



How newspapers cover social issues in Pakistan: A case of bonded labour coverage in national dailies

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Abstract- This research determines the frequency of public awareness through the print media coverage of bounded labour issues in two national Dailies of Pakistan. It analyzed that how the newspapers portrayed the issue, over a period of five years. Content analysis is applied. The findings indicated that the selected issue received look warm treatment. These issues are not, in most cases as sensational as the other political, socio economic and entertainment issues are. It also indicated that English newspapers coverage was quite limited generally favourable as compared to Urdu press, which has very limited coverage of the issue and substantially neutral.

Key words: Comparative analysis, Socio-economic, Neutral

I. INTRODUCTION

Bonded labour is one evolutionary form of slavery and it exists almost all over the world but its prevalence is more concentrated and noticeable in Asia. The countries of South Asia, are home to a major proportion of the whole number. Bonded labour is the work rendered by one person to another in return for an advance payment or debt. Bonded labour involves effective forfeiture of the right to change occupation, and the right of movement. The debt becomes hereditary in nature and family of the debtor becomes liable to work for the retirement of the debt.

The system of debt bondage in Pakistan is the outcome of certain categories of indebtedness, which have been prevailing for a long time, involving certain economically exploited, helpless and weaker sections of the society. This system originated from the uneven social structure characterized by feudal and semi-feudal conditions. Bonded labours constitute perhaps the weakest section of the rural poor.

All categories of kiln labour, both salaried and piece-rate labour take substantial advances. The study conforms the common view that brick kiln remains a major sector where debt bondage occurs. Although it is illegal, bondage is effective-for many, earning is so low that advances cannot be paid back even over a couple of years. Most brick kiln workers are convinced that they and their families will be hurt if they flee bondage and that runways will be tracked down.

The media has been focusing on these unfortunate people. The voices of women, children, and men, who are enslaved, traded and trafficked, and the accounts of their experiences, are very similar. During the past few years, different organizations and individuals have done a number of researches on the issue. According to Ercelawn and Ali, 2002, thousands of haris are living in makeshift camps near Hyderabad, where they have sought refuge from the oppression of debt bondage. Those who escape bondage are just a fraction of millions across the country in agriculture as well as in industry.

Media is already playing a proactive role in highlighting various social issues including child labour phenomenon from various angles. However, media has still a long way to go for creating awareness among all stakeholders regarding the chronic issue of bonded labour. Print media should publish special and investigative reports on evils revolving around child labour including prostitution, drug-trafficking and sexual and physical abuses. The print media should allocate more space to the issue. Media have, in many countries played a crucial role in combating the abuse of child workers.

Stories touching labour issues continue to get cold reception from the media because they are not considered as saleable commodities.

The objectives of the study are: -

❖ To explore the coverage of bonded labour issues in English and Urdu newspapers, for creating awareness in the masses about bonded labour.

- ❖ To understand, whether press is fulfilling the responsibility of realizing the stated problem and enlightens the public as well as the government about its various aspects.
- ❖ To use the findings to influence attitude change on the coverage of bonded labour issues within media houses.
- ❖ To sensitize the media on the extent and consequence of neglecting labour rights issues in their coverage.
- ❖ Is there any difference between the Urdu and the English press regarding the coverage of bonded labour in Pakistan?
- ❖ To examine the role of two major dailies in the improvement of status of bonded labours in Pakistan.
- ❖ To examine the nature of portrayals of bonded labours in print media.
- ❖ To analyze which of the following issues have been given more coverage in the two major dailies,
 - I. Bonded labour and its different kinds.
 - II. Child labour,
 - III. Health issues of bonded labours (specially kidney stealing)
 - IV. Private jails and bonded labour.

This study therefore, aims to sensitize the media and the society on the extent of attention given to bonded labour rights by the media. It also proposes to close gaps, which other studies have not accomplished; and to add literature to a data bank that focuses on analyzing how the Pakistan media covers bonded labour rights. Unfortunately, most of the violations of bonded labours are rarely captured in the media. Where they are captured, it is in an ad hoc and reactive manner, rather than in a deliberate, focused and pro-active way. Labour's issues have not yet drawn the attention they deserve from the media, although social interactions are increasingly becoming mass media mediated. As agenda setters and agents of social change, as well as their power to influence policy, failure by the media to capture labours issues is indeed a grave shortcoming.

The issue of bonded labour has a great significance since it relates a sensitive portion of our population. And no study on coverage of bonded labour has yet been conducted. Their better condition will lead to development in our economy and may improve our image in the outer world. For this serious issue, there is need to aware the people, the government, policy makers, and the last but not the least our media.

In our newspapers and news programs certain issues are given more prominence than others and this phenomenon provides us with a scale of importance that also has social and political implications. Public not only learn about social issues from the media, they also learn how much importance is attached to an issue from the emphasis put on it.

Newspapers, magazines, radio and televisions broadcasters not only reach large percentage of population, but they are also important shapers of public opinion. They have in many countries played a crucial role in combating the abuse of child labour. Information carried by the media has, for the most part, concentrated on exposing sever cases of child abuse. It typically appears as news stories having considerable shock value, and which focus on inhuman working conditions faced by children in particular places or industries such as match or glass factories in India, sugar cane cutting in Brazil and textile mills in Thailand, to mention only a few. This sort of publicity is necessary to initially draw public attention to the problem, stimulating the social concern and outrage needed to do something about it.

