

IMAGE OF MUSLIMS IN MAINSTREAM ENGLISH DAILIES OF INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FOUR MAJOR NEWSPAPERS DURING 2007 & 2017

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ABSTRACT

Appearance in media gives credence to what is being depicted. The image of a person, a group, a community and a nation at large depends to a great extent on how it is being portrayed in the media. Thus media image creates stereotypes and communities hold this prism in their minds and view everything accordingly. A substantial segment of Muslims intelligentsia is sad to witness how the media deal with Muslim-related issues. They see it as a new scheme of thing, where negative news on Muslims is getting prioritized in the agenda of the print media. They fear that more and more inflow of Muslim news and the way it is represented in media, distort their image and concomitantly influence the vulnerable young minds of the country.

KEYWORDS: Media Image Creates, Stereotypes, Segment of Muslims

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary times, no discussion on the public sphere is complete unless it takes into account the role of media in representing concerns of the citizens. Muslims are India's largest religious minority with officially constituting 13.4% of the country's population. (Census, 2001).

According to Sachar (2006), Muslims constitute the second largest religious group in India and thus the largest religious minority.

In the present study, an attempt has been made to study the *"Image of Muslims in Mainstream English Dailies of India: A critical Analysis of four Major Newspapers during 2007 and 2017."* The broad categories examined were: news content, photographs, editorials, articles/features and letters to editor, appearing in four national English newspapers of India during 2007 and 2017.

Unit of Analysis

For the purpose of the paper, unit of analysis defined by the researcher describes the broad meanings given below in alphabetical order:

Articles: The perceptive analysis of topics and issues related to Muslims published in the selected newspapers.

Editorials: The considered opinion of the selected newspapers published in the designated editorial columns on Muslims and their issues of timely topic.

Features: Interesting and useful non-news stories related to Muslims published in the selected newspapers usually written in lighter veins.

News: The reports of events related to Muslim issues published in the selected newspapers that have the potentiality to evoke public interest.

Letters to editor: Feedback of the newspaper readers related to Muslims published in the letters to the editor column in the selected newspapers.

Photographs: All pictures related to Muslim issues taken by camera appearing in the selected newspapers.

The present study has excluded Business page, Sports, Cartoons, Weather Reports and Advertisements.

The researcher has already did his doctorate on this topic. Then the sample years of study were 1997, 2002 and 2007. Now the researcher wants to take into account the first six months of 1997 and 2017.

Rationale

Before Godhra Carnage Year, India was on 80th rank on Press Freedom Index and post Godhra, it was on 128. From that very day it never comes with two digits. In 2007, India was on 120th rank and now in 2017, it gets 136th rank. India slipped three places in the 2017 World Press Freedom rankings to 136th among 180 countries. The dismal performance blamed on Modi's nationalism and growing self-censorship in the mainstream media. (Jyoti, 2017).

So the researchers take the first six months of the current year 2017 into account and compare it to the first six months of year 2007 to see the variation.

Marshall McLuhan, who is universally regarded as the father of communications and media studies and prophet of the information age, call print media a *Hot Medium*, because it engages one sense completely. Hot medium are high in definition.

Srivastava (1991) cites the Henry Ward Beechers famous statement on newspaperapers that "newspapers are the schoolmasters of the common man.

Hard Media Determinism

Nothing in society can happen without the media's involvement. (Chomsky and Herman, 1988).

According to George Gerbner, You know, who tells the stories of a culture really governs human behavior. It is used to be the parent, the school, the church, the community. Now it is a handful of global conglomerates that have nothing to tell, but a great deal to sell. (Weldon, 2011).

According to Kumar (2011), the media has become an extremely important institution, with almost unlimited power in today's society. It initiates debates, facilitates dialogue and shapes public consciousness. He further added that what appears in media, print or visual is widely accepted by people as true.

Ruesch and Bateson (1987) found that following World War 2, mass communication have become so pervasive that no individual that no individual or group can escape their influences for long.

All media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected and unaltered. (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967).

This makes the present study important as a research topic. The media has the power to mould public opinion that is why it is called the fourth pillar of democracy.

Why We Rely on Media

Our immediate experience is very limited, and thus we rely on media in order to make sense of the vast world outside that immediate experience. The media thus create a pseudo-environment that intervenes between self and the world in order to allow people to make sense of the world. (Lippmann, 1922).

