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**NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF GENDER, ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN INDIA**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the coverage of gender, environment and development (GED) issues in the Indian English-language newspapers. A main hypothesis is that the high rate of gender discrimination in India contributes to a *gender bias* in the coverage of GED stories. The newsworthiness of GED has been examined by use of a frequency analysis. Some key concepts in the study of gender and media, namely *gender typifications* and *gender stereotypes* were used to examine the contents of articles and news stories. The results of the frequency analysis were discussed in relation to evaluations and assessments made by newspapers' editorial staff, gender scholars, international and Indian NGOs, and Indian government representatives. The possible selection biases were also discussed. Material for the study was collected through interviews and observations at the sorting desk of the *Indian Express* during a two month's field study in India. The results show that the press does not reflect the actual needs of people in India and is influenced by certain biases in the coverage of GED issues. NGOs, gender scholars and press watch organizations believe that the press performance regarding the coverage of GED is weak.

Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Aim of Research	5
1.2	Background and Current Research	6
1.3	Theory and Concepts	8
1.4	Material and method of field study	10
1.5	Design of study and method of analysis	10
1.6	Delimitations	12
1.7	Reliability and Validity	12
1.8	Disposition	12
2	The Newsworthiness of Gender issues – A Frequency Analysis	13
3	Editorial Policies and Gender	16
4	Journalists	19
4.1	Journalists in Central Office	19
4.2	Regional Journalists	20
4.3	Women Journalists	22
4.4	Discussion	23
5	Evaluations of Newspaper Coverage of GED Issues	25
5.1	NGOs	25
5.2	News Watch Organizations	25
5.3	Gender Scholars	26
5.4	Summary	27
6	Selection Biases in Newspaper Coverage on GED Issues	28
6.1	Newspaper's Policy	28
6.2	Owners and Interest	29
6.3	Personal Judgments	29
6.4	Lack of Training and Motivation	30
6.5	Urban Bias	30
6.6	Elite Bias	32
6.7	Press and GED	32
6.8	Summary	33
7	Conclusion	33
8	References	35
9	List of Interviews	36

Foreword

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1. Introduction

The importance of creating a global partnership to promote human rights and human development is discussed in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2003). The MDG's third goal is to "promote gender equality and empower women". Gender disparities in education, employment, health and participation in decision-making processes have been identified as major obstacles to human development. The problem of gender inequity is also an impediment to the development of India, where women are disproportionately represented in poor and vulnerable communities and 'class-gender effects' in the process of degradation of nature's resources are other matters of grave concern. Recent studies show that poor, rural women in environmental risk areas are especially disadvantaged. The Indian government, Indian NGOs and international organizations have initiated a number of projects aimed at solving these women's development needs. India is a democratic state with a relatively free press and a large number of newspapers. The role of the press in exposing these specific problems and development needs of poor, rural women cannot be underestimated.

1.1 Aim of Research

The purpose of my MA-thesis is to study the press coverage of gender, environment and development (GED) issues in the English-language newspapers in India, with special emphasis on the coverage of the development needs of poor, rural women in environmental risk areas. The study will address the following main questions:

- To which extent is GED a newsworthy issue? Which aspects of gender are highlighted and downplayed in the news reports?
- How do journalists and newspaper policy makers perceive gender and GED issues?
- How do NGOs and gender scholars evaluate the press coverage on gender and GED?

The aim of this study is to examine the actual performance of the newspapers concerning the coverage of issues related to gender and GED. *A main hypothesis in this study is that the high rate of gender discrimination in India may affect the Indian press and lead to a gender bias in the news reporting.* For instance, this *gender bias* will be reflected in: the selection of news events, in the way certain aspects of news events are highlighted or downplayed, and in the

press coverage being characterized by certain *gender stereotypes or typifications*. Such gender stereotypes do not permit the real ‘representation’ of women. Different criteria will be used to test and clarify the different aspects of the news coverage. Attention will be given to both external and internal factors that might affect the quality and the quantity of the coverage of GED in the English-language newspapers in India.

1.2 Background and Current Research

Cultural, social and economic factors contribute to a high ratio of discrimination against women in India. Inequality and oppressiveness particularly toward women in traditional communities have made women a poor and vulnerable community while keeping men in a disproportionate number of positions of power and influence. A large number of studies have detailed the hardship that the introduction of the global market economy (particularly, the commercialization of agriculture and land) has visited on women in what were previously subsistence-based rural communities (Sen & Grown 1987, Dankelman & Davidson 1988, Shiva 1989, Sontheimer 1991, Kabeer 1994, Sachs 1996, Visvanathan et al 1997). There are fixed assumptions toward the role and ability of women which is not the case for many working class families and also not true of women in subsistence economies. As Haleh Afshar remarked in 1985, “Male extension workers often carry an ideological image of households with male heads, the man tilling the land and the woman rocking the cradle and keeping the home fires burning”. The failure to see the reality of human existence and the way it is gendered is at the heart of the damage to women and the environment in the development process.” (Quoted in Mellor 2000, P.12).

According to Bina Agarwal (Bina Agarwal 1992), women and female children are most adversely affected by environmental degradation because of the pre-existing gender division of labor, where women in poor peasant and tribal households do much of the gathering and fetching from the forests, village commons, rivers, and wells. In addition, women of such households are burdened with the responsibility of family subsistence. Also, there are systematic gender differences in the distribution of subsistence resources within rural households. There are significant inequalities in women’s and men’s access to the most critical productive resource in rural economies, agricultural land, and associated production

technology such as: fewer employment opportunities, less occupational mobility, lower levels of training and lower payments for same or similar work. People living in the South especially women are being affected by environmental hazards. Women in this part are treated as a cheap labor force. "The main beneficiaries of the development process are the urban middle classes; dual societies with unprecedented economic inequalities have been created. Cuts in public spending lead to a marginalization and impoverishment of increasing number of people, particularly women." (Braidotti et al., 1995, p.26).

The journalists being aware of their role can influence their audience and attract their attention to cooperate and participate in more equitable development plans. Since the last two decades parallel to the growing importance of studies on development communication in the developing countries, new styles of development journalism have received growing attention. It can be said that development communication and communication development compliment each other. Communication can become a tool for development if it is being used by professional journalists who convey development-directed messages to the audience. The constant evaluation of the media's performance is necessary in order to achieve a helpful development communication reflecting society's real needs. Narinder Aggarwala, an Indian journalist who advocates development journalism, believes that journalists at the development desk should critically evaluate all developments plans from national and local perspectives. A news report fulfills the minimum criteria for development journalism if it consists of at least one of the following points: stresses the process and not the event, maintains a critical perspective on development plans, emphasizes people's needs, presents a background for development issues, predicts future needs, considers the effect of plans on people, compares the development process to similar processes in other places, compares the plan with implemented results, critically surveys stories of success, and points out people's needs (Badii and Ghandi, 2001, p.425).

In general, mass communication as well as newspapers and journalists as a part of the communication network in particular can have a directive role in either giving a remedy to a problem or provoking it into a worse situation. The communication of messages between journalists and people takes place through newspaper articles and stories. The newspaper's policy and journalists' personal analysis of issues play significant roles in directing the flow

of information. However, the press coverage of the GED in India is not explored in previous studies.

