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## **Portrayal of Women Issues by Pakistani and Indian English Leading Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

This research investigates the portrayal of women issues by Daily The News International and Times of India from January 2019 to December 2020. It is a comparative study of women portrayal by Pakistani and Indian English elite newspapers. It is a census study conducted through content analysis of 17 editorials of Daily The News International and 25 editorials of Times of India. All editorial sentences are divided into 19 categories according to the nature of data. The researcher used two communication theories; framing and feminism, and concluded that media frames women issue as 'factual' in news stories while it portrays them 'negatively' in editorials. The study found out that both newspapers gave 21.05% positive, 56.62% negative & 22.32% neutral editorial coverage to the issue, so overall coverage remained positive. The research also indicated that both newspapers (Daily The News International & Times of India) highlight variety of women issues pertaining murder story, honor killing, suicide, kidnapping, torture, sexual harassment, rape, molestation, domestic violence, battering, marriage issues, acid attack, misbehave, fire burning, hurts, lack of political participation, domestic abuse and stories of eloping.

**Key Term:** The News, Times of India, framing, feminism

### **Introduction**

In underdeveloped countries, women issues related to socioeconomic empowerment has been an issue for decades. But the wave of women empowerment among developed countries in 1980s changed the perspective of considering women as an equal and active social member. Women empowerment movements, around the world, has mobilized the women towards identifying and solving their relevant issues in any society. Now,

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violation of women rights and violence against women has become the prominent and key issue of any society. Media of any society highlights these issues on priority basis but still, there are some media practitioners, who highlight these issues negatively. The researcher conducted this research to check the portrayal to women issues in media.

Pakistani women are now working in every field of life; media, politics, police, judiciary, armed forces, secret agencies, transportation, banking, teaching & health but still they are facing sexual harassment, injustice and inequality (Shaheed & Mumtaz, [1998](#)).

Women population is the 50% of the world. In some countries they have their own identity, status and role; they are treated equal to men. But some other countries they are treated as an inferior creature, they don't have their identity, role and respect. Media of all over the world presenting women as an imaginary creature, as a sex symbol, weak and thin and emotional but the reality is totally opposite from it. Pakistani and Indian media also presenting women as a show piece and filler as well as media of both countries highlighting many issues of women like; violence against women, societal and cultural hindrance, social and economic issues but there is lacking of solutions of the issues from media practitioners (Badar, [2013](#)).

### **Significance of the Study**

Many studies have been done on women issues but the present research is different from previous researches as it is based on 19 diversified categories of women issues published in Daily *The News International* and *Times of India*. It is also different due to its hypothesis and objectives. This study will not only be helpful in academics but it will also help to address the actual problems which are being faced by women in Pakistan and India. This study explored those which women issues are more or less discussed and the role of print media regarding women issues. This will help in the reduction of women issues as well as it will help in the formulation of legislation related to women after highlighting the issues in the results of this research. Media practitioners may also get help from this study to tackle such type of issues in future. It will be the positive addition in the world of research.

## **Frequently Published Issues of Women in Pakistani and Indian Print Media**

The researcher selected one newspaper (Times of India) from India and one (*The News International*) from Pakistan. Both newspapers highlighted variety of women issues which are mentioned below:

- Murder
- Honor Killing
- Suicide
- Kidnapping
- Torture
- Sexual Harassment
- Rape
- Molestation
- Domestic Abuse
- Battering
- Marriage Issues
- Acid Attack
- Misbehave
- Fire Burning
- Hurts
- Lack of Political Participation
- Domestic Abuse
- Eloping
- Criticism against government about women issues

## **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study have been framed by the researcher in the following manners;

- To analyze that which types of women issues are commonly highlighted on print media.
- To examine that which types of women issues are less highlighted
- To evaluate the role of print media as how they cover the news about women issues.

## Literature Review

Seema (2018) in her study “Analysis of Mass Media Appealing to Women” says that media projects an image of a devalued, inferior and economically and emotionally depend woman. In spite of being the central character of fiction, in most cases, she has no real human value, has a low self-concept, is passive, does not counter –act, is not dominant, has narrow interest, has no decision-making power, is in search of “he”, is not rational, is not treated aggressively, is being emotionally exploited, is economically unproductive, is resigned to fate, is beautiful and calls for help.

