Content Analysis of Saptahik Sadhana: A Library & Information Science Perspective

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Abstract- *This paper presents a theory-based content analysis of Saptahik Sadhana, a prominent Marathi ideological periodical, from a Library & Information Science (LIS) perspective. The study explores how periodicals function not only as information dissemination tools but also as agents of knowledge creation, ideological documentation, and social transformation. Using theoretical frameworks such as Critical Theory, Gramsci's Hegemony, Habermas' Public Sphere, and Structuralist approaches, the analysis examines the periodical's recurring themes, social representation, value orientation, and critical stance on socio-political issues. Findings reveal that Saptahik Sadhana promotes democratic values, social justice, rationalism, and equality, and functions as a counter-hegemonic platform challenging dominant ideologies. The study emphasizes the significance of content analysis in LIS research for understanding ideological structures, knowledge production, and the societal impact of media. This research contributes to periodical studies, media analysis, and the broader field of LIS scholarship by highlighting the interplay between information, ideology, and social consciousness.*

Keywords: Content Analysis, Library & Information Science (LIS), Saptahik Sadhana, Periodicals, Ideological Constructs, Public Sphere, Critical Theory, Knowledge Production

I. INTRODUCTION

Media are not merely instruments for information dissemination; rather, through the processes of selection, framing, and circulation of information, they function as powerful information systems that actively construct social reality (McQuail, 2010). From the perspective of Library & Information Science (LIS), media play a crucial role in knowledge creation, information flow, and social communication (Buckland, 1991). Periodicals, in particular, serve as structured and continuous sources of scholarly, ideological, and social information, documenting intellectual trends, ideological conflicts, value systems, and changing social realities (Meadows, 1998). Among Marathi ideological periodicals, Saptahik Sadhana holds a significant position as a socio-intellectual information source. In LIS research, the study of such periodicals should extend beyond literary or sociological interpretation to include systematic examination of information content, subject structure, thematic organization, and ideological orientation (White & Marsh, 2006). Theory-based content analysis offers an effective methodological framework for understanding the nature of information, the processes of knowledge production, and the socio-cultural contexts embedded in periodical literature (Krippendorff, 2018). Content analysis is a widely used research method in LIS, enabling objective, systematic, and scientific analysis of text-based information sources (Neuendorf, 2017). Through this method, researchers can examine thematic diversity, informational scope, information value, ideological tendencies, and the potential impact of information on readers (Stemler, 2001). An LIS-oriented content analysis of Saptahik Sadhana helps reveal its information structure and its engagement with social, educational, cultural, and democratic values.

II. OBJECTIVES

1.   To analyze the ideological orientation and thematic focus of Saptahik Sadhana.
2.   To examine social representation and the inclusion/exclusion of societal groups in the periodical.
3.   To identify recurring values such as justice, equality, and democratic principles within the content.
4.   To study the periodical's critical stance on social, political, and cultural issues.
5.   To demonstrate the theoretical utility of content analysis in LIS research for periodicals and information sources.

III. CONTENT ANALYSIS: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Content analysis is a well-established research method in Library & Information Science, used for the systematic and theory-driven examination of communication content (Krippendorff, 2018). It enables researchers to analyze written, visual, and digital information sources in order to uncover patterns, meanings, and ideological structures underlying the text (Neuendorf, 2017). In LIS research,

content analysis is particularly effective for studying periodicals, policy documents, archival materials, and digital information resources (White & Marsh, 2006). Berelson (1952) defined content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication." This definition highlights the method's scientific rigor and objectivity. Later, Krippendorff expanded the conceptual scope of content analysis by emphasizing contextualized meaning-making, defining it as a method for drawing valid inferences from texts in relation to their contexts (Krippendorff, 2018). This theoretical advancement positioned content analysis beyond mechanical word counting, allowing researchers to explore semantic, contextual, and ideological dimensions of information. At the theoretical level, content analysis draws upon several interdisciplinary frameworks. Structuralist theory examines textual organization, symbolic systems, and meaning construction (Saussure, 1966). Critical Theory focuses on power relations, ideological dominance, and social inequality embedded within media content (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972). Ideological analysis helps identify value systems and belief structures disseminated through information sources (van Dijk, 1998). Additionally, media and society theories explain the reciprocal relationship between media, information, and social change (McQuail, 2010). Together, these frameworks strengthen content analysis as a robust theoretical tool in LIS research.

