

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Dissertation

Role of Media in Electoral Politics in India: A Study of General Elections 2014

doctor philosophiae

Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswissenschaftlichen Fakultät

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Datum der Einreichung: 26.01.2016

Datum der Promotion: 29.04.2016

Abstrakt

Das primäre Ziel der Studie ist die Herstellung von Nachrichten durch vermittelte buzzwords zu verstehen. Vermittelte buzzwords werden von Medienhäusern und verbreitet durch Zeitungen oder Nachrichtenkanäle geprägt. Hier liegt der Schwerpunkt insbesondere ist zu untersuchen, wie vermittelte buzzwords hergestellt werden durch Zeitungen vor einer Wahl und wie diese buzzwords auf die Wähler, den Einfluss von Nachrichten konditionieren. In diesem Zusammenhang ist das größere Ziel Medien-Politik-Gesellschaft Wechselbeziehung in einer der größten Demokratien in der Welt und einer der bedeutendsten südasiatischen Ländern heißt Indien zu erkunden. Die Studie nimmt eine Gesellschaft zentrierten Ansatz, der Medien als soziale Institution betrachtet und zielt darauf ab, die verschiedenen Funktionen und Wirkungen in den Beziehungen zu anderen sozialen Einrichtungen nämlich Politik und Wähler zu analysieren. In diesem Licht setzt diese Studie, dass die Medien die Rolle vis-a-vis der Politik (Staat) und die Wähler (Gesellschaft) im Umfang liegt, auf die sie beeinflusst und wirkt sich auf die letztere.

Schlüsselwörter: Indische Medien, Herstellung von Nachrichten, Wahlpolitik, Mediated Buzzwords, indische General Election 2014

Abstract

The primary aim of the study is to understand manufacture of news through mediated buzzwords. Mediated buzzwords are coined by media houses and disseminated through newspapers or news channels. Here the focus in particular is to explore how mediated buzzwords are manufactured by newspapers before an election and how these buzzwords condition the influence of news on the electorate. Within this context, the larger goal is to explore media-politics-society interrelationship in one of the biggest democracies in the world and one of the most significant South Asian countries i.e. India. The study adopts a society centric approach that views media as a social institution and aims at analyzing its various features and effects in its relations with other social institutions namely politics and electorate. In that light, this study posits that media's role vis-a-vis politics (state) and the electorate (society) lies in the extent to which it influences and impacts the latter.

This study will explore media's influence on General Election 2014 in India with the help of mediated buzzwords identified through primary and secondary sources, analyze the relationship between buzzwords and newspapers (represented by the media houses) disseminating them and explore the impact and influence of these mediated buzzwords on the electorate cutting across different social locations. This study has three primary foci – to identify mediated buzzwords and issues during General Elections of 2014 in India, to analyze how the mediated buzzwords were used by the media houses to manufacture news during General Elections of 2014 in India, and to assess the effects of these mediated buzzwords on the formation of political opinion of the electorate during General Elections of 2014 in India.

Key Words: Indian Media, Manufacture of News, Electoral Politics, Mediated buzzwords, Indian General Election 2014

Acknowledgements

To begin, I would like to thank Prof. Boike Rehbein, my supervisor, for accepting me as one of his PhD candidates. Not only had he given me a direction about my research when all seemed to be lost and gone but his valuable advice and profound guidance was priceless. With his unmatched legacy in Sociology he has made my research skills razor sharp and my thought process critical. Prof Rehbein is the one who has moulded and moduled the Sociologist in me and it is impossible to pen down his influence in a few words. I shall always be indebted to him!

I would like to specially thank Prof V. Sujatha, my co supervisor, for guiding me during the course of my lengthy but enriching field work across India. It would have been very difficult for me to take this work to completion without her insights, inputs and incredible support.

I am also grateful to my funder Hanns Seidel Stiftung for providing me Scholarship and would like to warmly thank Dr. Volker Bauer, Director of the Foundation's India chapter. My heartfelt thanks go to Institute for Asian and African Studies for offering me an ideal environment where I could concentrate on my research.

To do a PhD is like climbing the topmost peak step by step! There were moments of hardship, frustration, bitterness, but there were also times of joy, encouragement, trust and help which I received from different people! I was deeply inspired by Prof. Anand Kumar of Jawaharlal Nehru University and many thanks to him for his unrestricted advice and encouragement!

It gives me immense pleasure to thank Prof. V. Parthasarathy, Prof. Anand Pradhan, Prof. Avijit Mitra, Prof. Prasanta Ray, Prof. Maitrayee Sanyal and Prof. Sigrud Baringhorst for their varied observations and ideas. I am truly indebted to journalists Ajitha Menon and Paranjoy Guha Thakurta for their crucial inputs and insights on media and politics in India that contributed heavily to the research. I would also like to express my gratitude towards the wonderful and proficient staff I met at different libraries in both Germany and India, starting from the Institute for Asian and African Studies Library of Humboldt University, Berlin, Munich State Library, Munich, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, Teen Murti Library, New Delhi and National Library, Kolkata. Also, I am indebted to the people from different walks of life whom I had interviewed during my field work in India. Many thanks for trusting me and my work.

I would like to thank my friend Amrita, for all the support I received from her during the entire phase of doctoral studies. Not only did she help me emotionally but also steered my ideas and concepts which helped me to improve my work, largely.

I would like to thank my colleagues Tamer Soyler, Andrea Silva, Claudia Schuetz, Raoof Mir and Arvind Das for having long discussions over my thesis. I can't deny that extensive talks with them at different cafes and mensas only made my work better!

I also take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to my friends in Germany (a country which I call home) Tilly, Rudi, Elizabeth, Patrick and Kenya for all the support they extended to me in every hour of crisis both at personal level and functional level! It will be unfair on my part if I don't express my deep sense of gratitude towards my friends (back home in India) including Amitabh, Vineet, Ashawari, Anik and Tupai for providing me the boost which was needed to complete my doctoral thesis. I would also like to thank my sister (Ishita) and brother in law (Subhajit) for unlimited moral support that they extended during the period.

Lastly and most importantly without the unconditional support from my parents this research would have been impossible. I am ecstatic as ever and hope my thesis submission will bring some joy in my family and smile to my parents. For all the sacrifices my parents have done so far, the little I can do is to dedicate this modest accomplishment to them.

Berlin, 21.01.2016

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List of Abbreviations

AAP – Aam Aadmi Party

ABP - Ananda Bazar Patrika

AIDMK – All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

BJP – Bharatya Janata Party

BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

CAG – Comptroller and Auditor General of India

CBI - Central Bureau of Investigation

CNN- Cable News Network

CPI(M) – Communist Party of India (Marxist)

DW- Deutsche Welle

HT- Hindustan Times

IBSA - India, Brazil, South Africa

INC - Indian National Congress

LPG - Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization

MP - Member of Parliament

NDA – National Democratic Alliance

NREGA – Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Act

PM – Prime Minister

RSS - Rashtriya Seva Sangha

SUCI – Socialist Unity Centre of India

TMC - Trinamool Congress

TOI - Times of India

UPA – United Progressive Alliance

UP - Uttar Pradesh

VHP – Vishva Hindu Parishad

Introduction

This study aims at exploring the role of media¹ in electoral politics within the larger context of media-politics-society inter-relationship. Media's relationship with politics has long been an integral part of social science research in India and elsewhere. While a series of studies have happened in the US on media-politics relationship, media's role in the Indian sub-continental politics and society has emerged as a crucial point of discussion in the last two decades. This is largely due to the fact that South Asian countries are increasingly becoming integral to global polity, economy and society. As a matter of fact, India, the largest democracy² in the world and one of the most significant South Asian countries today, is considered to be an emerging economy and an emerging society. Within this context, this study will focus on media-politics-society relationship in India.

There are some important reasons that led the researcher to choose India as a typical example for studying media-politics-society relationship. As the world increasingly started looking southward, Global South and South Asia emerged as the focal points of investigation, contestation and analysis. India, interestingly, is a significant constituent of both these global

¹ Role of media means "a composite of occupational tasks and purposes that shows wide recognition and recurrence (it has an enduring and stable character)...roles are normally located within an institutional framework and they are directed and regulated by the typical activities of the institution" (McQuail, 2007: 12). The relevant institution here is the media system of a given society. The element of purpose in a role might introduce the normative character of certain roles, which is to say that it attaches an element of value-based desirability. However, this study aims at refraining from a normative decisiveness; it would rather explore the role that media actually plays in a democracy vis-à-vis electoral politics and governance. Moreover, like in the study where media is both state and privately owned and controlled, it can also perform the following functions in a democracy (Graber, 1994): Firstly, media can attract and direct attention to problems, solutions or people in ways which can favour those with power and correctively divert attention from rival individuals or groups; secondly, media can confer status and confirm legitimacy; thirdly, in certain circumstances, media can be a channel for persuasion and mobilization; fourthly, media can help to bring certain kinds of publics into being and maintain them; and fifthly, media is a vehicle for offering rewards and gratification for some. In general, media is highly cost-effective as a means of communication in society and easy to control.

² With 1267 million people living, a total of 834 million people cast their votes in India. This makes the country the largest democracy in the world (D' Ambrogio, 2014).

clusters as an emerging economy, emerging market, and emerging society. Not only is India the biggest democracy in the world, it is also a significant member of BRICS³ and IBSA⁴, and its industrial development and scale of media expansion has been the highest in South Asia till date. Moreover, in the view of studying elections in which the participation and role of the electorate is the most crucial, India not only is the second most populated country (next to China) in the world, it is culturally one of the most diverse as well. These are the pivotal reasons for which India has been chosen as the country for studying media-politics-society interface.

The study adopts a society centric approach that views media as a social institution and aims at analyzing its various features and effects in its relations with other social institutions, namely, politics, governance, and the people. In this light, the study posits that media's role vis-a-vis politics (state) and the electorate/voters (society) is significant in the extent to which it influences and impacts the latter. It is the voters who decide upon their voting decision based on what the newspapers publish and the news channels broadcast on politics. Media's role is integrally related to its accountability to the voters and accumulation and dissemination of facts in terms of political news. Media's political campaigns' latent functions are not necessarily intended by the parties, but can result as a by-product of their campaign activities within the electorate (Schimtt-Beck, 2009). Intensification of political communication before an election induces interests among the voters to engage in politics and cast their votes. Also, better political information and awareness means more involvement in the voting system and clearer political identification with candidates on the part of the voters. Therefore, media is the crucial facilitator for political opinion formation of the electorate, especially before an election.

Here, the focus is to explore media's influence on General Election 2014⁵ in India with the help of mediated buzzwords⁶ identified through primary and secondary sources. Role of

³ BRICS is an acronym for five of the major economies in the world. The association comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

⁴ IBSA is an international tripartite forum which consists of India, Brazil and South Africa. Their main object is to promote international cooperation with each other.

⁵ In nine phases from April 07, 2014 to May 12, 2014, Elections were held in India to constitute the 16th Lok Sabha or the lower house of the Parliament (Source: Election Commission of India, 2014)

⁶ A buzzword can be defined as a word or a phrase that becomes highly popular for a particular period of time (Webster, 2014). Buzzwords often do not hold much meaning aside the spatio-temporal context within which they arise. The term 'buzzword' is quintessentially a part of the urban dictionary that is largely used to impress laymen.

media will be explored by analyzing the relationship between the buzzwords and newspapers (represented by the media houses) disseminating them, and exploring the impact and influence of these mediated buzzwords on the electorate cutting across different social locations. This study has three primary foci – to identify mediated buzzwords and issues during General Elections of 2014 in India, to analyze how the mediated buzzwords were used by the media houses to manufacture news during General Elections of 2014 in India, and to assess the effects of these mediated buzzwords on the formation of political opinion of the electorate during General Elections of 2014 in India.

1.1 The Media-Politics-Society Relationship

There are various perspectives in terms of exploring the inter-relation of media, politics and society; this study takes a society centric perspective that entails examining media as an institution and its influence on society in terms of its relation with state (largely represented by politics) and electorate (that represents society). There are several schools of thought regarding what role media plays and what role it should play in society, especially vis-a-vis political news. Arguably, there are four possibilities in terms of the tripartite relationship of media, politics and society (McQuail, 2006): one is that the media strongly influences politics and society (for good or ill), another is that the media simply reflects what is going on in the state and society at large – this makes media more an effect than a cause, while a third is that the inter-relationship is an interactive and circular one, with no clear line of influence; there is a fourth possibility that posits a lack of influence in either direction among the three, where media, politics, and society are three independent complexes of social and cultural practice. However, this study is not focussing on the questions of what ought to be, it will rather try exploring the actual situation of electoral politics that brings media, politics, and the electorate at direct relation and influence with one another.

Notwithstanding various possibilities of inter-relationships discussed above, one of the most crucial arguments emerging today is that these three actors are in symbiotic relationship with one another. In other words, media, politics, and society are conditioned and in turn condition one another within the larger social fabric. Once political news is received by the electorate, they discuss among themselves on it. This in turn influences the larger society that comprises larger electorate. Also, since media sustains as a mutual communicative channel with society, political opinion of the electorate often comes back to the media in terms of what the society

at large is thinking and opining politically. Next, political parties depend on the media for dissemination of political news and media also is dependent on political parties for fodder. In other words, politics being the most crucial issue, apart from the economy, in a modern social constellation, media reports essentially constitute political news items. Moreover, once media becomes privatized, many media houses are often owned by business barons who also have political affiliations. Therefore, the tripartite relationship of media, politics, and society emerges when media keeps the electorate politically informed by disseminating political news, which in turn facilitates political opinion formation of the electorate that reflects on the political outcome of an election, which again is reported by the media.

Opinions are varied regarding the trajectory of media-politics-society inter-relationship (Norris, 2000), i.e., whether they share linear, circular, or multi-directional co-dependency. While this study does not intend to investigate the nature of trajectory in particular, it views the relationship largely in terms of mutual inter-dependence. This study does not consider the inter-relationship as a linear system as each of the actors influence and is influenced by the other. However, the relationship can be termed as multi-directional since they mutually feed upon each other for each of their individual sustenance.

The relationship of media, politics and society becomes important in a democratic setup. In a democracy, media is independent and the electorate has voting rights to elect their representative. In this light, in a representative democracy, both media and the electorate play crucial roles in determining the political situation of the state. At an ideal situation, media and electorate both enjoy full independence in expression of political opinion. However, at the functional level, this independence can be compromised, especially at the face of media houses being owned by private investors, who also often enjoy political positions (however, argument can be raised that state owned media restricts opinion of dissent in relation to the state, while privately owned media would enjoy more freedom of expression). Notwithstanding, such trends in turn influence political opinion formation of the electorate in a certain fashion already crafted by the media influenced by their political preferences. In this light, while democracy augments inter-dependence of media, politics, and society at a functional level (starkly different from an ideal level), this inter-relationship has the potential of becoming asymmetrical. In other words, it can be observed that at certain situations, influence of one factor is more on the other two, or vice versa, i.e., in a state, media can have more impact on the political situation than the state would have on media houses; on the other

hand, the electorate can also impact both media and politics more than the duo would do the former.

Nevertheless, the most important function of media in relation to politics and society is to inform the electorate about political affairs in the state. Media acts as a communicator between the electorate and political parties – disseminating political news and developments to the electorate on one hand and communicating the political parties about needs and demands of the people on the other. This bilateral communicative function of the media makes it an indispensable actor in a democratic system. In this light, media sustains and facilitates the system of electoral process in a democracy by acting as a channel of communication between the electorate and the political parties and leaders. However, while performing this function, media often innovates and multiplies its role and evolves as the most crucial factor within a democratic system.

In the light of the discussion above, arguments are emerging that politics has become mediatised over the years (Stroembaeck, 2008, 2010), i.e., distance between media and politics has become shorter especially in terms of media ownership on one hand and dissemination of political news underscored by tacit political preference on the other. This gives rise to a crucial question - does or can the media maintain a critical view of the politics within a state? At the ideal level, it is possible for media to maintain critical standpoint vis-a-vis political functioning of different parties within a state, and for that matter, the state itself. Also, in such situations, the electorate can also maintain far more unbiased political opinion reflecting upon their electoral choices. However, at the actual situation, even in a representative democracy, both electoral independence and freedom of expression of the media are compromised by a tacit interface of political, media and economic elite in the society. In this light, it is one of the biggest challenges of media today to maintain a critical position regarding the state and the surrounding political affairs – probably the most crucial function that it emerged for.

1.2 Media-Politics-Society in the Indian Context

Having established the context within which media, politics and society inter-relation thrives, it is now important to review the development of this relationship in India. India has the second largest circulation (72 million daily) of daily newspapers in the world, closely trailing China (85 million). Media in India is more than two centuries old (Sahay, 2006). Here, the

researcher looks at media's evolution in India since independence from British rule. Post-independence print media, i.e., newspapers, remained sympathetic to the government's efforts to build the nation until 1975, when Emergency⁷ was declared and press was gagged.

India was declared a democratic republic when its constitution was adopted on January 26, 1950, after nearly two and a half years of independence. The first election in democratic India, i.e., adult franchise, was held in 1952 when the Indian National Congress (INC)⁸ led by the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru⁹ won by a massive margin. Virtually, post independence, there was a big wave in favour of Nehru and his party Congress. Indian media almost as a whole was behind the Congress party, mainly because of the role it played in the independence movement. Barring few newspapers, all were in favour of the independence movement led by Congress during the British rule in India; Congress enjoyed media support through decades. The soft, supportive and sympathetic attitude of the Indian media carried on for few years after independence. During this period, for at least more than two decades, majority of the Indian newspapers adopted a nationalist approach and stood strongly behind Congress. This created a huge impact on the people, which in turn helped Congress to gain a massive victory in the first election of 1952.

Though it was never mentioned clearly in the Constitution, the Indian media enjoyed more freedom after independence, i.e., after India became a democratic republic. However, for various reasons, with the exception of a few cases, criticism against the Government was very rare during this period. In fact, a larger percentage of the media denounced movements against the Government, stating various issues. Opposition did not get much support from the major newspapers in the country, and as a result it was a torrid time for them to ventilate their views through the media. A similar picture was observed during the next two elections, both in Parliament and in the State Legislature in 1957 and 1962. In 1962, after the General Elections, there was again a wave of nationalism throughout the country, which swept the

⁷ Emergency in India means a 21 month time span from June 25, 1975 to March 21, 1977 when the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency with the help of the President of India under article 356 of the Indian Constitution. With widespread political unrest, the period bred a total attack on the freedom of free speech and a censorship on media.

⁸ Indian National Congress was the country's largest and most popular political platform demanding freedom from the British rule. Congress was founded on December 28, 1885. Today it is one of the main political parties in India.

⁹ Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) was independent India's first Prime Minister.

entire Indian contingent to war with China. The strong voice of the media in favour of Prime Minister Nehru helped him to overcome the shock of defeat in the October war against the Chinese. This nationalistic wave in the media was also observed during the 1965 war against Pakistan when Lal Bahadur Shastri¹⁰ was the Prime Minister of the country. Indian media, throughout the decade post independence, played a strong nationalist role.

In 1966, after the sudden demise of Prime Minister Shastri, Indira Gandhi¹¹, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, became the Prime Minister; she enjoyed full support of the Indian media till 1975 until she declared Emergency in the country. Earlier, in 1969-70, when she decided to nationalize banks and coal mines, and abolish Privy Purse¹², major national dailies like The Times of India, Indian Express, and The Hindu rendered full support to her. But during the election of the President, when she supported the candidature of labour leader V.B. Giri against the official Congress candidate Sanjeev Reddy, the Indian media split its support. A section of the national media supported Mrs. Gandhi's candidature, but the rest stood firmly in favour of the official Congress candidate. During this historical election, when Congress became divided and Mrs. Gandhi was compelled to form a new party by the name of Congress Indira, surprisingly, nearly every major media house, including the highest circulated The Times of India, stood behind the Prime Minister. It was in all likelihood a proof that the majority of the national dailies in the country would like to go with the ruling party and its representative. In 1971, during war with Bangladesh, Mrs. Gandhi got full support from the Indian media, irrespective of English or vernacular, and the result was a massive victory in the 1972 elections.

Post 1972, as the politics of India changed very quickly, so did the media. After nearly three decades of independence, for the first time in history, a big section of Indian media stood firmly against the ruling party and the Government of India. The Indian Express, which is owned by the Goenkas, played a big role and became the pioneers of a crusade against Mrs. Gandhi and her party. A movement was launched during 1973-74, led by Jayprakash

¹⁰ Lal Bahadur Shastri (1904-1966) was the second Prime Minister of India.

¹¹ Indira Gandhi, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, (1917 – 1984) was the first female Prime Minister of India and second longest serving Prime Minister of the country.

¹² Privy Purse was mode of payment which was done to the royal families in charge of princely states as part of the deal to be a part of Independent India in 1947. The amount which was paid was 8.5% of the annual revenue of each princely state.

Narayan, and joined by all the major opposition parties, irrespective of Left or Right, from CPI(M) to Svatantra Party. In June 1975, the election of Mrs. Gandhi from the Rai Bareilly constituency of Uttar Pradesh was declared void by Allahabad High Court, while a case was filed by her opponent candidate socialist leader Raj Narayan, complaining malpractice on her part during the election. The Opposition started a massive movement throughout the country with the demand of Mrs. Gandhi's resignation as Prime Minister, which compelled her to declare a state of emergency applying Article 352 of the Indian Constitution. During this period, most of the major newspapers changed their stance and started to raise their voice against Mrs. Gandhi. It was one of the reasons for the declaration of emergency; the entire press was gagged and complete censorship was put into effect. Newspapers in this period were totally helpless; some of them were compelled to support Mrs. Gandhi and her Government, but few of them, like The Indian Express, The Statesman, The Hindu, and few others, lodged a silent voice against the media gag. As a mark of protest, the newspapers many a times refused to re-type stories and left edited sections completely vacant.

When the Emergency was withdrawn after one and a half years in the first half of 1977, the Indian media heaved a sigh of relief. But a majority of them, including the The Times of India, stood against Mrs. Gandhi, which took her by surprise. Election was declared in March 1977 when there was a big battle between Mrs. Gandhi and the Indian media as a majority of the newspapers went against her. This created a huge impact on the people of India from all corners, and the nation witnessed the defeat of Mrs. Gandhi and her party for the first time since independence. It is to be noted that the Indian media was never so aggressive against a party in power before, as was seen during the 1977 elections. The same also proved the impact of newspapers on the electorate, a major part of who were illiterate. Jay Prakash Narayan¹³ became not only the hero for the Indian masses but also a darling of the Indian media. No leader opposing the ruling party and the Government ever received so much importance and attention of the media as he did.

After the election of March 1977, Janata Dal¹⁴, which was formed during the mass movement in the mid-70s at the behest of J.P. Narayan and comprised several non-Congress parties,

¹³ J.P. Narayanan (1902 – 1979) was a freedom fighter in British India. He turned into social reformer and a political activist after India's independence.

¹⁴ Janata Dal was formed by J.P. Narayanan in the mission to fight Indira Gandhi Government in the 1970s.

came to power, and Morarji Desai¹⁵, one of the top ex-Congress leaders took charge as Prime Minister. It was the first non-Congress Government in India since independence that enjoyed huge support in the country. However, within a very short span, disputes among the top leaders started ventilating through the media. At one point in time it was found that with the exception of The Indian Express, most major national dailies, including The Times of India, remained extremely critical of the Morarji Desai Government for months together. The main focus of the media at this time was the differences between the party members and the malfunctioning of the Government. The battle between the two deputy Prime Ministers, Charan Singh and Jag Jiwan Ram, became a daily platter for the media. These events and the critical role of the major national media again created a negative impact on the readers' minds. When the Morarji Desai Government collapsed due to infighting, and Charan Singh formed a new Government as the Prime Minister, a signal came through the media that it was nearly the end of India's experiment with the first non-Congress Government. In the end, Charan Singh also had to resign and mid-term elections were called in March 1980, which resulted in the return of Mrs. Gandhi. Majority of the media during this period again rallied behind her, and it was quite a different picture from that of 1977.

During the 1980 General Elections, a majority of the big Indian newspapers, except for The Indian Express and The Hindu, extended support to Indira Gandhi mainly due to alleged misrule of the Janata Party. Hindustan Times (HT), one of the leading dailies, owned by industrialist K.K. Birla of the famous Birla family, took a lead role in favour of Indira Gandhi and her party Congress. HT was all along known as a pro-Congress newspaper, and K.K. Birla was also a Member of Parliament from Congress. The Times of India from time to time extended issue-based support to different parties. During the 1977 Elections, they, along with the other national dailies, were very critical of the rule and role of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. In 1980, they shifted from their earlier stand, while The Indian Express and The Hindu took a middle path. These two major newspapers played an independent role and presented a balanced form of news.

After the 1980 Elections, Indira Gandhi had a smooth sail without much opposition from the bigger newspapers. Within few months of her return to power, she lost her younger son Sanjay Gandhi to a plane crash. This raised a wave of sympathy towards her from the media

¹⁵ Morarji Desai (1896-1995) was India's Prime Minister between 1977 and 1979. He was the first leader in the country's history to lead a non-Congress Government.

and helped her gain popular support in the long run, mainly because there was less criticism on her by the media. After coming to power in Delhi, Indira Gandhi faced two major crises – one, a movement in Assam¹⁶, and two, the Khalistan Movement¹⁷ in Punjab. These two movements saw genocide and mass killings and there was a major outcry in the local media. In Assam, there was a void in terms of criticism of the Government; rather, the national dailies chose to criticize the radicals in Assam and praise the Government. In Punjab, it was a different ball game altogether. Media, especially the English dailies, criticized Indira Gandhi and held her Government responsible for brutality and mass murder by the army in the name of Operation Blue Star¹⁸. Operation Blue Star led to the murder of Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984, and public opinion and public sentiments at the time completely swung towards the Congress. It is also important to mention the role of the Hindi press that primarily supported Indira Gandhi's aggression against the Sikh holy site, The Golden Temple. The editor of the Nav Bharat Times, a prominent Hindi daily, Rajendra Mathur wrote: "Murderers, mad and bank robbers can only oppose this action." In fact, Rajendra Mathur hailed the movement as "a historic day", while its sister publication, the English daily 'The Times of India', termed it as history's 'saddest day'! (Varma, 1984).

Pro-Congress sympathy in the mainstream media grew after the murder of Indira Gandhi and percolated throughout. As the wave of sentiment increased, it snowballed into the massive victory of Rajiv Gandhi in the December 1984 Election. Young Rajiv Gandhi became the toast of the nation and the media found a new hero after Indira Gandhi. Rajiv Gandhi brought few changes in the age-old Indian systems. He is still known as the father of telecommunication revolution in India. The national media supported him till the news of the Bofors Scandal¹⁹ reached their ears. When The Indian Express first broke the story of the Bofors Scandal, it shocked the nation and it was soon picked up by the rest of the newspapers,

¹⁶ The movement in Assam in 1979 was marked by widespread violence against undocumented immigrants in the state. The movement which was started by All Assam Students Union and All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad forced Government to identify illegal migrants to the state, especially from Bangladesh, and drive them out. The movement which started off as a peaceful protest ended with a massacre in Nellie in central Assam, which killed more than 2000 people.

¹⁷ Khalistan Movement was started in Punjab as a Sikh nationalist movement. The aim of the unsuccessful movement was to create a separate nation only for the Sikhs.

¹⁸ Operation Blue Star was an Indian army operation between June 03-08, 1984 under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The main object of the operation was to eliminate the top leaders of the Khalistani movement.

¹⁹ Bofors scandal took place under the Rajiv Gandhi regime and the main allegation was that top Indian policy makers received kickbacks from Swedish arms manufacturer AB Bofors.

including The Hindu. Arun Shourie, the then editor of The Indian Express, and Chitra Subramaniam, a special correspondent of The Hindu, spearheaded the entire scam; it was a major embarrassment for Rajiv Gandhi, his family, party members and the Government. Popular support for Rajiv Gandhi decreased as the chorus of media reports increased on the Bofors scam, which ultimately led to his defeat in 1989. This was the first time that the concept of buzzword came into play as the media repeatedly used a popular coinage from the Opposition parties ‘Gali gali mein shor hain, Rajiv Gandhi chor hain’ or ‘noise in every street, Rajiv Gandhi is a thief’.

In the 1970s, American President Richard Nixon was compelled to resign due to the Watergate Scandal²⁰ published in The Washington Post and other American newspapers. Similarly, just after a decade and a half, the then Prime Minister of the country was defeated in elections due to a similar scandal raised by the Indian media. President Nixon was impeached in the Senate and had to resign, but Rajiv Gandhi was neither impeached, nor was an official complaint lodged against him. The allegations were not proved in court or elsewhere levelled against him. It is important to mention here that pressure from the media and a united opposition force against him changed the entire contour of the nation’s political landscape and resulted in the defeat of Rajiv Gandhi. This incident indicates enough towards the increasing power of the Indian media, and Mr. Gandhi was one of the first casualties of media trial in the country.

After the defeat of the Congress in 1989, it again came to power in 1991 with P.V. Narasimha Rao²¹ becoming the Prime Minister of India. Dr. Manmohan Singh²², ex-Governor of Reserve Bank and future Prime Minister, was his Finance Minister. Dr. Singh was the pioneer of liberalization of the Indian economy. It was during this period that there was a massive boom in the economic sector and media was a part of it. Following the policy of liberalization, foreign investments were allowed in the field of media, and this led to a media explosion in

²⁰ Watergate Scandal was a major political scandal that took place in the United States of America under Richard Nixon. Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein leaked the news of the scandal and it caused a major uproar in the country. The scandal destroyed President Nixon politically and he resigned as the President of the United States of America in 1974.

²¹ P.V. Narasimha Rao (1921-2004) served as Indian Prime Minister between 1991 and 1996.

²² Dr. Manmohan Singh is an Indian economist who served as Prime Minister of the country between 2004 and 2014. He was also at the helm of matters under P.V. Narashima Rao Government as the Finance Minister when India opened its market to the world.

the country. Indian media became globalized and liberalized. India adopted the New Economic Policy in 1991²³. This opened the floodgate for private investors to start business, and media was a significant part of this. The period also witnessed a boom in the field of electronic media as private news channels, both English and vernacular, started to emerge. Similarly, foreign news channels like CNN, DW, or BBC, which were previously barred, started entering the country.

During the post-liberalization period, certain visible changes started surfacing in the Indian media, including a gradual devaluation of the status of newspaper editors. The news writing style of the newspapers became crispier and its tone contemporary. Newspapers started preferring covering high society as it made more business sense.

In the early 1990s, India saw the rise of a fresh wave of communalism in politics, society, and media. With the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)²⁴ led by A.B. Vajpayee²⁵ and L.K. Advani, the entire political scenario of the country began to change rapidly. Incidents such as Babri Masjid²⁶ and its violent reactions in some parts of the country, including riots and blasts in Mumbai, took centrestage. The nation was divided on communal lines, which was reflected in the media. A major section of the media, primarily vernacular newspapers in the North, West, and Central parts of the country, became players of the movement popularly known as Hindu Jagaran or 'Rise of the Hindus'.

It can be said that in spite of a pro-BJP bias, English media in general condemned the Babri Masjid incident; some of them referred to it as genocide, while the vernacular media were less critical on the anti-Muslim riots (Das, 2015). Hindi newspapers helped them promote 'Hindu nationalism', which led to communal frenzy during the campaign to build the Ram Temple²⁷

²³ Economic Liberalization in India was started by the then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, with a target of making the country's economy market oriented and to leave enough room for privatization and foreign investment.

²⁴ Bharatiya Janata Party or the People's party of India was founded in 1980. It is a right wing party.

²⁵ Atal Bihari Vajpayee was India's Prime Minister in 1996 for 13 days and then again between 1998 and 2004.

²⁶ Babri Masjid was built by the Mughals in 1527. It was destroyed by hardline Hindu activists in 1992.

²⁷ Ram is a mythological figure and is worshiped as God by the Hindus.

in Ayodhya, which ultimately culminated in the demolition of the centuries old Babri Mosque²⁸ in December 1992.

It is now well-researched and archived as “part of the mass-circulated Hindi press-turned ‘Kar Sevak’ (foot soldiers) in response to the crisis” (Charu Gupta and Mukul Sharma, 1996:17). Charu Gupta and Mukul Sharma have documented in detail how various Hindi newspapers disseminated misinformation, stereotyped the Muslims and became the voice of the majority Hindu community during the Ramjanmbhoomi²⁹ Babri Masjid Movement (1990). They wrote: “The Ramjanambhoomi-Babri Masjid controversy and its coverage is the blackest of the black chapter in the history of print media (1996:4)”. In October 1990, during Ayodhya movement, a leading Hindi daily, Aaj, in its banner headlines published: *Suraksha balon ki goli se char mare, Ashok Singhal ke sar mein goli lagi, Baba Ramchandra Paramhans bhi ghayal, Ayodhya mein kar sewa shuroo, sena ka goli chalane se inkar* (Four killed in the firing by security forces, bullet hits Ashok Singhal in the head, Baba Ramchandra Paramhans also wounded, karsewa begins in Ayodhya, the army refuses to open fire)³⁰. Similarly, another Hindi daily, Nav Bharat Times, wrote: *Lakhon kar sewakon ne suraksha balon ki lathi aur goli ki parwah kiye bagair vivadit Babari Masjid ko lagbhag dhwast kar diya* (Lakhs of karsewaks defied the lathis and bullets of security forces and nearly demolished the disputed Babri Masjid)³¹.

It also marked the mushrooming of ‘community newspapers’ (Sahay, 2006) that indicates towards the sustenance, and as a matter of fact, proliferation of newspapers catering to localized interests. This kind of provocative ‘reporting’ fanned communal tension in several cities of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Here, it would be interesting to note that the state-controlled news channel, Doordarshan³², in 1987-88 serialized the Hindu religious epic ‘Ramayan’³³, which chronicled the life of the Hindu lord Ram. It further enhanced an already surcharged atmosphere, and helped Hindutva forces mobilize major communities on communal lines.

²⁸ Babri Mosque was a mosque built in Ayodha in 1527 during the Mughal era.

²⁹ Ram Janmabhoomi, or birthplace of Ram, was a name given to a site in Ayodha by Hindus who believed the location was the birthplace of Ram. A movement was later started by the BJP to erect a Ram temple in that area in place of the century old Babri Mosque.

³⁰ Source: Aaj (Hindi daily newspaper), October 1990

³¹ Source: Nav Bharat Times (Hindi daily newspaper), October 1990

³² Doordarshan is India’s public service broadcaster. It was launched on September 15, 1959.

³³ Ramayan is an Indian epic written by Valmiki.

The Press Council of India conducted an investigation on the role of the Hindi press during the 1990 communal crisis. Its resolution states (Ludden, 1996:109):

“There is little doubt that some influential sections of the Hindi press in UP and Bihar were guilty of gross responsibility and impropriety, offending the canons of journalistic ethics in promoting mass hysteria on the basis of rumours and speculation, through exaggeration and distortion, all of this proclaimed under screaming banner headlines. They were guilty, in a few instances, of doctoring pictures (such as drawing prison bars on the photograph of an arrested Mahant), fabricating casualty figures (for example, adding ‘1’ before ‘15’ to make “115” deaths), and incitement of violence and spreading disaffection among members of the armed forces and police, engendering communal hatred” (Quoted in Ram 1992).

In the 1996 elections, BJP secured a majority in the Lok Sabha, but the Government’s tenure was only for 13 days. Struggling for the next two years, it finally formed a stable government under the leadership of Vajpayee in 1999, with its alliance NDA, and served a full term of five years till 2004. With BJP at the helm of affairs, a big section of the Indian industrial lobby and the media controlled by them tilted towards them. Even after the completion of Vajpayee’s term in 2004, a majority of the Indian media, irrespective of language and region, became part of the campaign ‘India Shining’³⁴. The campaign by the media backfired, the BJP misread peoples' minds and ultimately lost to Congress. The Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) emerged as the winners and formed the next Government. In spite of massive waves of campaign in the media, BJP lost the elections in 2004.

Between 2004 and 2013, India witnessed the rise of UPA I and II. Congress-led government of a decade met with several ups and downs. This was also the period when media and politics started coming close to each other, a phenomenon earlier defined as mediatization of politics. The UPA regime was characterized with massive corruption that was easily picked up by the media. By that time, political, economic, and media elite had also begun their inter-relation insofar as media ownership and dissemination of political news was concerned. Media houses were increasingly owned by business tycoons, many of whom were also part of the ruling party. This in turn influenced the pattern of dissemination of political news by

³⁴ India Shinning was a marketing slogan by the BJP Government in 2004 to define the overall economic growth of the country.

different media houses, including impacting their editorial slants³⁵. Newspapers like The Times of India, Dainik Jagran, and The Telegraph (they have been discussed later in detail), who were initially close to the Congress and its party president Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, widow of Rajiv Gandhi and daughter-in-law of Indira Gandhi, gradually started shifting their political allegiance away from the party. Amidst this shift of media loyalty and massive corruption at the then UPA-II government, General Election took place in 2014.

1.3 Objectives, Research Questions and Hypothesis

Within the above mentioned backdrop, the primary objective of the study is to identify mediated buzzwords and issues during General Elections of 2014 in India, to understand how the mediated buzzwords were used by the media houses to manufacture news during General Elections of 2014 in India and to estimate the influence of the mediated buzzwords on the formation of political opinion of the electorate during General Elections of 2014 in India.

The basic research questions which the researcher will try to find an answer to by the end of this dissertation are: Firstly, what were the mediated buzzwords and issues during the General Elections of 2014 in India? Secondly, how were the mediated buzzwords used to manufacture news by the media houses during General Elections of 2014 in India? Finally, did the buzzwords influence the political opinion formation of the electorate before General Elections 2014 in India? If yes, how? Hypothesis of the study which the study will either prove or disprove at the end of research is ‘Election results in India are conditioned by mediated buzzwords’.

1.4 Research Methodology³⁶

In terms of methodology, this study aims for qualitative analysis. As will be mentioned in the next chapter on Review of Literature, this study considers a society centric approach within which media is defined as an institution in relation to other institutions in the overall social fabric, namely, politics and electorate. In this light, the study aims at identifying and analyzing media’s influence on the electorate in terms of political opinion formation of the

³⁵ Editorial slant here refers to the historical background within which the newspapers emerged, selection of news by the newspapers, timeliness of the news selected and choice of buzzwords.

³⁶ Here, it must be mentioned that this study takes under consideration only newspapers; news channels and radio are being left out.

latter, instead of treating media in terms of its content and impact on voting decisions of people which calls for quantitative analysis.

Delhi (the national capital), Uttar Pradesh (most populous Indian state), West Bengal (29.47% of the minority³⁷ voters hail from this state and the most important state in eastern part of India), Gujarat (the home of the present Prime Minister, Narendra Modi), and Tamil Nadu (AIDMK³⁸ was the second largest party during the elections of 2014 and one of the important states in southern part of India) have been the field of study. The universe of the study is divided into four groups, depending on each of their ways of perceiving and analyzing media's role during elections: Politicians, who are further categorized according to their political affiliations Bharatya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, Samajwadi Party, AIDMK, Left Front, and Trinamool Congress. Journalists/Media Professionals are subdivided with reference to their level of experience and seniority in the field of media and journalism in India into Editorial level/Senior Journalists, Mid-career journalists and stringers. Academicians in India who are engaged in sociology, political sociology and sociology of media, political commentary, and media analyses. Lastly, the Electorate has been categorized in terms of age, gender, occupational category, educational qualification, religion, caste as identity, and geographical locations. The sample size and the total number of respondents have been fixed to 250. All the respondents have been selected with reference to each of their sub-categories mentioned above, in terms of stratified sampling and snowball sampling. This study deals with two types of data sources – primary and secondary. Primary sources involve direct interactions with the subjects (mentioned in universe of the study) through interviews; secondary sources include identifying the mediated buzzwords potential for impacting the electorate, for e.g., newspaper reports published during the period November 2013 and May 2014.

