

AN ANALYSIS OF IMAGES AND CAPTIONS PUBLISHED IN THE HINDU AND THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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Abstract

The modern newspaper is a challenging and multi-faceted organization. Likewise, the role of a journalist is very significant here. Since reporting is the main job of a journalist, he should have imagination, clarity of thought, fluency in expression and control over his language. He has to strictly adhere to various aspects of Print Media ethics while imparting an information. He should ensure objectivity, accuracy and truthfulness. He should address personal and public rights. News stories need to be handled and processed very carefully and made suitable for being published. It should be presented in an attractive, understandable and digestible form. New formats in reporting have emerged due to revolutionary innovations and developments in Print Media. A journalist has to be aware of the changing trends in all areas of reporting. Discovering all relevant facts, selecting and presenting important facts and producing a readable story are very essential in newspaper reporting. Reporters need special skills for presenting a news item. Weaving an accurate, fair, current and comprehensive story are the essential features in reporting. Due to all these, the techniques involved in the presentation of news items are also undergoing changes to realize the requirements of newspaper readers. Since newspapers have become more and more reader-centered today due to various reasons, different strategies and techniques are used in the dailies for attracting readers of all age groups. A good news story must be combined with an effective story and a perfect image to capture the full information. Photojournalism is a unique form of journalism. It is a powerful tool for communication today. Pictures enhance news stories. The value of an image consists in its choice, composition and quality of reproduction. The major considerations for a photojournalist is 'what to shoot', 'how to frame' and 'how to depict' for publishing images effectively. Similarly, photo captions, like news pictures, are also an important part of a newspaper. Caption writing is a skill and it should reply to 'who, doing what, where, when and why'. Since printing images form an integral part of any newspaper nowadays, an attempt has been made in the paper for analyzing the news photos appear in the two leading English dailies THE HINDU and The New Indian Express. Also, the paper proposes to examine the quality of photo captions printed in the two newspapers.

Keywords: newspaper, news story, news picture, photo caption and ethics.

The paper attempts to analyse news images printed in *The Hindu* and *The New Indian Express* for imparting information to newspaper readers. It examines subject, quality, content, tone, composition and relevance of photographs published in the two English dailies to enrich news items.

Communication is a social activity. It is one of the activities that every human being recognizes. The word 'communication' is derived from the Latin word 'Communis' which refers to 'common' or 'to create commonness' among persons around us. Communication is defined as transfer of a message from one person to other through a medium. It may be

verbal, non-verbal, written or audio-visual. It may be the combination of any or all of them. It is very essential to identify relations among people in order to fulfil varied tasks. The importance of communication has been felt by everyone today. It has made all activities and processes very fast, accurate and efficient. Notable changes have occurred in the recent times in communication in the wake of innovations in technology.

There are different categories of communication. Mass Communication is one such type which includes newspaper, magazine, radio, television, film or movie, the internet, etc. We have several media of communication. Print and Electronic Media are the two important types of news media. Print Media comprises newspapers, magazines, newsletters, pamphlets, books, booklets, brochures, house journals, articles, banners, posters and billboards. Radio, television, telephone, computer and the internet are the important forms of Electronic Media.

The Media Guru Marshall McLuhan views that ‘the medium is the message’. Print Media play a significant role in transferring a message and shaping the public opinion. It has become a powerful tool for educating people and for providing entertainment to the public. Newspaper is the most popular kind of Print Media. It is responsible for mass reporting than any other news sources. It can reach a large audience. Newspaper has gained a place in the world though the method of transfer is changing due to the development of communication technologies. Newspaper industry is a growing industry today. Newspapers focus mainly on varied such fields as advocacy journalism, citizen journalism, data journalism, gonzo journalism, interactive journalism, investigative journalism, photo journalism, tabloid journalism and yellow journalism.

Photojournalism is a distinct variety of journalism. It is a revolutionary innovation in mass media. It is a powerful media of expression and communication today. It documents events through images to tell a news story. Photojournalists have got an important role here. They develop photographs to supply to the news media to illustrate news stories with images. News photos enhance news items. They serve as a fair and accurate representation of the texts presented in newspapers. Photos are combined excellently in newspapers with the printed words to transfer quality information to readers. Much attention is now being paid to the way in which a message is presented. News picture is a suitable tool than text to tell stories in newspapers. Pictures are essential to capture various moods. Newspapers use photographs for imparting visual information. As Rangaswami Parthasarathy observes “the best picture shows life happening. It can tell a story of life”.

