CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

7.1 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher presents the factor-wise summary of the crucial findings of this research, obtained through statistical analysis using simple percentage analysis and parametric independent t-test.

7.1.1 Theme

The result of the analyses of the factor, ‘theme’ shows that all the newspapers individually published more number of stories in the category ‘problem’ with an overall share of 41.95% of the published stories in this category, which may result in creating a feeling among the readers that this conflict is a problematic one.

Tamil morning newspapers published more conflict stories in the category ‘general’ than the English morning newspapers and Tamil evening newspapers and in the category ‘Problem’ than the Tamil evening newspapers; the Tamil evening newspapers published more conflict stories in the category ‘Demonstration’ than the English morning newspaper. This is because the four English morning newspapers taken for this research attach more importance to writing the stories, so that the stories would fall in the correct categories.
7.1.2 Page Placement

From the result of the analysis of the factor ‘page placement,’ it is understood that the conflict stories are predominantly placed in the ‘inside page’ by all the newspapers without any exception, having a very high overall percentage of 83.19 share for this category. Only an overall percentage of 14.30 of the stories are placed in the ‘front page’. So it is concluded that the newspapers did not give much importance for this conflict as far as the factor, ‘page placement’ is concerned.

Tamil morning newspapers published more conflict stories in the category ‘inside pages’ than the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers; no significant difference exists, between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.3 Positioning

Overall, 62.57% of the stories were placed in the ‘top right quarter’ and ‘top left quarter’ put together, which are the most prominent locations in the newspapers. So it is concluded that the newspapers gave importance for this conflict as far as the factor ‘positioning’ is concerned.

Tamil morning newspapers published more conflict stories in the categories ‘top left quarter’ and in ‘bottom left quarter’ than the English morning newspapers and in the category ‘top left quarter’ than the Tamil evening newspapers. English morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘top left quarter’ than the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.4 News Label

The result of the analyses of the factor, ‘news label’ reveals that the newspapers are less bothered to analyze the conflict and bring out their
opinion as well as the opinions of others by the way of ‘analyses,’ ‘editorial,’ ‘comment,’ ‘interview,’ etc.

No significant difference exists, between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers, Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, and English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers in any of the categories of the factor ‘news label.’

7.1.5 Source

The outcome of the analyses of the factor, ‘source’ highlights that the ‘staff reporter’ was the dominant source for the stories and that ‘wired service’ was also used to a smaller extent. The ‘citizen journalism,’ was almost neglected though it is emerging as a popular source. ‘Freelancer’ service was not at all used by any of the newspapers whereas the ‘member of the public’ has contributed to 3.52% of the stories.

Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘Public’ than the Tamil evening newspapers; no significant difference exists between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers, and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘source.’

7.1.6 Geographic Focus

The study of the factor, ‘geographic focus’ of the stories, reveals that most of the stories (95.98%) were placed in the category ‘local,’ which is the correct category, though negligible percentages of the stories were placed in ‘national,’ ‘state,’ and ‘regional.’ No story found place in the categories, ‘international’ and ‘none.’
Tamil morning newspapers placed more stories in the category ‘local’ than the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, whereas the English morning newspapers placed more stories in the category ‘national’ than the Tamil morning newspapers; no significant difference exists, between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘geographical focus.’

7.1.7 Treatment

The analysis of the factor, ‘treatment’ shows that the newspapers did not give much importance to this conflict. It was evident from the fact that most of the stories (82.47%) were placed in the category ‘general news.’

The fact that 15.45% of the stories came under the category ‘commentary/criticism’ reveals that some interest was shown in commending/criticizing the conflict. The negligible percentage (0.36%) of stories in the category ‘editorial,’ also reveals the fact that least importance was given for this conflict.

The Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the categories ‘general news’ and ‘feature’ than the English morning newspapers and also in the category ‘general news’ than the Tamil evening newspapers; no significant difference exists between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘treatment.’

7.1.8 Constructed Frames

It is evident from the result of the analysis of the factor, ‘constructed frames’ that the category ‘threat’ has dominated in all the
newspapers with an overall percentage of 53.59. The higher percentage of stories in the category ‘threat’ is a cause for concern. Interestingly the negative and positive categories; namely, threat, peace, violence, harmony and anger are alternately present in the descending order of their total number of occurrences. Though the presence of ‘caste name,’ is in negligible number, it is also a cause of concern because it has the power to aggravate the violence and spoil the peace and harmony in the society.

The Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the three categories ‘violence,’ ‘peace,’ and ‘harmony,’ than the English morning newspapers and in the category ‘peace’ alone than the Tamil evening newspapers, whereas the English morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘peace’ than the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.9 Span

The highest overall percentage of the stories is in the category ‘three-column.’ Since the number of the stories in the ‘single-column’ and ‘two-column are higher than that of ‘four-column’ and ‘multi-column,’ it is concluded that this conflict stories were not given higher importance when considering the factor ‘span.’

No significant difference exists between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers, Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, and English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘span.’

No significant difference exists between the any of the three pairs of the groups of the newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘span.’
7.1.10  Presentation of the Headline

In the factor, headline, higher percentage of stories are in the categories ‘double-decked,’ ‘double-line,’ and ‘multi-decked’ than the ‘single-line’ category. So on considering the factor, ‘headline,’ it is concluded that higher importance was given for this conflict.

The English morning newspapers published more stories than the Tamil evening newspapers in the two categories ‘Single-line’ and ‘Double-line,’ whereas the Tamil evening newspaper published more stories than the English morning newspapers in the category ‘multi-decked.’ There is no significant difference either between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers; or between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘presentation of the headline.’

7.1.11  Vocabulary of the Headline

The result of the study of the factor, ‘vocabulary of the headline’ reveals that the newspapers focused this conflict as a ‘sensational’ one and not much importance was shown in ‘educating’ the readers on this conflict.

The Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘sensational’ than the English morning newspapers and in the category ‘informative’ than the Tamil evening newspapers, whereas the English morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘informative’ than the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.12  Tone of the Headline

The overall ‘tone of the headline’ of the newspapers is to ‘raise the conflict,’ which is not good for the society. Since only a lower/negligible
percentages of the stories are of the categories ‘reduce the conflict,’ ‘neutral,’ and ‘communal harmony,’ it can be concluded that the newspapers did not show interest to reduce the conflict and bring communal harmony, which is also a cause for concern, as far as the factor, ‘tone of the headline’ is concerned.

The Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the two categories ‘raise the conflict’ and ‘reduce the conflict’ than the English morning newspapers, whereas the Tamil morning newspapers and the English morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘reduce the conflict’ than the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.13 Conflict Frames

The result of the analysis of the factor, ‘conflict frames’ also reveals exactly the same result as that of the factor, ‘tone of the headline.’

7.1.14 Presentation by Format

The newspapers did not show much importance for this conflict by publishing adequate number of stories in the categories ‘interviews,’ ‘letter to the editor,’ ‘investigative,’ ‘feature’ and ‘column.’ Little importance was given for the category ‘views.’ Since it is the duty of the newspapers to give the news, large number of stories in the category ‘news’ of the factor, ‘presentation by format’ did not matter much.

Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘news’ than the English morning newspapers and Tamil evening newspapers.

No significant difference exists between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘format.’
7.1.15  **Angle**  

Sensationalization was the focus of the conflict by the newspapers. The newspapers failed to educate the readers on this conflict as far as the factor, ‘angle’ of the stories are concerned.

The Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the two categories ‘informative’ and ‘sensational’ than the English morning newspapers, and in the category ‘informative’ than the Tamil evening newspapers, whereas English morning newspapers also published more stories in the category ‘informative’ than the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.16  ** Attribution**  

The factor, ‘attribution’ shows that almost equal numbers of stories are from the categories, ‘government’ and ‘non-government.’ The fact that the share of the categories, ‘expert opinion,’ ‘studies’ and ‘reports’ was in negligible percentages indicates that the newspapers did not show much interest to enlighten the readers on this vital conflict.

Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘government’ than the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers. No significant difference exists, between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in any of the categories of the factor ‘attribution.’

7.1.17  **Size of the Stories**  

The study of the factor, ‘size of the stories’ reveals that the total space allotted by all the ten newspapers put together was 3,14,920.6 sq.cm. The Tamil morning newspaper, Daily Thanthi, had allotted the maximum space.
Based on the factor ‘size of the stories’ the shares of the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers are higher than that of the English morning newspapers. But there is no significant difference between the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers, in the factor ‘size of the stories.’

7.1.18 Graphics and Photographs

In the factor, ‘graphics and photographs’ the category ‘photo’ was the most prominent in all the newspapers with overall 96.86% and the other categories were negligible. English morning newspapers did not have the category ‘jump.’ None of the conflict stories appeared in the category ‘sidebar’ in any of the newspapers.

Tamil evening newspapers published more stories in the category ‘government’ than the English morning newspapers. There is no significant difference in any of the categories of the factor ‘graphics and photographs’ either between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers or between the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.19 Size of the Pictures

In the factor, ‘size of the pictures’ also the Tamil morning newspaper, Daily Thanthi, had allotted the maximum space. The total space allotted for the pictures during the entire new cycle of this conflict is 42,912.81 sq.cm, which is 13.63% of the total space allotted for the conflict stories.

Based on the factor ‘size of the pictures’ the share of the Tamil evening newspapers is higher than that of the English morning newspapers.
There is no significant difference in the factor ‘size of the pictures’ either between the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers or between the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.1.20 Pallet of the Picture

In the factor, ‘pallet of the pictures’ though the category ‘color picture,’ is dominating, the category ‘black & white picture’ is also occurring with slightly lesser proposition. The category ‘color cartoon/illustration’ is negligible and the category ‘black/white cartoon/illustration’ is completely absent. The fact, the color pictures are dominating than that of black and white, indicates that newspapers are adopting higher technology.

Tamil morning newspapers published more stories in the category ‘black & white’ than the English morning newspapers. There is no significant difference in any of the categories of the factor ‘pallet of the picture’ either between the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers or between the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers.

7.2 CONCLUSION

The idea that the peaceful-social environment is the prerequisite for sustained development is a universally accepted one. On that basis, in the world of journalism, the concept of Peace Journalism has acquired great importance. Peace is the sine qua non for growth.

The police-lawyer conflict that occurred in Chennai, in the year 2009, spread and developed into a chain of events in many parts of Tamil Nadu. So, this study and its findings have become very important. The episode of the police-lawyer conflict, the related news content published by
the popular newspapers of Tamil Nadu during the relevant period of ten months in 2009, and how it was handled by them – all these were analyzed in detail. The research findings have made it clear that the manner in which the newspapers dealt with this subject should have been better in many respects.

The news contents published by the newspapers revealed that all the newspapers did not present the news relating to the police-lawyer conflict uniformly, though these two are the two important wings of the systems of maintenance of law and order, and delivery of justice. Many differences are observed in the portrayal of the conflict among the ten newspapers. It became evident from this research that the two pairs of groups of newspapers, the English morning newspapers and the Tamil morning newspapers, and the Tamil morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers vary significantly in the conflict portrayals; whereas the English morning newspapers and the Tamil evening newspapers do not vary significantly in the conflict portrayals. The contents were analyzed also with a view to find out if the media showed concern to peace-building and establishing harmony during the process of conveying the news of this conflict. It has been found out that there was no concerted effort for this among the newspapers.

