Portrayal of Minorities in Kannada Newspapers

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Abstract

India's diversity encompasses a significant population of religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities. This study explores how the media shapes and perpetuates both positive and negative images to maintain these communities' presence in public consciousness. Focusing on the portrayal of minorities in the Coastal Karnataka region, the paper examines eight Kannada newspapers (N=851) to test scholarly propositions regarding the coverage of minorities in Mangaluru. The research aims to identify the frames used to report on minorities and analyse the sources that dominate this news coverage.

Keywords: Content analysis; Framing theory; Minorities; Sources.

Introduction

Pluralistic societies feature diverse cultures, religions, languages, and values, posing complex challenges for equitable resource access. Modern civilizations increasingly exhibit diverse cultural and ethnic compositions (Vopel and Walkenhorst, 15).

Parekh observes that India exemplifies diversity with substantial populations of religious, linguistic, and ethnic minorities. The Indian Constitution protects the rights of all citizens, including minorities, and prohibits discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. India's approach to minority rights differs from other plural democracies by recognizing multiple languages and observing national holidays for various religions (11).

Kumar's examination reveals that the rise of right-wing Hindu nationalism has complicated India's political and religious landscapes, intensifying critical debates (95).

Robinson criticizes how the 'minority' category is often misunderstood

and misrepresented in legal and political contexts. Studies on minorities in India typically focus on conflicts between minorities and the dominant Hindu society. Christianity is often viewed in terms of conversions from Hinduism, while Sikhism and Islam are seen through the lens of communalism or opposition to Hinduism (17).

According to Anand, in Hindutva discourse, Muslims are portrayed as objects of insecurity at personal, local, national, and international levels, fostering feelings of fear, fantasy, distrust, anger, envy, and hatred, which prompt desires for emulation, rejection, or eradication (293).

The media play a significant role in shaping society, influencing sociological and political aspirations with a dynamic relationship. Analysis of media portrayals provides insights into relationships between different communities.

Saeed argues that Bollywood often portrays minorities, especially Muslims, in negative stereotypes as villains, underworld dons, terrorists, and militants, reinforcing longstanding prejudices (271).

Print media also shape societal identities, critically evaluating group portrayals in news articles and editorials, including language, tone, and overall message. Mann highlights how during the 'crisis in Punjab' in 1983 and 1984, Sikhs were stereotyped as violent and a threat to the Indian state in newspapers like the *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times*, legitimizing violence against them (121).

Das notes that government control over the media during the 1984 riots in Punjab led to biased and selective coverage, as foreign correspondents were restricted from visiting the region (10).

Sonwalkar explains that during the 2002 Gujarat violence, local media such as *Sandesh* and *Gujarat Samachar* supported the Hindu nationalist stance, justifying attacks on Muslims, while national media like the *Times of India* and *Indian Express* criticized the violence (93).

In the Kandhamal riots, the media blamed Christians, framing the events as communal clashes rather than violence (Bauman, 143, Nayak, 67).

Coastal Karnataka, comprising Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and Uttara Kannada districts, has witnessed communal violence over the past three decades. The region is home to diverse communities practicing Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sufism, with languages such as Kannada, Tulu, Konkani, and Byari reflecting this diversity. Mangaluru, the largest city in Dakshina Kannada, produced Karnataka's first Kannada newspaper, '*Mangalura Samachara*,' in the mid-19th century.

Over the past few decades, Mangaluru has seen significant media growth, surpassing other regions in Karnataka. The city now hosts several state-level newspapers, local publications, and cable TV channels. Additionally, numerous web news portals cater to residents within India and abroad. Major newspapers like *Vartha Bharati*, *Hosa Diganta*, *Karavali Ale*, and *Jaya Kirana* are published in Mangaluru and have large circulations. According to the 2019-20 annual report by the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), *Vijayavani* remains Karnataka's most widely circulated daily with 757,119 readers (48-62). However, in the Dakshina Kannada/Mangaluru region, *Vartha Bharati* leads with a readership of 148,096, followed by *Udayavani* (138,317), *Vijaya Karnataka* (55,621), *Hosa Diganta* (25,000), *Prajavani* (20,701), *Kannada Prabha* (6,655), and the evening papers *Karavali Ale* (46,190) and *Sanjevani* (20,000) (473-477).

