

It is Modi Driven Television Coverage – 2014 Poll Campaign

Going by prime time coverage of national news channels, Modi received highest coverage all through March and April months. Although Rahul Gandhi campaigned extensively as in the case of Modi, it was Kejariwal, who received much higher coverage despite his campaign was limited to two or three states.

Priyanka Vadra got more coverage than any of the leaders like Jayalalitha, Mamata, Chandra Babu or Patnaik. Also, Amit Shah is one of the top ten to receive higher coverage.

This CMS Media Lab analysis reminds once again (as in 2009) that coverage of 2014 poll is all about personalities. Despite extensive coverage, there was no qualitative shift in the priorities of coverage. Corruption, Election Commission and opinion polls, in that order, received more coverage among issues next to development and governance related issues.

The analysis is based on the detailed content analysis of 61 days (March 1 to April 30, 2014) election coverage on five television news channels - Aaj Tak, ABP News, Zee News, NDTV 24x7 and CNN IBN. Findings are based on the prime time coverage (8-10 pm) of these five TV news channels. Figures are based on the coverage time given to election topics / subjects. The time devoted for parties and leaders are calculated on the basis of subjects / topics of the coverage during discussion and reporting in the bulletins.

CMS Media Lab continues to monitor and analyse the coverage of television news channels of 2014 elections. The detailed report of the same will be available in by end of May 2014. CMS Media Lab, a specialized team at CMS has been tracking news media with special focus on Elections, Public Policy, Health, Education, Agriculture, Corruption and other contemporary issues since 2003.

Hi-lights:

- Narendra Modi got the highest coverage although the two months of coverage by Television News channels, Arvind Kejriwal got the second position in this coverage. But, he received higher coverage in the first fortnight of campaign of March 2014.
- Modi received 7.5 times more coverage of what Rahul Gandhi got on TV. Rahul Gandhi is at third position and got very less coverage compared to Modi and Kejariwal.
- Election coverage on TV News reflects that the fight is between BJP and Congress.
- Party wise and leader wise coverage analysis indicates that the BJP is far ahead of its competitors.
- BJP grabbed the first position in party wise coverage; it topped Congress by a margin of 10 percentage points in total coverage.
- Congress and AAP acquired second and third positions respectively. AAP received half of what BJP got in TV news channels.

- Although Rahul, like Modi, did nationwide campaign across the country, he got much less coverage of news channels than Kejariwal whose campaign for this 2014 poll was limited to only a couple of places in two or three states.
- The Election coverage is personality and party centric on TV news channels, not so much on issues.
- Hindutva is not in the top ten issues of the election coverage.
- Campaign against corruption and Election Commission's functioning were among the top five issues of the election coverage figured in the TV news coverage. The others are: opinion polls, public policy, governance, development and local issues

Findings of the Television News Coverage of Leaders - Top 10 Leaders

1 st March - 30 th April 2014		
Leaders	Time in Minutes	% of Time
Narendra Modi	2575	33.21
Arvind Kejriwal	799	10.31
Rahul Gandhi	336	4.33
Priyanka Gandhi	171	2.20
Sonia Gandhi	156	2.01
Manmohan Singh	143	1.84
Mulayam Yadav	142	1.83
Amit Shah	107	1.38
Raj Thackeray	102	1.32
Mamta Banerjee	90	1.16

Note: Figures are % of total coverage given to leaders in 5 news channels (8-10 pm).

The coverage of TV News channels indicates the critical mass of conversation towards Narendra Modi in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. The election coverage of leaders hardly reflects the ground realities of the battle field. The coverage is not reflective of the regional realities. It ignored many states of the country.

During March and April months received least coverage – as compared to TMC, SP, BSP, SAD, for example. Modi got three times more coverage compared to Kejariwal, although he hardly campaigned country wise as in the case of Modi and Gandhi. Rahul Gandhi, despite being a country wide campaigner of Congress in this election, got only 4.33% of the total coverage given to the political leaders.

The emergence of Prinyanka's got 2% of the coverage. PM Manmohan Singh and Mulayam Singh also got 2% in the coverage. Manmohan caught TV attention in the coverage due to release of book on him during the same period. Mulyam recorded coverage for his remarks on rape and women in his rallies. Among the regional leaders Raj Thackeray and Mamta Banerjee got less than 1.5 % of the coverage individually. Interestingly, Modi's man Amit Shah is in top ten leaders due to his hate speech to get higher coverage. Other important regional leaders got less than 1% of coverage given to personalities.

Findings of the Television News Coverage of Parties - Top 10 Parties

1 st March -30 th April 2014		
Parties	Time in Minutes	% of Time
BJP	1507	37.99
Congress	1101	27.75
AAP	742	18.70
SP	176	4.44
Shiv Sena	72	1.82
BSP	57	1.44
MNS	41	1.04
CPI(M)	41	1.04
TMC	38	0.96
JD (U)	24	0.61

Note: Figures are % of total coverage given to parties in 5 news channels (8-10 pm).

BJP grabbed the first position in election coverage of TV News Channels by acquiring 38% of total coverage. It received 10 percentage points more coverage time as compared to Congress. Congress is at the second position by acquiring 27.75 % of the coverage time. AAP is at the third position by grabbing 18.70%.

Among regional parties Samajwadi Party got approx 4.5 % of the coverage time. Shiv Sena, BSP, MNS, CPI(M) got coverage between 1% to 2% while rest of the regional parties including TMC and JDU received less than 1% of the total coverage time given to parties. Other regional parties like AIDMK, DMK, TDP, BJP, etc got insignificant coverage.

Findings on Television News Coverage on Election Issues: Top 10 issues/subjects

1 st March -30 th April 2014		
Issues	Time in Minutes	% of Time
Personality	7753	37.66
Party	3966	19.26
Satire/Comic Programmes	908	4.41
Corruption	749	3.64
Election Commission	508	2.47
Opinion Polls/Exit Polls	478	2.32
Public Policy	474	2.30
Governance	421	2.05
Development	417	2.02
Local / Regional Issues	338	1.64

Personalities and parties are the major focus of the 2014 election coverage in TV news channels. Both accounted for more than half of (57%) of the total election coverage. Spoof /comedy programmes figured as third position in the top ten programmes. Series of scams of the UPA government, and relentless campaigning against scams by opposition parties, prominently by Kejriwal and Narendra Modi, made it at the fourth position (4%) in terms of the coverage.

Election commission (2.47%) and opinion polls (2.32) got fifth and sixth positions respectively. Public policy (2.32 %) and governance (2.05%) acquired seventh and eighth positions in the coverage respectively. Development and local issues are at the bottom of top ten issues.

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