five variables coming under this factor are ‘front page,’ ‘inside page,’ ‘editorial page,’ ‘business page,’ and ‘technology page.’

3. **Positioning** is concerned with the position in which the story is placed in a particular page, which also partly reveals the importance given by the newspaper organization to the conflict news story. The seven variables for the factor ‘positioning’ are ‘top left quarter,’ ‘top right quarter,’ ‘bottom left quarter,’ ‘bottom right quarter,’ ‘right grid,’ ‘left grid’ and ‘center.’

4. **News Label** relates to the page labels in which the stories are placed. This increases or decreases the chances of the story being read. For instance, placement of the story in the editorial page increases the chance of its being read. The variables under this factor are ‘news,’ ‘direct news,’ ‘analysis,’ ‘comments,’ ‘policy/politics,’ ‘editorial,’ and ‘interview.’

5. **Source** is about the source of the story. The six variables identified for this factor are ‘wired service,’ ‘staff reporter,’
6. Geographic Focus relates to the focus of geography provided by the newspapers towards the story. The six variables of this factor are ‘local,’ ‘state,’ ‘regional,’ ‘national,’ ‘international’ and ‘none’ (no geographical focus).

7. Treatment relates to the treatment given or the method adopted to depict the stories. The variables of this factor are ‘general news,’ ‘features,’ ‘commentary/criticism,’ ‘editorial’ and ‘celebrity column.’

8. Constructed frames refer to the frames that the news stories construct in the minds of the readers. This has been identified with the analysis of the story. The variables are ‘anger,’ ‘threat,’ ‘violence,’ ‘peace,’ ‘harmony’ and ‘caste name.’

9. Span identifies the space span provided to the story based on the number of columns. The variables are ‘single-column,’ ‘double-column,’ ‘three-columns,’ ‘four-columns’ and ‘multiple-columns.’

10. Presentation of the Headline identifies the way the headline is presented in the story, which also defines the importance of the news story. The variables are ‘single-line,’ ‘double-line,’ ‘double-decked,’ and ‘multi-decked.’

11. Vocabulary of the Headline identifies qualitatively the vocabulary present in the headline of the story. This reveals the intention behind the story since headline is the face of the
story. The five variables for this factor are ‘educative,’ ‘informative,’ ‘sensational,’ ‘titillating,’ and ‘trivializing.’

12. Tone of the Headline factor identifies the tone or mood provided by the headline for the story. The four variables for this factor are ‘neutral,’ ‘raise the conflict,’ ‘reduce the conflict’ and ‘harmony.’

13. Conflict Frames factor identifies the frames or the common opinion of the conflict provided by the content of the story. Previous item is for the headline and not of the story. The four variables for this factor are ‘neutral,’ ‘raise the conflict,’ ‘reduce the conflict,’ and ‘harmony.’

14. Format relates to the format in which the news story is presented. The variables of the factor are ‘news,’ ‘views,’ ‘interviews,’ ‘letter to the editor,’ ‘investigative,’ ‘feature,’ and ‘column.’

15. Angle arises from the standpoint of the newspaper in presenting the story. The variables identified are ‘educative,’ ‘informative,’ ‘sensational,’ ‘titillating,’ and ‘trivializing.’

16. Attributions relates to the source of news attributed by the newspapers in the news stories. The variables of the factor are ‘government,’ ‘anonymous,’ ‘non-governmental,’ ‘expert opinion,’ ‘studies,’ and ‘reports.’

17. Size relates to the space allocated by the newspapers for the conflict stories including the pictures if any. This is measured in ‘sq.cm.’
18. Graphics and Photographs identifies the incorporation of the Graphic, Photo, Sidebar and Jump pertaining to the conflict news stories. The variables for the factor are ‘graphic,’ ‘photo,’ ‘sidebar,’ and ‘jump.’

19. Size of the Picture relates to the space allocated for the pictures in the conflict stories. This is measured in ‘sq.cm.’

20. Pallet of the Pictures refers to the type of picture associated with the story. The four variables of this factor are ‘color photos,’ ‘black & white photos,’ ‘color cartoon/illustration,’ and ‘black & white cartoon/illustration.’

(Hereafter these variables are referred to as categories.)