According to the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) report, religious minorities constitute 16 percent of Karnataka's population, which is higher than the national average. Muslims form the largest minority group, followed by Christians and Jains (186). In Dakshina Kannada district, Hindus make up 67.18 percent, Muslims 24.02 percent, and Christians 8.20 percent, with Jains, Sikhs, and Buddhists comprising smaller percentages. Mangaluru City's demographics include 68.99 percent Hindus, 17.40 percent Muslims, and 13.15 percent Christians among others.

A report by the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) emphasizes the regional press' role in fuelling communal tensions through biased reporting (32). Vijaya Karnataka and Udayavani have faced criticism for labelling Muslims as 'anyamateeya' (belonging to another faith), perpetuating an 'othering' narrative. Udayavani's coverage of a Muslim protest in Udupi exemplifies this bias by associating green flags with Pakistan, reinforcing divisive stereotypes (34).

Similarly, Cavallin and Kuhlin observe that Hindu right-wing discourse often depicts Christians as corrupt and coercive in their efforts to convert non-Christians, framing conversion as a societal concern (6). This portrayal of religious minorities as internal threats is a central aspect of the Hindutva ideology.

Review of literature

Several scholars have examined how the media portray minorities or cover issues such as immigrants (Farris and Mohamed, 814, Bail, 855, Benson, 156, Benson and Saguy, 233, Cottle, 22, Valentino et al., 149, Van Dijk, 16, Nassar, 593, Hussain, 95). Moreover, recent studies increasingly focus

on the portrayal of minorities in global media (Baker, 310, Baker et al., 131, Dolezal et al., 172, Greenberg and Miazhevich, 75, Jaspal and Cinnirella, 289, Moore et al., 14, Morey and Yaqin, 44, Poole, 28, Poole and Richardson, 1, Richardson, 33, Van Djik, 167, Jakubowicz 10, Alia and Bull 3, Harding, 205, Ali et al., 96).

Scholars consistently identify patterns of negative portrayal of minorities in media. Edward Said asserted in 1981 that the media often portrayed Muslims and Islam disparagingly, especially during coverage of the Iranian Revolution, associating terms like 'fundamentalism' primarily with Islam, representing it as barbarism by the right, medieval theocracy by the left, and exotic and distasteful by the center (35). Conway argued in the landmark 1997 Runnymede Trust report that the British media predominantly held unfavourable and closed views on Islam (1). Alia and Bull noted the historical use of demeaning language about ethnic identities in written records (3). Reports on minorities in the press are typically minimal in size and frequency, often linking them with violent crime, riots, and social problems (Van Djik, 167, Jakubowicz, 10).

Media Framing

The study uses 'framing' as a theoretical framework. Entman has defined Framing as a process of "selecting some aspects of perceived reality and making them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (51). The earliest works on media framing are attributed to Shanto Iyengar's study that evaluates the framing effects of television news on politics. Iyengar introduced the concepts of 'episodic' and 'thematic' framing of news. He said: "Episodic news framing depicts concrete events that illustrate issues, while thematic framing presents collective or general evidence" (59).

Bourdieu posited that the images that are shown in the media have a real effect and people believe what they see. This, in turn, has a mobilisation effect. The mobilisation effect not only gives life to ideas and images but also to groups. The news, the incidents and accidents of everyday life, can be loaded with political or ethnic significance, unleashing strong and often negative feelings, such as racism, chauvinism, fear-hatred of foreigners or xenophobia. The simple report, the very fact of reporting, of putting on record as a reporter, always implies a social construction of reality that can mobilise (or demobilise) individuals or groups (21). Likewise, when it comes to the regional press, fewer studies focus on the media portrayal of minorities. This is why the present study tries to examine the representation of minorities in Kannada dailies.

