VALENCE OF NEWS AND ITS CONCOMITANT IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONAL IMAGE OF INDIANARMY AMONG INDIAN YOUTH

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Abstract: The media plays a central role in disseminating information to the public about the happenings in the world, particularly in those areas in which the audience does not possess any direct knowledge or experience. The proposed study intends to examine the impact of media in the formation of public belief and attitude of Indian youth about Indian Army. The study would endeavor to find out the organisational image of Indian Army among Indian youths, contingent to news coverage. A questionnaire, measuring organisational image incorporating seven dimensions was developed and was administered to the participants-, youths while exposed to positive and negative news coverage related to Indian Army. The data was analysed through multivariate analysis of variance and the result revealed that valence of news coveragesignificantly impacts organizational image.

Keywords: *Organisational image, multivariate analysis of variance, Indian Army*

1.Introduction

The formation of organizational image is based on the processing and interpretation of information cues resulting into analytical evaluative judgment about an organization (Mishina et al., 2012). Organizations disseminate some of these cues directly to target population when they project positive images of themselves through corporate communication (Rindova & Fombrun, 1999). Another set of cues emanates from direct exposure to the products and services offered by the organization. News media (Deephouse, 2000; Pollock & Rindova, 2003) also plays a crucial role in crystallization of organizational image by way of scrutinizing organizational actions and disseminate evaluations that influence the perceptions of mass audience.

Legacy media are believed to play a central role in the formation of organizational image because they "control both the technology that disseminates information about firms to large audiences and the content of the information disseminated" (Rindova, Pollock, & Hayward, 2006). Legacy media direct public attention tothe organizations they cover, and they influence stakeholders' evaluations of organizations by selectively presenting and framing information about them (Carroll & McCombs, 2003; Pollock & Rindova, 2003). Accordingly, scholars have introduced the term "media reputation" to refer to the "overall evaluation of a firmin the media" (Deephouse, 2000: 1091), and they have widely investigated how media reputation contributesto the formation of collective reputational judgments ultimately culminating into organizational image. Basedon these

studies, scholars have argued that, while not being the only source of influence on reputational judgments, news media importantly affect how individuals evaluate organizations, especially when they haveno direct exposure to their products or services (Carroll, 2010). Research on media reputation generally focuses on the coverage of a few identifiable news outlets, selected based on "authority" and "circulation" (Deephouse, 2000; Deephouse & Carter, 2005; Zavyalova, Pfarrer, & Reger, 2012), and under the assumptionthat the evaluations adequately capture the informational content made available to the public. While few scholars explicitly claim that legacy media exert an overwhelming influence on collective judgments, the assumption of a "close alignment between legacy media content and public opinion" (Deephouse & Carter, 2005) is so widely accepted that the coverage by prominent news media is often used as a proxy for measuringorganizational image (e.g., King, 2008; Rindova, Petkova, & Kotha, 2007; Zavyalova, et al., 2012).

2. Top-Down Communication: The Gatekeeping Role and Influence of Legacy Media

Legacy media generally disseminates media evaluations as a top-down process enacted through a broadcasting mode of diffusion (one-to-many) whereby relatively few media outlets spread evaluations about organizations among a broad audience (e.g., Deephouse, 2000; Rindova et al., 2005). This assumption is consistent with the idea that Legacy media enjoy exclusive formal and informal access to elite sources (Westphal & Deephouse, 2011) and act as gatekeepers (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; White, 1950) by filtering information that they consider newsworthy and disseminating it to the general public (Brosius & Weimann, 1996; Katz, 1957). In this respect, the extant literature assumes a structural distinction between a privileged source of evaluations (the Legacy media) and an audience who receives and processes them (the public). Scholars typically assumethat, in the absence of direct exposure to an organization, its products, or its services, individuals look to the evaluative content of news media to form their judgments because they perceive journalists as "authoritativesources" (Rindova et al., 2006: 33) and attribute to them "superiority in evaluating firms" (Rindova et al., 2005: 1034). Scholars also attribute "wide-ranging influence" (Westphal & Deephouse, 2011: 1080) to legacymedia because established and capillary distribution channels confer on them a "structural position" (Rindovaet al., 2005: 1034) that enables them to reach audiences "at large scale" (Rindova et al., 2006: 33; see also Deephouse, 2000).