Methods of data collection from primary sources is exploration, and the researcher aims capturing the opinions and observations of journalists, politicians, academicians, and electorates in the above mentioned states in India. Tools of data collection is face-to-face and telephonic interviews through structured questionnaires having mostly close-ended questions (for the electorates) and semi-structured questionnaires with mostly open-ended questions (for journalists, politicians, electorate and academicians). The methods of data collection from

³⁷ Census Reports 2011, Indian Government

³⁸ All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

secondary sources are mainly through identification and analysis of news reports; this part deals with identification and analyses of mediated buzzwords. Mediated buzzwords were primarily identified in terms of the terms and coinages that were used and referred to by journalists, politicians, electorate and academicians in their interviews. At the next stage, majority of these terms and coinages were also found to have appeared in the newspapers within the aforementioned period. In this light, mediated buzzwords were identified in these two stages (primary and secondary) in terms of frequency of appearance in the newspapers, popularity among the stakeholders, time of dissemination, and location in the newspapers.

The newspapers have been selected in terms of circulation, regional significance and linguistic relevance. The English dailies that were selected for the study were The Times of India (TOI), The Telegraph, and The Hindu, and the vernacular dailies used were Dainik Jagaran, Hindustan Dainik, and Ananda Bazar Patrika.

1.5 Issue of Ethical Neutrality in Research

Working as a journalist for few years has given me the necessary exposure to observe media's role in general in terms of political news dissemination. Therefore, by choosing to pursue PhD, I have already expressed my preference for problematizing and scrutinizing the media-politics relationship as a researcher. However, while conducting my research, my aim would be not to influence the responses of my subjects, not to lead them in formulating opinion, and not to use any coercive forces to get them respond in a certain fashion. Also, I do not intend to apply any covert method for gathering primary data. Also, the issue of ethical neutrality becomes crucial, especially while applying my research findings. Here, my aim would be to contribute meaningfully to the academic body of existing researches in the parlance of media studies so that my next generation of researchers finds this study relevant and useful for further explorations.

1.6 Chapter Schemes

This section looks at the chapterization of the thesis. The aim of the next chapter is to contextualize the study in terms of existing theories related to the key factors mentioned above. For doing that, it is important to explore the larger framework within which media-politics-society theories operate. Denis McQuail (2010) offers a basis structure, laying the foundation for further discussion on the tripartite relationship between media, politics, and

society. This study takes into account McQuail's idea of media theory and goes on to review two theorists considered most relevant for the study, namely, Juergen Habermas and Noam Chomsky (together with Herman). The first section of the study relooks at McQuail's theory of media forming the basis of the study; the second section deals with Habermas and Chomsky's concepts related to media-politics-society inter-relations; the last section explains how these theories are relevant for the study.

In the following chapter, mediated buzzwords and issues within the context of General Election 2014 in India will be identified through secondary analysis of newspapers and analyzed. The entire country had turned into a political hot-bed before General Election in June 2014 – the buzzwords had started doing the rounds in newspapers, news channels, and social media; political parties were issuing their agenda and increasingly engaging in political debates with each other, and the voters had gradually started making their decisions as to whom to elect as India's next Prime Minister. Within this context, a period of seven months between November 2013 and mid of June 2014 (till election happened) has been chosen as the time period to identify the buzzwords and issues. Next, these mediated buzzwords and issues will be identified through secondary analyses of six newspapers in terms of their circulation, territorial significance, and linguistic relevance. These buzzwords will be identified to the exclusion of other issues in terms of their frequency of appearances within the mentioned period of seven months. This chapter will analyze each of the buzzwords in terms the frequency with which they appeared in the newspapers within the following contexts - what does the buzzword stand for, political context of the buzzword and buzzword analyses.

Next, the attention moves to understanding the manufacture of news through mediated buzzwords, and it shifts the focus of the study from buzzwords to their sources, i.e., media houses (newspapers in the study) that generated the buzzwords. To explore the structure, scope, and general political orientations of the newspapers for understanding manufacture of news through these mediated buzzwords, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the socio-political context within which a particular newspaper was born and general temperament of the latter in relation to political news making and dissemination; the second section discusses the relation between media houses, political forums and business units at the functional level in India within the context of ownership of media houses; and the last section aims at substantiating the inter-relationship among these three units (politics,

media and economy) by identifying the type of buzzwords that each of the newspapers chose to generate before General Election 2014 in India.

Having identified the buzzwords previously, and discussed how they reflect upon the news selection of the media houses generating them, in the last chapter, Chapter V deals with the impact of mediated buzzwords on the electorate, focusing primarily on two aspects – firstly, to identify the mediated buzzwords as the electorate identifies them and to compare if the buzzwords generated by the newspapers (identified in the third chapter) are similar to the ones recognized by the electorate; and secondly, to estimate if these mediated buzzwords influence political opinion formation of the electorate. The electorate forms the third and most important constituent of an election, since they are the ones voting a political party to power as against the others. However, it is also crucial to define and explain the profile of people that this study considers to be the electorate. An electorate can be defined as a set of citizens of a country eligible to vote and elect their political leader. In India, voting rights start from 18 years of age for citizens of all genders. Political formation for a person can begin even before s/he becomes eligible to vote; however, keeping the official age specificity in mind, the age limit of the respondents in this study begins from 18 years.

The final chapter, i.e, Conclusion will prove or disprove the hypothesis tested in the study. The concluding chapter will have three broad sections. The first section consists of detailed summary of the entire thesis, followed by the next section where key findings are mentioned; this section will try to draw a larger generalization on the basis of the key findings, and the last section enlists further scopes of research on similar issues.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

India is a huge nation with various languages. Restricted knowledge of all the Indian languages compelled the researcher to focus on English, Hindi and Bengali newspapers. Next, for a research to be completed to one's heart's content, no amount of time looks enough. However, it would have been beneficial if the researcher could get few more months to conduct field work more extensively. The third limitation of the study emerged due to the fact that India lacks proper documentation of events. It was a huge challenge to unearth old newspapers from the archives and weave the historical evolution of media in the state. Next, it was not always easy to catch journalists and academicians, given their hectic work schedule. Also, sample selection remains challenging because of the varied range of

parameters relevant to the study. Although the researcher has tried to remain as specific as possible while selecting the respondents, the sample and the numerical deductions have 5% error. Since the PhD program is based on student scholarship, money and finance have remained a constant limitation.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This study revolves around how media, through mediated buzzwords, influences and shapes electoral politics and governance in India. In this light, the three key factors involved here are: media, politics and society. Politics is represented by the state, and society is primarily represented by the electorate and also by civil society and similar stakeholders of governance. Within this framework, the aim of the chapter is to contextualize the study in terms of existing theories related to the key factors mentioned above. For doing that, it is important to explore the larger framework within which media-politics-society theories operate. Dennis McQuail (2010) offers a basic structure laying the foundation for further discussion on the tripartite relationship between media, politics and society. This study takes into account McQuail's idea of media theory and goes on to review two theorists considered most relevant for the study, namely, Juergen Habermas and Noam Chomsky (together with Herman).

The first section of the study relooks at McQuail's theory of media forming the basis of the study; the second section deals with Habermas and Chomsky's concepts related to media-politics-society inter-relations; the last section explains how these theories are relevant for the study.

2.1 Dennis McQuail

McQuail, one of the most influential communication theorists today, lays down the theoretical groundwork within which further theories can be discussed. Theories on media are characterized by various perspectives, among which the distinction between the liberals and the conservatives is the most pronounced (McQuail, 2010). Liberal theories largely account

for the leftist theories on media that are critical of the way global conglomerates and state corporations co-opt media for their vested interests. As for the conservatives, they claim that the “liberal bias” (McQuail, 2010) in news damage media’s traditional values. In other words, leftist theories on media are interested in preservation of media’s independence at the face of state or/and private ownership, while the conservatives negate such possibilities. The next point of difference arises between critical and administrative approach, as espoused by Lazarsfeld (1941). This point of contestation does not engage with political reference of media; rather, it focuses on the differential perspective with which the actual practice of media is analyzed by the two approaches. Consequently, critical theory aims at identifying and exposing the operational shortcomings within media practice and relating them with larger social issues. On the other hand, administrative or applied theories try understanding the actual process of mass communication and identifying and solving its problems in itself, without further theorizing, with the final goal of enriching the application of mass communication (Signitzer, 2007). This study does not directly engage with the applied orientation; however, it definitely explores the critical theories.

Apart from these, there are two other axes of variation in media theory as suggested by McQuail (2010), namely, difference between media centric and society centric approach and materialist and culturalist approach. As the name suggests, media centric approach focuses on the activity of media within its own sphere and also entails autonomy to media. It considers mass media to be the primary agent of social change paved by technological development. On the other hand, society centric approach sees media as a part of a larger social structure which is directly influenced by political and economic forces. In this light, media theories generating from society centric approach are larger social theories (Golding and Murdock, 1978). Next, between materialist approach and culturalist approach as espoused by McQuail (2010), materialist approach focuses on “material forces and factors, while culturalist approach is interested in the arena of culture and ideas corresponding to and influencing media”. This divide further corresponds with few other perspectives, e.g., humanistic versus scientific, qualitative versus quantitative, and subjective versus objective. The next set of approaches, i.e., media centric-society centric and materialist-culturalist approaches are independent of each other. Between them, four different perspectives on media theories can be identified.

These categories are not mutually exclusive; in other words, theories related to media-society-politics often fall into more than one of following categories; for instance, media culturalist

perspective entailing a focus on media from the perspective of its audience that may or may not vary among different media cultures and exploring the subjective experience of that audience vis-à-vis the media, e.g., perception of an audience after watching a reality show; media materialist perspective, i.e., from media culture, this perspective is about exploring the terrain of media technology in terms of shaping of media content, nature of the medium and overall social relations of reception and production; thirdly, social culturalist perspective that sees media essentially from the vantage point of society. The focus of social culturalist perspective is to see media's relation to society and individual in terms of mutual interaction and effects. Also, social and cultural issues, according to this perspective, relates directly with economic and political issues; and lastly, social materialist perspective that links media more directly to economic and political issues rather than social culturalist approach. It deals with media in terms of the issue of ownership and control and argues that these two are the ultimate deciding factors in shaping the dominant ideology in a society disseminated by the media.

Within the large framework that includes Leftist vs. Conservative approach, Critical vs. Administrative or Applied approach, Media Centric vs. Society Centric approach, and Materialist vs. Culturalist approach, this study identifies its temperament to be one of leftist, critical, society centric culturalist approach³⁹. Therefore, at a specific level, it deals with social culturalist and social materialist approaches towards theories related to media. In other words, this study takes into account theories that fall largely within the purview of society

³⁹ Leftist perspective talks about economic equality. Similarly this study argues that privatization of media is an obstacle in the way of freedom of press. Therefore, this thesis renders privatization of media problematic. Private ownership of media negates equality of participation by different media professionals in news making and disseminating process; instead it gives enough room to the owners of the newspaper houses to take decisions.

Critical perspective means asking questions about the rationale of something. Similarly this study tries to uncover how media houses manufacture news and in turn influence the voters. Next Frankfurt School, where Habermas belongs introduced critical theories in Sociology that involves the critique of capitalist society. This study also looks into the study of privatization of media and its consequent implications on news making and dissemination.

Next, this study adopts a society centric approach because this study sees media as a social institution and not just a part of the market. In other words, media like other social institutions like family, gender has certain roles and functions to play in the society and does not respond to the demand supply mechanism of the market. This study sees media not in terms of its technical roles but social roles.

Social culturalist perspective sees media essentially from the vantage point of the society. The focus of the social culturalist perspective is to see media's relationship with the society and individual in terms of mutual interaction and effects. Although the study later finds social materialist perspective, i.e. issue of media ownership and control, the main aim of the study is to look at media's role in electoral politics, i.e. how media interacts and influences the electorate.

centric approach and entail social culturalist and social materialist perspectives. As already mentioned, this study is concerned with how media contributes to electoral politics and governance issues in India, thereby shaping and influencing the electoral process. Therefore, this study identifies media as one of the crucial elements of social structure, the other two being politics and society. Similarly, both Habermas and Chomsky, along with Herman, envisage, critically analyze, and contextualize media within a tripartite inter-relational framework including state (politics) and electorate (society). Thus, within this framework laid down by McQuail (2010), the next section will review the already existing literature on media embodied in the theories of Habermas and Chomsky (and Herman). While Habermas is a leftist thinker hailing from the Frankfurt School, Chomsky (and Herman) are not conservatives; all of them are critical in their theoretical approaches and view media in its relation with politics and society. Their analyses of media are conditioned by the political structure and the ways of reception of media dissemination by the society. In this light, they both uphold society centric approaches while theorizing on media.

2.2 Juergen Habermas: Public Sphere

2.2.1 Definition of Public Sphere

Juergen Habermas, one of the most prominent thinkers from Frankfurt School, coined the term public sphere for explaining society, state, media, and economy in a relational situation. In a word, “By the public sphere we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed” (Habermas, 1974). Therefore, at the onset it is clear that public sphere is a part of social existence facilitating formation of public opinion. In his *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), Habermas chooses to clarify at the beginning what public sphere is not, before continuing with detailed explanation of what it is. Public sphere does not stand just for ‘public’, i.e., the individuals who assemble, nor is it characterized simply as a crowd (Durham and Kellner, 2006). It rather denotes the emergence of an institution that concretizes only through participation of people. The term participation is important here, since public sphere entails a creative and reproducing function of the people involved and not just mere amalgamation of individuals. The importance of participation of “private individuals” assembling “to form a public body” (Durham and Kellner, 2006) is also epitomized in the sentence “Access is guaranteed to all

citizens” (Habermas, 1962). That is, to form a public sphere, full access for participation of the people is a precondition.

“A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither like business or professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of a state bureaucracy. Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions – about matters of general interest.” Habermas, 1974:1

2.2.2 Constituents of Public Sphere

The structure of the public sphere follows the logic of core and periphery. At the core, or the center, lies the political system, i.e., the state consisting “of the familiar institutions like parliaments, courts, administrative agencies, and government. Each of these institutions has a “deliberative arena” (Durham and Kellner, 2006) and they perform their functions of legislation, verdicts, administrative decision-makings and policy formulations through these various types of institutionalized deliberations. At the periphery lies the flow of messages, i.e., the media, including news, reports, and images with educational, entertainment, or polemical content. At the periphery of the political system, the public sphere is rooted in networks for wild flows of messages - news, reports, commentaries, talks, scenes and images, and shows and movies with an informative, polemical, educational, or entertaining content.

In this light, “there are two types of actors without whom no political public sphere could be put to work: professionals of the media system—especially journalists who edit news, reports, and commentaries, and politicians who occupy the centre of the political system and are both the co-authors and addressees of public opinions” (Habermas, 2006). Apart from the journalists representing the media at the periphery, and the politicians representing the state at the core, there are five further actors involved in the public sphere, namely, lobbyists, advocates, experts from various fields, moral entrepreneurs, and intellectuals. Lobbyists “represent special interest groups”, advocates “either represent general interest groups or substitute for a lack of representation of marginalized groups that are unable to voice their interests effectively”, experts are either from professional or scientific fields, moral entrepreneurs mostly imply those people engaging in public attention generation for neglected issues and intellectuals “who have gained, unlike advocates or moral entrepreneurs, a

perceived personal reputation in some field (e.g., as writers or academics) and who engage, unlike experts and lobbyists, spontaneously in public discourse with the declared intention of promoting general interests” (Habermas, 2006). However, the state and the public sphere do not overlap, as one might suppose from casual language use. Rather, they confront one another as opponents. Habermas designates this sphere as public which antiquity understood to be private, i.e., the sphere of nongovernmental opinion making (Durham and Kellner, 2006).

2.2.3 Public Opinion

All these actors come together to constitute the public sphere and participate in the construction of public opinion. As espoused by Habermas (2006), public opinions are difficult to identify, specifically as they are constructed together by the functioning of the political elite and diffuse audiences through media’s intervention. However, the influence of public opinions spreads in opposite directions, turning both toward a government busy carefully watching it and backward toward the reflecting audiences from where it first originated (Habermas, 1993).

As mentioned above, the state makes political decisions and legislations at the core, which are further fed upon by different actors at the periphery like the lobbyists/advocates/intellectuals. Images, news and reports produced and shaped at core and periphery constitute published opinion. When published opinion is further conditioned by the media, it is called polled opinion. Therefore, public opinion is constituted by both published and polled opinion. In other words, published opinion is generated by the state, whereas polled opinion is that published opinion received by the citizens and disseminated and processed by the media.

“At the periphery of the political system, the public sphere is rooted in networks for wild flows of messages—news, reports, commentaries, talks, scenes and images, and shows and movies with an informative, polemical, educational, or entertaining content. These *published opinions* originate from various types of actors—politicians and political parties, lobbyists and pressure groups, or actors of civil society. They are selected and shaped by mass-media professionals and received by broad and overlapping audiences, camps, subcultures, and so on. From the spectrum of published political opinions, we can distinguish, as *polled opinion*, the measured aggregate of pro or con attitudes to controversial public issues as they tacitly take shape within weak publics. These attitudes are influenced by everyday talk in the

informal settings or episodic publics of civil society at least as much as they are by paying attention to print or electronic media.”

Habermas, 2006:416

Public sphere, through the generation of public opinion, lays down a network of checks and balances between the state and the society with the help of media intervention. Therefore, public opinion stands for the mechanism of criticism and control that the citizens collectively exercise upon the state, both informally from time to time and formally by casting votes during elections (Gripsurd and Moe, 2010). “The public sphere is a sphere which mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion, accords with the principle of the public sphere – that principle of public information which once had to be fought for against the arcane policies of monarchies and which since that time has made possible the democratic control of state activities” (Habermas, 1974).

However, public opinion cannot emerge without the existence of a reasoning public. Along with the other precondition that people should have full access to resources, this presupposition that that the people entering into a public sphere and participating in the construction of public opinion are informed and capable of reasoning is also crucial for the emergence of public sphere and consequent construction of public opinion.

“Only when the exercise of political control is effectively subordinated to the democratic demand that information be accessible to the public, does the political public sphere win an institutionalized influence over the government through the instrument of law-making bodies.”

Habermas (1974:49)

Otherwise, in their absence, the logic behind formation of the public sphere will be defeated if the public sphere cannot act as a mechanism of control against an ever engulfing state machinery. Therefore, it is important to note and examine the historical context within which a public sphere emerges.

2.2.4 Evolution of Public Sphere

Habermas’s theory of public sphere is historically contextualized in the 18th century bourgeoisie society in Europe. Public sphere in this context emerged in response to the “arcane policies of monarchies” (Habermas, 1974). Public opinion as “opinion publique”

(Durham and Kellner, 2006), generating from public sphere, is different from general “opinion” that had existed even prior to the emergence of bourgeoisie public sphere in the form of collective practices, values, and normative attitudes. However, given that public opinion formed by reasoning public is different from opinion in generic sense, “public discussions about the exercise of political power, which are both critical in intent and institutionally guaranteed, have not always existed – they grew out of a specific phase of bourgeois society and could enter into the order of the bourgeois constitutional state only as a result of a particular constellation of interests” (Habermas, 1974).

However, the concept of public sphere, as espoused by Habermas, had a considerable amount of ideological elements in them, which may or may not necessarily translate into actual situations in social welfare state mass democracies. Habermas’s public sphere is built around the liberal model that presupposes private individuals with reasoning capacity come together in full access and participation and engage in political discussions on the basis of published and polled opinions to construct public opinion. These preconditions are not available in actual situations since the public can neither have full access to resources nor can they possess holistic reasoning based on full disclosure of information. This is largely due to the fact that in the evolution of the public sphere in social welfare state mass democracies, the realm between private and public is diffused. As a result, political authorities now engage in commodity exchange, which is originally a realm of the economy and not the state; also, social powers assume political functions. Such diffusion of spaces brings with them the elements of economic interests underlying in state machinery and vice versa. Under such circumstances, the citizens cannot possibly have full access to information since that will compromise the growing power of the state.

“With the interweaving of the public and private realm, not only do the political authorities assume certain functions in the sphere of commodity exchange and social labour, but conversely social powers now assume political functions.”

Habermas, 1974:56

In this context, it is also crucial to differentiate between Habermas’s concept of “making proceedings public” (Publizitaet) and the “public sphere” (Oeffentlichkeit). “The term Publizitaet describes the degree of public effect generated by a public act. Thus, a situation

can arise in which the form of public opinion making is maintained, while the substance of the public sphere has long ago been undermined” (Habermas, 1974).

2.2.5 Function of the Public Sphere

Function of the public sphere is independent of the state. In other words, political public sphere operates without state intervention. However, the constituent of the political public sphere, i.e., the public in itself, is the responsibility of the state. The state is supposed to ensure safety, security and access to other resources for the public. In this light, though the state is not a part of the public sphere, it facilitates the existence of the latter. As a result, state is called public authority, not because it is a part of the public, but it exists for taking care of the public.

“Although state authority is, so to speak, the executor of the political public sphere, it is not a part of it. To be sure, state authority is usually considered “public” authority, but it derives its task of caring for the well-being of all citizens primarily from this aspect of the public sphere.”

Habermas (1974: 49)

The overall function of the public sphere is deliberation. Habermas considers deliberation to be an essential component for democracy and delineates three major implications of deliberation. Firstly, deliberation implies mobilization and specific interpretation of relevant issues and information; secondly, it relates with the building of arguments both for and against the interpretations; and thirdly, it engages with the generation of rationally constructed answers in terms of affirmation or negation that would eventually determine the outcome of the arguments of the public sphere. Therefore, the ultimate function of the public sphere is to mobilize the public for discussion and argument building so that a decision can be made vis-a-vis political affairs within the state. Also, the entire process of deliberation that is facilitated by public sphere also sets the stage for determining the agenda of the political institution. In this light, mobilization of the public and specific interpretation of issues emerge as the first and essential functions of the political public sphere.

2.2.6 Element of Power within Public Sphere

The participants in the public sphere are bound by a power structure that provides differential level of access to resources to different profiles of the public. The amount of power each of the participants in public sphere possesses depends on their access to resources in the society. Therefore, firstly, public sphere is characterized by participants from different classes, and secondly, the level of their participation depends on the amount of power each of them holds in the society. Moreover, differential level of power also determines the multiplicity of public opinion generated within the public sphere. Next, power is directly proportional to the amount of reflexivity⁴⁰ each of the participants have. Reflexivity also depends on the power structure insofar as the participants enjoying more power (and more access to resources) would have more scope of reflexivity for reconsidering an opinion. However, Habermas also adds that unequal means of participants does not affect their level of participation in generating public opinion. Eistub and McLaverty (2014) write that motivation of the participants is not crucial in determining the success of the deliberative function of the public sphere. Also, Thompson (2008) argues that differential motivation for participation due to differences in access to resources is not significant in public sphere; if one participant can identify and engage with the motive of participation of another, the reason for the motive (of either participant) is not important. While Habermas insists that differential access to resources, power level, and reflexivity of the participants would not affect the formation of public opinion because even the powerful participant would involve similar amount of participation as that of the less powerful with independence of the media and civil society in ensuring full participation of the citizens in the public sphere, Eistub and McLaverty (2014) insist that the socially powerful (in terms of ethnicity, wealth and sex) would negatively impact the deliberative function of the public sphere (Cohen and Rogers) since they are already enjoying the advantages of a non-deliberative political structure within the state.

“Players on the virtual stage of the public sphere can be classified in terms of the power or “capital” they have at their disposal. The stratification of opportunities to transform power into public influence through the channels of mediated communication thus reveals a power

⁴⁰ Reflexivity or reflexive character of the participants in the public sphere refers to the scope of revisiting the perceived public opinion generated in the public sphere through discussion and responding to them afterwards after reconsideration.

structure. This power is constrained, however, by the peculiar reflexivity of a public sphere that allows all participants to reconsider what they perceive as public opinion. The common construct of public opinion certainly invites actors to intervene strategically in the public sphere. However, the unequal distribution of the means for such interventions does not necessarily distort the formation of considered public opinions. Strategic interventions in the public sphere must, unless they run the risk of inefficiency, play by the rules of the game. And once the established rules constitute the right game, one that promises the generation of considered public opinions, then even the powerful actors will only contribute to the mobilization of relevant issues, facts, and arguments. However, for the rules of the right game to exist, two things must first be achieved: First, a self-regulating media system must maintain its independence vis-a`-vis its environments while linking political communication in the public sphere with both civil society and the political center; second, an inclusive civil society must empower citizens to participate in and respond to a public discourse that, in turn, must not degenerate into a colonizing mode of communication.”

Habermas (2006b: 419-20)

However, fulfilment of these preconditions is not easy. Full participation of the public to be ensured by the civil society is a challenge. With reference to the discourse of ‘public ignorance’, the average citizen is largely an uninformed and disinterested person (Friedman, 2003). However, technological developments have made information easily accessible and highly mobile. These often facilitate the construction and consolidation of political orientation that was not possible before. Travel of information through technology ensures that average citizens as potential participants in the public sphere read, view and listen to political news disseminated by the media and form a certain amount of political understanding. Such processes happen both with deliberate and unconscious engagement of the citizens. This way, with the help of texts, visuals, and messages received even at a casual level by sheer exposure to media, “people can be knowledgeable in their reasoning about their political choices without possessing a large body of knowledge about politics” (Dalton, 2006).

2.2.7 Media: The Salient Agent in Public Sphere and Public Opinion

Emergence of public sphere is heavily indebted to the existence of media, non-interfered by the state and economy. At least, as an ideal type, independence of the media is an essential component of public sphere. However, at the actual level in social welfare state, media is not

as independent as Habermas would like it to remain. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that even in its slightly compromised state, media is the biggest facilitator of public opinion. As mentioned already, published opinion and polled opinion together come to constitute public opinion, and that happens only through media's intervention. Moreover, media has over the time been playing even bigger roles in keeping the average citizens informed and involved regarding the political affairs in the state.

“In a large public body, this kind of communication requires specific means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it. Today, newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere. We speak of the political public sphere in contrast, for instance, to the literary one, when public discussion deals with objects connected to the activity of the state.”

(Habermas, Lennox, and Lennox, 1974:50)

One of the most crucial role media plays in political public sphere is shaping the political opinion of the voters. The electorates are the biggest receivers of news on the basis of which public opinion is constructed in the public spheres. Before an election, these public spheres become the hubs of political opinion formation. Sometimes, the voices shaping the public opinion of larger population in context are confused and diffused in mediated communication. Nevertheless, these are the different voices of the media that channelize political opinion of the electorate before an election (Durham and Kellner, 2006).

For feeding political news to the electorate, media professionals construct an elite discourse. Three actors emerge in this discourse eventually – firstly, politicians enter from the centre of the political system, followed by lobbyists and interest groups, and the third group joining are the intellectuals, religious centres, and moral entrepreneurs representing the civil society (Habermas, 2006).

These actors, along with the journalists, facilitate construction of public opinion of the electorate. In a larger context, generation of yes and no from the public in the public sphere is the ultimate function of media. However, public opinion need not be just one but many. Because public opinions are jointly constructed by published and polled opinion, where the five actors, including media and the public, participate, it is difficult to point it down. In other words, it is hard to differentiate between published opinion that is perceived and polled opinion that is mostly statistically recorded. However, public opinion is not instrumental to

exercise of political power by the state; it only creates pressure on the public's mind to cast a vote. Also, influence of public opinion "spreads in opposite directions, turning both toward a government busy carefully watching it and backward toward the reflecting audiences from where it first originated" (Habermas, 2006:421). Also, the reflexive character of the public sphere implies that decisions can be reviewed from both below, i.e., from the public, and above, i.e., from the state. This works as a filter mechanism within the public sphere so that its dynamic character is retained and the space is not completely co-opted by the state. Public opinion epitomises those plausible interpretations of conflicting opinions that are discussed in the public sphere. In this light, public opinion can also translate into majoritarian perspective. Media also serves as a communicator between the legislators and the public by facilitating formation of public opinion in the public sphere. Since public opinion reflects upon what the public would accept as a legitimate and reasonable decision in the state, it helps the state machineries and legislators in their decision-making process, i.e., the state can refer to public opinion emerging out of public spheres while law making and execution. Also, voters who regularly read newspapers and participate in public sphere not just as receivers of news but also actively engaging in them, consider public opinion facilitated by media to offer plausible alternatives on public issues. Media's relevance in the public sphere is epitomized in the formal voting system that reflects upon the actual opinion of the public in terms of deliberative decision-making process of the state and political system. Gerhards (1993) writes, the relevance of public opinion both for the public and for the decision-makers is secured in competitive democracies in the final instance by the institution of voting.

2.2.8 Crisis within Public Sphere

As mentioned already, the public sphere can function properly only when there exists freedom of expression and opinion for the public. Also, another precondition for its smooth functioning is independence of the media. However, it is also crucial to remember that the elements of the public sphere, as delineated by Habermas, are largely of the ideal type. In other words, in an actual situation, neither is the media independent, nor does there exist a complete freedom of expression for the public (which is, as a matter of fact, related to the compromised independence of the media).

Editorial independence is compromised at the face of private owners of media houses joining the political system and using their property-based power for achieving political ambitions.

This happens mostly in print and electronic media, since they can also be regulated. Here, big corporates, as owners of newspapers and news channels, can use their politico-economic connections to turn the media houses into mouthpieces of political parties. This way public opinion can be distorted, suiting the political ambition of the media owners. This largely sums up the relationship between economic and media elite and its repercussions in the functioning of public sphere. Secondly, with reference to the feedback between a self-regulating media system and a responsive civil society, “the political public sphere needs input from citizens who give voice to society’s problems and who respond to the issues articulated in an elite discourse. There are two major causes for a systematic lack of this kind of feedback loop. Social deprivation and cultural exclusion of citizens explain the selective access to and uneven participation in mediated communication, whereas the colonization of the public sphere by market imperatives leads to a peculiar paralysis of civil society” (Habermas, 2006:421). In other words, all the people constituting the public do not have equal access to resources for equal participation in the public sphere. Next, with regard to access and participation in mediated communication, it is observed that the interest in public affairs and the use of the political media largely correlate with social status and cultural background (Delli Carpini, 2004). “In the course of the past few decades, however, the ties to ascriptive social and cultural origins have been loosening...The shift toward ‘issue voting’ reveals the growing impact of public discourse on voting patterns and, more generally, of public discourse on the formation of ‘issue publics’ (Dalton, 2006:320). Participation in public sphere is conditioned by access to resources, social status and cultural backgrounds. In other words, social location, even though still largely defines participation and substantial contribution to public sphere deliberations, citizens are now more akin to news and information than they were before.

2.2.9 Critique of Public Sphere

Nancy Fraser, one of the most articulate critiques of Habermas, while acknowledging his “idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and to democratic political practice” (1990:57) argues that the concept of public sphere needs certain interrogation and re-interpretation to suit an existing democratic setup. In her argument for moving beyond Habermas’s model and proposing a post-bourgeois model of public sphere, Fraser identifies four underlying assumptions of bourgeois public sphere that she renders problematic. Firstly, she claims that the model Habermas proposes does not entail full participation of the public,

since women and plebeian men are excluded from participation in the public sphere. Therefore, the idea of open access to public sphere, as insisted by Habermas is denounced by Fraser. Secondly, she raises the question of how diversity and multiplicity in the public sphere can be maintained in societies that are already stratified. She is critical of Habermas's claim that "institutional confinement of public life to a single, overarching public sphere is a positive and desirable state of affair" and "the proliferation of a multiplicity of publics represents a departure from, rather than an advance toward, democracy" (Fraser, 1990:66). Thirdly, she is concerned over the issue of accessibility among the public within the public sphere. In other words, she raises the question that how audible would the subalterns' voices be in relation to the dominant publics in a stratified society? In an absence of egalitarian participation, which she claims is most likely to be the case, public opinion has the potential to quickly turn to coteries of private interests of the dominant publics.

Fourthly, she is critical of the assumption that state and civil society need to be separate in a democratically functional setup. Fraser suggests that depending upon how one defines civil society, such separation should be endorsed or denounced. If civil society is defined as "a privately-ordered, capitalist economy, then to insist on its separation from the state is to defend classical liberalism"; however, "when "civil society" means the nexus of nongovernmental or "secondary" associations that are neither economic nor administrative", then it is best to keep the two separate from each other (Fraser, 1990:74).

Fraser concludes that a comprehensive definition of public sphere should not only bracket but eliminate social inequality. Secondly, multiplicity of publics is preferable to singular public sphere, especially in stratified societies today. Thirdly, she claims that "a tenable conception of the public sphere would countenance not the exclusion, but the inclusion, of interests and issues that bourgeois masculinist ideology labels "private" and treats as inadmissible" (1990:77). Lastly, a defensible conception of public sphere would accommodate subaltern voices better.

Apart from Fraser, recent critiques of Habermas insist on calling him a media ecologist. Media ecology involves "the study of media environments and emphasizes the social, cultural, and psychological impact of media and technology" (Barnes and Strate, 1996:183). Drawing from the work of scholars such as Harold Innis (1951), Marshall McLuhan (1962, 1964), Walter Ong (1982), and Neil Postman (1985, 1992), media ecology studies the impact

of media forms on individuals and society, including political, economic, and social organization. Media ecology's diversity, breadth, and depth include social and cultural theory in conjunction with media as part of the ecology of communication as it embraces history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and psychology (Paul Grosswiler, 2001:23).

Media ecology's concept of media environments and Habermas's concept of public spheres as developed in his early-written but recently published book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), share some vital elements (Paul Grosswiler, 2001:119). Habermas's book on public sphere provides evidence for equating the bourgeois public sphere with media ecology's concept of print culture (Stevenson, Thompson, 1995). Habermas's bourgeois public sphere is primarily "private people come together as a public" who claimed they "regulated from above against the public authorities themselves" (Susen, 2011:39). Connecting the private realm to public authority, the three parts of the public sphere in the eighteenth century included the public sphere in the 'world of letters', composed of clubs and the press, "through which the vehicle of public opinion it [the public sphere] put the state in touch with the needs of society" (Habermas, 1962:31). According to most media ecologists, literate and print culture favors the linear, detached, abstract, rational and individual; on the other hand, print culture encourages individualism, nationalism, and democracy. All of these qualities are encompassed in Habermas's bourgeois public sphere, which is created primarily by the press and which furthers the critical-rational debate within the newly media-created space of civil society (Stevenson, Thompson, 1995).

2.3 Noam Chomsky

Chomsky establishes the role of media in terms of society, state and the public within the context of 'propaganda'. His theory is based on the presumption that neither media nor the public is independent, while Habermas puts media within the context of public, thereby assigning certain amount of agency to both media and public that is compromised only in a crisis situation. On the other hand, for Chomsky, media is not independent because it is market driven and conditioned by the vested interests of the political elite. Also, since there is an inter-relation between political and economic elite, media in turn is conditioned by political elite, i.e., the state as well. However, Chomsky warns against assuming that the propaganda model holistically denounces public participation at all levels in a state and

claims that it does not discard the possibility of the public to win against the elite at local and national levels.

According to Noam Chomsky, the role of media in contemporary politics forces us to ask what kind of a world or society do we live in, and in particular what kind of democracy do we desire for (Chomsky, 2002)? According to him, there are two different conceptions of democracy; one in which public participates in a meaningful way. It is in this type of democracy that people manage their own affairs, and the means of information are open and free. However, in reality, this kind of society is rarely seen. Thus, he talks about an alternate model of democracy where public must be barred from managing their affairs, and information must be kept narrowly and rigidly controlled. According to him, the second kind of democracy is in vogue and practiced worldwide. In this light, Chomsky's model of democracy is antithetical to Habermas's model of public sphere.

2.3.1 Media and Filters

In *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988), Chomsky and Edward S. Herman first suggested the propaganda model in which they described five editorially distorting filters applied to news reporting in mass media through which “money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public” (Chomsky and Herman, 1988:2).

These filters epitomize the interrelationships between media, politics, economy and society. The first filter relates to size, ownership and profit orientation. “The dominant mass-media outlets are large firms which are run for profit. Therefore, they must cater to the financial interest of their owners - often corporations or particular controlling investors. The size of the firms is a necessary consequence of the capital requirements for the technology to reach a mass audience. This filter relates to the privatized media houses” (Chomsky and Herman, 1988:306). The second filter is about the advertising license to do business relating economic and political elite to media. Since the majority of the revenue of major media outlets is derived from advertising (not from sales or subscriptions), advertisers have acquired a “de-facto licensing authority” (Chomsky, 1991:87). Media outlets are not commercially viable without the support of advertisers. News media must therefore cater to the political prejudices and economic desires of their advertisers. This has weakened the working-class press, for

example, and also helps explain the attrition in the number of newspapers (Chomsky, 1991:89). The third filter comes from sourcing mass media news. Information source for news is important to consider in terms of the issue of objectivity in news content. Herman and Chomsky argue that “the large bureaucracies of the powerful subsidize the mass media, and gain special access (to the news), by their contribution to reducing the media’s costs of acquiring and producing news” (1991:88). The fourth filter includes flak and the enforcers. Flak refers to negative responses to a media statement or program (e.g., letters, complaints, lawsuits, or legislative actions) or negative publicity of the media. Flak can be expensive to the media, either due to loss of advertising revenue, or due to the costs of legal defense or defense of the media outlet's public image. Flak can be organized by powerful, private influence groups (e.g., think-tanks), and the prospect of eliciting flak can be a deterrent to the reporting of certain kinds of facts or opinions (Chomsky, 1991: 89). The last filter refers to anti-communism. This was included as a filter in the original 1988 edition of the book, but Chomsky argues that since the end of the Cold War (1945–91), anti-communism was replaced by the “War on Terror” as the major social control mechanism.

Later, in his much celebrated book *Media Control* (2002), he mentioned about the American Government’s propaganda operations and how American President Woodrow Wilson changed his citizens’ mindsets towards the nation’s foreign policy right in the middle of the First World War. Here the question is, how and why, so quickly, could he turn the pacifist people of America into a hysterical, war mongering population which wanted to destroy Germans, go to war, and save the world. “Among those who participated actively and enthusiastically in Wilson’s war were the progressive intellectuals, who took great pride in having shown what they called the ‘more intelligent members of the community’, namely, themselves, who were able to drive the reluctant population into a war by terrifying them and eliciting jingoist fanaticism” (Chomsky, 2002:14). This clearly shows, irrespective of what the fact is, that state propaganda, when supported and backed by the ‘intelligent, educated’ classes, can have a big effect. In other words, Chomsky and Herman claim that state uses media for communicating its political propaganda to the public. Also, a question eventually comes as to who forms the intelligent mass; according to Chomsky they were the decision makers, writers, intellectuals, and the media. Further, propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state, as Chomsky (2002) opines. In a totalitarian or a military state, the leader holds a bludgeon over the citizen’s heads, and if they get out of line, he

smashes them over the head. But as society has become more free and ‘democratic’, one loses that capacity. Therefore, he has to turn the techniques of propaganda. The bludgeon, here representing the State and its immediate functionaries, uses the media to communicate its logic clear to the rest of the people, namely, the citizens. Thus, again, it is the common people who succumb to the ‘democratic dogmatisms’ as they fail to figure them out.

The propaganda model was envisaged largely with reference to the regularity with which the media operates on the basis of a set of ideological premises infused by the state, depends heavily and uncritically on elite information sources and participates in propaganda campaigns helpful to elite interests. In trying to explain why media performs in this way, they looked to structural factors as the only possible root of the systematic patterns of media behaviour and performance (Herman, 2000).