Post-modernism

Postmodern media theory focuses on deliberate distortion of reality to create hyperreality. In semiotics and postmodernism, hyperreality is an inability of consciousness to distinguish reality from a simulation of reality, especially in technologically advanced postmodern societies. Hyperreality is seen as a condition in which what is real and what is fiction are seamlessly blended together so that there is no clear distinction between where one ends and the other begins. (Tiffin and Terashima, 2005).

Eco (1986) called it the authentic fake and explores it further by suggesting that the action of hyperreality is to desire reality and in the attempt to achieve the desire, to fabricate a false reality that is to be consumed as real. Hyperreality is significant as a paradigm to explain current cultural conditions. Consumerism could be seen as a contributing factor in the creation of hyperreality or the hyperreal condition. Hyperreality tricks consciousness into detaching from any real emotional engagement, instead opting for artificial simulation, and endless reproductions of fundamentally empty appearances.

Boorstin (1992) said that contemporary culture use simulations and false appearances. America is living in an age of contrivance in which illusions and fabrications had become dominant force in society. Public life is filled with pseudo-events-staged and scripted events that were a kind of counterfeit version of actual happenings. American ideals were being replaced by superficial images.

Baudrillard (1988) said that Simulacra is a representation that is not real. It is a symbol of a copy without an original. Baudrillard further added that the world we live in has been replaced by a copy world, where we seek simulated stimuli and nothing more.

Baudrillard a strong simulacrist claims that in the media and consumer society, people are caught up in the play of images, spectacles and simulacra. They have less and less relationship to an outside, to an external reality. And the narcotized and mesmerized media-saturated consciousness is in such a state of fascination with image and spectacle that the concept of meaning itself dissolves. Baudrillard claims that masses seek spectacle and not meaning. They implode into a silent majority. (Baudrillard, 1993).

Deluze (1990) describes simulacrum as an image without resemblance. Derrida and Stiegler (2002) argue that it is an art factuality that is produced and made rather than a record. Artifactuality is determined by market forces.

Debord (1994) develops and presents the concept of the Spectacle. He traces the development of a modern society in which authentic social life has been replaced with its representation. He encouraged the use of detournement, which involves using spectacular images and language to disrupt the flow of the spectacle. Debord's piece of art is a critique of contemporary consumer culture and commodity fetishism.

Postman (1985) said that the contemporary world was better reflected by Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, whose public was oppressed by their addiction to amusement, than by Orwell's work, where they were oppressed by state control.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is a part of scientific research study to investigate what type of research has been done so far in the area. Review of literature enables the researcher to update his knowledge and understanding of the topic of research. Most of the literature reviewed revealed that media interpretation of Muslims is presented in more negative tones. Most of the literature reviewed showed that India's national media lacks social diversity. It does not truly reflect the country's social profile. Muslims were severely under-represented in the mainstream national media (including the English dailies). One major study showed that 91 % of articles about Muslims were negative. Some studies revealed that national newspapers reported false stories on the infamous episode of Gujarat.

Poole (2002) offers an explanation to debates about how public knowledge of Islam is constructed and circulated? At the same time examining the claim that Muslims are universally demonized.

Richardson (2004) explores how elite newspapers are implicated in the production and reproduction of anti-Muslim racism. He examines the background of press, analyzed the news as a product which must be sold to elite consumers in order to satisfy the advertisers and make a profit.

Martinez (2003) argued that the media have been primary contributors to an erroneous image of Islam by stereotyping all Muslims as being fundamentalists or terrorists. He concluded that there is no resemblance between *Media Islam* and *True Islam*.

Kasim (1999) argued that negative words were always used to describe Muslims viz., terrorists, fundamentalists, fanatics et al. He was of the view that if a suspect of a crime is a Muslim, the media take the opportunity to bombard Muslims with all kinds of accusations. He suggests the media, that associating an entire group with the actions of some of its members is unfair and acceptable. He added that media should be cautious when playing with words.

Chomsky (1989) said that media serve the interests of state and corporate power, which are closely interlinked, framing their reporting and analysis in a manner supportive of established privilege and limiting debates and discussions accordingly.

In a survey designed and executed by Chamaria, Kumar and Yadav (2006) found that India's national media lacks social diversity; it does not reflect the country's social profile. They added that Muslims are severely under-represented in the national media (mainly in the English media).