1.3 Theory and Concepts

The theoretical framework and the main theoretical concepts to be used in the study will be presented in the following manner. The discussions in this study are based on the Gender Theory (Handrahan, L.M. 1999), the Online Journal of Feminist Construction, Volume 3, Number 3) and the Social Responsibility Theory (Siebert, Fredrick S., Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm 1963). The Commission on Freedom of the Press provided a model in which the media had certain obligations to the society. These obligations were expressed in the words "informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance". The social responsibility principle is to provide an entrance to different mass media to minority groups. The journalist is accountable to his audience as well as to the government. In the Social Responsibility Theory, the press has a moral obligation to consider the overall needs of the society when making journalistic decisions. Considering the fact that United Nations MDG's third goal underlines the promotion of human development, gender equality and women's empowerment, this study attempts to explore to what extent the Indian press share responsibility for the effects of their actions, maintaining that the press plays an important role in the development and stability of modern society. The Social Responsibility Theory and the Gender Theory are applied in this study to investigate if newspapers in India feel the moral obligation to consider society's needs regarding issues related to gender, environment, and development. Moreover, the interviews conducted with gender scholars, NGOs and other organizations aim at clearing their standpoint and evaluation about the press's performance.

The media explicitly tries to influence its audience. While "during the 1990s and into the new century, gender roles on television became increasingly equal and non-stereotyped - within some limits" (David Gauntlett 2002), there is a room to study how these standardized mental pictures affect the journalists in their job. "Feminist research has long been concerned with how women are portrayed in news media texts" (Cynthia Carter et al. 1998). However, there is not much said about the *representation* of the Indian women in gender related news in Indian newspapers. Purnima Mankekar in her study of ethnography of television, womanhood

and nation in postcolonial India writes, “..What these narratives reveal about the postcolonial state’s attempts to reshape gender politics within the Indian family and examine how these discourses intersected with women’s experiences in their families and communities” (Purnima Mankekar 1999). The press has a significant role regarding women representation since it has a considerable impact on society. Gender representation in this study refers to how Indian women and their real needs are introduced in the published news.

Recent studies indicate that the selection of news events is often linked to a certain selection bias; it may for instance be linked to a set of *gender typifications*. (Cynthia Carter et al. 1998; Meyers 1997; Gauntlett 2002; Carter and Steiner 2004). Debates over whether or not the media accurately ‘reflect’ social reality, or the extent to which journalists can produce a ‘neutral’, ‘impartial’ news account, typically restrict the discussion to one regarding how best to separate ‘facts’ from ‘values’. As a result, the issue of what constitutes the truth is often ignored, or otherwise simply dismissed as a philosophical matter of little consequence when the routine conventions of reporting are under scrutiny (Carter et al. 1998). The media shows us situations and relationships from other people’s point of view, indeed, it is part of the eternal fascination of drama that we can see ‘how the world works’ in lives other than our own (Gauntlett 2002). In spite of the growing literature on gender problems in India, the role of gender stereotypes in Indian media still remains a relatively unexplored topic. The concepts of *gender typifications* and *gender stereotypes* are used in the examination of the contents of the news and articles.

The kinds of *selection biases* involved in the production of gender and GED news will be discussed in relation to the gender bias. What is reported in the newspapers regarding the GED is important since media has the power to influence existing structures. The discourse made by journalists can be used as an instrument for the empowerment of marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Considering the examples of gender discrimination in India such as differences in the distribution of subsistence resources, dowry death, infanticide and gender inequity within rural households it requires studying the ways and policies through which the Indian press use its power in reflecting the GED-related events. The issue of GED refers to the gender inequality that exists in relation to the women, who are mostly burdened with the

responsibility of family subsistence especially in rural areas and are being affected by environmental hazards in the development process.

1.4 Material and Method of Field

The data for this study has been collected through an ethnographic micro-level field study. My main newspaper data sources were the *Indian Express*, the *Hindustan Times*, and the *Times of India*. Data was collected from newspapers and archives, and through informal conversations, open-ended interviews, observations at the sorting desk of the *Indian Express* as well as studying the news stories reported by Press Trust of India (PTI). The respondents were journalists and editors, representatives of international organizations, press watch institutions, women's organizations and gender researchers at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Delhi University. Interviews were recorded with the permission of the speaker. All respondents were made aware of the study's objective. The research is based on honesty and trust in presenting data. The data collection consisted of the following stages:

- 1) Observation of the selection of news events at the *Indian Express*, and reading of the published news in *Indian Express* and *Times of India*.
- 2) Study of the news reported by PTI.
- 3) Interviews with journalists and chief editors at the *Indian Express*, *Hindustan Times* and *Times of India* in Delhi and at their regional offices in Dehradun and Jaipur.
- 4) Interviews with representatives of NGOs including women's organizations and international organizations, press watch institutions, gender scholars and government officials.

1.5 Design of Study and Method of Analysis

This is mainly a case study in which the qualitative method will be used. The choice between quantitative and qualitative methods has been made according to the research objectives. The analysis consists of two phases:

Phase 1: A frequency analysis of the newsworthiness of gender and GED

The material for this analysis was obtained through daily observations of the selection process at the sorting desk of the *Indian Express* during two weeks in September 2004. During the same period I also read the everyday editions of the *Indian Express*, the *Times of India* and

some other English language newspapers such as the *Hindustan Times*. I have analyzed the stories and articles chosen from a sample of two weeks published in the *Indian Express* which contain a theme related to *gender* or GED. The criteria for choosing GED stories and articles in this study had been based on the content of the stories and articles published by the newspapers. The GED stories are considered to be those pieces of stories which report on issues related to the environment and development and obtain a gender angle. This is true about the GED articles. However, there is a difference between the gender aspect of GED stories and articles. The writer determines the order and content of the ideas in an article and his attention to the gender angle of the environment and development issues depends on the policies, newspaper framework and his own personal judgments. However, the reflection of GED issues in the news is different. The news reporting is limited since it cannot go beyond the facts and should reflect the exact events.

Journalists in a newspaper choose news stories among a number of news events that are reported by sources of news like reporters and newswires. The Press Trust of India (PTI) is a lead news agency in India. The selected events are news. Only a limited number of events have the chance of being news. There are many factors engaged in the process of news selection. The events which are *not* selected have not passed the 'gate'. In my analysis *frequency* refers to the number of published news stories and articles. Further, news stories and articles were categorized (for more details see section 2). GED and gender are the main categories. Gender is further divided into subcategories such as political aspects, poverty, discrimination and inequality, violence, murder, rape and crime. Violence comprises the forms of gender violence that cannot be categorized as murder or rape. All subcategories have been developed on the basis of a close reading of news stories and articles. These categories have been useful for examining which aspects of gender are highlighted and downplayed in press publications. Further, these categories have been useful for my analysis of *gender stereotypes* and *typifications*. The news stories which were discarded at the sorting desk and remained unpublished have also been counted and categorized. The events which are absent in the news are those events that are not being valued by the predominant discourse. Any category which received a high frequency of publication represents in my analysis a *newsworthy* issue.