Political scientist Thomas Ferguson contends that the majority of the media, “controlled by large profit-maximizing investors, do not encourage the dissemination of news and analyses that are likely to lead to popular indignation and, perhaps, government action hostile to the interests of all large investors, themselves included” (Ferguson, 1995:400). Political scientist Ben Page notes that “the problem for public deliberation is most severe when officials of both parties and most mainstream media take positions that are similar to each other and opposed to the public” (Page, 1996:118). The propaganda model explains the “elite-mass gaps”, as well as elite and mainstream media hostility to this mode of analysis (Herman, 2000).

2.3.2 Propaganda Model: Structural Factors

By structural factors, Chomsky and Herman refer to the free market system and interrelation among media, politics and economy. The structural factors within which media is situated conditions the way the latter actually functions.

“The crucial structural factors of the propaganda model derive from the fact that the dominant media are firmly embedded in the market system. They are profit seeking businesses, owned by very wealthy people (or other companies); and they are funded largely by advertisers who are also profit-seeking entities, and who want their advertisements to appear in a supportive selling environment. The media also lean heavily on government and major business firms as information sources and both efficiency and political considerations and, frequently, overlapping interests, cause a certain degree of solidarity to prevail among the government,

major media and other corporate businesses. Government and large non-media business firms are also best positioned (and sufficiently wealthy) to be able to pressure the media with threats of withdrawal of advertising or TV licenses, libel suits and other direct and indirect modes of attack.”

Herman, 2000:102

These factors are linked together, facilitating the multi-leveled capability of government and powerful business entities and collectives to exert power over the flow of information. As mentioned already, the five factors involved are ownership, advertising, sourcing, task, and anti-communist ideology, and they work as filters through which information must pass, and that individually and often in a cumulative fashion they greatly influence media choices. Propaganda campaigns can occur only when they are consistent with the interests of those controlling and managing the filters.

The propaganda model never claims to explain everything or to illustrate media omnipotence and complete effectiveness in manufacturing consent. It is a model of media behavior and performance, not of media effects (Herman, 2000:105). It explicitly points to the existence of alternative media, grassroots information sources and public scepticism about media truthfulness as important limits on media effectiveness in propaganda service, and we urged the support and more vigorous use of the existing alternatives. Chomsky has pointed to the general public’s persistent refusal to fall into line with the media and elite over the morality of the state. We also emphasized on the fact that there are often differences within the elite that open up space for some debate and even occasional (but very rare) attacks on the intent as well as the tactical means of achieving elite ends (Herman, 2000:112).

2.3.3 Critique of the Propaganda Model

Many liberals and some academic media analysts of the left did not like the propaganda model. Many of the critiques displayed a barely concealed anger, and in most of them, the propaganda model was dismissed with a few superficial clichés, e.g., conspiratorial, simplistic, etc.

Propaganda model, though well received among the left, was also implicated as being pessimistic and hopeless. A closely related objection concerned its applicability to local conflicts, where the possibility of effective resistance was often greater than in the case of

national issues; but the propaganda model does not suggest that local and even larger victories are impossible, especially where the elites are divided or have limited interest in an issue (Herman, 2000). As a matter of fact, the model does suggest that the mainstream media, as elite institutions, commonly frames news and allows debate only within the parameters of elite perspectives; and that when the elite is really concerned and unified and/or when ordinary citizens are not aware of their own stake in an issue or are immobilized by effective propaganda, the media will serve elite interests uncompromisingly.

According to Herman (2000), one of the biggest claims of mainstream critics is that Chomsky and Herman do not take into account the possibility of independence of media houses and journalists. Such claims gathered popularity irrespective of the fact that *Manufacturing Consent* devotes several pages of the preface to an explicit rejection of conspiracy and an attempt to show that the propaganda model is best described as a “guided market system”. Herman further adds, “we went to great pains to show that our view is closer to a free market model; we argued that the media comprise numerous independent entities that operate on the basis of common outlooks, incentives, and pressures from the market, government, and internal organizational forces” (Herman, 2000). As Chomsky insists, “the propaganda model explains media behavior and performance in structural terms, and intent is an unmeasurable red herring. All we know is that the media and journalists often mislead in tandem—some no doubt internalize a propaganda line as true, some may know it is false, but the point is unknowable and unimportant” (Chomsky, 2002:109).

Next, a more sophisticated version of the last argument, put forward by communications professor Daniel Hallin, is that Chomsky and Herman failed to take account of the maturing of journalist professionalism, i.e., unbiased opinion of the journalists, which he claims to be “central to understanding how the media operates” (Hallin, 1994). Hallin also states that in protecting and rehabilitating the public sphere, “professionalism is surely part of the answer” (Hallin, 1994). However, as Hermann puts it:

“Professionalism and objectivity rules are fuzzy and flexible concepts and are not likely to override the claims and demands of deeper power and control relationships. Professionalism arose in journalism in the years when the newspaper business was becoming less competitive and more dependent on advertising. Professionalism was not an antagonistic movement by the workers against the press owners, but was actively encouraged by many of the latter. It

gave a badge of legitimacy to journalism, ostensibly assuring readers that the news would not be influenced by the biases of owners, advertisers, or the journalists themselves. In certain circumstances it has provided a degree of autonomy, but professionalism has also internalized some of the commercial values that media owners hold most dear, like relying on inexpensive official sources as the credible news source.”

Hermann, 2003:7

As Ben Bagdikian has noted, professionalism has made journalists oblivious to the compromises with authority they are constantly making (Bagdikian, 1987). Hallin himself acknowledges, moreover, that professional journalism can allow something close to complete government control through domination of sources (Hallin, 1994).

Thirdly, another set of criticism is at the heart of the negative reactions of the serious left-of-center media analysts such as Philip Schlesinger, James Curran, Peter Golding, Graham Murdock, and John Eldridge, as well as that of Daniel Hallin. They claim that the propaganda model is quite mechanical and functionalist and it ignores the existence of space, contestation and interaction. Schlesinger summarizes the elements of the propaganda model and discusses the evidence. He acknowledges that the case studies make telling points, but in the end he claims that they failed to explain the weights to be given our five filters; they did not allow for external influences, nor did they offer a “thoroughgoing analysis of the ways in which economic dynamics operate to structure both the range and form of press presentations” (Schlesinger, 1989).

Golding and Murdock criticize the model for its focus on “strategic interventions” that allegedly cause us to “overlook the contradictions in the system. Owners, advertisers and key political personnel cannot always do as they wish”. Analyzing “the nature and sources of these limits” is a “key task” of critical political economy (Golding and Murdock, 1991). To this criticism, Chomsky and Herman claim that strategic interventions certainly occur, but are of distinctly secondary importance. It is also untrue that the propaganda model implies no constraints on media owners and managers; it rather only recognizes and spells out the circumstances under which the media will be relatively open mainly, when there are elite disagreements and when other groups in society are interested in, informed about, and organized to fight about issues.

2.4 Relevance of Habermas and Chomsky in the Study

Precondition for the existence of public sphere as espoused by Habermas is independence and full access of the public to information, whereas Chomsky begins his theory by claiming that in actual situation in a democracy, public is barred from managing their affairs and information is highly controlled. Also, Chomsky considers the relation between media and economic elite from the beginning of the propaganda model, on the other hand, Habermas acknowledges media-economy merger only as part of the crisis in a democracy. However, for both Habermas and Chomsky, mechanism of political opinion formation is similar insofar as both contextualize media's role as communicator between information induced by the state and the public as receiving the news content. While information is travelling from the state to the public through media, for Habermas it takes the shape of polled opinion which translates eventually into public opinion, and for Chomsky it becomes propaganda. This difference is mainly due to the fact that Habermas considers media and public to be independent while Chomsky does not. This is also reflected in the fact that Chomsky contextualizes his theory of propaganda model in free market economy, while Habermas espouses that participation in public sphere is economically conditioned in terms of access to resources, social status, and cultural background. Also, Habermas's definition of the public is better nuanced than Chomsky.

Both Habermas and Chomsky (and Herman) deal with media, politics, and society, while exploring the role of media in the larger societal context. Both are interested in how media is informed by the other two actors while it also influences them. However, there are few distinct points of differentiation between their perspectives on media's role in society. Firstly, Habermas does not directly consider the economic issues of ownership and control of media. However, for Chomsky and Herman, political and economic conditions are the two most integral elements that influence media's functioning in a society. While Habermas identifies state or politics as crucial in constituting the public sphere, he does not include the economic factor as directly as Chomsky. In the study in context, relationship between media, politics, and economy is crucial. This research deals with the role of media manifested through mediated buzzwords published in newspapers. To begin with, the newspapers under consideration are privately owned. Therefore, they thrive in free market economy in tune with the model espoused by Chomsky. Next, privatization of media implies presence of big

corporates owning the media houses. Many of them also have political ambitions. As a result, a certain interaction between the economic, political, and media elites emerge in the Indian media market. As opined by Chomsky, such interrelationships have potential for editorial compromise of news dissemination.

Secondly, and most importantly, Habermas allows agency to media and the public while he considers the state to be independent. This is further pronounced in the way he differentiates between published opinion and polled opinion. Published opinion, as he suggests, generates from state machineries like parliaments and bureaucracy. On the other hand, polled opinion generates from the convergence between information disseminated by the media and received and processed by the public. Published and polled opinion together come to constitute public sphere. In this light, Habermas considers the state to be an independent factor, while media and public (society) interact to construct a part of the public sphere. In this regard, this study draws heavily from Habermas. Media in India is independent. As a matter of fact, it is termed as the fourth pillar of democracy. Traditionally, newspapers in India have always played an adversarial role in evaluating the state machinery, e.g., during Emergency (1975-77) when press was gagged, many newspapers continued writing and some would come up with blank pages, but printing the newspapers nevertheless. Also, being the biggest democracy in the world, a massive amount of political agency lies in the hand of the public who cast their vote on the basis of dissemination of news in newspapers and news channels. In this light, this study, like Habermas also states, begins with the assumption that both media and the public are independent. However, as the study progresses and the research findings unfold, Chomsky gathers relevance. Chomsky's propaganda model suggests a direct relationship between state and politics, economy, and media. As a matter of fact, the propaganda model suggests that society is only a receiver of information strictly conditioned by politics and economy often working as a diffused entity. In other words, not only does politics and economy condition media's dissemination of information, they often pair up with each other for doing so. In this light, the propaganda model denies any agency to the public or society, unlike Habermas. In India, within the context of privatized media and political ambition of the media owners, such trends have been visible and noted in the study. In this light, media sometimes become a part of the overall politico-economic power play, especially before an election. This claim has been established with further details in the study with the help of frequency and pattern of dissemination of buzzwords by the newspapers. It was found that certain newspapers would

popularize certain buzzwords, especially those with strong political connotations to the exclusion of certain others. Consequently, following Chomsky, this study also finds that economy and politics at some level enjoy more agency than public and the media.

Thirdly, in addition to five filters mentioned in Chomsky's propaganda model, this study introduces a sixth filter within the Indian context, namely, anti-Islam. Specifically within the context of the present BJP-led government at the centre, anti-Islamic sentiment of the people in general and media in particular is on the rise in India. In this light, the study identifies it as the sixth filter relevant in the Indian context. The sixth filter has been identified while categorising the mediated buzzwords popularized by the newspapers in context that exhibit strong anti-Islamic sentiments. This has been discussed further in the concluding chapter.

Fourthly, one of the criticisms that Chomsky and Herman met with has been that they do not recognize the independence and professionalism of the journalists. Within the Indian context, it is primarily the media houses for which the journalists work that insist more upon professionalism than the individual journalists themselves. Since the journalists are bound by the editorial policies of the media houses, the threshold of their independence and professionalism are also conditioned and often curtailed.

Next, participation of the public in the decision-making process of the state that is epitomized in electoral politics is the defining premise within which both the two theories under review are situated. In similar lines, the study under context also depends heavily on the participation of the public. Although it might sound contradictory that this research on one hand gives prerogative to public participation, and on other hand recognizes the lack of agency enjoyed by the public, it can be claimed that within the structural factors that Chomsky ascertains, this study holds that the electorate in India enjoys participation in electoral processes before an election. To prove this point, this study draws directly from Habermas's understanding of public sphere and argues that India is characterized with a strong presence of public sphere in which media (newspapers) plays a massive role in both directly and indirectly shaping political public opinion of the electorate.

Consequently, it can be ascertained that the study under context begins with assumptions close to Habermas, and later with the progress of the study, towards the conclusion, finds Chomsky more relevant. In this light, public sphere as the focus of media for generating public opinion is the point of beginning of the study, and it is only with the findings unfolding

that Chomsky's propaganda model becomes important. This is largely due to the fact that the media's close association with politics and economy is not new in India. By the sheer virtue of media as an institution, it has remained integral to political and economic functioning in the state. However, the role of media can potentially be influenced only when there is a relationship of interest between media and the other two actors. Such trends have been observed in the study by studying the nature, visibility and pattern of dissemination of the mediated buzzwords. Also, for studying the role of media in electoral politics, it is crucial to define 'public'. Here, this study is heavily indebted to Habermas. In the line of Habermas, this study also considers the public to be informed and participatory in nature; just a mere cluster of electorate does not constitute the public.

In this light, it can be claimed that this study considers Habermas's ideal type of public sphere independence of the public and media, and gradually comes to acknowledge a situation in an actual type of social democratic welfare state where media and public are conditioned by political and economic factors. At the third stage, as the idea of public sphere gives way to a larger propaganda model, and the tripartite relationship between media, politics, and economy vis-a-vis the electorate (representing society) becomes more complicated, this study falls more on Chomsky.

This study lays the foundation by positioning the mediated buzzwords (media) in relation to the electorate (society). Like McQuail's theoretical framework for media theories, the study initiates the relation between media and society that is carried forward and proliferated later. Also, like Habermas, the study provides agency to media as a crucial facilitator of the electoral process and also one of the most important deciding factors in its outcome. Keeping the state and political elements aside, this chapter largely deals with the dynamics within media as disseminating and popularizing the buzzwords in massive frequency within a short span of seven months before General Election 2014 that have the potential of influencing the political preference of the electorate. Next, the study brings in media and society (public) together to identify which buzzwords received maximum popularity. Next, in the study, Chomsky's propaganda model can be directly linked to the issue of manufacture of news that deals with the issue of manufacture of news by the media houses. The most important element in this chapter is to identify which buzzwords were popularized more by which media house in context, whether the selection of buzzwords correspond with certain patterns of political preference even if tacitly projected by the media houses, and if those patterns have any

relation with the ownership of the concomitant media houses. In other words, this chapter largely takes into account the issue of state and economy conditioning dissemination of information by the media through its study of mediated buzzwords popularized before General Election 2014 in India. Unlike the propaganda model that establishes a direct link between ownership of media houses and political parties, thereby linking state and economy and directly affecting media and its functioning, this study does not draw a direct link implicating specific media houses to specific political parties. This is largely due to the fact that the propaganda model is developed with reference to American media and politics, where media houses have open political affiliation. However, in India, this relationship is rather tacit and indirect. Therefore, it is neither feasible nor ethical as a researcher to presume such relationships between media, politics, and economy in India. Therefore, the buzzwords have been identified and analyzed instead to introduce the possibility of a pattern of state-economy inter-relation affecting the media. Next, this study finds Habermas's concept of public sphere relevant for discussing the influence of the mediated buzzwords among the electorate (society) conditioned by the overall political opinion formation generated within public spheres today. It does not consider a gathering of public as public sphere, as often warned by Habermas, rather captures opinion of thinking and informed public. The concept of public sphere is also relevant here in the Indian context because a large number of voters are illiterate, and as a result, cannot read newspapers themselves. Their political opinions are largely formed through participation on the public sphere. In this light, the concept of public sphere helps in understanding the extent to which mediated buzzwords influence political opinion formation of the electorate before General Election 2014 in India.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter relooks at the theories and concepts relevant for the study. As mentioned already, the major tenet of the study is to explore and estimate the role of mediated buzzwords as affecting the electoral process, namely, General Election 2014 in India. This corresponds with three major elements, i.e., media, politics, and society. Concomitantly, the theories discussed here also largely revolve around these three factors. Therefore, the aim of the chapter is to analyze the existing theories and their relevance in the study within the larger context as laid down by McQuail's understanding of the gamut of media theories. However, it is important to note that while this chapter identifies the temperament of the study akin to society centric approaches as against media centric approaches, it does not undermine the

agency of media and its inner dynamic as major facilitators for electoral politics. In other words, society centric approach has been a deliberate choice for analyzing media's role and influence in General Election 2014 within the broader context that includes two other integral elements of an election, namely, politics and electorate (society). In this light, the society centric approach is a preference over the media centric approach since the latter only deals with media content and functions without the corresponding relations with politics and society. Therefore, the focus of the study enables the choice of theoretical perspective, without any deliberate or tacit attempt at undermining the dynamism that media as an institution portrays.

Lastly, this study also entails the concept of power elite espoused by Pareto and Mosca (1939), and later by Mills (1956). Concepts like political, economic and media elite have been brought into the study only in Chapter IV that deals with the issue of media ownership and if it affects editorial policy of the media houses. Since power elite does not cover the entire study but only finds relevance briefly in Chapter IV, it is not discussed here; instead it will be discussed later in the relevant chapter.

Chapter III

Mediated Buzzwords and Issues

This chapter deals with the first research question of the study i.e. what were the mediated buzzwords and issues during the General Elections of 2014 in India? Here, the researcher lays the foundation of the study on mediated buzzwords which begins with identification of them and in later chapters deals with their impacts. Theoretically, this chapter begins at the level of Habermas's ideal type in which media is treated as a social institution, disseminating mediated buzzwords, bereft of influences from state and economy. Consequently, the focus here is to identify the buzzwords and explain their socio-political meanings and contexts. Why these buzzwords are generated by newspapers and what function do they perform are dealt with in the next chapters. In other words, in accordance with Habermas' ideal type of public sphere, media disseminates buzzwords with reference to their socio-political relevance of the time. Also, in an ideal type, media's role during election is that of a watch dog i.e. media as the fourth pillar of democracy functions independently in the society in its own merit and disseminates news and mediated buzzwords for the readers. Consequently, both Habermas and this chapter hypothesize that media's role in politics in terms of disseminating buzzwords is not influenced by any other factor namely state and economy.

The political milieu of a country before a national election is generally characterized with several issues, agenda and buzzwords. Most of the time, these are generated by the political parties through their manifestos and made popular by the media or coined by the media itself in view of the political climate and wind change before the election. In this light, assessment

of media's role vis-a-vis an election ought to begin with identification of such buzzwords and issues and their analysis. In this chapter, mediated buzzwords and issues within the context of General Election 2014 in India will be identified through secondary analysis of newspapers and analyzed.

Although the political climate of a country is perpetually brewing with multiple issues of national concern, six to seven months just before the election is considered to be the most politically ripe period. As discussed in the previous chapters, the entire country had turned into a political hot-bed before General Election in June, 2014 – the buzzwords had started doing the rounds in newspapers, news channels, and social media; political parties were issuing their agenda and increasingly engaging in political debates with each other; and the voters had gradually started making their decisions as to whom to elect as India's next Prime Minister. Within this context, a period of seven months between November 2013 and mid of May 2014 (till election happened) has been chosen as the time period to identify the buzzwords and issues. Next, these mediated buzzwords and issues were identified through secondary analyses of six newspapers in terms of their circulation, territorial significance and linguistic relevance⁴¹:

They are mentioned as follows⁴²:

- The Times of India – Biggest circulated English daily all over India
- The Hindu – Biggest circulated English daily in the Southern part of India
- The Telegraph – Biggest circulated English daily in the Eastern part of India
- Dainik Jagran – Biggest circulated Hindi daily all over India
- Hindustan Dainik – Hindi daily with second biggest circulation
- Ananda Bazar Patrika – Biggest circulated Bengali daily in India

3.1 Identification of Mediated Buzzwords

Choice of buzzword for understanding media's role in politics is closely linked to the issue of media-politics-economy interrelationship and private ownership of media houses by the corporate. Because newspapers are owned by the corporate or business tycoons who represent

⁴¹ More have been discussed on each of the newspapers in the next chapter.

⁴² The newspapers were chosen on the basis of Audit Bureau of Circulation July-December, 2013 Report. <http://www.auditbureau.org/news/view/17>

the country's economic and often political elite, manufacture of news is a part of the propaganda that many of the media houses run before elections. Mediated buzzwords constitute an integral part of that propaganda because it is only through such buzzwords that a newspaper can popularize a certain political party and their manifesto among the electorate.

Here, the researcher will illustrate on a study conducted on the role of media during elections in Nigeria. It is elaborate in the book titled "Media Role in African Changing Electoral Process" (2013) edited by Cosmas Uchenna Nwokefor and Kehbuma Langmia. Nwokefor writes that media upholds political candidates and campaigns for them through slogans. Media would disseminate slogans related to the candidates they would like to win repeatedly till the voters are convinced of the potentiality of the candidate to be the next head of the state. In an article titled "Media Power in Elections" Nwokefor (p. 47) writes, "Generally media's role in politics is to mislead the public. Garret (2010) in support of the role media plays today in elections stated thus, 'The current role of media in politics seems intent on misleading the public into a particular way of thinking, which is further described as propaganda. As a propaganda tool, the media's sole purpose during political campaigns is to get candidates of their choice elected into power. In so doing, they consistently mislead the electorate'." Nwokefor adds "Nigeria's media landscape has always been broadcast...slogans...such as 'Change we can believe in', 'If I can make it presidency of Nigeria, you can also make it'. These slogans elicit emotion from the public and make them identify and empathize with the candidate. The media capitalize on a slogan and run it as often as possible until it becomes not only what people think but also what they should think about. In view of creating an image out of candidate of their choice, the media makes everything possible to present this candidate as the one to beat and in doing so hide any negative issues about the candidate". This study and the observations have strong resemblance with the situation in India that constitutes my work. What the author refers to as slogans are close to mediated buzzwords that are generated by the newspapers on the basis of the issues present before an election and the potential prime ministerial candidate. It has been found in my study that mediated buzzwords referring to Narendra Modi and the BJP were the most popular buzzwords before General Elections 2014 in India. In a similar fashion to what Nwokefor observes in Nigeria, my study reveals that these buzzwords coined and popularized by those media houses like the Times of India and Hindustan Dainik who are specifically owned by big corporate and have clear pro-establishment stand.

Therefore, choice of buzzword, as mentioned in the beginning has been a conscious decision as it is linked to the overall issue of ownership of media houses in India today.

Next, few other important studies have also happened in recent years on mediated buzzwords.

In “Buzzwords in Politics?” Dr. Viera Zuborova (Slovakia, *Journal for Universal Excellence*, September, 2015) argues that buzzwords growing out of political discourses shape communications in national politics. She adds that the scientific or modern term, which described these words, is “buzzwords”, deviated from jargon or neologism. But we can still observe that there is missing a complex definition and typology that is related to the world of the buzzwords, which are more often used by the journalist or some analysts that are describing the world of politics.

Next, in China, Quin Gang, (“Guidance, Supervision, Reform, Freedom: Plotting the Direction of Chinese Media through an Analysis of the All Important Buzzword”, China Media Project, University of Hong Kong, Posted on 13.07.2005) writes about three buzzwords and their relative frequencies between 1994 and 2004. These buzzwords were used by the Chinese people to understand the changes in Chinese media over the decade. Here not just the author studies changes in Chinese media as perceived by the Chinese people, he also applies similar methodology as I used in my study i.e. understanding the impact of buzzwords through their frequency of appearances over a period of time.

Lastly, Gabrielle Grow and Janelle Ward (“The Role of Authenticity in Electoral Social Media Campaign”, *First Monday*, April, 2013). Here look at authenticity as a buzzword and its influence on electoral politics in the USA. They tried to investigate whether authenticity as a buzzword influence the voter’s political opinion formation. Voters were interviewed and asked questions in relation their perceptions of authenticity regarding political candidates.

In this study, mediated buzzwords were selected from the headlines⁴³ of the news reports mainly from first and Nation pages of the newspapers. Buzzwords were identified from the headlines as it was found during pilot study that in most occasions the readers look at the headlines and often do not read the news content in detail; as a result, in a newspaper, it is the headlines that the readers remember the most. The following buzzwords were identified after secondary analysis of the newspapers within the mentioned period. They were identified as

⁴³ Advertisements were not part of secondary analysis

mediated buzzwords to the exclusion of other issues in terms of their frequency of appearances within the mentioned period of seven months (November 2013 to May 2014):

- NaMo
- Gujarat Model of Development
- Corruption
- Chai pe Charcha (Debate over Tea)
- Hindutva
- Narendra Modi Nicknames
- Personal Profile of Politicians
- Dynasty Politics
- Minority Appeasement
- Lokpal (Ombudsman Bill)
- Corporate-Politico Connection
- Gujarat Riot
- Rahul Gandhi Nicknames
- Ab Ki Bar / Modi Sarkar (This time / Modi Government)
- Common Man

The buzzwords mentioned above were further constituted with concomitant issues that will be mentioned and discussed in the following section. This chapter will analyze each of the buzzwords in terms the frequency with which they appeared in the newspapers within the following contexts:

- What does the buzzword stand for?
- Political context of the buzzword
- Buzzword analysis

3.2 Analyses of Mediated Buzzwords

3.2.1 NaMo

Table 1: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
NaMo	25	9	2	15	22	3	76

‘NaMo’ stands for Narendra Modi, the present Prime Minister of India. It was a mediated buzzword generated and disseminated by newspapers and news channels before General Election 2014 in India. NaMo surfaced in the media around the mid of 2013 and continued to dominate headlines till the election in May 2014. Taking the first two initials from Narendra Modi’s name, NaMo tops the chart of mediated buzzwords before 2014 general elections in India. It is arguably one of the most successful populist buzzwords that was fed into the public memory in the recent political history in India. This was the first time a political candidate was given a nickname and popularised massively. NaMo also captures the quintessential world view of the Bharatiya Jatana Party (BJP) and its mother body Rashtriya Seva Sangh (RSS). BJP and RSS stand for establishing and protecting Hinduism in India. They are strictly anti-Islamic and strongly believe in making India a Hindu state. In its political history, BJP has remained directly associated with various Hindu-Muslim riots, the one involving the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 being the most talked about. In addition, Narendra Modi himself became the centre-stage of the Gujarat riots in 2002. Although the Supreme Court of India gave him a clean chit, releasing him of all allegations of triggering the riot and its devastating aftermath, Modi’s name still remains entangled with it. During his prime ministerial campaigns, Modi made deliberate attempts at disengaging himself from the religious connotation of Hinduism propagated by BJP and RSS. However, being christened by the media as NaMo brought into light other implications. Politically speaking, NaMo upheld Narendra Modi’s candidature as the prime ministerial candidate and popularised his political capability through an easy and catchy nickname. In view of multiplicity of languages that Indian voters speak, NaMo is easy for them all to pronounce. Therefore, it was envisaged as being a rhythmic, easy-to-remember, and catchy household

name for Modi. Apart from its political implications, NaMo also bears a socio-religious implication. In Sanskrit, one of the oldest languages spoken in India almost only by the Hindu upper castes, NaMo means to pay homage to gods. In this light, the term not only has a religious but also a caste-related undertone. Therefore, NaMo as a term generated by the media aimed at embodying the religious worldview of the BJP centered around Hindusim and upper caste Bramhanical hardline.

Within this larger political context of NaMo, let us analyze its presence in the newspapers. In the table above, it can be seen that between November 2013 and May 2014, NaMo surfaced 76 times in the seven newspapers under review. Among all the buzzwords and issues identified, NaMo has the highest presence. Unlike many other buzzwords which appeared only towards the end of the campaign or at the beginning of the campaign, with rapid disappearance thereafter, NaMo has been a consistent buzzword throughout the period under review. Let us look at the newspapers, in terms of each of their frequencies of generating NaMo.

Times of India leads the chart with NaMo appearing 25 times in 7 months. NaMo appeared on its pages every month apart from February and November. In March and April, only two months from elections, it appeared as many as 7 and 8 times, respectively. Twice it appeared on the first page in March and once in April, at other times appearing on the Nation page. What is noteworthy is that even when Modi was denounced and criticized by opposition leaders, he was referred to as NaMo and not Modi. After Times of India, NaMo made maximum appearances in Hindustan Dainik – 22 times in 7 months. Also, its average rate of appearance is better than Times of India. On the other hand, like Times of India, NaMo also appeared in Hindustan Dainik the most in March and April, 5 times each. However, unlike the former, here NaMo appeared more consistently – 2 times in each of May and December, 4 times in January, thrice in February, and 1 time in November. In Dainik Jagran, NaMo came 15 times altogether. It appeared thrice in May, 4 times each in March and April, 3 times in February, 2 times in January, and 1 time in November. Therefore, like the other two newspapers, it appears the most in March and April; it does not make any appearance in December. In April, it appeared once in page 1 coupled with a strong visual imagery of Modi wearing a regional headgear. This was one of the most innovative and populist ways of political campaigns by Modi, aiming for identification with region-specific voters. In March, NaMo appeared twice on page 1; one of the headlines called Modi as ‘Bhagirath’ along with

NaMo. This has a Hindu undertone as Bhagirath is a Hindu mythological king who brought River Ganges from heaven to earth. In the Telegraph, NaMo appeared 9 times in 7 months. Unlike the other newspapers, it appeared the most in February and December, and did not appear in November. In the rest of the months, it appeared only once every month. However, what is crucial is in spite of not making grand appearances like the formers, it appeared almost every month in The Telegraph. Also, The Telegraph published a news report mentioning Modi as NaMo with a headline “After Modi Who? If not PM What? The BJP feels May 16 Outcome is Just a Formality but Some Indeed Asking an Unlikely Question in Gujarat”. While the election is still happening and 2 phases of elections are still pending, such headlines are suggestive and presumptuous of Modi being elected as the Prime Minister. Even in its comparative under-representation in terms of other newspapers, NaMo appeared 4 times on page 1 of The Telegraph. Ananda Bazar Patrika, being the highest circulated Bengali daily in the eastern part of India, generated NaMo only thrice in 7 months. It appeared 1 time for each of May, April, March and February. It never appeared on the first page. NaMo had the lowest frequency of appearance in The Hindu. It appeared once in each of March and February. In both occasions it appeared in the context of Modi’s innovative ways of political campaigns – NaMo-themed mobile ringtones and fish stalls. Also, both news reports came in the first page, one with a negative connotation for NaMo as the ringtone campaign being a failure and the other one reporting that the fish stalls might be a success since they were modelled after NaMo-themed tea stalls that gained huge popularity.

3.2.2 Gujarat Model of Development⁴⁴

Table 2: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Gujarat Model of Development	18	8	11	19	12	6	74

⁴⁴ Including Development and Toffee Model

The term ‘Gujarat Model’ was introduced by the BJP and then Chief Minister of Gujarat Mr. Narendra Modi during the 2007 Assembly Elections. Along with this, few other buzzwords, including Development, Brand Modi, and Toffee Model also gained popularity. Here, these buzzwords are discussed in direct relation to Gujarat Model since they were generated by the newspapers along with the former within similar reference point. Table 2 refers to all these five buzzwords termed together as Gujarat Model of Development and shows their total frequency in each of the newspapers under review.

Gujarat Model of Development first made its appearance in December 2013, and as the election time progressed, it became one of the most frequently used terms in the newspapers as well as among the voters. The term showcases the industrial and social growth of Gujarat during the tenure of Modi as the chief minister of the state. ‘Gujarat Model’ was used by BJP in its campaign during the 2014 General Election with Modi as the Prime Ministerial candidate. The term has been used primarily to hail Gujarat’s business friendliness. The model depicts a picture of a welfare state. Gujarat under Modi had developed a good relationship with the business class of India, and thus became one of the most investor friendly states in India. The level of bureaucratic hassle was claimed too low and the state’s land policy was such that it became relatively easy for the investors to invest in the state. Along with this, the state got maximum political stability. All these characteristics made the ‘Gujarat Story’ successful. During Modi’s chief ministerial tenure, Gujarat, which was overall an under-developed region in the country, grabbed media eyeballs for its fast growth rate and pockets of highly-industrialized zones. Another feature of the Gujarat Model was the balance between industrialization and agriculture. In India, there was always a missing link between the agrarian era with the industrial era, and many regarded Gujarat as the missing link between the two. ‘Gujarat Model’ was termed as a ‘Toffee Model’ (discussed later) by the Congress led UPA-II; however, BJP claimed that it was an ‘Agricultural Turnout Model’. However, many economists termed it as an epitome of ‘crony capitalism’.

Within the larger context, India is one of the emerging economies in Asia, next to China. However, India’s growth rate had not been encouraging during the UPA-II tenure. On the other hand, Gujarat showcased, in spite of the riot in 2002, a promising growth rate coupled with fast industrial development. BJP cashed in on this during its campaign before General Election 2014 with Narendra Modi (the then Chief Minister of Gujarat) as its prime ministerial candidate. BJP promised good governance and development for the entire nation,

as it was already projected and apparently proved by applying the ‘Gujarat Model of Development’.

The term ‘Gujarat Model of Development’ surfaced 50 times in the 6 newspapers under review between November 2013 and May 2014. Among all the buzzwords under review, ‘Gujarat Model of Development’ has the third highest presence after NaMo and Hindutva. The term appeared in all 7 months, except January. Let us look at the newspapers under review, in terms of each of their frequencies of generating ‘Gujarat Model of Development’.

Times of India leads the chart with 19 appearances in 7 months. Gujarat Model made the highest appearance in Times of India. In April 2014, ‘Gujarat Model of Development’ appeared 10 times, including thrice as front page news. In majority of the times, it appeared in relation to Narendra Modi pitching in his candidature with success stories of the Gujarat Model as the ultimate roadway for India’s growth mechanism. In other cases, Gujarat Model came under heavy criticism of the Congress, including Rahul Gnadhi, who claimed that Haryana, one of the most backward states in India, scored fairer in development index than Gujarat. Time and again, the Congress mocked the Gujarat Model as the ‘Toffee Model’. In February, it appeared twice on the Nation page. Aam Aadmi Party criticized Gujarat Model as inadequate and an eyewash. After Times of India, Gujarat Model appeared the most in **Dainik Jagran, 18 times**. In May, it appeared twice, preceded by April (8 times); in December, it appeared only once. In May, both the times, Gujarat Model was referred to by the opposition parties as ‘suicidal’; the Congress also claimed that Gujarat was in reality drowned in debt. In April, Gujarat Model made front page news twice; in most of the occasions the Congress, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, termed Gujarat Model as not farmer-friendly, as a Toffee Model and worse than Nitish Kumar’s Model of Development for Bihar. On the other hand, it also appeared twice as Modi’s trump card in the election. Gujarat Model appeared once in December with a positive note with Modi promising India a holistic development like Gujarat. **In Hindustan Dainik, Gujarat Model appeared 12 times altogether – twice in May, 6 times in April, thrice in March and once in February.** In most of the occasions, like other newspapers, it appeared in relation to the Congress attacking Modi’s model and Modi luring the voters with the model’s potential. **In The Hindu, Gujarat Model appeared 11 times altogether.** It appeared 4 times in April; it is noteworthy that it was the only time in this newspaper that Jayalalitha was also quoted to be criticizing the model, including the Congress. In March, it appeared twice where the AAP and CPI(M)

called the Gujarat Model all fake and a balloon waiting to burst. Gujarat Model appeared 8 times in The Telegraph. In May it appeared only once – while the election was still going on, it made front page news with a tagline of ‘Super-Modi Mix’. In April, it appeared 5 times, out of which it made front page news once. Apart from appearing in relation to Congress’s criticism and Modi’s magic wand for win, news reports related to Gujarat Model had strong suggestion that Modi is going to be the next Prime Minister; in another report, a Muslim voter was quoted praising the Gujarat Model and opining that he will vote for Modi. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it appeared total 6 times with twice each in April, March, and February. Here, Mamata Banerjee was quoted twice to be claiming that West Bengal was doing better than Gujarat; also, the Gujarat riot was linked once with the state to implicate the model as a lie.

In connection to the Gujarat Model, few further mediated buzzwords were disseminated by the newspapers under review, such as Development, Toffee Model, and Brand Modi.

Modi was known to have transformed Gujarat from a barren land into a land of wealth and prosperity in just one decade. During the election campaign, development became a major issue as India was struggling under little or no development. Modi with a success story in the form of Gujarat Model and had the voters’ faith who felt that he could develop India. The UPA in its two-year term of governance had failed to deliver, and with media highlighting Modi’s achievements vis-a-vis development in Gujarat, Indian voters felt hopeful. However, after Modi, Congress also picked it up as an agenda for the party. In The Times of India, it appeared 5 times, with BJP claiming that their government will focus on development and decentralization and making statements like “secularism is development”. In The Hindu, it appeared twice, with Modi claiming that Congress remembers the poor only before an election, and SUCI mocking the national party's development plans. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 6 times altogether with Rahul Gandhi claiming that only Congress could bring in development, Modi preferring development as an agenda for election to Hindutva, Modi assuring the share market of the sensex going up, and Modi urging the nation to bring about a change in the political system by welcoming his government. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared once with Rahul Gandhi questioning Modi’s developmental plan and claiming that the latter’s underlying agenda is only for Hindutva.

‘Toffee Model’ was coined against Modi’s ‘Gujarat Model of Development’. All other parties, including Congress and Aam Aadmi Party openly expressed their scepticism and

challenged Modi's economic model. They often called Gujarat's development a toffee model, and thereby of no value. Also, the term 'Toffee Model' is a sarcastic metaphor for almost free land given by the Gujarat Government led by Modi to industrialist Gautam Adani at a very low price. The main allegation against the Modi Government in Gujarat was that they gave away acres after acres of land to the industrialists at a throwaway price, which led to bigtime suffering of the underclass and poor people. In *The Hindu*, it appeared 4 times when Rahul Gandhi, and other Congress leaders, and Kejriwal, called Gujarat's development a toffee model of development. In *Dainik Jagran*, it appeared once within the context of Congress claiming that Modi's economic policy is only for the big corporate honchos like Adani and nothing for the common people.

With reference to Brand Modi, during 2014 elections the unique phenomenon was corporatization of Narendra Modi's campaign, where he himself turned into a commodity which was marketed by the industrial lobby and their media, supported by the political strength of BJP and Hindutva agenda of the RSS. In this situation, the Indian media coined the term 'Brand Modi' where the whole election campaign was a kind of branding by expert marketing community. Never before in Indian political history had 'individual branding' been seen. In 2004 elections, after completing a 5-year term, the Vajpayee led BJP government had coined the phrase 'India Shining'; they tried the same with the Indian election market, which backfired. However, in 2014 Elections, BJP triumphed by branding, especially branding an individual named Narendra Modi. In *The Times of India*, it made headlines when Modi was reported to be popular among urban young voters, especially for his technological engagements during poll campaign. In *Dainik Jagran*, it appeared with reference to Modi being called a Tiger and Modi's face coming on the cover of mobile phones to clothes. In *Hindustan Dainik*, it made appearance twice in April in relation to how business honchos and the corporate world were admiring Modi for his pro-development agenda.

3.2.3 Corruption⁴⁵

Table 3: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Corruption	14	8	14	20	12	3	71

One of the biggest problems that India was facing, apart from poverty, was corruption, especially during the UPA-II rule. In this light, Corruption became one of the most popular among the mediated buzzwords before General Election 2014 in India. CoalGate, 2G Scam and Black money were the three buzzwords that became highly visible vis-a-vis Corruption. In Table 3, Corruption in general has been presented together with these three associated buzzwords.

