
COVERAGE BIAS OF BANGLADESH TELEVISION MEDIA: A PORTRAYAL OF POWER AND POLITICS

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Abstract

After the fall of autocratic regime of military ruler in 1990, the political governments in Bangladesh has created platform of media expansion through 'privatization policy'. The only state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) was in operation till mid-1990s but the number of privately owned satellite channels has rose to a few dozens, at present. This growth is perceived abnormal in terms of role and professionalism of the channels to the society since their affiliation with the political parties is critically viewed for managing license. This study aims to explore the coverage bias of the TV channels through analyzing the contents of 130 reports selected purposively from three TV channels, both the state-run and corporate owned. It reveals that 51 reports (39%) concentrated on power, politics and elites; the highest thematic coverage by the selected channels. The ruling party got the highest coverage where the Prime Minister, Ministers, Members of the Parliament and the senior political leaders were projected with importance. The reports were mostly male dominated and urban focused. Thus, the television channels portrayed the powerful and influential classes neglecting the common people who represent an empire of the dominant classes in Bangladesh.

Keywords: *Coverage, bias, power, politics, influential class, elite, dominance, content*

Selepas kejatuhan rejim autokratik pemerintahan ketenteraan pada tahun 1991, kerajaan pemerintah di Bangladesh telah membina satu landasan pembesaran melalui polisi penswastaan. Satu-satunya televisyen milik pemerintah iaitu Bangladesh Television (BTV) telah beroperasi sehingga pertengahan 1990 namun stesen televisyen swasta banyak didirikan sehingga kini. Perkembangan ini di lihat tidak selaras dari aspek peranan dan profesionalisma saluran terhadap masyarakat kerana kefahaman mereka dengan parti politik dilihat secara serius untuk mengurus sebuah lesen. Kajian ini bertujuan meneroka liputan yang bias terhadap saluran televisyen melalui analisis kandungan. Sebanyak 130 laporan telah dipilih secara bertujuan dari 3 saluran televisyen kerajaan dan swasta. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan 51 laporan (39%) tertumpu pada kuasa, politik dan elit yang mendapat liputan paling tinggi mengikut tema. Parti pemerintah mendapat liputan paling tinggi di mana Perdana Menteri, ahli-ahli parlimen dan pemimpin politik dikira sebagai penting. Laporan lebih pada dominasi gender lelaki dan tertumpu di bandar. Saluran televisyen memaparkan mereka dari kelas yang berkuasa dan berpengaruh dan tidak mengendahkan mereka dalam kalangan orang biasa yang mewakili empayar kelas dominan di Bangladesh.

Introduction

Bangladesh is a South Asian country with about 169 million (est.) people in an area of 148,460 sq km (World Factbook: 2016). The literacy rate is 61.5 in terms of the population age 15 and above having the ability to read and write. Of the total population, 34.3% consists of the urban population while the remaining ones are the rural. Recently, the World Bank has

ranked Bangladesh as the lower middle income country. Like other developing countries, Bangladesh has been experiencing the rise of mass media, especially the television channels. Television is considered a significant medium of communication in the country especially for the 38.5 percent people who are deprived of education. In the recent years, Bangladesh is experiencing industrializations and corporatization. The country has achieved some Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) especially in improving women and child health, poverty reduction, universal primary education and so on. The progress among the south Asian countries is remarkable. With the expansion of industries and corporate organizations, mass media, especially the satellite channels are expanding rapidly in the country.

Why TV is Important in Bangladesh

Television has the ability to reach the audience with news, views, education, entertainment and motivational programmes. Due to its audio-visual characteristics, it can draw attention of the people widely even those having little or no formal educational background. More than half a century ago, Bond (1954, p. 288) wrote, “Television has the facilities to become one of journalism’s ace reporters. It can bring a unique dimension of news to its audience—sound plus sight, authenticity plus immediacy, variety plus intimacy.”