The UKs (2015) researcher stated in their study that it hardly to define and identify supportive and non-supportive news coverage as objectively. They identified that the mass media use of derogatory language, the inclusion of photographs of women accompanying news stories that have nothing to do with women-related issues, advertising role models of women as ‘housewives’ and as passive recipients of male attention. Nor can the elimination of women-related problems from editorials and their being limited to superficial subject like fashion and beauty matters be considered supportive. They analyzed, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the impact and content reporting and the degree of coverage accorded to women-related matters. They also disclosed that urge newspaper and magazine owners and editors to give additional and constructive coverage to women-related problems

Parvez and Roshan (2010) said in “Mass Media and Women: A Study on Portrayal of Status and Violence” that Pakistani women is portrayal in Tv drama as victim character in the shape of wives and daughter rather than strong women. Monrovia (2014) says that Association des femme’s journalist-AFJ analyzed news coverage of women and women issues in 70 countries .it found that female news was reported only seventeen percent. Women was portrayal was like a injure party.

Taimour (2010) presents in his article as “the performance of press during women movement in Pakistan” that Pakistani private TV channels are highlighting the women issues and has become a voice of women and the Urdu media especially daily newspapers have few specific woman

editions to take up the serious women issues but English newspapers are promoting women issues

Manzoor (2013) investigates the attitudes of Pakistan print media and women issues in her study. Pakistani society is experiencing mixed trends regarding status of women is concerned. Shahwar (2013) narrates in her article as “a study of audience perception about portrayal of women in advertisements of Pakistani electronic media” that mostly advertisers take women as eye-catching entity to capture the female’s beauty for increasing the demand of product.

Onyinyechi (2014) says in his research paper as “Representation of women’s image in Nigerian newspapers. News Media and Mass communication” that the portrayal of Nigerian women is negative in the newspapers specially in field of education, economic and politic.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework is the necessary part of every media research. It is a frame of theory, in which the research put in it. There are two theories those are directly related to the research and can fit as a theoretical framework for this research. These theories are:

#### **Framing Theory**

The researcher chooses this theory as a theoretical framework because he/she checks the coverage of women issues. The researcher analyzed the data according to the frame and slants of news and editorial sentences in the Times of India & The News International during January 2012 to December 2013. This research fit into framing theory because of its analysis techniques. So, the researcher completes her research under the core assumptions of framing theory.

#### **Feminism Theory**

The present research is related to the women issues and the researcher tried to check the coverage of women rights, women violence, women status, women representation, women participation and women conditions. So, this theory is directly becoming the theoretical framework of this present research and this research is fit into it.

## Hypothesis

- H1*: It is more likely that *Times of India* has different approaches in presenting women issues as compared to *Daily the News Pakistan*.
- H2*: It is more likely that *Times of India* gives more coverage about women issues as compared to *Daily the News*.
- H3*: It is more likely that *Times of India* is more outspoken in portrayal of women issues than *Daily the News*.
- H4*: It is more likely that *Times of India* is more critic toward Govt regarding women issues.

## Research Methodology

It is a comparative study of editorials of Daily ‘*The News International*’ and Daily ‘*Times of India*’ from January 2019 to December 2020 regarding the coverage of women issues.

To conduct this study, the researcher collected two years newspapers of Daily *The News International* and *Times of India* i.e. from January 2019 to December 2020. Almost 730 copies of each news papers were analyzed by the researcher. Hence researcher studied all editorial of two years from January 2019 to December 2020, which were directly related to topic. The researcher found 25 editorials, in *Times of India* and 17 editorials in Daily *The News International* which were related to the topic of research. This census study of editorial was conducted to check the portrayal of women issues according to the newspaper’s policies. The researcher compared that which types of women issues are less and more highlighted in Pakistani and Indian newspaper.

Content analysis technique is used to evaluate the content of news and editorials. The universe of study includes all editorials published by Daily ‘*The News International*’ and Daily ‘*Times of India*’ regarding women issues from January 2019 to December 2020. The total population of study contains found 25 editorials; in daily ‘*Times of India*’ while 17 editorials in Daily ‘*The News International*’. Unit of analysis means the unit or thing which is to be measured during the research. The unit of analysis is sentences of editorial regarding women issues. As this research was a censes study, hence the researcher did not choose any sample out of the population and no sampling was done instead all the found 25 editorials, in daily

‘Times of India’ while 17 editorials in Daily ‘*The News International*’ were studied and analyzed. When the population size is not too big and can be easily studied so sampling is not done.

