4.1 Aim of the Study

The representation of minorities, especially the Muslim minority has always been a debatable issue worldwide. Along with other states, the mass media have played a significant yet speculative role in framing the identity of Muslims in the society, by either setting an agenda or merely helping the heterogeneous society into further opinionated encasement of individuals, thereby creating conflict situations. With this increasing number of conflict arising within the societies, understanding the representation and the nature of those disposed communities by the media assumes significance.

In search of such reported cases under this preview, the researcher studied various published literature on disparities in representation among cultural and religious communities. Interestingly, there was widely published literature that threw shocking interpretations of Muslim representation by the media. Cases of conflict of these literatures, the review clearly states that there is an ongoing misrepresentation of the Muslims in the mainstream media, particularly after the 9/11 attacks. The researcher observed that the imagery of Muslims have always been designed in an immoral way. Looking into similar case in India 1998 serial Bomb Blasts of Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore, a noted city enriched with goodness of natural resources, work force, highest international industrial affiliation, and with a countable size of Muslim population has traumatized in a most intensifying manner. Involving a series of misrepresentation against Muslims by the media, was created much before the 9/11 attacks in USA. The aftermath of this disaster still seems
lingering in the lives of every Muslim and is being appended to every act of terrorism. This burgeoning effect created by media that every Muslim might be a terrorist need a thorough investigation for such notion disharmonizes the peace and secular ideals enshrined in the constitution. In an effort to straighten the issues underlying the conflict reporting, the researcher chose to study the 1998 Coimbatore Bomb Blasts case reported widely against Muslims. This research aimed at unravelling the role of print media in stereotyping Muslim during the Coimbatore serial Bomb Blasts.

4.2 Objectives of the study

1. To enumerate the nature and intensity of the coverage of Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict in the regional newspapers of Tamil Nadu.

2. To elucidate the authenticity and credibility of the news stories on the Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict.

3. To study the frames provided by the print media on the Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict.

4. To ascertain the discourse of the constructed news stories in the regional newspapers on Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict.

5. To study the role of the headlines in framing the conflict among the readers.

6. To determine the significance of the photographs and graphics in the conflict news.

7. To exemplify the agenda set by the regional newspapers on the Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict.

8. To study the association between the conflict and the news appeared in the newspapers.
9. To analyze the space allocated by the regional newspapers for coverage of Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict.

4.3 Hypotheses of the study

The Hypotheses were framed around the constructs like 'Nature and Intensity', 'Authenticity', 'Credibility', 'Frames', and the 'Discourse of the Stories' provided in the mainstream media on the Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict. This was further understood by having the study of 'Headlines', 'Photographs', and 'Graphics' to study the importance of how they influence the coverage of the conflict. The factors like 'Agenda Setting', 'Overall Impression', and 'Psychological Outcome of the Stories' were added to the above factors to bring a complete picture of the conflict constructed by the mainstream media.

**H_01.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing Hard news.

**H_02.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing news stories with geographical focus.

**H_03.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing Local news.

**H_04.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing State/Regional news.

**H_05.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing National news.

**H_06.** There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing Tone of the news story.
H₀7. There is no significant difference among the newspapers in publishing constructed frames in the story.

H₀8. There is no significant association between the overall information among the four newspapers.

4.4 Theoretical Framework

The research on the grounds of Framing Analysis has been intensely studied. Currently, framing theory has taken over from Agenda Setting and Cultivation Theories as the most commonly applied research approach in the field of communications science. Scholars like (Bosman, Haenens, 2008: McCombs, 2005) have quoted that "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).

According to Bateson (1972), a frame specifies the relationship between several associated elements in a text. Stipulating 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: first, the specific content and second, a frame that shows how the message as a whole should be interpreted.

