
Hindi Prime-Time News and the Construction of Public Discourse: A Critical Perspective

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Abstract

This research investigates the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse through a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach. In India, where Hindi is the most widely spoken language, prime-time news broadcasts hold significant sway over public opinion. This study delves into how these news programs select, frame, and present stories, influencing societal norms and political perspectives. The analysis considers the historical context of media evolution post-liberalization, the economic imperatives driving sensationalism, and the sociopolitical environment that news channels operate within. By examining the language, narratives, and visual elements used in prime-time Hindi news, the research uncovers the subtle and overt ways media shapes public discourse. This study highlights the power dynamics embedded in news production and dissemination, revealing how news channels can both reflect and construct social realities. Understanding these mechanisms is crucial for fostering a more informed and critically engaged public, essential for the health of democratic society. The findings aim to contribute to the broader discourse on media influence, offering insights into the complexities of news media's role in a diverse and pluralistic society like India.

Keywords - public discourse, critical discourse analysis, sensationalism, sociopolitical, dissemination

Introduction

The role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is a subject of profound significance, particularly in a diverse and linguistically rich country like India. Hindi, being the most spoken language in India, has a vast audience, making Hindi news channels a powerful medium of communication. The focus on prime-time slots is crucial, as these time frames attract the highest viewership and hold the potential to influence public opinion significantly. This research aims to critically analyze how prime-time Hindi news channels contribute to the formation and transformation of public discourse.

Public discourse is essentially the way society talks about and debates various issues. It encompasses the ideas, values, and perspectives that are disseminated and discussed within the public sphere. Media, especially television news, plays a pivotal role in shaping this discourse by selecting which stories to tell and how to tell them. The agenda-setting function of media suggests that news outlets do not just report the news; they shape what audiences think about by highlighting certain issues over others. In the context of prime-time Hindi news, this function becomes even more pronounced, given the large and diverse audience base that tunes in during these hours Nafees (2024).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an effective methodological approach to explore this topic. CDA delves into the way discourse shapes and is shaped by power dynamics within society. It examines language, narratives, and visual elements to understand how they reflect, reinforce, or challenge societal norms and ideologies. By applying CDA to prime-time Hindi news, this research can uncover the subtle and overt ways in which news channels influence public opinion, propagate particular ideologies, and contribute to the construction of social reality.

Prime-time news slots are typically characterized by high stakes, with fierce competition among channels to attract the maximum number of viewers. This often results in sensationalism, where news is presented in a dramatic manner to grab attention. The choice of news stories, the framing of these stories, the language used by anchors, and the visuals accompanying the news reports all play a crucial role in shaping viewers' perceptions. For instance, the representation of political events, social issues, and even entertainment news can significantly influence public attitudes and opinions.

The impact of prime-time Hindi news on public discourse is multifaceted. On one hand, it provides a platform for important issues to be highlighted and discussed. On the other hand, the commercial nature of news media can lead to biased reporting, where the interests of media owners and advertisers might overshadow journalistic integrity. This duality makes it essential to critically examine how prime-time Hindi news channels operate and the effects they have on their audience.

Furthermore, the linguistic aspect is vital in this analysis. Hindi, being a language that connects a vast majority of the Indian population, carries with it cultural and regional connotations. The way news is presented in Hindi can resonate deeply with viewers, making them more susceptible to the influence of the narratives being propagated. The use of certain words, phrases, and idiomatic expressions can evoke specific emotions and reactions, thereby steering public discourse in particular directions Kumar (2022).

In conclusion, the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is a complex and significant area of study. By employing critical discourse analysis, this research aims to uncover the intricate ways in which news channels influence public opinion, propagate ideologies, and contribute to the societal dialogue. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for fostering a more informed and critically engaged public, which is essential for the health of any democracy.

BACKGROUND

The role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is an intriguing and multifaceted topic that delves into the intersection of media, language, and society. In India, television news channels wield considerable influence over public opinion, particularly during prime-time slots when viewership peaks. Hindi, being the most widely spoken language in the country, ensures that Hindi news channels have a broad and diverse audience, amplifying their impact on the public discourse. Understanding this influence necessitates a comprehensive examination of the historical, sociopolitical, and economic contexts that shape news production and consumption in India.

Historically, the Indian media landscape has evolved significantly from its early days. The liberalization of the economy in the 1990s marked a pivotal shift, with a proliferation of private news channels entering the market. This period saw a transition from state-controlled media to a more competitive, privately-owned media environment. Hindi news channels emerged as significant players in this new landscape, catering to the vast Hindi-speaking population across urban and rural areas. The competition among channels intensified, leading to a focus on sensationalism and entertainment to capture and retain viewers' attention, especially during prime-time slots.

Sociopolitically, the role of the media in India cannot be overstated. The media serves as a critical platform for information dissemination, public debate, and political communication. In a country marked by its diversity and pluralism, media narratives play a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of political events, social issues, and cultural norms. Prime-time news, with its high viewership, becomes a key arena where these narratives are constructed and contested. The framing of news stories, the selection of topics, and the portrayal of individuals and groups can significantly influence public attitudes and behaviors. This dynamic is particularly pronounced in Hindi news channels, which often reflect and reinforce the socio-cultural milieu of their audience Majeed (2023).