Media can create awareness about the seriousness of bonded labour issue. This study intends to analyze whether the newspapers are fulfilling their responsibility of presenting the real picture of the issue and stressing the government for implementation of policies to eliminate this kind of menace.

The examination of all these important sectors major fields of employment of bonded labour, (agriculture, brick kiln, carpet weaving etc) of economy would reveal that despite of implementation of the Government of Pakistan's National Policy and Plan of Action for abolition of Bonded Labours, adopted in 2001 (Nasir, 2004). The condition of bonded labour in Pakistan has not improved yet. It is not only tarnishing the image of Pakistan society but is also hampering economic growth of the country in the form of trade.

Researcher intends to see what kind of coverage was given to bonded labour. Does press give any prominence to stated problem? If it does than how press covers the issue. The search intends to analyze the role and contribution of press in elimination of bonded labour in Pakistan.

Due to the considered credibility in comparison with electronic media and the degree of freedom, diversity and responsibility, one of the elite English newspaper and one of the popular Urdu newspaper have been selected.

The logic behind the selection of these two newspapers is that these dailies are metropolitan newspapers having vast coverage, circulation and popularity among the readers. These newspapers are

playing an important role in covering the national as well as international issues and providing information with healthy criticism and responsibility. These selected dailies belong to the known group of publications. These newspapers appeared regularly during the period under consideration and were easy to access from the libraries of Lahore.

Dawn is the most authentic newspaper in Pakistan, which always imparts authentic information and sets new and healthy trends of standard journalism. It always tries to give a balanced picture of political issues, some how if there is an issue of public concern, it takes a bold line as well. It gives more coverage to issues like bonded labour.

The Daily Jang is the largest circulated Urdu language newspaper in Pakistan. The Daily Jang is published by the Jang Group of Newspapers. It is very popular among the readers of Urdu journalism. It reflects the social perspective in its contents. Jang prefers the interests of the readers.

Overview of Bonded Labour

In this original Convention on the subject, the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29)¹, the ILO defines **forced labour** for the purposes of international law as “all worker or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”.

Debt bondage or bonded labour

It means ‘paying off loans with direct labour instead of currency or goods. It is either a kind of indenture or truck system, and is a form of unfree labour. Historically, in the USA, it is also sometimes called peonage. Where children have to work due to debt bondage, this is considered a worst form of child labour.

Human Trafficking

Trafficking in persons is modern-day slavery. Annually, approximately 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders; millions more are enslaved in their own countries (Bureau of public affairs, 2004). The common denominator of trafficking scenarios is the use of force, fraud or coercion to exploit a person for commercial sex or for the purpose of subjecting a victim to involuntary servitude, debt bondage, or forced labour. The use of force or coercion can be directed and violent, or psychological.

Domestic Servitude

Domestic workers may be trapped in servitude through the use of force or coercion, such as physical (including sexual) or emotional abuse. Children are particularly vulnerable to domestic servitude, which occurs in private homes, and is often unregulated by public authorities. For example, there is great demand in some wealthier countries of Asia and the Persian Gulf for domestic servants who sometimes fall victim to conditions of involuntary servitude.

Child Labour

Forced labour is also one of the worst forms of **child labour**, as defined in the ILO’s Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)². Child labour amounts to forced labour not only when children are forced, as individuals in their own right, by a third party to work under the menace of a penalty, but also when a child’s work is included within the forced labour provided by the family as a whole.

Consequences Victims have to Face

Victims of trafficking for forced labour lose their freedom, becoming modern-day slaves. They experience permanent physical and psychological harm, isolation from families and communities, reduced opportunities for personal development, and restricted movement. Victims are often wary of law enforcement and psychologically dependent on their traffickers. Child victims are denied educational access, which reinforces the cycle of poverty and illiteracy.

Involuntary Servitude

People become trapped in involuntary servitude when they believe an attempted escape from their conditions would result in serious physical harm or the use of legal coercion, such as the threat of deportation. Victims are often economic migrants and low-skilled labourers who are trafficked from less developed communities to more prosperous and developed places.

International Conventions Related to Bonded Labour

The issue of bonded labour that affects millions of people particularly in South Asia including Pakistan has been of long-standing concern to the international community. Bonded labour has been treated by the international community as a manifestation of slavery and slavery like practices. The Slaving

¹https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C029

²https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182

Convention of 1929 which was ratified by Pakistan in 1995 defined slavery as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised”³.

Indigenous Situation

One of the most important topics being discussed by the media and NGOs in Pakistan is the issue of bonded labour these days. Pakistan, along with India and Nepal, lists amongst the main South Asian states where forced labour is rampant. Asia accounts for 9.5 million out of a global total of 12.3 million victims of this gruesome scenario. Although the word bonded labour is often used with the colloquial meaning of severe poverty and dependence on the goodwill of others, there is no accepted technical definition, and a standardized set of tools that exist for analyzing and quantifying bonded labour in Pakistan. Like trafficking, bonded labour is an area of human experience that is highly complex and which evokes powerful and contradictory feelings amongst those attempting to understand it.

