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# The News Is Either Restricted Or Excessively Political: A Perception Study Of People Of Delhi

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## Abstract

Nowadays, the news is either restricted or excessively political. There is no longer a 'clean and clear image. Mark Twain once observed, "If you don't read the newspaper, you are uninformed; if you read the newspaper, you are misinformed." In this study, we will examine what the general public believes about how the media operates, as well as their perspectives on topics such as journalists being intimidated, news being politicized or suppressed, and what feasible solutions exist for such situations. The conversation process of the process's numerous stakeholders is investigated. News should be delivered to the public as its whole, with all of the truth and reality intact, so that people may develop their own opinions and freely accept or criticize them.

## Introduction

India is regarded as one of the world's largest democracies. A democracy's primary role is to safeguard its foundational values of liberty and fairness. and equality that comprise the legislative, executive, and judicial departments of government, it is critical for the three branches to collaborate while remaining independent of one another and balancing their respective capabilities. The fourth estate, media, is also at the pinnacle. As much as the first three branches have the ability to regulate and provide for the nation, the media also plays a significant role. The media should be impartial and uncensored. It should not be prejudiced and should give the audience with accurate, clear, and concise information. However, in recent years, media control has taken a toll on the democratic state. One of India's six freedoms is guaranteed under Article 19 of its constitution, which ensures the right to freedom. Unfortunately, it appears that the government is violating these rights. As a result, today's debates revolve around freedom of speech and expression, press freedom, internet freedom, and personal freedom.

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These days, the news is either restricted or excessively politicized. There is no longer a 'clean and clear image. "If you don't read the newspaper, you are uninformed; if you read the newspaper, you are misinformed," remarked Mark Twain, and this is still very much the case in India today. Some of the news that gets out is either in favour of political parties who have paid or threatened the media to write in their favour. When any news is broadcast, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry bans the channel for 24 hours. However, if the matter is one of national security, secrecy should be maintained to prevent adversaries from obtaining information that might be used against our country and jeopardize its national security. The government shuts down the internet in some cases if a public or crowd is participating at the site. Some journalists and activists who write articles critical of the government or any political party are intimidated or assassinated in strange circumstances. With such abuses of fundamental rights, this does not appear to be a peaceful democracy. Reporters Without Borders placed India 136th out of 180 nations in their 2017 World Press Freedom Index. This score so indicates how critical the state of news reporting in our country is. It is critical for democracy that the people be allowed to engage as well as obtain information that is devoid of bias and prejudice.

For democracy to function effectively, elections to be fair, and citizens to understand the actual world, the media must be able to present citizens with news that is fresh and unbiased, free of influence from political leaders, media outlets, or any other organization. It is preferable to present the news to the public as its whole, with all of its truth and realism intact, so that they may develop their own opinions and freely accept or criticize it. This research study will attempt to address the question, "Why is there media censorship?" Is it necessary? Finally, how free is the press? It is also crucial for ensuring that the marginalised have a say in the formulation of local choices that affect their life (Anil Kumar Pathlavalh, 2016)

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In this study, we will examine the general public's impression of how the media operates, as well as their perspectives on topics such as journalists being threatened, news being politicised or suppressed, and what feasible solutions exist for such situations. The dialogue process amongst many players in the process makes this more apparent (Anil Kumar Pathlavath, 2018).

The status of being free within society from onerous restraints imposed by one's behaviour or political opinions is referred to as liberty. The treatment of a behaviour that is enforced is referred to as justice. Equality occurs when all persons are treated equally in terms of status, opportunity, and rights, regardless of gender, religion, or any other characteristic. National security is the safety or protection of a country from crimes or dangers such as terrorism, conflicts, or any other problem

that affects the country. Every country's government makes it a top priority. Prejudice is an unfounded belief that may or may not be based on fact. It is just a prejudiced judgment affected by previous experiences or other situations.

## **Objectives**

- To determine why the news is restricted by the media or why the majority of the news is influenced by political domination.
- To determine the role that the government, political parties, and other entities play in the news that is disseminated or published.
- To assess the impact of news distributed through print and television media.