Phase 2: Evaluations of the press coverage on gender and GED

The results from phase one will be compared here and discussed in relation to the critical assessments of press performances made by editorial staff and journalists at the newspapers, press watch institutions, NGOs and gender scholars. Finally, I will identify and discuss the possible *selection biases* which are involved in the production of news. In this context I will also discuss to which extent these selection biases add up to a gender bias in the press coverage on gender and GED.

1.6 Delimitations

This thesis is limited to a study of the national editions of the main English language newspapers. These newspapers are read mostly by the highly educated and mainly urban population. This study does not discuss the newspapers which are printed in vernacular languages.

1.7 Reliability and Validity

The period of two weeks chosen for the frequency analysis of the GED-related stories and articles may affect the findings of this analysis since the content of a newspaper may vary throughout the year and a two week study may therefore not give an accurate picture of the press coverage on GED. However, the findings of the frequency analysis in this study have been discussed with editorial staff, gender scholars, NGOs and press watch institutions. The results are consistent with the assessments made by gender scholars and the press watch institutions.

1.8 Disposition

The results of the thesis are presented in the following way: (1) I will examine the newsworthiness of gender issues through a frequency analysis of published news and articles. (2) I will discuss editorial policies on gender followed by presentations of evaluations made by journalists, NGOs, press watch organizations and gender scholars. (3) I will identify and discuss the selection biases which are involved in the news reporting on gender and GED.

2. The Newsworthiness of Gender Issues – A Frequency Analysis

In this section, the study will examine the frequency of gender and specifically the GED stories and articles published in a period of two weeks by the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India*. The ‘news’ consists of the events that were selected. The role of news desk is significant in the process of news production. The view of journalists and reporters at the sorting desk can directly change the selection process. The news desk selects among the flow of events that take place. News editors are likened to ‘gatekeepers’, a term first used by David Manning White (1950). “Mr. Gate” in the newspaper decides ‘what is news’, and what is not. On the other hand, the news desk decides what makes a good story, the tips that are worth following up, and the ones which need to be analyzed and underlined. Hence, the number of published articles and stories on GED reflects the policy of newspaper concerning the newsworthiness of this issue.

The considerable number of political news and articles published in the newspapers indicate that politics have the first priority in the Indian newspapers as it is explicitly mentioned by chief editors. However, news stories that appeal to broad sectors of readers’ life environment, mostly in cities, such as violence, crime, sports and pop culture will be given a very high priority compared to the events which happen far from journalists and their readers’ lives.

Table 1. Frequency of articles published by the *Indian Express*

Issues/ No. of Articles	Politics	Gender	Development	Sport	Religion	Other
	32	5	2	2	2	12

Table 1 shows the frequency of articles and their categories that are published by the *Indian Express* in a period of two weeks. The articles in the category of ‘Politics’ enjoy the highest frequency as the number of articles on ‘Gender’, ‘Development’, ‘Sport’, Religion’ and ‘Other’ show a frequency of 5, 2, 2, 2 and 12 respectively. The high frequency of political articles in a period of two weeks indicates the importance of this issue from an analytical perspective for the newspaper. Since the theme of an article is chosen at the editorial level the result of the frequency analysis implies the fact that the policy of this newspaper is focused on politics. As shown in table 1 the category of ‘Gender’

in comparison to ‘Politics’ is a marginal issue as the number of articles on gender is almost six times less than the ones published on politics.

Table 2. Types of gender issues covered by the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India*

Gender issues	News stories	Articles
Violence	4 (3)	0 (0)
Murder	7 (11)	0 (0)
Rape	6 (11)	0 (0)
Crime	2 (0)	1 (0)
Political aspects	4 (1)	2 (0)
Discrimination/ Inequality	3 (0)	2 (0)
Poverty	1 (0)	0 (0)
TOTAL	27 (26)	5 (0)

Numbers for Indian Express are given *without* parentheses.

Numbers for Times of India are given in parentheses.

Table 2 shows the frequency of news stories and articles that are published by the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India* on gender issues in a period of two weeks. The frequency of news stories shows the newsworthiness of gender related events in the *Indian Express* while the frequency of articles indicates the policy and also the significant of gender issues from an analytical perspective in this newspaper. The categories in table 2 are chosen based on the aspects of gender issues that are reported frequently in this newspaper, which are violence, murder, rape, crime, discrimination and political aspects. Apart from political aspects, discrimination and poverty all the other gender issues can be categorized as ‘violence’.

From the total number of 27 news stories published on gender in the *Indian Express*, 19 stories are in the categories of ‘Violence’, ‘Murder’, ‘Rape’ and ‘Crime’. This number is equal to 25 in the *Times of India*. The high frequency of stories on different types of violence compared to other aspects of gender issues demonstrates the newsworthiness of events related

to gender violence. Furthermore, some forms of gender violence are highlighted and treated as more newsworthy than others namely 'rape' and 'murder'.

From the total number of articles on 'gender' published by the *Indian Express* during the sample period of two weeks, one belongs to the category 'Crime', two to 'Political Gender', and two to 'Gender Discrimination / Inequality'. The number of articles in other categories such as 'Violence', 'Murder', 'Rape' and 'Poverty' is equal to zero in the *Indian Express*. There are no articles published on gender-related issues in the *Times of India* in the period of two weeks. The 'gender violence' including crime, rape and murder has received the most attention in news coverage while there are almost no articles on this issue. The coverage of news events related to 'violence' is one aspect while articles are another significant part which can complete the news. Articles explain the 'how' and 'why' of the news and journalists can take advantage of news events to transfer certain ideas to the audience. However, it highly depends on the policy of the newspaper. The selection of events related to 'gender violence' such as 'rape' can be considered from two different perspectives. On the one hand, the reflection of a 'rape case' as a news story may take place to show a social problem. On the other hand, the coverage of numerous stories on rape can be treated in a way that is likely to cause a public interest. The newspapers, as a part of the media, affect the public opinion by their selection choice and they can publish articles which present analytical views of news events. Articles are windows of communication between the journalists' views and their readers. The newspaper which covers such stories in order to critically underline a problem is expected to publish its analytical views in the form of articles and complete the goal that lies behind the reflection of those stories. For instance, the coverage of news stories on rape without presenting analytical and critical discussions, as shown in Table 2, can be called 'sensationalism'. This indicates that news reporting in the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India* are characterized by a gender typification where women are portrayed as the victims of male violence.

The GED stories are not prioritized and seldom appear on the front page. The study of several English-language newspapers in India demonstrates that stories on gender violence, cases of rape, crime, and glamour have considerable frequency compared to the development stories

which happen in rural areas. The ‘development’ issue by itself does not attract journalists’ attention and its chances are reduced if it obtains a gender or environment aspect. The performance of the *Indian Express* regarding the coverage of gender violence and the number of articles on GED is very similar to the *Times of India*. However, the results of the content analysis of the *Indian Express* editions in a period of two weeks show that there are a number of stories on development issues published in this newspaper. It indicates that the development issues in the *Indian Express* receive a certain attention but still there is not a clear gender perspective in the reporting of events related to GED. I also observed the stories reported by the Press Trust of India News Agency (PTI) which were not published by the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India*. The events related to *gender* issues in rural areas are not considered newsworthy and are not included in the news.

The results of the frequency analysis support the main hypothesis that the high rate of gender discrimination in India affects the Indian press and creates a gender bias in the publication of news. In the following sections, I will examine the kinds of selection bias maybe found in editorial policies and among journalists.