The connection between the employed theory and the findings of the study is also worth mentioning. The framing theory was chosen to study the connection between the various parameters of the appeared texts of the newspapers. The findings of the study explicitly articulate the deep connection between the textual variables like treatment, format, frames, geographical focuses, sources, vocabulary, and headline of the newspapers. The finding of the study comprehensively summarizes the significant association between the textual elements of the various newspaper texts.

Justice B N Srikrishna, who conducted a one man commission of enquiry into this conflict, submitted a very clear report. He has not minced
words in pointing out that it was the unruly lawyers who started the violence; and that the police exceeded their limits; and that the High Court administration was unduly lenient that made it all possible. The newspapers neither featured special columns nor wrote many editorials on the subject to highlight the seriousness of the matter. It is worth to mention here that a journalist, who responded to the queries of the researcher, said that the press did not have guidelines. He also said that there were no guidelines for conflict-reporting for media. Such ignorance shows lack of professional knowledge among the reporters. This research has made it clear that the journalists lacked in professional knowledge and talent in handling conflicts. And, this adversely affects the discharge of social responsibilities of the media.

During the interaction with the researcher, a journalist pointed out that because of the political affiliation, a newspaper belonging to a political party exaggerated the conflict to make it a political issue. Commercial interests also can force the newspapers to deviate from their straight path. The newspapers having political and commercial vested interests cannot maintain professional integrity.

The mass media is expected to play a significant role as the fourth pillar of democracy. The role of media assumes special importance when violence erupts. Mass media is a powerful tool in bringing about social changes in the society. There are many actors in the society to resolve a conflict, but media’s role is a special one. There is little doubt of the need for media in conflict-driven situation. The rapidity of profound political, social and environmental changes leaves societies stunned in the face of massive and unresolved conflicts. Mass media is a key player in such situations to restore peace and harmony. Looking back at the history, one can understand
the special relationship of the media with conflict situations, external and internal, be it in India or the rest of the world.

During times of crisis, people are looking for information. So, they turn to news source of what is happening and to help them figure out what might have happened. In such situations, the media need to provide news without sensationalism. In the area of conflict resolution, the media can really play a major role in enlightening the public opinion and in helping people take cognizance of the need for peace for their overall welfare. It should take all steps within its reach to end the conflicts as quickly as possible and reinstate peace. The media should also help find amicable and effective solutions to prevent their recurrence. Thus, the concept of ‘Peace Journalism’ evolves here. Peace Journalism is when editors and reporters make choices - of what stories to report, and how to report them - which create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict. The term ‘peace journalism’ was proposed by Johan Galtung in the 1970s.

In the midst of commercialism, sensationalism, elite and media monopoly, ‘peace journalism’ is the need of the hour. Peace journalism approach provides a new road-map tracing the connections between journalists, their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their reporting – the ethics of journalistic intervention (Mc Goldrick and Lynch 2006). In a crisis situation like police-lawyer conflict, peace journalism can study the crisis in-depth, detect the root cause of the problem and suggest constructive measures to deal with the problem. It uses conflict analysis and transformation to update concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting. Studies on the nature of media, particularly during the times of conflict and crisis, have shown that media have failed to perform its very basic role of being an honest, objective and fair purveyor of information to the public. Rumors are spread and they are mistaken as facts. This might add
the public’s fear or contribute to people drawing wrong conclusion. Therefore, Journalists have to decide whether they are going to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Peace journalism aspires to find means to report on the invisible effects, such as the long-term legacies of conflict like psychological trauma or the likelihood that those affected may be violent in the future. Thus, Peace journalism tries to discover the cause and process of conflict and the effort and initiatives from all sides to encourage peace building. On considering the growing significance of peace journalism Police-Lawyer conflict offers itself as an ideal moot point to study the approach, attitude and practices of the media towards any conflict in India. These findings could help us obtain reasonable understanding about the role of media in the conflict situations and try to formulate new approaches towards peace journalism.