## **Review of Literature**

Abhishek Dey's piece titled "Journalists in the Delhi NCR face same threats. With relation to Gauri Lankesh's fate "(2017) was published only a few days after Gauri Lankesh's death—approximately four reports were made in Noida over death threats received via platforms such as WhatsApp and phone calls. They were told that if they were critical of the Modi administration, the BJP and RSS would not spare them and would "eliminate" them. Another Quint journalist was raped and threatened with death after posting a video in which she called the lyrics of "BOI Na Aunty Aau Kya" sexist, cheap, and insulting. The messages she got, some of which were unconnected to the song, detailed why Gauri was slain, stating that she was assassinated because she rigorously wrote against Modi, the BJP, or the RSS. They labelled Gauri as a traitor and anti-national and anti-Hindu for doing so. They assumed she was as worthless as Muslims, and that they would all be "removed."

Antra Sarkhel (2017) claimed in a study report titled "India shut down internet 29 times in 2017" that it has become a standard to shut down the internet in India. He has recorded all of the regions where the shutdown has occurred, as well as the number of times it has occurred. The list includes Jammu and Kashmir, which has had ten cases of internet suspension due to various incidents, Rajasthan, which has had three, Haryana, which has had five, Uttar Pradesh, which has had two, and Madhya Pradesh, which has had one. In Nagaland, mobile internet services have been suspended multiple times due to clashes between urban and local bodies and the state government. In Maharashtra, the mobile internet service was shut down once in Nasik owing to a state-wide farmers' protest, and it was shut down twice in Odisha.

In a post headlined "Journalists in Delhi-NCR receive identical texts threatening them with Gauri Lankesh's destiny," Abhishek Day on Press Freedom notes that multiple journalists have received rape and murder threats. Gauri Lankesh, 66, was the editor of the Kannada monthly LankeshPatrike. On September 5, 2017, she was shot outside her house by an unknown attacker. The threat makers used this case as a target to threaten the other journalists with death. In his article titled "The Fear of Censorship in Indian Media," Soutik Biswas (2015) explained that people began to fear Modi's government after it went on to accuse three new channels of violating broadcasting regulations by airing interviews that criticized the government for the execution of Yakub Menon. In one of the interviews, Menon's former attorneys stated that if the authorities of the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries with the greatest criminal law minds learn about the execution, they will laugh at the Indian judicial system. The Indian government, however, took exception and threatened the news outlets for showing these interviews. Biswas also recalls a journalist's comment on how the Prime Minister's office has been centralized. He concludes his article by pointing out this year's Press Index ranking which is 137 out of 180 countries and says that the Press needs more freedom to thrive as a democracy. Kumar, A. (2019).

## **Methodology**

This study would include both primary and secondary data gathering methodologies. The utilization of an online Survey via a questionnaire will be used to collect primary data. This questionnaire will be given to 250 respondents, and their replies will be collected and analysed using statistical techniques such as correlation and IBM SPSS. The target audience will be persons above the age of 18, most likely between the ages of 18 and 55. This target audience is mostly made up of the country's young, although replies from well-informed and knowledgeable adults will also be included. The questionnaire was also provided to some specialists in the subject, as their input will be critical. Delhi and surrounding places would be included in the target area. Group talks are another approach for gathering primary data. People with similar interests or concerns are invited to participate in a group discussion. They express their thoughts and opinions on a certain issue. Each group included 5-6 people in it. There were seven such groups, each with one discussion session. The responses are extensively qualitatively analysed. Each question focuses on a few recurring topics, which will be documented. It is observed that the thought that is being repeated again and over again has been identified. To discover the theme, a series of critical thinking and analysis exercises are performed on the repeating themes. The 'findings' are then written into a narrative that describes the concepts and their themes. The participants were eager to offer their thoughts. They have a lot to say about the Indian media and how it works.

Secondary data is included through the utilisation of pre-existing case studies, books, journals, web articles, and newspapers. One such issue that will be investigated is the Information and

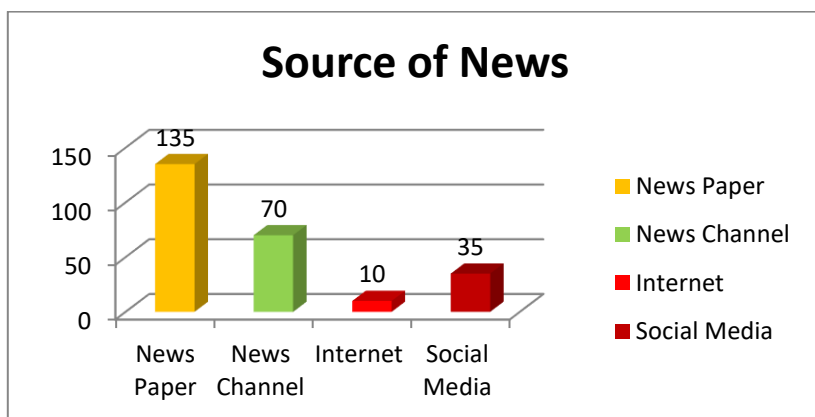
Broadcasting Ministry's 24-hour restriction on NDTV. In such instances, the reaction of the public would also be considered,