Research Questions

1.   What is the importance given to the news about minorities in the newspapers?

2.   What frames are used in covering minorities?

3.   What are the sources that dominate the news coverage?

Methodology

This study analyses the content of eight newspapers with significant readership in coastal Karnataka. The newspapers were selected based on their circulation size, categorized as large, medium, and small. Among the eight newspapers, six are morning editions and two are evening editions. These selected newspapers reach diverse demographics in Mangaluru. *Hosa Diganta, Kannada Prabha, Udayavani* and *Vijaya Karnataka* exhibit a pro-Hindu bias, while *Prajavani, Karavali Ale* and *Sanjevani* are known for their centrist perspectives. *Vartha Bharati* focuses more on news concerning minorities and critical reports on Hindu fundamentalism.

All news stories and editorial content related to minorities published in these newspapers from November 2018 to October 2019 were examined. The unit of analysis was individual news stories, including editorials and letters to the editor, to understand the newspapers' stances on minority issues and public opinion.

A six-week sample was chosen using the constructed week method from all issues published between November 2018 and October 2019. Each constructed week represented two months: Week 1 from November to December 2018, Week 2 from January to February 2019, Week 3 from March to April 2019, Week 4 from May to June 2019, Week 5 from July to August 2019, and Week 6 from September to October 2019. The days of the week were selected to ensure equal representation, with one day randomly chosen for each day of the week. Constructed week sampling enhances sampling efficiency in quantitative newspaper content analysis by capturing the variation in news content over a seven-day week (Boyle et al., 638, Clark and Illman, 496, Jones and Carter, 399, Stempel, 333, Riffe et al., 133).

News stories containing specific keywords such as 'Muslims,' 'minorities,' 'Christians,' 'Jains,' 'Sikhs,' 'Buddhists,' 'Priest,' 'Imam,' 'Quran,' 'Bible,' and 'Sikh riot' were selectively analyzed to determine their tone (positive, neutral, or negative). Additionally, five frames were identified to analyze news framing: victim, beneficial, problem, other, and ambiguous. Two re-

search scholars were trained in coding and achieved an average inter-coder reliability score of 90 percent using Holsti's formula (Holsti, 20). These scholars independently coded the content of the eight newspapers once inter-coder reliability was established.

Findings

(1) The coverage of minorities

Minority news accounted for 2.8 percent of the total news covered in the eight sample newspapers. *Sanjevani* carried 5.4 percent coverage, the highest of minority news followed by *Vartha Bharathi* with 4.9 percent and *Karavali Ale* with 4.6 percent. On the other hand, *Vijaya Karnataka* gave 2.6 percent coverage and *Udayavani* 2.2 percent. *Hosa Diganta* offered 1.8 percent of coverage, and *Kannada Prabha* 1.6 percent. *Prajavani,* with 1.3 percent, had the lowest news coverage on minorities.

Table 1: Minority news coverage in newspapers

Newspaper	All news items	Minority news items	Percent of minority news items
Udayavani	4452	100	2.2
Vijaya Karnataka	3654	96	2.6
Vartha Bharati	5034	245	4.9
Prajavani	4410	57	1.3
Hosa Diganta	3804	68	1.8
Kannada Prabha	4668	77	1.6
Karavali Ale	2796	129	4.6
Sanjevani	1470	79	5.4
Total	30288	851	2.8

It is interesting to note that *Sanjevani*, an eveninger with four-page space, carried the highest amount of news stories, and *Prajavani*, a newspaper with one of the major circulation and space in the region, had the lowest (see table 1).