3. Editorial Policies and Gender

The selection process leads to a flow of news where some issues are ignored and others are highlighted. News editors’ perspectives affect the process of selection since they have the power to influence the news selection. Editors at the *Indian Express*, *Hindustan Times* and *Times of India* believe that they select and publish stories that are ‘good stories’. In response to the question of ‘what is a good story?’ they replied that a good story is the one which is ‘newsworthy’. Then, I asked them, ‘What are the news values from your point of view?’, as the newsworthiness of an event is not the sole factor guaranteeing the selection of events. The editors said that they do not categorize stories, and stories with a gender angle are not separated from the other news. According to the editors, the selection process gives equal weight to all kinds of events and stories without focusing on special issues; and the best story has a better chance of being selected. Such statements show that there is not much effort to focus on the GED issue.

Chief editors and editors confirm the fact that gender stories receive less or no attention compared to stories on politics or violence. As shown in the previous section the GED events are not treated as newsworthy and receive less space compared to events related to politics, crime, violence, sport, and especially cricket and fashion. As an unwritten rule in the Indian English-language newspapers, political events enjoy the first priority in the news. Violence and crime come after politics respectively, while sports is next, before all those that are least 'important' and 'newsworthy' including GED-related stories. However, this category can vary to some extent in some newspapers. Indeed, there are a few newspapers like the *Hindu* and the *Indian Express* whose performance does not completely match this model. A newspaper like the *Indian Express* that considers itself a pioneer in the coverage of gender and development still does not have a very accurate perspective toward reflecting GED stories and is not an exception from this rule. The chief editor of the *Indian Express*, Shekhar Gupta, counted the news values of a GED story as "...the news values for GED are just as they are for anything else. It should interest the reader, the reader should be curious, there should be public interest, it should be accurate, and should concern a large number of people, or should be sufficiently large concern and should not be just marginal concern." According to this definition very few GED events can pass the selection evaluation and be treated as newsworthy. Although the GED stories in India might include a large number of people, it is a 'marginal concern' from the editor's point of view in Delhi. According to Gupta, those events are not interesting for their readers who live in the city. Since most readers live in cities those aspects of GED that are related to the city are more likely to appear in the news while the reader's choice as customers of the newspapers can affect the interest and benefits of newspapers. The aspects of gender that concerns the readers in the city such as gender violence are treated as newsworthy. The associate editor of *Hindustan Times* declared that the newsworthiness of GED stories depends on the "gravity" of the event and added, "We don't really go very deep to gender issues and all that. But if something happens that is clearly gender related, like a rape case, assault on a woman or wife burning case; we cover those kinds of stories." The chief editor of *Indian Express* noted, "Gender stories can be very big. Most of my key journalists in this office are women. Yes, they do not like to write on gender issues because if they write about gender then nobody reads it." The values of the society in which journalists are living have a significant impact on them. Some journalists and

specifically women journalists have confirmed that they are not interested in writing on gender since the gender perspective is not prominent in the Indian society where most people neither are aware of nor have any respect for this perspective.

'Lack of space' is a reason stressed by chief editors and editors for explaining the absence of report on and analysis of GED-related events. The chief editor of *Indian Express* said in this regard, "We have less space for activists than we have for journalists. Because activists have their agendas, and beyond the point they are boring. So the greatest you can do to these issues of development or gender equality is to cover and writing about which is boring. Readers say these are boring issues and they are not interested." The executive editor of the *Hindustan Times* mentioned, "We are not a paper which gives the development news importance. Not because we don't think it is important. Personally I think that is important. We do not have enough space in our paper to give to the development work around the country. We are a very city centric newspaper. Almost all the Delhi's papers are very city centered." When he was asked how they manage the newspaper's space, he added, "No, we don't manage the space. The space that is available for the news in a newspaper is a space that is not taken by advertisements. The editorial has no control."

Other restraints that may influence the editorial policies are government and powerful institutions that often make a conscious effort to influence the news coverage. The chief editor of the *Indian Express* declared, "We are fighting with the government all the time. But if we structure our paper in such a way that pleases the NGOs, then the government will kill us tomorrow. Because when we fight the government, we have the leaders and people with us. If we write sad things then we loose the people who are with us and then the government will kill us in one day." News services produce news stories as 'products' and advertisement customers have their role in this process. News enterprise's commercial rationale generally has considerable influence on editorial priorities. The *Indian Express* is the only English-language newspaper in Delhi that recognized GED stories as newsworthy when I discussed this point. According to the chief editor and executive editor of the *Indian Express*, this paper intends to cover gender, environment and development more than any other paper. Other newspaper editors noted directly that they do not have space for the GED stories.

4. Journalists

This part of the paper attempts to show how journalists, whom I have interviewed, perceive and evaluate the newsworthiness of issues related to gender, environment and development (GED).

4.1 Journalists in Central Office

Journalists in central offices based in Delhi believe that the situation is changing positively in India although the process is slow. They live far from the reality of rural areas and the city's problems are more tangible to them. One journalist explained to me how she selects the events when she works in the field, "It should be something that sounds the most shocking and the most sensational. The more negative it is the better chance it has to be taken out." The 'most shocking event' in the field, from a city-based journalist's point of view is not a story about how the next generation is suffering from lack of proper living environment. Such issues do not meet the criteria to be the theme of articles or stories from the urban journalists' point of view since they recognize rural India with those characteristics and the situation is not new for them.

The following is the point-of-view of made by an environment and development special correspondent talking about the newsworthiness of gender issues related to the environment and development during an interview in Delhi, "The topic of gender and environment is for someone that is doing a very serious analytical article. There is no news like that. The news must be something like when a policy is not working, or livelihoods are lost. Gender element and environment and the combination are very small section of the entire work. It does not have that much newsworthiness that it should have." She explained why these types of events are not newsworthy in her view as saying, "Because it is very complex. It is not a simple thing. That today this woman was living here and tomorrow.. It happens over time. It is something which you need to analyze. We do not get time to really look at an issue in such holistic manner where we start examining over years and then changes take place. We can cover if it is something sensational, like dam." Regarding the problems existing in the rural areas and in the hills she added, "It is a part of rural landscape that there is no news in it. It has existed like that in centuries. It is like that. News is something when there is something

new. There is nothing new in this phenomenon. A new phenomenon is supposed when a dam is coming up or a road is coming up. It is a part of our rural reality it does not make it to the news pages.” Mentioning the example of the issues that she can bring to the news space she said, “If there is intervention in any form by any agency, the government, a factory it is a private enterprise then there is something new that is happening over there.”

The sensational news, even those related to the environment and development are popular in the Indian press. As it is mentioned above in the quotation, if a dam is supposed to be constructed there would be a considerable coverage of the issue. There are two issues that concern the consequences of dam construction: (1) there is a national benefit in constructing dams, (2) the process of construction would follow a series of undesirable events including environmental damages and displacement of people living in that area for years. However, this issue will not be followed up; because the newspaper’s policy is not against the dam construction. The executive editor of the *Indian Express* believes that newspapers should support dam construction because people need water. To follow the events that happen around a dam construction requires the reflection of the problems and unsecured situation of displaced people and environmental hazards which is not in accordance with the editorial policy even in a ‘responsible’ newspaper such as the *Indian Express*.