Tankard (2008) has detailed various news features that commonly convey frames. They are headlines, kickers, subheads, photographs, photo captions, and leads, etc. Wong (2004) has identified four major dimensions of framing that could be studied: 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 the issues included); and 4) Effective attributes (tone of the
picture). Moreover, Weaver (2007) mentioned that frames could be studied by means of systematic content analysis or more interpretive textual analysis. Van Gorp (2007) also observed that some researchers opt for rather qualitative approach in analyzing media frames, such as discourse analysis, while others apply traditional content analysis or other quantitative methods. Hence, the present study engaged the framing theory to study the research problem.

4.5 Method of the study

4.5.1 Content Analysis

This study employs a quantitative method of content analysis and operates on the concept of Case Study. It is appropriate to note Neuendorf’s (2002) definition that "Media 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, generalisability, 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". Twenty-four major factors that determine the objectives of the study, with a sub-set of variables that influence the factors were identified in this research after the review of the available literature.

Newspapers that contain news on the Coimbatore Bomb Blasts during the stipulated period of the study were collected. All the news that appeared on the Coimbatore Bomb Blasts viz., News stories, Editorials, Opinions, Comments, Pictures, Cartoons and all other types were selected, which became the samples for the study and primary data for the analysis. These news stories were analyzed based on the below mentioned variables and factors and the data were coded for further
analysis. These coded data have been statistically measured for analysing and finding the results.

- **Chi-square**: The chi-square statistic may be used to test the hypothesis of association and no association between two or more groups, populations, or criteria.

- **ANOVA**: A statistical method stands for analysis of variance to test significance between the 'Mean' scores of more than two groups.

- **Model Fitting**: To study the trend values and find the Linear and compound Growth Rate of conflict news.

### 4.5.1.1 Operational framework of the factors and variables

1. **Themes in the story** – The basic concept deals with the story and its variables like Politics, Religion, Government, Violence, Police/crime, Law and Order and Court/Legal.

2. **Story Genres** – Identifies the treatment or the method given to portray the stories. The variables of the study include – Hard News, Soft News, Analysis/Feature, Comments or criticism, Letters to the Editor, Editorials, Special column and Interviews.

3. **Articles by attribution** – Identifies the source for the story. It is derived from the direct quotes mentioned in the story. The variables are Government Official, Pro-Muslim groups, Celebrities, Politician, Pro-Hindu groups, Public, Social activists, Human Rights, Police, Judicial sources.

4. **Story byline** – Identifies the byline given to the story. It is known from the credit given by the newspapers organizations. The variables identified are Named author, wired service and No by-line.
5. **Origin of the story** – Provides the actual writer of the story. It is analyzed under the variables wired service, Staff/Correspondent, Freelancing correspondent, Columnist and Reader.

6. **Geographic focus of the story** – Identifies the geographical focus provided by the newspapers towards the conflict that include Local, State/Regional, National and International.

7. **Tone of the story** - Identifies the tone or mood provided by the newspapers on the conflict like Pro-Muslim, Anti – Muslim, Pro-Government, Pro-Hindu and Neutral.

8. **Constructed frames in the stories** – Identifies the frames that the News stories construct in the minds of the readers. This has been identified with the use of words employed in the story like Religious, Spiritual, Political, Violence, Extremism and Law and Order frames.

9. **Angle of the story** – Identifies the way in which the newspaper approaches the story and how it is presented. They are Educative, Informative, Sensational, Commercial, Defensive and Comical.

10. **Length of the story** – Provides the amount of space that is allocated to the story categorized under >800, 400-799, 150-399, 100-149, <100 words.

11. **Overall Agenda setting provided by the newspapers** – Identifies the agenda or the outcome provided by the newspapers on the conflict like, the Accused must be punished, a Muslim must be punished and No agenda.

12. **Intention of the coverage** – Identifies the motive or ideology of the newspaper behind the coverage of the conflict. The variables in the analysis
include Pacifying the situation, Complicate the situation, provide a solution for the situation and Confuse the readers.

13. **Labels used when referring to the Groups/ Individuals** – Identifies the tagline, branding and identity created by the newspapers on the conflict. The variables are Muslims, Anti-National, Foreign terrorists, Minorities, Terrorists, Separatists, Criminals, Fundamentalists, Fanatics, Extremists, Muslim terrorists, Hindutva, Religious extremist, Religious group, Accused, Conservatives, and Human rights.