According to Transparency International's latest survey⁴⁶, India ranks 85th out of 175 countries in the scale of corruption. The Transparency International scale also says that in India 45% of people have first-hand experiences of paying bribes to get a job done in the government sector. Political parties were often found imbued in corruption, viz., the Bofors Scandal or the Coal or 2G scam. In their second term, the UPA Government came under media attention because of two major corruption charges against them – 2G Scam and Coal Scam (CoalGate as media coined). These two charges against the Congress-led UPA government eventually gave rise to corruption as one of the biggest agenda of the opposition parties vis-a-vis the Congress. Corruption as both an issue and a buzzword received massive media coverage and popular support. In fact, the Aam Aadmi Party was started with the basic tenet of eradicating corruption from Indian politics.

Dainik Jagran leads the chart with 20 appearances of this buzzword in 7 months followed by Times of India, The Hindu and Hindustan Dainik. In The Telegraph, in April, 'Corruption' made headlines in relation to Modi's business links with big corporates, the Congress's defense of Robert Vadra, Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law, demand for Lokpal Bill, and Kejriwal calling all other parties as corrupt and claiming himself to be a 'Fakir'. In December,

⁴⁵ Including 2G, CoalGate and Black Money

⁴⁶ <https://www.transparency.org/country/#IND>

it appeared in connection with Modi's business and Rahul Gandhi's defense of the UPA-II. In The Hindu, 'corruption' as a buzzword was consistently seen between January and April. It appeared vis-a-vis Modi's business, Modi questioning Vadra's 'quick rise model' and the Aam Aadmi Party proclaiming their zero tolerance policy for corruption. In Dainik Jagran, in April, it appeared 4 times in relation to the AAP promising a corruption free India, Vadra's corrupt businesses, and Rahul Gandhi claiming Modi to be corrupt. In February, it came in the front page when Kejriwal called Rahul Gandhi corrupt, and in December the big news was Rahul Gandhi's acknowledgement that corruption was indeed one of the biggest challenges in the current scenario of Indian politics. It appeared as headlines when Modi claimed that he would bring back all the black money from Swiss Bank accounts, should he be elected as the Prime Minister, business school graduates demanding a corruption-free political system, and Manish Sisodia from the Aam Aadmi Party implicating the Congress to be corrupt. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, 'corruption' as a buzzword appeared thrice altogether. In April, it appeared twice in relation to Modi's promise of tracking down the black money source and Priyanka Gandhi defending husband Robert Vadra. Also, like in Dainik Jagran, in December, corruption made headlines with Rahul Gandhi acknowledging it as a political menace in India. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared once in March in relation to Modi's 'bring back black money' promise. In connection to Corruption, few further mediated buzzwords were disseminated by the newspapers under review, including 2G Scam, CoalGate, and Black Money.

India is considered a mining paradise; the states earn a huge amount of revenue on the basis of coal allocations. A major scam in allocation of coal blocks in India happened between 2004 and 2009. Media coined the term 'CoalGate' for referring to the Coal Scam. The term was essentially coined by The Times of India and other newspapers took after it. However, newspapers like The Hindu continued to refer to it as 'Coal Scam'. The term 'CoalGate' was inspired from the famous Water Gate Scandal which shook USA in the 1970s. The Comptroller Auditor General of India (CAG) office accused the Government of India of allocating coal blocks in an ineffective manner. BJP in 2012 lodged a complaint based on which CBI started its investigation to see if the distribution of coal block had any link with corruption. According to the allegations, both the Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) and private firms paid much less than what they would have otherwise and were party to the crime. CAG in its first draft noted that the gain was more than US\$170 billion. Many top

politicians and business tycoons were believed to be involved in the scam. CoalGate, along with 2G Scam, comprised two of the major corruption charges, especially against the UPA government just before the election. It appeared 20 times in total, with the highest rate of appearance in The Times of India and The Hindu. In The Times of India, it appeared thrice in May, including one front page appearance, and one time each in March and February. It mostly appeared in the Nation pages. In the Hindu, it appeared 6 times as well – 4 times in May and one time each in April and March respectively. In most of the occasions, it was referred to as ‘Coal Scam’. In Dainik Jagran, in April, it appeared thrice in terms of BJP targeting Congress of massive corruption and assuring the voters that corruption will be stopped at a bureaucratic level once they come to power. In May, it appeared thrice, including a front page news on a book released by Sanjay Baru, that claimed that the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could have avoided the scam. It also refers to the issue as a scam and not as ‘CoalGate’.

The 2G Scam was another example of corruption under the UPA II Government involving DMK, the Congress’s primary alliance to power in Delhi. The 2G scam or the 2G Spectrum scam was an Indian telecommunications scam which was political in nature involving top UPA leaders. Here, politicians and government officials undercharged mobile companies for frequency allocation licenses, which they turned to make 2G Spectrum subscriptions for mobile phones. A. Raja from DMK, who was in charge of the cabinet for Information and Technology, and Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, an MP from the same party, were arrested by the CBI. The scam involved huge amounts of money and the difference between the money collected and that mandated to be collected was estimated US\$28 billion by the Audit General of India. The scam was a facepalm moment for the Congress already reeling under pressure. With media highlights, 2G scam became a major issue during the Elections. It appeared 15 times in the newspapers under review between November 2013 and June 2014, apart from its frequent mentioning in the larger corruption debates. In The Times of India, in May, it appeared thrice and made straight to front page news in all the occasions. In one news report, 2G was rhymed with ‘Jijaji’ referring to Robert Vadra, Sonia Gandhi’s son-in-law, who was already implicated with corruption charges. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared altogether 4 times between February and May. Once it made front page news, with the BJP demanding that the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh should be interrogated by the CBI in relation to 2G Scam. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared 4 times in connection with A. Raja’s arrest and the

Congress's direct link to the scam. In The Hindu, it appeared twice, once in May and once in November, in relation to the Congress government being accused by BJP of not investigating enough into the scam.

Black money is a big menace in Indian economy since last few decades, with around billions of dollars stacked in either Swiss Banks or some other foreign banks. But the exact amount is still unknown even to the Government of India. The identities of the owners of the black money are also not revealed by the Government. On behalf of the Government of India, a list of names were placed in the Parliament, but no action has been taken yet. In the last election, black money was a big issue because the UPA Government could not do anything to solve this problem. Even the Government could not check the flow of tax-evaded money to Swiss or other foreign banks. In this situation, Narendra Modi as the Prime Ministerial candidate of BJP gave an assurance to the people during his election campaign that if he would come to power, he would bring back the entire black money from foreign banks and distribute it among the Indian people. Black money is a huge loss to the state exchequer and also a big obstacle to the country's development. Many sectors like health, education, housing, irrigation, etc. are suffering due to lack of Government funding. In this light, when the media started reporting on 'Black Money' and where it all went during the UPA-II tenure, Modi picked it up as one of his major agenda. 'Black Money' appeared 8 times in the newspapers under review in 7 months. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared altogether 7 times between March and May, 2014, during the peak election campaign period, in relation to the Congress leaders being accused of safeguarding black money holders, Modi attacking the UPA-II as imbued with corruption and black money, and Kapil Sibal alleging that Modi holds more black money himself. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared once in April with reference to SEBI trying to identify the black money holders.

3.2.4 Chai pe Charcha⁴⁷

Table 4: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Chai pe charcha	34	9	5	3	9	4	64

⁴⁷ Including Chaiwallah

Tea or Chai is a very popular drink in India. Political discussions over a cup of tea are very popular and seen in every corner of the country. In consonance with that, Chai pe Charcha and Chaiwallah became two highly popular mediated buzzwords before General Elections 2014 in India.

A translation of ‘Chai pe Charcha’ would mean ‘discussions over a cup of tea’. Tea stalls constitute the ‘public sphere’ of Habermas (2002), where political discussions take place, political opinions are formulated, and voting decisions are made. Before the 2014 General Elections it was revealed by media that Indian Prime Ministerial candidate Narendra Modi used to be a tea seller as a young man in the streets of Ahmedabad. The election campaign team of BJP connected the tea selling background of Modi with the country’s Chai culture. In every city, Modi started having discussions with voters as he candidly discussed his life and his plans for India’s future. Another highlight of ‘Chai pe Charcha’ was that the areas where he failed to be present personally, Modi made it a point to be present in front of the people through DTH, internet, and satellite TV. The turnout of ‘Chai pe Charcha’ ranged between huge and massive. Media picked this issue and gave a big coverage every time Modi interacted with the people.

‘Chai pe Charcha’ was one of the most popular buzzwords before General Election 2014. **It made 64 appearances in 7 months, led by The Times of India, followed by Hindustan Dainik, The Hindu, Ananda Bazar Patrika, Dainik Jagran, and The Telegraph.** Here, it appeared 34 times throughout the main election campaign period between January and April. It made appearances vis-a-vis Modi’s pan-India campaign from Trichi to Haryana, his use of technology to conduct conference calls at tea stalls, discussions especially focussing on women’s issues – an agenda Modi held dear, and free ‘Modi tea’ at selected tea stalls holding the campaign. After The Times of India, it made most appearances in Hindustan Dainik and The Telegraph. Like the former, it also appeared in Hindustan Dainik during the peak campaign season – January to April. In April and February, it appeared 3 times each, preceded by March when it appeared twice. In January it came in the newspaper once as the front page news. In The Telegraph, it appeared twice in March in relation to Modi’s focus on women’s empowerment, especially women from the north eastern part of India. It can be noted that women’s empowerment reportedly remained a major agenda for discussion during this campaign by Modi. Unlike the previous two newspapers, ‘Chai pe Charcha’ appeared in The Hindu only in February and March. In March, The Hindu came up with a news report on

how the Aam Aadmi Party started their campaign fashioned after Modi's 'Chai pe Charcha'. It also covered on 'Chai pe Charcha' of Modi in Kolkata and how West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee found it irrelevant. In February, Modi started exploring fish stalls for his campaigns, which made headline here. Like The Hindu, 'Chai pe Charcha' appeared only in February and March in Ananda Bazar Patrika. In March, it appeared once, mentioning Modi using 3D technology to reach out to the voters at tea stalls. In February, there were two reports that mentioned how RJD was trying to imitate Modi's tea stall political campaign strategy after it showed positive results. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared thrice – twice in March and once in January. In March, it made an appearance in relation to discussion over women's empowerment and Rahul Gandhi's answer to 'Chai pe Charcha' through Google Hangout. It is mentionworthy here that although Modi used technology to reach out to his voters at tea stalls, mention of Rahul Gandhi using Google Hangout bears a tacit implication towards the latter's elitism since it lacks the immediate 'common man' identification. Google Hangout, while quite popular among young urban middle class, misses out on the pan-India appeal of tea stalls. In this light, such reports undermine Rahul Gandhi's political campaigns and its success potentials vis-a-vis Modi.

In connection to Chai pe Charcha, few further mediated buzzwords were disseminated by the newspapers under review, including Chaiwallah. 'Chaiwallah' campaign was also a part of branding Narendra Modi to attract the common people of the country. Narendra Modi's father Damodarbai was a tea vendor in a small railway station in Gujarat where Modi worked for few years in his teenage before leaving home in search of god. In a poor country like India, where most of the top political leaders came from rich families, including the Nehrus and the Gandhis, BJP tried to portray Modi as an exception as he came from an economically backward family. It undoubtedly made Modi quite popular. In The Times of India, it appeared consistently from January to April during the entire campaign period. It made headlines, including some front page news coverage in relation to Modi's modest past and his rags-to-riches story of making it big in Indian politics. Such image building strategies are generally aimed at tickling the voters' sentiments and facilitating self identification with the leader. It made headlines in The Telegraph, including in May, April, and January, with reference to Modi discussing crucial issues of national concern in his 'Chai pe Charcha', emphasizing on his young days as an assistant at his father's tea stall.

3.2.5 Hindutva⁴⁸

Table 5: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Hindutva	20	9	7	13	9	6	64

‘Hindutva’ was definitely among the most popular buzzwords before General Election 2014, making appearances 64 times in 7 months. Along with Hindutva, another buzzword with similar temperament that became popular was Har Har Modi/Har Ghar Modi. In Table 5, they both have been presented together under Hindutva, largely because they both resonate a similar religious overtone.

The term Hindutva was coined by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who was known as the father of all Hindutavadi (Hinduism) organizations. According to Savarkar and then RSS leaders K.B. Hedgewar and M.S. Golwalker, Hindutva or Hinduism is an ideology seeking to establish the supremacy of Hindus in the country with a common nation, common race, and common culture. They believed that India is ‘Hindusthan’, is a land for only Hindus, and all others are foreign to this country. Hinduism and their followers had a long history and tradition in the country. RSS now is working as the mother organization of nearly all Hindutva groups and political organizations like BJP, Viswa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, etc. Earlier Golwalker formed Hindu Maha Sabha in 1937, and another organization named Jan Sangh was formed by Syama Prasad Mukherjee in 1953. Those parties combining with some other right wing political parties and senior and expelled congress leaders like Morarji Desai, Jag Jivan Ram, etc. formed Janata Party during the emergency period in mid 70s, but in 1989, these Hindutvabadis led by Vajpayee and Advani came out of Janata Party and formed the BJP, who are now the political platform of hindutvabadi elements in the country. Modi in his late 30s joined BJP and started to preach Hindutva as an ideology.

Within this historical context, ‘Hindutva’ was brought back in the national political arena and debate by the media especially with reference to Modi’s alleged link in the Gujarat Riots that killed around 800 Muslims and 260 Hindus. It was one of the worst riots in India in the recent

⁴⁸ Including Har Har Modi/Har Ghar Modi

past, and public memory was still fresh before the election. Although both Narendra Modi and his aide Amit Shah had already received clean chit by the Supreme Court vis-a-vis the riot, Modi critiques were still sceptic about his role in it. In this light, massive media reporting on Hindutva standing only next to 'NaMo' forms an interesting terrain for analyzing the media's role in the election.

In May, it appeared 4 times in The Times of India, including when Modi equated poll campaign with 'Sadhana', an essentially Hindu term for relentless practice. In April, just before the election, it appeared 5 times, including Modi's overt support towards Hindu migrants vis-a-vis his displeasure towards 'Ghusepet' (illegal immigrants) in general and BJP's clear agenda for re-creating Ram Mandir. In March, it appeared once, with Modi-supporters chanting 'Durga Mantra', and once in January mentioning that Modi-supporters were to build a temple with Modi as the idol. In The Hindu, in May, it appeared once, in April 4 times, and in March and February twice each. In majority of the occasions it made front page news, with opposition leaders attacking Modi with his covert agenda of Hinduism, and intellectuals openly denouncing Modi on communal lines. On the other hand, it also appeared as BJP offered apology to Muslim voters for possible past mistakes. In May, it appeared twice in Dainik Jagran in relation to other parties accusing Modi of establishing 'Ram Rajya' once elected to power. In April, it appeared thrice, with Modi declaring to make Varanasi the religious capital of India. In March, it made front page headline as Varanasi chanted 'NaMo'. In January, it again appeared thrice in news in relation to Modi's objection against Communal Disharmony Bill and Modi visiting Kashi Vishwanath before starting the election campaign.

It appeared altogether 9 times in Hindustan Dainik within the context of Modi's tacit agenda for making India a Hindu-dominated country. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it made headline with Modi claiming to be distancing himself from 'Hindutva' politics in April. In March, it appeared in relation to Modi meeting religious leaders; again in January, it made headlines on the front page with Modi keeping the religious card aside and concentrating on development. In December, 'Hindutva' appeared with headlines like "Polls predict saffron storm". In May, 'Hindutva' appeared once implicitly in the headline on the front page of The Telegraph under "Ram Naam & Rahul Badnaam: Name Game Draws Poll Panel Glare". Such headlines bore strong positive anecdotes for Modi and negative for Rahul Gandhi. The report suggested Modi invoking Ram and the crowd chanting "Jai Shree Ram". Also, drawing reference from Mahatma Gandhi "Gandhi always defined good governance as Ram Rajya" –

Modi tried to instill communalism through Gandhi. Therefore, he was driving two points home – a) encouraging Hindutva with ‘ram naam’ and b) talking about governance with Gandhi’s defense. Such headlines intensified Hindutva. In April, it made headlines thrice. Headlines like “Modi Targets ‘Pink Revolution’” tickled the sentiments of hardcore Hindus. In January, Modi’s name came together with ‘riot’ in the headline; although the BJP denounced such links as baseless, ‘Hindutva’ loomed large on the political climate of India.

In connection to Hindutva, few further mediated buzzwords were disseminated by the newspapers under review, including Har Har Modi/Har Ghar Modi.

Har Har Modi/Har Ghar Modi was a slogan raised by BJP during the 2014 Parliamentary Elections to portray Narendra Modi as their Prime Ministerial candidate as the Hindu God Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva is also known as Har in India. The very slogan meant Modi is like Lord Shiva and should have a presence in every house. This slogan also helped to promote Hindutva and won Hindu hearts across India. This slogan made Modi larger than his party; also, it accentuated the communal line of politics of the BJP. In spite of widespread criticism, BJP stuck to it and made it a part of their official campaign. Ultimately the slogan became very popular among BJP backed political cadres and a section of voters. It made headlines four times in May, twice in April and once in February in relation to when other parties criticized it as a communal slogan.

3.2.6 Modi’s Popularity⁴⁹

Table 6: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Modi’s Popularity	17	11	3	12	6	-----	49

Between November 2013 and May 2014, a number of mediated buzzwords appeared in the newspapers under review with reference to nicknames of the BJP prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi, which also indicated towards his growing popularity. They were much less in frequency than NaMo, and that is why they were not put together with the buzzword with

⁴⁹ Including Modi Wave and Modi Tsunami

highest frequency. Nevertheless, these buzzwords were significant in their dissemination by the newspapers. They included Modi Wave and Modi Tsunami.

India being a land surrounded by water bodies, the wave analogy is easily identifiable and thereby popular all across the country. Within the political context, 'Modi Wave' means conditions favourable for BJP candidate Narendra Modi to completely sweep the elections. The term was coined by none other than Modi's close ally Amit Shah. In fact 'Modi Wave' was the pivot around which the election campaign revolved. BJP and its allies rigorously spoke about it, while politicians from Congress and the rival camp tried to negate it. Hardly anyone could ignore it; as a result, the contagious term 'Modi Wave' was picked up by media in no time. The term also gave an impression to many that no matter what Narendra Modi will have a huge mandate in the elections and he will be the next Prime Minister of the country. This also made the position of other political parties slightly off shoot in relation to Modi. All the newspapers under review from time to time had used the term 'Modi Wave' in the entire duration of the study. Undoubtedly, 'Modi wave' was one of the highlights of 2014 elections. Simultaneously, the term also shows the importance of one man in the politics of India for the first time. Earlier the entire focus would be on political parties as an entity and not on one particular candidate. The American media had coined such terms like 'Kennedy Wave' 'Nixon Wave' or 'Clinton Wave' before a General Election. The Indian media and political parties took the cue from them and applied the same theory in practice for the first time in the history of electoral politics in India.

'Modi Wave' appeared 21 times in the newspapers under review within the mentioned period. It had the highest frequency of appearance in The Times of India, followed by Dainik Jagran, The Hindu, Ananda Bazar Patrika, and The Telegraph. It did not appear in Hindustan Dainik between November 2013 and June 2014. In The Times of India, it appeared 9 times. Between May and March, the most crucial months before the election, it appeared consistently. In November, it appeared once. In May, it came once on the front page in relation to 3D campaign strategy of Modi. In April, it appeared on the front page once vis-a-vis the Congress blaming the BJP of playing the caste card to facilitate 'Modi Wave'. In March, Brinda Karat from the CPI(M) denounced 'Modi Wave' as a creation of the money-laundering BJP. In November, 'Modi wave' appeared when the Congress claimed that it will disappear sooner than it arrived and that it was solely created by the media. In Hindustan Dainik, 'Modi Wave' appeared 5 times in total; out of which it appeared twice in each of May

and April and once in February. In May, it appeared once on the front page vis-a-vis the opposition claiming that there was no such thing in real. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 4 times. In both May and April, it appeared once each where the headlines were quoted as stating that there was no 'Modi Wave'. However, in March, it appeared in the Nation page with the headline 'Modi Wave to become Modi Tsunami after April 15'. Barely two months before the election, these kind of headlines were noteworthy. In January, 'Modi Wave' made headlines coupled with one of the most popular and successful campaign strategy of Narendra Modi, i.e., 'Chai pe Charcha'. In The Hindu, 'Modi Wave' appeared thrice – twice in April just a month before the election, and before that once in March. In all the occasions, it appeared in relation to the opposition parties negating the existence of 'Modi Wave'. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, a buzzword with such pan-India appeal made appearance only thrice. In April, it appeared once as a negation of any 'Modi Wave'. However, in January, it appeared twice and with a positive note for Modi. 'Modi Wave' appeared in The Telegraph only twice – in May. Unlike other newspapers under review, it did not appear when the election campaign was at its peak in February, March, and April. Nevertheless, unlike the others, here it appeared with a positive connotation for Modi on the both occasions, including one front page appearance and once coupled with mentioning other punch lines of the BJP like 'Narendra Modi Hawa' and 'Narendra Modi Leher'.

Modi gained immense popularity as the General Election approached and he became a brand in himself. Masks of Modi were being distributed by the BJP cadres in several occasions during a road show or a rally. Modi was made into a larger-than-life figure in Gandhinagar and Varanasi, two of his constituencies, where Modi masks were distributed the most. Masks helped Modi to show the world how popular he is and media printed the pictures to the readers. It appeared 8 times altogether in The Telegraph with Modi masks being distributed in Varanasi during one of his rallies, and Modi firing at the Third Front as a possible alternative. In The Times of India, Modi Mask appeared 11 times, including two front page headline appearances.

3.2.7 Personal Profile of Politicians⁵⁰

Table 7: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Personal Lives of Candidates	16	8	3	10	6	—	43

A significant number of mediated buzzwords appeared in terms of the personal lives of the prime ministerial candidates, mainly Narendra Modi, with reference to caste and marital status. Also, Snoopgate was one of the most popular mediated buzzwords that revolved around Modi allegedly stalking a young woman in Gujarat.

Narendra Damodharbhai Modi was born in 1950 in a small town in a city of Gujarat in a lower middle class family. His father Damodar Bhai Modi was an owner of a tea stall in a local railway station. In his teenage and student life, Narendra used to work in a tea stall to help his father. From this background, during the 2014 Elections, a part of election campaign concentrated on Modi's past as a tea seller or chaiwalla. At the age of 19, Narendra Modi married Jashodaben, a school teacher, but within a very short time deserted his wife in search of God. He travelled various countries, including the Himalayas and also went to Rama Krishna Mission where he wished to join as a monk. But later he joined RSS at a very young age and started to preach Hindutva. Later during the early 80s, when ex-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his close aide Lal Krishna Advani launched BJP under the umbrella of Sangh, Modi joined the party. After that his rise was meteoric, and in 2002, he became the Chief Minister of his state Gujarat and was re-elected twice in 2007 and 2012. From there he directly became the Prime Ministerial candidate for BJP in the 2014 General Elections by passing many senior leaders in the party.

His public life has always been clear and open; as a matter of fact, as a political leader he has been media savvy from the very onset. However, his private space, especially his marital status, always remained obscure. He abandoned his wife and never indulged in domestic life. This was taken up by the opposition parties and the media to speculate on his personal life

⁵⁰ Including SnoopGate and Modi's Caste

and scoop out details from his past, especially about his wife, for sensationalization. Congress, time and again, attacked Modi on grounds of obscure marital status and doubted his credentials as a responsible public servant when he could not even take care of his own wife.

In April, it appeared thrice in The Times of India with reference to the Congress demanding that Modi should recognize his wife formally; in one occasion a Congress leader was reported as saying that Modi's wife should be given 'Bharat Ratna' for being a patient wife. In November, it found mention when the Congress started asking Modi about his marital status and asked him to reveal it in public. In The Hindu, it made headlines twice – once in May and once in March. Modi's wife and mother cast their vote in May, which received massive media coverage; also, senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh claimed that he did not believe in hiding his personal relationships like Narendra Modi. This was said after Singh's relationship with television journalist Amrita Rai came out in the media few months before the election. In Dainik Jagran, it began with Subramaniam Swami claiming in November 2013 that Modi was married. In April, the Congress brought down a direct attack on Modi in terms of his marital status, and in May Jasodaben's vote casting made headlines.

In November 2013, the so-called "snoopgate" scandal made headlines after two websites Cobrapost.com and Gulail.com obtained audio recordings of telephone conversations involving Modi's right-hand man Amit Shah starting an illegal surveillance of a young woman at Modi's request in late 2009. The surveillance included tapping her phone, details of her family, and even monitoring her movements outside the state boundaries. The BJP admitted that Modi had used the state government machinery to monitor the young woman, claiming the surveillance; it was later revealed that the surveillance was maintained in compliance with her father, but without her knowledge, which still makes the case illegal.

Further, snoopgate opened the floodgate in terms of reports on how Modi government often spied upon its officials in Gujarat. A judicial panel stated that before the snoopgate affair, there was evidence of rampant state-sponsored phone tapping by the Narendra Modi government against political rivals, journalists, and private citizens. This information and the details of the snoopgate affair further revealed that the Modi government in Guajart often involved tight control over the state machinery by the head of state, especially against those who displeased him. Further, Wikileaks claimed that Modi as the Gujarat Chief Minister ruled with a small group of advisors using more fear and intimidation than inclusiveness and

consensus. These assessments of Modi's governance style are inconsistent with the claim that he had no control over the Gujarat riot of 2002. 'Snoopgate' also received massive criticism from gender-based organizations all across the country, who directly questioned Modi's expertise at the promised women empowerment programme when his own government stalked women in the state.

In May, it appeared 4 times in Dainik Jagran, including twice as front page news, with the Congress government insisting upon investigation against Modi. In April, Priyanka Gandhi brought back the 'Snoopgate' issue in news for implicating Modi of stalking. In November, it made headlines 4 times, including twice on the front page in relation to Modi giving go-ahead to the investigation and the Congress calling it an issue of 'national concern'. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared 5 times, including once as front page news with the Congress upholding the issue against Modi. In The Hindu, it appeared once in February with the Gujarat government claiming that they had no information on the probe, and once in December as the Centre initiated investigation in the case. In The Times of India, it appeared once with the Congress attacking Modi as prime ministerial candidate. In The Telegraph, it made front page news once in May in relation to Modi's surveillance system on his citizens as the Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Lastly, Modi's caste also became a popular buzzword vis-a-vis personal lives of the candidates. Casteism defines Indian society as well as the politics in India. Apart from linguistic and communal divisions, the Indian population is also very strongly divided in terms of castes and sub-castes. In view of this, independent India came up with several positive discriminations in the Constitution, safeguarding the interests of the lower classes like the Dalits or Harijans. The term Harijan was coined by Mahatma Gandhi. They got reservations in education, employment, and were also entitled benefits in some other sectors. But the reservation brought the upper and lower castes at odds with each other. Since each caste has several factions, it brings with it challenges in identification of the real contender of caste-based benefits. Caste being one of the strongest tenets of identity politics in India, political parties have always cashed in on it. Also, there are many parties based only on caste politics, like Bahujan Samaj Party led by Mayawati, among others. Apart from the caste-based parties, all other parties engage in vote-bank politics based on caste, and General Election 2014 was no exception. Moreover, BJP being a party of upper caste Hindus, Modi's caste became a massive point of discussion for not just the political parties but the media as

well. Modi belongs to the Modh Ganchi community, which is a backward caste. From time to time he played the caste card through his speeches, mentioning his low caste identity. This helped him relate with the lower caste voters. ‘Caste’, especially ‘Modi’s Caste’ made appearances mostly in Dainik Jagran, The Times of India, and Ananda Bazar Patrika for 7 months. It appeared once in Dainik Jagran in relation to the Congress accusing Modi of playing the caste card to woo Dalit voters. In The Times of India, just when the election campaign was at its peak in April, the Congress accused the BJP of not only playing the Hindutva card but also the caste card in Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh being the biggest state in India in terms of population, caste is the most crucial identity of its voters. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it appeared once in May in relation to the Congress attacking Modi for hiding his caste identity.

3.2.8 Dynasty Politics

Table 8: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Dynasty Politics of Congress	11	9	2	13	7	—	42

Nearly seven decades after Independence, the Indian National Congress is being led by a single family, i.e., the Nehru and Gandhi. Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of India and also the President of Congress for several years. When he was the Prime Minister, he nominated his daughter Indira Gandhi as the President of Congress in 1957, who became the country’s Prime Minister in 1967. After Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister and he took Indira in his cabinet as Minister for Information and Broadcasting. After the sudden death of Lal Bhadur in 1966, the then Congress leadership failed to choose any senior leader of the party who could lead the nation, and the compromise formula was to elect Nehru’s daughter as the next Prime Minister. Indira was assassinated on October 31, 1984, and her elder son Rajiv took oath as the Prime Minister of India the very next day. After Rajiv’s assassination in May 1991, there was a gap of few years when some leaders outside the Nehru-Gandhi family led the Congress Party, like Narasimha Rao (1991-1996) and Sitaram Kesri, but again inner conflict among senior Congress leaders compelled to bring Rajiv’s widow Sonia Gandhi to lead the Congress Party. She became the President of INC in

1997 and is continuing till date. Although she refused to be the country's Prime Minister in 2004 and selected Dr. Manmohan Singh in the position, as the Chairperson of UPA and President of Congress she was all along at the helm of affairs. It was a well-known fact during the tenure of UPA Government that the country was technically ruled from Sonia Gandhi's office. In 2004, Sonia made her son a member of the Parliament, and from then it was envisaged that ultimately he would carry the family baton. In 2014 Elections, Rahul was projected as the Prime Ministerial candidate of Congress and UPA.

In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 13 times altogether with reference to BJP and Modi targeting Rahul Gandhi as incompetent and always under the protective shade of Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka and Sonia trying to defend Rahul Gandhi, and Varun Gandhi (Rahul Gandhi's cousin and a BJP leader) lashing out at the family-dynamic of the Congress party. It made headlines 11 times in The Times of India in relation to Modi accusing the Congress of indulging in the Ma-Bete Ki Sarkar and Priyanka Gandhi avoiding the Gandhi's lack of visits to Rae Bareilly, a long-standing Congress constituency. In The Telegraph, it appeared 9 times in May, April, and November, mostly with reference to Sonia and Priyanka Gandhi being protective of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi's husband Robert Vadra. It also appeared vis-a-vis how Rahul and Varun belong to the same family but different political parties and share a strong political rivalry. It also appeared in relation to Rahul Gandhi being called a 'Shehzada', i.e., a prince who does no real work for the party yet remains the boss. **In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared 7 times**, including in April, March, and February with reference to the mother-son government of the Congress. In The Hindu, it appeared in April with reference to Robert Vadra's disproportionate assets and how the Congress covered him up, and also when the BJP lashed out on Rahul Gandhi being a second fiddle to his mother.

3.2.9 Minority Appeasement

Table 9: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Minority (appeasement)	10	-----	6	16	8	1	41

British colonization in India came to an end in 1947. As India got independence, it also got divided on communal lines. The British had ruled India using the 'divide and rule' policy

between Hindus and Muslims. Historically speaking, Hindu-Muslim communal politics has been a long-standing crisis in India, and the British exploited it well. During the post-independence era, Hindus started nurturing a sentiment of hatred among the Muslims. However, going by Sachar Committee Report in 2011, Muslims have poor socio-economic and educational index in India. In this light, it is one of the most crucial agenda of any political party to help bring in better conditions of livelihood for the minorities, including Muslims and Christians. In addition, political parties like the BJP, with the worldview of a Hindu state, propelled such sentiments. While on one hand, the Indian constitution declares the state to be a secular one, a major section of the Hindus claimed that the Muslims should go back to Pakistan, on the other. Political parties have long been exploiting such a dichotomous situation and playing the religious card for splitting votes. In this light, minorities play a crucial role in which way the vote will swing for a party. Congress has traditionally been a supporter of the Muslim community, especially before elections. BJP, already stamped as a Hindu-Nationalist party, keeping especially the Godhra Riot incident in mind, aimed at breaking their stereotype and reached out to the Muslim voters. As a result, during the poll campaign in 2014, major political parties like the Congress and BJP reached out to the Muslim voters in the hope of receiving their electoral support. As a matter of fact, in Indian elections, any major change depends on the change of the vote bank; for e.g., in 2014 Parliamentary Elections, BJP's Hindu vote bank was the Hindi heartland that includes states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisghar, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhan, and Haryana. Delhi played major role for a pro-Modi change; BJP got 72 seats out of 80 in Uttar Pradesh.

'Minority Appeasement' appeared 41 times in 7 months in the newspapers under review, making it one of the most popular buzzwords before the election.

In Dainik Jagrna, it appeared once in May when the Congress claimed that Muslims will be in danger if Modi comes to power. In April, it appeared 4 times with reference to Modi reaching to minority voters and being confident that he will be accepted with open arms. In March, it appeared in relation to the Congress alleging that Kejriwal was playing the minority card, Muslim businessmen reaching Varanasi to meet Modi, Modi demonstrating Muslim emancipation in Gujarat, and Modi hoping that Muslims will make a difference in his constituency Varanasi. Between February and December, it appeared 4 times, including

Rahul Gandhi paying a surprise visit to riot inflicted Muazaffarnagar and Modi inviting Maulana Madni to be his guest.

In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared altogether 8 times between January and April in relation to Congress demanding that Modi offer an apology to Muslims for the Gujarat Riot, Modi reaching out to Muslim voters in different states, and BJP accusing Aam Aadmi Party of playing with religious sentiments of the voters. In The Times of India, it appeared twice in May; once with reference to Modi who was reported as afraid of how the minorities would accept him and in another in relation to Rahul Gandhi reaching out to the minorities. In April, it appeared 5 times in reports related to an octogenarian Islamic scholar rejecting Modi as a potential Prime Minister, Modi fearing that minorities will not accept him, Aam Aadmi Party of being accused of playing the minority card, Modi claiming that he can teach Sonia Gandhi how to reach out to minorities, and the Congress claiming that Modi has no takers among the Muslim voters. In March, it appeared thrice with reference to Modi wooing Telengana Muslims. In January, it appeared once when Congress geared up for their Muslim vote bank in Uttar Pradesh.

In The Hindu, it appeared 6 times altogether. In April it appeared 5 times including when the cleric backed Modi for not wearing the skullcap, Omar Abdullah taunting him for it, Modi denying that he is taking special efforts to reach out to the Muslim voters, and Congress leaders demanding apology from Modi for his inability to protect Muslims during the Gujarat Riot. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it appeared only once with reference to Modi playing the Muslim card.

3.2.10 Lokpal

Table 10: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Lokpal	3	5	9	14	3	2	36

‘Lokpal’ is a Hindi term meaning ‘care taker of the people’. The Lokpal movement in India was started by Anna Hazare in New Delhi in 2011. The term Lokpal was coined by Dr. L.M Singhvi. It was sought by a section of politicians in India to fight the corruption menace. The

Lokpal Bill was passed in 2013 and it covers all members of Parliament and Government officials. During the movement Congress was in the eye of the storm as it was down with corruption during that period. The real argument surrounding Lokpal is if it should cover the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers of the states. Lokpal was one of the most popular buzzwords during December 2013 when the bill was introduced in the Parliament. The Aam Aadmi Party later also left the Delhi government over the Lokpal controversy. It received huge media attention and became a household word. Lokpal awakened the common people's interest in the possibility of a corruption-free political system in India. Lokpal appeared 36 times in 7 months in the newspapers under review, with Dainik Jagran leading the frequency of appearances.

In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 14 times between December and April with consistency. Between January and April, it appeared in relation to Kejriwal demanding Lokpal and row over the Lokpal Selection Committee. In most of the occasions, it made front page news. In December, it appeared as many as 7 times since Anna Hazare went into fasting. 'Lokpal' went viral as Dainik Jagran came up with headlines like 'Lokpal Bill will neither spare tiger nor mouse'. In The Hindu, 'Lokpal' appeared 9 times between January and March. In most of the occasions, it made front page news, especially during Kejriwal quitting the Delhi government. In The Telegraph, 'Lokpal' appeared 5 times during Hazare's fasting and Kejriwal quitting the Delhi government. Unlike other newspapers, it never reappeared. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared twice in December and once in November in relation to Hazare and Kejriwal. In The Times of India, it appeared thrice between December and February vis-a-vis Kejriwal quitting over Lokpal, drafting of the Lokpal Bill, and Anna Hazare's fast over the Lokpal row. It appeared twice in Ananda Bazar Patrika in December over political parties at loggerheads with each other over the Lokpal Bill.

3.2.11 Corporate-Politico Connection⁵¹

Table 11: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Corporate-Politico Connection	8	3	5	8	3	2	29

Corporate-Politico Connection was significant in relation to the parties accusing each other of using corporate funds for political campaigning. While the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party accused Modi⁵² from the BJP of shaking hands with big corporate giants like Adani and Ambani, Modi also claimed that Rahul Gandhi, the prime ministerial candidate from the Congress thrived on friendship with the corporate. Also, Modi's political campaigns in helicopters raised eyebrows as to from where he received such big amounts of money. In this light, Helicopter Democracy, along with Modi's business links (this buzzword in particular gained popularity and has been discussed later in the study) became two of the most significant buzzwords before General Election 2014 in India.

It was alleged by the other political parties that Narendra Modi had close links with young industrialists, such as Gautam Adani, even while he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat. Modi allotted huge lands for Adani in his home state Gujarat for industry at a very low price, which raised controversy in the state between 2012 and 2014. Apart from that, after becoming the Prime Minister, Modi insisted that State Bank of India sanction an amount of 5K crores for his business expansion. Besides, Adani, who had direct links with Narendra Modi much before his stint as Prime Minister, the other major corporate houses in the country also wanted him to be the leader of the nation after Manmohan Singh, to further their own business interests. The Indian corporate lobby was not much happy with the UPA Government led by Dr. Singh, though he was considered as the father of economic liberalization in India. The primary grievance of the corporate sector against Dr. Singh was that in spite of much assurance he could not fulfil all their needs to expand industry and business freely in the

⁵¹ Including Modi's Business Links and Helicopter Democracy

⁵² In later chapters, this issue has been referred to as 'Modi's Business Links'.

country. The main obstacle for Dr. Singh was his partners in the UPA Government, like CPI(M) led Left Bloc in the first term, and Mamata Banerjee led TMC in the second. It was believed by the corporate sector that Narendra Modi of BJP was the only person who could deliver for them. As a result, during the 2014 Lok Sabha Elections, the corporate lobby gave full support to Modi in various ways, including concerted campaigns through their media, both print and electronic. Media was believed to have played a crucial role in Modi's victory in the election. It made 23 appearances in 7 months.

In The Times of India, it appeared 6 times in total. In almost all the occasions, Modi's business association with the Adanis, and also with the Tatas, came under the media scanner as Rahul Gandhi accused Modi of discrete business practices. Congress also alleged that the 'Gujarat Model of Development' was actually 'Adani Model of Development'. In Dainik Jagran, in 6 times of appearance, 'Modi's business link' mostly remained associated with Adani, Tatas, and also the Ambanis. Also, Kejriwal accused both BJP and the Congress of 'sitting on Adani and Ambani's laps'. It had the most appearance in April, when election campaign was at its peak. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared thrice, mostly in relation to Adani and Tata, of which it made front page news once. In The Hindu, it appeared thrice, once in May and February, and twice in January. In all the occasions it appeared in terms of the nexus between Modi and corporate houses, especially the Adanis. In The Telegraph, like the other two newspapers, here as well it made an appearance in terms of Modi's favouritism towards big corporate houses.

In two appearances in Ananda Bazar Patrika, the first news report made it to the front page when Chidambaram, the then Finance Minister, started direct attack on Modi for irregular business links, and the second one accused Modi of using black money in business. Both of them appeared in April, during the peak time of the election campaign.