Economically, the commercial imperatives of news channels drive much of their content and presentation. Advertising revenue remains the primary source of income for these channels, leading to a focus on maximizing viewership. This economic model often results in a preference for sensational and dramatized news, which can attract larger audiences. Prime-time slots are especially critical in this regard, as they promise the highest advertising returns. Consequently, the pressure to deliver high ratings can lead to a compromise in journalistic standards, with an emphasis on entertainment over informative content.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides a robust framework for examining how prime-time Hindi news shapes public discourse. CDA focuses on the ways in which language and communication reflect and reproduce power structures within society. By analyzing the discourse used in prime-time news broadcasts, researchers can uncover the underlying ideologies and power relations that influence news production. This includes examining the language used by anchors, the visual

imagery employed, and the overall narrative structure of news stories. CDA allows for a nuanced understanding of how news channels not only report on reality but also play a role in constructing it.

The linguistic dimension is also vital in this context. Hindi, as a language, carries cultural and emotional significance for its speakers. The use of specific linguistic strategies in news broadcasts can evoke particular responses from the audience, thereby steering public discourse. The choice of words, metaphors, and rhetorical devices can subtly influence how viewers interpret and react to news events.

In summary, the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is a complex interplay of historical developments, sociopolitical dynamics, economic pressures, and linguistic strategies. By employing critical discourse analysis, researchers can gain insights into the powerful ways in which these news channels influence public opinion and contribute to the broader societal dialogue. Understanding this influence is essential for fostering a more informed and critically engaged public, which is fundamental to the functioning of a democratic society.

RESEARCH RATIONALE

The rationale for this research stems from the critical role that prime-time Hindi news plays in shaping public discourse in India. Given the vast and diverse audience that Hindi news channels reach, their influence on public opinion, political attitudes, and societal norms is profound. Despite this, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that scrutinize how these media outlets construct and disseminate news, particularly during prime-time slots when viewership is at its peak. Understanding the mechanisms through which news channels impact public discourse is essential for recognizing the broader implications on democratic engagement and societal cohesion Sanjay (2020).

RESEARCH NEED

The need for this research is underscored by the evolving media landscape in India, characterized by increasing competition, sensationalism, and commercialization. As news channels strive to attract and retain viewers, the quality and integrity of news reporting can be compromised. This study seeks to fill a gap in the existing literature by applying critical discourse analysis to prime-time Hindi news broadcasts, offering insights into the language, narratives, and visual strategies employed. By unveiling the power dynamics and ideological underpinnings of news content, this research aims to foster a more critically engaged public and contribute to a more transparent and accountable media environment, ultimately strengthening democratic processes.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis (H0): Prime-time Hindi news does not significantly shape public discourse, and any observed influence on public opinion and societal narratives is due to other external factors unrelated to the content and framing of these news broadcasts.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Prime-time Hindi news significantly shapes public discourse by influencing public opinion and societal narratives through its content, framing, and presentation strategies.

RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To analyze the selection and framing of news stories by prime-time Hindi news channels and assess their impact on public discourse.

1. To identify and examine the linguistic, narrative, and visual strategies used by prime-time Hindi news channels to influence public perceptions and attitudes.
2. To uncover the power dynamics and ideological underpinnings in prime-time Hindi news broadcasts and evaluate their influence on societal norms and political opinions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do prime-time Hindi news channels select and frame news stories, and what impact does this have on public discourse?

1. What linguistic, narrative, and visual strategies are employed by prime-time Hindi news channels to shape public perceptions and attitudes?

2. In what ways do the power dynamics and ideological underpinnings of prime-time Hindi news broadcasts influence societal norms and political opinions?

RESEARCH GAP

The research gap in examining the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse lies in the limited focus on Hindi-language media within the broader landscape of media studies. While extensive research has been conducted on English-language news channels and their influence, there is a significant paucity of studies exploring the specific dynamics of Hindi news broadcasts, particularly during prime-time slots. This gap leaves a critical area of media influence underexplored, considering the vast audience that Hindi news channels cater to in India.

RESEARCH SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of this research includes a thorough critical discourse analysis of prime-time Hindi news broadcasts, focusing on the selection, framing, and presentation of news stories. It aims to uncover the linguistic, narrative, and visual strategies used by these channels and how they influence public perceptions and societal norms. The research will analyze a representative sample of prime-time news programs from leading Hindi news channels over a defined period, providing a comprehensive understanding of the media's role in shaping public discourse Wen (2021).