The incongruity in Pakistan between procedural democracy and widespread human rights violations is rooted in a system of governance created in British India and reconfigured by successive post-colonial governments. The colonial system, and its legal apparatus, which sought to control subjects rather than govern citizens, was a model for the architects of Pakistan’s state structure. The state’s denial of fundamental rights in order to maintain political control, a hallmark of British rule in India, endures in contemporary Pakistan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The media has an important role to play in increasing public understanding of the trafficking phenomenon by providing accurate information in accordance with professional ethical standards.

Media content is believed to have a significant influence on public opinion, policy making, and criminal justice processes. For example, media images of suppressed segments of a society, because of the public’s limited exposure and salience of the topic, are assumed to affect opinions and the policy responses implemented. Because of these assumed effects, scholars have argued that it is important to analyze the content of media messages. These images are then compared to another approximation of reality, regarding suppression.

Park & Wright(2007) conducted a study and empirically examined the extent to which business journalism has taken over labour reporting between 1980 and 2000. They conducted a content analysis of The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Associated Press during this time frame. Academic research suggests there has been an increase in business and economic reporting at the expense of labour reporting during the later half of the twentieth, century. Their results noted a dramatic increase in business reporting and suggested labour reporting had experienced a subtle decrease. The decline of labour coverage coupled with the increase in business-oriented reporting suggests that the growth or decline of coverage cannot merely be attributed to an overall growth or decline of the news agencies themselves. It does, however, provide evidence of a widening gap between labour and- and business-oriented news coverage. The results suggest that labour groups should invest in more media or public relations to get their perspectives to the public. The authors used a critical political-economic approach in gathering and assessing data on business and labour journalism

Bekele & Myers(1995), describe that“of all types of non-governmental organizations, it is the media that can best inform the public about the reality of children working in hazardous circumstances. In countries with a vital free press, it is the function of the press to make hidden visible” (p.31). A review of labour-journalism literature also reveals several insights regarding the decline of labour reporting. During the past twenty years, the labour beat has declined in status and is now regarded as a dead-end job track. In many cases, the positions are filled by reporters from less desirable beats or by business reporters who cover labour issues from a business viewpoint. Furthermore, these journalists are not demographically representative of labourers and may be unfamiliar with working-class issues. Corporate ownership of media also appears to lead news sources to avoid labour issues.

Gulnaz, (2000) ‘conducted a study focusing “child labour” and “child health”. It concluded that the overall newspaper role couldn’t be termed satisfactory. Hardly few news about child labour were given on the front and back pages. Maximum coverage was found on national and city pages. In the light of social responsibility theory and development theory the media is not playing its role as effectively as it should be. Although, the print media is promoting those issues to some extent which are not sufficient to make both the public and government realization of the seriousness of the issue of children rights.

³<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/SlaveryConvention.aspx>

ILO report (2002)⁴ highlights trade unions of media professionals also have an important role to play in combating child labour through responsible media coverage. The international federation has produced drafts and principles for reporting on issues involving child labour. These were published in the second world congress against commercial sexual exploitation of children held in Yokohama in December 2001. Umber, (1999) conducted a study titled as “Woman and child development issues in two English dailies” she concluded that so far the role of print media is still not satisfactory, during the period (1988-1999), in spite of the democratic dispensation of the governments and elected parliaments, and also the pressure of international multilateral and elected donor agencies and the phenomenal growth of foreign funded non-governmental organizations, the coverage of pro-social change and development issues received a negligible attention of the print media.

Assefa (2003) elucidates that newspapers, magazines, radio and televisions broadcasters not only reach large percentage of population, but they are also important in shaping public opinion. They have in many countries played a crucial role in combating the abuse of child labour.

Information carried by the media has, for the most part, concentrated on exposing sever cases of child abuse. It typically appears as news stories having considerable shock value, and which focus on inhuman working conditions faced by children in particular places or industries such as match or glass factories in India, sugar cane cutting in Brazil and textile mills in Thailand, to mention only a few. This sort of publicity is necessary to initially draw public attention to the problem, stimulating the social concern and outrage needed to do something about it.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is generally assumed that a free press is seen as an integral component of a healthy democracy. This freedom does have its limits; therefore, some constraints might stem from issues of defamation and national security, and hence news blackouts or restrictions on information have occurred during military crises. In today’s world the press has the formidable power to make the public aware of a problem, in which formerly, it has demonstrated little or no interest. Social problems have not been a popular topic, they have not received nearly as much coverage as have political and economic issues, not to mentioned scandals. If the press covers a story assiduously, the public gets more interested, stimulating the state to be more active in social negotiation and implementation.

The present study is focused on examining and analyzing the Editorials, Columns and feature articles of the daily “DAWN” and the daily “JANG” since 1stSeptember 2001 to 31st August 2006. The objective of the study is to explore and analyze the role of press in highlighting and combating the problem of bonded labour in Pakistan, and how effectively it helps in highlighting the issue. Content analysis was used to examine how the media covers and portrays bonded labourer’s issues.