The reason for having an online poll is because individuals nowadays use their phones throughout the day. An online survey is a means of disseminating a questionnaire through the internet. Based on their own spare time, the target audience may simply respond to it through the internet in minutes. It is simple for them to devote a few minutes to answering the survey's questions, and their responses may be quickly recorded and analysed using Google Forms. This is one of the quickest and simplest methods for collecting replies. Regardless of the simple technique, certain questions require more depth and more insights inside the replies, for which personal interviews appear to be the ideal manner of recording responses. A group discussion will also aid in gaining answers if you have different viewpoints and broad thoughts on the same issue. A group conversation can encourage people to think more broadly.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the survey was put into charts to get a better understanding of the data. The explanation is as under:

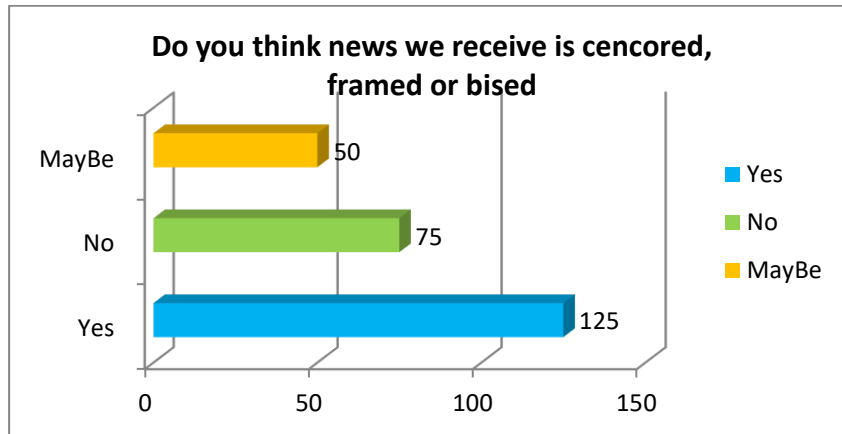
### 1. Source of news



**Fig-1**

In the above chart the sources of news of our 250 respondents have been shown to get a better understand and a good comparison to make it easier to interpret. The table shows that for a majority of respondents, the news source is Newspapers, TV is the second preferred option. Social Media Which makes news from a Facebook post and pages like ScoopWhoop the least preferred option followed by informational messages on WhatsApp. According to the survey, 67.5 % of our respondents prefer newspapers that are 135 respondents, and only 4% of respondents prefer the internet (News Portal) as a source of news.

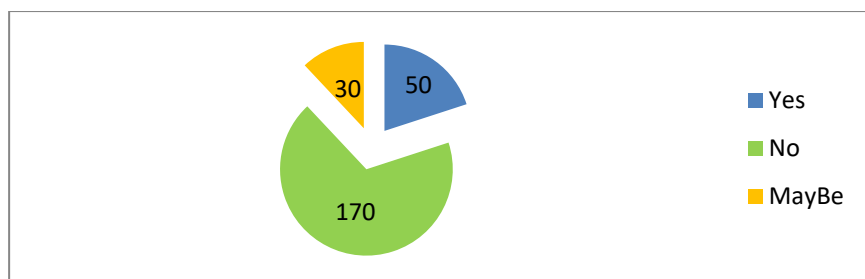
## 2. Do you think the news we receive is censored, framed, or biased?



**Fig-2**

The above chart shows people's perception of whether the news we receive is censored, politicized, or biased. A huge number of our respondents believe it is true; our news is actually censored, politicized, and biased. Some of the people are not sure about it whereas a very low number says that it is not censored and that what we receive is the actual and the truth. Where 507% Of people believe that the above statement is true, a smaller number of 30% of people believe that what we receive is the unbiased and un-politicized truth.

## 3. Showing the Respondent's view if they get influenced by the way the news is being reported.



**Fig-3**

The above chart shows whether our respondents form their opinions or get influenced by how the news is being reported by the reporter or by how they portray the news. A good number of respondents do not get influenced by the way the news is being reported and have the

capabilities to analyze the information and form their own opinions and views. The numbers of people Who do not get influenced are 68% of total respondents whereas the people who do get influenced are a close of 20%. The rest of the people do not know yet if they do or do not get influenced.