In relation to Corporate-Politico Connection, few further mediated buzzwords were disseminated by the newspapers under review, including Helicopter Democracy. Helicopter democracy is a term coined by the Indian media during 2014 elections, when it was found that some top political leaders of national and regional parties used helicopters for their political campaign to address as many public gatherings as possible in a short time. Narendra Modi, during his campaign, used to fly using helicopters to address rallies and meetings. Not only helicopters, he also used aircrafts from his home Ahmadabad to different cities. Flying in

special jets and helicopters is hugely expensive in India and questions were raised by other parties about the funding behind the air travel of Modi. Media termed this entire affair as ‘Helicopter Democracy’. Modi’s election campaign expenses are still a matter of controversy in Indian political fields. Not only Modi, some regional leaders like Mamata Banerjee of TMC also used helicopters very frequently during election campaigns. In rural India, during the election campaigns, helicopters which fly the leaders were also a subject of attraction for the common people, who would otherwise never get a chance to witness the flying machine. This rampant use of helicopters became a new phenomenon in the Indian democracy to reach as many people as possible.

In The Times of India, it appeared twice when Kejriwal from Aam Aadmi Party taunted Modi for ushering in the culture of synthetic politics by flying in helicopters and not being grounded. In The Telegraph, it appeared once when Modi arrived in Varanasi in a chopper and Kejriwal came by train. Media termed Kejriwal a ‘pauper’ to rhyme with Modi’s ‘chopper’. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared thrice when Kejriwal called Rahul Gandhi and Modi helicopter leaders, not having any contact with the common people.

3.2.12 Gujarat Riots

Table 12: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Gujarat Riot	6	5	5	1	4	4	25

Gujarat riot, the genocide against the state’s Islamic population, is a big black spot in secular India. It took place in February-March 2002. Thousands of innocent Muslims were killed and many more were injured and raped. The riots erupted after a train carrying Hindu volunteers from Ayodha caught fire in Godhra. Many of the volunteers were burnt to death after the fire. In retaliation, Muslims were targeted in various cities and towns in Gujarat, coupled with looting, raping, and killing them. For few days, there was no administration in those areas, and it was alleged that some minister of the BJP Government led by Modi and also some bureaucrats and police officers were directly or indirectly involved with rioting and killing. Modi as Chief Minister was blamed for his silence over the riots. Even the then Prime Minister, Vajpayee, criticized Modi for his inaction. Ripples of the riots were felt

worldwide, and for more than a decade Modi was denied a US Visa. After the riots, many cases were filed in High Court and Supreme Court, which continued for a decade. During 2014 Elections, the main campaign against Modi was the issue of Gujarat Riots.

In The Times of India, it appeared 6 times in relation to Modi attacking Congress for their accusation and avoiding apologizing for Gujarat riots. While on one hand the Aam Aadmi Party and the Congress repeatedly accused Modi for the riot in Gujarat, BJP leaders kept insisting that Modi was clean. In December, it made front page headline as Modi claimed in a rally in Delhi that there was no riot in last 10 years of his tenure in Gujarat. In The Telegraph, it appeared 5 times in relation to Modi being implicated by the Congress in the riot in his own state, and how Modi was in double jeopardy between SnoopGate and Gujarat Riot accusations. It appeared consistently between December and March during the entire stretch of campaign period before the elections. In The Hindu, it made headlines in April as Modi was termed a mass murderer in the riot. Other parties also claimed that it was premature to give Modi a clean chit on Godhra. In December, BJP offered an apology to Muslims for the riot and Modi said he was shaken to the core after ‘Gujarat Riot’ in 2002. In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared 4 times altogether, once in May, January, and December, and twice in April in relation to Modi denying riot charges and the Congress accusing him. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it made headlines with the Congress claiming that Godhra was the biggest impediment for Modi to fulfil his political dream in General Election 2014. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared only once in December with reference to Modi’s blog where he had lashed out at critiques implicating him responsible for the riot.

3.2.13 Rahul Gandhi Nicknames

Table 13: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Rahul Gandhi name calling	5 (Shehzada) 1 (Teddy Bear) 1(Candy Kid) 1 (Childish) 2 (RaGa)	2 (Shehzada)		2 (Shehzada) 1 (Mere Bird vs. Modi as Tiger) 1 (Comedian) 1 (Google)	3 (Shehzada)		21

				Hangout vs. Modi's chaiwallah image) 1 (Kid)			
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Rahul Gandhi is the present Congress leader and one of the most influential leaders of the country. He also epitomizes the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty. He was the face of Congress in the 2014 General Elections. Rahul Gandhi, as projected by the Indian media, has never been interested in politics and was dragged into it by his mother Sonia Gandhi. Media depicts Rahul as a typical mama's boy. Many regard him as a reluctant politician. He is arguably more the prince of the Gandhi family and less of a politician. Before the General Elections 2014, Rahul gave few interviews to the media that made headlines for all the politically-incorrect comments he made; eventually he found himself at the receiving end of jokes centered around him. Even politicians started calling him teddy bear (because of his laziness in politics), candy boy (often he looks very elitist), and childish (because of his immaturity and loose talks). Soon media started calling him 'RaGa' in the same line as it coined for Modi – 'NaMo'. Media coinage for Rahul Gandhi synonyms can be analyzed better in comparison to that of Modi. While Modi was termed a Tiger, Rahul Gandhi was called a 'Shehzada'; as discussed already, Rahul's Google Hangout was brought in comparative lines with Modi's tea stalls to identify the former as an elitist leader while Modi was projected as a leader for the 'Common Man'. Next, 'RaGa', in Sanskrit, one of the oldest languages spoken in India, stands for a melodic mode used in Indian classical music. Coining a such term for Rahul Gandhi indicates towards a deliberate attempt by the media to portray him with a soft image associated with music – a space considered far away from hard-hitting politics. RaGa never came close to NaMo in terms of popularity and frequency in terms of buzzwords before the General Elections 2014.

Between May and March 2014, in The Times of India, Rahul Gandhi was called repeatedly by various names including 'Shehzada', 'Teddy Bear', 'Candy Kid', and 'Childish'. He was christened as Shehzada five times and politically unconnected terms like teddy bear and candy kid were also referred to for addressing him. Like The Times of India, The Telegraph also christened Rahul Gandhi as Shehzada before the elections. Such adjectives made more consistent appearances in The Hindu – once as 'Rahul Baba' in April, mentioning him having low confidence levels in March and portraying him with negativity in December.

Dainik Jagran called Rahul Gandhi a mere bird while Modi a lion; it also termed the former as kid, comedian, and Shehzada. Here, such adjectives made appearance almost every month between January and April. In March, Rahul Gandhi was termed a bird while Modi was called a tiger; the former was also called a comedian and a kid. Such attributes undoubtedly positioned Rahul Gandhi as less of a political contender than Modi. In Hindustan Dainik, Rahul Gandhi was termed as Shehzada twice in April.

3.2.14 Aab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar

Table 14: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Ab ki bar/Modi Sarkar	7	3	-----	8	1	-----	19

It was also a very popular slogan for BJP to portray Narendra Modi as the next Prime Minister of the country during 2014 Elections. This slogan meant the upcoming government would be Modi's Government. This was also a slogan where BJP tried to make Modi's image larger than the party. The main allegation was that the slogan made the entire campaign look like a one-man show, and BJP as the party that Modi belonged to, took a back seat. An indirect message was also given to the voters that if Narendra Modi gets elected, then it would act as relief balm for them from the clutches of misery. This kind of political cult during elections was last seen during Indira Gandhi's campaign in the 1970s when 'Indira is India and India is Indira' did rounds.

In The Times of India, It made headlines with Amit Shah claiming Modi's clean sweep, keeping Congress way behind in the election. In The Telegraph, it appeared twice in May with reference to sensex shooting up with a welcome mark for the economy, and also with the overall developmental projects initiated by Modi. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 8 times in relation to Modi's campaign in Varanasi and how business associates geared up to meet him in the hope of development.

3.2.15 Common Man

Table 15: Comparative Presence and Frequency in Newspapers

Buzzword/Issue	Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Total
Common Man	7	-----	2	4	1	1	15

Electoral politics involves money and power that alienates common people or the voters from the immediate political process. Specifically in a country like India, the largest representative democracy in the world, indirect democratic representation further facilitates this alienating process. In this light, reaching out to the voters is one of the priorities for any political party in India. R. K. Laxman, one of the finest political cartoonists in India created an iconic depiction of the ‘common man’ who represents an average middle-class Indian. Aam Aadmi Party brought back this image of the common man in the mainstream political process by naming the party after the former. Aam Aadmi party with its leader Arvind Kejriwal stormed into the Indian political system with his common man image. A former employee of the Income Tax Department represents the commonest of the common India. With his common man image he came, he saw, and he won the Delhi Legislative Elections of 2013. As Kejriwal’s common man image worked in his favour, other parties, especially the BJP, took it upon themselves to cash in on that same image and they were successful indeed. Modi’s campaign strategy exploited his past as a tea seller, together with his ‘Chai Pe Charcha’. Also, Congress leaders like Rahul Gandhi strived to win over the voters portraying a ‘common man’ image. ‘Common Man’ as a social icon had already been a media favourite in India, and after AAP’s win, it started selling like hot cakes which the other parties just took forward during their electoral campaigns for General Election 2014.

‘Common Man’ appeared 15 times in the newspapers under review, except for The Telegraph. **It appeared 7 times in The Times of India.** In most of the occasions it appeared in relation to Modi’s chai wallah image and ‘Chai pe Charcha’ campaign; on one occasion it also made headlines with Rahul Gandhi interacting with porters at the railway stations. It appeared twice in The Hindu in December and March, with reference to how Modi was cashing on his modest background as a tea vendor. In Dainik Jagran, it appeared 4 times in April vis-a-vis Modi’s attempt at reaching out to common people through his tea campaign.

In Hindustan Dainik, it appeared once in relation to Rahul Gandhi meeting the poor people in Uttar Pradesh and staying with them for few days. In Ananda Bazar Patrika, it appeared once in March in relation to Rahul Gandhi trying to reach out to the common people.

Rahul Gandhi is called the 'Prince of Indian Politics' by various non-Congress parties due to his dynastic blood. In last few years as MP, particularly while challenging Narendra Modi, son of a tea vendor, he tried to portray himself as a common man. He travelled wide across and in villages, spent nights in mud huts, ate a common man's food of daal-roti to create a common man's image. Once in the Parliament he tried to describe the misery of a village woman named Kalabati in his speech, which made him popular among the rural mass within a very short time. However, in spite of Rahul's hard efforts, he was never viewed as a common man by a wide section of people in India. This difference between him and Modi could have gone against the Congress in the Elections of 2014.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the mediated buzzwords and issues within the context of General Elections 2014 in India in terms of their origin, context, political relevance and impact. The period chosen for secondary analyses of the newspaper reports was between November 2013 and May 2014. These seven months were chosen deliberately with the observation that nearer the election more is the impact and popularity of the buzzwords. For identifying the buzzwords, six newspapers were chosen in terms of their circulation, territorial significance, and linguistic relevance, including The Times of India (biggest circulated English daily in India), The Hindu (biggest circulated English daily in the southern part of India), The Telegraph (biggest circulated English daily in the eastern part of India), Dainik Jagran (biggest circulated Hindi daily all over India), Hindustan Dainik (Hindi daily with second biggest circulation), and Ananda Bazar Patrika (biggest circulated Bengali daily in India).

This host of buzzwords disseminated by the newspapers under context validate Habermas's ideal type of functioning of the media. The buzzwords are deep rooted in socio-political situations of the state and bear strong social meaning. This chapter also finds supports to the hypothesis it began with i.e. newspapers disseminate buzzwords independent of intervention from state and politics. This finding emerges from analysing each of the buzzwords in terms of their relative frequencies of appearances.

The buzzwords were identified in these newspapers on the basis of their frequency of appearance within the aforementioned period. The buzzwords include: NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Corruption, Chai pe Charcha (Debate over Tea), Hindutva, Narendra Modi Nicknames, Personal Profile of Politicians, Dynasty Politics, Minority Appeasement, Lokpal (Ombudsman Bill), Corporate-Politico Connection, Gujarat Riot, Rahul Gandhi Nicknames, Ab ki Baar/Modi Sarkar (This Time/Modi Government) and Common Man. The buzzwords were discussed on the basis of what the buzzword stands for, political context of the buzzword and an analysis of the identified buzzwords. The chapter concludes that the buzzwords with highest frequency were NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Corruption, Chai pe Charcha and Hindutva.

Each identified mediated buzzword has a meaning of its own, and the chapter explains each one, for e.g., NaMo, which was widely used by the media and the most popular buzzword during the 2014 Elections, was used as a nickname of Narendra Modi. At a literal level, NaMo stands for traditional way of greeting among the Hindu, and Modi is the leader of the Pro Hindu BJP.

Next to Corruption, Chai pe Charcha became a highly popular buzzword with total 64 appearances in 7 months. Interestingly, it appeared the most in The Times of India (34 times), with a huge margin from other newspapers. As a matter of fact, it was the Times of India that coined the term, and the other newspapers picked it up eventually. In connection to this, other buzzwords like Chaiwallah also gained popularity. Chaiwallah was also a part of branding Modi. Modi came from a modest background; his father was a tea vendor. This common man image of Modi was found to be in sync with a population dominated by poor people in India. As a result, newspapers attempted at popularizing this buzzword and succeeded.

The last most popular buzzword among the top five, Hindutva, appeared altogether 64 times, including 20 appearances in The Times of India, 13 in Dainik Jagran, 9 each in The Telegraph and Hindustan Dainik, 7 in The Hindu, and 6 in Ananda Bazar Patrika. Hindutva upholds the quintessential philosophy of the BJP and its parent body the RSS. As a party, its aim is to turn India into a Hindu state. Although Hindutva has always remained at the core of BJP's politics, it was Modi's alleged link in the Gujarat Riot that killed thousands of minorities that brought it back in national political debate by the media.

Chapter IV

Understanding the Manufacture of News through Mediated Buzzwords

From the last chapter that dealt with identification of mediated buzzwords, this chapter explores the second research question of the study i.e. how were the mediated buzzwords used to manufacture news by the media houses during General Elections of 2014 in India? This question brings the study to the context of Chomsky's propaganda model. As opined by Chmsky and Herman, media is not independent in the state but is subject to political and economic situations and outcome of a society. As a result, media's role in politics is conditioned by the political parties on one hand and economically powerful class on the other. In other words, mediated buzzwords disseminated by newspares is not neutral but are heavily influenced by the ownership structure of the newspaper which also reflects upon its editorial policies. In that light, this chapter deals with the issue of ownership of each of the media houses in context and explores the scope and patterm of dissemination of buzzwords by them. Consequently, this chapter shifts the focus of the study from buzzwords to their sources, i.e., media houses (newspapers in the study) that generated the buzzwords. To explore the structure, scope, and general political orientations of the newspapers for understanding manufacture of news through these mediated buzzwords, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the socio-political context within which a particular newspaper was born and general temperament of the latter in relation to political newsmaking and dissemination; the second section discusses the relation between media

houses, political forums, and business units at the functional level in India within the context of ownership of media houses; and the last section aims at substantiating the inter-relationship among these three units (politics, media and economy) by identifying the type of buzzwords that each of the newspapers chose to generate before General Elections 2014 in India.

4.1 Newspapers in India: Socio-political Context

The six newspapers under review (The Times of India, The Telegraph, The Hindu, Ananda Bazar Patrika, Dainik Jagran and Dainik Hindustan) are the highest circulated newspapers in English, Hindi and Bengali. Hindi and English are the two official languages in India, while Bengali is the highest spoken language in the country after Hindi. Keeping the circulation of newspapers and linguistic proliferation, these newspapers have been chosen for the study.

4.1.1 The Times of India

Looking at the readership of Indian newspapers, it is The Times of India which has always been at the top of the ladder for decades now. The owners of The Times of India, Bennett Coleman, were mainly merchants from Europe who had started their business in Bombay in the 1830s. The newspaper was known as the Bombay Times till 1838. It acquired its present name much later in 1861. A Bombay-based Marwari business man, Ramakrishna Dalmiya, bought the company 'Bennett Coleman' from the European merchants. This is how Bombay Times, a highly European newspaper changed hands and became an Indian one.

The owner of the Bennett Coleman group had an ill repute and no one in the country actually knew his main business interest. According to Robin Jeffrey, Ramakrishna Dalmiya was "a semi literate man with a limited mental horizon; nevertheless, he was delighted in giving his lengthy and ludicrous statements and publicizing his half baked ideas. He had a number of wives, held editorial meetings while having his daily massage, which left him smelling; he measured human progress in terms of the society accorded – and the column inches his flagship paper provided – to the cow" (Jeffrey, 2000:110-111). He was arrested by police in 1955 for misappropriating funds. Then he decided to sell out the company to his son-in-law, Shanti Prasad Jain; it was Mr. Jain who paid the hefty fine to the Government.

With a topsy-turvy beginning, The Times of India is now the highest circulated English newspaper in India. Overall, it is the third largest newspaper in India on the basis of

circulation. According to the figures provided by the Indian Readership Survey in 2012, the newspaper has a readership of over 7.643 million.

Today the Times of India is published by the Bennett, Coleman and Company Limited. Vineet Jain, one of the most well-known entrepreneurs in India belonging to the Jain Family is the Managing Director and present Chairperson of the newspaper. There are also few other groups like the The Times Group. The Times Group is responsible for publishing sister publications like Ahmedabad Mirror, Bangalore Mirror, Bangalore Times, Delhi Times, The Economic Times, Ei Samay, which is a Bengali daily brought out from Kolkata, The Maharashtra Times, a Marathi language newspaper, Mumbai Mirror, The Navbharat Times, which is a Hindi daily newspaper, and Pune Mirror. The newspaper has its base in all the important cities all over India. The editorial policy of The Times of India changes from time to time. However, they have been primarily known to report anti-establishment and against the Delhi Government.

4.1.2 The Telegraph

Hindustan Standard was an English language daily newspaper published by the ABP Group from Kolkata. The newspaper was started in 1937 with the idea of permeating the ideology of the publishing house to non-Bengali readers of Bengal. The newspaper was started against the British rule and began writing against British imposition of acts that prevented the Indians from writing against the administration, jailing Indian freedom fighters, punishing the Indian press by suspending publications, and fining them. The editor, publisher and the printer of the newspaper were fined and jailed 19 times till 1947. After independence, Hindustan Standard became one of the leading newspapers in English language alongside Amrita Bazar Patrika. Hindustan Standard stopped publishing in 1882, but within days the name of the newspaper changed and it became The Telegraph. The Telegraph, which was founded on July 7, 1982, is today one of largest circulated English newspaper in India and has the highest circulation in the eastern part of the country.

According to Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC), January-June 2014 Survey, The Telegraph has a circulation of 472,250 copies as of December 2013 and is the fourth most widely read newspaper in India, after The Times of India, The Hindu, and Hindustan Times. The readership of the newspaper stands at 1,275,000 as was revealed by the Indian Readership Survey in 2012.

Since its very inception in the 1980s, The Telegraph followed a policy of pro-capitalism and pro-industrialization. Though the eastern part of India, especially West Bengal, was governed by the CPI(M), The Telegraph's editorial policy never has been in sync with the Left. It is still a part of the ABP Group, and Aveek Sarkar, from the Sarkar family, who started ABP Group is the Chief Editor. In this light, The Telegraph is pro-market and pro-change in temperament.

4.1.3 The Hindu

P.V. Rangachariar, T.T. Rangachariar, D. Kesava Rao Pantulu, and N.Subba Rao, all law students; G. Subramania, a school teacher; and lecturer M. Veeraraghavachariar founded The Hindu in Chennai on the September 20, 1878. For more than a decade the newspaper was published as a weekly, and in 1889, it started publishing as an evening newspaper on a daily basis. The aim of The Hindu at that point of time was to lend support to Sir Muthuswami, who was a judge at the Madras High Court, and to make amends for propaganda against Iyer by the Anglo-Indian Press. The newspaper was one of the first of its kind to voice its protest against the discriminatory practices by the British in the court (Parthasarathy, 1978). It is imperative to say that the debut issue was published in Chennai as well as in Georgetown in the Caribbean Islands, as in both the places a number of people from Tamil descent lived. Subramania Iyer became the first Managing Director of the newspaper.

Since day one, The Hindu as a newspaper had a very liberal look. In the initial days, the newspaper only cost 4 annas and it had a rented office in 100 Mount Road. It was from Mount Road that the group started their own press known as the National Press. However, in 1898 the partnership between Mr. Veeraraghavachariar and Mr. Subramaniya Aiyer came to an end, and it was the former who started to run the show. Soon Mr. C. Karunakara Menon became the Editor of the newspaper. However, the popularity of the newspaper took a beating in the 1900s and there was a sharp decline in the circulation number, and as a result hands were changed. Mr. S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar became the new owner of The Hindu group (Parthasarathy, 1978). Mr. Iyengar, who practiced law earlier, shifted to journalism after the purchase, which was one of his core interest areas.

Around the 1980s, when the younger members of the Iyengar family took charge of The Hindu, the paper had a single objective, it decided not to lend support to two of India's main parties, The Congress and the BJP, and till now it has maintained a very liberal and balanced

editorial policy. Today, The Hindu is run by the same Iyengar family and has been a pioneer in many things in journalism in India, including colour print, having own airplanes to distribute newspapers, and the first Indian newspaper to have an online version in 1995. The Hindu is a pro-left independent newspaper (Parthasarathy, 1978).

The Hindu is the second most read English language newspaper in India with a daily sale of 1.39 million copies and an annual turnover of \$200 million. October 2014 of ABC figures show that the newspaper is printed at 17 locations across 8 states, including Chennai, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Mohali, Allahabad, and Noida.

4.1.4 Dainik Jagran

Dainik Jagran is the highest circulated Hindi language daily in India. The newspaper was started in 1942 by Puranchandra Gupta who was also a freedom fighter. From the beginning, Dainik Jagran was very close to the Congress Party and Mahatma Gandhi (Kaminsky and Long, 2011). The newspaper was started in the same year when freedom fighters started 'Quit India Movement'. Since its inception, it lent its voice to support the freedom fighters and the Congress. The first edition of Dainik Jagran was started from Jhansi. In 1947, the group started its second edition in Kanpur, and in the later stages, cities like Rewa, Bhopal, and Gorakhpur were added to the list in 1953, 1956, and 1975 respectively. In the mid 1980s, Dainik Jagran had its presence all over Uttar Pradesh, including Varanasi, Allahabad, Meerut, Agra, and Bareilly. The newspaper was seen in the national capital in 1990. Post 1990, Dainik Jagran made inroads to Haryana, Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu.

Initially, Dainik Jagran had a pro-Congress stand, which changed over the years. During the days of emergency, like many other newspapers, the Jagran group became anti-Indira and anti-Congress. In the 1990s, the stand of the party changed and with that the editorial policy changed as well. The Jagran Group not only became anti-Congress but also pro-BJP. According to Kaminsky and Long, Dainik Jagran "has...been notorious for supporting a right-wing Hindutva (Hinduness) ideology" (2011:507). It might be mentionworthy that Narendra Mohan, Puranchandra's son, who succeeded his father as the Chairman and Managing Director of the Jagran Group, was also an industrialist and had tremendous influence both as a newspaper baron and at a personal level. Further, he was drawn into politics as a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP by his 'political mentor' Lal Krishna Adwani.

His political preferences may account for the changing political bent of the newspaper as well. “Giving its support to a right-wing political ideology greatly helped Dainik Jagran to expand...Thus, (it) rode the rising wave of Hindutva sentiment in the late 1980s and early 1990s through its sensationalist and populist reporting style” (Kaminsky and Long, 2011:508). Narendra Mohan passed away in 2002. His eldest son Sanjay Gupta became the Chief Executive Officer and Full-time Director of the Jagran Group in 1993 and is still continuing. Recently, Dainik Jagran was named as the most credible newspaper source in a joint survey by Reuters and BBC in the country (Kaminsky and Long, 2011).

4.1.5 Hindustan Dainik

Hindustan Dainik is the third most widely read newspapers in India, especially in the Hindi belt. In Delhi and in the National Capital Region (NCR), it is the second most read newspaper. Presently it has a total readership in the region, which is over 19.93 lakh (Bird, 2010). The newspaper is highly popular in the Hindi heartland and is widely read across Bihar, with over 9 lakh readers, and in Jharkhand it has 11 lakh readers. In Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in India, the figure is more than 1.37 crore readers.

Hindustan Dainik was originally a part of the HT Media Ltd Group, a media conglomerate, but later in 2009, it started its own company by the name of Hindustan Media Ventures Limited. Presently, the paper has 19 editions in the northern part of India. The reach of the newspaper is huge, and it is being published from Delhi, Patna, Muzaddarpur, Gaya, Bhagalpur, Ranchi, Jhamshepur, and Dhanbad. In Uttar Pradesh, it is one of the most read newspapers and has editions in Lucknow, Meerut, Agra, Varanasi, Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Bareilly, Moradabad, Aligarh, Mathura, Saharanpur, Kanpur, and Faizabad (Bird, 2010). The stand of the paper since its very beginning has been pro-Congress. Presently, the newspaper is headed by Amit Chopra who has been the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hindustan Media Ventures Limited since 2010.

4.1.6 Ananda Bazar Patrika

The Ananda Bazar Patrika (ABP) is one of the oldest newspapers in India with highest number of circulation in the eastern part of India. ABP was started in 1922 by Prafulla Kumar Sarkar. During the British rule, ABP played a very important role to promote Swaraj and protest against the British rule. During the 1930s and 40s, the newspaper became a prominent

voice seeking India's Independence from the British (Mukherjee, 2009). Post independence, ABP went through dramatic expansion and its popularity only grew. The 2013 Audit Bureau Circulation figures revealed that 1.16 million copies of ABP were being sold and it has an average readership of 5.8 million. In 1923, ABP turned into a morning daily and sealed its ties with Reuters, Associated Press, and the Free Press of India. It was in 1925 that the first byline appeared as 'Our Special Correspondent' and the newspaper's number of pages was increased to 16. In the same year, the newspaper published a special supplement of Calcutta Congress which was sold out within two hours of hitting the stand; a second issue was later published on demand. A year later, ABP started with a special issue during the main festival, Durga Puja. Before this, special issues in India used to be published only during Christmas.

ABP is published from three major Indian cities, i.e., Kolkata, New Delhi, and Mumbai, and it has a distinct division when it comes to the prime districts of the state West Bengal. It is divided into six parts, namely, North Bengal (Malda, Jalpaiguri, South and North Dinajpur, Cooch Behar, and Darjeeling); South Bengal is divided into Howrah, North and South 24 Pargana, Hoogly, Bankura, Birbhum, Purulia, Nadia, and Murshidabad; the other four districts are Burdwan, Murshidabad, Kolkata, and Howrah. ABP also brings out a tabloid for the metro Kolkata and neighbouring areas. The sister publication of ABP, The Telegraph, is also one of the most read English newspapers in India.

Let us divide the ABP's editorial policy as reflected in the newspapers in the following parts: before Independence, after Independence, during Emergency Period, and during the Left Rule.

During the days of struggle for Independence, ABP played a pivotal role in Bengal as it spoke for liberty of India and against the British rule. In fact many of the freedom fighters from time to time wrote columns in ABP. The newspaper was known to be very close to the Congress Party. Prior to independence, ABP was branded as a Congress paper (Mukherjee, 2009). The paper used to cover detailed news on the Congress Working Committees' meetings in Shimla, Wardha, and Bombay from 1939 to 1944 including Gandhi's Quit India Movement. On the night of August 08, 1942, Gandhiji was arrested and put behind bars. Other Congress leaders were also jailed in order to crush the movement. However, instead of being crushed, the movement gained momentum and became violent. Lakhs of people were arrested, beaten up and tortured (Mukherjee, 2009). Because all the prominent Congress leaders were behind bars

before the eruption occurred, it proved impossible for the British to connect any of them to the violence, though no effort was spared to find a link. All the nationalist newspapers of India and Ananda Bazar Patrika supported the 'Quit India' movement and wrote against the British excesses while risking their own existence. Ananda Bazar Patrika used to write on the misdeeds and the tortures by the British, and as a result, several members of its workforce were arrested. Over 1,00,000 Indian nationalists were jailed for indefinite terms; the eruption was crushed by the end of August. In a letter to the King, Linlithgow, called 'Quit India' movement by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857.

Even while supporting the 'Quit India' movement, ABP continued to write on other events during the period, including the Second World War, the passing away of the great poet, Shri Rabindranath Tagore, the dramatic escape of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose from the house in Calcutta where he was imprisoned all the way to Afghanistan and finally on to Germany, and the Great Bengal famine of 1943 that was created by an artificial shortage of rice.

Late Shri Ashok Kumar Sarkar, a stalwart in Indian journalism, was the Editor of ABP from 1958 until his death in 1983. He was the only son of Late Shri Prafulla Kumar Sarkar, the first Editor of Ananda Bazar Patrika. Since March 1983 till date, Shri Aweek Sarkar, the eldest son of Late Shri Ashok Kumar Sarkar, is the Editor of Ananda Bazar Patrika.

After Independence, ABP still continued its close association with the Congress and became a pro-Government newspaper as there was Congress Government both in Bengal and in Delhi at that time (Mukherjee, 2009). The post-Independence journalistic style took new turns, with the writings becoming constructive, educative, and encouraging, to the younger generation in particular. The assassination of Gandhiji on January 31, 1948 was a great shock to the country. The first page headline of ABP was of the biggest type size and the editorial paid homage and respect to the Father of the Nation.

ABP has always had rich editorial contents and has given due importance to various events in its columns. Two editorials are published daily, one on national matters and another on other important matters. For news coverage, the newspaper depends not only on the standardized wire services and news agencies, but also sends its reporters, special correspondents, and cameramen to various spots for 'live' coverage. In all metropolitans and other big cities, there are special reporters for the paper. In Delhi, there are political correspondents to cover Parliament news. In all the other states and in the districts of West Bengal, there are

designated reporters to cover events. In the UK, US, and other countries, there are special correspondents for the paper. Ananda Bazar Patrika was the first to send a special reporter to cover the Berlin Olympics in 1936 when no other paper could think of spending so much money on one person to cover sports news. Be it earthquakes in Mongair in Bihar or Latur in Gujarat, be it the Kumbh Mela, be it the China War, be it war against Pakistan, or the terrorist attack in the Parliament or in Mumbai, be it the Kargil War or the Bangladesh War, the reporters of the Ananda Bazar Patrika cover news on the spot.

The correspondents of the paper cover the events with élan, something that lends a unique touch to the editorial content. Similarly, its coverage of sports, science and technology, and music programs have made the newspaper popular. The publishing house has designated reporters to cover hospital news, university news, corporation news, municipality news, cultural news, social welfare news, news of jails, news of old age homes and orphanages, etc.

The news coverage of elections to the Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha, Municipal Corporation and the Panchayat are current and reliable. Objective reporting has always been a strong point of the newspaper. There is no bias in political reporting, something that may have landed the paper in the bad books of a section of political parties. At one point in time, the Congress party tried to dictate newspapers on their terms. Ananda Bazar Patrika maintained its neutral stance and did not bend to all the likes and dislikes of the Congress government. This landed two of its lauded journalists, Barun Sengupta and Gour Kishore Ghosh, behind bars during the Emergency in 1977.

Most of the famous writers and journalists of West Bengal were at one point of time or the other associated with ABP as journalists, and many of them are also literary award winners of the Government of India.

It lauded the achievements of Bidhan Chandra Roy as the Chief Minister of West Bengal and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Prime Minister of India. But soon Indira Gandhi announced Emergency in the 1970s; ABP changed its stand and turned the paper into a major critic of the Government. Not only did the newspaper criticize the role of Congress but also projected Jyoti Basu, then an emerging Communist leader, as the future of Bengal.

However, when the Left Front Government came to power in 1977, ABP started to criticize the Government and its policies. Later when Buddhadeb Bhattacharya of the CPI(M) became

the Chief Minister, though the newspaper initially supported his stand on industrialization, later shifted its support to Mamata Banerjee from Trinamool Congress, who became the 8th Chief Minister of West Bengal.

4.2 Media-Politics-Economy Dynamic: Ownership and Control

The media-politics inter-relationship in India, like any other democracy, has been a space for contestation for a long period. The dynamic found a new entrant after economic liberalization in the country coupled with introduction of New Economic Policy in 1990. With Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization (L-P-G), privatization of media houses started taking place; this gave rise to a further space of debate between media ownership, editorial policies, and overt or covert political assertions of a media house (Jeffrey, 2000). Unlike the US, where media houses are open about their political preferences and support, the Indian media is rather secretive about their political stands. However, this by no means denies their inclination towards certain political paths as against certain others; or may be it would be more befitting to say that media houses (here newspapers) in India operate within a tripartite relationship between business barons, political parties, and editors and journalists.

4.2.1 Media Ownership: The Conceptual Discourse

Fundamental to an understanding of media structure is the question of ownership and how the powers of ownership are exercised. The belief that ownership ultimately determines the nature of media is just not a Marxist theory, but virtually a commonsense axiom summed up in Altschull's (1984) 'second law of journalism': the contents of the media always reflect the interests of those who finance them'. Not surprisingly, "there are several different forms of ownership of different media, and the powers of ownership can be exercised in different ways" (McQuail, 2000:198). As implied by Altschull's remark, it is not just ownership that counts; it is a wider question of who actually pays for the media product. Although there are media houses whose owners do personally pay for the privilege of influencing content, most owners just want profit, and most media are financed from different sources. These include a range of private investors (among them other media companies), "advertising, consumers, various public or private subsidy givers, and governments" (McQuail, 2010:226). It follows that the line of influence from ownership is often indirect and complex, and it is rarely the only line of influence.

Most media belong to one of three categories of ownership: commercial companies, private non-profit bodies, or the public sector. However, within each of these there are significant divisions. For media ownership it will be relevant whether a company is public or private, a large media chain or conglomerate, or a small independent. It may also matter whether or not a media enterprise is owned by a so-called ‘media tycoon or ‘mogul’, typified as wanting to take a personal interest in editorial policy. (Tunstall and Palmer,1991). Non-profit bodies can be neutral trusts, designed to safeguard interdependence of operations (as with the Guardian newspaper), or bodies with a special cultural or social task, such as political parties, churches, and so on. Public ownership also comes in many different forms, ranging from direct state administration to elaborate and diversified constructions designed to maximize independence of decision making content.

For mass communication theory, it is nearly always the ultimate publication decision that matters the most. Liberal theory rests on the assumption that ownership can be effectively separated from control of editorial decisions. Larger (allocative) decisions about resources, business strategy, and like are taken by owners or boards of owners, while editors and other decision makers are left free to take the professional decisions about content which is their special expertise. In some situations and countries, there are intermediary institutional arrangements (such as editorial statues) designed to safeguard the integrity of editorial policy and the freedom of journalists.

The existence of checks and balances cannot, however, obscure several facts of life for media operation. “...One is that, ultimately, commercial media have to make profits to survive, and this often involves taking decisions which directly influence content (such as cutting costs, closing down, shedding staff, investing or not and merging operations)” (McQuail, 2010:227). Publicly owned media do not escape an equivalent economic logic. It is also a fact that most private media have a vested interest in the capitalist system and are inclined to give support to its most obvious defenders – conservative political parties. The conventional wisdom of liberal theory suggests that the best or only solution to such problems lies in multiplicity of private ownership (Baker, 2007).

4.2.1.1 Elite Theory: Pareto and Mosca

In this regard, it is relevant to mention here about the emergence of a new genre of elite – the media elite; they are a hybrid of what Pareto and Mosca (1939) called economic and political

elite. Though the Elite theory was espoused by them, the thinker who went furthest is Mills (1956). In conscious opposition to Marxism, Mosca (1939) opined that the division of society into dominant and subordinate groups is a universal and unalterable fact; “in all societies, two classes of people appear – a class that rules and a class that is ruled” (Ashraf and Sharma, 1985:65). Next, for Pareto, elites or ruling groups are defined in terms of the superior qualities of some individuals; whereas Mosca classified them as ‘organized minority’ or ‘political class’ over the unorganized majority. However, Mills took the theory forward to blur the difference between political and economic elite by using the term ‘power elite’; a term that includes economic, political and military elite – primarily in the American society (Basu, 2013). He also opined that the three groups actually form a single power elite and they are bound together. In this study, political and economic elite comprise two separate categories which merge insofar as their vested interests are common and gives birth to ‘media elite’⁵³.

4.2.2 Media Ownership: Indian Scenario Now

Due to the covert relationship between media, politics, and economy in India, it is challenging to gather enough literature on this issue. However, few scholars, including Paranjay Guhathakurta, have conducted studies on media ownership and control in India.

Guhathakurta insists that there is close association between political parties and media insofar as political parties or persons with political affiliations own and control increasing sections of the media in India (Guhathakurta, 2013). This is mainly due to the fact that owners of media houses also hold other businesses and often use the media houses to facilitate these businesses. There are a few instances of promoters who have used the profits from their media operations to diversify into other (unrelated) businesses. Also, the growing corporatization of the Indian media is reflected in the way in which large industrial conglomerates are engaging in gainful associations with media groups, in both direct and indirect ways. This leads eventually to the emergence of a certain merger between the disseminators and distributors of news (Guhathakurta, 2013).

⁵³ Media Elite refers to the category of journalists and media house owners who may also at times act as editors of newspapers and news channels. Their significance lies in the fact that apart from being journalists, they also own the media houses, hold important political positions, or are in close association with the political elite in a state. Therefore, these category of journalists are economically and politically powerful and often represent media, political, and economic elite altogether.

Such mergers are due to the fact that big corporates are steeped in debt, especially after foreign media entered the Indian market. The shake-out also implies that ownership is increasingly concentrated in oligopolistic markets and, as a result, is losing plurality. Emergence of oligarchy could mean that the market has become more homogenized in spite of growing web technologies; this also opens the scope of a democratized landscape for prosumers (producers-consumers). On one hand, growing usage of internet has collapsed the spatial restriction worldwide, while on the other hand it has also shrunk the volume of television and print media operations. However, that has not undermined the already existing popularity of news media, especially in print form in a country like India where literacy is lower than many of the developed countries.

At a global scale, media houses publishing newspapers are becoming corporatized. Within the context of political economy, non-profit media enterprises are conspicuous by their absence. Corporate giants are increasingly aligning their interests with elite interest groups and no alternative model for media has appeared so far to counter that. Apart from the economic angle, what is alarming is the growing political interest of the media houses owned by big corporates. This also indicates towards the increasing collaboration between the owners of the media houses and the editors of the newspapers. Moreover, such collaborations serve as a point of allegiance between the two for influencing voters in certain lines that benefit both the corporate and the politicians (sometimes representing each other). Needless to say, this restricts free dissemination of news reports by the newspapers.

The Indian media market differs from that of developed countries in several ways. Firstly, since India is still a developing country, all sectors of media, including newspapers, are still growing. This is in spite of the fact that social media has entered the Indian market with all galore. Therefore, unlike developed countries where traditional media has given way to high-tech media, India still stands at a crossroad. Also, given India's multicultural and multi-linguistic social fabric, media market in India is highly fragmented among vernacular language newspapers and English dailies (Guha Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012).

At a larger context, 'mediascape' (Appadurai, 1996) in India is driven by a common motto of profit maximization. As the fourth estate in a democracy, which also represents the largest in the world, the Indian media market prioritizes commercial gains to authentic journalism. In view of the growing merger between big corporates owning media houses and the political

class in India, Guha Thakurta et al (2012) observe that monetary prerogatives often lead to corruption within media houses, and eventually compromise on the role of media as an adversarial to establishment in India. In other words, media as a constant scrutinizer of the government is turning into a party to the state machinery. One such feature of corporatization of media in India, both print and electronic, is paid news (Guha Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012). It refers to dissemination of news against monetary payment. Paid news poses as independent and objective, but is actually not.