Many Delhi journalists, including editors believe that the issue of GED especially in far rural areas is not news since those people have always been struggling with these problems for years. Implementing the true concept of development journalism requires a certain amount of effort. However, writing on this issue is recognized as part of academia rather than a journalistic responsibility among the journalists in the central offices. The *Indian Express* environment and development correspondent told me that they are not very successful in reporting GED-related issues because those are not new events. She added, “It is a very academic exercise that is still going on. It is not news.”

4.2 Regional Journalists

Meeting journalists in the regional offices in Jaipur and Dehradun and listening to their views proved that journalists in Delhi evaluate events in a different way than those who are in the

regional offices. One of the reasons they mention for not writing on GED-related problems (which they are aware of) is the difficulty of going far distances for a news story. The example of this case is a writer working in one of the English-language newspapers' regional offices in Jaipur who obtains a diploma in journalism and was the student of MA in Human Rights. She explained how difficult it is to convince the editors to publish a gender or environment story. She is living and working in Jaipur and has a good knowledge of the GED situation in Rajasthan. However, she believes that she needs to know more about the relation between women, environment and development. Although, she did point out the fact that reporters who cover politics are more important from an editors' point of view, she has not accepted the offer to shift from GED to politics because she believes that her field is very important. She believes it is the responsibility of journalists to reflect the problems of the society and make the policy makers hear the voice of people.

However, she does not usually cover the problems of women and environment that she knows about because those people live far away and it is difficult for her to travel for the story. She is disappointed and does not insist to place her stories on the front page of the regional edition or to the national edition anymore. She counted the reasons as firstly, the newspapers general policy does not allow gender issues to be prioritized. Secondly, it is difficult to change the idea of editors and chief editors since they think that gender issues are not important enough. Thirdly the national edition is for all India and should cover national issues, she said, "There is no space for the problems of Rajasthan and its women on the national paper."

The regional offices of the newspapers usually do not send gender reports to the center in Delhi and if they intend to publish it in the regional edition. They believe that gender, environment and development is not an issue that they can write about it more often. The journalists say that their job is to write a story and they cannot write about something that is not 'newsworthy'. It means that GED stories do not enjoy the high rate of newsworthiness as politics and violence do. Manisha Sharma the *Hindustan Times*' staff writer in Jaipur who writes on gender and environment noted, "Gender reports are not sent to Delhi (center) and are published only for the regional edition. There had been cases of gender reports sent to Delhi to be published on the national edition but they had some kind of political importance.

For example, the story that is about caste issue is important for the politicians. Therefore the story of the girl who has fled away with a boy from another caste and they had been caught and parents killed the girl has been sent to the center not because of the girl and gender angle but because of the importance of the caste for the politicians.”

4.3 Women Journalists

Many *women journalists* do not like to write on gender because they feel they would be marginalized and they cannot receive promotions in their profession if they continue to write on gender which is treated a marginalized issue by itself. They choose to write on politics instead which gives them a higher status in their job. Usha Rai, the deputy director of Press Institute of India (PII), regarding this point said, “Women journalists are very much aware of gender issues. But I think most women journalists do not want to write only on gender issues because they feel their promotions and their opportunities forthcoming in the profession would be limited. They won’t get the job’s lucks if they only write on gender issues. So, they prefer to write on political issues, economic issues, and foreign issues which help them to promote to the top as a journalist. So *gender* doesn’t get the same kind of importance because within the newspaper structure if you are writing only on *gender and environment*, you are not lucky to become the editor of the paper or get a senior position.” This is an additional bias that exists in the Indian newspapers and among journalists which originates from a more general bias that is imposed on the press by the main policies that imply ‘business’ as the main goal. A senior editor in the *Indian Express* told me, “As a political journalist and writer if I were to think that how conscious I am about gender I would say: Not very.”

The resistance of women journalists to writing on gender-related issues can be explained from different perspectives. One significant aspect to this issue is the process of their acceptance in journalism as a ‘journalist’. It has been a hard struggle for women to prove their capabilities. The Director of Women Features Service (WFS) Angana Parek noted this concern, “I agree. There is a kind of resistance. A lot of women journalists don’t want to be put into some kind of category. It is since late 1870s that women journalists are in the field and are treated as a ‘journalist’ not as a male or female journalist. They want to compete with men. There are a lot

of women who do not like to write about women and development issues. Because they think these are soft bits.”

Women make up a large number of journalists in India. According to the above discussions they have prejudices against writing on gender issues. Bias on *gender* issues originates from a vast cultural ground in the society which affects both men and women, and the press is a part of this society.

4.4 Discussion

The press as a part of media enjoys the power to influence the structures and processes in order to attain national development goals. Considering the responsibility of the press the journalists’ personal capabilities and understanding of issues are significant factors. The journalists’ perception of gender, environment and development issues plays an important role since their deep understanding and awareness affect their choice of focus and effort. A comprehensive perception of issues makes journalists powerful in analysis.

The journalists’ perception of the GED issue is highly related to their background and level of knowledge. Generally, the journalists including chief editors, editors, reporters and writers are following an urban-focused policy that is established in the Indian press. Some journalists are not able to relate the three concepts of gender, environment and development and they are not small in number. Even the ones who have an overall understanding of the issue express the fact that they need some kind of education in this field. I met journalists who believe that GED-related problems are marginal and concern marginalized groups. Some other journalists said that working on GED is an academic job and is not included in the field of journalism. The journalists in Delhi more likely know about the problems of poor rural women in their country but they do not think it is newsworthy because since they are not aware of the impact of inequality on the economic growth and development process. Being from a city and working in the capital makes them almost insensitive to the problems of marginalized groups. If journalists fail to link the problems of women who are central to the economy and are most affected by the environmental degradation in the development process, they will not be able to write about it and fulfill their journalistic role in the development process. Journalists are not

satisfied with the situation, rate and various forms of inequality in India. However, they feel hopeless about change: “What is the solution to this that you are saying. Even if men stay at home, they are so lazy that women have to do all the work.” The social pressures that the patriarchal patterns impose on life culture in India affect the society and have negative impacts on people including journalists. The most optimistic view appears in statements such as ‘Things are changing. India is a big country with big population and problems. It takes time.’ The journalists working in this field are not satisfied with the coverage though still might not consider the problem from an analytical perspective. A Delhi-based correspondent stressed, “That is definitely a problem. Implements are not made. Like farming implements are not suited to a woman’s height. They all are made for men. That is a problem and we do not write enough about it. We have to be very active and we have to take it up by our own. No body is talking on behalf of those women. There are no organized groups. When there is no voice coming from that it becomes challenging.”