(a) Type of news content

Table 2 : Type of content

	News Story	Article	Editorial	Photo Story	Total
Udayavani	95 (95)	1 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)	**100**
Vijaya Karnataka	88 (91.7)	7 (7.3)	1 (1.04)	0	**96**
Vartha Bharati	233 (95.1)	10 (4.1)	1 (0.4)	1 (0.4)	**245**
Prajavani	53 (93)	0	3 (5.3)	1 (1.8)	**57**
Hosa Diganta	58 (85.3)	7 (10.3)	2 (3)	1 (1.5)	**68**
Kannada Prabha	71 (92.2)	5 (6.5)	1 (1.3)	0	**77**
Sanjevani	78 (98.7)	0	0	1 (1.3)	**79**
Karavali Ale	129 (100)	0	0	0	**129**
Total	**805 (94.6)**	**30 (3.5)**	**11 (1.3)**	**5 (0.6)**	**851**

Comprehensive news coverage ensures that a newspaper offers a well-rounded view of current affairs, enabling readers to stay informed about the world around them. It typically includes news reporting, interviews, investigative journalism and opinion pieces to present a wide range of perspectives on important issues. The table (see table 2) clearly shows that since a vast majority of the items about minorities were straight news stories, the coverage lacked comprehensiveness.

Straight news accounted for 94.6 percent of overall coverage while 3.5 percent of articles were published. Editorials amounted to 1.3 percent and 0.6 percent of photo stories were published in the total coverage.

Hosa Diganta featured 85.3 percent straight news stories, 10.3 percent ar-

ticles, 3 percent editorials, and 1.5 percent photo stories. *Vijaya Karnataka* published 91.7 percent straight news stories, 7.3 percent articles, and 1.04 percent editorials. *Kannada Prabha* carried 92.2 percent straight news stories, 6.5 percent articles, and 1.3 percent editorials. *Vartha Bharati* covered 95.1 percent in straight news, 4.1 percent in articles, and 0.4 percent in editorials and photo stories. Interestingly, despite its least overall coverage, *Prajavani* allocated 5.3 percent of its space to editorials, more than any other newspaper. *Udayavani* and *Hosa Diganta* followed, dedicating 3 percent of their content to editorials (see table 2).

(b) Presence of minority community in newspapers

Table 3: Minority communities in different newspapers

Newspaper	Muslims	Christians	Jains	Sikhs	Buddhists	Minorities	Total
Udayavani	78 (78.0)	16 (16.0)	4 (4)	0	0	2 (2.0)	100
Vijaya Karnataka	84 (87.5)	8 (8.3)	2 (2.1)	1 (1.0)	0	1 (1.0)	96
Vartha Bharati	206 (84.1)	28 (11.4)	3 (1.2)	0	0	8 (3.3)	245
Prajavani	41 (71.9)	11 (19.3)	3 (5.3)	1 (1.8)	0	1 (1.8)	57
Hosa Diganta	63 (92.6)	1 (1.5)	1 (1.5)	2 (2.9)	1 (1.5)	0	68
Kannada Prabha	63 (81.8)	6 (7.8)	2 (2.6)	2 (2.6)	0	4 (5.2)	77
Sanjevani	63 (79.7)	12 (15.2)	2 (2.5)	0	0	2 (2.5)	79
Karavali Ale	109 (84.5)	19 (14.7)	0	0	0	1 (0.8)	129
Total	**707 (83.1)**	**101 (11.9)**	**17 (2.0)**	**6 (0.7)**	**1 (0.1)**	**19 (2.2)**	**851**

The newspapers featured 83.1 percent of their news stories about Muslims, 11.9 percent about Christians, 2 percent about Jains, and a mere 0.7 percent and 0.1 percent about Sikhs and Buddhists, respectively. Despite covering minorities in only 1.3 percent of its total content, *Prajavani* still managed to report on all four minority communities: it focused 71.9 percent of its stories on Muslims, 19.3 percent on Christians, 5.3 percent on

Jains, and 1.8 percent on Sikhs.

Udayavani followed *Prajavani* in the diversity of its coverage, reporting 78 percent of its stories on Muslims, 16 percent on Christians, and 4 percent on Jains. The evening paper *Sanjevani* covered 79.7 percent of its stories on Muslims, 15.2 percent on Christians, and 2.5 percent on Jains. The other evening paper, *Karavali Ale*, published 84.5 percent of its stories on Muslims and 14.7 percent on Christians.