Paid news undermines the voting system in India. Since the electorate form their political opinion by reading political news in the newspapers (and television channels, which is not a part of the study), it is the fundamental duty of the newspapers to disseminate news that contain truth. An absence of honest and genuine media reporting on the verge of corruption within media compromises the issue of media accountability. Moreover, frequency of paid news increases before electoral campaigns in India; this definitely makes electoral politics and the voting system in the country a farce. Corruption in media means denial of democratic right to the citizens.

There is no consensus as to what exactly constitutes paid news. However, according to Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to a committee of Parliament, the real difficulty in curbing the practice of it is as follows: “Though there is a well established procedure to take action for such violations, the problem is to establish the violation itself per se. There are so many different ways which can be adopted towards obliging the (newspaper and television) channels financially that it is extremely difficult to establish a violation in this regard” (Guha Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012:11).

In other words, it is not possible to identify paid news through singular parameters, e.g., black money is a part of paid news and that is completely unaccounted for. Therefore, it is easy to publish advertisements of political parties and corporate enterprises as news items. As a result, presence of paid news is only indicated by the presence of actors involved in it insofar as they acknowledge breaking laws. However, the dystopia of such a utopian theory lies in the fact that economically and politically powerful people in India are often involved in paid news. Therefore, it is almost impossible to pinpoint its existence and functionality.

Today, large media corporations in India, including other countries, are dominating the political economy strictly driven by capitalistic profit making motive. The existence of free

and independent media is almost a romantic idea at the face of it. As discussed in the first section, ownership issue becomes complicated the moment a media house is owned by a corporate or a business baron. Privatization of media houses brings in the concomitant problematic of editorial freedom vs. profit maximization. With corporatization of media houses, money or the economy is already at odd with journalistic ethics. Moreover, active political affiliation or tacit political obligations of owners of media houses makes the tripartite relationship even stronger and more relevant.

4.3 Media-Politics Interface: Mediated Buzzwords and Manufacture of News

The following table brings together all the buzzwords generated so far by the newspapers under review. Taking all the newspapers into account, fifty buzzwords were generated by them altogether⁵⁴.

4.3.1 Comparative Appearances of Buzzwords in Newspapers

Table No. 16

Buzzword/Issue	The Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Anand a Bazar Patrika	Total
Gujarat Model of Development	12	7	6	11	9	6	51
Modi Wave	9	2	3	4		3	21
NaMo	25	9	2	15	22	3	76
Common Man image	6			1	1	1	9
Chai pe Charcha	17	3	5	3	9	4	41
Rahul Gandhi name calling	1 (Shehzada) 1 Teddy Bear 1(Candy Kid) 1 (Childish)	1 (Shehzada)		1 (Shehzada) 1 (Mere Bird vs. Modi as Tiger) 1 (Comedian)	2 (Shehzada)		13

⁵⁴ While discussing these buzzwords in Chapter III, some of them were clubbed together along with other buzzwords of similar themes. However, this table shows each of the buzzwords independently. This counts for the numerical variation of the few buzzwords in the two chapters, for e.g., Corruption in Chapter III included buzzwords like 2G Scam and CoalGate since they are similar in terms of issues; however, in this table, each of the three buzzwords and their frequency of appearances have been mentioned separately.

	1 (RaGa)			1 (Google Hangout vs. Modi's chaiwallah image) 1 (Kid)			
Corruption	3	8	6	6	2	3	28
Lokpal	3	5	9	14	3	2	36
2G Scam	5		2	4	4		15
Coalgate/Coal Scam	6		6	3	5		20
Modi's business links	6	2	4	6	3	2	23
Modi's personal life	4		3	3			10
Modi's innovative campaigns			1	4			5
Development	5		2	6	1		14
Hindutva	14	6	8	9	7	6	50
Gujarat Riot	6	5	5	1	4	4	25
Snoopgate	1	1		9	5		16
Modi's popularity	2	4	4	7	1	2	20
Governance				1	1	1	3
Black Money				7	1		8
Caste	1			3		1	4
Minority (appeasement)	10		6	16	8	1	41
Vote bank politics				7			7
Technology	5			3	5	1	14
Modi 'selfie'	3	2		1	2		8
Women's Empowerment				3		1	4
Third Front			4			1	5
Dynasty Politics of Congress	5	8	2	11	6		32
Price Rise	3	2		4			9
Youth		1		2			3
Brand Modi	1			2	2		5
Migrants/Infiltration	1	4		1			6
Toffee Model			4	1			5
Modi Mask		4					4
Third Front			4			1	5
Sonia Gandhi's Foreign Origin	1	1	2				4
Social Media	2						2
Chaiwallah	17	6					23
Ab ki bar/Modi Sarkar	2	2		1			5
Helicopter leaders/democracy	1	1		1			3
Personal relationships of		1		1			2

leaders							
Har har Modi		1					1
Babri Masjid		1					
Railgate	1			1			2
Modi as 'Hitler'				2			2
Modi Tsunami				2			2
Modi's image				2			2
Rahul Gandhi's 'common man' image (positive)				1			1
Modi's caste				1			1
Modi-nomics				1			1

Dynamics between media and politics in India can best be understood with the help of the mediated buzzwords doing rounds before the elections. Having already discussed the epistemology of these buzzwords and their overall frequency of appearances in the previous chapter, here the focus will be on each of the newspapers and what buzzwords they helped to generate, how certain buzzwords were essentially coined by specific media houses to the exclusion of others, and how these buzzwords and their usages reflect upon the possible political and ideological inclinations of each of the media houses.

The following table presents a comparative understanding of how different newspapers generate different buzzwords based on the top ten buzzwords generated by each of the newspapers under review. Here, it is important to identify the pattern of dissemination of political news and tacit political inclination of each newspaper concomitant to each of their ownership patterns.

4.3.2 Top Ten Buzzwords in Each of the Newspapers

Table No. 17

The Times of India	The Telegraph	The Hindu	Dainik Jagran	Hindustan Dainik	Ananda Bazar Patrika
NaMo	NaMo	Lokpal	Minority	NaMo	Gujarat Model of Development
Chai pe Charcha	Dynasty Politics of the Congress	Hindutva	NaMo	Gujarat Model of Development	Hindutva
Chaiwallah	Corruption	Gujarat Model of Development	Lokpal	Chai pe Charcha	Gujarat Riot

Gujarat Model of Development	Gujarat Model of Development	Corruption	Dynasty Politics of the Congress	Minority	Chai pe Charcha
Hindutva	Chaiwallah	Minority	Gujarat Model of Development	Hindutva	Modi Wave
Minority	Hindutva	CoalGate	SnoopGate	Dynasty Politics of the Congress	Corruption
Modi Wave	Gujarat Riot	Gujarat Riot	Hindutva	Modi Wave	NaMo
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	Lokpal	Chai pe Charcha	Vote Bank Politics	CoalGate	Lokpal
Common Man	Infiltration	Toffee Model	Modi's Popularity	Technology	Modi's Popularity
CoalGate	Modi's Popularity	Modi's Popularity	Black Money	SnoopGate	Modi's Business Links

4.3.3 Buzzword Disseminating Patters of Newspapers

With reference to the table above, buzzword generation pattern and dissemination of political news will be analyzed for each of the newspapers with reference to their ownership specificities.

4.3.3.1 The Times of India

Table No 18

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
NaMo	4	9	8		3	1		25
Chai pe charcha		3	2	7	5			17
Chaiwallah		3	2	7	5			17
Hindutva	5	6	2		1			14
Gujarat Model of Development		10		2				12
Minority	1	5	3		1			10
Modi wave	2	3	3				1	9
Ab ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	1	1					5	7
Common man	4			2				6

Coalgate	3		1	1	1			6
Gujarat riot	2	1		2		1		6
Modi's business links	1	3	1				1	6
Dynasty Politics of Congress	2	2			1			5
2G Scam	3	1					1	5
3D technology		5						5
Development		1	1	3				5
Modi's personal life-marital status		3					1	4
Price rise						1	2	3
Lokpal				1	1	1		3
Corruption		1		1	1			3
Modi selfie	1	2						3
Social media	1	1						2
Modi's mass appeal/Modi's Popularity							2	2
Infiltration	1							1
Snoopgate		1						1
Caste								1
Sonia Gandhi's foreign		1						1
Railgate		1						1
Brand Modi		1						1
Helicopter Democracy		1						1
Rahul Gandhi as Shehzada		1						1
Rahul Gandhi as Teddy bear		1						1
Rahul Gandhi as Candy Kid		1						1
RaGa		1						1
Rahul Gandhi 'childish'		1						1

The Times of India being the most circulated English newspaper in India generated few of the most popular buzzwords before General Election 2014. Few of the most popular buzzwords of General Election 2014 were generated by this newspaper, including NaMo, Chai pe Charcha, Gujarat Model of Development, Hindutva, and Minority. NaMo appeared 76 times in the six newspapers under review between November 2013 and May 2014, out of which it appeared 25 times in The Times of India. Chai pe Charcha appeared 41 times in seven months with 17 appearances in this newspaper. Hindutva appeared 57 times altogether with 14 appearances in this newspaper. Gujarat Model of Development appeared 50 times in total, out

of which 12 times it was featured here. Minority appeared 10 times in this newspaper out of 41 appearances in total. Apart from these, other significant buzzwords generated by The Times of India were Modi Wave, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Common Man, CoalGate and Gujarat Riot. The first five buzzwords generated by The Times of India centre exclusively around the BJP and its then BJP Prime Ministerial Candidate and present Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi. Buzzwords like NaMo, Chai pe Charcha, and Gujarat Model of Development, with their continuous first page appearances, are clear in their purpose of existence; they uphold Modi in a positive light with reference to his developmental success as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, his tea vendor image, and a nickname with strong communal undertone (already discussed in Chapter III). On the other hand, Hindutva and Minority as buzzwords bear binary potential of projecting the BJP and Modi in both positive and negative perspectives. However, with reference to the news reports on these two buzzwords in The Times of India, it appears that this newspaper largely chose to use these buzzwords within positive context of the BJP and Modi. Majority of the reports on Hindutva and Minority are about how Modi put them aside as his political manifesto, tried reaching out to Muslim voters and gave more importance of economic development of India than the BJP's overtone of Hindutva politics. Coming to the next set of buzzwords that include Modi Wave, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Common Man, CoalGate, and Gujarat Riot, only one (CoalGate) out of the five is about the then Congress government, that also with reference to one of the biggest scams during the UPA-II tenure. The rest of the four buzzwords refer essentially to Modi from the BJP. As a matter of fact, Modi Wave and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar were coined by The Times of India, though other newspapers also facilitated to their popularity. Common Man as a buzzword, however, time and again referred to Aam Aadmi Party as well; however, the essential subtext remained about Modi and his modest image of a tea vendor's son, lending support to the former's identification with the masses for electoral success. Gujarat Riot is the direct negative reference to Modi that made into the first ten buzzwords generated by The Times of India. However, Gujarat Riot featured majorly in reports on how Modi wants India to see beyond the riot and accept him as the next Prime Minister, and how the BJP extended their apologies to the people for the riot. Hardly a report directly criticized Modi and the BJP on their potential role in the Gujarat Riot. In this context, it is mentionworthy here that although the Supreme Court of India had acquitted Modi of all communal charges, his involvement in the riot is still under scrutiny, especially within the civil society that undoubtedly marks an important public place in a democracy like India.

Apart from Common Man mentioned already, no other buzzword was identified as generated by The Times of India that corresponded to Aam Aadmi Party. On the other hand, quite a few buzzwords were generated with reference to the Congress, its Prime Ministerial candidate Rahul Gandhi and the party president Sonia Gandhi. They include Dynasty Politics of the Congress, 2G Scam and various nicknames for Rahul Gandhi. It is important to note here that while majority of the buzzwords related to the BJP and Modi were generated in a positive context, buzzwords mediated with reference to the Congress and Gandhi family were almost exclusively about their shortcomings as existing and future leaders of the country. The Gandhi family's political lineage was a constant issue that made headlines with reference to how the Congress has confined its political expansion only within blood connections, and how Sonia Gandhi defends her son-in-law Robert Vadra and his disproportionate business profits. 2G Scam was also another buzzword that did rounds, referring to the massive telecom service tender-related scam that happened during the UPA-II tenure. Next, Rahul Gandhi was re-christened time and again with several nicknames, none of which, apart from RaGa, defined him in a positive note. His nicknames include Candy Kid, Childish, Teddy Bear and Shehzada. Time and again he was reported to be referred to by these nicknames by opposition leaders and many of such reports even made front page headlines.

Buzzwords like Lokpal, that refers essentially to civil society activism through which Aam Aadmi Party and Anna Hazare came to the political fore-front in India, Corruption as a general concern in Indian politics which does not preclude any political party, and Modi's obscure marital status did not receive much significance in this newspaper.

In this light, The Times of India appears to be projecting a clear pro-Modi and pro-BJP stand throughout the election campaign period. Notwithstanding the UPA-II's massive level of scams that did find mention in the buzzwords, buzzwords related to Modi and his prospect as next Prime Minister of India outnumbered the former. As a matter of fact, mention of affirmative policy changes introduced by the Congress, including Right to Information Act and NREGA, remained conspicuous by absence.

4.3.3.2 The Telegraph

Table No 19

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
NaMo	2	1	1	2	1	2		9
Dynasty Politics of Congress	1	6					1	8
Corruption		2		1		5		8
Gujarat Model of Development	1	5		1		1		8
Chaiwallah	2	3			1			6
Hindutva	2	3			1			6
Gujarat Riot			1	1	2	1		5
Lokpal							5	5
Infiltration	1			1			2	4
Modi's popularity/Modi Mask		3		1				4
Chai pe charcha			2				1	3
Modi's business links		1				1		2
Selfie	1	1						2
Modi wave	2							2
Ab ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	2							2
Har har Modi	2							2
Inflation/Price rise					1		1	2
Modi's image			1					1
Youth		1			1			1
Shehzada		1						1
Babri Masjid		1						1
Helicopter Democracy		1			1			1
Snoopgate	1							1
Sonia Gandhi's foreign origin	1							1
Personal relationships of leaders	1							1

Similar to The Times of India, NaMo was the most popular buzzword generated by The Telegraph. Though it appeared only 9 times in seven months, compared to 22 times for The

Times of India (that accounts for differential circulation of the two newspapers), NaMo often made front page news for The Telegraph. It was followed by Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Corruption, Gujarat Model of Development and Chaiwallah. Therefore, out of the top five buzzwords generated by The Telegraph, three of them, i.e., NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, and Chaiwallah project the BJP and Modi in a positive fashion. However, unlike The Times of India, Dynasty Politics of the Congress is among the most frequently used buzzwords generated by The Telegraph, although the buzzword was mostly used to report on how the Gandhi family has coopted the political legacy of the Congress. Next, Corruption in general, including the scams during the UPA-II and Aam Aadmi Party's anti-corruption stand, made headlines more frequently in The Telegraph than The Times of India. Apart from these three, Gujarat Model of Development and Chaiwallah image of Modi were generated with similar intensity in this newspaper as was in The Times of India. Among the first ten most frequently used buzzwords by The Telegraph, Hinduva, Gujarat Riot, Lokpal, Infiltration, and Modi Mask are mentionworthy. Unlike The Times of India, Lokpal featured as front page news, upholding the civil society anti-corruption call. Next up are Hindutva and Infiltration that Modi opposed during his campaign, and Gujarat Riot that defines Modi in communal lines, while buzzwords like Modi Mask and other anecdotes refer to Modi's popularity – both found mention among the top ten buzzwords generated by The Telegraph.

In comparison with The Times of India, The Telegraph projects its affinity to Modi in a lesser degree. Although Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi were implicated in their political legacy (Dynasty Politics of the Congress), they were mentioned extensively nevertheless. Moreover, the Telegraph indulged in lesser degree in nicknaming Rahul Gandhi; he was called Shehzada only once. In this light, The Telegraph, though expressing its tacit preference for Modi, kept their reporting pattern less apparent by balancing the buzzwords so that both the BJP and the Congress, the two biggest contenders of General Election 2014 in India, receive comparable levels of limelight. As a matter of fact, buzzwords generated essentially by The Times of India like Har Har Modi/Ghar Ghar Modi and Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar were used much lesser in frequency by The Telegraph than the former.

4.3.3.3 The Hindu

Table No 20

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
Lokpal			1	7	1			9
Hindutva	1	4	2	1				8
Gujarat Model of Development		4	2					6
Corruption		2	2	1	1			6
Minority		5		1				6
Coalgate	4	1	1					6
Gujarat Riot		1	1	2		1		5
Chai pe charcha			1	4				5
Toffee Model		4						4
Modi's popularity			1		1	1	1	4
Third Front			1	3				4
Modi's business links	1			1	2			4
Modi's family/Modi's personal life	2		1					3
Modi Wave		2	1					3
2G Scam	1						1	2
Sonia Gandhi's Foreign Origin		2						2
Development		1	1					2
Dynasty politics of Congress		1					1	2
NaMo			1	1				2
Common Man			1			1		2
Snoopgate				1		1		2
Social media				1				1
Media-Politics			1					1
Secular image of Modi							1	1
Modi's media relation			1					1
Modi's innovative campaign			1					1
Modi selfie	1							1
Caste	1							1
Communalism		1						1
Governance		1						1
Hindi Refugees		1						1
'Maun' Mohan		1						1

Rahul 'baba'		1						1
Rahul Gandhi confidence			1					1
Rahul Gandhi's negative image						1		1
Black Money		1						1
Price Rise			1					1
Kejriwal Anarchist						1		1
Kejriwal's Common Man image			1					1
Kejriwal novice			1					1

The Hindu is the only newspaper under review where Lokpal topped the buzzword chart by appearing 9 times in seven months, including several front page appearances. Lokpal was succeeded by Hindutva, Gujarat Model of Development, Corruption and Minority. In this light, three of the five most frequently used buzzwords in The Hindu did not involve the BJP and Modi. Among all the three English dailies, The Hindu is the only newspaper where Hindutva and Minority were both among the most frequently used buzzwords. Both of them referred to Modi in a negative light insofar as communal politics and Modi's involvement in Gujarat Riot was concerned. Nevertheless, Gujarat Model of Development, projecting the developmental work of Modi as Chief Minister of Gujarat, also appeared as the third most frequently used buzzword in The Hindu. However, unlike other newspapers under review, Gujarat Model of Development also made appearance in terms of reports questioning Modi's model as an authentic model of development. Apart from the first five, other buzzwords making it to the top ten included CoalGate, Gujarat Riot, Chai pe Charcha, Toffee Model, and Modi's Popularity. Interestingly, four of them relate directly to Modi, while CoalGate refers to the massive coal scam during UPA-II tenure. However, all these four buzzwords do not refer to Modi in a positive light; while Chai pe Charcha and Modi's Popularity are affirmative towards Modi, Gujarat Riot and Toffee Model definitely refer to him in a negative fashion. As mentioned already, Gujarat Model of Development became one of the most frequently used buzzword for The Hindu largely because it often questioned the credibility of Modi's model of development and reported extensively on how opposition leaders call his model a Toffee Model.

Next, The Hindu is the only newspaper that generated Third Front as a leading buzzword. Other newspapers had almost obliterated any possibility of an alternative to Modi and hardly

ever mentioned Third Front. Moreover, while NaMo and Modi Wave were among the first five of The Times of India and The Telegraph, they found negligible mentions in The Hindu. As a matter of fact, buzzwords related to individual leaders and their personal image building, irrespective of political parties always find a place much down the chart in The Hindu. Be it Modi Selfie, Innovative Campaign Strategies of Modi, or nicknames for Rahul Gandhi or Kejriwal's political competence, The Hindu mentioned them only in tangential, unlike any other newspaper under review.

Therefore, in view of the choice of buzzwords generated by the newspaper, it can be analyzed that The Hindu bears a strong affiliation to Leftism and alternative politics in India. While other newspapers reported heavily on Modi's charisma and Rahul Gandhi's immaturity, The Hindu chose to report and generate issued-based and political party-based buzzwords instead of individualistic buzzwords like NaMo and Shehzada. In this light, The Hindu shows a clear break from the general pro-BJP editorial preference of other newspapers. Unlike its name that may provoke the biggest communal debate in India today (The Hindu as The Religion of Hinduism), this newspaper has traditionally remained akin to left-oriented and issue-based political reporting.

4.3.3.4 Dainik Jagran

Table No 21

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
Minority (appeasement)	1	4	7	1	1	2		16
NaMo	1	4	4	3	2		1	15
Lokpal		2	1	3	1	7		14
Dynasty politics of Congress	3	7			1			11
Gujarat Model of Development	2	8				1		11
Snoopgate	4	1					4	9
Hindutva	2	3	1			3		9
Vote bank politics (caste, religion)	1	2	4					7
Modi's popularity		2	3		1		1	7
Black Money	1	4	2					7

Modi's business links	1	3	1	1				6
Development	2	3			1			6
Corruption		4		1		1		6
Manmohan Singh as weak Prime Minister, aloof 'Maun' Mohan		2	2		1			5
2G Scam	2	1		1				4
Modi Wave	1	1	1		1			4
Price Rise		3			1			4
Modi's innovative campaign			2		1		1	4
Modi's personal life	1	1					1	3
Caste	3							3
Coalgate/Coal Scam		3			1			3
Technology		1	1		1			3
Women's reservation			2	1				3
Chai pe charcha		2			1			3
Youth				1	1			2
Brand Modi (Modi as Tiger)				1	1			2
Modi as Hitler			1			1		2
Modi Tsunami		1	1					2
Modi's image	2							2
Personal life of Congress leaders (Digvijay Singh)	1							1
Modi 'selfie'	1							1
Migrants	1							1
Gujarat Riot						1		1
Rahul Gandhi as Shehzada		1						1
Rahul Gandhi a mere bird vs. Modi a tiger					1			1
Rahul Gandhi in Google Hangout (negative)			1					1
Rahul Gandhi a comedian			1					1
Rahul Gandhi a kid			1					1
Sab ka saath/Sab ka vikas			1					1
Toffee Model			1					1
Kejriwal's minority vote			1					1

bank card								
Rahul Gandhi in Holi prop (positive)			1					1
Rahul Gandhi's 'common man' image (positive)				1				1
Manmohan Singh as 'better Prime Minister'			1					1
Modi's caste					1			1
Modi's 'common man' image		1						1
Modi Sarkar		1						1
Helicopter leaders		1						1
Rahul Gandhi's public image (positive)	1							1
Railgate		1						1
Communalism			1					1
Modi-nomics			1					1
Sonia-nomics			1					1
Good governance						1		1
Modi mask							1	1

Dainik Jagran generated the maximum numbers of buzzwords among all of them under review. Minority topped the chart of most frequently used buzzwords generated by Dainik Jagran. Interestingly, it was followed by NaMo, Lokpal, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, and Gujarat Model of Development. Minority as a buzzword featured mostly in terms of Modi's measures towards minority appeasement before the election as part of vote bank politics. On the other hand, NaMo as one of the most popular buzzwords, made front page headlines in tune with Modi's charismatic leadership potential. Next, Lokpal found a regular mention on the front page, especially between November and December 2013 when the Lokpal Bill was introduced in the Parliament. While Dynasty Politics of the Congress as a popular buzzword of Dainik Jagran featured mostly with reference to Sonia-Rahul-Priyanka-Vadra nexus of the Gandhi family, Modi's Gujarat Model of Development as a likely model for overall development of India also found place among the first five most frequently used buzzwords by Dainik Jagran. In this light, the newspaper generated buzzwords in the most balanced fashion, maintaining a stable ratio between the Congress, the BJP, and Aam Aadmi Party.

Next, among the top ten buzzwords generated by Dainik Jagran were SnoopGate, Hindutva, Vote Bank Politics, Modi's Popularity, and Black Money. It is mentionworthy here that SnoopGate, Black Money and Vote Bank Politics were generated and popularized exclusively by Dainik Jagran. It is not that these three buzzwords did not find mention in other newspapers, however they never made to the top ten. Here again, while Modi's Popularity was a significant buzzword on one hand, SnoopGate, an incident that puts Modi's image of a clean political leader under scrutiny, finds its space on the other. Next, as mentioned already, minority appeasement as a part of Vote Bank Politics became one of the most popular buzzwords generated by this newspaper. Black Money as a buzzword did not gain popularity in other newspapers as it did here. Modi had promised to bring back 100 crore worth of black money stacked in Swiss bank accounts and also reveal the account holders' names.

Interestingly, buzzwords that otherwise gained popularity in other newspapers, like Modi's Business Links, Development, Corruption, Manmohan Singh as a Prime Minister, 2G Scam, and Modi Wave, did not receive as much coverage in this newspaper. It is crucial to mention here that Dainik Jagran is the most circulated Hindi newspaper in India. Given its extensive reach and popularity, it is noteworthy to identify that coverage and dissemination of political news with the help of mediated buzzwords were the most balanced here with lowest level of political tilting. Also, Dainik Jagran coined few terms that were not used by other newspapers under review, e.g., Modi-nomics and Sonia-nomics. Although they were not used frequently, however, their reference to the economic model of Modi vs. that of Sonia Gandhi, especially within the context of inflation and price rise before General Election 2014 in India, amount to catchy buzzwords. Also, women's empowerment was generated as a buzzword by this newspaper almost exclusively. Lastly, Dainik Jagran also coined buzzwords like Modi as Hitler and Modi Tsunami with binary implications. Comparing Modi with Hitler, arguably the person behind the worst genocide in the world on one hand and equating Modi's popularity with that of a tsunami (from Modi Wave to Modi Tsunami) on the other definitely reflect upon a conscious editorial effort at maintaining a non-partisan policy.

4.3.3.5 Hindustan Dainik

Table No 22

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
NaMo	2	6	5	3	3	2	1	22
Gujarat Model of Development	1	5	2	1				9
Chai pe charcha		3	2	3	1			9
Minority Appeasement		3	1	2	2			8
Hindutva	1	1	2	1	1		1	7
Dynasty politics of the Congress		2	1	2		1		6
Modi wave	2	2		1				5
Coalgate	3	1			1			5
Technology	1	2		2				5
Snoopgate		2	1	2				5
Gujarat riot	1	2			1	1		4
2G Scam	1	2		1				4
Lokpal						2	1	3
Modi's business links		2	1					3
Corruption		1	1					2
Selfie Modi	1		1					2
Rahul Gandhi as Shehzada		2						2
Brand Modi		2						2
Governance						1		1
Development						1		1
Black money		1						1
Common man			1					1

As one of the most circulated Hindi newspapers in India, along with Dainik Jagran, Hindustan Dainik shows a stark similarity in its top five buzzwords with that of The Times of India. While the first five buzzwords in The Times of India were NaMo, Chai pe Charcha and Chaiwallah, Gujarat Model of Development, Hindutva, and Minority, for Hindustan Dainik, the order was NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, and Hindutva. Although a scope of pure coincidence of resemblance cannot be ruled out, it is at the same time significant to remember that both The Times of India and Hindustan Dainik are owned by powerful corporate houses with strong political connect. This combination of

media, political and economic elite within a single dimension of ownership of media houses is often reflected upon the similarities in dissemination of news and generation of mediated buzzwords by newspapers. In this light, the first five buzzwords are quintessentially about Modi and the BJP. However, one line of difference lies in the fact that Hindustan Dainik also mentioned Minority as a part of Modi's appeasement process, and not only with positive connotations.

Next, like The Times of India, this newspaper also generated buzzwords related to nicknames of Rahul Gandhi as Shehzada. On the other hand, a buzzword like Brand Modi generated by Hindustan Dainik did rounds even on front page political news, especially days before the election. In view of the buzzwords generated by Hindustan Dainik, and also keeping in mind that it is one of the most widely circulated Hindi newspaper in India, it can be assessed that this newspaper projects a certain bonhomie towards Modi and the BJP. Also, it hardly generates any buzzword related to Aam Aadmi Party and Lokpal.

4.3.3.6 Ananda Bazar Patrika

Table No 23

Buzzwords/Issues	Monthly Frequency							Total Frequency
	May	April	March	February	January	December	November	
Gujarat Model of Development		2	2	2				6
Hindutva		1	3		1	1		6
Gujarat riot		2	1			1		4
Chai pe Charcha			1	2		1		4
Modi wave		1			2			3
Corruption		2				1		3
NaMo	1	1	1					3
Lokpal						2		2
Modi's popularity				1			1	2
Modi's business links		2						2
Governance						1		1
Development						1		1
Black money		1						1
Common man			1					1
Caste	1							1
Technology			1					1
Minority Appeasement					1			1
Third Front					1			1

Women Empowerment			1					
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Ananda Bazar Patrika is the highest circulated Bengali daily in India. However, unlike other newspapers under review, Ananda Bazar Patrik has its circulation limited largely within the eastern part of the country, including West Bengal. Due to its regional presence, political news reports of national importance featured in the newspaper only insofar in relation to political news of Eastern India.

Coming to buzzwords, the first five of them are to some extent similar to that of The Times of India and Hindustan Dainik. Gujarat Model of Development tops the chart, followed by Hindutva, Gujarat Riot, Chai pe Charcha, and Modi Wave. However, this is the only newspaper among all under review to generate a buzzword related to Modi's possible involvement in Godhra Riot of 2002 in Gujarat. In this regard, there are certain amount of editorial resemblances among The Hindu, The Telegraph, and Ananda Bazar Patrika. Firstly, Gujarat Riot appeared among the first top ten most frequently used buzzwords in these three newspapers. Next, while Corruption was the sixth most frequently used buzzword generated by Ananda Bazar Patrika, this buzzword appeared among the top five in The Telegraph and The Hindu. On the other hand, it ought to be remembered that Gujarat Model, Chai pe Charcha, and Modi Wave were among the most frequently used buzzwords generated by Ananda Bazar Patrika; all of them were related to Modi and projected him in a positive fashion in terms of his successful economic policy, his tea vendor image, and his increasing popularity. Even when referring to buzzwords in a negative fashion, for e.g., Hindutva and Gujarat Riot, the newspaper was also generating buzzwords related to Modi and the BJP, not about the Congress. Apart from Lokpal, no other political party is mentioned in the top ten buzzwords generated by Ananda Bazar Patrika other than the BJP. Unlike other newspapers under review, this newspaper hardly generated any buzzword related to the Congress, like Dynasty Politics of the Congress, nicknames of Rahul Gandhi, or the massive scams during the UPA-II tenure. However, like The Hindu and Dainik Jagran, it also mentioned Third Front and Women's Empowerment in its buzzwords, though at a lower frequency level.

In view of the pattern of buzzword generation and dissemination of political news items, it can be observed that Ananda Bazar Patrika maintained a strong preference for Modi and the BJP to almost complete exclusion of the Congress as a viable political contender.

4.4 Conclusion

Having identified and analyzed the buzzwords in the six newspapers mentioned in the previous chapter, this chapter has focused on these newspapers generating the buzzwords. A detailed discussion on the newspapers, the political context of their origin, the evolution of their functioning over the years and their editorial policies helped analyze the emergence of the buzzwords within the context of particular newspapers. The chapter was divided into three sections. The first section discussed the political context of origin of each of the newspapers which were selected for the study, like The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Telegraph, Dainik Jagran, Hindustan Dainik, and Ananda Bazar Patrika. The second section raised the issue of ownership of media houses and the concomitant issue of their editorial policies. This section also brought into discussion the Elite Theory espoused by Pareto and Mosca (1939) vis-a-vis the possibility of an inter-relation among the three elites in context here, namely, political, economic, and media elite. The tripartite relationship among them found relevance in the context of ownership of media houses, influencing their editorial lines in terms of tacit or apparent political preferences. In the third section, the focus was on how each of the newspapers highlighted particular buzzwords to the exclusion and under-representation of some other buzzwords. This was discussed with the help of tables comparing the presence and frequency of different buzzwords in different newspapers. Here, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, and Hindutva emerged as the top three buzzwords, having the biggest presence and most frequent appearances in all the six newspapers taken together. These top three mediated buzzwords were found to have been mediated the most by The Times of India, Hindustan Times and Dainik Jagran. Interestingly, all three buzzwords referred to the BJP and Narendra Modi.

The chapter talks about each newspaper popularizing each buzzword, a particular kind of buzzword, over representing or under representing it. The researcher has also tried to gauge if there is parity in the nature of buzzwords used by the selected media houses or there is some discrepancy.

The chapter ends with the observation that each of the media houses in the study exhibits a certain amount of inter-connection between ownership and editorial policies of the newspapers, throwing light on the potential inter-relation between media, politics, and economy. This observation is further validated by the theoretical reference to Chomsky and

Herman. This chapter shows a strong political slant and preference for most of the newspapers to the extent that each of them chose to disseminate certain particular buzzwords more than the rest and even to the exclusion of certain others e.g. Third Front emerged only in The Hindu and since no other newspaper in context disseminated it as a buzzword, it failed to come into prominence in the overall list of important buzzwords. Next, most of the newspapers disseminated NaMo as the top buzzword. This also reflects upon the fact that most of them are privately owned by big business tycoons who also bear strong political connections (mostly with the BJP since it had already emerged as the biggest alternative to the UPA-II-led Congress before General Election 2014 in India).

Chapter V

Impact of Mediated Buzzwords on Electorate

Having identified the buzzwords in Chapter III and discussed how they reflect upon the editorial tilt of the media houses generating them in Chapter IV, this chapter focuses primarily on two aspects – firstly, to identify the mediated buzzwords as the electorate identifies them and to compare if the buzzwords generated by the newspapers (identified in Chapter III) are similar to the ones recognized by the electorate; and secondly, to estimate if these mediated buzzwords influence political opinion formation of the electorate. In other words, this chapter addresses the last research question of the study i.e. did the buzzwords influence the political opinion formation of the electorate before General Elections 2014 in India? If yes, how? Here, the researcher is dealing with Habermas’s understanding of public sphere but exploring its implications and impact on people at an actual situation i.e. General Elections 2014 in India. Relevance of public sphere in this chapter lies in the fact that mediated buzzwords are not disseminated by the newspapers in vacuum but for the electorate to accept or reject them. In that light, in an actual public sphere like this before an election, the electorate perceive these buzzwords and shape their political opinion. Therefore, mediated buzzwords facilitate reproduction of political public opinion of the electorate in a public sphere. Next, this chapter also deals with Chomsky’s understanding that media does not function independently. Taking cue from Chomsky, in an actual situation it can be hypothesized that since media is dependent on economy and state for its functioning, so is public sphere. In other words, if media being the most crucial element in the public sphere is restricted, even if partially by politics and economy of a society, then the public sphere including all its participants (electorate) is also

restricted. In that light, impact of mediated buzzwords on the electorate might also be conditioned by the political and economic imoliactions of the state.

The electorate forms the third and most important constituent of an election since they are the ones voting a political party to power as against the others. However, it is also crucial to define and explain the profile of people that this study considers to be the electorate. An electorate can be defined as a set of citizens of a country eligible to vote and elect their political leader (Citation). In India, voting rights start from 18 years of age for citizens of all genders. Political opinion formation for a person can begin even before s/he becomes eligible to vote; however, keeping the official age specificity in mind, the age limit of the respondents in this study begins from 18 years.

While identifying the sample, it is important to note that the electorate does not constitute a monolithic group of people; rather, it represents people from different social locations. Differential social locational attributes contributes to distinct ways of political opinion formation. Therefore, the sample of respondents comprising the electorate in the study has been identified in terms of several parameters, including age, gender, occupational category, educational qualification, religion, caste, and geographical locations. The sample size chosen is 250. The respondents were spread across India in different states, including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Gujarat.

5.1 Analyses of Primary Data

5.1.1 Reading Habits of the Electorate

In terms of newspaper reading habit of the electorate for receiving political news, 108 respondents out of 250 (43.2%) opined that they follow political news in newspapers on a regular basis; 70 respondents, i.e., 28% said they follow sometimes; 43 respondents, i.e., 17.2% opined that they follow political news items in newspapers irregularly; and 29 respondents, i.e., 11.6% of them said they never follow political news. Almost half the electorate following newspapers mentioned that they read newspapers or have somebody read out political news to them. This is a significant number given that electronic media has highest penetration in India, and among the urban voters, use of social media has increased manifold times in the recent past. Also, in view of the massive illiteracy percentage in India (around 35%), it is interesting to note a significant percentage of the population reading newspapers. Next, taking the percentage of respondents reading political news from

newspapers regularly and sometimes, it appears that 71.2% of the total number of respondents read newspapers for receiving political news. Coming to the number of respondents never reading newspapers, a percentage of 11.6% is not a marginal statistic to consider, especially because this percentage signifies the lack of political consciousness among the voters who might cast their votes nevertheless. Also, this percentage of respondents might not be restricted to an electorate with minimum or no literacy, rather people from all educational backgrounds. In this light, it is crucial to consider the 11.6% of the respondents throughout the study, especially to identify if mediated buzzwords have distinct influences on distinct categories of people.

5.1.2 Most Popular Buzzwords among the Electorate

Next, the top 25 buzzwords as identified through newspapers were mentioned to the electorate of 250 respondents to evaluate the level of buzzword popularity among the electorate (see Appendix Table 1). It was found that NaMo tops the chart with maximum number of respondents (79%), opining that it was the most frequent buzzword they found in the newspaper before General Election 2014 in India. NaMo is followed by Gujarat Model of Development (63.5%), Chai pe Charcha (61%), Minority (56%) and Hindutva (53.5%). Let us analyze the first five buzzwords before considering the next sets. It is interesting to note that the buzzwords identified through secondary analysis of the newspapers as having highest frequency are similar to the ones considered most popular by the electorate. Among the top five buzzwords that surfaced in the study, NaMo is unanimously considered to be at the top. This implies that not only did newspapers attempt at constructing NaMo as the ultimate catchphrase of General Election 2014 in India, they were also highly successful at it since the electorate also identified massively with it. Secondly, it justifies the massive margin with which the BJP prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi won the election since majority of the electorate found NaMo to be the most popular and visible buzzword of the election, and thereby, in all likelihood, it shaped their political opinion formation.

NaMo is followed by Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Hindutva and Minority. In this light, out of top five, three buzzwords during General Election 2014 in India encapsulated Narendra Modi in a positive note. Gujarat Model was considered to be the ideal model of economic development in India as Modi tried to shed his communal image and lay more stress on economic growth as his political agenda. Although Gujarat Model was at times

compared with a 'Toffee Model', and the newspapers under review disseminated such news, it appears that the electorate had been heavily influenced by Modi's potential for turning the country's economy for better. Next, Chai pe Charcha as a buzzword captures Modi's modest image as a tea vendor's son. Such a 'common man' image helped Modi identify with the electorate, which was largely of that socio-economic profile in India. Keeping these buzzwords aside, Hindutva and Minority surfaced in the top five most popular buzzwords considered by the electorate. Here, it is imperative to highlight a point of difference between the way these two buzzwords were generated by the media and the electorate identified it to them. With reference to the newspapers, as already discussed in the last two chapters, media generated Hindutva and Minority mostly in negation to Modi's communal image. Although Modi was acquitted in Gujarat Riot of 2002, his image as instigating a communal disharmony in the state loomed large. Media, along with Modi himself, tried replacing this image of the latter with political news reports in the line of how Modi put India's economic development before the BJP's Hindu nationalist politics and how he aimed at reaching out to the Muslim voters and welcomed Muslim businessmen in Varanasi during his political campaign. On the other hand, constant mention of Modi's communal reference, even in distinct anecdote, made the electorate reflect more on the latter's Hindutva relation with Hindutva politics. However, this is not to imply that it deterred the electorate to vote for Modi; as a matter of fact, a significant percentage of the electorate identifying themselves as quintessential Hindus voted for Modi influenced heavily by these buzzwords.