### Data Analysis

This chapter comprises the analysis of gathered data through percentage method. The results are presented in the form of tables and graphs. The researcher gathered all data through content analysis method after construction of categories. There are 19 categories constructed on the bases of researches related to women issues. Rape, kidnapping, molestation and sexual harassment are the issues which were repeatedly highlighted in the editorials of both newspapers (*The News International* & *Times of India*). The researcher used qualitative and quantitative methods in this research. Analysis of data is presented as under;

**Figure 1**

*Number of Sentences about Rape in Both Newspapers*

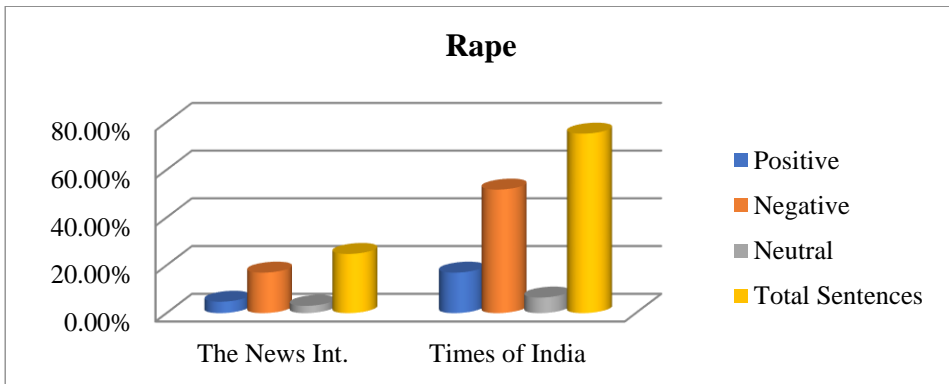


Figure 1 shows that both newspapers published 17 editorials (4 by *The News International* & 13 by *Times of India*) comprised on 230 sentences in which 57 (24.78%) published in *The News International* while 173 (75.21%) published by *Times of India* regarding rape cases during purposed period of research. Both newspapers published 50 (21.73%) sentences in positive way, in which *The News International* published 11 (4.78%) and *Times of India* published 39 (16.95%) sentences. *Times of India* published 119 (51.73%) sentences in its editorials in negative way and *The News*



*International* published 39 (16.95%) sentences while both newspapers collectively published 158 (68.69%) sentences in negative way. Data shows that 22 (9.56%) sentences regarding rape remained neutral in which *The News International* published 7 (3.04%) sentences while Times of India published 15 (6.52%) sentences. Data also shows that Times of India given 50.43% more coverage regarding rape in its editorials than *The News International*.

## Figure 2

Number of Sentences about Women Murders in Both Dailies

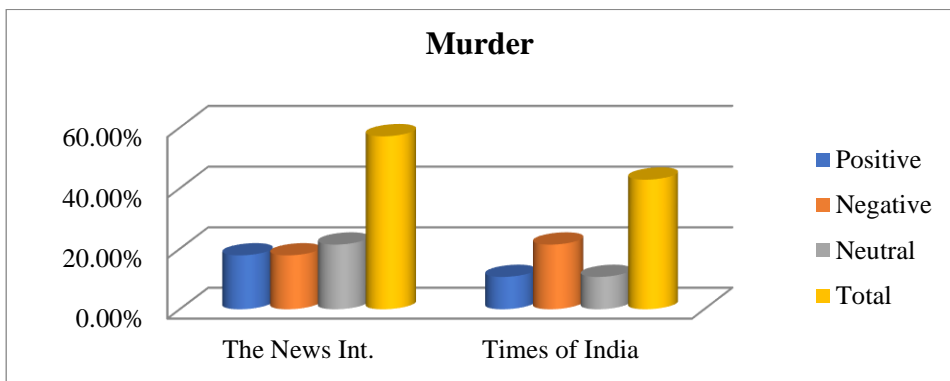


Figure 2 shows that both newspapers published 2 editorials (1 by *The News International* & 1 by Times of India) comprised on 28 sentences in which 16 (57.14%) published in *The News International* while 12 (42.85%) published by Times of India regarding murder cases during purposed period of research. Both newspapers published 8 (28.57%) sentences in positive way, in which *The News International* published 5 (17.85%) and Times of India published 3 (10.71%) sentences.