Vartha Bharati published the highest number of stories about minorities, featuring 84.1 percent of its stories on Muslims, 11.4 percent on Christians, and 1.2 percent on Jains. These five newspapers gave better coverage to Christians compared to *Vijaya Karnataka*, *Hosa Diganta*, and *Kannada Prabha* (see table 3).

(c) Coverage of minorities in major news categories

Table 4: Minority news categories

News category	Total	Percent
Crime	183	21.5
War and Defence	147	17.3
Government and Politics	109	12.8
Religion	96	11.3
Public Morality	92	10.8
Accidents and Deaths	53	6.2
Diplomacy and Foreign Relations	42	4.9
Human Interest	39	4.6
Education	34	4.0
Public Health and Welfare	24	2.8
Economic Activity	8	0.9
Popular Amusements	8	0.9
Development Activity	4	0.5
Art and Literature	4	0.5
Environment & Natural Disaster	4	0.5
Language and Culture	3	0.4
Science and Invention	1	0.1

Crime news accounted for 21.5 percent of the stories. War and Defence news, which dealt with terrorism around the world and border disputes with Pakistan, followed with 147 stories, making up 17.3 percent. Government and Politics came third with 109 stories, accounting for 12.8 percent, while Religion featured in 96 stories, comprising 11.3 percent. Public Morality had 92 stories, representing 10.8 percent. These five news categories represented the majority of minority news, amounting to 73.03 percent of the coverage.

These are also the only five categories with more than 10 percent of coverage; the rest fall below 10 percent and include Accidents and Deaths, Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, Human Interest, Education, etc. (see table 4).

(2) News Frames

Benson analyzed news stories using five frame categories—victim, beneficial, problem, other, and ambiguous (7). Victim frames, which generate sympathy for the victim group, and beneficial frames, portraying groups positively contributing to society, were identified with positive tones. Problem frames, which evoke fear or animosity, were noted for their negative tone. Examples of stories coded in these categories include:

Victim
- "Hebri: Two arrested for transporting beef, bus seized"
- "Police discriminate against Muslims: Survey"
- "Wali spreads derogatory messages against Jesus, Mary: Christians demand action"

Beneficial
- "Sunni Coordination provides aid for the flood-affected"
- "Nationalistic Christian Forum pays homage to martyred soldiers"
- "Valiant Fatima Suhana clears her exam despite losing her leg in a train accident"

Problem
- "Pro-Pak Post: Youth Arrested"
- "Terrorist Bhatkal leads protest in Tihar Jail"
- "Bantwal Muslim youths involved in a street fight"

The 'other' category encompasses stories that are neither positive nor negative, merely identifying a group as distinctive without valence, such as "Ayodhya: will not be involved in negotiations". The 'ambiguous' catego-

ry includes stories that are too unclear to categorize definitively, like "It's good that my brother died", or those that readers could interpret as positive or neutral, such as "Salwat annual event in Kinya". These elements contribute to the complexity of stories, lacking a clear valence.

Frames in minority news

Table 5 : Frames in minority news

Frames	Muslims	Chris-tians	Jains	Sikhs	Bud-dhists	Minori-ties	Total
Victim	82 (11.6)	20 (19.8)	4 (23.5)	2 (33.3)	1 (100)	4 (21.1)	**113 (13.3)**
Beneficial	134 (19.0)	37 (36.6)	10 (58.8)	0	0	11 (57.9)	**192 (22.6)**
Problem	366 (51.8)	20 (19.8)	1 (5.9)	1 (16.7)	0	2 (10.5)	**390 (45.8)**
Other	100 (14.1)	8 (7.9)	2 (11.8)	1 (16.7)	0	0	**111 (13)**
Ambigu-ous	25 (3.5)	16 (15.8)	0	2 (33.3)	0	2 (10.5)	**45 (5.3)**
Total	**707**	**101**	**17**	**6**	**1**	**19**	**851**

Table 5 summarizes the distribution of frames among the sample of 851 news stories about minorities. The 'problem' frame, present in 45.8 percent of the stories, emerged as the most common among the five categories. This suggests that the media often portrays minorities in a negative light. However, the 'victim' and 'beneficial' frames, which are more likely to elicit sympathy or kindness towards minorities, combined to account for 305 stories, or 35.8 percent, with a positive tone.

