

## A PROSPECTIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS ON PORTRAYAL OF RAPE ISSUES IN KANNADA NEWSPAPER INCLUDING PRAJAVANI, KANNADA DAILY

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**Abstract:** “Media is the message”, said Marshal McLuhan while arguing about how media plays important role in our day to life. His arguments over media’s capacity to shape our opinion are unquestionable. But the present media is not a message comes from one ideological point or from one source of thought school. It is nothing but multiple individuals with a various cognitive or socialization processes. Hence the variety in their opinion which differs from person to person or from one newspaper to other. With all the differences the power of media cannot be negated or dejected. Hence it is very important to relook at our news providing sources often.

This paper looks critically at the news provided by one of the reputed Kannada daily, Prajavani and the representation of different news items. It is very important to review and analyze our popular media time and again in order to understand tilt in their ideology and the mass response to it.

**Methodology:** This is a content analysis considering one month periods’ newspapers, mostly Bengaluru edition The researcher has considered Prajavani, which always enjoyed high cultural and moral standards for decades. Since its inception in 1947, it has identified as a political, yet neutral towards any political ideology. In terms of impact of post publication, Prajavani still maintained highly influential status across the State, be it a farmers’ community or Policy makers.

Though the researcher intended to compare one English newspaper with a Kannada newspaper, the researcher was able to focus more on one newspaper due to lack of time as well as availability newspapers’ hardcopy. Though the electronic newspapers are available, it is a difficult task to review a month’s paper online which is not possible to measure it in terms of space. Considering all these issue, the researcher could provide justice one major newspaper.

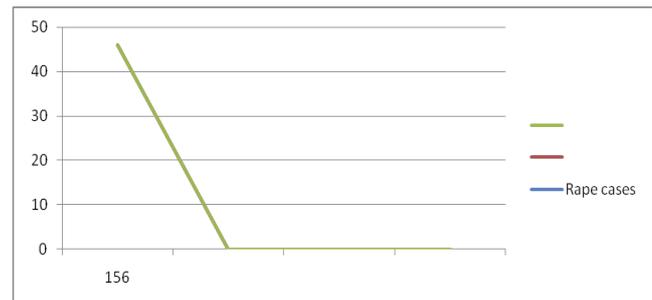
This research has taken account of 30 days of Bangalore Edition newspaper without supplements. This one month time period was July 1<sup>st</sup> August 3<sup>rd</sup>. it was the high time where most of the rape cases got reported in this month since infamous and most discussed sexual assault case Vibgyor’s childs’ rape took place during the month of June. Since then, there were different reactions from various communities, organizations, political parties which are interesting to study as they never done so.

**Analysis:** As per the Bureau of Crime records, there is a slight increase in the rape cases registered from 2011 to 2014. It was 1171 in 2011, it raises to 1599 in 2013 followed by more than half of it recorded in the first half of 2014 (till June).

Year	Accused	Arrested	Punished	Percent
2011	1171	1025	42	3.58
2012	1043	936	50	4.19
2013	1599	1398	26	1.62
2014	814	611	00	-

### Total number of news items related to sexual assault appeared in Prajavani

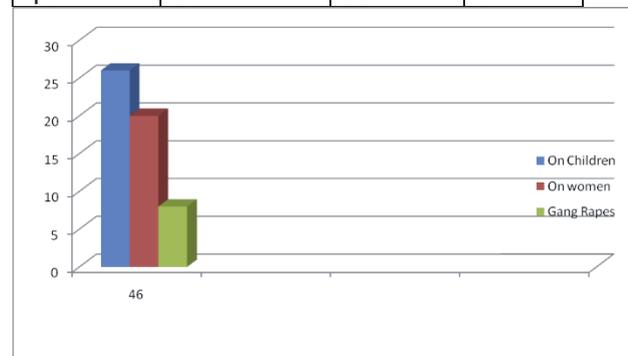
Total no. of reports on sexual assault	Rape cases
156	46



There were around 156 Sexual assault reports appeared in one month. Out of which 46 were on rapes happened and rest were on sexual molestation and such attempts news reports.

### The section of rape victims

Reported rapes	On Children	On women	Gang Rapes
46	26	20	8



There were in total 46 rape issues which got reported in this month, out of which 26 are committed on girl children, 20 on women and 8 gang rapes are been

reported. In 5 gang rapes cases, the culprits have made the video of their heinous act.

#### Printing space given

Total space in CM	Cover page stories	Inside page stories
397	18	138

**Around Vibgyor:** A six-year-old child was allegedly sexually assaulted during the school hours on July 2<sup>nd</sup> at Vibgyor School, Bengaluru. The parents filed the complaint after their daughter complained of stomach ache and a doctor who was consulted stated that the child had been sexually assaulted. Though the police narrowed down to two suspects – the skating instructor and a security guard on July 21<sup>st</sup>. The media reported the same and changed the tone when they were released with arresting two gymnastics instructors for the alleged gang rape of a six-year old girl. Here with the police ruling out the "direct" role of the skating instructor who was booked as the main accused in the incident.