Qazi (2017) said that the fatwa from Darul uloom Deoband asking Muslims to refrain from participating in media debates on Muslim issues makes a lot of sense. In an ideal world, journalism is a profession of incredible integrity. Good

journalists are among the most dextrous and skilled people in the world and also the most respected. We have all benefitted from the work of indefatigable journalists who put life, limb, family and even sanity on the line for the sake of truth. He added that media must desist from fanning anti-Muslim sentiments. Last but not least, He concluded that journalism is failing in its role of objective reporting and analysis and continues its job by rehashing tired narratives of radical Islam.

Said (1981) uncovers how Western media cover any event related with Islam in a framework created by pre-conditions, prejudices and political interests.

Malhan (1985) is of the view that the soul of people is in the press. But the press at times is in the hands of a few financial magnates who may murder its soul by corruption or narrowness of commercial interests. The second press commission feels that newspapers controlled by the big business are liable to become vehicles of expression of the ideologies of their owners.

Ashish (2003) comments on the Indian English Medias biased reporting on Gujarat riots. He said that today's journalism is being governed by an ideology rather than the principles of the profession.

Vergheese, Padgaonkar and Patel (2002) led a fact finding mission into the riots in Gujarat, post-Godhra and the role of media in particular. They concluded that English media in India reported false stories on Gujarat.

Said (1981), Dijk (1991), Noakes (1998) and Hafez (2000) studied the role of the British media in spreading negative images on Islam and concluded that Muslims are described as divergent, irrational and unable to integrate in society.

Ali, Shahzad and Khalid (2008) studied and investigated the coverage of 12 Muslim countries by Newsweek and Time magazines during the period from 1991-2001. They concluded that portrayal of all twelve Muslims countries by Newsweek and Time magazine was dominantly negative.

Said (1978) another study about orientalism has also discussed about the role of Western media in manipulation of images of Islam.

Graber (1989) exposes the impact of United States mass media in portraying the negative image of Muslims.

Akel (2006) is of the view that stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam are rooted in medias prejudice and ignorance. Islam is looked as an *extremist*, *terrorist* and *fundamental* religion.

In his contribution, Mitra (2009) endorsed the view that the English language media of India does not project a positive picture of the Muslim community.

Rawat (1998) observes that the prestigious letters to editor column of newspaper is being hijacked by the letter writer brigade of the Sangh Parivar, which has been visible in all the newspapers carrying their crusade against Muslims.

Livingstone (2007) study showed that 91 percent of articles about Muslims were negative. He found that only 4 percent of the 352 articles studied reflected positive stories.

Katju (2011) slammed the media saying that he is very disappointed with the way in which the Indian media works. He added that it is the deliberate action of the media to divide the people on religious lines and that is totally against the professional ethics and national interest.

Volkmer (2006) said that the newspapers have lost their authenticity. They have been sold to the capitalist forces.

Objectives

The broad objective was to investigate the quantum and characterization of Muslims and Muslim related issues and concomitantly the image of Muslim community in the mainstream English dailies of India.

The specific objective is to measure Muslims image in leading dailies in proportion to overall space the dailies during first six months of 2007 and 2017.

The second specific objective is to study the tone of Muslim-centred content in mainstream English dailies of India during the sample period.

Hypotheses

In order to verify these objectives, hypothetical statements were developed. (To honour the objectivity, which is the pure soul of research, the researcher after reviewing available literature drafts these hypotheses). In choosing these hypotheses, literature review is inspiration.

They were: **H1-** Indian mainstream English dailies consistently during 2007 and 2017 gave more negative coverage to Muslim-related content, as compared to positive coverage.

H2- During the current year 2017, Indian dailies gave Muslim related topics a sufficient space in a negative tone as compared to decade ago year 2007.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The amount and kind of information presented in the media is a decisive factor that ultimately has an impact on the image of a community or a group perceived by the society. Therefore it was logical to adopt content analysis as the research methodology to study the image of Muslims in mainstream English dailies of India.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (1983), research dealing with newspapers is one of the first areas of mass communication research to be developed. The initial interest in such research came from colleges and universities. The first issue of the Journalism Bulletin (published in 1924) carried an article by William Bleyer, entitled "Research Problems and Newspaper Analysis." It presented a list of possible research topics in journalism. Among them were: (1)-the effects of form and typography on the ease and rapidity of newspaper reading; (2)- the effects of newspaper content on circulation; and (3)- analysis of newspaper content.