The next set of buzzwords include Corruption (47.5%), Lokpal (43.5%), Modi's Popularity (40.5%), Dynasty Politics of the Congress (38%) and Modi's Business Links (32.5%). Around similar percentage of the electorate identified Corruption as the problem and Lokpal as an answer; also, Modi's Popularity and Modi's Business Links featured in the top ten most popular buzzwords. Interestingly, buzzwords directly related to the then government, i.e., UPA-II led by one of the oldest parties in India, the Congress, were conspicuous by absence as only one buzzword, namely, Dynasty Politics of the Congress was featured in the top ten buzzwords identified by the electorate. It is noteworthy here that while mediated buzzwords related to Modi (both positively and not so positively) featured seven out of ten times among the most popular buzzwords identified by the electorate, buzzwords related solely to the Congress appeared only once. This may reflect upon the overall split in the dissemination of

party-specific political news and reception of such news by the electorate. A massive margin for the BJP's win coupled with Modi's popularity account for the numbers appearing here.

Between the 11th and 20th most popular and influential buzzwords identified by the electorate vis-à-vis General Election 2014 in India, featured Rahul Gandhi's Nicknames (31%), Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar (29%), CoalGate (22%), 2G Scam (20.5%), Modi Selfie (18.5%), Modi's Personal Life (17.5%), Gujarat Riot (16.5%), Development (14.5%), Black Money (12.5%), Vote Bank Politics (9%), Third Front (7.5%), Toffee Model (6%), Technology (5%), Snoopgate (4%), and Price Rise (3%). Rahul Gandhi was re-christened time and again by different newspapers with different nicknames and almost always with a negative connotation; these not only made headlines, but also influenced the electorate in forming their political opinion against the Congress's prime ministerial candidate – a fact reflected already in the election results. Next, Hindi being one of the most spoken languages in India, a catch phrase in Hindi centered around Modi gained as much popularity. Next, Corruption was one of the top ten most popular buzzwords; in this light, it is logical to find two of the most integral components of Corruption during the UPA-II rule, i.e., CoalScam, 2G Scam and Black Money, as being among the most influential mediated buzzwords for General Election 2014 in India. Modi being featured in almost all the most popular buzzwords, Modi Selfie and Modi's Personal Life also influenced the electorate in formation of their political opinion to a considerable extent. As mentioned already, Modi, though declared clean by the Supreme Court, was never above the scanner vis-à-vis communalism, at least for a certain percentage of the electorate. Majority of them were influenced by the buzzword referring to Gujarat Riot. Gujarat Model of Development was one of the most popular and influential mediated buzzwords during General Election 2014 in India; concomitantly, Development itself became a popular buzzword, and although not many, but a decent percentage of the sample were influenced by it.

India being a country ridden with caste and communal politics, a considerable percentage of the sample identified vote bank politics as one of the most influential buzzwords during General Election 2014. Moreover, Modi being the prime ministerial candidate from the BJP, a Hindu nationalist party, religion played havoc in this election, especially for wooing the vote bank. The Third Front received not much attention, although the Indian political scenario has historically been dominated by the potential of a strong alternative beyond NDA and UPA. Nevertheless, a certain percentage of the electorate was influenced by it as a mediated

buzzword. Toffee Model received some popularity, followed by Technology, Snoopgate, and Price Rise, as identified by the electorate as mediated buzzwords.

5.1.3 Influence of Buzzwords

Next, with reference to the effectiveness of buzzwords in influencing political opinion formation of the electorate, among total number of respondents, i.e., 250, 115 (46%) opined that the buzzwords influenced majorly in the formation of political opinion, 88 (35.5%) opined to have been relatively influenced by mediated buzzwords in forming their political opinion, 33 (13%) of the respondents said that they were influenced in a minor fashion, and only 14 (5.6%) of them mentioned that the buzzwords had no influence on their political opinion formation at all. It is interesting to note that a staggering 46.5% of the respondents answered in affirmative vis-à-vis effectiveness of the mediated buzzwords. This also accounts for the unobtrusive nature of media in general, and the newspapers under review in particular, to disseminate political news in such fashions to have maximum impact.

5.1.4 Distribution of Buzzwords among Social Locations

Next, coming to the different social locations of the electorate, the following tables will present the distribution of buzzword popularity among people of different age groups, gender, educational qualification, occupational categories, geographical locations, religion, and caste.

5.1.4.1 Age

Table No 24

Buzzwords	Age Group 18-30	Age Group 31-40	Age Group 41-50	Age Group 51-60	Age Group 61-70
NaMo	50	66	55	45	34
Gujarat Model of Development	42	68	57	48	35
Chai pe Charcha	58	69	52	37	34
Minority	44	51	54	60	41
Hindutva	40	47	52	65	48
Dynasty Politics	34	59	57	61	39
Corruption	56	62	47	49	36
Lokpal	64	51	45	46	44
Modi's business links	34	48	51	68	49
Gujarat Riot	53	67	52	51	27
SnoopGate	61	66	55	38	30

. Development	63	55	57	52	23
. Modi's popularity	74	66	58	23	29
. CoalGate	58	64	49	45	24
. 2G Scam	55	67	51	40	37
. Modi's Personal Life	48	52	58	57	35
. Technology	63	67	53	44	23
. Price Rise	42	49	58	66	35
. Black Money	35	47	66	74	28
. Modi Selfie	77	57	60	38	18
. Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	54	69	61	42	24
. Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	60	57	48	50	35
. Vote Bank Politics	33	45	59	59	54
. Third Front	36	55	43	71	45
. Toffee Model	50	62	66	48	24

Total = 250

This chart looks at the age distribution of the electorate in terms of preference for the mediated buzzwords. Among the top ten buzzwords identified already, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, and Chai pe Charcha gained the most popularity in the age group 31-40. Next, for Minority, Hindutva, and Dynasty Politics of the Congress, maximum popularity was gained in the age group of 51-60. Corruption was the most popular among electorate in the age group 31-40, while Lokpal received maximum attention from age group 18-30. Modi's Business Link received maximum attention from the electorate in the age group 51-60 and Gujarat Riot from 31-40.

In the next 15 mediated buzzwords, Snoopgate, Development, and Modi's Popularity gained maximum popularity among the age group 18-30. CoalGate, 2G Scam, and Modi's Personal Life gained maximum popularity among age group 31-40; Technology, Modi Selfie, and Rahul Gandhi Nicknames was most popular in the age group 18-30; Price Rise, Balck Money, and Vote Bank Politics became most popular in the age group 41-50; Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar and Toffee Model was most popular in the age group 31-40; and Third Front gained most popularity in the age group 51-60.

Therefore, the age group of the electorate between 18 and 40 appears to be the most dynamic in terms of reception of mediated buzzwords for forming their political opinion. To broaden the argument, it is the youth population in India that were the most perceptive and constituted the major recipient of the mediated buzzwords popularized by the newspapers. With special

reference to buzzwords like NaMo, Modi's popularity, Chai pe Charcha, Modi Selfie, Rahul Gandhi Nicknames, Technology, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, it is the youth that opined to have been influenced the most by these mediated buzzwords.

5.1.4.2 Gender

Table No 25

Buzzwords	Male	Female
NaMo	179	61
Gujarat Model of Development	175	75
Chai pe Charcha	166	84
Minority	162	88
Hindutva	167	83
Dynasty Politics	141	109
Corruption	150	100
Lokpal	156	94
Modi's business links	145	105
Gujarat Riot	143	103
SnoopGate	142	108
Development	145	105
Modi's popularity	147	103
CoalGate	127	124
2G Scam	129	121
Modi's Personal Life	122	128
Technology	148	102
Price Rise	141	109
Black Money	138	112
Modi Selfie	124	146
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	142	108
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	123	127
Vote Bank Politics	145	105
Third Front	159	91
Toffee Model	133	117

Total = 250

In case of majority of the buzzwords, except for Modi Selfie, Modi's Personal Life, and Rhul Gandhi Nicknames, it appears that male voters are more influenced in terms of their political opinion formation than the female voters. Such skewed gender difference in terms of popularity of mediated buzzwords definitely accounts for the fact that literacy rate among men is much higher than among the women; men have more access to resources and public spaces than women, which helps them receive better political exposure and form their

political opinion. Also, it was observed that in many occasions where women stay at home, their political opinions are mostly formed by secondary sources like what they hear from the men in the family and less by reading newspapers themselves. In this light, it also appeared that the political opinion formation for the female electorate is mostly influenced by the political opinion of the male members of their households rather than by mediated buzzwords.

Also, the study under review made a conscious decision not to incorporate third gender as a separate category because gender is officially recognized only in the aforementioned binary in India till date. This is also to clarify the stand that the researcher considers any gender variant apart from male and female in its existential validity; however, has deliberately deterred from considering them as part of the electorate since they are still unrecognized as a category in India. In this light, the research under review has not included political opinions of people who consider themselves belonging to a third gender.

5.1.4.3 Occupation

Table No 26

Buzzwords	Low-skilled	Middle level	High level professionals
NaMo	61	99	90
Gujarat Model of Development	34	100	118
Chai pe Charcha	122	101	37
Minority	63	116	61
Hindutva	61	107	82
Dynasty Politics	49	91	112
Corruption	75	95	80
Lokpal	73	34	93
Modi's business links	34	86	80
Gujarat Riot	114	92	44
SnoopGate	52	104	94
Development	36	112	102
Modi's popularity	62	107	81
CoalGate	54	102	94
2G Scam	51	112	87
Modi's Personal Life	74	101	75
Technology	48	97	115
Price Rise	113	95	42
Black Money	57	88	105
Modi Selfie	46	93	111
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	116	69	63

Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	77	108	65
Vote Bank Politics	35	111	104
Third Front	44	94	112
Toffee Model	107	80	63

Total= 250

In the age of globalization, occupational variants are numerous. It is neither feasible nor desirable to consider each of them separately. Therefore, this study has divided them into three levels in terms of differential levels of skills – low, middle, and high. The buzzwords opined to be most popular among the low-skilled workers and having influenced their political opinion formation include Lokpal, Gujarat Riot, Chai pe Charcha, Price Rise, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar and Toffee Model. Buzzowrds appealing the most to middle-level professionals include NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Minority, Hindutva, Corruptuion, Modi’s Business Links, Snoopgate, Development, Modi’s Popularity, CoalGate, 2G Scam, Modi’s Personal Life and Rahul Gandhi Nicknames. Among the high-skilled professionals, the following buzzwords appear to have had maximum influence in forming their political opinion: Gujarat Model of Development, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Vote Bank Politics, Modi Selfie, Third Front, Technology and Lokpal.

Coming to NaMo, it is interesting to note that while it topped the chart with maximum popularity by the electorate, it also received balanced distribution among respondents of various occupational categories. Unlike other mediated buzzwords that received skewed popularity vis-à-vis specific professional levels, NaMo appears to have had influenced electorate from all class levels. This also validates the already established election results that brought Narendra Modi from BJP to power as the Prime Minister of India.

5.1.4.4 Educational Qualification

Table No 27

Buzzwords	Basic Literate	Completed School	Completed College	Master’s Degree/ Equivalent	Higher/Sp ecialized Degrees
NaMo	20	39	58	64	69
Gujarat Model of Development	17	26	57	78	72
Chai pe Charcha	29	35	64	69	53
Minority	19	49	54	60	68

Hindutva	23	41	61	65	60
Dynasty Politics	21	39	57	69	64
Corruption	19	35	62	67	67
Lokpal	36	48	58	55	53
Modi's business links	16	31	67	65	71
Gujarat Riot	28	37	59	62	64
SnoopGate	16	31	46	55	57
Development	26	45	54	58	63
Modi's popularity	30	45	61	64	50
CoalGate	15	33	58	56	59
2G Scam	16	31	54	60	61
Modi's Personal Life	15	26	46	51	56
Technology	13	21	35	58	62
Price Rise	67	37	49	64	33
Black Money	17	31	53	59	66
Modi Selfie	21	40	46	45	53
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	31	56	45	52	43
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	19	27	68	63	50
Vote Bank Politics	24	24	40	51	53
Third Front	13	20	31	58	66
Toffee Model	54	39	48	49	34

Total = 250

This table shows figures in terms of the total number of respondents, i.e., 250. Educational qualification of the electorate has been divided into five categories: Basic Literate, Completed School, Completed College, Completed Master's Degree and Higher or Specialized Degrees. Majority of the mediated buzzwords were the most popular among the respondents who completed college, Master's Degree, and above, i.e., among electorate with higher education. However, few buzzwords, including Chai pe Charcha, Price Rise, Lokpal, Modi's Popularity, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, and Toffee Model appear to have had significant influence on the electorate with lower level of education. These buzzwords gained popularity among the electorate from all educational backgrounds. Top buzzwords like NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Hindutva, Minority, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Corruption, Lokpal, Modi's Business Links, and Gujarat Riot appear to have had proportional relationship with ascending levels of education, i.e., higher the level of education, more the popularity and influence of the mediated buzzword.

5.1.4.5 Geographical Location

Table No 28

Buzzwords	Rural	Suburban	Urban
NaMo	72	110	68
Gujarat Model of Development	44	68	137
Chai pe Charcha	104	86	60
Minority	56	111	83
Hindutva	60	108	82
Dynasty Politics	60	79	111
Corruption	69	115	82
Lokpal	99	87	64
Modi's business links	63	81	106
Gujarat Riot	68	91	91
SnoopGate	37	102	111
Development	70	97	83
Modi's popularity	76	87	87
CoalGate	69	83	98
2G Scam	74	76	100
Modi's Personal Life	59	75	116
Technology	33	87	130
Price Rise	112	83	65
Black Money	59	87	104
Modi Selfie	59	84	114
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	96	82	72
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	60	89	132
Vote Bank Politics	42	93	115
Third Front	20	85	145
Toffee Model	80	94	76

Total = 250

This chart shows figures in numbers in terms of total number of respondents, i.e., 250. Geographical habitat in each of the four states West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Delhi have been divided roughly into three zones – rural, suburban, and urban. NaMo and Gujarat Model of Development received maximum popularity in the urban areas. NaMo as a mediated buzzword topping the list attained highest frequency of appearance in almost all urban spaces under consideration in the study. Chai pe Charcha had a comparatively even distribution and became more popular in rural and suburban areas. Modi's tea campaign helped him connect with the voters at the grass root level. Minority and Hindutva typically received more popularity in suburban areas; whereas, Dynasty Politics of the Congress and Corruption had the most influence in urban areas. Lokpal was highly popular in rural areas, Modi's Business

Links mostly in urban areas vis-à-vis the former's elaborate plan for high-end economic developments, and Gujarat Riot had a fair distribution among electorate of all areas.

Among the rest of the top 25 mediated buzzwords, Snoopgate, Modi's Personal Life, Technology, Modi Selfie, Black Money, Rahul Gandhi's Nicknames, Vote Bank Politics, and Third Front were most popular among the electorate in the urban areas; Development became particularly popular and influential among suburban voters; and buzzwords gaining popularity among the electorate in the rural areas included Price Rise, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, and Toffee Model.

5.1.4.6 Religion

Table No 29

Buzzwords	Hinduism	Islam	Christianity	Sikhism	Buddhism /Jainism	Agnostic
NaMo	96	83	78	65	77	87
Gujarat Model of Development	85	80	82	76	81	94
Chai pe Charcha	91	74	75	85	82	88
Minority	97	94	94	89	65	78
Hindutva	98	90	77	78	67	75
Dynasty Politics	74	78	67	69	78	92
Corruption	65	68	61	60	69	71
Lokpal	59	65	61	53	55	68
Modi's business links	78	75	66	64	77	74
Gujarat Riot	88	96	79	81	64	91
SnoopGate	56	50	52	50	36	47
Development	82	81	79	82	75	95
Modi's popularity	86	71	70	68	77	72
CoalGate	69	66	62	67	62	69
2G Scam	65	67	60	58	58	71
Modi's Personal Life	72	67	68	56	54	57
Technology	58	56	51	53	66	65
Price Rise	67	68	59	57	47	70
Black Money	70	68	65	58	64	72
Modi Selfie	87	83	76	70	72	69
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	88	81	78	67	75	73
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	81	76	67	65	68	75
Vote Bank Politics	66	56	59	51	53	89
Third Front	80	64	69	65	37	82
Toffee Model	55	50	47	45	35	68

*Figures represent percentage (%)

Total = 250

India, though a secular state, is a theologically sensitive country when it comes to the interface between religion and politics. It can be observed that vote bank politics remained one of the most significant mediated buzzwords throughout the study under review. Although it was not a part of the top ten buzzwords, vote bank politics has historically remained a crucial strategy for electoral politics in India, and General Election 2014 was no exception. According to Census 2011, the electorate in India constitutes Hindus, followed by Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Buddhists. Apart from them, there are people from other religions and sects, however less significant in numbers. Also, the study under review considers Agnostics as a separate category especially for two reasons – firstly, few of the most influential mediated buzzwords related to General Election 2014 in India bore tacit or direct religious connotations, and secondly, a slow but steady percentage of the electorate are gradually identifying themselves as agnostics in the country. Within this binary, the researcher considered it to be relevant to also look at whether mediated buzzwords with overt or covert religious intonations are accepted alike by electorate with faith and without.

NaMo, with a strong Hindu-connotation, as already discussed in Chapter III, appears to have influenced electorate from all religious backgrounds, including 87% of the agnostics. Gujarat Model of Development, having no apparent religious linkage and being the trump card for BJP for development, received high level popularity especially from the agnostics. Similarly, Chai pe Charcha also became equally popular among all religious sentiments, including the agnostics. On the other hand, Minority and Hindutva were more popular among Hindus, Muslims, and Christians than among the agnostics for their obvious religious undertone. Staunch Hindus welcomed these buzzwords, whereas for electorate with other religious faiths, these bore negative reference points. Nevertheless, these buzzwords influenced the electorate to form their political opinion. Next, Dynasty Politics of the Congress received most popularity among the agnostics than among electorate with religious faith. Corruption, Lokpal, and Modi's Business Links appear to have gained average popularity among all religious faiths, including the agnostics. Gujarat Riot, perhaps the mediated buzzword with maximum religious connotation was the most influential among Hindu, Muslim, and Agnostic voters, with differential angle of influence.

Apart from the top ten mediated buzzwords, the ones mostly influencing political formation for the Hindus include Development, Black Money, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Modi's Popularity, Modi Selfie, and Third Front. In this light, the electorate identifying themselves as

Hindus appears to have been heavily influenced by mediated buzzwords related to Modi for formation of their political opinion. Among the electorate with Islamic faith, Development, Modi Selfie, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar were the most influential of all the mediated buzzwords. In this light, Muslim voters were also influenced by the development card of the BJP popularized by the newspapers under review. Moreover, buzzwords like Modi Selfie, that also entangles technology and youth (two separate buzzwords but with lesser standalone popularity), became popular among the electorate with Islamic faith. This also shows the penetration of the mediated buzzwords cutting across social locations of age and religion. Among the Christians, Development, Modi's Popularity, Modi Selfie, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar were the most influential buzzwords apart from the top ten mediated buzzwords already discussed.

Among the agnostics, it appears that Development, Third Front, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Vote Bank Politics and Rahu Gandhi Nicknames were the most influential mediated buzzwords.

5.1.4.7 Caste as Ascription

Table No 30

Buzzwords	High Caste	Middle level Caste	Low Caste
NaMo	74	70	67
Gujarat Model of Development	78	73	72
Chai pe Charcha	82	87	76
Minority	91	86	85
Hindutva	92	84	88
Dynasty Politics	77	78	60
Corruption	65	71	65
Lokpal	70	68	66
Modi's business links	64	67	52
Gujarat Riot	84	80	78
SnoopGate	65	54	52
Development	77	81	71
Modi's popularity	81	78	67
CoalGate	66	62	57
2G Scam	64	60	55
Modi's Personal Life	73	68	67
Technology	56	60	54
Price Rise	76	78	80
Black Money	56	67	70
Modi Selfie	87	79	62

. Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	88	85	80
. Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	66	64	60
. Vote Bank Politics	84	81	80
. Third Front	60	56	54
. Toffee Model	56	62	69

*Figures represent percentage (%)

Total = 250

This chart shows figure in percentages. Apart from religion, caste is the most significant ascriptive status in India. Caste, along with each of their factions, builds a complicated network of social locations. Here, not to shift the focus of the study to caste and its multiple expressions in India, the researcher has divided caste into high, middle level, and low. It is important to note that caste is not only present in Hinduism but in Islam as well. However, while considering the caste attribute of the electorate, religious attributes have not been considered in the study.

The most popular and influential mediated buzzwords among the high caste electorate include NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, Hindutva, Gujarat Riot, Modi Selfie and Ab KI Bar/Modi Sarkar. Among the middle level caste, it appears that Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Gujarat Riot, Modi Selfie, Price Rise, and Vote Bank Politics were the most popular ones along with the top five mediated buzzwords. Among the low electorate with low caste ascriptive status, most popular buzzwords included Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, Hindutva, Gujarat Riot, Price Rise, Ab Ki Br/Modi Sarkar, and Vote Bank Politics. Even if the study did not consider religious specificity while analyzing caste-oriented political response of the electorate, it appears that higher the caste, more is the identification with mediated buzzwords bearing overt or covert religious connotations.

5.1.4.8 Caste as Identity

Table No 31

Buzzwords	Caste Conscious	Caste Liberal	Caste Unaware
NaMo	88	71	71
Gujarat Model of Development	84	78	87
Chai pe Charcha	80	85	77
Minority	86	74	57
Hindutva	81	72	54
Dynasty Politics	84	86	82

Corruption	63	68	70
Lokpal	56	67	65
Modi's business links	60	62	57
Gujarat Riot	83	77	66
SnoopGate	61	50	50
Development	70	82	69
Modi's popularity	84	77	51
CoalGate	69	54	55
2G Scam	68	52	56
Modi's Personal Life	72	65	64
Technology	61	73	75
Price Rise	70	76	78
Black Money	55	61	78
Modi Selfie	86	67	58
Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar	87	65	52
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	54	57	53
Vote Bank Politics	86	63	55
Third Front	50	69	66
Toffee Model	53	68	67

*Figures represent percentage (%)

Total = 250

The chart shows figure in percentages. Distinction between caste as ascription and caste as identity has been made in the study with logic similar to that of differentiating between electorate with faith and electorate as agnostics. Also, caste being an ascriptive status as well, all people belonging to a particular caste do not necessarily identify with their ascription. In this light, electorate from high castes may not be equally caste conscious, whereas electorate from low castes exhibits more caste consciousness. Therefore, this chart analyzes the popularity and influence of the mediated buzzwords among three categories of the electorate – caste conscious, caste liberals, and caste unconscious.

NaMo was more popular among caste conscious people, while Gujarat Model of Development was more influential for both caste conscious and caste liberal electorate. Next, while Chai pe Charcha had fair distribution of popularity among all three categories, mediated buzzwords like Minority and Hindutva gained more popularity among caste conscious electorate. Apart from them, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Modi's Business Links, Price, and Rahul Gandhi Nicknames had fair level of popularity among all three kinds of the electorate; Gujarat Riot, Snoopgate, Modi's Popularity, CoalGate, 2G Scam, Modi's Personal Life, Modi Selfie, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, and Vote Bank Politics were more popular among Caste Conscious electorate; Lokpal, Corruption, Development, Technology, and Third Front

gained more popularity among the Caste Liberal electorate, while Caste Unaware electorate appears to have been moderately influenced by majority of the mediated buzzwords.

5.1.4.9 Why and how different groups are susceptible to different buzzwords in different degrees

For understanding the impact of mediated buzzwords on the electorate, the researcher had divided them in terms of age, gender, occupation, education, geographical locations, religion and caste. As it has surfaced from the study, different categories of the electorate were impacted differently by these buzzwords. Therefore, the study concludes that the buzzwords had differential impacts on different social locations. Different buzzwords impact different social locations in different degrees because of the fact that the electorate identify with the buzzwords on the basis of each of their existing socio-economic and political conditions of living and their future aspirations. In other words, a buzzword influences political opinion formation of a voter only when she can identify with the buzzword in terms of her needs, demands and desires; since different voters have different needs and aspirations based on different social locations, they respond at different degree to different buzzwords. Also, a buzzword having impact on the political opinion formation of an electorate not just means that she is influenced positively by the buzzword, she could also be influenced negatively.

Now let us see how and why different groups are susceptible to different buzzwords in different degrees.

Age - In terms of age, young people were more impacted by pro-Modi buzzwords like NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development. India under UPA II Government which was led by the Congress was marked with economic shutdown. The economy under the previous Government grew at a snail's pace with almost zero job creation and little job generation. Throughout the country inflation rate rose and there was no hike in the employment rate! As a result, people were scared and wary about their future! In parallel, Narendra Modi, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, was depicted by the media, as a harbinger of a robust economy. His home state, as the media reports claimed, was doing well economically and was the only Indian state which grew during that phase in terms of economy; whereas the pace in rest of India was sluggish. Under such a situation, young population (between age group 18 and 40) in India was hugely influenced by pro-Modi buzzwords since the media projected him to be as the sole savior of India from economic doom.

Also, Lokpal as a buzzword was the most popular among the youth (between 18 and 30). This is largely because of the fact that the Congress had already earned a lot of disrepute due to massive corruption in the government. Consequently, the youth of India welcomed the issue of Lokpal Bill initiated by Anna Hazare and later taken up by the Aam Aadmi Party. This is reflected by the fact that Lokpal as a mediated buzzword gathered maximum popularity among the youth.

Occupation - High skilled workers were all for buzzwords like ‘Gujarat Model’, ‘Dynastic Politics’ and ‘Technology’. Buzzwords like price rise, chaiwallah would always appeal to low skilled people. Price rise has always been the core problem of the Indian poor while the humble background of Narendra Modi as tea seller ends up in self identification by the low skilled workers across India.

The middle income group or the middle level professionals were volatile in India – as a result buzzwords like Hindutva, NaMo and Minority attracted or influenced them much more than any other. This is a section which needs reservation to achieve things in life due to their limited monetary capabilities hence religious cards become handy.

Next, Indians who are high level professionals like engineers or corporate professionals were disappointed with the sluggish growth rate of the country under Congress which according to many was a chain reaction to dynastic politics. Since, the ‘Gujarat Model’ meant generation or maximization of capitalist mode of job creation, higher level professionals were all for it. Another buzzword which was popular amongst them was technology. Now in India only the highest skilled professionals have the purchasing power or penchant for technology.

Education - If we look at educational qualification, then we will see little or basic literate people were susceptible to buzzwords like price rise. Largely, it is the poor who do not get a chance to educate herself and as a result their purchasing powers remain low. As a result, price rise was one buzzword which became widely popular with this group. Those who have completed school needs immediate job. Since the previous government was incapable in providing jobs, for people who just have completed school (18), Ab Ki Bar Modi Sarkar becomes important Also the dropout rate in high school in India is one of the highest. Gujarat Model was popular with people who had completed master’s degree as this buzzwords exclusively spoke about economic growth and development.

Geographical Locations - In rural areas buzzwords like Chai pe Charcha, price rise were highly popular. In India, the division between urban and rural area is sharp. As a result, Chai pe Charcha (which shows Modi's humble background) and price rise (little purchasing power) gained popularity in rural areas more than other spaces.

In suburban areas buzzwords like NaMo, Hindutva and Corruption were popular. If we check the backgrounds of the people in sub urban areas of the country, we will see people who are semi poor and mediocre. Hence, religion becomes a huge identity of this section of people. Since, the same group also belongs to the middle income group, corruption naturally becomes a buzzword for them.

Buzzwords like Gujarat Model of Development and technology were popular amongst the urban voters. Since, urban voters are the core areas of job creation; hence, these buzzwords became hugely successful.

Gender – Majority of the mediated buzzwords were found to be impacting the men more than the women. This is largely due to the fact that political parties less highlight issues specific to those that only women identify with e.g. women's safety. As a result, women identify less with political issues. Here in the study it surfaces that women have identified with the mediated buzzwords much lesser than men.

Also, this can be further explained further with an example of a recent study conducted by Praveen Rai from CSDS, New Delhi, In "Electoral Participation of Women in India: Key Determinants and Barriers", published in Economic and Political Weekly, on January 15, 2011, Praveen Rai writes that theories are bifurcated when it comes to analyzing women's electoral participation in India. Some opine that the issue is fraught with patriarchy and gender subordination in India and others negate that. He also points out that autonomy and independence in electoral behavior and voting choices are important factors to be considered while discussing women's electoral participation in India. He also suggests that in India, women's electoral participation is affected by social and gender-specific factors like marriage and family, while men's electoral participation as voters are immune to such factors. Also, interest in politics and own voting decision are key determinants in determining women's voting behavior. He recognizes that women's voting choices are often influenced by their extended families, "Thus women who exercise their own discretion in deciding whom to vote for show a higher level of electoral participation as voters in electoral competition than those

whose decisions are influenced by family and friends.” His study is based on General Election 2004 in India and it shows that women voter turnout was more in eastern and southern parts of India than the rest of the country. He explains this as these two regions having matriarchal social structures which “allow them more freedom to access and negotiate interactions in the public sphere”. He also suggests that “the Constitution of India grants universal suffrage to both men and women with equal rights to participate in electoral competition, but the existing societal value system, the private-public divide in terms of domain identification and male preponderance in political institutions restrict women from exercising their electoral rights and a fair participation in electoral competition. These factors also act as key barriers and obstacles in women’s active participation in the Indian electoral system and in the larger issue of women’s advancement as a whole.” He adds that in recent election, gender remains significant as determining voting behavior of women in India; however, percentage of voting has risen in the country significantly over the years.

Religion – Different buzzwords were found to have impacted electorate with different religions differently e.g. buzzwords with heavy religious connotations like NaMo, Hindutva and Minority had either positive or negative influence on people from different religion. On the other hand, buzzwords with no apparent religious undertone were more popular among the agnostics e.g. Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Dynasty Politics, Vote Bank Politics and Third Front. It is important to note here that popularity or influence of a buzzword among a certain social location does not necessarily mean that it affects that category of the electorate positively e.g. NaMo was popular among the Hindus, Muslims and Agnostics, but for different reasons. Majority of the Hindus identified with NaMo positively, given its overt Hindu connotation; while a large number of Muslim respondents referred to the buzzword with negativity; lastly, many of the Agnostics said that they identified with NaMo more because of its association with Narendra Modi and his promise of economic development and they pay less attention to the religious undertone the buzzword bears, while few have also said that they completely negate the buzzword for being overtly religious in a secular state like India.

Caste – The researcher deliberately divided caste into caste as ascription and caste as identity because respondents belonging to particular caste do not necessarily identify with their ascription; e.g. electorate from high castes may not be equally caste conscious, whereas electorate from low castes exhibits more caste consciousness.

Caste as identity - Certain buzzwords were found to be more prone to impact the respondents in terms of caste than others e.g. NaMo, Hindutva and Minority. Since these buzzwords have both religious and caste connotations, caste conscious respondents were heavily impacted by these buzzwords than caste liberal and caste unaware respondents. Again, buzzwords like Gujarat Model of Development and Lokpal, with no apparent indication of caste in their meanings, were found to have different kind of impact pattern. Both caste conscious and caste unaware respondents had similar impact from Gujarat Model of Development while Lokpal impacted caste liberal and caste unaware respondents more. Since these buzzwords do not directly imply caste-based issues but issues of development and people's participation in politics, they were not found to have caste-specific impact. Again, vote bank politics had more impact on caste conscious respondents because this buzzword indicates directly towards the fact that political parties often play caste and religious cards targeting particular groups e.g. Dalits and lower castes to have their votes.

Caste as ascription – this category was divided into three sections i.e. high caste, middle level caste and low caste. High caste respondents were more impacted by buzzwords like Minority, Hindutva and Vote Bank Politics than other categories. It was found that Minority and vote bank politics impacted them negatively because high caste respondents do not come under positive discrimination enshrined in the constitution for lower caste citizens in India. On the other hand, Hindutva appealed to the high castes positively because the buzzword is heavily loaded with Hindu upper caste attributes. Interestingly, Hindutva was almost equally popular among low caste respondents as well but mostly in negation i.e. the low caste respondents identified with Hindutva more as an imposition since it by definition forces Hindu upper caste attributes on lower caste people in India. Respondents from the middle level caste category were more prone to be impacted by buzzwords like Development since they are in neither end of the scale (high or low). However, their attitudes towards buzzwords overtly bearing the element of caste were more similar to that of the high caste respondents since climbing up the caste ladder is the general aspiration and not the other way round.

This chapter so far discussed the mediated buzzwords identified by the electorate to be most influential in forming their political opinion before General Election 2014 in India, together with analyzing the electoral profile and estimating how differential the level of impact the buzzwords had on the latter. However, the electorate also identified a number of issues or areas that they should have received a larger amount of attention by the newspapers under

review but did not. Following is a list of such issues identified by the electorate that were missed out by the newspapers:

5.1.4.10 Issues Underplayed by the Media

Table No. 32

Issues	Electorate
VHP-BJP Bond	85
Modi's Communal Past (as instigator of communal riot in Gujarat)	65
Potential of Alternative Politics (beyond Modi)	90
UPA-II's failure at improving Indo-Pak Relation	95
Congress's political future	75
Gender (specifically women's issues)	120
Infiltration	55
Governance	100

Total = 250

In terms of the issues identified by the electorate that the newspapers under review should have focused more on but did not, gender, or more specifically, women's issues, was identified by 48.5%, followed by Governance (39.5%), UPA-II's failure at improving Indo-Pak relationship (38.5%), Potential Alternative Politics (beyond Modi) (36%), VHP-BJP bond (34.5%), Congress's political future (30%), and Modi's Communal Past (27.5%).

Violence against women has been growing in India, especially since the rape case of Jyoti Singh Pandey in December 2013; in this light, the electorate felt that neither this appeared much in the political manifesto of the parties nor among leading political news items by the newspapers under review. Governance is also another significant issue identified by the electorate, especially in relation to the massive governmental corruption during UPA-II's rule; a significant percentage of the electorate also opined that the mediated buzzwords were restricted to NDA-UPA binary and hardly considered the potential for other political alternatives for India. Concomitantly, they further suggested that along with the Congress's political shortcoming, discussions and news reports should have engaged more into the party's political future. Since the Congress is one of the oldest political parties in India, it still holds significance vis-à-vis the country's political scenario, despite its dismal performance in the UPA-II government. Lastly, Modi's communal past and VHP-BJP link are two of the most crucial issues that were systematically underplayed and under-reported by the newspapers under review, as per the electorate. Notwithstanding Modi's manifesto

prioritizing India's economic development over Hindu Nationalist politics of Sangh, VHP's direct influence on the BJP and Modi is undeniable.

5.2 Conclusion

Thus, this chapter estimates the impact and influence of the mediated buzzwords on different sections of the electorate in India in an attempt at analyzing the overall role of media during General Election 2014. As it emerged from the study, majority of the respondents have been impacted by the mediated buzzwords for their political opinion formation. This finding answers the research question this chapter began with i.e. whether mediated buzzwords have impact on the electorate's political opinion formation. It also tests Habermas's concept of public sphere in an actual situation. In spite of Chomsky's claim that media is conditioned by political and economic factors in a society, which has already been addressed in the last chapter, this chapter finds that the electorate are nevertheless influenced by these buzzwords. Next, impact of mediated buzzwords on the electorate happens in three stages – firstly, the electorate are introduced to mediated buzzwords disseminated by newspapers either by reading newspapers or by listening to conversations in political public spheres; next, the electorate discuss and debate over these buzzwords; and at the final stage, they form their political opinion based on these mediated buzzwords.

The salient findings of the chapter can be summarized as follows: Firstly, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, and Hindutva emerged to be the most popular buzzwords among the respondents. Interestingly, they were also identified as having high frequency of appearances in the newspapers. Secondly, majority of the respondents opined that they followed newspaper reports regularly. Thirdly, in terms of effectiveness of the buzzwords in influencing political opinion formation of the electorate, majority of the respondents said that the buzzwords influence them majorly. Fourthly, in terms of the influence of the buzzwords across different age groups among the respondents, maximum impact was observed on respondents between the age group of 18 to 40. Moreover, buzzwords like NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Corruption, SnoopGate, Modi's Popularity, CoalGate, 2G Scam, Technology, and Modi Selfie were found to be the most popular among the age group 18-40, whereas respondents between 41 and 60 were found to be more influenced by buzzwords like Minority, Hindutva, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Modi's Business Links, Modi's Personal Life, Price Rise, Black Money, and

Vote Bank Politics. Among the respondents between the age group of 61 and 70, Hindutva, Vote Bank Politics, and Third Front were found to be the most popular.

Fifthly, in terms of gender distribution of impact of the buzzwords, more men than women were found to have been influenced. However, few buzzwords like Modi's Personal Life, Rahul Gandhi Nicknames, and Modi Selfie were found to have had more influence on women than men. Sixthly, in terms of occupational variants that had been divided in terms of skill level into low, middle, and high, overall influence of the buzzwords were found to be fairly distributed. In other words, it did not appear that one particular group was more influenced at a major level than the other. Having said that, it was also found that few buzzwords were often more popular in a group specific manner, for e.g., Gujarat Model of Development was found to be the most popular among the high-skilled workers, whereas Chai pe Charcha was more popular among the low-skilled workers. The buzzwords that were found to be the most popular among the low-skilled workers included Lokpal, Gujarat Riot, Price Rise, Chai pe Charcha, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, and Toffee Model; buzzwords appealing the most to the middle-skilled professionals were NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Minority, Hindutva, Corruption, Modi's Business Links, SnoopGate, Development, Modi's Popularity, CoalGate, 2G Scam, Modi's Personal Life, and Rahul Gandhi Nicknames; lastly, buzzwords that gained maximum popularity among the high-skilled workers were Gujarat Model of Development, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Vote Bank Politics, Modi Selfie, Third Front, Technology, and Lokpal. Also, like other categories, NaMo was found to have massive popularity even here as well, cutting across all occupational levels. Seventhly, closely linked to the parameter of occupation was the educational level that was divided in the study into the following: Basic Literate, Completed School, Completed College, Master's Degree/Equivalent, and Higher/Specialized Degrees.

Overall popularity of the buzzwords were found to cutting across all educational levels; however, buzzwords like Modi's Popularity, Lokpal, Price Rise, Toffee Model, Chai pe Charcha, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar were found to be the most popular and influential among all the respondents from different educational backgrounds. Eighthly, in terms of geographical habitat being divided into rural, suburban, and urban, the buzzwords in general were not found to have area specific influence and popularity; however, buzzwords like Chai pe Charcha, Lokpal, Modi's Popularity, Price Rise, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar were identified as the most popular among the respondents from rural spaces; in the suburban

space, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, Hindutva, SnoopGate, Development, and Vote Bank Politics were the most popular, and the buzzwords gaining maximum popularity in the urban spaces included NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, SnoopGate, Modi's Personal Life, Technology, Modi Selfie, Rahul Gandhi Nicknames, Vote Bank Politics, and Third Front.

Next, in terms of religion, NaMo was found to have topped the chart with maximum popularity among the Hindus. Other popular buzzwords among the Hindus included Minority, Hindutva, Chai pe Charcha, and Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar; among the respondents from Islam, Minority, Hindutva, and Gujarat Riot were the influential buzzwords. However, while Hindutva and Minority were found to have had positive connotations among the Hindus, they were referred to by the respondents from Islam with strictly negative sentiments. Gujarat Model of Development, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Minority, and Development were found to be the most popular among the Christian respondents, whereas the Sikh respondents identified the most with Minority, Chai pe Charcha, and Gujarat Riot; among the respondents embracing Buddhism and Jainism, Chai pe Charcha, Modi's Business Links, Modi's Popularity, Gujarat Model of Development, NaMo, and Dynasty Politics of the Congress were found to be the most popular. A deliberate category of Agnostics was created in the study to accommodate those who do not follow any organized religious group in India. Among them, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Gujarat Riot, Development, and Vote Bank Politics were found to be the most influential. Lastly, in terms of caste as ascription, NaMo, Minority, and Hindutva were found to be the most popular among respondents from all castes (high, middle, and low). On the other hand, in terms of caste as identity, caste conscious respondents identified the most with NaMo, Minority, Ab Ki Bar/Modi Sarkar, Vote Bank Politics, Gujarat Model of Development, and Dynasty Politics of the Congress; caste liberal respondents were found to be identifying the most with Chai pe Charcha, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Gujarat Riot, Gujarat Model of Development, Modi's Popularity, and Price Rise; and lastly, caste unaware respondents were found to be influenced the most by Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Dynasty Politics of the Congress, Price Rise, Black Money, and Technology.