The issue got so much of focus, which was reported in detail in all the media platforms which helped the issue to sneak as a larger campaign throughout the state. Since the incident took place, at least a follow up stories are carried everyday till August 3<sup>rd</sup> with various aspects in Prajavani.

**Response to Vibgyor issue:** Followed by police initiate on July 14, on 18<sup>th</sup> July Karnataka public education department had written a letter to ICSE to cancel Vibgyor's recognition.

On 21<sup>st</sup> the police issued tough guidelines to schools in Bengaluru for safety of children and warned of prosecution in the event of its non-compliance.

Under the guidelines, school buses should fix GPS and CCTV cameras and drivers should be isolated and not allowed to mingle with the children after they had parked the vehicles.

"Unnecessary interaction with the children... that should be avoided because we have found that these people also have been accused in some cases," Bangalore Police Commissioner M N Reddy told reporters while releasing the guidelines.

27<sup>th</sup> July Police commissioner MN reddy met employees and parents of Vibgyor School and he assured to reopen the school with all the safety measures

On July 28, the school had promised for fulfilling all the 11 demands of the parents but parents are still hesitant to send the children to school.

On 29<sup>th</sup> July Vibgyor School restarted with more than 100 CCTV installations. The newspaper report also included the percentage of children attended school which was not that much satisfactory figure.

#### Editorial reactions

**Editorials:** In the course of research period, there were 2 editorials and 2 editorial columns (articles)

were published. One editorial writing of 17<sup>th</sup> July was on Criticizing the police officer who handled gang rape case took place in a car, Bengaluru. It criticized the Inspector as well as the insensitivity of our police system in handling rape issues: The police inspector Mr. Rafeeq did not maintain the confidentiality of the victim. It states that there have been a lot of discussions started after 2012 December 16<sup>th</sup> Nirbhaya, but not much changes taken place within the police system. The editorial says, After Delhi and Mumbai, Bengaluru has been termed as 3<sup>rd</sup> most unsafe city according to national bureau of crimes. The writing suggests that the police authority should shadow down this negative image of the city.

The second editorial appeared On July 21, demanding for arrest of Vibgyor incident's culprits. The editorial says there has been no arrest made (there has been a arrest on the same day which was reported on the front page) since 18 days of the incident and 6 days after registering the case. It also suggests the Government should keep track on the preventive measures of a school.

#### Editorial columns/articles in the editorial page:

One the editorial column by Nagesh Hedge, veteran Journalist and environmentalist, time talks about "the sex Clock" which is more a biological in nature and in animals unlike human beings who does not have a sex clock. According to his writings, the men should have a biological clock which makes a person to react to his sensitive parts whenever there is a necessity, especially for reproduction period.

The second Editorial Column appeared on July 28<sup>th</sup> which speaks on private schools escapism when it comes to other issues like Kannada Medium education or Uniform education debates or even in fees decrease matter.

**Cartoons:** There were 5 editorial cartoons (which are generally printed on the cover page) on rape issues in this one month. If four, sarcastically looks at citizens, the authorities and the govt, one was on Goa's Minister's comment (who said that Bikinis would be banned in Goa while reacting to Pramod Mutalik's statement on Shorts and Jeans culture). This cartoon appeared on July 3, and goes like, "There might be bikini ban in Goa soon, Urgent, Book your tickets-Maja travels". The cartoon had a graphic of bus named as Maja Travels (fun travel) and a conductor who was uttering the above words.

The above mentioned cartoon did sound sexist which looks at the statement made by a minister as a curse to men who always visit Goa to sneak in to Bikini. The cartoonist Prakash Shetty, forgets the fact that Goa is much larger than Bikini, so the people and Culture. The Cartoon clearly indicates the insensitivity of the artist and also overtly portrays patriarchal, male chauvinistic attitude.

**“Interesting news” item from other states and Countries:** There were news items from other states too which generally appeared on page 7 or 10. It is interesting to look at how a newspaper allots the space or chooses a news item on other state which is physically far away from our state or city. By going through the following news selection, one can visibly understand the ‘yardstick’ of a newspaper in choosing news items from other states.

**July 1:** Protest against a statement given by Goa’s Public welfare minister who supported Promod Muthalik’s stand on opposing shorts and preserving local culture.

**July 3:** A Woman beaten and sent out from her house for wearing Jeans in Uttar Pradesh. The report states that she just tried that to impress her husband.

**July 10:** “Eating an apple everyday increases sexual interest in women”-based on unquoted research which claims that 731 women in Italy were subjected to study so.

**July 14:** Pope Francis given away the statement that “2% of church community indulged in child abuse” Gram panchayath ordered to rape 10 year old Scheduled cast girl in Delhi.

The above statements from the actual news reports are just a sample to illustrate the newspaper’s reservations about the other state’s news. Most of the rape issues or sex related issues were portrayed in satirical way or news items with such content were published. Rather a rape, a gang rape got more prominence in the news space. Though few news items cannot be seen as said but most of the 7<sup>th</sup> page national items or 10<sup>th</sup> page international news items should be questioned in terms of their content and relevance. For instance, an unknown research from Italy of merely 700 odd participants related to sexual energy would not be an appropriate news item in our context. This has to be tested, validated in our demographic and geographical necessity. A news item cannot be vaguely picked from a news agency just because it aroused certain sexual feeling in a sub-editor.