Although the journalists in the newspaper’s central office and their colleagues in regional offices, who are more aware of some certain aspects of the issue, have different perceptions about GED, they still follow the same policy. Besides, the existing social and occupational limitations have created some sort of bias toward writing on *gender* among women journalists. Time limitations, regulations and norms are other elements, which makes the journalists not write on GED. Having learned from the system they work hard to meet the deadlines with stories by which they gain appreciation and promotion. It can be said that the journalists’ general understanding of the GED problem considering the importance of their role towards people and their society is not sufficient and rather it is weak in some cases. A small number of journalists, writers and academics write on gender, environment and development. There is a relative silence in society regarding this issue and the newspapers’ market-oriented policies do not support the bright ideas and chances of initiatives in this field. The journalists’ perception of GED is influenced by the context of their life. There is a low interest and lack of motivation among journalists to follow, think and write on the gender aspect of environment and development. A number of factors are engaged in the creation of this situation including the society’s insensitivity towards the gender angle of the issue particularly when it concerns environment and development, and the commercialization of

media through which the press follow the rules of market and is far from its social responsibility.

5. Evaluations of Indian Newspaper Coverage on GED issues

5.1 NGOs

The NGOs in Delhi, Rajasthan and Dehradun, which I have interviewed, are not satisfied with the performance of the press. They believe that press has not fulfilled its responsibility toward the society and its performance regarding the coverage of GED is weak. Aparna Basu, the president of All India Women's Conference, noted that "There has been a decline in the role of English language newspapers in reporting on women's development needs". The director of SOPHIA, a NGO in Dehradun, said, "There is no capacity building program for the journalists. They are not educated and they are not qualified. They just wait to give them a press release. In our part of the country (Dehradun) media has failed to be the watchdog of the society. They have failed in fulfilling their role as far as gender and environment is concerned. The newspapers are very market oriented and publish more glamour. I am sure if there is some news from the grassroots that are more environment and development oriented and focus on women's problems then people like to read this news too. Newspapers are commercialized and profit making companies." Other NGOs that I have interviewed had a similar view on the coverage of GED issue. They noted that GED-related stories are neglected in the coverage and it can be explained by the way in which newspapers are influenced by the market forces.

5.2 News Watch Organizations

The quality of the press performance is discussed with two organizations of Women Feature Service (WFS) and Press Institute of India (PII). The main question had been how far the press performance reflects the actual problem of gender discrimination with a focus on GED in India.

I interviewed the directors of Women Feature Service (WFS) and Press Institute of India (PII). Both organizations are critical to the press coverage of gender, environment and

development. Arun Chacko, the director of PII, noted, “I am not satisfied with the coverage. The newspapers have a social responsibility. Increasingly more and more attention is given to profits and commercialism. A newspaper is not a chocolate factory or a shirt maker. The question is where you strike the balance where most publications have lost their way. The local newspapers are not responsible at all and the standard is even lower than the English ones. Among English language newspapers, there are newspapers which are more responsible for working on development issues including gender issues. And others give very little space to the GED issues and more space given to the advertisement revenues and sensational news. They cover politics, fashion, and popular sport like cricket.” Usha Rai as a pioneer in writing on gender, environment and development has put much effort to improve the coverage of this issue in the Indian press. Rai, the deputy director of Press Institute of India, expressed her dissatisfaction about the coverage of GED and had critical views toward press performance. She pointed out, “They don’t talk about these issues so much in the rural areas. The women struggle all alone to bring up 4 or 5 children by her own, because her husband has left to the city. What is the space that woman can get? Very little...”

Most interviewees believe that commitment is lacking in newspapers and there is little space specified to GED related issues. They mentioned that the owners’ main goal is gaining profit and stories on rape and crime against women are mostly given space in the news since journalists recognize such stories readable. Angana Parek, Director of Women Features Service (WFS) had similar views as mentioned above. In addition she pointed out, “Both women and men journalists need to be sensitized and made aware that there is a gender angle. They are not informed and need to be trained. Our newspapers certainly do not reflect the gender angle. Journalists and the decision-makers of newspapers are not gender sensitive.” The discussions with the Women Feature Service (WFS) and the Press Institute of India (PII) indicate that both organizations evaluate the press performance unsatisfactory regarding the coverage of GED.

5.3 Gender Scholars

I interviewed four gender scholars who have done research on GED in India. They criticized the press regarding the coverage of GED. Bina Agarwal observed, “What is interesting is that

even women's groups have not focused very much on the question of environment. Journalists might get marginalized if they write about gender issues. So there is an additional bias. It is because within the hierarchy of stories the political stories tend to be much higher up. And the gender and development stories are not sensational you know. Development is a quiet story. Some newspapers are more serious about this than others. Like Hindu. It is much more likely to carry a story on gender, environment and development than possibly any of other newspapers. And it could be on the Sunday weekly for instance, much more likely. I believe the lack of focus is not because you can not get space though for your piece; but just people are not writing that much about this."

Bina Agarwal and some other gender scholars pointed out that there is little academic literature on GED, which might be a factor contributing to the lack of journalistic analysis.

5.4 Summary

As it is discussed in this section, the NGOs, press watch organizations and gender scholars have a very similar perception of the press coverage on GED issues. Almost all respondents have pointed out that GED remains a neglected issue, mainly because the press coverage is city oriented and influenced by market forces. Some observed that gender stories must be sensational or involve violence against women in order to be considered newsworthy by the press. Events related to gender, environment and development are not considered to meet the Indian English language newspapers' criteria regarding news values. Without being asked to do so, most respondents ranked the English-language newspapers in India in terms of their social responsibility and sensitivity towards gender and development issues. The *Hindu* and the *Indian Express* were consistently ranked as the most responsible and gender sensitive newspapers. They generally considered the *Times of India* as the prime example of a group of newspapers which are neglecting gender and development issues. In other words, the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India* here are considered to be representing different extremes regarding their gender policy. As shown by my frequency analysis in section 2, the performance of the *Indian Express* and the *Times of India* are quite similar in certain respects, both give priority to news reporting on gender violence. To the difference of the *Times of*

India, however, the *Indian Express* does provide some space for critical comments on and analysis of gender issues.

6. Selection Biases in Newspaper Coverage on GED Issues

On the basis of the material presented in sections 2-5, I will now discuss the kind of selection biases which may contribute to the gender bias in the Indian English-language newspapers. The term ‘bias’ is not a simple word which can be used for labeling the journalists’ state of mind, and it becomes even more complicated when we try to link it to the concept of ‘gender bias’. ‘Bias’ in the Indian newspapers appears in two forms of conscious and unconscious. A biased selection or a biased coverage is not necessarily the result of choices made under the influence of a conscious ‘bias’. The quality and quantity of coverage on GED issues depends on the types of limitations that journalists are experiencing in their environment. The limitations that can be categorized as organizational and non-organizational act as an obstacle to the press coverage of GED. The organizational limitations include the policy of the newspaper, owners and interest, time limitation, regulations and norms. The non-organizational limitations are journalists’ personal judgments, and lack of training and motivation. In addition, there are two forms of ‘bias’ among the pressmen found in this study called ‘urban bias’ and ‘elite bias’ which will be discussed in the following.

6.1 Newspaper’s Policy

In a general perspective the journalists including chief editors, editors, reporters and writers are following one policy that is established in the Indian press. As shown in section 3 this policy is very much audience oriented to the point that journalists are focused on satisfying their urban readers and publish stories according to the urban taste. The newspaper’s policy makers decide on the policy, and journalists do not have any influence at this level. As central offices of many leading English-Language newspapers are based in Delhi, the focus is on the interest of Delhi’s readers and problems in this city.