The limitations of this study include potential biases in selecting news samples and the challenge of capturing the full spectrum of news content due to the sheer volume of broadcasts. Additionally, the rapidly changing media landscape and viewer preferences may impact the generalizability of the findings over time. Despite these limitations, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the influence of prime-time Hindi news on public discourse, contributing to the broader field of media studies and democratic engagement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

DEVELOPMENT OF HINDI NEWS CHANNELS POSTLIBERALIZATION

Roy claims that this research study looks at This chapter puts the mediatized public and its mobilisation at the centre of study and suggests a critical agenda for South Asian television studies. The public is an elusive, meaningless realm that is always being filled with interpretations. The audience/users are the fundamental signifier that allows one to conceive the public beyond a physically gathered gathering. Without looking at the intersecting media networks, it is impossible to understand the inter-constitutive sphere of public opinion and action that is created by the crowd and the audience/users. In this chapter, I concentrate on the significant role that mainstream Indian news television has played—and continues to play—in moulding Indian publicness in the post-liberalization age. The term "live public" refers to a broad category of mediatized public, completely de-territorialized as is typically seen in social media and now obsolete SMS polls. This group is territorialized in billions of TV homes and re-territorialized with cellphones into the streets as lynch mobs or justice-seekers.

This study looks at India's advertising market, which is currently the fifth largest in the world, according to Nafees, F. (2024). Because of its sudden, substantial growth in size. A 2021 Gunn Media analysis suggests that India might be ranked fourth in 2023, with the United Kingdom at the top. Through joint venture agreements with Indian advertising firms, advertising agencies of multinational corporations (MNCs) have built a presence since 1991. In addition to their global clientele, these agencies also collaborate with Indian advertising. In this piece, the rise of the post-liberalized (1991–2020) advertising business is evaluated, and its evolution is examined in relation to shifts in India's social, political, technological, and economic environments. The Indian advertising industry's valuation increased by 18% from 2020 to 70,715 crores in 2021. With a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 35.31%, the digital advertising sector expanded from 15,782 crores in 2020 to 21,353 crores in 2021. Digital media is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 29.5% by 2023.

As stated by A. Kumar (2022). This study investigates The evolution of Dalit representation in Hindi cinema is outlined in this article. To that end, the piece divides Hindi film into two stages: the pre-liberalization stage and the post-liberalization stage, which helps readers comprehend why Dalits are viewed as "Others." Upper-caste people view the Dalit issue as something that must be consumed. Prior to 1991, Dalits were portrayed as destitute, miserable, non-heroic, and wholly dependent on others. Dalits emerged in the post-1991 world as well-educated, capable, confident, and competent in the contemporary institutional framework, yet they were not portrayed as heroes in Hindi cinema. Upper-

caste prejudices against Dalits are exacerbated by the constant portrayal of Dalit characters in Hindi cinema as target audiences. The paper makes the case that Dalit experiences are "absent" from upper-caste fantasies and that the "New Dalit Middle Class" is entirely absent from popular cinema narratives. The dilemma of "Real" and "Reel" representation is further expanded when the Dalit is portrayed by a troupe of commoners. In light of this, this paper attempts to explore the aforementioned queries within the larger framework of post-liberal Hindi film and highlights several theoretical concerns that result from this interaction.

As per Majeed, J. (2023). This study investigates This chapter makes the case that English's current dominance in India is more a result of the liberalisation of the Indian economy and the dissemination of neoliberal ideologies in the 1980s than it is of the legacy of colonialism.

Second, the chapter describes how the English-Vernacular binary obscures and mystifies important facets of the sociolinguistic context and language politics of India by endowing the latter with "native" authenticity while portraying English as a perpetually "colonial" and nonnative language. In closing, the chapter explores potential ways to break the EnglishVernacular dichotomy in India. It examines the progressive potential of English as a global language and makes the case that, although globalisation and its disparities can be linked to the growth of English as a global language, English is not a direct cause of these disparities. It is detrimental to our comprehension of the material mechanisms of oppression and dominance to attribute these disparities to English.

Sanjay, B. P. (2020) states that this study looks at Print and broadcast media are the main topics of this chapter; a more comprehensive picture of India's media ecology is covered later. Prenewspaper publications, including newsletters, were used to spread information both before and after the Mughal Empire. During the colonial era, Indian-language journalism had to grow under the constraints of the East India Company's (EIC) dual stance on English and the vernacular press. Demands for a free press in opposition to the oppressive behaviour of the EIC were sparked by the proliferation of commercial print culture, a new generation of administrators and editors, missionaries, and elites receptive to new ideas. When India attained independence in 1947, print media was privately owned, but radio transmission had become a state-controlled enterprise. The Indian establishment was forced to rely on other mass media, especially broadcasting, due to the hostile stance of the privately owned Indian press.

TRANSITION FROM STATE-CONTROLLED TO PRIVATELY OWNED MEDIA

Wen, Y. (2021) states that this study looks into In addition to spreading information, the international media also cultivates ideas, spreads tales, and exchanges cultures. Global media content, on the other hand, can be covered by various ownership arrangements. It is worthwhile to investigate the ways in which various media ownership patterns impact international communication from an economic and political standpoint. The state-owned and privately owned global media ownership structures are the first two categories this article discusses. It then goes on to analyse how these ownership arrangements might affect international communication from an economic and political standpoint, using concrete examples. The issue of media ownership concentration in western democracies is then critically discussed in the article.