14. **Span of the Headline** – Identifies the space span provided to the story based on the number of columns. The variable includes Single column, Double column, Three columns, Four columns and Multiple columns.

15. **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 include Single deck, Double deck, Triple deck and Multi deck.

16. **Headline Vocabulary** – Identifies qualitatively the vocabulary pertained in the Headline of the story. The variables are Action words, Typical words, Deceptive words, Graphic words and Assumptive words.

17. **Standpoint of the Headline** – identifies the opinion or ideology or the stance a newspaper takes in the conflict. This has been identified using the Pro-Government, Pro – Hindutva, Pro-Muslim, Neutral and Anti – Muslim tags.

18. **Tone of the Headline** – Identifies the tone or mood provided by the headline on the conflict. The variables for the study include Denotative, Connotative and Contextual.
19. **Photographs and Graphics** – Identifies the incorporation of the graphics and photographs pertaining to the conflict News stories. The variables for the study include Black & White (B/W) Graphics, Color graphics, B/W Photographs, Colour photographs and No image.

20. **Photographs with identifiable faces** – Identifies the appearance of the photographs in the conflict news. The variables in this analysis include Identifiable faces, Non-identifiable faces and No image.

21. **Appeal of the Photographs** – Identifies the appeal or mood handled in the photographs, and the variables, including Action photos, Portraits, General and No image.

22. **Frames constructed through Photographs** – Identifies the frame constructed in the photographs in the story. The variables used for positioning of the story include pro-Muslim, Anti-Muslim, Sensational, Trivialization, Titillation and Commercialization.

23. **Overall impression of the story** - Identifies the idea and opinion carried by the newspaper readers. The identification has the following factors, namely-Support the Muslim cause, Support the Government, Support the accused, Support the Hindutva, Against the Muslims and Neutral.

24. **Psychological outcome of the story** – Identifies the emotional and sensible outcome produced by the story in the minds of the readers. The variables used to identify the psychological outcome are Sympathy for Muslims, Hatred of Muslims, Sympathy on Hindutva, Sympathy for victims and No Impact.
4.5.2 Discourse Analysis

The study of Discourse Analysis and Critical linguistics, analyzes the way, the readers of the media interpret the texts. It combines and contrasts the readers and creators of texts and provides a clear opinion of discourse and content provides political and social dimensions in the society. Fairclough (2003) formulated the approach that highlighted the importance of texts in media and how it reflects and represents the social entities and relations, at the same time constructing and constituting them. He stresses the importance of analyzing the language of the media texts, since it exposes the domination inside social systems. He suggests, “A discursive event is co-shaped by the situation, institution or a social structure within which it appears and, in turn, it influences and reshapes its own social framework, that is, the situation, institution or social structure”. Thus, 'Discourse' itself constitutes and in turn constructs the situations, knowledge, and identities of the people or group or the objects dealt with in.

Various theoretical and methodological approaches have been framed with the Discourse Analysis, the prime aim of them being understanding the relationship and dialectic between the text and the society, their orientation towards certainty and replication of a specific discursive practice in the interpretation of events and incidents. Thus, Discourse Analysis is mainly an interpretive and qualitative research method.

The research has been designed to understand the media representation of Muslim minorities and the question of who, what and how they speak, whose views and interpretations are reproduced by media discourse, which implied assumption about the target groups underlie these media texts, and what discriminatory and
oppressive practices are given priority. The methodology of understanding the media texts was drawn from Foucault’s (Foucault, 1971) interpretation of discourse as framing a particular subject, i.e. the ideology of the Muslims, for example. Thus, “Discursive framing” of subjects provides that the media constructs and creates the identity of the specific groups and maintains implications of the group and thus, creating larger or lesser impact on the groups. It is true that there is no direct relationship between the reader and the content, though the media is considered the prime factor in creating hostility, stereotyping and hatred on these communities. Thus, the interaction between the text and the reader/writer is the interpretation.