In the quantitative part latent meanings were analyzed through adjectives, adverb, and phrases of constructed categories. For analyzing data percentage and graphs of data were used. Pilot study was also conducted to determine that there is enough data available for research purpose or not? The direction of the categories was also determined. Presentation of data has been made both in tabular and graphic form. Statistical tabulation is also used to test hypotheses and chi-square formula is used

Content analysis

A comparative analysis of articles, columns and editorials regarding coverage of bonded labour in the textual contents, of the “DAWN”, and the “JANG” (Sep 2001-Aug 2006). Three research questions and 2 hypotheses were formulated. Defined its population, sample (five-year study of two newspapers) and also defined its unit of analysis (feature articles, columns and editorials). Constructed categories (A, B, C, D, E, F) quantified these categories and also tried to find out latent meanings of texts through adjectives, proverbs etc of the editorial page contents.

The sampling frame of the articles, columns and editorials was five years (1st Sep 2001 to 30th Aug 2006), 3650 editions were sampled. Unit of analysis, was any editorial or article related to bonded labour. Articles or feature articles (on editorial pages and special editions including Sunday magazine, Editorials, Columns

Categories:

- A. Status of bonded labour in Pakistan.
- B. Laws and policies related to bonded labour in Pakistan.
- C. Role of the government of Pakistan in elimination of bonded labour.
- D. Problem Of child labour and child abuse in Pakistan.

⁴<https://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/rep-iii-1b.pdf>

- E. Bonded labour and private jails special reference to haris⁵.
 F. Health problems related to bonded labour specially kidney stealing.

Direction of the Contents:

To determine the contents of the editorial pages, data is ranked on a three-point scale positive (+) negative (-) and neutral (0).

Status of bonded labour (A)

Category A	Status of bonded labour in Pakistan [the professions] *Agriculture *Construction *Carper-weaving *Brick Kiln *Marine fisheries *Mining *Glass bangles *Tanneries *Domestic work *Begging	+	All contents were positive which analyzed bonded labour problem and proposed certain solution,e, g. "Bonded labour: all evils rolled into one" (<i>Dawn</i> ,2006).
		0	All contents were considered neutral which discussed the problem of bonded labour as a passing reference
		-	All contents published in " <i>Jang</i> " or " <i>Dawn</i> " were considered negative if they marginalized the issue.

Laws related to Bonded labour in Pakistan (B):

Category B	Laws related to bonded labour in Pakistan *Laws *Policies *National policy & plan of action *Abolition act	+	All textual contents were considered positive if they encourage the implementation of laws related to bonded labour in Pakistan. For example, "new labour policy" (<i>Dawn</i> 2002)
		0	All contents were considered neutral if the discussed the problem of bonded labour as a passing reference or
		-	Negative if its tone was pessimistic and its general stance was negative towards implementation of law.

Efforts of the government of Pakistan in elimination of bonded labour (C).

Category C	Efforts of the government of Pakistan in elimination of bonded labour *Implementation of law *Excess of justice	+	All textual contents were considered positive which analyzed Government of Pakistan's role in combating the problem of bonded labour, e.g., "Action Plan on bonded labour in doldrums" (<i>Dawn</i> ,2004).
		0	Any textual content was considered neutral if it Presented a balanced picture of Governments role.
		-	The contents were considered negative if they support govt. role.

Child labour in Pakistan (D):

Category D	Child labour in Pakistan [types] *Child abuse *Child trafficking	+	Contents that Critically analyzed the child labour problems were considered positive e.g., "Child labour ka Khatima" (<i>Jang</i> 2003). "End of child labour"
		0	All contents were considered neutral if there was no clear favour or unfavourable stance.
		-	All textual contents, which were pessimistic in tone, were considered negative.

Bonded labour and private jails special reference to haris (E):

			Contents that critically analyzed the
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⁵ Workers

Category E	[fear] Bonded labour and private jails with special reference to haris	+	situation were considered positive.
		0	Contents that present a balanced picture of the situation were neutral.
		-	Contents that do not give any solutions or are pessimistic in tone were negative

Health problems specially kidney stealing (F):

Category F	Health problems special kidney stealing [ignorance] *Health problems *Working conditions *Justice in case of kidney stealing	+	Content that critically analyzed the situation was considered positive.
		0	Contents that present a balanced picture of the situation were neutral.
		-	Contents that do not give any solutions or pessimistic in tone were negative.

Research Questions and Hypothesis:

R 1. Did English newspapers give more coverage to bonded labour than the Urdu press?

R 2. Did the newspapers fulfil their responsibility regarding coverage of bonded labour?

R 3. Which issue, amongst (A,B,C,D,E,F) get maximum coverage in both the Newspapers.

H1. English press of Pakistan gives more coverage to bonded labour than Urdu Press.

H2. English press of Pakistan portrays the issue of bonded labour more responsibly than the Urdu language press.

Inter coder reliability and coders

In this research two students of M.A mass communication were assigned to identify the different aspect and their direction. The coding sheets⁴⁰were given to the coders and they were required to read the given sample at least three times and classify the items into one of the categories. The criteria to make judgment about the contents was to be made on the basis of frequency of ideas, words, phrases or the over all impression of the coders and 75 to 85% of reliability was achieved.

IV. FINDINGS

Quantitative Findings

Quantities findings are based on the measurements of frequency or rate of recurrence of bonded labour issues in the two dailies during five years.