Times of India published 6 (21.42%) sentences in its editorials in negative way and *The News International* published 5 (17.85%) sentences while both newspapers collectively published 11 (39.28%) sentences in negative way. Data shows that 9 (32.14%) sentences regarding murder remained neutral in which *The News International* published 6 (21.42%) sentences while Times of India published 3 (10.71%) sentences. Data also shows that *The News International* given 14.29% more coverage regarding murder in its editorials than Times of India.

**Figure 3**

*News About Battering in Both Dailies*

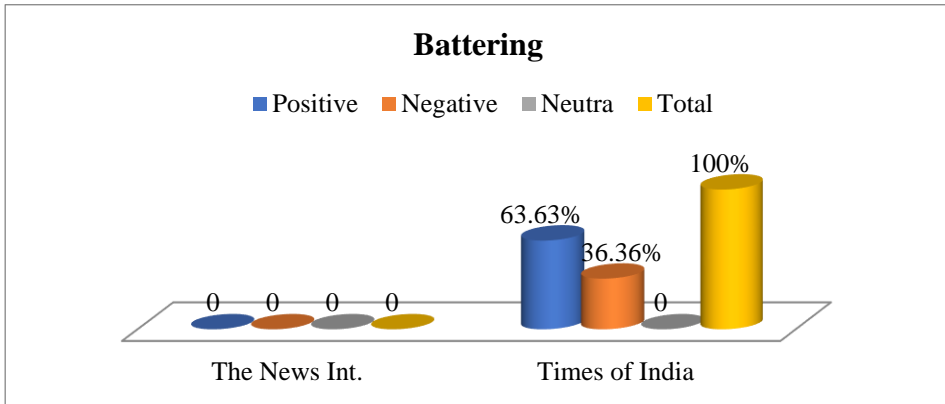


Figure 3 shows that Times of India give 100% more coverage on battering issue as compare to *The News International*. Times of India published 1 editorial comprised on 11 sentences, in which 7 (63.63%) sentences remained positive while 4 (36.36%) sentences remained negative.

**Figure 4**

*News About Domestic Violence in Both Dailies*

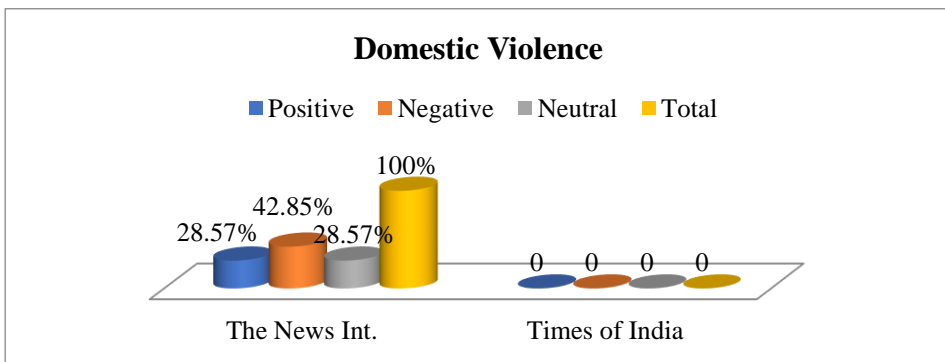


Figure 4 shows that *The News International* give 100% more coverage on domestic violence as compare to Times of India. *The News International* published 2 editorials comprised on 28 sentences, in which 8 (28.57%)

sentences remained positive, 12 (42.85%) sentences remained negative while 8 (28.57%) sentences remained neutral.