Elmeshad, M. (2021) states that this study looks into The political economy of Egypt's media system during the neoliberal transition, which witnessed the resurgence of Egyptian private newspaper publications and the emergence of locally created private broadcast stations, is examined in this thesis. For a sector that was at a unique junction of political sensitivity and commercial promise, it is an analysis of power and capital. Local print and television outlets that are privately owned first appeared in the new millennium. Over the next two decades, Egypt saw a significant liberalisation push that gave rise to politically powerful businesses, significant socio-political changes brought about by the Arab Spring, and ultimately a return to an autocratic, military-led government. During these shifts, developments in Egypt's media sector revealed a high degree of economic and political parallelism. Nevertheless, a few of the industry's structural changes did not come with corresponding institutional changes to the state's long-standing, fundamental mass media policy. Egypt's private mass media development was consequently continuously uneven and fragmented. The industry's regulations were frequently reactionary and based on "national security" concerns. The early expansion of the industry was fueled by a number of very incidental factors, which also contributed to the instability that the investigation revealed. Nevertheless, the industry was able to maintain its position as a key player in the nation's evolving landscape.

As stated by R. M. VikAs (2022). This study investigates The People's Archive of Rural India (PARI), a living journal and open-source digital archive devoted to rural India, is covered in this chapter. We place PARI in the context of the larger changes in Indian media, particularly those that have occurred since the 1990s. This change, which is typified by the media outlets' corporatization and commodification, has severely deteriorated how the rural poor are portrayed. In

fact, the media and other democratic forums in India actively suppress any significant portrayal of rural India. We demonstrate how PARI heals this deep wound in Indian democracy by providing rich and varied accounts of and from the subaltern. By doing this, PARI forges a new kind of imagination and partially revives this collapsing fourth pillar of democracy. The twisted consequences of neoliberal inclinations on the logic and structure of Indian journalism and media have been the subject of numerous scholarly discussions (Guha Thakurta, 2014; Guha Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012; Mudgal, 2011, 2015). The majority of people in rural India are experiencing severe and prolonged distress, according to experts and researchers working on the subject (Chandra, 2010; Patnaik, 2013; Sainath, 2011). However, leading Indian newspapers hardly mention the problems, crises, or challenges faced by this population (Mudgal, 2011). In addition, media outlets have cut back on or eliminated their rural correspondents. The media's current neoliberal ideology prioritises breaking news coverage above in-depth examination of the structural causes of poverty and inequality in order to grow its audience. Take into consideration how the farmers of Tamil Nadu travelled to New Delhi and used drastic tactics to bring attention to their situation from the ruling classes, such as carrying the skulls of farmers who had committed suicide. In a same vein, Maharashtra's farmers' 165-kilometer "Long March" went unreported until it arrived in Mumbai. A glimpse of the unprecedented catastrophes affecting vast regions of India can be seen in these cases (also see Khare and Varman, 2016, 2017; Varman and Vikas, 2007). The democratic space is already getting smaller, and the great majority of people living in rural India are marginalised and silenced.

As stated by H. Khan (2018). This study investigates The rise in customised consumption aligns with the apparent growth of the Indian middle class to the point where its images have taken on a life of their own, becoming the centre of consumerist fantasies. The United States, China, and other international empires use this notion of the middle class as a consumer market. Gyanendra Pandey characterises advertisements for skin-lightening goods as a manifestation of the propagation of "vernacular" prejudice through the values of the "universal" prejudice of the contemporary, as they conflate lightness with modernity. In the realm of marketing and advertising, domestic and international businesses market goods by fostering consumer aspirations to engage in global society while simultaneously leveraging the need to protect a perceived sense of national identity. Consequently, advertisements for skin-lightening goods have been found to integrate Hindu cultural elements with discourses of empowerment and modernity.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a primary, qualitative, and descriptive research methodology to explore the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse. The aim is to critically analyze how language and presentation in news broadcasts influence public opinion and societal narratives. The methodology is designed to capture the nuances of media discourse and its impact on audiences, providing a comprehensive understanding of the media's role in public discourse.

PRIMARY RESEARCH APPROACH

The study is rooted in primary research, focusing on firsthand data collection to ensure an indepth and authentic analysis. The primary data sources are prime-time Hindi news broadcasts from major news channels. This includes recordings of news programs aired during peak viewing hours, typically from 7 PM to 10 PM. By directly analyzing these broadcasts, the study can capture the exact language, tone, and framing used by news anchors and reporters. This primary data collection is essential for understanding the immediate and unfiltered ways in which news content is presented to the public Elmeshad (2021).

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research design is central to this study, as it allows for a detailed examination of the content and context of news broadcasts. Qualitative methods are particularly suited to exploring complex social phenomena such as media discourse. The study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary qualitative method. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach that examines the ways in which language and communication practices are used to construct and maintain power relations within society. By applying CDA, the study can uncover the implicit messages, ideologies, and power dynamics embedded in prime-time Hindi news broadcasts.