3. Relative Homogeneity of Sources, Content, and Style of Legacy Media Evaluations

Scholars have long argued that legacy media "reinforce uniformity and consistency" of publicly available evaluations of organization (Chen & Meindl, 1991: 527). This assumption justifies the treatment of legacy media as a rather monolithic entity with strong and direct influence on collective judgments. Legacy media not only enjoys the privilege to diffuse information to wide audiences, but they also tend to disseminate converging evaluations, thereby enabling these evaluations to strongly shape collective judgments (Carroll &McCombs, 2003) Moreover in absence of any alternative accounts available in the public domain, they simplybuttress pre established notions, coverage and opinions. Again, this assumption is not unreasonable if we consider the isomorphic pressures, professional routines, and informal and formal control mechanisms that characterize the field of news production (Deuze, 2005; Schudson, 2001) and that lead to the fairly uniform content and style of the evaluations disseminated by the legacy media (Chen & Meindl, 1991). In fact, journalists not only tend to have similar selection criteria, but they also tend to have access to and use a similarset of sources for their stories (Schudson, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 2014).

Extant research on the interrelations between organizations and the media system, and about how the latter influences the formation of organizational image, is based on assumptions developed when most publicly available evaluations of organizations were produced and disseminated by traditional news media or legacy media (or the organizations themselves). In the present research, common held notion about ubiquitous natureof legacy media would be explored against the modified media landscape, where social media and digital technologies are changing how information about organizations is produced and disseminated in the public domain. By saying so, we do not mean to question the validity of findings of research conducted before the rise of social media or the general idea that the media influence the formation of collective organizational image. The present study is intended to explore the role of legacy media in the wake of widespread usage of social media. As we are aware that social media also support the production, dissemination, and consumption of information in the public domain and are crucially changing how publicly available evaluations influence collective reputational judgments and organizational image, the present study strives to explore the relevanceof legacy media in the formation of organizational image of Indian Army among youth.

Aim- the aim of present study is to explore role of legacy media on organizational image of IndianArmy

among Indian youth.

Hypothesis- Organisational image of Indian Army among Indian youth is contingent to valence of news circulating in mass media.

Independent Variable- Valence of news (that is positive or negative news about Indian Army in the mass media)

Dependent Variable- Organizational image of Indian Army

Sample- the sample for the present study constituted 600 college/ university going students (410 males and 190 females) age ranging from 22 to 25.

Tool- Organisational image scale was used to measure organizational image of Indian Army

Method/Procedure- The study was conducted in two phases. A scale measuring organizational image was constructed constituting of 35 items (statements constituting 35 statements to be rated on five point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Organisational image was measured on seven factors namely - Trust (5 statements), Social sensitiveness(4 statements), Emotional appeal(4 statements), Relationship and empathetic concern(7 statements), Loyalty(5 statements), Vision and leadership(5 statements) and Skill(5 statements). This scale was administered to 300 participants in first phase while positive news was circulating about Army in mass media and the same scale was used in the second phase to measure organization image of 300 youth when negative news was circulating in mass media.

Statistics-Multivariate analysis of variance with valence of news as IV and seven dimensions of organizational image as DVs was performed.

4.Results-

Symbol- Positive News is 1 and negative news is -1, P_N news is positive or negative news.

Between – Subjects Factors

		N
P N news	-1	300
	1	300

Descriptive Statics

P_N_news		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SS	-1	9.2667	1.90112	300
	1	15.2233	1.32891	300
Trust	-1	11.7867	2.39449	300
	1	19.1467	1.65760	300
Relation	-1	22.9733	2.18216	300
	1	27.9633	1.62196	300
E Appeal	-1	9.6900	1.70203	300
	1	15.2633	1.30883	300
V Leader	-1	19.2800	2.42374	300
	1	28.0500	1.59037	300
Skill	-1	15.7200	2.24910	300
	1	22.9033	1.55630	300
Loyalty	-1	17.9067	2.05720	300
	1	25.8533	1.39941	300

The above table reflects that mean of all seven dimensions of organizational image islower in face of negative news in comparison to positive image.