TV has changed the traditional way of covering a fact, event or issue by its forerunning media. “Television was invented as a result of scientific and technical research. Its power as a medium of news and entertainment was then so great that it altered all preceding media of news and entertainment” (Williams: 2004, p. 3). The most powerful tool of TV is using the ‘visualization’ of a fact or event. It can be said that visualization of a fact is more powerful than the thousands of words. What cannot be described with thousands of words might be led to understand the audience with a single video footage of TV news. TV is ‘superior to the print media’ due to its magic power of telling and presenting a fact or event meaningfully and successfully (Acharya: 1987, p. 6). McLuhan (1994) states that TV has hit many media very hard with its magical power. After the invention of TV, print media, even Radio are losing appeal to the audience.

Of the multi-dimensional contents of TV, news is one of the most powerful and attractive one. The TV has the power and the ability to bring the audience to the spot of an event as if the audience might think they were experiencing the same even from the spot of

an incident. The TV news presents some key aspects of an event so that the audience can understand the significance and the dimensions of the fact. Due to audio-visual effects of TV news, the facts get lively presented to the audience and they get involved with the news. Thus, TV news satisfies the inquisitiveness of the audience's mind through presenting video footage and audio description. The TV news is a dangerously powerful and influential political institution serving the interests of the powerful class of a society (Hallin: 1986, p. 26).

In the perspective of Bangladesh, TV is a very powerful tool of communication having the ability and access to reach about half of that population who is deprived of formal education. As the TV messages are delivered with dialogue, music, words, sentences and video footages, they can easily be communicative and understandable to the people who cannot read or write. As a mass medium, TV has some other benefits, which include: different sizes and portability, affordability, operates on batteries and solar energy, and low setup costs. The TV can be used as an instrument to inform large masses of widely dispersed rural and semi-literate or illiterate people about new ideas, services, or products that can improve their lives. Rahman (2007) argues that, in the perspectives of immediacy, timeliness and credibility, the audiences have additional interests and attention to the TV news. He also states that TV cannot cover an issue or affair in detailed due to limitation of time.

Expansion of Satellite TV Channels and Viewership in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is experiencing booming of satellite TV channels for the last two decades. Before 1990s, whatever was meant by the media in the country was the dominance of newspapers and magazines. During that period, only two state-run broadcast channels, the Bangladesh Television (BTV) and Bangladesh Betar were in operation as the electronic media. Despite the huge geographic coverage ability, the aforesaid broadcast channels couldn't reach the masses in the expected level due to control by the government.

The policy of the political governments coming to the state power after the abolishment of the autocratic regime of the military ruler in 1990 has facilitated the atmosphere of media expansion in the country. In the early 1990s, Cable TV was introduced and it became popular quickly. In 1991 and 1996 elections, both the major political parties; the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) called for a

free, fair and democratic broadcasting system under an autonomous authority. As part of their privatization policy, the first measure toward privatization of Television was, however, taken in March 1999, authorizing privately owned Ekushey TV to go on air by the end of 1999 (Islam & Marjan: 2013). An estimate of the Ministry of Information shows that there are forty one registered private television channels in the country of which two are temporarily banned (Poriprekkhit: 2016, p-13).

These channels are regarded as the medium of entertainment and news. The TV entertainment was initiated by the ATN Bangla, the first entertainment channel in the country launched in 1997 (Nurunnahar: 2016, p. 78). Channeli, the first digital Bangla channel, launched in 1999 and ran 24 hours programme a day. With the trend of expansion of BTV, the sole state-run TV in the country has also launched a satellite channel titled BTV World in 2005. Thus, the growing satellite channels are functioning as the sources of news, views, information, educational and entertainment programmers (Wahid: 2007).

With the expansion of the satellite television channels, the viewership trend is also on the rise though there is no concrete data on the same. According to a report of Dataaxis (2013), 26 percent households possess a cable TV while the state-run BTV has country-wide coverage ability and viewership. An estimate of cable operators association and private channels association shows that cable network has reached to 84 percent households in the country (Poriprekkhit: 2016). However, according to a national media survey, more than 91 million people in Bangladesh use to watch TV channels (Nurunnahar: 2016, p-80).