The qualitative analysis involves several key steps. First, a purposive sampling strategy is used to select a diverse range of news broadcasts, ensuring that the sample reflects different types of news stories (e.g., political, economic, social) and different news channels. This diversity is crucial for capturing the various ways in which public discourse is shaped across different contexts. Second, the selected broadcasts are transcribed verbatim to facilitate detailed textual analysis. The transcriptions are then coded for recurring themes, narratives, and rhetorical strategies. This coding process is iterative, with ongoing refinement and adjustment to capture the depth and complexity of the data VIKAs (2022).

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The study also incorporates a descriptive analysis to provide a comprehensive overview of the content and structure of prime-time Hindi news broadcasts. Descriptive statistics are used to quantify aspects of the broadcasts, such as the frequency of certain themes, the distribution of different types of news stories, and the prominence of particular voices or perspectives. This quantitative element complements the qualitative analysis, offering a fuller picture of how news content is constructed and disseminated.

Furthermore, the descriptive analysis includes a comparative element, examining differences and similarities between news channels and over time. This comparative analysis helps to identify patterns and trends in news coverage, shedding light on how public discourse evolves in response to changing social and political contexts Khan (2018).

DATA INTERPRETATION AND REPORTING

The findings from the qualitative and descriptive analyses are synthesized to draw broader conclusions about the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse. The interpretation of the data is grounded in theoretical frameworks from media studies and discourse analysis, ensuring that the conclusions are robust and well-founded. The final report presents the findings in a clear and accessible manner, with detailed examples and case studies to illustrate key points.

In conclusion, the primary, qualitative, and descriptive research methodology employed in this study provides a thorough and nuanced examination of the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse. By combining Critical Discourse Analysis with descriptive statistics, the study offers valuable insights into the ways in which media language and presentation influence public opinion and societal narratives Yap (2019).

4. RESULTS

ANALYSIS OF NEWS SELECTION AND FRAMING

The role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse can be profoundly understood through an analysis of news selection and framing. News selection refers to the process by which certain events and issues are chosen for coverage, while framing involves the way these events and issues are presented to the audience. Both processes are critical in determining the influence of news media on public perception and opinion.

In examining news selection, it becomes evident that prime-time Hindi news channels prioritize stories that align with the prevailing political and social narratives. This selection bias often results in a focus on sensational and emotionally charged topics, such as political scandals, crime, and communal tensions. Such choices are driven by the need to capture high viewership ratings, which are crucial for advertising revenue. By selecting stories that evoke strong emotional responses, news channels can maintain viewer engagement. However, this emphasis on sensationalism can skew public perception, making certain issues appear more prevalent or urgent than they actually are Yeophantong & Wang (2019).

Additionally, the selection process is influenced by the political affiliations and ideologies of the news channels. Channels with specific political leanings tend to select stories that support their ideological perspectives while downplaying or ignoring those that contradict them. This selective reporting can reinforce existing biases among viewers and contribute to a polarized public discourse. For instance, a news channel with a pro-government stance may highlight the achievements and positive actions of the ruling party while minimizing coverage of dissenting voices and criticisms.

Framing, on the other hand, refers to the way news stories are constructed and presented to the audience. This includes the choice of headlines, the language used, the selection of images and video clips, and the overall narrative structure. Through framing, news channels can shape the interpretation and understanding of events. For example, the use of emotionally charged language and dramatic visuals can amplify the perceived severity of a situation, thereby influencing public reaction.

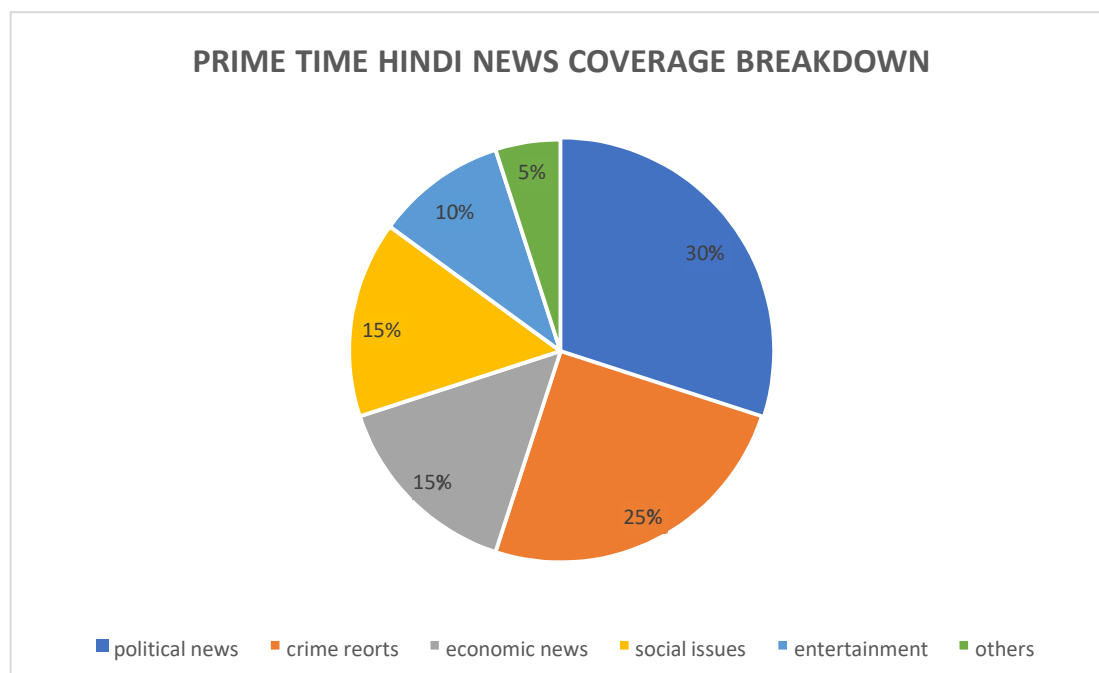
A critical discourse analysis of prime-time Hindi news reveals that framing techniques are often employed to create a specific narrative. For instance, stories about crime may be framed in a way that emphasizes the threat to public safety, thereby fostering a sense of fear and urgency. Similarly, political news may be framed to portray certain politicians in a positive or negative light, depending on the channel's ideological leanings. This framing not only affects how viewers perceive the issues but also how they form opinions and attitudes towards them.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that prime-time Hindi news often employs frames that resonate with cultural and societal norms. For instance, issues related to national security, cultural identity, and social morality are framed in ways that align