The data shows that the problem frames appeared in a higher percentage of stories about Muslims than those about other minorities. The 'minorities' category had a lower percentage of problem frames compared to Muslims: 51.8 percent of stories about Muslims were portrayed using problem frames, while only 30.6 percent used victim and beneficial frames. According to Table 5, Buddhists topped the list for victim frames, with 100 percent of stories featuring the community in one story. Jains followed, with 23.5 percent of their stories using victim frames and 58.8 percent using beneficial frames, resulting in 82.4 percent positive frames versus 5.9 percent problem frames. Christians, who fared better than Mus-

lims in minority news frames, appeared in 19.8 percent of victim frames and 36.6 percent of beneficial frames, totalling 56.4 percent positive frames compared to 19.8 percent problem frames. Sikhs had 33.3 percent of their stories positively framed and 16.7 percent with problem frames.

Overall, the media presented more negatively framed stories about Muslims compared to Jains, Christians, and Sikhs. This finding supports the prevailing view that the media portrays Muslims more negatively than other minority communities, such as Jains, Christians, and Sikhs, who are portrayed in a more positive light (see table 5).

(a) Frames in different newspapers

Table 6: Frames in different newspapers

Frames	Udaya-vani	Vi-jaya Kar-nata-ka	Var-tha Bhara-ti	Pra-ja-vani	Hosa Di-ganta	San-je-vani	Kan-nada Prabha	Kar-avali Ale	Total
Victim	11 (11)	10 (10.4)	35 (14.3)	6 (10.5)	7 (10.3)	12 (15.2)	5 (6.5)	27 (20.9)	**113 (13.3)**
Benefi-cial	15 (15)	16 (16.7)	84 (34.3)	19 (33.3)	7 (10.3)	20 (25.3)	20 (26.0)	11 (8.5)	**192 (22.6)**
Prob-lem	54 (54)	58 (60.4)	68 (27.8)	18 (31.6)	42 (61.8)	40 (50.6)	33 (42.9)	77 (59.7)	**390 (45.8)**
Other	11 (11)	10 (10.4)	41 (16.7)	12 (21.1)	10 (14.7)	3 (3.8)	13 (16.9)	11 (8.5)	**111 (13)**
Ambig-uous	9 (9)	2 (2.1)	17 (6.9)	2 (3.5)	2 (2.9)	4 (5.1)	6 (7.8)	3 (2.3)	**45 (5.3)**
	100	96	245	57	68	79	77	129	851

The examination involved analyzing the distribution of 851 frames across each of the eight newspapers to gain deeper insights into how minorities are portrayed. *Vartha Bharathi* featured 14.3 percent victim frames and 34.3 percent beneficial frames, which outweighed its 27.8 percent problem frames. In contrast, *Prajavani* showcased 10.5 percent victim frames and 33.3 percent beneficial frames, totalling 43.9 percent, significantly exceeding its 31.6 percent problem frames compared to the other seven newspapers.

Hosa Diganta dominated its coverage with 61.8 percent problem frames, more than any of the other seven newspapers, prioritizing problem frames over victim and beneficial frames. Overall, the problem frame dominated the coverage at 45.8 percent. *Vartha Bharathi* notably questioned right-

wing fundamentalism, while *Prajavani* took a more centrist stance. The remaining newspapers supported right-wing political ideology and its affiliates to varying degrees (see table 6).