4. Showing that the reporters are threatened by political/anti-political sources.

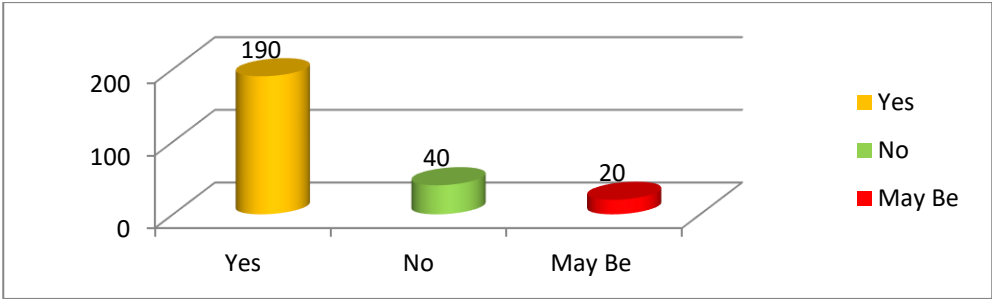


Fig-4

A very large number of people believe that yes, news reporters are actually threatened by powerful people who tend to politicize the news that is being delivered to us. Whereas a smaller number of people believe that they are not threatened. Going by this analysis, we see that a huge majority of people believe that the news we receive is censored and also that the reporters do live under the threat of powerful parties and people. A total of 76% of people believe that the reporters do get threatened to not let the news reach out to the public of the nation.

5. Showing if threats to reporters lead to censorship in our news

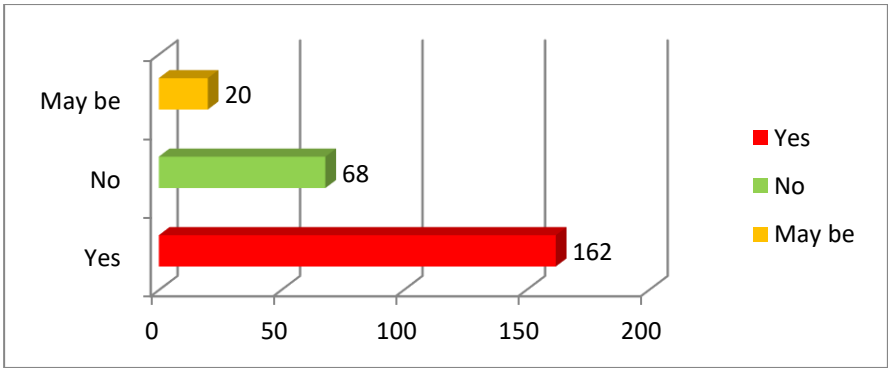


Fig-5

The above chart shows if respondents think the threats from powerful people/parties lead to a lack of freedom of speech or censorship in the news delivered to us. We can see on the chart that a lot of people do believe that the statement in question is indeed true compared to a very low number of people believing that it is false. Statistics show that 64.8 % of the people believe that the statement in question is true and have the above table shows the reliability of the news we get from the sources mentioned above.

6. Showing how reliable do people think the news sources are

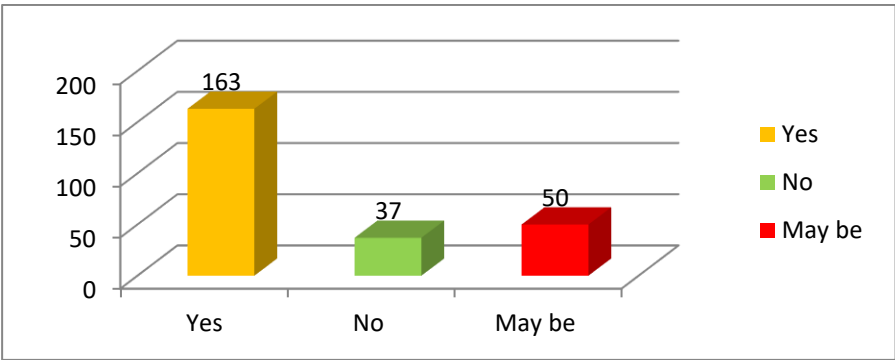


Fig-6

People believe that their news sources are mostly reliably showing a hint of hesitation because they are not sure if it is reliable. 65.2% of people believe that their news sources are pretty much reliable which is also what they are guessing. And the least number of people believe that it is completely or highly reliable as seen in the table above.