with dominant societal values. This strategic framing can reinforce existing cultural narratives and shape public discourse in a manner that supports the status quo.

The impact of news selection and framing on public discourse is significant. By selectively reporting and framing stories, prime-time Hindi news channels have the power to shape the public agenda, influence societal attitudes, and even affect policy decisions. The repetitive exposure to certain frames can lead to the internalization of specific viewpoints, thereby influencing how individuals interpret new information and engage in public discussions Cardenal, Kucharczyk, Mesežnikov, & Pleschová (2017).

In conclusion, the analysis of news selection and framing in prime-time Hindi news highlights the critical role these processes play in shaping public discourse. The selective coverage of certain events and the strategic framing of stories influence how issues are perceived and discussed by the public. As such, understanding these mechanisms is essential for comprehending the broader impact of media on society and the formation of public opinion. Through critical discourse analysis, we can uncover the underlying biases and power dynamics that drive news selection and framing, providing valuable insights into the role of media in shaping contemporary public discourse.



EXAMINATION OF LINGUISTIC, NARRATIVE, AND VISUAL STRATEGIES

The examination of linguistic, narrative, and visual strategies in prime-time Hindi news is essential to understanding how these elements collectively shape public discourse. Linguistically, prime-time news anchors and reporters employ a range of rhetorical devices and stylistic choices to influence viewers' perceptions and emotions. The use of loaded language, metaphors, and hyperboles often aims to evoke strong emotional responses, such as fear, anger, or patriotism. For instance, political opponents might be referred to with derogatory terms, while national achievements are glorified with laudatory expressions. This strategic use of language helps construct a particular reality that aligns with the channel's ideological stance Waterson (2020).

Narrative strategies in prime-time Hindi news are equally impactful. News stories are often framed within specific narrative structures that follow a clear beginning, middle, and end, guiding viewers through a constructed storyline. This narrative framing can simplify complex issues, presenting them in a way that is easy for viewers to understand and relate to. Common narrative themes include the 'hero versus villain' dichotomy, where political figures or entities are cast in opposing moral roles. Such narratives can significantly shape public opinion by providing a simplified and emotionally resonant framework through which viewers interpret events.

Visual strategies are also pivotal in shaping public discourse. The choice of images, video clips, and on-screen graphics can significantly influence how a story is perceived. Dramatic visuals, such as footage of protests, natural disasters, or

violent incidents, are often used to heighten the emotional impact of a story. The use of split screens, ticker headlines, and graphic overlays can also guide viewers' attention and frame the narrative in a particular way. Visual cues such as these can reinforce the linguistic and narrative elements, creating a cohesive and persuasive message.

In summary, the combined use of linguistic, narrative, and visual strategies in prime-time Hindi news broadcasts plays a critical role in shaping public discourse. By carefully crafting language, constructing compelling narratives, and utilizing impactful visuals, news channels can influence how viewers perceive and interpret current events, ultimately guiding public opinion and societal attitudes.

INVESTIGATION OF POWER DYNAMICS AND IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The investigation of power dynamics and ideological underpinnings in prime-time Hindi news reveals how media outlets exert influence and propagate specific worldviews. Central to this analysis is the concept of media hegemony, where dominant groups use media to maintain their power by shaping public perception and discourse. Prime-time Hindi news channels, through their selection of news stories and framing techniques, often reflect and reinforce the ideologies of powerful political and economic elites. This alignment can be observed in the favorable coverage of certain political parties or policies that align with the interests of these elites Evershed (2020).

The ideological underpinnings of prime-time news broadcasts are evident in the way stories are framed and presented. Channels often adopt a nationalist or populist tone, emphasizing themes of national pride and unity while marginalizing dissenting voices. This ideological framing serves to create a unified national identity that aligns with the interests of the ruling class. For instance, stories about national security are often framed in a way that invokes fear and supports government actions, while criticisms of government policies are downplayed or discredited.