In a keynote presented in a seminar held in Dhaka, The Chief Information Commissioner of Bangladesh, Professor Md. Golam Rahman (2016) mentioned that the expansion of the media in Bangladesh should be considered from the viewpoints of quality, responsibility and credibility rather than quantitative growth. The study, though in a micro level, attempts to investigate the coverage bias and portrayal of power and politics by the TV media in Bangladesh.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study was to comprehend the coverage bias in the news programmes of the Television media in Bangladesh.

The specific objectives of the study include to:

- Figure out TV channels' inclination on covering various events, issues and affairs
- Explore the link between the content coverage and power structure of the society
- Comprehend tendency of portrayal of power and politics against ideological affiliation of the channels
- Analyze the role of media in terms of sidelining and mainstreaming against the depiction of reality
- Understand the new empire of the media in terms of advocacy for colonialism and other forms of domination in the society

Literature Review

The liberal pluralists think that the mass media promote to assemble the opinions of all the classes of people of a given society. They view that the media should stand on its own structure, policy and professional standards which are free from bias and control of the powerful and influential quarters.

In contrast, the Marxist theorists consider that media perform to sustain the dominance of the powerful class in the society. And, all the arrangements of media operation are being carried out centering this power practice in the society. The content of the media is designed and disseminated reflecting the perspectives and interests of the influential and dominant class. According to the classical Marxists, the influential and dominant classes control the society through dominating the economy of society. The owners of the media, being the powerful elites, control the media through formulating favourable policy. This policy mainly sets the types of news and ideology of the media.

In analyzing political economy, a new dimension is added by Herman and Chomsky (1988) through their 'five filtering' approach discussed in the book 'Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media' of which the third filter concerns with the extensive influence of media on a range of other wealthy and powerful groups. Including governments, mainstream political parties, high-profile pressure groups and large-scale corporate interests, such groups are able to use their wealth and power to manipulate flows of information to the media (Hodkinson: 2011, p-119).

The TV channels in Bangladesh take varied interests in covering different issues. Islam and Marjan (*ibid*) argue that TV news puts more emphasis on face and protocol values

of politician, bureaucrats and the persons of higher social status while people's voices are neglected. Haider (2007) conducted a content analysis on three private TV channels in the country where he found the political news getting the highest priority. He also showed that the coverage was slanted towards the political ideology of the channels. One of the significant aspects of the TV news coverage was that they prioritized the protocol values rather than news values by giving importance on the certain Members of the Parliament and Ministers. These findings can be supported with the arguments of Rahman & Alam (2013, p. 202) who revealed in a study that the reasons behind the mushroom growth of television channels is the practice of using them as a tool for ideological persuasion by the ruling class. Ferdous (2009, p. 18) debates that Bangladesh media are pro-elite having urban focus and male-dominance in the content. The media, changing their nature towards free-market economy, do not show much interest to capture the struggles of the underprivileged classes and the common masses, who are the overwhelming majority in the country. Rahman (2004) mentioned that the TV channels showed inconsequentiality in selecting news items and stereotypical tendency of covering and presenting news rather than the real values of the same.

In every stage of national development, the role of TV is indispensable. In the Western Countries, and even in the neighboring country India, satellite channels are playing pioneer role in promoting socio-economic, political and cultural development. But this practice is still a far cry in Bangladesh. A gap in matured understanding by political leaders, poor socio-economic development and the absence of a long-term visionary plan about electronic media are the major obstacles to the path of serving the interest of the mass people (Rahman: 2006, p.18).

In a study titled 'Credibility of News and Expansion of Television Media in Bangladesh', Nipu (2016, p. 39) argues that credibility of television news in Bangladesh faces some challenges including presentation of inaccurate information as a result of unhealthy competition, affiliation with the political parties and dependence on the corporate branding. He also points out that there is no mentionable variation in the news bulletins of the on-growing channels (*Ibid*). Ahsan (2016, p. 53) argues that there are some certain reasons for which diversity in TV reporting is almost absent in the country, of which

‘syndicated journalism’ is a major cause for which many journalists share and use the video footages captured by a single camera.