Keeping in mind the nature of the topic, the researcher has applied the methodology of content analysis in order to track down the coverage of Muslim news in mainstream English dailies of India.

Now it is clear that methodologically the study is conducted as per the principles of content analysis. Units were decided, well-defined categories were systematically selected for inclusion, and coded for data analysis. The four selected newspapers were analysed to quantify the content related to the Muslim community during 2007 and 2017.

The content analysis is one of the most authentic ways to quantify and investigate the content of the print media,

hence it is widely in use for carrying image related analysis. It is essentially an organized and systematic procedure and according to Walizer and Wiener (1978), it is systematic procedure design to examine the content of recorded information. In line with the just mentioned description, four mainstream newspapers were selected and analyzed to quantify the content related to the Muslim community during 2007 and 2017. Berelson (1952) said that there are two categories of content analysis- *What is said? And How it is said?*

The researcher has examined broadly “What is said,” in terms of space covered in the presentation of Muslim related content and “How it is said” in terms of what type of tone, the mainstream English dailies of India adopted in covering Muslim related issues.

The coding is done by the 5 research experts from Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, Mass Communication and Linguistic departments of AMU.

The study made use of the quantitative method of content analysis and analysed the nature of content on three broad qualitative dimensions i.e. positive, negative and neutral.

Positive Stories: The stories in which the issues related to Muslims affairs were projected in a positive way. The stories/coverages of Muslims which depict development and positive changes in their political, economic and social sector, promotion of peace and harmony, involvement in the accords/agreement leading to peace and prosperity with other religious communities were coded as positive.

Negative Stories: Stories related to Muslims which reflect social strife, natural and human steered deaths and destruction, political instability, catastrophic, chaos and anarchy, shabby living conditions, criminal and immoral acts, and political, economic and social intrastate and interstate conflicts and disputes were coded as negative.

Neutral Stories: The stories that carry no emphasis on either positive or negative aspects of the Muslims economic, political and social life were coded as neutral. Neutral category is not included in the test of significance in the present study, because neutral coverage does not clearly mention emphasis on the Muslims image.

The tone of the Muslim-related content covered in the newspapers was categorized into three above well defined parameters. They were **positive, negative and neutral**. As a first step, the space covered was measured in square centimetre (not mentioned in the paper because of the word limit boundations), and then the categorization of the data was evolved, followed by its analysis into these categories using the simple but effective statistical tool of percentage. The data so collected was presented using tables in percentage form. The tone and representation of the news in terms of its response evoking quality was examined for the quantitative analysis.

The Selected Newspapers and Sample Size

The four mainstream English dailies of India selected for the study were- The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu and The Indian Express. Also the secondary sources-official Government data, reports and literature review were included to support the study.

The study under investigation has taken year 2007 (January 1, 2007- June 30, 2007) and year 2017 (January 1, 2017- June 30, 2017).

English daily newspapers were taken as the universe for the present study because of the fact that the English

newspapers in India were growing both in influence and popularity. The distinguished feature of the leading English newspapers is their “serious” aspect. The English newspapers in India were also well established and produced both in technical competence and editorial performance and they stand comparison with the best of the newspapers in the world. (Murthy, 2000).

The present study has taken only Delhi editions as the sample because of ease and access to these newspapers. Every issue of The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu and The Indian Express published in 2007 and 2017 from first January to June 30th was taken for close scrutiny with the help of census inquiry.

Every printed material that falls under the designated categories related to Muslims published in the form of news stories, photographs, editorials, articles/features and letters to editor was identified, categorized and included for analysis. The length and breadth of the column was measured for the quantitative analysis.

The total area covered under the selected defined categories and measured as part of quantitative analysis. For the present study, the researcher uses the formula total Muslim related issues divided by total area of newspaper multiplied by hundred. The researcher has avoided number wise count of news, photographs, editorials, articles/features and letters to editor, because the size of these categories varies and there was no fix space allotted to any of the mentioned categories that is why the researcher took item based area wise measurement.

Test of Significance

In the present study, z-test was applied to find out the significant differences. Z-test was preferred, because the sample size was more than 30. (University of Leicester, 2000).

The researcher used three levels of significance- significant, highly significant and insignificant.