This interpretation gains importance in media studies, since it gives the power of opinion and resistance. Foucault emphasizes that resistance is contained in the very idea of power, meaning that wherever power is being imposed, it gives the potential for resistance. Thus, discourse does not simply interpret systemic control into text, but, it is exactly discourse for which and because of which, conflicts arise in the society.

Foucault’s work does not provide a clear methodological concept ready to be applied to the studies of mass media, yet his concept of discourse and the discursive nature of the subjects can nevertheless be used as a theoretical framework for discourse analysis. Foucault argues that power produces the framework of knowledge, one that is perceived as truth, helps us to understand the power that operates through mass media and produces the subject, Muslims in the society. According to Foucault, when studying discourses, the primary target of analysis is the set of statement and phrases about a specific subject that mediate knowledge about that subject. Discourse analysis also views how the language confirms the
existence of a specific happening, mainly focusing on the rules guiding the presentation of a phenomenon, meaning rules that, in turn, excludes other and different ways of thinking. Similarly, Hall (1993) puts forth the same opinion, suggesting that those who are not directly involved in shaping the norms and definitions within problematic areas of political life, are primarily dependent for their 'working definitions' on agents, institutions and channels that have access to power and are the primary means of signification. Mass Media are certainly among these. Simply, the media cannot instil meaning in the readers' minds. But, they do have the integrating, explanatory and legitimate power to shape and define political reality, particularly in exceptional, problematic or intimidating situations.

**Procedure:** In this research, the critical analysis on the discourse provided by the media on the portrayal of Muslims have been of topical importance. For this, the researcher has identified potentially effective, alarming, and intense words in the portrayal and depiction of Muslims. Especially, noun phrase and noun, used to denote and stereotype the Muslims generally, have been identified and the usage of such words in the news stories carried on the issues relating to the Coimbatore Bomb Blasts and other Muslim conflicts have been identified and the *Modus operandi* of such words in the News stories has been analyzed. Especially, the words that provoke a picture of wrongness in the minds of the people like 'Extremists', 'Terrorists', the words that instil terror in the minds of the readers like 'Fanatics', 'Terror attacks' and are always misinterpreted in the society like *Jihad* and such words have been identified and the number of times they have appeared in the news stories, and the context in which they have appeared to test the hypothesis and for further analysis that fulfil the objectives the research.
4.5.3 In-depth Interview

In-depth Interview is the best tool to understand the entire notion and entire ideology of the person on the subject being dealt with. It provides the clearest picture of the incident. In-depth interview was conducted with expertise participants of the incident, on the conflict and the media coverage. Thus, semi-structured questionnaire the interview was conducted and the results have been discussed in the study.

*Interview process:* The researcher interviewed ten experts' who agreed to be interviewed based on their preferred location and time.

4.5.3.1 Participants of the In-depth interview

The participants of the In-depth interviews were 'Social activists' and 'Academicians' who provided a comprehensive understanding on the role of Minority and Muslims in enhancing democratic practices. Most of the views inferred from the data were reflected in the in-depth interview as well. Thus, in-depth interview become the supporting data to the content analysis

4.5.3.2 Profile of Participants of the In-depth Interview


Ba.Pa. Mohan is a notable lawyer, working at Bhavani, Erode, Tamil Nadu. He handled the first case of the Jail Warden Boobalan's murder case in the year 2000. On behalf of the Government, he appeared for a three accused in the Coimbatore Bomb Blasts case. He also argued for 70 accused of Al-Ummah members, Abdul Nasar Madhani case was also taken up by him.
2. Abdul Farooq

Abdul Farooq is a sub-inspector of police in Intelligence Bureau of Tamil Nadu. He has been associated with police department since the Coimbatore riot.

3. Gana. Kurinji

Gana. Kurinji is a People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) State Vice-President, Coimbatore. PUCL committee was a dependable and a credible organization that published a significant report in the Frontline magazine during the Coimbatore riot.