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrice's

Box's MF	170.574
Df1	59.544
Df2Sig.	28
	1.246E6
	.11

The above table suggests that the data assumption of equality of covariance matrices is not violated as Box's Test is not significant.

Effect – Valence of News	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Wilks' Lambda	.039	2.089E3[a]	7.000	592.000	.000

The above table shows that organizational image is significantly different among youth in face ofpositive and negative news as value of Wilks' Lambda is .039 (F= 2.089, sig at .00 level)

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

	F	df1	df2	Any dimension Sig.
SS	5.621	1	598	NO
Trust	2.216	1	598	NO
Relation	3.791	1	598	NO
E_Appeal	2.338	1	598	NO
V_Leader	2.838	1	598	NO
Skill	8.944	1	598	NO
Loyalty	5.195	1	598	NO

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
P_N_news	SS	5322.282	1	5322.282	1.978E3	.000
	Trust	8125.440	1	8125.440	1.916E3	.000
	Relation	3735.015	1	3735.015	1.010E3	.000
	E_Appeal	4659.307	1	4659.307	2.021E3	.000

The

V_Leader	11536.935	1	11536.935	2.746E3	.000
Skill	7740.042	1	7740.042	2.069E3	.000
Loyalty	9472.427	1	9472.427	3.060E3	.000

above table suggests that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups asnone of the dimension is significant.

a. R Squared = .768 (Adjusted R Squared = .768)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

c. R Squared = .762 (Adjusted R Squared = .762)

d. R Squared = .628 (Adjusted R Squared = .628)

e. R Squared = .772 (Adjusted R Squared = .771)

f. R Squared = .821 (Adjusted R Squared = .821)

g. R Squared = .776 (Adjusted R Squared = .775)

h. R Squared = .837 (Adjusted R Squared = .836)

The above table reflects that all seven dimensions of organization image are significantly different inwake of positive or negative news as all are significant at .00 level.

Discussion

The hypothesis that "Organisational image of Indian Army among Indian youth is contingent to valence of news circulating in mass media" is confirmed with data analysis

Previous research shows that media coverage can affect organisational image and reputation both positively and negatively, depending on the salience of actors that is the organisation (visibility) and the valence of this coverage (e.g., Fombrun&Shanley, 1990;Kiousis et al., 2007; Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006; Wartick, 1992; Zhang, 2016). However, this sweeping finding fails to answer about the conditions under which media visibility and tone influence image of organisation in the eyesof public (Zhang, 2016) within the study of media effects. The present study is an attempt to explore as to what extent media's tone of coverage influence organisational image and whether its impact is restricted to some dimensions or is ubiquitous in nature.

he notion that news is generally negative inspired Wartick (1992) to argue that higher level of newscoverage substantially increases the likelihood that members of the public receive discrepant information, which would then lead to disturbed prevailing schema and dissonance. This dissonance can cause negative evaluation about the organisation. With such a structural negativity bias news coverage on the one hand and the possibility that news coverage may carry positive object attributes and increase familiarity on the other hand, researchers grapple with the issue as to how the salience oforganisation in the news will influence their image. The present study therefore demarcated between positive and negative news on Indian Army and how the same differentiation was carried out warrantssome explanations.

Identification of positive/negative news

The demarcation of news into either in positive or negative domain is based on whole article instead of the tone of specific article passages (e.g., sentences or paragraphs) associated with Army news. Tocapture overall tone and valence, we measured positivity and negativity in each news article. We assumed that each article, text and special report about Army in mass media comprises of both positiveand negative contents. The news content was dissected on all positive as well as negative count and then a composite measure of positivity and negativity was ascertained. The organisation involved wasArmy and therefore words connoting valour, dedication and morale were also counted. With these specific markers, overall negativity and positivity were scaled. The overall context of the news was also taken into consideration to arrive at a justifiable distinction of positive or negative news.