So, in this backdrop of TV journalism in the country, the present study has attempted to comprehend the tendency of the TV news focus and explore their relation with the power and politics.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the present study bases on some established perspectives of media and communication which ideally include: Normative Media Theory, Agenda Setting Function of the Media, Power Theory by Michel Foucault and Marxist Perspective. According to the normative theory of the mass media, the role of the media has been defined as the ‘social responsibility’ through their ‘watchdog’ functions. According to V. Held (1970), the role of media is usually determined through the vote of ‘Majoritarian’ reflecting expectation of the majority people in the society while in the ‘Unitarian’ notion, the role of the same is defined based on a particular class of the people having power and influence. Public interest is really difficult to understand though the matters of public welfare should be the priority of media content. However, McQuail (2000:46) emphasized on four objectives of the role of media in a democratic society:

- surveillance in the cases of violation of social and moral discipline in the society and access to information without interference
- timely criticism of the functions of society and its organs
- encourage people’s participation through access to information
- transmission of values and culture of particular groups to generations

According to Kurt Lang & Gladys Engel Lang, the agenda setting of media denotes putting importance on those issues and affairs what they think important and beneficial to people while they similarly ignore those issues which they think less important. Thus, the media formulate the framework of people’s thinking (Lowery & Defleur: 1988).

Power exists in all the core elements of a society. But power is not a matter of implementation rather it can be established through interaction. Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society (Foucault: 1980). The

economy is the base of society by which everything is controlled. In the media system, it is also true that the influential and powerful class control the media where the class is ultimately reflected (Marx: 1859 [Translated in 1903]).

In light of the Marxism, the mass media can be understood as owned by the powerful class to serve their interests through depicting the dominant's ideology by ignoring the opposite political philosophy and portraying false consciousness among the mass people.

The main theme of the propaganda model is to influence the targeted group of people or audience on the opinion and agenda of a particular group of people. In the book, 'Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy of the Mass Media', Edward S. Herman & Noam Chomsky viewed that media propagates for protecting the interests of the influential class in the society.

The hegemony paradigm of Gramsci plays a central role in understanding the functions of mass media, and hegemony is becoming powerful day by day. Hegemony brings conflict between mind and central opinion among the audience. The value of mass media and the attributed power of the people are related to the concept. This is because Gramsci viewed to observe the role of media with the hegemony of the elite class having intelligence, power and influence (Gramsci: 1971).

McPhail (2014) explains how mass media are leading to a new concept of empire. It does not necessarily mean that the electronic media like television channels support the military power or land grabbing but is also based on the controlling and directing the mind of the people. According to him, the socialization process is hijacked by the media empires rather than the colonial empires of days gone by.

Methodology of the Study

The study is qualitative in nature, however, some quantitative features have been evident through conducting of the 'content analysis' of the selected TV news. As a means of secondary data gathering, literature review has been conducted. In the media studies, especially to comprehend the nature of the coverage, content analysis is a scholarly approach of studying the content of communication. The method is popular with mass media

researchers because it is an efficient way to investigate the content of the media as per the opinion of the communication experts. Walizer and Wienir (1978) defined ‘content analysis’ as ‘any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information’. Krippendorff (2004, cited in Dominick et.al:2011) defined it as a research technique for making replicable and valid references from data in their context. Kerlinger’s (2000) stated: “Content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication in a *systematic, objective, and quantitative* manner for the purpose of measuring variables (cited in Dominick et.al: 2011, p. 159). Lasswell (1948, p. 117), through his famous definition of communication, framed the base of the content analysis by stating: “Who says what, to whom, why, to what extent and with what effect? Wahlstrom (1992, p. 301) argues that content analysis determines the meaning of the message component and the cultural content. So, based on the aforesaid perspectives, both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the selected TV news will be analyzed.

Selection of the TV Channels

The study aims to understand the coverage bias in the TV channels of the country through selecting a representative sampling from the existing TV channels. Out of the registered 39 Channels, three Channels i.e. *ATN Bangla, Somoy TV* and *Bangladesh Television (BTV)* were selected for the study and a total of 130 news items (reports) have been analyzed from the broadcast delivery of news on the channels on 10.06.2016 and 12.06.2016 purposively. The TV channels were selected based on the diversity mentioned below:

- i. ATN Bangla was selected since it was one of the first generation satellite channels of the country.
- ii. BTV was selected since it is a state-owned terrestrial and first ever Television Channel of Bangladesh.
- iii. Somoy TV was selected amongst the new generation news-based TV channels.