4. Ayub Khan

Ayub Khan is an active former District Urban secretary of the Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazagham (TMMK) during the time of the Coimbatore Bomb Blasts viz. 1997. He also worked in PUCL and has investigated many riots.

5. Lena Tamilvanan

Lena Tamilvanan a Columnist and an Associate Editor of Tamil weekly magazines Kalkandu and Kumudam. Popularly known for his One-page articles, Travel write-ups, Question & Answer and he has authored about 72 books. He is also the Managing Director of Manimekalai Prasuram, the largest Tamil, book-publishing house.

6. Kumaresan

Kumaresan is the Editor-in-Charge of Theekkathir Tamil morning daily. He has also worked with The New Indian Express and is a renowned political commentator.
7. Evidence Kathir

A Dalit, who grew up witnessing caste-based discrimination from his childhood started as a writer for the socially marginalized, who later shifted to rights based interventions, especially human rights monitoring and advocacy. His experience and a commitment to Dalit rights eventually led him to initiate an independent organization, *Evidence* in Madurai in 2005 to fight against caste discrimination justice and equality.

8. Paamaran

Paamaran is an active Columnist, Writer, Orator, and worked as a member in *Kaalachuvadu Investigating Committee* during Coimbatore riot. He also participates in many talk shows in regional channels on social issues.

9. Durai. Madangan

Durai. Madangan is a versatile writer, Columnist, and Social activist and an avid translator. He owns a library named *yaazh library* at Coimbatore that serves many writers and journalists as an active platform for knowledge sharing.

10. Thirunavukkarasu

Thirunavukkarasu is an active scholar on communal violence, especially the 'Coimbatore riots and Bomb Blasts' and a Physiotherapist, by profession.

4.6 Period of the Study

The study was divided into two period's viz. Pre and Post Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict. The media coverage of Muslims from 1997 (a year before the conflict), was taken as the pre conflict period and the coverage from 1998 – 2009 (a period of 12 years), with the release of the judgment on the conflict was taken as the post conflict period. Thus, the coverage of Muslims and the conflict in the
mainstream newspapers for a period of 13 years (1997-2009), is considered as the period of the study.

4.7 Criteria for the selection of Newspapers

This study aims to analyze the content of the popular regional newspapers of Tamil Nadu viz., Daily Thanthi, Dinamalar, Dinamani and Dinakaran based on circulation.

4.8 Profile of the Newspapers

Daily Thanthi

Daily Thanthi is a reputed Tamil newspaper in Tamil Nadu which has nationwide circulation. The popular lawyer and known politician S. P. Adithanar, was the founder of the newspaper. Its first edition was released in Madurai on 1942. Daily Thanthi became one of the largest Tamil language dailies by circulation within a few years and has been a leading daily since the 1960s. It has 15 editions with the latest being the Mumbai Edition. It has the highest circulation among Tamil language dailies in Bangalore and Puducherry, and also in Tamil Nadu. Daily Thanthi's circulation during December 2012 was 16,14,874 copies as certified by Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC). It has the largest readership base amongst Tamil newspapers with 73, 53,000 readers spread across the Tamil Diaspora (Source: IRS 2010). Daily Thanthi used the public transport to distribute the papers throughout the southern region. The group also has an evening newspaper, Malai Malar and a weekly Rani. Recently the group has launched Thanthi television. It also published a children comic stories in Rani comics for some time that was discontinued.
**Dinamalar**

*Dinamalar* is a daily newspaper published from Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Pondicherry, Tirunelveli, Nagercoil, Trichy, Erode, Vellore and Salem. *Dinamalar* was founded by T. V. Ramasubbaiyer (1908–1984) in 1951 to voice for the cause of merging of Tamil speaking southern region of India around Kanyakumari district with Madras presidency. The outlet has an approximately 1500 employees across its 10 centers and an approximate turnover of over 100 Crore Rupees. In 1956, TV. Ramasubbaiyer moved his publications to Tirunelveli. He opened editorial units in Tiruchirapalli in 1966 and Madras in 1979. *Dinamalar* is run as a partnership firm by the sons of TV. Ramasubbaiyer, namely, R. Venkitapathy, R.Krishnamoorthy, R.Lakhmipathy, R.Raghavan and R.Sathyamoorthy.