5.4 CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF NEWSPAPERS

This study analyzes the contents of the popular ten daily newspapers, having publication from Chennai, which were selected on the basis of their higher readership based on the IRS report and popularity. These ten newspapers were divided into three groups based on their timing and language of publication. Since there is no English evening newspaper available within the ten selected newspapers, they came under only three groups, namely, English morning newspapers, Tamil morning newspapers, and Tamil evening newspapers. The Hindu, The New Indian Express, Deccan Chronicle, and The Times of India, are grouped under English morning newspapers; Daily Thanthi, Dinamalar, Dinakaran and Dinamani are grouped under Tamil morning newspapers; Malaimurasu and Maalaimalar are grouped under Tamil evening newspapers.
5.5 PROFILES OF THE TEN NEWSPAPERS SELECTED FOR THE STUDY

Daily Thanthi was started in Madurai in 1942, with simultaneous editions in Madras, Salem and Tiruchirappalli. It was founded by S.P. Adithanar, a lawyer trained in Britain. He modeled Daily Thanthi on the style of an English tabloid - The Daily Mirror. He aimed to bring out a newspaper that ordinary people would read, and which would encourage reading habit even among the newly literate. In the past, the daily newspaper which was printed in Madras, reached the southern Tamil region after at least one day. Daily Thanthi used the public bus system to distribute the paper throughout the south Tamil region and capitalized on the hunger for war news that arose after Singapore fell to the Japanese. Daily Thanthi became one of the largest Tamil language dailies by circulation within a few years; it has been a leading Tamil daily since the 1960s. Today, it has 15 editions. It is the highest circulated Tamil daily in Bangalore. It issues a book called 10th, +2 Vina Vidai Book, on every Wednesday during the second part of the year. The model question papers of all the subjects of Standard 10 and 12 are provided with answers along with the question papers of board exams that are conducted previous year. Daily Thanthi's circulation during Dec 2012 was 16,14,471 copies (certified by ABC. The current readership figures of Daily Thanthi has reached 73,53,000 as declared by the IRS in 2010. The key person for this newspaper is S. Balasubramania Adithan. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 71,95,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

Deccan Chronicle is an Indian English-language daily newspaper. It is published in Hyderabad, India by Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. The newspaper's name derives from the originating place, the Deccan regions of India. Deccan Chronicle is also published from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. Supplements are "TV Guide", "Sunday
Chronicle”, "Hyderabad Chronicle”, "Chennai Chronicle”, "Bengaluru Chronicle" and "Kerala Chronicle". It also supplies other weekly features like "School Chronicle" and "Teen Chronicle". The newspaper has a total readership of over 10.88 lakhs. The company started its operations in AP as a partnership concern in 1938. The late Tikkavarapu Chandrashekar Reddy took over the operations in 1976 after the earlier promoters declared bankruptcy. Mr. Reddy subsequently handed over the operations to his two sons T Venkattram Reddy and T Vinayak Ravi Reddy, who have been managing its operations since late 1970s. Since May 2004, it started printing the International Herald Tribune in Hyderabad and sold for Rs 30 per copy. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 2,70,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

**Dinakaran** is a Tamil daily newspaper distributed in India. As of March 2010, Dinakaran is the largest Tamil daily newspaper in terms of net paid circulation, which was 12,35,220. In terms of total readership, which was 167,41,000 as of May 2010, it is the second largest. Dinakaran is published from 12 centers in India. Dinakaran was founded in 1977 by K. P. Kandasamy in support of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) when his father-in-law, S. P. Adithanar, chose to support Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam during its split from DMK. In 2005 Dinakaran was acquired from his son K. P. K. Kumaran by Kalanithi Maran's Sun Network. In 2006 May, Dinakaran published the results of a series of opinion polls which showed politician M. K. Stalin having more approval than his elder brother M. K. Azhagiri. The Madurai office of Dinakaran was fire bombed and three employees were killed. This led to the resignation of Central Minister Dayanidhi Maran, brother of Kalanidhi Maran from the Union Cabinet. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 51,41,000 people in Tamil Nadu.
**Dinamalar** is a daily Tamil newspaper in Tirunelveli, Chennai, Trichy, Madurai, Erode and Coimbatore, India. T. V. Ramasubbaiyer (1908-1984) started the newspaper in Trivandrum in year 1951 to voice for the cause of merging of Tamil speaking southern region of India around Kanyakumari district with Madras presidency. In 1956, after merging of this region with Madras, he moved his operations to Tirunelveli. He opened editorial units in Tiruchirapalli in 1966 and Madras in 1979. Dinamalar is local language newspaper of Tamil Nadu. It is distributed in all major locations of Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, it is circulated in Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore, Nagercoil, Trichy, Vellore, Erode, Tirunelveli and Salem. Beside them, it also reaches in major tourist location of India, Pondicherry. Dinamalar has a circulation of over 8,05,961 copies. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 29,83,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

**Dinamani** owned by The New Indian Express Group is a highly read newspaper with a stronghold over Tami news readers in the country. The newspaper was launched in 1933 while the first edition came out a year later. Dinamani is known for its forthright reporting which in turn helps readers in forming a clear perspective on national and international issues. The high readership of the newspaper also attracts advertisers across South India. Dinamani is a prominent newspaper in South India with editions in Chennai, Coimbatore, Bangalore, New Delhi etc. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 5,36,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

**Malaimalar** is a daily evening Tamil newspaper. It is owned by Daily Thanthi group. It was founded by Aditanar in 1977. The key person for this newspaper also is S. Balasubramania Adithan. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 6,06,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

**Malaimurasu** is Tamil evening daily newspaper in Tamil Nadu, India founded by S. P. Adithanar, who also founded Daily Thanthi and many
other publications and the current director is Ramachandran Adithan. Malai Murusu is not reported in IRS 2010q1 or in any other rounds of IRS; but it was selected for this study because of its popularity.