**Figure 5**

*Coverage of Political Participation in Both Dailies*

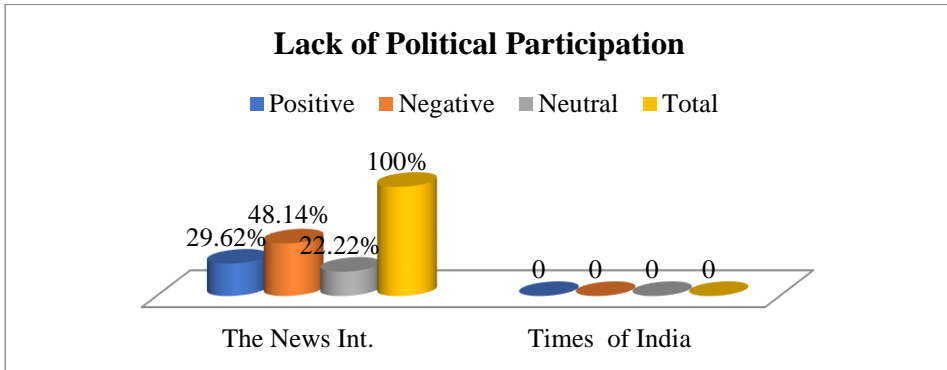


Figure 5 shows that *The News International* give 100% more coverage on lack of political participation as compare to Times of India. *The News International* published 2 editorials comprised on 27 sentences, in which 8 (29.62%) sentences remained positive, 13 (48.14%) sentences remained negative while 6 (22.22%) sentences remained neutral.

**Figure 6**

*Items About Honor Killing in Both Dailies*

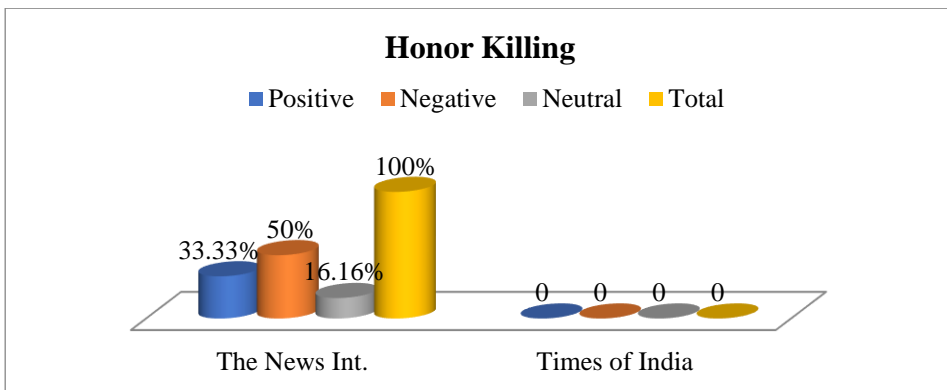


Figure 6 shows that *The News International* give 100% more coverage on honor killing as compare to Times of India. *The News International* published 2 editorials comprised on 24 sentences, in which 8 (33.33%) sentences remained positive, 12 (50%) sentences remained negative while 4 (16.16%) sentences remained neutral.

**Figure 7**

*Items about Domestic Abuse*

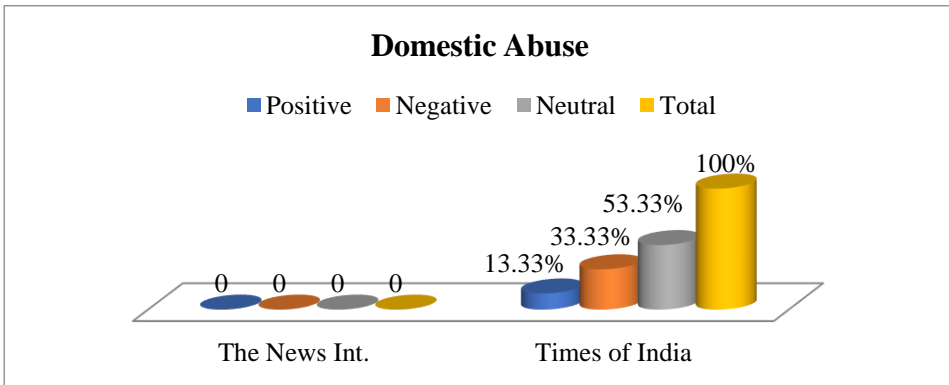


Figure 7 shows that Times of India give 100% more coverage on domestic abuse as compare to *The News International*. Times of India published 2 editorials comprised on 30 sentences, in which 4(13.33%) sentences remained positive, 10(33.33%) sentences remained negative while 16(53.33%) sentences remained neutral about domestic abuse.