IV. MEDIA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THOUGHT: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

From the perspective of Critical Theory, media are not neutral channels of information but function as ideological institutions that shape public consciousness through selective representation and framing (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972). In LIS scholarship, media are viewed as agents of knowledge production that influence how information is interpreted and socially constructed (Buckland, 1991). Gramsci's concept of hegemony explains how media sustain dominant ideologies while also providing spaces for resistance and alternative discourses (Gramsci, 1971). Periodicals, through editorial choices and thematic focus, either reinforce ideological dominance or challenge it by amplifying marginalized voices. LIS research recognizes that such content plays a crucial role in shaping knowledge structures and information hierarchies (van Dijk, 1998). Within this theoretical framework, Saptahik Sadhana demonstrates a clear orientation toward rationalism, social justice, democratic values, equality, and constitutional principles. Its content frequently critiques dominant power structures and promotes alternative socio-political perspectives. Theoretically, this positions Sadhana as a counter-hegemonic information source, contributing to critical

public discourse and democratic deliberation (Habermas, 1989). From an LIS standpoint, documenting, organizing, and analyzing counter-hegemonic content is an essential scholarly responsibility. Such analysis enables researchers to trace ideological shifts, understand patterns of knowledge production, and evaluate the social role of information over time (Meadows, 1998). Consequently, theory-based content analysis of Saptahik Sadhana contributes meaningfully to LIS research in the areas of media studies, ideological documentation, and the sociology of knowledge.

V. CONTENT ANALYSIS AND IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

In theory-based content analysis, text is not merely considered as a collection of words; it is treated as a structured ideological construct (Krippendorff, 2018). From the perspective of Library & Information Science (LIS), text serves as a primary information source, and its content is created, selected, and presented within a specific social context (Buckland, 1991). Therefore, content analysis allows researchers to understand not only the surface-level text but also its underlying ideological meaning, value systems, and social objectives (Berelson, 1952).

When conducting a theory-based content analysis of Saptahik Sadhana, several key theoretical questions emerge:

1. Which themes are consistently and prominently presented? Analysis of recurring themes helps identify the ideological orientation of the periodical (van Dijk, 1998).
2. Which social groups, classes, or communities are represented, and which are comparatively marginalized? This identifies patterns of social representation (Habermas, 1989).
3. Which values—such as equality, justice, rationalism, or democratic principles—are repeatedly emphasized? This highlights the value system promoted by the periodical.
4. On which social, political, or cultural issues does the periodical adopt a critical stance? This reflects its critical media function (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972).

Through these theoretical lenses, the content of Saptahik Sadhana emerges as more than informational; it actively questions established social ideologies and supports social transformation. From an LIS perspective, such content constitutes a vital source of knowledge production and documents processes of ideological change within society (McQuail, 2010). Consequently, the content analysis of Sadhana is instrumental in studying periodicals as agents of social change and in understanding the relationship between information and ideological patterns in LIS research.

VI. SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY, AND PERIODICALS

According to Habermas' Public Sphere Theory, periodicals function as key platforms for public discourse, enabling citizens to engage with social, political, and cultural issues and thereby strengthening democratic processes (Habermas, 1989). From an LIS standpoint, periodicals are public information resources that promote knowledge flow, intellectual freedom, and deliberative dialogue (Meadows, 1998). A theory-based analysis of Saptahik Sadhana reveals that its content encourages critical reflection on social issues, addressing diverse societal layers and prompting readers to engage thoughtfully with these issues. This fosters public dialogue and contributes to the development of a democratic society. The periodical's content stimulates reasoned, evidence-based discussion, challenges dominant power structures, and encourages readers to become active, informed citizens (Gramsci, 1971). In LIS terms, the periodical not only facilitates information consumption but also cultivates the ability to interpret, evaluate, and critically analyze information. Therefore, Saptahik Sadhana can be viewed as an effective information medium that supports democratic values, public discourse, and the freedom of information. Its theory-based content analysis is thus valuable not only for media studies but also for research on democratic-oriented information services within the LIS domain.

VII. THEORETICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

Theory-based content analysis is a powerful research method in LIS, enabling the systematic, meaningful, and contextual study of periodicals and other information sources (Krippendorff, 2018; Neuendorf, 2017). This method allows researchers to move beyond mere quantitative presentation of information and to interpret the underlying ideological meanings, social contexts, and knowledge production processes (White & Marsh, 2006).

Through theory-driven content analysis, researchers can determine:
• The ideological orientation of a periodical.
• Which topics are consistently prioritized and which values are reinforced.
• How perspectives are emphasized and social responsibilities manifested.

From an LIS perspective, understanding the social impact of media is crucial for information services and knowledge management (Buckland, 1991). Content analysis allows scholars to study how information shapes public consciousness, how knowledge structures social awareness, and how readers' informational needs are influenced (Meadows, 1998). Moreover, by analyzing historical and contemporary trends, researchers can document ideological changes, value shifts, and social patterns. Thus, theoretical content analysis is highly relevant in LIS research for examining the role of media, studying periodicals, and understanding processes of knowledge creation and dissemination in society.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The theory-based content analysis of Saptahik Sadhana demonstrates that periodicals serve as dynamic agents of knowledge production and social change. Beyond their informational role, they reflect and shape ideological orientations, document social and cultural values, and promote critical public discourse. From an LIS perspective, such content constitutes a vital resource for understanding the processes of knowledge creation, information dissemination, and social awareness. The study confirms that Saptahik Sadhana embodies a counter-hegemonic approach, encouraging critical thinking, democratic deliberation, and active citizenship. Theory-driven content analysis proves to be a robust methodological tool for evaluating periodicals, tracing ideological patterns, and examining the societal impact of information, thus contributing significantly to LIS scholarship.

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