The Hindu is an English-language Indian daily newspaper, headquartered in Chennai. The Hindu was started as a weekly in 1878, and started publishing daily in 1889. According to the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) in 2012, it was the third most widely-read English newspaper in India (after the Times of India and Hindustan Times), with a readership of 2.2 million people. The Hindu has its largest base of circulation in southern India, and is the most widely-read English daily newspaper in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The Hindu had a circulation of 1.46 million copies as of December 2009. The enterprise employed over 1,600 workers and annual turnover reached almost $200 million in 2010. Subscription and advertisement are major sources of income. The Hindu became, in 1995, the first Indian newspaper to offer an online edition. It is printed in 20 locations across eight states. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 11,54,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

The New Indian Express is an Indian English-language broadsheet daily newspaper published by the Express Publications and based in Chennai. It was founded in 1932 as the Indian Express. In 1991 it had split into two separate companies, the northern editions, headquartered in Mumbai, retained and renamed Indian Express as The Indian Express, while the southern editions became The New Indian Express. Today, the two newspapers and the two companies are separate entities. The New Indian Express is now published from all 22 major cities in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Odisha. The New Indian Express has a net paid circulation of 4,35,618 copies. The NIE achieves its
biggest penetration (paid sales per head of population) in the state of Kerala. It also claims to be the first Indian newspaper to give insurance benefits to its subscribers. The New Indian Express is published in a geographical area that covers approximately 24 per cent of the national population. The New Sunday Express (the Sunday edition of the NIE) is arguably the flagship publication, with magazine supplements incorporating both national and international themes and sections on developmental issues, society, politics, literature, arts, cinema, travel, lifestyle, sports, new-age living, self-development and entertainment. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 1,12,000 people in Tamil Nadu.

**The Times of India** (TOI) is an Indian English-language daily newspaper. In 2008, the newspaper reported that with a circulation of over 3.14 million it had been certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulations (India) as the world's largest selling English-language daily, ranking it as the third largest selling newspaper in any language in the world and the largest selling newspaper outside Japan. According to the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) 2012, the Times of India is the most widely read English newspaper in India with a readership of 7.643 million. This ranks the Times of India as the top English daily in India by readership. It is owned and published by Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. which is owned by the Sahu Jain family. The Times of India was founded on 3 November 1838 as *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce* in Bombay. *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce* was launched as a semi-weekly edition by Raobahadur Narayan Dinanath Velkar, a Maharashtrian Reformist and was published on every Wednesday and Saturday. It contained news from Britain and the world, as well as the Indian Subcontinent. The daily editions of the paper were started from 1850. As per IRS 2010q1 results, it enjoys a readership of 2,20,000 people in Tamil Nadu.
5.6 **PERIOD COVERED BY THE STUDY**

The duration of the entire news cycle of the conflict, which ran from 17th February 2009 to 19th December 2009, is the period covered by the study.

5.7 **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

The articles and stories of various forms - news, features, columns, commentaries, editorials, letters to the editor, interviews, and others pertaining to the conflict - became the primary data for the study. The data from the ten dailies during the period covered by the study were collected. In order to meet the objectives of the study, the researcher developed a detailed coding sheet. Since the researcher dealt with twenty parameters with several categories within each parameter, each category is assigned with a numerical value indicating the presence of nominal scale. The researcher also calculated the frequency of each category from the three groups of newspapers, which indicated the presence of ordinal scale. This ordinal scale is useful in calculating the statistical parameters, i.e., mean, SD and t-value. In this research no data is of the category interval or ratio. To analyze how the popular print media have constructed the Police-Lawyer Conflict, the Quantitative Content Analysis has been conducted on the newspaper articles published in the ten newspapers. The researcher appropriately employed simple percentage analysis. Since the data analysis demands the comparison of three groups of newspapers, the researcher used ‘t-test’ pertaining to small samples of ten newspapers. Further the ‘t-test’ would enable the researcher to compare the three groups of newspapers in pairs and this would lead to reach the transcendental depth of comparison of twenty parameters. SPSS software is used for the calculation of ‘t-test.’ Experts’ opinions were also collated through structured questionnaire and used in the discussion part.
5.8 NULL HYPOTHESES

1. The English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers do not vary significantly in the conflict portrayals.

2. The Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers do not vary significantly in the conflict portrayals.

3. The English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers do not vary significantly in the conflict portrayals.

5.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher confined this study to newspapers without taking into account the electronic media. Only the Chennai editions of the ten select newspapers were taken for the study.