Results from Group Discussion:

During the group discussion, the majority of participants expressed similar views on the operation of media outlets and journalists. Several topics were stressed, including national security, empowerment, and secularism, freedom of expression, the right to choose, and the right to correct information. Participants believed that media control was important, but only to a certain amount; they said that the Press of India did not appear to be free since they frequently brought us their interpretation of news and appeared to be continuously under political pressure, dominance, control, and influence. They either get paid to do so or they are forced to do so out of the fear of losing their jobs or lives. When asked up to what extent the media censor itself should, the participants had different answers. But the ones that contain the most validity were information related to defense operations and information of India. Extreme sexual content, controversial language usage such that taunting a particular community of people.



The participants believed that information about the government, crimes, scandals, demonstrations, and so on should be reported objectively and without bias by reporters. They should just tell us what happened and what the true situation is. Certain participants also stated that some journalists write news with a religious bias towards political parties. Not only that, but journalists have judged and shamed several people on talk programs in the name of free speech or owing to the backing of their media firm and political party influence. For example, in an interview with CNN IBN, political journalist Bhupendra Choubey summoned Sunny Leone for an interview. She expected to be questioned about her career life and forthcoming films.

However, the journalist had already begun slut shaming her for her previous work and personal life. She was mortified by the questions being posed to her. Several celebrities afterward tweeted in favor of Sunny. In such instances, the media should also use some form of filtering in their questioning. The media should have complete authority to offer us accurate information. They should not, however, abuse their position of authority by demeaning or disparaging those they invite to interviews or panel discussions. When asked how journalists' lives are jeopardized if they labor outside the rules imposed by powerful individuals, one participant stated. "It's extremely unfortunate that our journalists don't have a voice." For their benefit or to hide their infamous deeds, the political parties scare the journalists to not publish the stories. They put forward a barricade in their work and leave them helpless. When some journalists are highly committed to their work type and are willing to bring out the reality in front of the world, in several cases, they are killed in the most mysterious ways possible. This needs to change. The journalists should have their voice without being afraid." Participants strongly believe that the government should take steps not only to empower women but also all journalists by letting them have their basic right to work with utmost loyalty and commitment and bring out the real stories. Some participants focused on censoring only extreme sexual content such as pornographic images and videos from television and some other participants believed that if it portrays some kind of art or is used for educational purposes to spread awareness about sex education then, given in these instances, that too should be allowed. But most people believe that the news that is to be censored shall only be when it is regarding national security or any operation taken up by the defense ministry of India for safety purposes. Such confidentiality can be maintained as it is necessary. But the media should not try and hide "Powerful" people's crimes, scams, and other offensive actions breaking the laws. This is only unjust to the citizens of the country and is a disgrace to our constitution.

## **Conclusion**

Our country is renowned as the largest democracy in the world. Nonetheless, we witness many breaches of citizens' rights and freedoms. We can see from the data that the people themselves are primarily aware of the reality of India- the media. Their rights and the breaches that are occurring. It is no longer a secret that the media houses operate under political control. They do disseminate news as if it were their own. They publish or post in support of the political parties or entities that

have sway over them. We have seen that even after the BJP was a clear winner post-election, mainstream newspapers like the Hindustan Times and Business Standard wrote it in such a way that they do not defame their persuaded party, The Congress, and this is just one example of how the media is being censored or politicized. Other journalists have been attacked, intimidated, or assassinated on various occasions when they attempted to publish true stories. According to fear, this fully contradicts the freedom of speech and expression. Today's scenario The Indian press is not very good. However, with a clever group of young people, there will be a slow but steady transformation in the future. This would not only assist journalists to avoid threats but will also provide the public with an accurate picture of the true news. The Indian press will also be responsible for news control. The news should be regulated solely in cases of national security, when the material is relevant to defines operations and other key plots for our country's safety, or if certain content is overtly sexual or contains obscene language. The news, on the other hand, will stay unaffected. People have a right to know about their leaders and the government. To begin changing the way news is distributed, we must first give journalists a sense of authority and freedom of expression. If it is fear that prevents them from telling the genuine story, there should be an internet gateway where journalists may upload their pieces in their most authentic forms anonymously. The Press of India should assume command of this portal and all journalists who work for it. It should also establish an internal and clandestine staff that checks the reliability of news before uploading it.

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