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## ABSTRACT

Name of the Applicant- AMIT CHAMARIA

Name of the Supervisor- DR. MANOJ KUMAR JENA

Name of the Department- SOCIOLOGY

Title of the Ph. D. Topic- *DALITS* AND PRINT MEDIA IN NORTHERN INDIA:

REPRESENTATION AND CONTENT CREATION

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The study shows that representation of *dalits* at decision making positions (Editor-in Chief/Editor/Resident Editor) of prominent dailies in the northern part of the country is nil while the representation of *dalits* as reporters at block level is too almost nil. It is a matter of grave concern that national media are not truly national in spirit as the findings of the study shows that there is not a single representation from *dalits* category among 32 journalists at decision making positions of 20 prominent dailies published from national capital. The study describes that out of 59 journalists in 51 prominent newspapers (both English and Hindi) published from six states' capital Shimla, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Lucknow, Jaipur and Patna and two other cities –Meerut and Gorakhpur, the *dalits*' representation is nil.

It further shows that the representation of *dalits* at block level for the Kaimur edition (cover Rohtas and Kaimur district in Bihar) of four prominent newspapers – Hindustan, Dainik Jagran, Prabhat Khabar and Rashtriya Sahara is insignificant. Out of 139 journalists (reporter or stringer), the number of dalit stringer is one and 109 reporters are from upper castes. Among the upper caste journalists, 60 reporters are from Brahmin community.

The study discussing the issue of representation of *dalits* in print media from the approach of critical cultural theory says that media industry actually run as 'cultural

industry'. Therefore, cultural aspect matters in the operation of the media. And certainly caste in our society is an important part of the culture.

It argues that the non- representation or under representation of *dalits* in newsroom is because of maintaining the dominance of upper castes in the society by establishing hegemony. And hegemony work through consent with the best application of media as ideological apparatus.

It also finds that there is direct and close relation between under representation or non representation of *dalits* in newsroom and the news content. The missing of *dalits* in the newsrooms causes for the underrepresentation or misrepresentation of *dalits* in news items. The study confirms that *dalits* are either omitted or misrepresented in the news items. It is an irony that a small socio cultural group who control the media in the country 'decide what more than 30 crores people of the country will learn of the day's events.

The study explains that news stories related to *dalits* or *dalits'* issue have been largely ignored by the reporters of both the newspapers—Hindustan and Dainik Jagran in Kaimur Edition. In both the newspapers, only three percent (3%) news stories are related to *dalits* and *dalits'* issue. And barring one, all the stories more or less portray negative or stereotype image of *dalits*. Large numbers of the stories are about crimes committed by *dalits*, fire in *dalits'* house (*Jhopaddi*) or death of *dalits* in road accidents or personal rivalry between two groups of *dalits* or atrocities on *dalits*.

There is evidence that print media have historically contributed to *dalits'* invisibility and have reinforced their marginalization. However, non-representation of *dalits* in the print media raises a question over the democratization of media industry. In fact, the invisibility of *dalits* in the print media creates a kind of feeling of alienation among them. For *dalits* and marginals, cultural invisibility is a salient issue. Cultural invisibility means not seeing one's identity, lifestyles, culture, experience and representation in the public spheres. It aggravates other related forms of exclusion - economic and political. It further generates a strong sense of social exclusion.