Researchers have analyzed the relationship between positive/negative coverage – alternatively termed"media reputation" (e.g., Deephouse, 2000) or "favorability" (e.g., Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006b) – and organisational image. Wartick (1992) found positive links between the tone (positivity or negativity) of news and organisational image, whereas Fombrun and Shanley (1990) found a conditional positive relation between favourability (projecting organisation in positive manner) and reputation. They reported positive correlation only for organisations with high diversification (i.e., organisations with multiple roles or companies active in multiple business segments). Deephouse (2000) conducted study on organisational image of banks and concluded that media reputation, referring to "the overall evaluation of a corporation presented in the media" positively affects the financial performance of banks, possibly because of improved reputations and image. Meijer andKleinnijenhuis (2006) studied the effects of positive/negative news in both "success and failure news" as well as in "support and criticism news" on organisational image. They found supportfor both a "bandwagon effect" and an "underdog effect". Here former implies that positive news leads to more positive image, and the later refers to the notion that negative news could also lead to amore positive reputation. However in the present study underdog effect was not at all evinced. Zhang(2016) empirically studied media favourability and found a positive effect of the valence of news coverage on image and reputation not only at the overall level (i.e., the tone of news items about the organisation) but also at the attribute level (i.e., specific substantive attributes in news coverage that are linked to an organisation, such as particular products or social responsibility or leadership). In consonance with Zhang finding the present study also found that apart from overall impact on organization image the impact was clearly visualized in molecular dimensions as well. In another study, Zhang (2016) found positive correlations between media reputation, which refers to the generalevaluation of a company in the news (Deephouse, 2000), and organisational image. Researchers haveincessantly argued that the attitudinal impact of negative information should generally be stronger thanthe impact of positive information (e.g., Richey, Koenigs, Richey, & Fortin, 1975). Recently, Zhang (2016b) found strong support for this imbalance and skewed perception about organisation bystatistically comparing the effect of media tonalities on corporate reputation. Research on economic news lends more favourably on this assumption and some studies documents robust evidence for this assumption (e.g., Boomgaarden, Van Spanje, Vliegenthart, & De Vreese, 2011). The reason for economic news to have this kind of imbalance is hidden in our safety needs. People by and large (barring for high risk takers) prefer loss prevention and tend to focus on preventing loss than obtainingpotential gains. Hence, any kind of negative news evokes a stronger attitudinal response than positivenews. Army is also seen as organization that is primarily meant for warding off threat in the form of external aggression and securing the territorial boundary of the country and therefore triggers strong safety needs. As a matter of fact the potency of Armed forces in triggering safety needs among citizensis more than any economic downturn news. This may have contributed immensely for the strong negative bias evinced in the present study. The present study findings reflect that the valence of the news is impacting all the dimensions of organisational image. for instance in face of negative news onArmy, all the seven dimensions of organisational image has plummeted to considerably degree. However, there are numerous studies which reported that the type of media coverage tend to alter mass opinion in some dimensions but not in all the dimensions. This flows from the reasoning that the number of dimensions of organisational image that are liable for change contingent on valence of news, the greater would

be the impact of media coverage on overall organisational image. One logicalexplanation offered by Helm (2007) is the fact that there are differentiated information needs and interests among stakeholders who evaluate the importance of an organisation's attributes differently. Before proceeding any further we must be aware that almost all the studies focused on business organisation (profit/loss making firms) and the present study included non-profit making organisation.The nature of stakeholders is entirely different in the two organisations. The participants in the presentstudy are youth who because of sheer feelings of patriotism and citizenship graduate to level of 'stakeholders.'