(b) Episodic and thematic framing

Table 7 : Episodic and Thematic coverage

Newspaper	Episodic	Thematic	Total
Udayavani	96 (96.0)	4 (4.0)	100
Vijaya Karnataka	88 (91.7)	8 (8.3)	96
Vartha Bharati	234 (95.5)	11 (4.5)	245
Prajavani	54 (94.7)	3 (5.3)	57
Hosa Diganta	59 (86.8)	9 (13.2)	68
Sanjevani	79 (100.0)	0	79
Kannada Prabha	71 (92.2)	6 (7.8)	77
Karavali Ale	129 (100.0)	0	129
	810 (95.2)	41 (4.8)	851

Minority news coverage framed stories episodically in 95.2 percent of cases, focusing on specific events, while only 4.8 percent used thematic framing, which provides a general context. Among the newspapers covered in this study, *Vartha Bharati* criticized right-wing fundamentalism with 4.5 percent of coverage, while *Prajavani* took a more centrist approach with 5.3 percent. However, their minimal use of thematic framing limited deeper exploration of right-wing fundamentalism, as the majority of their coverage remained episodic. *Hosa Diganta* with 13.2 percent and *Vijaya Karnataka* with 8.3 percent featured more thematically framed news that often supported the right-wing ecosystem (see table 7).

According to Iyengar, the way news stories are framed influences how people perceive the causes of policy problems. Episodic framing focus-

es on event-centered information. For example, in reporting on poverty, episodic framing tends to attribute individual responsibility. In contrast, thematic framing includes a more detailed account of the causes of poverty (62).

Episodic framing significantly influenced minority coverage in this study, particularly in stories involving crime, which constituted 21.5 percent of minority news and reinforced negative perceptions.

It's important to note that readership varied among the eight newspapers: *Vartha Bharati* and *Udayavani* commanded a large readership in Mangaluru, whereas *Prajavani* had fewer readers compared to *Karavali Ale*. *Prajavani* and *Vartha Bharati* tended to present more balanced reports on minorities. In contrast, *Udayavani, Vijaya Karnataka, Hosa Diganta, Kannada Prabha, Karavali Ale*, and *Sanjevani*, with their wider readerships, often portrayed minorities in a negative light.

(c) News direction of minority news

Table 8: News direction

Newspapers	News direction			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Udayavani	22 (22.0)	31 (31.0)	47 (47.0)	**100**
Vijaya Karnataka	15 (15.6)	22 (22.9)	59 (61.5)	**96**
Vartha Bharati	96 (39.2)	73 (29.8)	76 (31.0)	**245**
Prajavani	23 (40.4)	12 (21.1)	22 (38.6)	**57**
Hosa Diganta	06 (8.8)	21 (30.9)	41 (60.3)	**68**
Kannada Prabha	19 (24.7)	26 (33.8)	32 (41.6)	**77**
Sanjevani	23 (29.1)	17 (21.5)	39 (49.4)	**79**
Karavali Ale	14 (10.9)	33 (25.6)	82 (63.6)	**129**
Total	**218 (25.6)**	**235 (27.6)**	**398 (46.8)**	**851**

The majority of stories—46.8 percent—had a negative tone, compared to

27.6 percent that were neutral and 25.6 percent that were positive. *Vartha Bharati* featured 39.2 percent positive-toned stories, 29.8 percent neutral-toned stories, and 31 percent negative-toned stories. *Prajavani*, on the other hand, presented 40.4 percent positive-toned stories, 21.1 percent neutral-toned stories, and 38.6 percent negative-toned stories, making these two newspapers the only ones with more positive-toned stories than negative-toned ones.

Karavali Ale led with 63.6 percent negative-toned stories, 10.9 percent positive-toned stories, and 25.6 percent neutral-toned stories (see table 8). *Vijaya Karnataka* followed with 61.5 percent negative-toned stories, 22.9 percent neutral-toned stories, and 15.6 percent positive-toned stories. *Hosa Diganta* had 60.3 percent negative-toned stories, 8.8 percent positive-toned stories, and 30.9 percent neutral-toned stories. Overall, these three newspapers dominated in stories with a negative tone (see table 8), supporting the idea that news content emphasizing problems and challenges tends to attract more attention (Jacobs and Meta Van der Linden, 15).