Status of bonded labour in Pakistan (A)

Table 1 [sep 2001 to sep 2006]

Years	Dawn		Jang	
	Frequency	Percent%	Frequency	Percent%
Sep-Dec 2001	-	0%	-	0%
Jan-Dec 2002	2	9.523%	1	8.3333%
Jan-Dec 2003	4	19.045%	2	16.666%
Jan-Dec 2004	5	23.809%	4	33.333%
Jan-Dec 2005	3	14.285%	4	33.333%
Jan-Sep 2006	7	33.333%	1	8.333%
Total	21	63.6363%	12	36.3636

Table 2: Comparative overall findings of coverage of Dawn and Jang on bonded labour Including all the categories in the mentioned five years (Sep-2001-Aug 2006)

Categories		Dawn		Jang	
		Frequency and percentages		Frequency and percentages	
		No.	%	No.	%
Status of bonded labour in Pakistan	A	21	31.34%	12	35.29%
Laws and policies related to bonded	B	6	8.955%	6	17.64%

labour in Pakistan						
Role of the government of Pakistan in elimination of bonded labour	C	5	7.462%	3	8.823%	
Problem of chiuld labour in Pakistan	D	25	37.31%	8	23.52%	
Bonded labour and private jails special reference to haris	E	6	8.955%	3	8.823%	
Health problems specially kidney stealing	F	4	5.970%	2	5.882%	
Total		67	66.33%	34	33.66%	

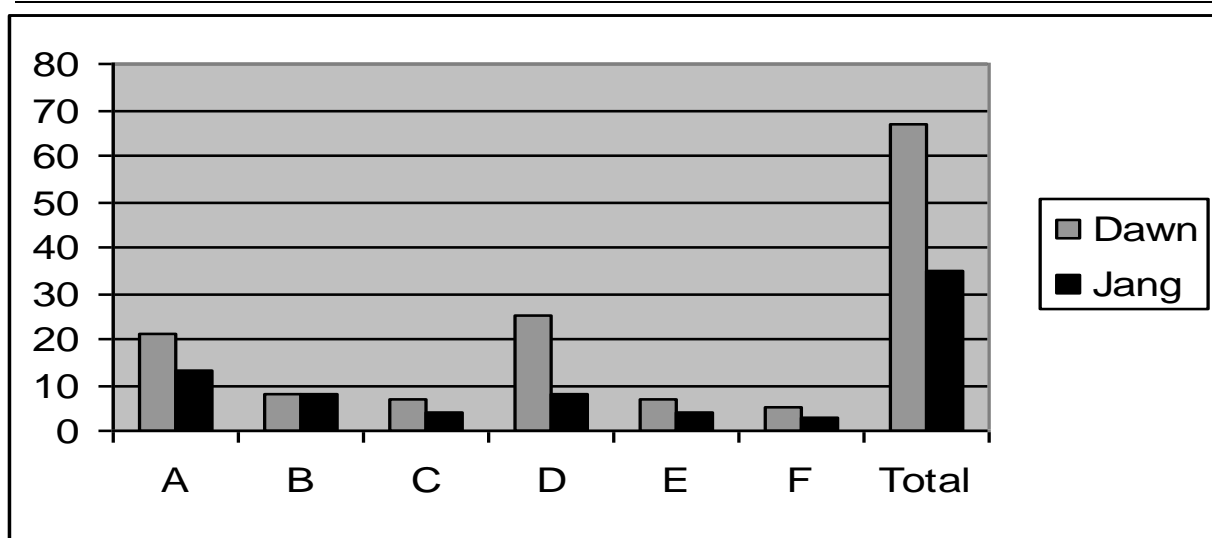


Figure 1

Table-7 indicates that during five years (sep 2001-dec 2006) total number of articles and editorials published in the Dawn and Jang in all the mentioned categories were 101. Among 101 articles and editorials 67 (66.66%) were published in Dawn and 34(33.33%) were published in Jang. On category "A" total number of 21 articles and editorials were published in Dawn during the mentioned five years and 12 were published in Jang on category B both the newspapers published equal number of articles. Dawn published 5 articles and Jang published 3 on category C. Maximum coverage was given to category D by Dawn, which published 25 articles on the topic whereas Jang published only 8 on the said category. On category E Dawn published 6 articles and Jang published only 3. Jang published 2 articles and Dawn 4 on category. Dawn gave more coverage to the bonded labour issue than Jang. Generally, the two papers gave lukewarm service when it comes to coverage of bonded labour issues by the media.

Qualitative Findings

Direction of the articles, editorials and columns of Dawn and Jang, on all categories during Sep 2001-Aug 2006.