According to the above mentioned policy the stories on gender do not have a chance of being covered by the press since urban readers are not interested to read about the GED problems which happen in rural areas. The newspaper’s policy makes journalists prioritize political

news stories. Stories on ‘violence’ obtain priority after politics while gender issues are not categorized even in the first five priorities among other stories.

6.2 Owners and Interest

Based on a more general policy, owners of newspapers are running business enterprises in the name of newspapers with a goal to gain a wider audience. The phrase ‘*which news sells more*’ is the result of pressures imposed by this system on journalism. Prakash Patra, a senior editor working with the *Hindustan Times*, observed, “Newspapers are companies and they have to make profits. If it is a company and what you write is acceptable by people, your circulation goes up. Readers must read you to be able to get profit.” These words indicate the way he perceives journalism in the present situation. Every newspaper or cultural institution requires enough financial support to be able to continue its work. However, the question remains that if newspapers should convert their identity to ‘profit making companies’ or create a balance between their financial needs and their social responsibility. The newspaper owners who obtain commercial objectives do not recognize the newspaper with its real entity that is a cultural product; however, they treat it as a commercial product. The newspapers intend to attract more women readers since women manage many family shopping needs. The commercial advertisements and fashion stories published by the newspapers need to have more women readers. Unlike the political news which are attractive both for journalists and readers, the gender issues related to the environment and development do not attract customers as fashion and glamour do.

6.3 Personal Judgments

Culture and stereotypes influence the journalists as a member of their society. Bina Agarwal believes, “The factors could relate to the fact that people do not look at the gender across anything sometimes. Some people do not. So, there is a bias that most articles are non-gender.” The fact that journalists generally do not consider the gender angles in their reporting have several reasons as mentioned before. Being raised in a society with strong patriarchal norms and pressures is an additional factor that influences their personal judgements about gender issues in general and to those related to the environment and development in particular.

6.4 Lack of Training and Motivation

A considerable number of journalists that I have interviewed are not aware of many aspects of the GED-related issues in India. Even those who have a higher education than an undergraduate degree and are willing to work on GED issues expressed that they need further training and education on this issue. This kind of training can be provided either by the newspaper directors or journalists themselves. Journalists' motivation is another factor which has significant impact on the coverage. Journalists can take part in the production of news or writing an analysis with various motivations. Since the general policy of most newspapers does not support the Development Journalism and the coverage of GED issues, there is no investment made by newspapers' directors in order to create an instrumental motivation or support the internal motivations among journalists. However, such system is not expected to have a training system with the aim of promoting journalists' level of knowledge and analysis on India's development. The gender scholar Bina Agarwal called this status 'blindness to the gender angel'. She said, "They do not see the gender angel at all. They do not see that there is any difference. They do not understand that there are different effects on different members of the community."

Interviews with journalists indicate the fact that they do not consider the gender angle as it exists. Any internal motivation for learning or writing about GED among journalists will change or vanish during the time when it does not receive attention and enforcement.

6.5 Urban Bias

The investigation in this study indicates that there is an urban bias toward rural issues both in the newspapers and among their audience. Journalists and their audience are living in the urban areas and problems of the rural people are not very much to their first priority of concern. Sonu Jain, the special correspondent working on environment and development stories in the *Indian Express*, said in the interview, "It is not only a question of owners. Every body is involved in that, starting with reporters who go to the field. We also look at problems that are related to the city; it is very rarely that we look at *other India* and the gap is keeping wider and wider and there is not that much space for rural story." There are several related reasons to the idea of 'other India' mentioned by her and many other journalists. The urban

and rural lives in India are two different worlds and there is a wide gap between people living in these areas. In some cases, this difference comes to the point that people feel they belong to two different countries. There is not much connection between these two different worlds and problems of one are not concerned in relation to the other. According to the conversations with journalists and other interviewees, India is divided into two parts which are 'rural India' and 'urban India'. Many interviewees used this category in their discussions referring to two different 'India' with different problems and concerns. On the other hand, journalists like other people of India are raised in this context and have accepted the rural India as different from their urban life with problems that are not easy to solve.

The results of studying the GED-related stories show that those stories which are related to the cities have more chance of getting published. For instance, the environmental questions that are brought forward by the press are mostly the ones related to the urban environment such as air pollution or water pollution. Such questions that affect the urban population become news story since the journalists and most of the audiences are a part of that setting. However, there is not a gender angle in those stories. The rural environmental questions, which rarely have the chance of being a news story, are forgotten. A senior editor in *Hindustan Times* said, "If I am selling in Delhi naturally we will concentrate on Delhi, because our readers want to know about Delhi." Hence, since the rural issues are not covered the gender aspects of such problems also are not mentioned. The state of rural women who cook on an open fire everyday with firewood can be an example of rural environmental problems. The degree of pollution and its affect on the women and children playing around them is not in the news. The rural population is far from the centers of attention and is hidden from the eyes of communication powers or the media.

However, a crisis like a natural disaster that hits the rural area receives attention from the press. For instance, there is a good coverage on drought. But the coverage does not have a gender perspective since it does not explain who would be affected most if there is a drought. Violence is another question that makes the journalists interested in rural news. For instance, the sensational gender stories related to caste or violence against a woman attract the press attention.

6.6 Elite Bias

Another form of 'bias' originates from the social structure in India and the fact that 'whose voice is heard by the newspapers?' The press is not an exception to the rules and restrictions that caste and class create for people in India. Although the caste system is not appreciated among journalists, the social impacts of class concepts on journalists and their readers are sufficiently powerful to affect the selection of news events and themes for articles and comments. Gender discrimination and the high rate of inequality in India are obstacles to development in this country and influence the press coverage negatively. Agarwal agreed with this fact and pointed out that there is elite and class bias in the press; women across most class groups in rural areas have a weaker voice while being greatly affected by environmental degradation. She added, "There is a strong elite bias whether it is rural or urban. And there is a male bias in that. If you go to a village, will you talk to the woman? Sometimes maybe... But usually you talk to the man you talk to the village leader. There are news stories where the violence might have been against a woman but the focus is on the male leader."

The concepts of caste and class in addition to the high rate of gender discrimination in India influence journalists' performance, and create a more disadvantaged situation for women.

6.7 Press and GED

The coverage of GED issues in India is influenced by prejudices against poor, women and minorities as well as the lack of interest in gender and development issues among journalists. Gender stories are focused on sensational news which represents women with certain stereotypes. The press does not reflect the people's actual problems which are necessary to be addressed and women's environment and development needs stay silent. Moreover, the reflection of sensational stories followed with no analysis of the problems not only does not help the women's situation but also may makes the situation worse in some cases. The environment and development stories specifically those related to rural areas do not receive journalists' attention. Caste and class are additional reasons for the special neglect of GED in rural areas.

6.8 Summary

The findings of this study, as discussed above, indicate that the English language newspapers in India do not reflect the actual needs of poor rural women in India and is affected by some prejudices against poor and minorities in the coverage of GED issues. This indicates that the English language newspapers in India do not feel responsible to participate in a global partnership to promote human development, gender equality and women empowerment while the significance of this issue is underlined by the United Nations.