Data Gathering Format

A data gathering format was developed for extracting information from the analyzed news items. Data were gathered as per the TV channel, date and slot of news.

Findings

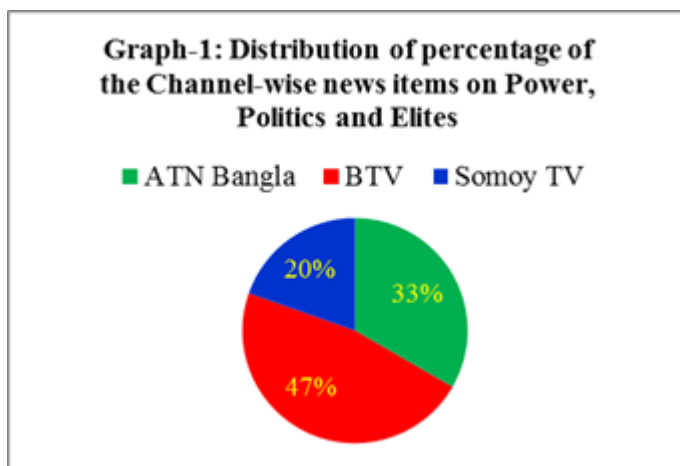
Themes of Coverage: The study reveals that out of the total 130 new items, 39 percent (51 news items) concentrated on power, politics and elites which are the highest amount in terms of the thematic coverage by the channels. The other themes covered included law and order

situation, killing, sports, environment and disaster, economy and business, terrorism, mass people and others. Sports persons having ‘face value’ to the society sand the audience got the second priority in terms of coverage with 18.46 percent (24 items). Mass people, Environment & Disaster got the least coverage with only 4 items each, 3 only percent. (Table-1).

Table-1: Themes of Coverage

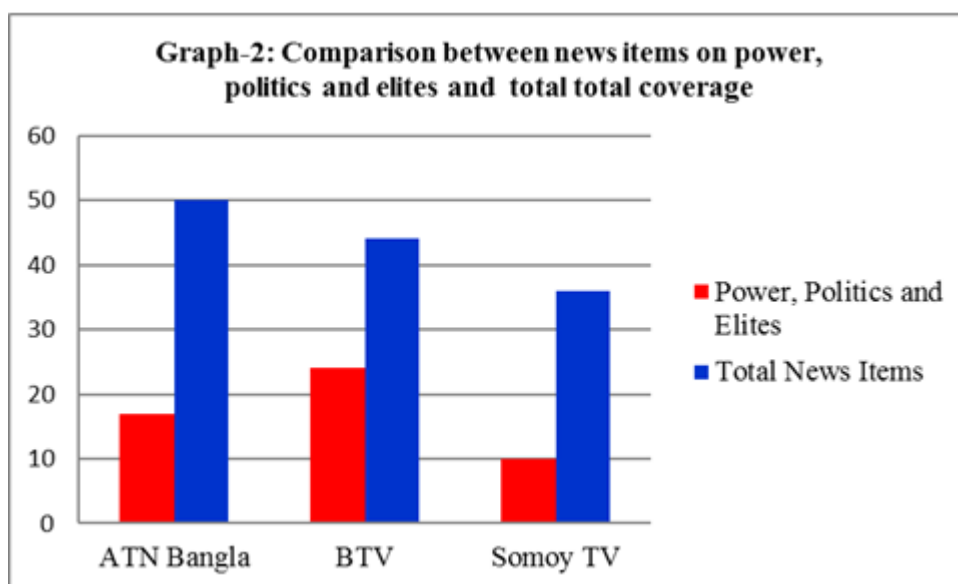
Name of TV	Law & Order	Killing	Power, Politics & Elites	Mass People	Sports	Environment & Disaster	Economy & Business	Terrorism	Others	Total
ATN Bangla	06	04	17	03	09	01	03	03	04	50
BTV	00	00	24	01	08	01	04	04	02	44
Somoy TV	08	04	10	00	07	02	01	01	03	36

Since, concentration of the study is the depiction of power, politics and elitism in the television media; further analysis will focus on the issue only. Out of the total 51 news items in all the three channels on power, politics and elites; the highest coverage as per the graph (set right side), has been put by BTV while the least was by Somoy TV. ATN Bangla stands between. This indicates that BTV takes more interest in putting coverage on the power, politics and influential quarters of the society in their content.