Table 3: Overall direction of Editorials elated to all the categories during five years

Category	Dawn			Jang		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
A	9	6	-	4	3	-
B	3	1	-	1	2	-
C	3	-	-	1	1	-
D	8	6	-	1	3	-

E	2	1	-	1	-	-
F	2	-	-	1	-	-
Total	26	14	0	9	9	0

Graph 7.1

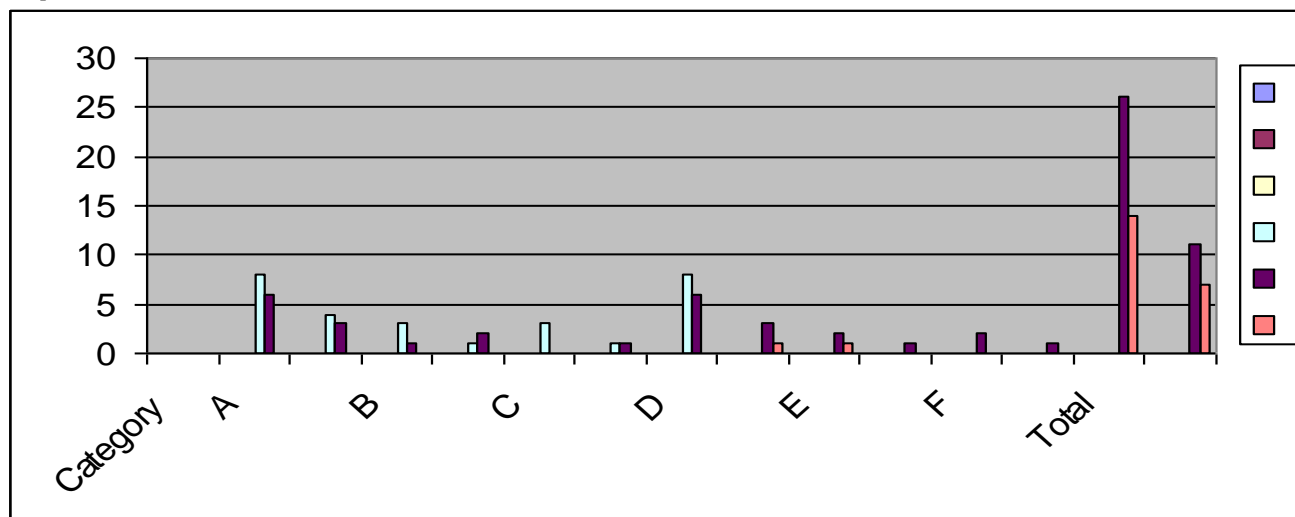


Figure: 2

The overall findings point out total number of 58 editorials were published in both the news papers out of which 40 were published in Dawn and 18 were published in Jang on all the categories during the mentioned five years. 26 articles published in dawn were positive in direction and 14 were neutral and no editorial was negative in direction. Jang published 9 editorials, which were positive in direction, and 9 were neutral. The study indicates that Dawn gave more positive coverage in its editorials on all the categories during the five years than Jang.

Table 4: Overall direction of articles related to all the categories during five years

Category	Dawn			Jang		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
A	3	1	-	-	1	-
B	1	-	-	1	1	-
C	1	-	-	-	-	-
D	5	3	-	-	1	-
E	2	-	-	1	1	-
F	2	-	-	-	1	-
Total	14	4	0	2	5	0

Table 7.2 indicates the direction of articles published during five years on all the mentioned categories. The results present that total number of articles published on all the categories were 25. Total number of articles published in Dawn was 18 among them 14 were positive in direction and 4 were neutral and not a single article was negative in direction. During five years Jang published 7 articles in which 2 were positive and 5 were neutral and no article was negative in direction.

Table 5:

Over all findings of Direction of Editorials, Columns and articles of Dawn and Jang during five years

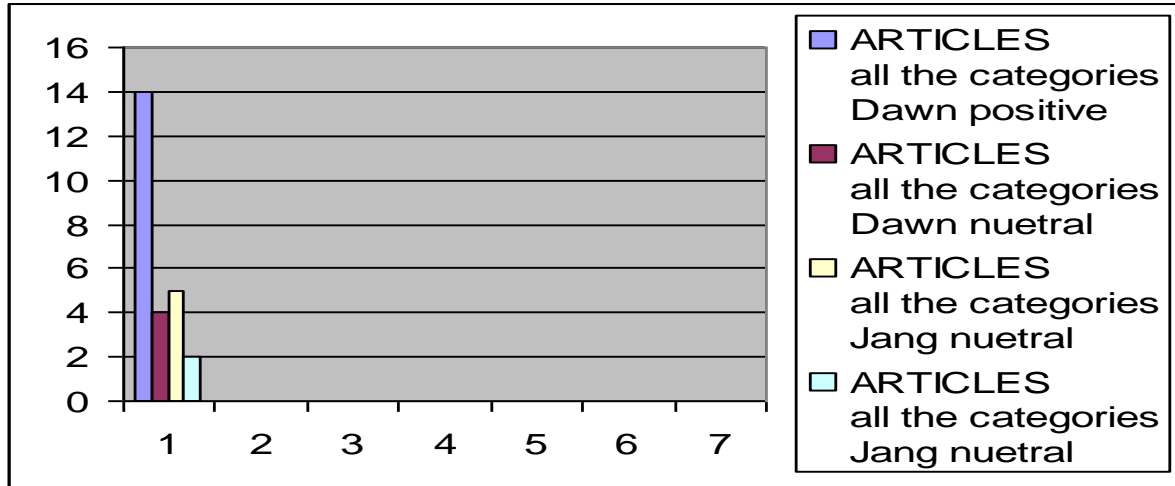
DAWN

Editorials			Columns			Articles		
+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0