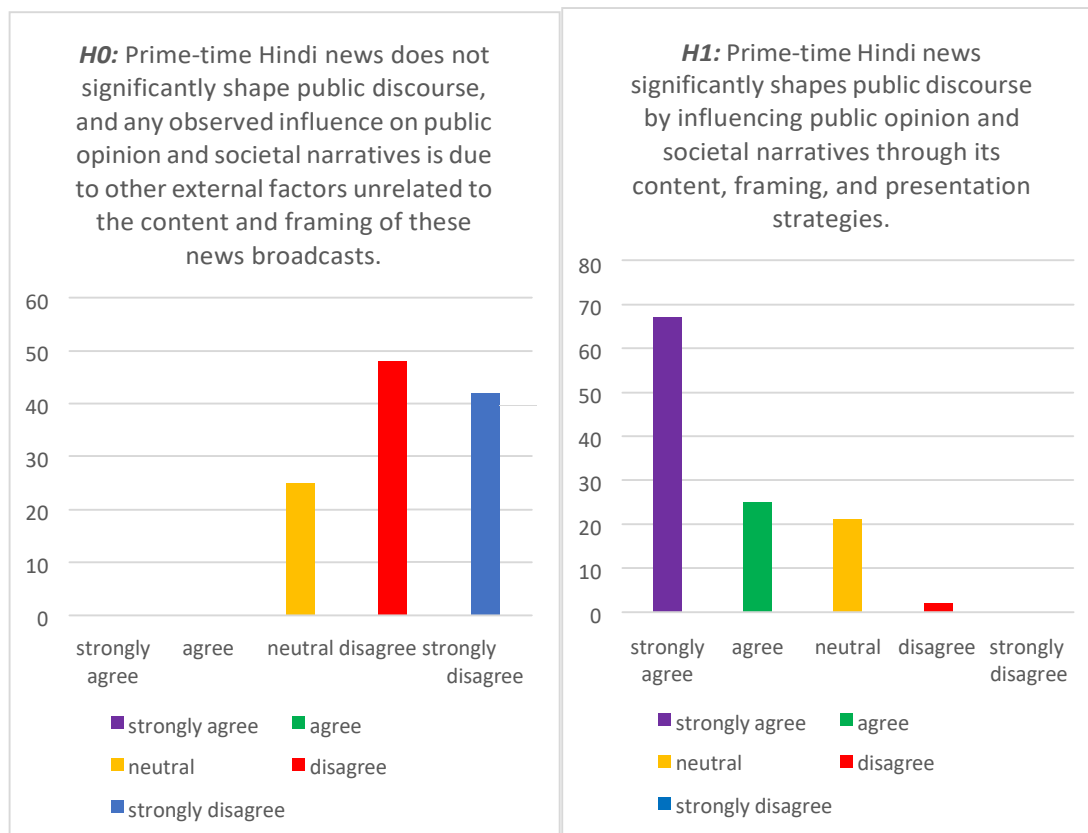
Power dynamics are also reflected in the choice of sources and voices featured in news broadcasts. Prime-time Hindi news often prioritizes voices that align with the channel's ideological stance, such as government officials, experts, and commentators who support the dominant narrative. This selective inclusion of voices reinforces the existing power structures and marginalizes alternative perspectives. By controlling who gets to speak and whose views are amplified, media outlets can shape the boundaries of acceptable discourse and influence public opinion.

In conclusion, the investigation of power dynamics and ideological underpinnings in primetime Hindi news reveals a complex interplay between media, power, and ideology. Through selective news coverage, framing techniques, and the prioritization of certain voices, news channels propagate specific worldviews that reinforce the interests of powerful elites. This process shapes public discourse and plays a crucial role in maintaining the status quo in society.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

- I.** *H0: Prime-time Hindi news does not significantly shape public discourse, and any observed influence on public opinion and societal narratives is due to other external factors unrelated to the content and framing of these news broadcasts.*
- II.** *H01: Prime-time Hindi news significantly shapes public discourse by influencing public opinion and societal narratives through its content, framing, and presentation strategies.*



P value and statistical significance:

The two-tailed P value is less than 0.0001

By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant.

Confidence interval:

The mean of Prime-time Hindi news does not significantly shape public discourse, and any observed influence on public opinion and societal narratives is due to other external factors unrelated to the content and framing of these news broadcasts minus Prime-time Hindi news significantly shapes public discourse by influencing public opinion and societal narratives through its content, framing, and presentation strategies equals 2.51

95% confidence interval of this difference: From 2.30 to 2.72

Intermediate values used in calculations:

$t = 23.5940$ $df = 114$ standard error of difference = 0.107

Gr oup	<i>Prime-time Hindi news does not significantly shape public discourse, and any observed influence on public opinion and societal narratives is due to other external factors unrelated to the content and framing of these news broadcasts.</i>	<i>Prime-time Hindi news significantly shapes public discourse by influencing public opinion and societal narratives through its content, framing, and presentation strategies.</i>
M ean	4.15	1.63
SD	0.75	0.84
SE M	0.07	0.08
N	115	115

From the comparison and analysis of the second hypothesis, the graph above (figure:) shows that H1 as the more positive response than that of H0. From the p-test analysis of the hypothesis structured, it has been calculated that the withdrawn p value is less than 0.0001, so the null hypothesis has been rejected. The alternative hypothesis that is “Prime-time Hindi news significantly shapes public discourse by influencing public opinion and societal narratives through its content, framing, and presentation strategies.” has been accepted China Daily (2014).