**Dinamani**

*Dinamani* was founded in September 11, 1934 with about 8 pages, that consisted provoking lines in its first page "*To erase poor's sorrows, To make everybody happy, Fearless Dinamani*". Under the patronage of T.S. Choakkalingam, during the freedom struggle *Dinamani* exhibited the views of the Indian populace. In spite of various hurdles since the last 66 years, multi-dimensional political situations, was managed by Sadhanand, Rammath Goenka, T.S. Choakkalingam and A.N Sivaraman. *Dinamani* has played crucial role during the emergency period 1975-1977 in India. *Dinamani* forms part of the *The New Indian Express* Group and was incorporated on August 13, 1999 under Indian Companies Act, 1956. This Company was promoted by Express Publications (Madurai) Limited which is the flagship Company of the Group. Express Publications (Madurai) Limited publishes
the prestigious English language newspaper, *The New Indian Express* from 24 centers in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Orissa. It also publishes *Sunday Standard* from New Delhi. Now Express Publications (Madurai) Limited also include Tamil daily *Dinamani, Cinema Express* (Tamil), *Malayalam vantiha* (Malayalam) and *Sakhi* (Kannada).

**Dinakaran**

*Dinakaran* is a daily Tamil newspaper published from the major cities in Tamil Nadu, India. Former DMK Minister K.P. Kandasamy [estranged son-in-law of SP. Adithanar] started it in 1977. It was bought out in 2005 by the *SUN TV* group which is owned by Kalanidhi Maran, the son of former Union Minister Murasoli Maran. According to ABC, the independent auditing agency for publications, it is the largest selling Tamil Daily in India, with over 1,000,000 copies per day. *Dinakaran* launched three new supplements recently for weekend leisure reading and is planning to launch one more supplement targeting young readers shortly. Diversified media group *Sun Network* had brought down the cover price to Re 1, which was later increased to Rs 2 when other Tamil dailies cost more than Rs.3.

**4.9 Unit of Analysis**

The news stories as a whole that have appeared in the selected newspapers during the period of study are the Unit of Analysis.

**4.10 Data Collection**

Articles and stories of various forms – News, Features, Cover-ups, Opinion columns, Commentaries, Editorials and other pertaining to the conflict become the primary data for the study. Such data that appeared in the four newspapers within the period of the study were collected. In order to meet the objectives of the study,
the researcher has developed a detailed coding sheet to analyze the relevant data. To understand how the popular print media have constructed the Coimbatore Bomb Blast conflict, a 'Quantitative content analysis' of newspaper articles published in four newspapers has been carried out.

4.11 Tools used for Analysis

Acquired data were processed through SPSS Software version 17.0. The researcher employed both parametric and non-parametric statistical tools to anatomically analyze the data obtained from the population. The research has appropriately employed simple percentage analysis, Chi-Square, Coefficient variant, ANOVA, Yearwise Distribution, Model fitting analysis, a detailed Discourse analysis and a set of identity using noun phrase and noun, carried out based on expert's opinion, was collected through structured questionnaire, which will be employed for a correlation analysis in the discussion.

4.12 Reliability and Validity

To understand the reliability of the constructed coding sheet, 10% of the data were coded and analyzed for reliability and validity using the data reduction and reliability tests in SPSS and corrected for the same.

4.13 Limitations of the Study

Since the study has been carried out after a long time gap of the occurrence of the conflict, the researcher accessed a the copies of all the newspapers form different Government and private libraries which are both hard and soft copies. Since no previous research has been done on this issue, the researcher has limited to the printed news stories and the committee reports and findings as the source, for getting to know the origin and course of the conflict.