26 0 14 7 0 3 14 0 4

Positive = 47
 Negative = 0
 Neutra= 211

Figure: 3



Total = 67
 Graph

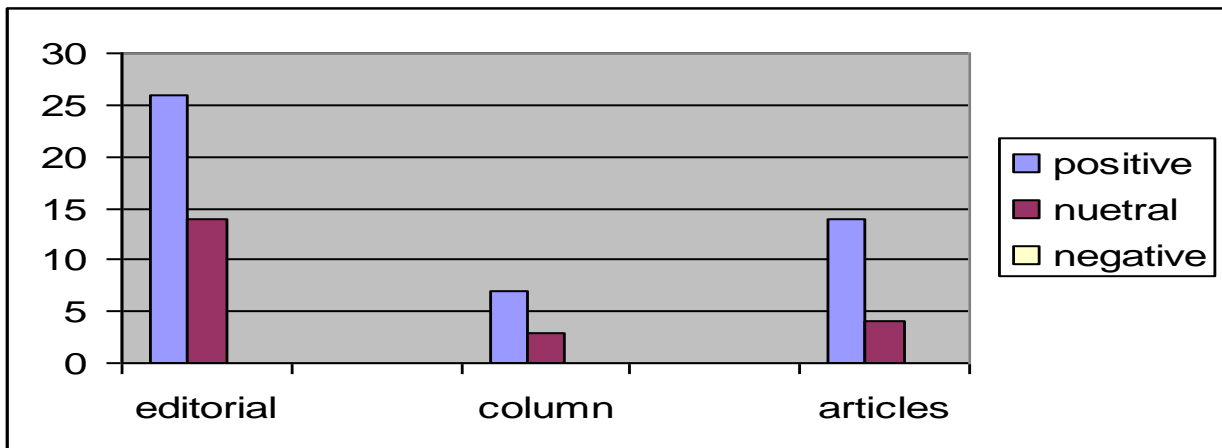


Figure: 4

JANG

Table 6:

Editorials			Columns			Articles		
+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0
9	0	9	3	0	5	2	0	5

Positive = 14
 Negative = 0
 Neutral = 19
 Total = 34

Graph 3

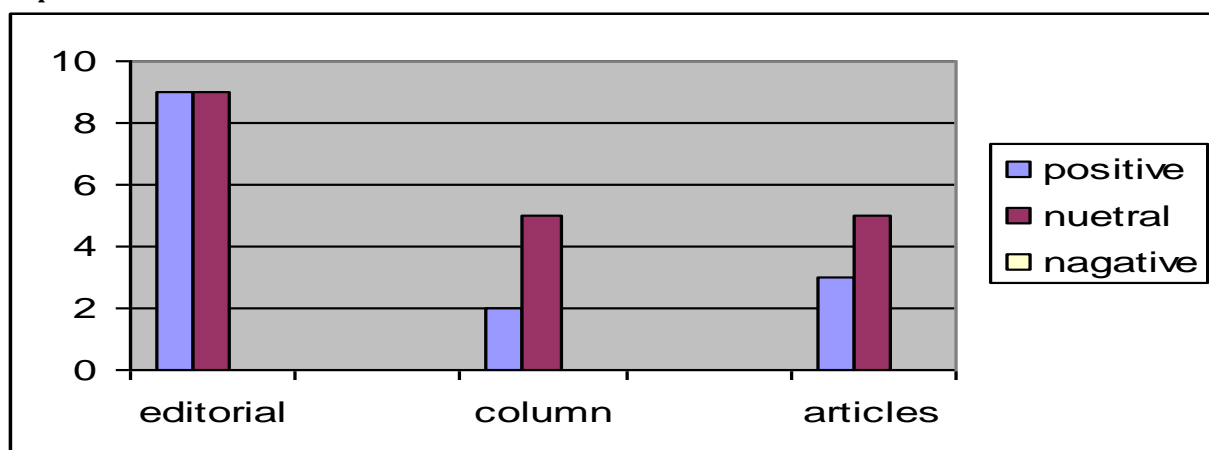


Figure: 5

H1.

English press of Pakistan gives more coverage to bonded labour than Urdu press.

Analysis

The main purpose of this five-year (2001-2006) study was to analyze that how the English and Urdu media treat the issue of bonded labour. The study indicates that the Urdu press is giving least coverage to such issues but at the same time the role of the English press cannot be termed as satisfactory. The issues like bonded labour have always been of secondary importance in the priorities of these newspapers for the reason that the news items pertaining to crime, politics, and sports attract the readers much more than others news. Hence, newspapers set this preference keeping in view the principle of demand and supply. Media is responsible to set the agenda towards any issue in society. The more media highlights the issue, the more policy makers and society will take interest, and will become sensitive to that issue. Media is already playing a proactive role in highlighting various social issues including child labour phenomenon from various angles. However, media had still a long way to go for creating awareness among all stakeholders regarding the chronic issue. The media has played a key role in creating awareness. But more needs to be done especially in sensitizing the public. Above all the landlords and kiln owners need to be told that workers are not like commodities to be abused.