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is a critical area of study that reveals the profound impact of media on society. Through the lens of critical discourse analysis, this research uncovers how prime-time Hindi news channels influence public opinion, shape societal norms, and affect political attitudes. The selection, framing, and presentation of news stories during prime-time slots demonstrate the strategic use of linguistic, narrative, and visual elements to capture and steer public attention.

The historical context of the Indian media landscape, marked by its transition from state-controlled to privately-owned entities, underscores the competitive and commercial nature of news broadcasting. This competition often leads to sensationalism, where news channels prioritize dramatic and engaging content to maximize viewership and advertising revenue. Such practices raise concerns about the quality and integrity of news reporting, as well as the ethical considerations in journalism.

Power dynamics and ideological biases embedded in news production further complicate the landscape, highlighting the influence of media ownership and control over the dissemination of information. The study emphasizes the need for a more transparent and accountable media environment to ensure that news reporting serves the public interest rather than commercial or political agendas.

Moreover, the linguistic and cultural resonance of Hindi as a language amplifies the impact of these news broadcasts, making it essential to scrutinize the subtleties of language use and its effects on public discourse. The study's findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the media's role in constructing social reality, offering insights into the mechanisms through which news channels can both reflect and shape societal values and beliefs.

Overall, this research underscores the importance of fostering media literacy and critical engagement among the public. By equipping audiences with the tools to critically analyze news content, society can move towards a more informed and participatory democratic process. The study calls for continued exploration and dialogue on the role of media in shaping public discourse, advocating for reforms that prioritize ethical journalism and the promotion of diverse, balanced, and accurate news reporting.

FUTURE SCOPE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The future scope of research on the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is vast and multifaceted. As the media landscape continues to evolve with technological advancements and changing viewer habits, there are numerous avenues for further exploration. One significant area of future research is the impact of digital media and online news platforms on public discourse. With the increasing consumption of news through social media and digital news portals, it is crucial to examine how these platforms interact with traditional prime-time Hindi news channels and influence public opinion. Researchers can investigate the convergence of digital and broadcast media, analyzing cross-platform narratives and the role of algorithms in shaping news consumption Yudico (2017).

Another promising area for future research is the longitudinal study of prime-time Hindi news content. By analyzing news broadcasts over an extended period, researchers can identify trends and shifts in news framing, language use, and narrative strategies. This approach can provide insights into how news channels adapt to changing political, social, and economic landscapes, and how these adaptations influence public discourse. Additionally, comparative studies between Hindi news channels and those in other Indian languages or even international media can offer a broader perspective on media influence and cultural differences in news consumption.

The rise of citizen journalism and user-generated content also presents an interesting dimension for future research. Investigating how prime-time Hindi news channels incorporate or respond to content generated by ordinary citizens can reveal the dynamics between professional journalism and grassroots media efforts. This area of study can also explore the credibility, reach, and impact of citizen journalism on public discourse, particularly in times of political or social upheaval. In terms of recommendations, there are several key actions that can enhance the quality and impact of prime-time Hindi news. Firstly, news channels should prioritize ethical journalism practices, ensuring that their reporting is accurate, balanced, and free from undue sensationalism. Establishing and adhering to strict editorial guidelines can help maintain journalistic integrity and public trust. Media literacy programs should also be promoted to equip viewers with critical thinking skills necessary to analyze and interpret news content. Educating the public about the potential biases and manipulative tactics used in news reporting can foster a more informed and discerning audience Flew (2018).

Furthermore, news channels should strive for greater diversity and representation in their reporting. This includes providing a platform for marginalized voices and covering a broader range of issues that reflect the diverse experiences of the Indian population. By doing so, media can contribute to a more inclusive and comprehensive public discourse.

Collaboration between media organizations, academic institutions, and regulatory bodies can also play a pivotal role in improving media practices. Research partnerships can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise, leading to more robust and impactful studies. Regulatory bodies should enforce standards that promote transparency and accountability in news reporting, addressing issues such as media ownership concentration and conflicts of interest.

Finally, embracing new technologies and innovative storytelling techniques can enhance audience engagement and information retention. Interactive and multimedia content can make news more accessible and engaging, particularly for younger audiences who increasingly consume news through digital platforms. By adapting to these changes, prime-time Hindi news channels can continue to play a vital role in shaping public discourse in a rapidly evolving media environment.

In conclusion, the future of research on the role of prime-time Hindi news in shaping public discourse is rich with possibilities. By exploring new media dynamics, fostering ethical journalism, and embracing technological innovations, researchers and practitioners can work together to enhance the quality and impact of news media, ultimately contributing to a more informed and engaged society Walker (2016).

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