Significant: When negative projection of Muslims was greater than greater than positive projection. In statistical test, when z-calculated was more than z-tabulated value i.e. 1.64.

Insignificant: When the difference between negative and positive attribute was same, or a minor difference found, but this difference was seen to be statistically not significant. In statistical test, when z-calculated was less than z-tabulated value i.e. 1.64.

Highly Significant: When extreme projection of Muslims was found in the mainstream English dailies of India, when z-calculated value exceeds 8.

Observations

Table 1: Image of Muslims in four Mainstream English Newspapers of India During 2007 & 2017 Including News, Photographs, Letters to Editor, Articles/Features And Editorials

Newspapers	2007				2017			
	+	-	N	T	+	-	N	T
TOI	0.4	2.6	0.1	3.1	0.1	3.3	0.1	3.5
HT	0.4	2.3	0.2	2.9	0.2	2.9	0.3	3.4
TH	0.7	1.6	0.1	2.4	0.6	1.8	0.4	2.8
IE	1.2	1.2	0.5	2.9	1.4	1.2	0.3	2.9

(Statistical Technique = Percentage)

+ = Positive coverage of Muslims - = Negative coverage of Muslims
N = Neutral Coverage of Muslims T = Total Coverage of Muslims
TOI = The Times of India HT = Hindustan Times
TH = The Hindu IE = The Indian Express

The table-1 represents the coverage of Muslims in four mainstream English dailies of India: The Times of India (TOI), Hindustan Times (HT), The Hindu (TH) and The Indian Express (IE). The data in the table-1 indicates the total coverage (T), positive coverage (+), negative coverage (-) and the neutral coverage (N) of Muslims as revealed when the data was analysed from first January 2007 to 30th June 2007 and from first January 2017 to 30th June 2017 of all the four selected newspapers.

It is pertinent to point out here that the total coverage related to Muslim issues and consequently their image projection was being calculated by measuring all the news in the selected newspapers, using the formula-total Muslim-related news, photographs, editorials, articles/features and letters to editor, divided by total news, photographs, editorials, articles/features and letters to editor, published in the newspapers, multiplied by hundred.

In 2007, the total coverage related to Muslim issues carried by TOI was 3.1 %, while after a decade in 2017, it was 3.5 %.

In 2007, HT covered 2.9 % as its total coverage of Muslims. It was 3.4 % in 2017.

2.4 % was the total coverage of Muslims in 2007 by TH. In 2017, the total coverage was 2.8 %.

2.9 % was the total coverage of Muslims in 2007 and 2017 by IE.

The positive coverage of TOI was 0.4 % in the year 2007, while the figure was only 0.1% in 2017 respectively.

The positive coverage of HT in the year of 2007 was 0.4 %. In 2017, it was 0.2 %.

0.7 % was the positive coverage of TH in 2007. On the other hand in 2017, it covered 0.6 % positive coverage.

Space given by IE to the positive coverage of Muslims in 2007 was 1.2 %, and in 2017, it was increased to 1.4 %.

The negative coverage given by TOI was 2.6 % in 2007, while 3.3 % was the negative coverage of TOI in 2017.

HT covered 2.3 % of Muslim news in a negative tone in the year 2007. In 2017, it covered 2.9 % respectively.

1.6 % was the negative coverage of Muslims covered by TH in the year 2007, while it covered 1.8 % in 2017.

Negative coverage remains the same by IE during the both sample years i.e. 1.2 %.

The neutral coverage by TOI in years 2007 and 2017 remains same i.e. 0.1 %.

HT covered 0.2 % neutral coverage in 2007, while in the year 2017, it covered 0.3%.

TH covered 0.1 % neutral coverage of Muslims in 2007, while in 2017, it covered 0.4 % respectively.

0.5 % was the neutral coverage of IE in 2007 and in 2017, it covered 0.3 %.

Table 2: Significance Level of Overall Image of Muslims in four Mainstream English Dailies of India During 2007 & 2017 Including News, Photographs, Letters to Editor, Articles/Features and Editorials

Years	P1	P2	Z-cal	Z-tab	Significance
2007	0.68	0.23	7.03	1.64	Significant
2017	0.73	0.18	9.16	1.64	Highly Significant

P1= Proportion of Negative image of Muslims

P2= Proportion of positive image of Muslims

Z-cal= Calculated value of Test of Significance for difference of Proportions

Z-tab= Tabulated value from standard normal table at 5% level of Significance is 1.64 for one-tailed z-test.