The answer to differential impact of the news media on the number of dimensions of organisational image and reputation that are getting influenced by them possibly lies in the source of information about the concern organisation. The point here is as to how organisational image is being carved in the minds of others. There are two channels of information about any entity- direct and indirect and reciprocal influence between these two is highly probable. Direct personal experience is often considered as a powerful source for image and attitude formation (e.g., Fazio and Zanna, 1981). However, not all organisational image dimensions can easily be experienced in person (eg, financial performance); thus, people in vast majority of cases form opinion or generate attitudes about an organisation without ever having direct personal contact with it or any of its products, services or representatives. Information gathered through this indirect channel is equally important for the formation of attitudes and, consequently, reputation or organisational image. Carroll and McCombs, (2003) as well as Kiousis *et al.,* (2007) and Sternthal *et al.*, (1978) assert that the third-party sources like the news media are quite influential. Two theories namely 'media system dependency theory' (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976) and 'need for orientation' (Weaver, 1980) offer plausible reasons for profound impact of third party influence on organisational image.

The present study included youth as participants on whom organisational image about army was measured. One thing is for sure that youth had no direct contact with Army (exception may be exposureto NCC or SSB, but the exception is purely academic. The present study therefore assumes that the organisational image of Army as formed in the minds of youth have their source of information aboutthe organisation via indirect routes. The two theories as mentioned in preceding paragraph appear to gel well with our findings and are in consonance with the obtained results.

The theory states that media dependence is contingent upon whether the news media are the only source or one of a few sources from which to obtain the information of interest. For example, whereasmany firm's products are available for personal experience, information on social responsibility is

usually not easily experienced in person. Demers *et al.* (1989) termed these aspects as "unobtrusive''wherein audience members cannot have direct experience with the product or services of organisation.Media dependence on unobtrusive dimensions is particularly pronounced if stakeholders find them important. It is reiterated here that almost all the dimensions of organisational image of Army could be labelled as unobtrusive as youth do not have access to information about Army in a direct mannerwhere they can base their opinion on personal experience. Absence of any kind of personal experienceswhatsoever with the Army forces them to search for information from media. The media therefore exerts an overarching impact on all dimensions in a ubiquitous manner impinging a powerful impact on organisational image among youth. The finding of the present study related to media's all pervasiveimpact on organisational image is in agreement with the postulates of media dependence theory.

We now turn our attention towards interpretation of our findings in terms of Need for orientation theory. In Weaver's typology, a high level of interest in the subject of a message coupled with a highlevel of uncertainty regarding the concerned subject inadvertently produces a strong need for orientation. On the other hand two conditions- low interest combined with either a low level of uncertainty or a high level of certainty produce a low level of need for orientation. The intermediary of the two that is high interest with low uncertainty and low interest with high uncertainty produce moderate level of need for orientation. Certainly individual's levels of relevance or uncertainty couldindependently predict his/her quest for information on issues, but combining the two variables into a single construct offers theoretical parsimony with a wide range of applications. Ball-

Rokeach and DeFleur (1976) argued that greater the need to access information on organisational image dimensions,the stronger is the dependency in such matters, and consequently higher the likelihood that the information supplied will alter organisational image of audience members. People link news about Army to national security, sovereignty and nationalism. People associate Army with unflinching loyalty to the cause of nation, very high level of commitment, paramount sacrifice and as a symbol ofnational identity and pride. This heightened emotionality attached with Army incites and invigorates a high level of interest in seeking information related to Indian Army. But at the same time, the operational as well as strategic details of Army are purposefully veiled from public domain as dissemination of this information might pose a serious threat to national security. The organisation follows a strict procedural code so as to avoid any kind of diffusion of information on these matters. However political scenario is entirely different. At times, political parties try to extract political mileage over their rival parties by way of rabble-rousing public sentiments through propagating news about Army. We have witnessed unprecedented rise of opposition parties clamouring for news and Government's stance to be make public on such sensitive issues like result of Army operation, their tactical location and location of our adversaries' etc. The situation hitherto highlighted result into veryhigh level of uncertainty regarding the concerned subject that is news/information related to Army. The mystery and uncertainty looming around Army (in the minds of audience members) eventually produces a strong need for orientation for the masses and in particular among youth of the nation. Thisstrong need of orientation in some way or other, make them vulnerable for higher level of suggestibility and their image about Army becomes highly dependent on media and news circulating in mass media. The findings from the present study are mirroring the predictions from need of orientation theory. The vacillating nature of organisational image contingent on the valence of news as is evinced from the data is in perfect harmony with the postulates of this theory.

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