As the study comprises of both qualitative and quantitative research, the analysis section is also divided into two parts, quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative results are analyzed through the frequency of bonded labour issue, published in the two major dailies. It shows that that during five years total number of articles and editorials published in the Dawn and Jang in all the mentioned categories were 101. Among 101 articles and editorials 67 (66.66%) and published in Dawn and 34(33.33%) were published in Jang. On category "A" total number of 21 articles and editorials were published in Dawn during the mentioned five years and 12 were published in Jang on category B both the newspapers published equal number of articles. Dawn published 5 articles and Jang published 3 on category C. Maximum coverage was given to category D by Dawn, which published 25 articles on the topic whereas Jang published only 8 on the said category. On category E Dawn published 6 articles and Jang published only 3. Jang published 2 articles and Dawn 4 on category F. Dawn gave more coverage to the bonded labour issue than Jang. Generally, the two papers gave lukewarm service when it comes to coverage of bonded labour issues by the media.

RQ 1. Did English newspapers give more coverage to bonded labour than the Urdu papers? When compression of results is made regarding the coverage of bonded labour there exists an obvious difference between the coverage of Dawn and Jang. Dawn gave 66.33% coverage to bonded labour issue whereas Jang gave 33.66% coverage to the issue. Further more the English media is more sensitive towards the issue than the Urdu media table 2 and 3 indicate that Dawn covered the issue more positively than Jang.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative findings are analyzed through the direction (positive, negative, neutral) of the textual contents (editorials, columns, articles).

The overall findings (see table 2 &3) point out total number of 58 editorials were published in both the news papers out of which 40 were published in Dawn and 18 were published in Jang on all the categories during the mentioned five years. 26 articles published in Dawn were positive in direction and 14 were neutral and no editorial was negative in direction. Jang published 9 editorials, which were positive in direction, and 9 were neutral. The study indicates that Dawn gave more positive coverage in its editorials on all the categories during the five years than Jang.

In an editorial titled “who’s ‘bonded’, who’s not” the writer discusses the laws related to bonded labour (category B) neutrally,

Bonded labour stands officially abolished in Pakistan since the passage of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1992, but in practice it continues to exist in many semi-urban and rural areas across the country. The worst hit, however, is rural Sindh where thousands of haris continue to live in bondage with little relief in sight for them.

RQ 2. Did the newspapers fulfill their responsibility regarding coverage of bonded labour?

There exists a state of apathy regarding the issues like bonded labour. The coverage of bonded labour in both the newspapers is scanty. It indicates that during the five years, only 101 articles, editorials and columns were published in both the newspapers. Jang published only 34, which proves that Urdu press is giving least coverage to the issue, but at the same time even the role of the English press cannot be termed as satisfactory. The issues like bonded labour have always been of secondary importance in the priorities of these newspapers for the reason that the news items pertaining to crime, politics, and sports attract the readers much more than other news. Hence, newspapers set their preferences keeping in view the principle of demand and supply.

RQ 3. Which issue, amongst (A, B, C, D,E,F) get maximum coverage in both the Newspapers.

There exists a clear difference among the frequency of coverage of the six categories. The category, which received the maximum coverage, is category D that is, “problem of child labour and child abuse in Pakistan. Table and graph show that category D received 37.31 coverage in Dawn and 23.52% coverage in Jang. So, among all issues D was remained prominent in both the newspapers.

V. CONCLUSION

Bonded labour issues receive lukewarm treatment in the media as compare to other news. Labour issues are not, in most cases, as sensational as compared to other political, socio economic and entertainment news, making them least attractive to be shunned by media. Hence, the media tends to report bonded labour issues only when they are sensational.

The poor reportage of bonded labour issues results in the media’s failure to educate the public on labour rights and influence policies affecting labour problems negatively.

One of the reasons why the media fail to educate their readers, on issues of abolition of bonded labour and other legislative requirements, could be that the writer are not themselves sensitized. There is need therefore for deliberate efforts to find ways of educating the reports on these provisions and why they should be highlighted in bonded labour stories. This is so because if the media is not able or ready to educate and inform the readers on bonded labour rights issues, then child abuses and deprivation of their rights will continue.

Moreover, the findings indicate that the voice of the affectees of bonded labour and their right to speak for themselves is suppressed by the very instrument expected to give them space i.e., the media. It multiplies their plight and they are left with no form to voice their concerns. Media houses should develop editorial policies that emphasize the need for stories to have voices of the abused through bonded labour.

The government and the NGO’s have applied a little exertion to sensitize and influence upon the print media to play their role in bringing forth the core issues of bonded labour under discussion. The present study has exposed an appalling reality that even the English language print media, which otherwise is sensitive to pro-social and developmental issues as compared to Urdu language newspapers, has almost failed in its endeavor to focus the core issue of bonded labour.

The study indicates that the Urdu press is giving least coverage to such issues but at the same time even the role of the English press cannot be termed as satisfactory. The issues like bonded labour have always been of secondary importance in the priorities of these newspapers for the reason that the news items pertaining to crime, politics, and sports attract the readers much more than other news. Hence, newspapers set their preferences keeping in view the principle of demand and supply. Stories touching labour issues continue to get cold reception from the media because they are not considered as saleable

commodities. Yet it is only through highlighting labours issues can pressure be put on policy makers and the public to uphold and respect bonded labour's rights.

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