(3) Sources

Conrad emphasizes that sources play a crucial role in shaping news stories and their frames for journalists (290). Media outlets utilize a range of sources—from government officials to interest groups—to create influential and impactful content (Shoemaker and Reese, 781). In news stories, anyone quoted is considered a source. For this study, only individuals identified within news stories were counted as sources, with those quoted in headlines or lead paragraphs categorized as major sources.

Police sources were predominant in news coverage about minorities, comprising 28.1 percent of quoted sources. Official sources, including the National Investigation Agency (NIA), district commissioners, and other government officials, accounted for 15.6 percent. Together, police and officials constituted 43 percent of the total sources in these stories. Sources from religious backgrounds, such as priests and religious leaders, constituted 12.5 percent, while politicians represented 10 percent.

In Table 8, the BJP emerged as the primary political source with 85 political sources totalling 10 percent, comprising 37 quotes and totalling 4.34 percent. In contrast, the Congress was quoted 17 times, amounting to 2 percent of the quoted sources. Political sources representing minority viewpoints totalled 31, comprising 3.64 percent of political sources overall. In total, major minority sources contributed to 19.03 percent of the

sources quoted in the stories (see table 9).

Sources in the news stories

Table 9 : Sources in news stories

Sources	Total	Percent
Police	239	28.1
Officials	133	15.6
Religious	106	12.5
Politicians	85	10.0
Other	71	8.3
No Source	65	7.6
Legal	35	4.1
Admin	26	3.1
Organisers	20	2.4
Academicians	16	1.9
Independent	13	1.5
NGOs	13	1.5
Business	11	1.3
FIR	9	1.1
Victims	9	1.1
Total	**851**	

Politicians and official sources, such as police, legitimize the press. Non-official sources, like victims, often get sidelined because there's no formal structure for news generation. Studies on sources consistently show that government officials are frequently quoted, ranging from one-third to three-quarters (Brown et al. 45, Sigal, 2). Conrad emphasizes that agenda-setting is crucial in media, influencing how people perceive and evaluate new information about human behaviour. Therefore, bringing these voices to the forefront has become a political priority (301).

Conclusion

Minority stories in newspapers accounted for only 2.8 percent of total

news coverage. Crime stories were the most covered at 21.5 percent, followed by War and Defence at 17.3 percent, Government and Politics at 12.8 percent, and Religion at 11.3 percent. Public Moral Problems had the least coverage at 10.8 percent. Together, these categories represented 73.03 percent of minority news coverage.

Overall, the portrayal of minorities in the eight newspapers was negative. Muslims dominated the coverage at 83.1 percent. *Vartha Bharati* and *Prajavani* provided relatively more balanced coverage with a higher proportion of positive stories compared to the other newspapers. The remaining six newspapers—*Udayavani, Vijaya Karnataka, Hosa Diganta, Kannada Prabha, Karavali Ale,* and *Sanjevani*—mainly focused on portraying problems. The problem frame dominated the coverage, followed by Crime, War and Defence, and Government and Politics stories. These findings reinforce previous studies highlighting the negative portrayal of Muslims, while Jains, Christians, and Sikhs were depicted more positively.

The problem frame was prevalent in 45.8 percent of stories, while the victim and beneficial frames combined constituted 35.8 percent, indicating a predominance of negative coverage. Muslim stories primarily featured problem frames that amounted to 51.8 percent, followed by victim frames amounting to 11.06 percent and beneficial frames with 19 percent. Episodic framing was predominant at 95.2 percent, suggesting a lack of consistency and depth in coverage, often attributing communal issues to individual responsibility rather than government policies.

Sources play a crucial role in shaping news stories. Police and officials accounted for 43 percent of sources in minority stories, overshadowing independent entities and victims. Police, officials, politicians, and religious figures primarily defined news about minorities. Only 19.03 percent of prominent minority voices were quoted in these stories.

The print media's predominantly negative coverage of minorities risks perpetuating prejudices among readers. This stereotypical portrayal reflects societal biases. Episodic news framing and insufficient depth in reporting indicate a lack of background and analysis in minority news stories. The underrepresentation of minority voices suggests their perspectives are rarely heard in newspaper columns.

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