Conclusion

The study aims at analyzing the role of media (newspapers) in electoral politics with the help of mediated buzzwords. The ultimate focus of the study has been to identify the mediated buzzwords, if and how they facilitate the manufacture of news for selected newspapers and if the same set of buzzwords influence the electorate in their formation of political opinion before an election. For studying this, the research under consideration chose India as a typical example. On the basis of the research objectives, research questions, and hypothesis of the study, this chapter will summarize all the previous chapters, answer the research questions, prove or disprove the hypothesis, and on that basis will lay down the key findings of the study.

6.1 Summary of the Study

The dissertation takes three stands – the primary object was to identify mediated buzzwords during General Elections 2014 in India; the secondary objective was to understand how the mediated buzzwords were used by the selected media houses; and finally, the purpose of the study was to estimate the influence of mediated buzzwords on the formation of political opinion of the electorates during the above mentioned election. The hypothesis of the dissertation ‘Electoral results are conditioned by mediated buzzwords’ has been proved in the study since this research shows that mediated buzzwords influence political opinion formation of the electorate. Firstly, mediated buzzwords introduce political issues into public discussion. Secondly, mediated buzzwords facilitate political engagements of the electorate through continuous dissemination of news in the newspapers. Thirdly, mediated buzzwords influence political opinion formation of the electorate. Lastly, these factors together encourage the electorate to cast their votes – the most significant functioning in electoral politics.

The dissertation explains Dennis McQuail's understanding of the overall gamut of theories of media. McQuail primarily differentiates between liberal and conservative approaches towards studying media; also, he suggests two further axes of variation in media theory, namely, media-centric approach & society-centric approach and materialist approach & culturalist approach. He suggests that these two approaches are independent of each other, and between them, four different media theories can be identified – media culturalist perspective, media materialist perspective, social culturalist perspective, and social materialist perspective. With reference to these variants, this study in context is placed within the framework of leftist, critical, society centric culturalist approach. Within this framework, the study considered two major theorists, namely, Jurgen Habermas and Noam Chomsky, and their theories and concepts, including public sphere and propaganda model. These two concepts of Habermas and Chomsky were incorporated in the study in relation to the way they address the issue of media's role vis-a-vis the state (politics) and the people (public/electorate).

The thesis discusses the concepts of public sphere and propaganda model extensively while connecting them with the basic thrust of the study. The concept of public sphere espoused by Habermas finds the biggest relevance in two major arguments of the latter, where he considers media to be independent and the public to have full access to information. The relevance lies in the fact that this study also begins with this consideration, although it is acknowledged that in an actual situation, such preconditions cannot exist in absolute form. In view of this, the concept of propaganda model becomes relevant in the study. As espoused by Chomsky, there exists a strong inter-connection between media, politics, and economy to the extent that media is completely stifled and conditioned by the motivation of the state and the market. As also suggested by Chomsky and Herman, the people (public) have only partial access to information disseminated by the state and media. In this light, Chomsky's propaganda model is antithetical to Habermas' definition of public sphere. However, this study draws on the arguments of propaganda while examining the relation between media, politics, society, and economy, and also for evaluating the role of media vis-a-vis the other three. The propaganda model is also relevant in the study, since it suggested, in the line of Chomsky, that the economy plays an integral role in determining the role of media in electoral politics.

As mentioned before, the thesis has a threefold aspect and the first part identifies mediated buzzwords on the basis of their frequency of appearance in the six newspapers and by

interviewing the respondents as potential voters regarding which buzzwords they identified as influencing them the most for the formation of political opinion before General Elections 2014 in India. Buzzwords are generated and disseminated by the media and received by the electorate. In this light, buzzwords were chosen in terms of these two categories, i.e., media (newspapers) and electorate. For newspapers, those were considered to be buzzwords that appeared every month, appeared more often as election dates came closer, came in the headlines at least twice a month, and were front page news at least twice a month during the 7-month period that the study has taken into account. On the other hand, so far as the buzzwords identified by the respondents are concerned, the latter were interviewed with close- and open-ended questions as to whether they understand the word ‘buzzword’, if they can identify some, what are those, and where did they find them. The respondents were found to have either read about the buzzwords in newspapers or heard them over political discussions in the public sphere⁵⁵. This is how mediated buzzwords were identified in newspapers and among the electorate.

In the next part of the thesis, the researcher has tried to understand the manufacture of news through mediated buzzwords. As mentioned already, this study considers six newspapers, including The Times of India, The Telegraph, The Hindu, Dainik Jagran, Hindustan Dainik, and Ananda Bazar Patrika, on the basis of circulation, territorial significance, and linguistic relevance. To understand how mediated buzzwords were used for manufacturing news by the media houses, it is crucial to bring in two actors into the discussion – the owners of each of the media houses and the editorial slants of the newspapers. Also, it is important to see if any overlapping exists between ownership and control of the media houses and their editorial slants.

At the onset, it is mentionworthy that the ‘mediascape’ in India is largely dominated by the profit maximizing temperament of the market (Guhathakurta, 2013). Moreover, economic liberalization has brought with it private investors, many of whom are owners of media houses as part of giant corporate conglomerates. As a matter of fact, the newspapers and the media houses in this context are also an integral part of the free market, and as a result are often profit-driven, as Chomsky claims in his Propaganda Model (1988). For example, The Times of India, as the largest circulated English daily in India, is owned by Bennett, Coleman

⁵⁵ Public sphere has extensively been described in Chapter II.

and Company Limited, originally a European company now headed by Vineet Jain as the Managing Director and Chairman, a well-known Indian entrepreneur. Next, The Telegraph, as the most widely circulated English newspaper in Eastern India, and Ananda Bazar Patrika, as the highest circulated Bengali daily in the country, are owned by ABP Group, spearheaded by Aweek Sarkar as the Chief Editor, a well-known business person from Calcutta, the capital of West Bengal. The third newspaper, i.e., The Hindu, with the highest readership in southern India, is owned by the Iyengar family who started the newspaper in 1978. Next, Dainik Jagran, having highest nation-wide circulation as a Hindi daily in India, was started by Puranchandra Gupta, a freedom fighter, in 1942. He was succeeded by his son, Narendra Mohan, who later also joined the BJP and became a Minister of Parliament. Today, it is headed by his son Sanjay Gupta, the Chief Executive Officer and full-time Director of the Jagran Group. The fifth newspaper, i.e., Hindustan Dainik, with third largest readership among the Hindi-speaking population in India, was originally owned by HT Media Limited Group, a media conglomerate; later in 2009, it started its own company by the name of Hindustan Media Ventures Limited with Amit Chopra as the Chief Executive Officer.

All the newspapers considered in the study came into being during the British rule in India. While majority of them were initiated to fight against the British rule, few were established for pure business purposes. In this light, political context and economic interests have remained closely associated with these newspapers from the very inception. However, some of them continued with similar political temperament as they were born with, and some changed through evolution. Also, while discussing the editorial temperament and possibility of tacit political preference of media houses, it is important to note that in India, unlike the US, media houses do not openly support and back political parties before national elections. Nevertheless, private ownership of the newspapers, together with political membership of the owners, is often identified as possible agencies for the editorial stand of the newspapers to have a certain amount of political preference. Having said that, this study does not espouse that newspapers are the mouthpiece of the politico in India, and nor does it disrobe the newspapers from their journalistic autonomy. However, it should be mentioned that the media houses have close structural association with the economy and politics of the country (due to privatized ownership and political membership and preference of the owners) that might translate into functional influence.

The Times of India exhibits an anti-establishment temperament. Looking at the top ten buzzwords it generated, it can be analyzed that it also generated buzzwords that reflected strong anti-establishment sentiments. In other words, with the Congress-led UPA-II as the then ruling party, and the BJP as its biggest opposition, five buzzwords out of the top ten generated by The Times of India (NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Hindutva, Minority, and Chai pe Charcha) were pro-BJP and pro-Modi. Also, NaMo, the most widely disseminated buzzword by the newspapers in general before General Elections 2014, as found out in the study, tops its chart as well. As a matter of fact, The Times of India coined the buzzwords NaMo, Chai pe Charcha, Chaiwallah, Modi Wave, and Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar, that other newspapers soon picked up. Next, The Telegraph, being pro-change, pro-industrialization, and pro-capitalism, considers NaMo to be numero uno. It also extensively disseminated buzzwords like Gujarat Model of Development, Chaiwallah, and Modi's Popularity, in consonance with the pro-industrialization worldview. Moreover, buzzwords like Dynasty Politics and Corruption also appeared among the top ten. However, unlike The Times of India that almost forgot to popularize buzzwords beyond the BJP and Modi in a positive light, The Telegraph disseminated buzzwords like Gujarat Riot, Hindutva, and Lokpal widely. In view of the fact that infiltration is an issue in the eastern part of India, especially from Bangladesh, which Modi and his close associate Amit Shah made a target in their speeches before the election ('ghuspet'⁵⁶), it appeared as a popular buzzword in this newspaper to the exclusion of other newspapers under consideration.

The Hindu, on the other hand, and in line with its liberal and pro-left temperament, was found to have disseminated buzzwords like Lokpal and Hindutva more than Gujarat Model of Development and Chai pe Charcha. In a liberal and balanced fashion, it also popularized Toffee Model, the antithetical buzzword to Gujarat Model, and anti-Congress buzzwords like Corruption and CoalGate. Next, Dainik Jagran, with its anti-Congress and pro-BJP temperament, disseminated Minority, Lokpal, and NaMo as the top three buzzwords. However, this newspaper, although pro-BJP in temperament, popularized Lokpal much more than The Times of India and The Telegraph. However, while they disseminated Modi's Popularity, they also popularized SnoopGate on the other hand. Next, Hindustan Dainik,

⁵⁶ Ghuspet is a Hindi term for illegal refugees. People from Bangladesh, who are Muslims by religion, from time to time enter India in search of job for many decades now. The BJP which is an upper caste Hindu party is ideologically against the migration of poor Muslim Bangladeshis inside the Indian territory.

largely considered to be pro-Congress in temperament, exhibited a combination of buzzwords that began with the likes of Minority and Hindutva, which present the BJP in a negative light. At the same time, it also popularized buzzwords that epitomized the Congress's failure, like Dynasty Politics of the Congress and CoalGate. Lastly, Ananda Bazar Patrika, as being owned by the ABP Group, disseminated buzzwords like Gujarat Model of Development and Chai pe Charcha on one hand, and Hindutva and Corruption on the other. Unlike The Telegraph, where NaMo topped the chart, here it appears much later in the order, also because the BJP in general was not as highly popular in West Bengal as in the rest of India. Thus, these mediated buzzwords were used by the media houses to manufacture news by choosing to disseminate certain buzzwords more often than certain others, depending on the general political context within which each of them came into being, ownership specificities, tacit political preference, and journalistic wisdom.

The third part of the study explores if and how buzzwords had an impact on the political opinion formation of the electorates of India. Firstly, it can be said on the basis of primary data collected in the study that the buzzwords did influence the political opinion formation of the respondents in the study representing the electorate. 108 out of 250 respondents, i.e., 43.2% said that they follow newspapers regularly, and only 29, i.e., 11.6% said that they never follow news. This category of the respondents were asked if they participated in political discussions in public spheres, out of which 34.87% opined that they participate in public spheres regularly, 21.7% said they participated sometimes, 30.4% said that they participate irregularly, and 13.04% said that they never participated in public spheres for political discussions. In this light, barring a negligible percentage of people who do not follow news and newspapers in any form, majority of the respondents were found to be engaging directly and indirectly with political news in newspapers. Next, 46% of the total respondents had opined that mediated buzzwords majorly influence their political opinion formation, 35.5% of the total respondents said that the buzzwords influence them relatively, 13% of the total respondents felt that these buzzwords have minor influence in their political opinion formation, and only 5.6% of the total respondents opined that the buzzwords have no influence on them.

This can also be proved by comparing the list of buzzwords in their order of preference as identified to be disseminated by the newspapers and that of those identified by the respondents to be influential in the formation of their public opinion (see Appendix Table 2).

Also, apart from the ones mentioned in the table, the respondents had identified a number of buzzwords (refer to Chapter V) that, according to them, were under-represented by the newspapers. When asked the source, they opined that they came across them in the newspapers, but less often than they would expect them to appear. The fact that the respondents also identified some buzzwords in their frequency of non-appearance indicates that mediated buzzwords in general were successful in facilitating political engagement and political opinion formation of the respondents (representing the electorate) before the election.

Coming to the next part of the question, i.e., how did the buzzwords influence the political opinion formation of the electorate before the election, it is mention worthy that the buzzwords in general were found to be popular among the respondents exhibiting all parameters of age, gender, caste, class, occupation, education, and region. In other words, no particular category of population was found to be immune to buzzword influence.

It can be observed that NaMo was the most popular as a mediated buzzword to influence the political opinion formation among the age group 31-40, mostly male, middle-skilled, completed school, suburban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Gujarat Model of Development was most popular among the age group 31-40, mostly male, high-skilled, completed master's degree, urban, agnostics, high caste, caste unaware respondents. Next, Chai pe Charcha was the most influential among age group 31-40, mostly male, low-skilled, completed school, rural, Hindu, middle-level caste, caste liberal respondents. Minority was the most popular among the age group 51-60, mostly male, middle-skilled, completed school, suburban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Hindutva appeared to be the most influential among the age group 51-60, mostly male, middle-skilled, completed school, suburban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Dynasty Politics of the Congress was the most popular among the age group 51-60, mostly male, high-skilled, completed master's degree, urban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste liberal respondents.

Corruption was the most influential among the age group 31-40, mostly male, middle-skilled, completed master's degree and higher/specialized degrees, suburban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste unaware respondents. Lokpal gained maximum popularity among the age group 18-30, mostly male, high-skilled, completed school, rural, agnostics, low caste, caste liberal respondents. Modi's Business Links was the most popular among the age group 51-60,

mostly male, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Hindu, middle-level caste, caste liberal respondents. Gujarat Riot gathered maximum momentum among the age group 31-40, mostly male, low-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, suburban and urban, Muslim, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Next, SnoopGate was mostly popular among the age group 31-40, mostly male, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Hindu (with close distribution to other religious communities), high caste, caste conscious respondents. Development appears to have been mostly influential among the age group 18-30, mostly male, middle-skilled, master's degree, suburban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste liberal respondents. Modi's Popularity was the most influential among the age group 18-30, mostly male, middle-skilled, completed school, suburban and urban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. CoalGate was the most popular among the age group 31-40, mostly male, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Hindu and Agnostics, middle-level caste, caste conscious respondents. 2G Scam gained maximum popularity among the age group 31-40, mostly male, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste conscious respondents. Modi's Personal Life was the most influential among the age group 41-50, mostly female, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Technology was the most popular among the age group 31-40, mostly male, high-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Buddhists and Jains, middle-level caste, caste unaware respondents.

Next, Price Rise was the most popular among the age group 51-60, mostly male, low-skilled, basic literate, rural, agnostics, low caste, caste unaware respondents. Black Money gathered maximum momentum among the age group 51-60, mostly male, high-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, agnostics, low caste, caste unaware respondents. Modi Selfie was the most popular among the age group 18-30, mostly female, high-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, Hindu, high caste, caste conscious respondents. Next, Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar was the most influential among the age group 31-40, mostly male, low-skilled, completed school, rural, Hindu, middle-level caste, caste conscious respondents. Rahul Gadhi Nicknames was the most popular among the age group 18-30, mostly female, middle-skilled, completed college, urban, Hindu, high caste, caste liberal respondents. Vote Bank Politics was the popular among the age group 41-50 and 51-60, mostly male, middle-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste conscious respondents. Next, Third Front was the most influential among the age group 51-60, mostly

male, high-skilled, higher/specialized degrees, urban, agnostics, high caste, caste liberal respondents. Lastly, Toffee Model was the most influential for political opinion formation among the age group 31-40, mostly male, low-skilled, basic literate, suburban, agnostics, middle-level caste, caste liberal respondents. Therefore, it can be observed that the mediated buzzwords, through their continuous dissemination by the six newspapers under consideration, influenced, at different degrees, the political opinion formation of the electorate from all social locations.

Thus, this section responds to the three primary focuses of the study and answers the research questions vis-a-vis identification of the mediated buzzwords, relation manufacturing of mediated buzzwords by the media houses, and their influence on the electorate before General Election 2014 in India. The next section will delineate the key findings of the study.

6.2 Key Findings

The central focus of the study has been mediated buzzwords; consequently, the key findings would also stem from a thorough analysis of the buzzwords, their intrinsic characteristic features, and the pattern of their relationship with and influence on other variables in the study, namely, electorate, politics and society.

Mediated buzzwords possess the following immediate characteristics defining them. Firstly, they are emerging as the latest entrant in the news-making terrain as a successful mechanism for reaching out to the electorate by the media. They are simple in language, therefore are easy to understand and identify in the headline or within the news content, for example, Modi Wave or Black Money. Buzzwords like these would appeal to voters across all educational and social backgrounds since they do not involve unfamiliar words. They are also easy to remember and the electorate can directly and personally identify with them. Secondly, they often draw the linguistic structure from a vernacular language, like Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar (Hindi language, one of the official languages in India), or from larger global contexts like CoalGate (taken from American media's reference to the 'Water Gate' Scandal of 1970). Thirdly, these buzzwords are highly mobile and travel fast through word of mouth. This characteristic can be ascertained largely from the fact that the buzzwords gain popularity and influence the political opinion formation of even those electorate who are barely literate but participate in political discussions in public spheres and learn and remember the buzzwords by listening to such discussions. Next, the closer the election period, more is the usage of the

buzzwords by the media houses. As found in the study, the buzzwords started surfacing only 7 to 8 months before the election and gradually gathered pace. According to the study, the buzzwords started appearing with higher frequency as the election came closer; they gathered maximum momentum just one or two months before the election, since the entire country turned into a political hotbed during this period. Thus, the buzzwords both facilitate in creating the milieu and also explore the political terrain already created before the election to encourage political engagement of the electorate. Also, the buzzwords are low in news content but high in symbolic value and rhetoric; for e.g., a buzzword like SnoopGate itself does not say much about the issue and the context, but it has a tacit provocative element that introduces the subject of stalking into an electorate's mind. When this buzzword becomes headline, such provocation would enable the electorate to read the full news to find out who is stalking whom. On the contrary, if the newspaper had published the same news (on Modi snooping on a young working woman in Gujarat) without incorporating any buzzword and only stating the basic fact of the news in the headline, it might, firstly, not attract as many readers' attention, and secondly, the header being a tell-all, hardly any reader would read the entire piece of news. In this light, the buzzwords are facilitating more political engagement for the electorate by telling less about an issue, but encapsulating it in essence. Also, the buzzwords possess high impressionistic quotient in comparison to issues; for e.g., a buzzword like Toffee Model drives the sarcastic element of the coinage home with the word 'Toffee'. Toffee is often associated with playful activity of children, and therefore with frivolity. Similarly, the buzzword Toffee Model was coined to mock Modi's developmental model by his oppositions who considered his economic developmental claims and plans unrealistic. The sarcasm and intended frivolity came out easily through the buzzword Toffee Model as against Gujarat Model, since a reader would be reminded of something as non-serious as a toffee every time Modi's developmental issues would be discussed.

Next, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, and Chai pe Charcha emerged as the most popular and influential buzzwords being identified through newspaper reports and by the electorate. All three of them corresponded to the BJP and its prime ministerial candidate for General Elections 2014, Narendra Modi. The effectiveness of the buzzwords could also be proved a posteriori by the fact that Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India after General Elections 2014. Then, in a country like India, buzzwords have strong communal and caste overtone. Buzzwords like Hindutva, NaMo, and Minority bear heavy communal

overtone that are largely Hindu in nature. On the other hand, buzzwords like Vote Bank Politics throw light on the fact that caste continues to be a strong reference point for voting in India, a feature that is kept alive by the media in its pattern of buzzword dissemination. These imply that politics and religion have strong interconnection, and the media not just acknowledges this but also facilitates the relation through mediated buzzwords before national elections. Moreover, the buzzwords appeal to the electorate cutting across social locations. As found out in the study and explained earlier in Chapter V, the buzzwords became the most popular and influential among the following profiles of the respondents (representing the electorate): mostly male respondents between the age group of 31 and 40, who have completed master's degree and also school education, hail from sub-urban and urban regions in India, are middle-skilled, with Hinduism and agnostics as religious preferences, belong to high- and middle-castes, and are caste conscious and caste liberals.

With reference to the top five buzzwords, namely, NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, Chai pe Charcha, Minority, and Hindutva, it appears from the study that these buzzwords had the biggest impacts on respondents between the age group of 31 and 40, followed by 51 and 60, middle-skilled male respondents having completed their school education, hailing from the suburbs, high caste Hindus with visible caste consciousness. In this light, all the buzzwords in general had larger popularity and appeal, but the top five buzzwords had relatively restrictive popularity. However, it is interesting to note that India, in spite of being a country with only 73% literacy rate, electorate with just school education comprise the category of people experiencing maximum influence of the buzzwords for the formation of political opinion. This is largely due to the fact that a significant number of the electorate, as also found in the study, participate in political public spheres and identify the mediated buzzwords by listening to people reading newspapers out to them in such spaces. Moreover, in this regard, it is crucial to note that there is a difference between literacy and education since being literate only means the ability to sign one's own name and not necessarily being able to read and write.

Having identified the intrinsic characteristic features of the mediated buzzwords, this section will look into the pattern of their relationship with and influence on other variables in the study, namely electorate (representing society) and politics. Firstly, mediated buzzwords embody the inter-relationship among society, politics, economy, and media. This inter-relationship has been studied extensively by Noam Chomsky and Herman in their Propaganda

Model (1988) that this research paper discusses and adapts in Chapter II: Review of Literature. Mediated buzzwords are disseminated by media houses publishing the newspapers. These media houses are often owned by private businesspersons or corporate conglomerates, as mentioned before. Also, occasionally, these private owners of media houses have explicit or tacit political connection or affiliation. In this light, at the structural level, media houses are exposed to the country's politics and economic system and possess mutual relationship. Secondly, media not only possesses a close structural relationship with politics and economy, the media-politics-economy interface conditions or affects the influence of the buzzwords on the electorate. This largely happens if the ownership and political connection of the media houses start influencing the editorial choices of the news they publish. In other words, as mentioned in the previous chapters, it has been found that the functioning of media houses in the study was influenced by the economic and political factors that manifested through the type of mediated buzzwords each of them chose to coin and disseminate. Even tacit political preference and economic interests of the media houses can potentially compromise the dissemination of news, which may translate into denial of full information to the electorate, as espoused by Chomsky in the Propaganda Model (1988). As found in the study, mediated buzzwords reflected upon the political and economic undercurrents that media houses in the context were subject to; however, it would be unjust to conclude that the buzzwords were completely co-opted by the vagaries of the latter. This point will be further explained at the end of this section.

Next, relationship among media, politics and economy manifests in the fact that media is influenced by the political and economic situations and changes in the country. This is because majority of the media houses in India are now privately owned and many of the private owners or business-people enjoy strong political positions in the country. Some of them have institutional titles like ministers of parliament, while some others have strong friendships or professional relationships with political parties. Either way, this fact influences the functioning of media houses i.e. dissemination of news.

Therefore, it is important to look at how the issue of ownership in India has changed over the years and how that change is related to the changing politics and economic changes in the country. Historically speaking, issue of media ownership in India can be divided in three parts- during freedom struggle, during Emergency and during New Economic Policy in the 1990s.

During India's freedom struggle print media was the backbone of the independence movement and it from time to time shaped up Indian politics. Right from India's first war of independence in 1857, vernacular newspapers (Hindi/Urdu/Bengali) journals like Samachar Sudhanshan or Payam-e-Azadi played prominent roles, supported the struggle for freedom, and exhorted people to throw out the British rulers. This provoked the British to introduce tough acts like vernacular press act, gagging act, imposing restrictions on vernacular newspapers and journals. For similar reasons Amrita Bazar Patrika, one of the highest circulated newspapers was forced to close down its office in Jessore and moved its base to Kolkata after it faced tremendous ire from the British Government.

In fact many of the tall leaders of freedom movement themselves turned into journalists like Mahatma Gandhi (Harijan), Madan Mohan Malviya (Hindustan) or Bal Gangadhar Tilak (Kesri) and used press to propagate their ideas to the masses. So this was the political situation within which the press/media functioned during the colonial period. Most of the newspaper under review had their humble beginning during the British period, especially Ananda Bazar Patrika (1922), Hindustan Dainik (1936), Dainik Jagaran (1942). Dainik Jagaran was launched in 1942 during Quit India movement.

The second stage was that of Emergency. Emergency (1975-77) means in India a period when orders were bestowed upon the Prime Minister, the authority to rule by decree, allowing elections to be suspended and civil liberties to be curbed. Incidentally after Emergency the Government tightened its control on the media which had a reputation of being free and lively.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi soon after declaring emergency took control of the press, prohibiting reporting of domestic and international news. The Government expelled several foreign correspondents and withdrew accreditation of many Indian journalists. During the 21 month long emergency many national media gave up the battle for free and fair media. Their pages were filled up with fawning accounts of national events, flattering pictures of Sanjay Gandhi and Indira Gandhi and lucrative Government advertisement. This was the first time the importance of government advertisement came into picture as Chomsky pointed out and the newspapers which decided to go with the Government were showered with advertisements. Two of the newspapers, The Indian Express and The Statesman fought against Indira Gandhi's emergency, by either keeping editorial page blank or by publishing

famous quotes from Rabindranath Tagore. These two newspapers faced flaks and were blacklisted by the administration.

Largely, Indira Gandhi used three methods to stifle media: allocation of Government ads, shotgun merger of news agencies and use of fear arousal techniques on newspaper/journals, editors, publishers, journalists, individual shareholders. The Indian press hugely depends on the Government advertisement and without it, to run any newspaper would be impossible. Mrs. Gandhi played this card successfully.

In the early 1990s India with Narshima Rao as Prime Minister entered a new phase in terms of economic policies. The shift from Nehruvian socialism to New Economic policies marks a watershed moment in the Indian history. With liberalization, privatization and globalization of Indian media, more money entered the Indian market. In the structural set up of a newspaper, strict divisions began to emerge, where the owner decided the content/selection of news while a journalist editor was merely reduced to an employee with no power in news selection. Profit maximization became the sole goal of the owners of the media house owners and news became only a commodity. A new concept emerged in terms of media elite – a person who owns both political and economic powers. From an observer, media became participants (took part in ‘making news’). There was news that India had to go for new economic policies as there was a serious foreign debt crisis which led India to borrow substantially from the IMF and satisfy loan conditions by opening up Indian markets to foreign competition and foreign investment. The period also did see massive influx of foreign fund in the Indian media business.

So, it can be observed that the contemporary politics and economy which from time to time shaped up the ownership structure of the Indian media and media definitely did walk a long way since the day when a political leader was its editor (Gandhi). Presently most of the editors are economic leaders (Ambani) with huge business like Benett Colemann or the Telegraph. It is the economic editor who has a larger say than the journalist editor – and it is quite clear from the pattern of buzzword selection by most of the newspapers. So here I would like to add that since the study focuses on how media disseminates buzzwords and these buzzwords impacts the electorate in their political opinion formation, buzzword is the instrument through which media’s relationship with politics and economy has to be understood here.

Next, as it emerged in the study, a sixth filter, i.e., anti-Islam also worked along with other five filters espoused by Chomsky and Herman. Anti-Islam as a growing sentiment in India before General Election 2014 has been epitomized in the mediated buzzwords popularized by the newspapers under consideration, e.g., NaMo, Hindutva, Minority Appeasement, and Gujarat Riot. NaMo, as already discussed in the study, bears strong Hindu religious anecdote, while Minority has been clubbed with the term 'Appeasement'. Appeasement by definition means granting concession to potential enemies for maintaining peace. Also, Gujarat Riot emerged as a negative reference to the Muslims before the election. In this light, the study identifies the sixth filter that has acted in identifying and popularizing the mediated buzzwords. Linked to this argument is the issue of professionalism of journalists. As already mentioned in Chapter II, Chomsky and Herman have been criticized for not considering professionalism and independence of journalists. As it emerges in the study, journalists cannot exercise professionalism unless that falls in line with the organization policy of the media house they work for. Here, Chomsky differentiates between elite media and quality press. Elite media refers to those media houses that are balanced in their worldviews (which presumably would allow more journalistic professionalism), and quality press refers to those media houses which are more populist in temperament (as a result the journalists here also have to follow populist ideology in line with the media houses). Chomsky (1987) notes that the distorting filters as discussed in Chapter II are stronger in case of quality press than elite media. In the American media, New York Times and Washington Post are referred to as elite media, whereas The Boston Globe and The Los Angeles Times are more of quality press; similarly, in Germany, Sueddeutsche Zeitung represents elite media, and Bild is all about quality press. Here, in this context, as observed in the study, mediated buzzwords disseminated by The Times of India are more conditioned by the filters and as a result exhibit populist worldview (with most popular buzzwords like NaMo, Gujarat Model of Development, and others), whereas The Hindu exhibits more balanced editorial policy (with buzzwords like Lokpal, among other less popular ones). Fourthly, mediated buzzwords were identified both in terms of frequency of appearance and those that were chosen by the electorate. A gap between buzzwords as identified in newspapers (media) and those surfacing through interviews of the subjects (electorate) shows that media chose to prioritize certain buzzwords over certain others. This further underscores the media-politics-economy interface that enables the media to highlight some buzzwords and underplay the rest even when they make news.

Sixthly, mediated buzzwords have both direct and indirect impacts on the electorate. This is linked to the level of education and literacy and also the difference between the two. Those with education can read newspapers and would come under direct influence of the buzzwords; however, those without education but with only literacy (can only sign) would be indirectly influenced by the buzzwords. Indirect influence happens through the participation of the electorate in public sphere, both in rural and urban spaces; e.g., people gather at tea stalls and informally discuss the political situation in the state, especially before a national election. Newspapers constitute a significant part of such discussions, where those who cannot read much, listen to a person reading out that day's headlines and important news reports to them. During these occasions, buzzwords are read out and later discussed at length. Since the buzzwords are easy to remember, they stay in the memory of the ones participating in such discussions in the public spheres. Next, linked to the previous finding, mediated buzzwords, although analyzed only in newspapers, appear to have a larger impact when discussed and deliberated upon in the public sphere. This could further be proved by one of the findings in the study that the buzzwords in general were popular and influential on respondents cutting across all educational backgrounds, to the extent that few of them like Price Rise and Toffee Model enjoyed maximum popularity among the basic literate. Having explained the difference between literacy and education before, this suggests massive popularity of political public spheres as core spaces for discussing and engaging with everyday politics of the state. As a matter of fact, the BJP tried cashing in on this with its Chai pe Charcha campaign strategy before General Elections 2014, which became one of the most popular mediated buzzwords disseminated by the newspapers.

Next, as found in the study, the buzzwords were more popular among men than women. This is connected to the buzzwords being popularized both through direct reading in newspapers and listening to political discussions in public spheres. In India, men participate more in public spheres than women. Therefore, even if educated, a significant number of women do not participate in political public spheres like their male counterparts. As a result, as mentioned in Chapter V, they identify with the buzzwords either by reading in newspapers or by listening to the discussions of the male members of the family at domestic spaces. This indicates that the public sphere is still dominated by men in India. Lastly, notwithstanding the media-politics-economy inter-relation and tacit influence of politics and economy on mediated buzzwords disseminated by the newspapers, the issue of autonomy of the media

cannot be ignored. In spite of close relations between media-politics-economy, the media does not turn into a puppet in the hands of the other two. This could also be observed from the buzzwords generated by newspapers like Dainik Jagran and Hindustan Dainik, newspapers which would disseminate buzzwords apart from those reflecting on their tacit political preferences. Media in India still functions as an autonomous independent institution, else buzzwords like Lokpal, Gujarat Riot, and Corruption would not gather momentum and become popular. Also, as found in the study through the analysis of mediated buzzwords influencing the electorate, India, irrespective of low literacy levels in comparison to the developed countries, exhibits high level of dynamism and receptivity within the electorate as politically conscious and informed voters actively participate in public spheres. Although influence of these buzzwords is subject to a level of electoral participation conditioned by, as Habermas puts it, access to resources, social status, and cultural background, the final analysis suggests that the buzzwords gained popularity and influence across different social locations. As a result, public sphere in India still functional; since media still enjoys relative autonomy. So far media is not completely dependent on political and economic elite and editorial independence of the media exists, the public will reproduce political arguments and counter arguments and public sphere will remain relevant. Therefore, the agency of the media as an institution and continuous presence of the public sphere are the two key factors that facilitate the inter-communication between media houses as the disseminator of news and the public as the receiver of news in India.

6.3 Generalization

The study on mediated buzzwords in their relation to politics, economy and society has been focussed on India. In terms of the key findings of the study, this section will now try make larger generalization by locating the relevance of mediated buzzwords in electoral politics and governance in South Asia. It is important to look at the major findings with reference to India and examine if similar arguments can be drawn for other South Asian countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.

One of the first important findings for India is that mediated buzzwords are simple in language, therefore are easy to understand. Because of this feature, the buzzwords gain popularity and influence the political opinion formation of even those electorate who are barely literate. This generalization can be extended from the Indian context to the South Asian

countries due to the fact that adult literacy rate in India (74.04%⁵⁷), including other South Asian countries (unlike Sri Lanka⁵⁸ where literacy rate is 92.7%) like Pakistan⁵⁹ (55%), Nepal⁶⁰ (65%), Bangladesh (55.8%⁶¹), and Bhutan⁶² (52.8%) are similar. Since the mediated buzzwords, as found in the study, appealed to even the illiterate and basic literate electorate of India, they are likely to appeal to the majority of the population in these countries as well, with a significant section of the population as barely literate or illiterate.

Secondly, generalization can be drawn in terms of the impact of the mediated buzzwords on electorate of various social locations (including different levels of literacy discussed above). This study indicates that the popularity of the buzzwords were not restricted to one community of people in India only, but gained momentum among electorate with divergent social profiles, like people of different class, gender, language and region, caste and religion. Among all the South Asian countries considered here, socio-cultural and linguistic diversity in India is the most. Given that, it is likely that these mediated buzzwords would influence electorate of different social locations in other countries as well, which have lesser socio-cultural variants than India, e.g., in Pakistan⁶³, there are 72 languages identified till now in the country, in Bangladesh⁶⁴ it is 41, while in India there are 780⁶⁵ languages that people speak in.

Thirdly, the study proves that these buzzwords became popular in India also through word of mouth in political public spheres, apart from newspapers. Also, sometimes in these public spheres one person would read out the newspaper (where the buzzwords would be located) and others listening would pick up the buzzwords from there. Existence of a political public sphere indicates towards the importance of communities in everyday existence for the Indians. This is also linked to the social structure of the country, which is largely collective. Other South Asian countries in the context are also collective in their social structure with strong sense of community bonding and participation. As a result, it is likely that these

⁵⁷ Census Report 2011, India

⁵⁸ <http://www.lk.undp.org/content/srilanka/en/home/countryinfo.html>

⁵⁹ www.unesco.org/uii/litbase/?menu=14&programme=66

⁶⁰ National Population and Housing Census 2011

⁶¹ Bangladesh Literacy Survey, June, 2011, Industry and Labour Wing, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning

⁶² en.unesco.org/countries/bhutan in 2005

⁶³ <http://www.ethnologue.com/country/PK>

⁶⁴ <http://www.ethnologue.com/country/BD>

⁶⁵ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/books/780-languages-spoken-in-india-20-died-out-in-last-50-years/story-Y3by8ooYbXRA77xP2AEWKN.html>

countries would also provide the space for sustenance of such political public spheres. Since public sphere in India is one of the most crucial locales that popularized the political influence of mediated buzzwords before election, larger generalization can be drawn that they would act similarly in case of other South Asian countries as well.

Next, this study concludes that mediated buzzwords in India were more popular among men than women. It attributes this difference to the patriarchal social structure in India (skewed sex ratio: 940, Population Census 2011, India) that confers more access to resources and freedom of mobility and participation in the public spaces to men than women. Other South Asian countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka show similar gender differential as well, with skewed sex ratio, high female mortality, and lower literacy level among women; for e.g., in Pakistan⁶⁶, youth literacy rate among men is 79.1%, whereas among women it is 61.5%. In this light, it can be drawn that the buzzwords in other South Asian countries, like India, would impact more men than women.

However, having discussed the salient generalizations drawn on the impact of mediated buzzwords on India and other South Asian countries, it is also mentionworthy here that the pattern and specific ways of such impact would differ from one South Asian country to another. The South Asian countries in the context are similar in terms of socio-political composition and historical experiences, but they are not identical. Each country would have its specificities vis-a-vis electoral composition, media system, and political choices for the electorate, which would heavily define the pattern and extent at which mediated buzzwords would influence the political opinion formation of its electorate, especially before an election.

6.4 Scope for Further Study

This section enlists various scopes that this study leaves for further research. Firstly, the most obvious and relevant scope is to explore the role of mediated buzzwords in electoral politics and governance in other South Asian countries by taking each of them separately. Secondly, linked to the previous point is the scope of exploring the role of media in electoral politics and governance with another variable other than mediated buzzwords and compare the impact of these two variables. Next, influence of mediated buzzwords can be analyzed in Global South at large, shifting the focus beyond South Asia to other BRIC and IBSA countries.

⁶⁶ www.unicef.org/infobycountry/pakistan_pakistan_statistics.html

Firstly, the impact of mediated buzzwords can be analyzed on countries with higher literacy rate and be compared with this study that dealt with India, a country with lower literacy rate. In other words, influence of mediated buzzwords between developed and developing countries can be compared. Such comparison has potential for both validating mediated buzzwords as a universal comparative variable for studying media's role in election or indicating towards the emergence of a new variable altogether. Also, the interconnection between media, politics, and economy can be studied further for analyzing the evolution of media in terms of structure and function.

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Table 32: Issues Underplayed by the Media

Appendix

8.1 Most Popular Buzzwords among the Electorate

Table 1

Buzzwords Identified through Newspapers	Total Appearance between November 2013 and May 2014	Buzzwords Identified through Interviewing the Electorate	Considered as the Most Popular and Influential Buzzword among a Population of 200
NaMo	76	NaMo	158
Gujarat Model of Development	74	Gujarat Model of Development	127
Corruption	71	Chai pe Charcha (Debate over Tea)	122
Chai pe Charcha (Debate over Tea)	64	Minority Appeasement	112
Hindutva	64	Hindutva	107
Narendra Modi Nicknames	49	Corruption	95
Personal Profile of Politicians	43	Lokpal (Ombudsman Bill)	87
Dynasty Politics	42	Modi's Popularity	81
Minority Appeasement	41	Dynasty Politics	76
Lokpal (Ombudsman Bill)	36	Modi's Business Links	65
Corporate-Politico Connection	29	Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	62
Gujarat Riot	25	Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar	58
Rahul Gandhi Nicknames	21	CoalGate	44

Ab Ki Baar/Modi Sarkar (This Time/Modi Government)	19	2G Scam	41
Common Man	15	Modi Selfie	37