**Figure 8**

*Criticism Against Government About Women Issues*

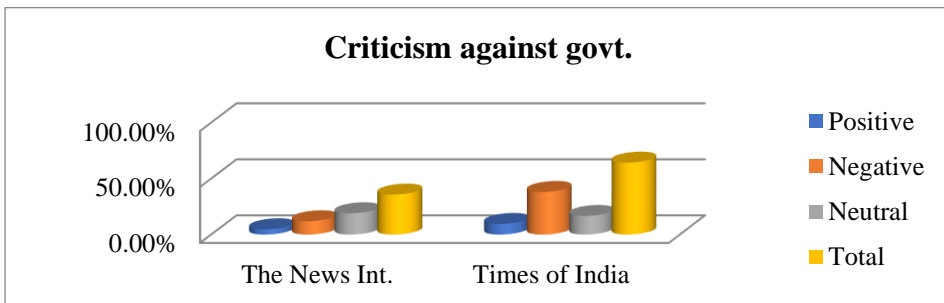


Figure 8 shows that both newspapers published 3 editorials (1 by *The News International* & 2 by Times of India) comprised on 42 sentences in which 15 (35.71%) published in *The News International* while 27 (64.28%) published by Times of India regarding criticism against women during purposed period of research. Both newspapers published 6 (14.28%) sentences in positive way, in which *The News International* published 2 (4.76%) and Times of India published 4 (9.52%) sentences. Times of India published 16 (38.09%) sentences in its editorials in negative way and *The News International* published 5 (11.90%) sentences while both newspapers collectively published 21 (50%) sentences in negative way. Data shows that 15 (35.71%) sentences remained neutral in which *The News International* published 8 (19.04%) sentences while Times of India published 7 (16.66%) sentences. Data also shows that Times of India given 28.57% more coverage regarding criticism against government in its editorials than *The News International*.

**Figure 9**

*Items about Miscellaneous*

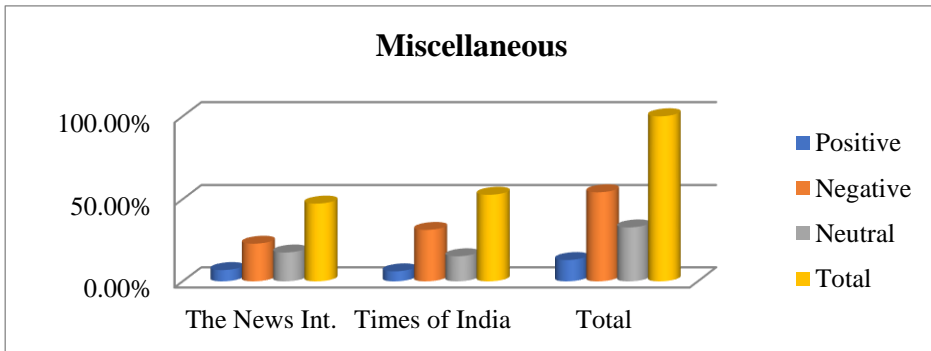


Figure 9 shows that both newspapers (Daily *The News International* & Times of India) published 11 editorials (5 by *The News International* & 6 by Times of India) comprised on 131 sentences on miscellaneous category. These sentences published on sexual harassment, molestation, eloping, acid attack, marriage issues, suicide, kidnapping, torture, misbehave, fire burning, hurts and on other issues like; dowry, property, late marriages, fundamental rights. Both newspapers published 17 (12.97%) positive, 71

(54.19%) negative and 43 (32.82%) neutral coverage in this regard. Times of India have given 5% more coverage in this category.