In the recent past the entire world is witnessing swift, unprecedented, and eventual changes in the social system, economic conditions, governance and political paradigm. These parameters have strong impact on the global and local media systems. This paradigm shift has also transformed the Indian mass media system. The rapid growth in the media circulation and market condition, reach and influence, content delivery system has marked remarkable changes on the Indian media system. These unprecedented changes have very strong impact on the content of the media. Majority of the media outlets in India have their own independent organization policies and political affiliations. The journalists ought to accomplish the policies of the organizations in their reporting. So very few independent media outlets are committed to their democratic duties. Moreover the popular media outlets in Tamil Nadu depend upon the advertisement revenue of the Government, and cannot avoid some sort of quid pro quo. Moreover the majority of the media outlets have emerged as corporate companies and they consider news as a commodity. The journalists
are supposed to supply the marketable news to the media organizations which face tough competition. The study on police-lawyer conflict news stories were viewed as a marketable product by the owners of the media as has been proved in the findings of the study.

Indian constitution has explicitly guaranteed the freedom of speech and expression to its citizens and it includes media’s freedom too and hence this particular conflict has not been directly or indirectly controlled by the state. The cultural values of the society always have its own space in the news room. If this conflict was the outcome of shaken professional values of the lawyers and the police, the media’s role has not helped to restore them.

7.3 SUGEGSIONS

There is a general opinion that Indian journalists lack in professional training, ability and knowledge in conflict-reporting. It can be easily understood that the reason for this sad state of affairs is that the newspaper establishments do not attach enough importance to impart special trainings needed by their staff, who are reporting conflicts or do not employ well-qualified, professional journalists.

Similarly, the journalists should develop a healthy attitude to follow the guidelines during reporting. The owners of media establishments should come forward to provide professional training and developmental programs beneficial to their journalists. There are many multinational voluntary service institutions who contribute substantially for such training and developmental activities. In many foreign countries such institutions work enthusiastically to improve the standard of journalism in the fields like conflict-reporting. Indian media establishments should come forward to take up joint programs with these institutions. The local media should be given priority for such programs.
Greater attention needs to be paid to matters like educational qualifications of the journalists, the processes of their selection, on-the-job training, etc. Like the independence of media, the independence of journalists also should be ensured. In the absence of the latter, the former can never be a reality. Improvement of the working environment and facilities of the journalists also need to be taken up in earnest. If proper attention is paid to these matters the Media can discharge their social responsibilities more effectively.

The unprecedented growth of twenty four hour news cycle and proliferation of mobile technology have made the readers extremely sensitive. The people expect real time exclusive news and visuals from the media. In these circumstances, the role of the academic institutions have paramount role to play. The academic institutions and independent researchers ought to conduct periodical monitoring and evaluation on the accuracy, fairness, objectivity of the conflict reporting. The academic programs ought to incorporate conflict reporting and peace journalism in its curriculum. The media institutions must play a lead-role and conduct capacity-building programs for working journalists.

7.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study analyzed the contents of the Tamil morning newspapers, the Tamil evening newspapers and the English morning newspapers published from Chennai. Future researchers can study the perspectives and reports by newspapers from other regions also as other states on the same story in order to get cross-cultural understandings of the issue. Moreover analyzing the in-house journals of both lawyers and the police will throw a clear picture about their view on this issue. The number of factors may be increased beyond twenty and the variables in each factor may be increased.
Further the constructed images in the conflict news stories can also be studied through narrative analysis or conversational analysis. The focus group study among the Police, Lawyers and Media Professionals on the subject matter can also offer better understanding about the conflict. A comprehensive survey analysis among the conflicting parties could also throw new light on the research area. A detailed study on the incorporation of professional and ethical guidelines regarding conflict and violence in the media contents could be measured through appropriate scales. From the inferences drawn by this study a suitable model could be built for testing similar conflict situations.