Significant= Negative projection of Muslims was greater than Positive projection.

Highly Significant= Extreme negative projection of Muslims was found in mainstream English dailies of India because it exceeds 8.

With the application of z-test, the following result has emerged. To describe results from the table-2 in the year 2007, Z-calculated value was 7.03, it was more than the Z-tabulated value that is 1.64. So, it was significant. This means that negative projection of Muslim related issues in four mainstream English dailies of India in 2007 was more than the positive projection. It was also clear from the table-2 that the negative tone towards the Muslims image was 0.68, more than the positive image 0.23. The analysis of the data reveals that the alternative hypothesis 'H1' was true, in case of projection of negative dimension related to Muslim issues in the selected mainstream English newspapers.

The table-2 also reveals that during the year 2017, the image of Muslims was highly significant (Z-calculated value was 9.16), it means that the issues related to Muslims was more in a negative tone. The table-2 also reveals that the negative tone towards the Muslim image was 0.73, more than the positive image which was 0.18. Here again alternative hypothesis 'H1' was accepted.

This means that first hypothesis 'H1' i.e. "Indian mainstream English dailies consistently over two different period of times gave more negative coverage to Muslim-related issues as compared to positive coverage" was completely accepted.

It was also verified from the table-2, that during 2017, Indian mainstream English dailies gave more space to Muslim-related topics in a negative tone as compared to 2007..Hence, alternative hypothesis 'H2' i.e. "during 2017, Indian mainstream English dailies gave Muslim-related topics a sufficient space in a negative tone as compared to a decade ago in 2007" was accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

Being the second largest constituent of humanity, Muslims are bound to be an important subject of media discourse. The literature review undertaken indicated that Muslim community is facing a number of challenges from within and outside. It has received a lot of what may be called negative image at global level. The present study when analyzing the media scenario in India, it revealed that the media coverage also reflects a similar trend. Because of the media portrayals, mis-conception in India gained popular currency, predominantly reinforcing the negative beliefs. Often they are projected as terrorists, anti-nationals, communal, fundamentalists, fanatics etc.

Against the backdrop of growing mis-conception in the media, as reflected in its content, the present study was an attempt to explore the issue of Muslim coverage and its concomitant image mirroring potential, having a bearing on the perception in public domain.

The content analysis and their codification of the selected newspapers reflect some glaring facts about the media portrayal of Muslims in India.

When six months coverage of Muslim related content was analyzed, it was found that all the selected newspapers consistently in two different period of times were statistically significant, means they gave more negative coverage to Muslim related news as compared to positive coverage. It was also found that 2017 was more statistically significant than 2007.

The selection and projection of negative dimension of a community as revealed by this study have dangerous consequences and likely to place Muslims in a more disadvantageous position. These four sample newspapers are believed to influence the thinking of both the common man and the ruling elite. These newspapers stand out as Indias quality press, having a wide appeal, particularly among the educated and the young. Knowingly or unknowingly, they are becoming a cause to impair national unity, solidarity, integrity and social progress. The data analyzed point out clearly that these four sample newspapers gave extreme negative projection to Muslim-related content.

Literature Review also reflects that media serves the interests of State and Corporate Power. We request media to work on ethical grounds.

Contemporary world is driven by hard media determinism. Nothing in society can happen without the medias involvement. Media governs our behaviour. They form the taste and dilute judgment. As an extremely important institution, with utmost unlimited power in two days Global Village, they shape public consciousness.

Newspapers are considered as school masters of common man. So newspapers should be very cautious when playing with words.

Media has created the hyper reality picture of Muslims. Sometimes, they use simulations and sometimes simulacra. Now we request mainstream English dailies of India to come out from the spectacle, hyper reality, art factuality and introduce world to the beauty of reality.

The role of the mainstream English dailies becomes all the more significant to address the expectation of creating a cohesive society or at least reduce the influence of divisive elements.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited to analyze the image of Muslims in four leading dailies of India. Hence the findings cannot be generalized to other mainstream dailies, vernacular newspapers, magazines, broadcast media and new media.

The present study concerns only image of Muslims, hence the findings cannot be generalized to other religious communities in India.

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