**Figure 10**

*Total Editorial Coverage of the News International Regarding Women Issues*

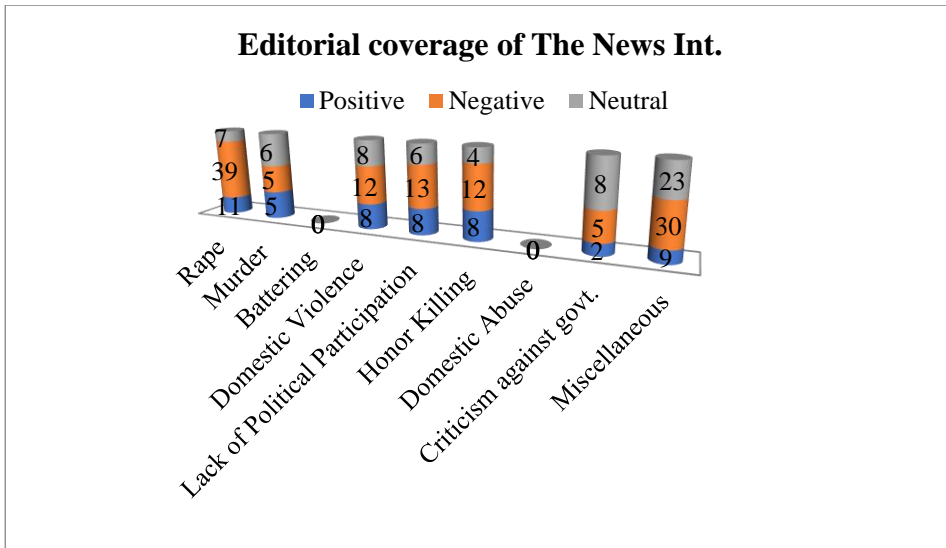


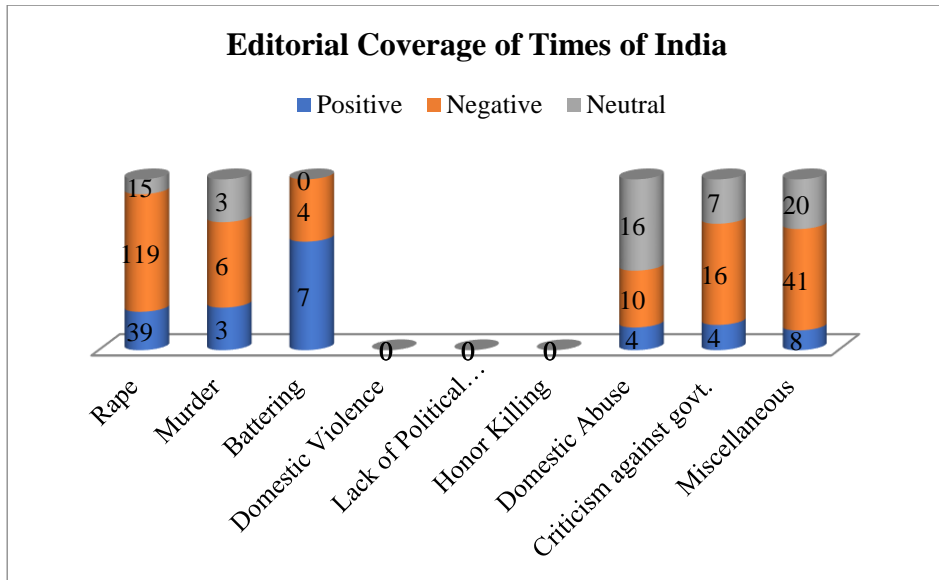
Figure 10 show that *The News International* published 17 editorials comprised on 229 sentences regarding women issues during purposed period of research. *The News International* published 24.89% sentences on rape, 6.98% on murder, 12.22% on domestic violence, 11.79% on lack of political participation, 10.48% on honor killing, 6.55% on criticism against government and 27.07% sentences on miscellaneous, while 51 (22.27%) sentences published in positive way, 116 (50.65%) in negative way and 62 (27.07%) in neutral way. This data shows that *The News International* given more editorial coverage on rape cases.

Figure 11 shows that Times of India published 25 editorials comprised on 322 sentences regarding women issues during purposed period of research. Times of India published 53.72% sentences on rape, 3.72% on murder, 9.31% on domestic abuse, 8.38% on criticism against government and 21.42% sentences on miscellaneous, while 65 (20.18%) sentences

published in positive way, 196 (60.86%) in negative way and 61 (18.94%) sentences in neutral way. The data shows that Times of India has given more editorial coverage on rape cases.