Depiction of Power, Politics and Elites

Intra-TV Analysis: Intra-TV content analysis meaning the individual analysis of the TV channels show that power, politics and elites have been the subjects of TV news frequently with 33 percent in ATN Bangla, 54.5 in BTV and 28 in Somoy TV. In terms of covering power, politics and elites, BTV stands the first position while ATN Bangla, the second and the least is the Somoy TV.



Faces of the Power, Politics and Influence

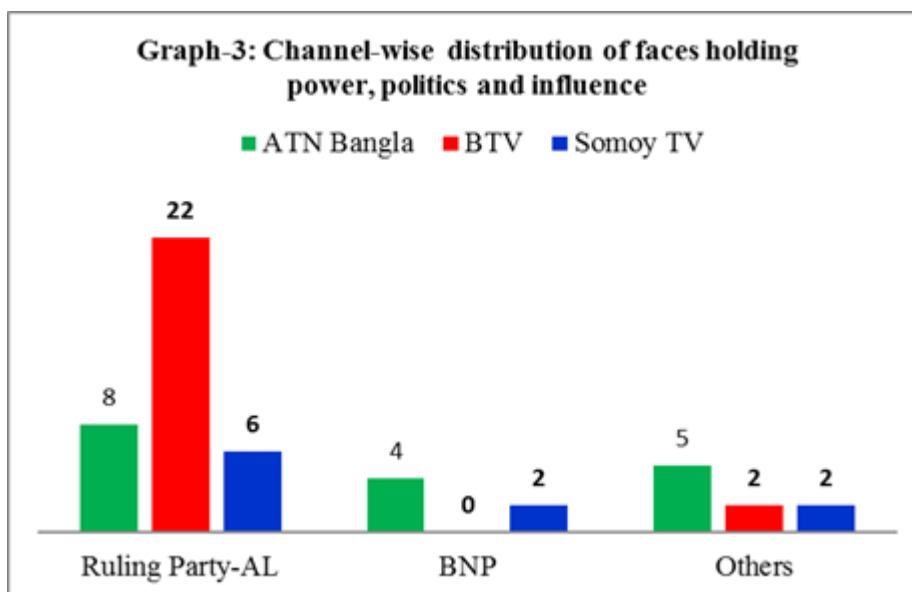
Out of the total 51 reports covered by the three channels on power, politics and elites; 36 items (70.58%) were covered on the ruling party while the BNP, one of the largest political parties in the country got 7.84 percent coverage with only 04 items covered. A total nine items were covered on 'others' meaning the elite persons, civil society members, international political persons and so on.

Table-2: Political Parties in Coverage

Name of TV	Total	Ruling Party-AL	BNP	Others
ATN Bangla	17	08	04	05
BTV	24	22	00	02

Somoy TV	10	06	02	02
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BTV, being the state-run terrestrial TV channel, has put much emphasis on projecting the speech deliveries by the ruling party Bangladesh Awami League while the channel did not cover any item on the political leaders of the one of the largest political parties in the country Bangladesh Nationalist Party(BNP). ATN Bangla stands second in terms of representing the voice of the political leaders belonging to the ruling political party. *Somoy TV* also prioritized the political leaders in power. However, a total of six items was covered on BNP by these channels having corporate ownership. In the category, ‘others’, the persons having influence and elitism other than being the members of the two major two political parties mentioned, included as their faces were visible almost with equal importance in the news items.



Faces of the Ruling Political Party

Of the faces covered from the ruling political party, the Prime Minister, Ministers, member of the parliament and the senior leaders got priority. The PM was the subject of the seven news items alone in the three channels’ two prime-time news slots. Among the ministers, the influential ones, got priority in the coverage. The reports were based on the speech of the leaders possessing political elements.

