ABSTRACT

Presently, a situation has arisen that we cannot even think of life sans media. Now the media defines and complements all the aspects of life that nourish human development, viz. art, education, culture, habits, politics, ethics, commerce, lifestyle changes and so on. The power, reach, influence and impact of this extraordinarily dominant instrument are beyond measure. The pictures drawn, ideas expressed, impacts made or attempted to be made about the global events by the media on a daily basis deserve to be studied in detail. How do the media approach an event? From which point of view they appraise it? How do they depict what they notice for the benefit or consumption of their readers? What sort of impact they create and how they mold the reaction of the multifaceted readers? These topics call for microscopic analysis; because, many studies have revealed a close connection between the contents of the media and the functioning of the individuals and society.

This research has been undertaken with the objective of analyzing the contents of the select front-line English morning newspapers, Tamil morning newspapers, and Tamil evening newspapers, of Tamil Nadu, published from Chennai, relating to the police-lawyer conflict that took place in the Madras High Court premises. How the media portrayed the news about
this conflict and the chain of events connected with it has been subjected to Quantitative Content Analysis.

In this research, the threads of news relating to the police-lawyer conflict published during the entire news cycle, from February 17, 2009 to December 19, 2009 have been analyzed. The news reports about the conflict have been divided into twenty factors; the relevant variables under each factor have been individually assessed. The select ten newspapers had published 1,392 stories during this news cycle. The 27,840 data obtained from these 1,392 stories were subjected to statistical analyses. 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. 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.