**Figure 11**

*Total Editorial Coverage of Times of India Regarding Women Issues*



**Figure 12**

*Comparison of Editorial Coverage of both Newspapers (Daily The News International & Times of India)*

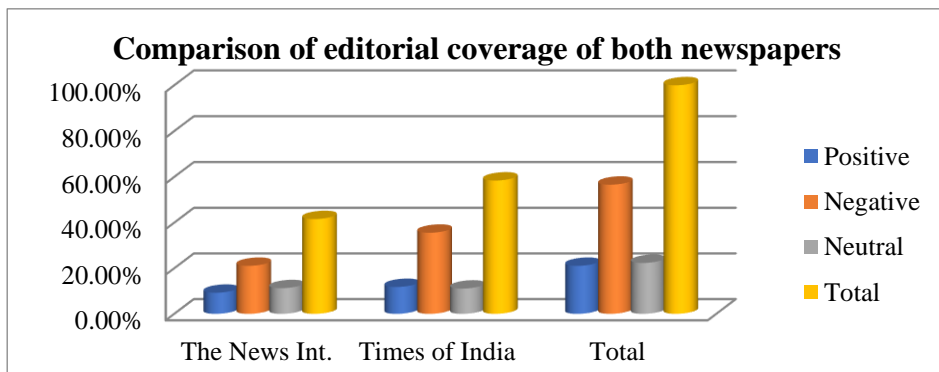


Figure 12 shows that *The News International* and Times of India published 42 editorials (17 by *The News International* & 25 by Times of India). Both newspapers published 551 sentences in these 42 editorials, in which 229 (41.56%) sentences published by *The News International* while 322 (58.43%) sentences published by Times of India, which shows that Times of India has given 17.13% more editorial coverage than *The News International* during purposed period of research. Both newspapers published 116 (21.05%) sentences in positive way, in which 51 (9.25%) published by *The News International* and 65 (11.79%) published by Times of India. 312 (56.62%) sentences published in negative way, in which 116 (21.05%) published by *The News International* and 196 (35.57%) published by Times of India. 123 (22.32%) sentences published in neutral way by the both newspapers, in which 62 (11.25%) published by *The News International* and 61 (11.07%) published by Times of India. Gathered data shows that both newspapers given 34% more negative coverage as compare to positive and neutral on women issues in their editorial during purposed period of research.

### Discussion

This study conducted on the basis of content analysis. It's a census study in which the research analyzed 42 editorials published by the both newspapers during purposed period of research. *The News International* published 17 editorials comprised on 229 sentences, in which 51(22.27%) sentences remained positive, 116(50.65%) remained negative and 62(27.07%) sentences remained neutral, which shows that *The News International* given more negative editorial coverage while Times of India published 25 editorials comprised on 322 sentences regarding women issues, in which 65(20.18%) remained positive, 196(60.86%) remained negative and 61(18.94%) remained neutral which shows that Times of India given more negative editorial coverage as compare to positive and neutral during purposed period of research.

Both newspapers published 42 editorials comprised on 551 sentences, in which *The News International* published 229(41.56%) sentences and Times of India published 322(58.43%) sentences during purposed period of research. The data showed that Times of India given 17.13% more editorial coverage than *The News International*. The researcher also analyzed the



slants of both newspapers and come to the conclusion that both newspapers published 116(21.65%) editorial sentences in positive way, 312(56.62%) in negative way while 123(22.32%) editorial sentences in neutral way. This data shows that both newspapers given more negative editorial coverage as compare to positive and neutral coverage.

There are four hypothesis of the study and the entire hypotheses are proved. H1 “it is more likely that *Times of India* has different approach in presentation of women issues as compared to Daily the News Pakistan” proved as the gathered data shows that Times of India covered women issues with different approach as it gave more coverage to sexual harassment, molestation, suicide and eloping while *The News International* given more coverage in two areas (honor killing & kidnapping) than Times of India.

H2 “it is more likely that *Times of India* do more coverage about women issues as compared to Daily the News” also proved as Times of India given more 17.13% editorial coverage.

H3 “it is more likely that *Times of India* is more out spoken or openly in portrayal of women issues than daily the News” also proved as Times of India remained out spoken in such issues on which *The News International* remained silent like; sexual harassment, domestic abuse, molestation and eloping.

The fourth hypothesis “it is more likely that *Times of India* is more critic toward Govt regarding women issues” proved by the researcher as Times of India remained 1.83% more critic in editorial coverage.

## **Conclusion**

The researcher concluded that both newspapers gave sufficient coverage on variety of women issues. Both newspapers portrayed women issues more negatively than positive and neutral. *The News International* remained restrained from covering some issues like; sexual harassment, eloping, molestation, battering, domestic violence, acid attack, fire burning and hurts, while Times of India showcased them abundantly. Both newspapers just highlighted the women issues and did not give proper solution of these issues.

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