#### **Reaction of different communities:**

**July 20:** Poetry reading on women issues by Suchitra Cultural organization.

Manjula Manasa, state human rights chairman demands for printing helpline number on railway tickets

**July 21:** Photo exhibition, talk, discussion on rape by Suchitra organization in Bangalore  
‘Black dot’ campaign over facebook and whatsapp which was about removing personal picture and placing black dot on the same space as a sign of protest to rape issues.

**23 July:**

- Lokasatta party’s state president Mukund demand for more protection for women
- MP Rajeev Chandrashekar says that there has to be case filed against Mustafas’s(a man arrested in relation to vibgyor’s rape issue) earlier working school too as he had the same thing there also.
- Protest by ‘women voice’ organization in pulikeshinagar and in vasanthnagar against rape issues
- **ABVP protest** against rapes in the state in Hosakote
- **NHRC** issued notice to state government seeking explanation within 2 weeks on Vibgyor school issue.

**July 28** Protest by CPM in KR puram

**July 30:** Kannada organizations call for Bandh on 31<sup>st</sup> July on the **issues of MES friction** as well as on rape issues

**SFI and DYFI protest against rape issues:** The above news items show how all the parties do make noise as a reaction to other parties. Was a chain reaction or just a demonstrative act has to contemplated more. An organization which always comes to picture whenever there is an issue of land, border, Kannada issues, does demonstrate a nominal Bandh along with MES friction issue but not before that alone on children issues. Those who respect the mother earth(Kannadamba) could also be expected to respond as quickly than as possible which was not a scene. Its clearly evident that SFI, was responding to ABVP and ABVP was responding to other party.

#### **Policy maker’s striking statements:**

**July 1:** Shorts and Jeans are against our Culture-Goa’s Public welfare minister

**July 20:** “Compared to 21 crore population of UP, rapes are very less. Boys are boys and they make mistakes sometimes”-Mulayam singh Yadav

**23 July:** Need relief for women than mere talks-Umashree.

Rapists should be shot dead-Horticulture minister Shamanooru shivasaknaraapa in mysore. Revenue minister says these suggestions are just emotional but does not work practically.

Changes will be made to empower Goonda Act George K.J

Is there no other news for you-Siddaramaiah questions media.

Heated discussion in Lokasabha

The statements of policy makers of high rank are shocking as well as deeply contemplating. The above mentioned people or either holding a highest position in their state or directly responsible for policy changes.

#### **Gang rape:**

**July 10:** Gang rape in UP before her boyfriend in a sugar cane farmland

**July 14** –gang rape and the act was recorded it in mobile phone

Rape before her boyfriend, posing as policemen by 4 people

In the 8 gang rapes reported in media, and four gang rapes took place in Kolar alone. Out of which two were on school going children. In five cases the culprits had recorded their atrocious act on their cell phones which will be used for showcasing their potency in the peer group. This is a clear indication of act-post act voyeuristic satisfaction elements. This might be the influence of constant exposure to porn content which also shows that how men would like to expose women in the entire worst possible ways as an instrument born to use.

**Conclusion:** The research was carried keeping major seven aspects which are Vibgyor issue, Response to Vibgyor issue, Editorial reactions, Cartoons; Policy maker's striking statements, Reaction of different communities and prominence of other state rape related news. More or less the newspaper considered for the research did report what state authorities informed. They did believe what police commissioner briefed often.

For a period of almost one month the newspaper reported at least a small news item on protest against Vibgyor School or on follow up stories on its development later. Like any other media or peoples' outrage it imitated their voice rather taking up these in to newer discussion to suggest a logical, rational solutions. Vibgyor School did not arise out of a gymnastic teacher who has been believed as a rapist. It does have other faculty, thousands of students and got well points by ICSC and CBSE institutions. But none of the newspapers reports or editorials talks

about them. The portrayed reports lacked the common sense about the employment of other people or future of other students. They were successful enough to make the school locked for around a month.

When the policy makers are especially Home minister was talking about intended changes to be brought to Goonda Act, the newspaper fail to understand the whole point of bringing changes to a common law. There were no pictures or news items on other school authorities' safety measures in this one month. All it was criticizing was Vibgyor's. It did fail to grasp a comprehensive solution to overall issue.

It even did not discuss the shocking evidences of youth's sadistic attitude towards their acts. Recording over phone, threatening later, sharing in social media...all these are dangerous as well a path of self destruction. None of the newspaper articles or Sunday's discussion speaks about this. This is more of psychological than just an act.

When it comes to political leaders funny, stereotypical statements there were photos of them to make them more clear to public but not on bringing a platform of private schools in order to bring larger change.

While reporting about other state's news items may be newspaper authorities should be clearer what they mean by projecting such stories. For example a 'world class' (claimed by forbs) university's student dissertation would not be relevant to our context. With all the debates about sexual assaults in and around us, one can choose a satirical news which as rape or sex angle to it.

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