7. Conclusion

A main hypothesis in this study had been the fact that the high rate of gender discrimination in India may affect the Indian press and create a possible *gender bias* among journalists. The results of the frequency analysis indicate that the newspaper's policy is focused on politics and the stories on gender violence, cases of rape, crime, and glamour have considerable frequency compared to the development stories which happen in rural areas. The coverage of certain types of stories such as gender violence, rape and glamour creates a stereotyped picture of women in the Indian society. Moreover, the publication of numerous stories on violence against women help the promotion of a negative gender representation by describing women as vulnerable only in certain situations rather than reflecting their actual needs. The low frequency of gender issues and GED stories in the news compared to the above mentioned aspects of gender such as 'cases of rape' on the one hand and the absence of some other aspects of gender in the reporting on the other hand characterizes the press coverage with gender bias. The current study indicates that Indian journalists in choosing news stories are affected by their personal judgments, customs, organizational regulation that are employed within, the pressure of time limitation and obligation of considering the rules as well as the necessity of gaining interest. Hence, the selection of events related to gender, environment and development issues is characterized by conscious and unconscious bias which is reflected in the selection of news events and in the way certain aspects of news events are highlighted or downplayed. Besides, there is an additional bias at some levels such as the bias against writing on gender issues that exists among women journalists. The general atmosphere and perception of gender issues as well as the norms and promotion rules in the newspapers has

made most of the women journalists be prejudiced about writing on 'gender'. Although the GED stories in India might include a large number of people, it is of 'marginal concern' from an editors' point of view in Delhi since those events are not interesting for their readers who live in the cities. Moreover, the low interest, lack of motivation and the relatively weak knowledge of GED among journalists hinder their way to follow, think and write on this topic. The NGOs, gender scholars and press watch organizations believe that press has not fulfilled its responsibility toward the society and its performance regarding the coverage of GED is weak. Almost all respondents have pointed out that GED has remained a neglected issue, mainly because the press coverage is city oriented and influenced by market forces. Based on the analysis made in this study, the press does not reflect the actual needs of people in India and is influenced by certain prejudices against women, poor and minorities in the coverage of GED issues.

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9. List of Interviews

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- 2 Soni, Medha (Assistant Communication & Advocacy Officer, UNFPA), Communication during a visit, October 26, 2004
- 3 Rai, Usha (Deputy Director, Press Institute of India) Recorded Interview, September 14, 2004
- 4 Philipose, Pamela (Associate Editor, Indian Express) Recorded Interview, September 20, 2004
- 5 Jain, Sonu (Special Correspondent, Indian Express) Recorded Interview, September 7, 2004
- 6 Ganapathy, Nirmala (Reporter, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit, September 17, 2004
- 7 Chatterjee, Manini (Senior Editor, Indian Express) Recorded Interview, September 7, 2004
- 8 Bhatia, Shekhar (Editor, Hindustan Times) Recorded Interview, October 23, 2004
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- 10 Agarwal, Bina (President IAFFE- Vice President IEA/Professor of Economics, Institute of economic Growth, Delhi University) Recorded Interview, October 19, 2004
- 11 Sharma, Suresh (Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University) Oral communication during a visit, October 19, 2004
- 12 Gulati, S.C. (Head, Population Research Center, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University) Notes taken during the interview, October 19, 2004
- 13 Karkaria, Bachi (national Metro Editor, The Times of India), Recorded interview, October 25, 2004
- 14 Patnaik, Ila (Economics editor, Indian Express), Recorded Interview, October 20, 2004
- 15 Sen Gupta, Arindam (Resident Editor, The Times of India), Recorded interview, October 25, 2004
- 16 Raghuraman, Shankar (Senior Editor, The Times of India), Recorded interview, October 25, 2004
- 17 Kaushal, Avdhash (Chairperson, Rural Litigation & Entitlement Kendra) Recorded Interview, October 4, 2004
- 18 Sharma, Parul (Senior Legal Adviser, Human Rights Law Network) Oral communication during a visit, October 17, 2004
- 19 Jain, Parveen (Photo Editor, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit, September 18, 2004
- 20 Malik, Ashok (Senior Editor, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit, September 20, 2004
- 21 Rajen Shanker, Unni (Assistant Executive Editor, Indian Express) Recorded interview, September 20, 2004
- 22 Pathak, Rahul (Editor, Express News Service, Indian Express) Recorded interview, September 16, 2004
- 23 Kamal Jha, Raj (Executive Editor, Indian Express) Recorded interview, September 21, 2004
- 24 Sharma, Manisha (Staff Writer, Hindustan Times in Jaipur) Recorded interview, September 28, 2004

- 25 Roy Chowdhury, Arun (Resident Editor, Hindustan Times) Recorded interview, October 25, 2004
- 26 Gupta, Shekhar (Editor-in-Chief, Indian Express) Recorded interview, October 24, 2004
- 27 Mudgal, Vipul (Associate Editor, Hindustan Times) Recorded interview, October 25, 2004
- 28 Murty, M.N. (Professor, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University) Recorded interview, October 19, 2004
- 29 Shamim Qureshi, S. (Chief Editor, Sab Ka Akhbar) Oral communication during a visit, October 22, 2004
- 30 Parekh, Angana (Director, Women's Feature Service) Recorded interview, October 5, 2004
- 31 Patra, Parakash (Editor, Hindustan Times) Notes taken during the interview, October 25, 2004
- 32 Mishra, Ashish (Research Officer, Women's Resource Center, Jaipur) Recorded interview, September 27, 2004
- 33 Neelima, Kota (Principal Correspondent, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit, September 9, 2004
- 34 Kaushal, Avdhash (Chairperson, Rural Litigation & Entitlement Kendra) Recorded interview, October 4, 2004
- 35 Singh, Meeta (Coordinator, Women's Resource Center, Jaipur) Recorded interview, September 27, 2004
- 36 Dayal, R.K. (Chief Photographer, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit, October 20, 2004
- 37 Gupta, Dipankar (Professor, Center for the Study of Social Systems, Schools of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University) Recorded interview, October 12, 2004
- 38 Basu, Aparna (President, All India women's Conference) Recorded interview, October 15, 2004
- 39 Chacko, Arun (Director, Press Institute of India) Recorded interview, September 10, 2004
- 40 Kaushal, Praveen (Director, Sophia NGO) Recorded interview, October 5, 2004

- 41 Kataria, Hina (Chief Functionary & Secretary) Recorded interview, October 4, 2004
- 42 Srivastava, Tushar (Reporter, Indian Express) Oral communication during a visit,
September 12, 2004
- 43 Pancholi, Indira (Women's Rights Committee) Recorded interview, September 27,
2004
- 44 Jain, Himanchee (NGO) Recorded interview, September 27, 2004
- 45 Gandhi, Ramu, Oral communication during a visit, September 29, 2004
- 46 Kazmi, S.MA. (Principal Correspondent, Indian Express), Recorded interview,
October 3, 2004
- 47 Naudiyal, Laxmi (Journalist, Dehradun), Recorded interview, October 8, 2004
- 48 Parashar, Uptal (Corespondent, Hindustan Times in Dehradun), Recorded interview,
October 8, 2004
- 49 Saxena, Deepti (Corespondent, Press Trust of India), Recorded interview, October 8,
2004
- 50 Yechury, Kalpakam (All India Women's Conference), Recorded interview, October
15, 2004