Photojournalists, like other journalists, strictly adhere to Print Media ethics. The major considerations for them are ‘what to shoot’, ‘how to frame’ and ‘how to edit’. They have to choose carefully ‘what picture to take’, ‘what picture to stage’ and ‘what picture to depict’ for effective presentation of news stories both in content and tone. Hence, publishing pictures form an integral part of any newspaper nowadays.

The Hindu and *The New Indian Express* are the two popular English newspapers in South India. They have a long history and a rich tradition. They publish news with strong, dramatic and suitable pictures. The images delivered are about people, places and things. The stories illustrated with action pictures convey informations, emotions, passions, humour, failures, etc better than news texts, arguments or discussions. The images that appear in these two newspapers have their wonderful, special effects on readers. They affect the receivers emotionally and intellectually. They delight, excite and interest readers. The news photos printed are pictures of social and human interest.

Photographs of violence and tragedy are not published. Gruesome photos leading to riots and to aggravate tension are avoided to show to the public. While reporting crimes such as rape, abduction, sexual harassment of women or children, the victim's names and photographs or other information's relating to their identity are not printed. Utmost care is taken not to bring social problems to the victims, their relations and the family to which the affected persons belong. The photos depicted ensure that individuals are not affected and threatened. Community-wise pictures of the victims of communal violence are not shown. The depictions do not at all harm, insult or flame anybody. Pictures of controversial topics are dropped. Better and quality frames are captured in order to compose and stage subjects and contents carefully. Photo manipulation, reproduction and transmission of images are not done.

The two newspapers respect the public's right to freedom to tell the truth before the pictures have been delivered. Through suitable frames the events that happen around the world are staged. The printed photos display news in an objective and decent manner to provide correct information's. The pictures appear objectively along with texts. There is credibility in their representations. The images never outweigh the subjects, contents, tones, compositions and highlights. Factual accounts are represented with perfect frames. The photos are newsworthy and enrich the news value. The images printed are relevant to events and society. They are extraordinary, accurate, informative, effective and useful for conveying what is happening around us and around the world. News photos and news stories match very well. The images are depicted dramatically and they do not mislead the readers. They are striking and narrative to bring out the message clearly in telling the stories. Due weight age is given for editorial and technical values too. The images are technically perfect and are sharp.

Photo caption, like news pictures, are also an essential part of a newspaper. A photograph helps readers understand what the news is all about. A photo caption describes a photograph, chart, graph, etc. It appears usually under a picture. Caption writing is a skill. It should answer to 'who' doing what, when, where and why'. Poor and misleading captioning could spoil the message of an image. Information, taste, judgment and imagination are required to write a good caption.

The captions printed in *The Hindu* and *The New Indian Express* are appropriate. They give explanatory text about images, charts and graphs. They contain essential details such as names, credits and citations. Present tense is used mostly in captioning photos for instance of images. The short descriptions are helpful to understand the newspaper story telling. Clichés are avoided for clear and direct expressions. Conversational or informal language works well in captions to produce the intended effects. Accurate, complete, informative, ideal and good captions go very well with the pictures published in the two newspapers chosen for analysis.

News Photos Published in the Hindu and the New Indian Express



Firm Message: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi on Monday.—
Photo: R. V. Moorthy



Good work:Vizhuthugal Youth Movement members cleaning the forest path leading to Sri Sundara Mahalingam Temple on Sathuragiri Hills in Virudhunagar district.



The train stands near the station after a man attacked other passengers aboard the train at Salez, Switzerland | AP



Smooth take-off: The Centre will soon unveil the final regional connectivity scheme that aims to promote the use of smaller aircraft.— FILE PHOTO



India's Sindhu Puarla returns a shot to Taiwan's Chou Tai Tzu-ying during a Women single match at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Pride of India: The parents of Dipa Karmakar, Dulal Karmakar and Gouri Karmakar, along with family members watch their daughter's praiseworthy performance on television.— PHOTO: AFP

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