Table-3: Faces Covered of the Ruling Political Party

Name of TV	Total on AL	PM	MP/Ministers/Senior Leaders
ATN Bangla	08	3	5
BTV	22	3	19
Somoy TV	06	1	5

Gender –Who was focused?

The media in Bangladesh is strongly dominated by the male. Among the total news items (130) by the channels undergoing the study, it reveals that 78.47 percent surveyed content showed the faces of male while the female-faces were shown in 11.53 percent news items. The remaining items were not clear in terms of showing the male or female faces.

Table: 4- Gender Focus

Name of TV	Male-Faces	Female-Face	Not clear	Total
ATN Bangla	42	05	03	50
BTV	31	5	8	44
Somoy TV	29	5	2	36
Total	102	15	13	130

The attitude of the channels in terms of covering the male and female faces was almost similar, with a little difference in covering the male. Whether the female faces were found covering with equal emphasis, ATN Bangla gave the highest coverage on the male faces with

84% of its total coverage. BTV's coverage of the male faces was 70.45% of its individual coverage while it is 80.55% in Somoy TV.

Urban-rural Focus

Though Bangladesh is not still an urban-based country having only 34.3% urban population (2015) as per the report of the Central Intelligence Agency(US), the television media pay much more attention to the urban issues and affairs. Conversely, television news concentrates on the rural issues barely.

Table-5: Urban-rural Focus

Name of TV	Urban	Rural	Not clear	Total
ATN Bangla	43	04	03	50
BTV	35	01	08	44
Somoy TV	26	02	08	36
Total	104	07	19	130

The study shows that 80% reports went for the urban coverage, meaning that the activities of the political leaders, ministers and other elites are mostly urban centric. In Bangladesh, politics and governance are mostly operated from urban areas which function as the 'headquarters' of administration and corporatization. The themes and issues of the rural areas, being the overwhelming majority' become the subjects of television news rarely. The study reveals that only 5.38% coverage went for depicting the rural issues. *ATN Bangla* paid the highest concentration on covering urban issues with 86 percent news content while it was 79. 54 and 72.22 percent in *BTV* and *Somoy TV* respectively. Although the focus of the remaining ones was not clear, their tendency mostly tilted towards focusing the 'urban'. Such discriminatory picture is widely visible in Bangladesh media, particularly on television.

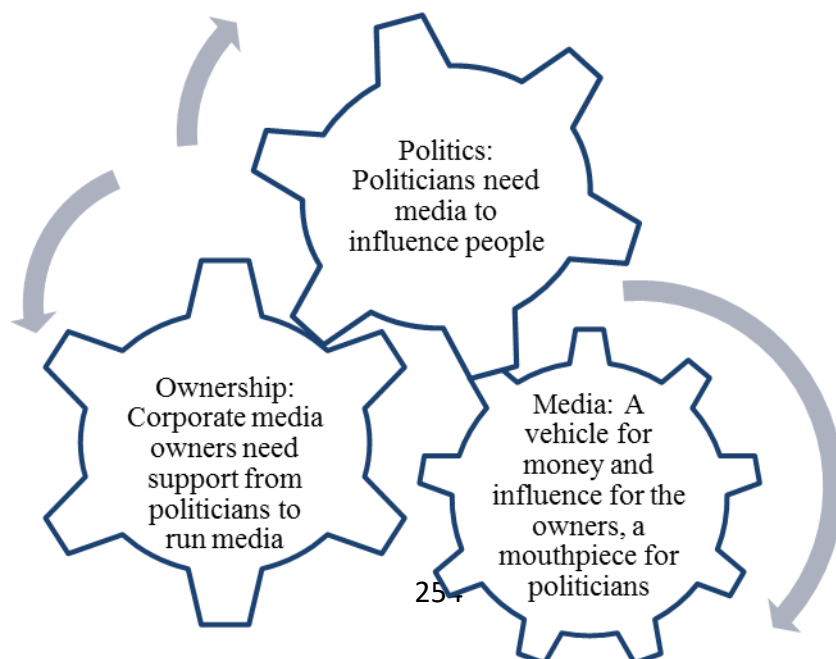
Analysis of the Findings

Televisions in Bangladesh are strongly dominated by power, politics and influence of the elite classes where the 'face and protocol values' are considered for news reports rather than the 'news values' of an issue, event or affair. The ruling political party usually gets priority in television news. More powerful and influential ones, even in the ruling party, go ahead in the

race of coverage lagging behind the weaker ones. The political parties aside from the power and influence are not equally covered as of the ruling one though there is a tendency among the channels to make a 'so called balance' in the news coverage between the large political parties. Almost all the news items on the political leaders, ministers and even the prime minister contain the political elements rather than the welfare of the people or the state. The political contents mostly focused on presenting the weak points of different parties and venoming each other on trifle excuse of disagreement of the national and international affairs relating to the public interests.

The TV media are strongly male dominated where the female faces are seldom shown in the news content with importance. This finding can be related to the male ownership of the media where the decisions and policy are adopted in favour of the male dominance in the news content. Media are urban-centric since the activities of the industry are carried out around the urban where the metropolis lifestyle is depicted with importance. With the rise of industrialization and urbanization in the country, the managerial elites of the corporate world are inhabited mainly in the capital for the smooth running of their business with the support from their obedient media. The business elites are strongly tied with the political leaders having power and influence in the machine of state governance. The findings show that the Prime Minister, Ministers, Member of the Parliaments and the senior leaders of the ruling party are some of the faces which got frequent coverage with importance. Thus, television channels are dominated and influenced by the ruling elites since their prevalence in the television news was more common than others.

Graph-4: Tripartite relationship among media, ownership and politics



The biased news coverage of the television channels raises the question of the role of the media in the society. Do the media serve the interest of the common masses through their partial coverage? Although the answer to this question might be not possible to clear in a sentence, it can be said that the 'voices of the diversity' and the 'voices of the masses' are not depicted in the news content significantly. So, who will represent the voices of the mass in the media? The identical faces shown in the news represent the interest of their own ideology mostly limited to gaining their political goal. This does not represent the issues of the general people comprehensively.

The findings showed, even the state-run BTV which is operated by the people's revenue, did not consider the interest of the masses. Rather, it played a role as the mouthpiece of the political government through showing its bold partiality to some of the identical faces of the government and the ruling political party. Thus, the TV media sidelined or bypassed the majority of the people through ignoring their issues. Slightly different from BTV, the private TV channels sometimes poured efforts to bring about a balance in their political coverage by showing the faces of a few other big political parties like BNP.

From the normative viewpoint, it is the social responsibility of the media to present the issues, affairs and the facts happening around the world without being biased. But the aforesaid findings are the clear indication of coverage bias of the TV media in Bangladesh. Development issues (for example: poverty eradication, subsistence and surplus economy, etc), life and living struggle of the majority of the people are not portrayed in the media. The findings can be related to the affiliation of the political parties to the media since there is a general perception that the TV channels having received license during the regime of a particular political party, usually serves the interest of that party and politics. In this sense, the present ruling party got preferences in the news contents of the two sample private channels alongside BTV. It means that the ownership of the TV channels is affiliated with the ideological bias of the ruling political party and other elites having power and influence in the society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the aforesaid findings, it can be said that the media, especially the television channels in Bangladesh facilitate the dominance of a different empire, which is full of power and political influence, where the overwhelming majority-the common people of the country

are deprived due to lack of their access to the media. Due to ‘coverage bias’, the media cannot perform their due role to the society and the credibility of the media is questioned. Due to linkage with the dominant classes, media cannot investigate the corruption and malpractices of the business elites, bureaucrats, and the political leaders. That is why; role of the media in the society is not performed in line with the interests of the people. Media can not venture to expose the malpractices and corruptions since the dominant classes are mostly responsible for such activities. This is a high time for the media to concentrate on their actual role to the society and gaining credibility through considering the interests of the total society rather depiction of a few. Otherwise, the media might face the trial of the audience for this deprivation.

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