

WHO TELLS OUR STORIES MATTERS

Representation of
Marginalised Caste
Groups in Indian Media



ऑक्सफैम इंडिया
OXFAM
India

A movement
to end
discrimination

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report is a joint effort of Oxfam India and Newslaundry. Our research team included Omprakash Mahato, Meenu CV, Jitendra Suna, Sonu Kumar, Alolika De, Ajay Arya and Harita Gupta.

We thank the young enthusiastic team of interns for helping us with the project; Anjney Mital, Anoushka Sinha, Anchal Khanna, Alenjith K Johny, Vasundhara Panghal and Ananya Upadhyay.

We also thank Tejas Patel, Abhirr VP, Savvy Soumya and Akshay Tarfe of Oxfam India.

Valuable insight from Dr, V. Biju Kumar, Hinakshee Barman, Prabhakar Kumar, Indumoni Gogoi, Nirban Ray, Hirokjyoti Ray, Kalyan Sonowal, Nishu Kumari and Krishna Karkee also helped. We also thank Sarthak Bhatia for his work on the previous reports.

The report aims to portray the limited representation of marginalised communities in newsrooms and its impact on shaping the news discourse. It also hopes to open a public debate on caste-based discrimination and social exclusion in the media.

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ACRONYMS

AVMSD: Audiovisual Media Service Directives

BARC: Broadcast Authority Research Council

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

DNT: De-Notified Tribe

DU: Delhi University

IPSOS: Independent Polling System of Society

IRS: Indian Readership Survey

OBC: Other Backward Class

SC: Schedule Caste

ST: Schedule Tribe

TMR: The Media Rumble

TV: Television

UPSC: Union Public Service Commission

WEF: World Economic Forum

SUMMARY

Over the years, the quest for truth has been replaced by the quest for viewer ratings and voices of the people are represented by the select few. A study conducted by IPSOS (Independent Polling System of Society) across 27 countries over a period of five years (2014-2019) revealed that trust among newspapers and magazines readers dropped at an average 16%. In the US and Great Britain, public trust for print media declined by 26% and 27%, respectively (IPSOS, 2019). A study conducted by Reuters Institute 2021, as per Digital news report presents that only 38% Indian trust news compared to 65% in Finland, 61% in Kenya, 54% in Brazil and 50% in Finland (Gupta, Agnihotri and Chakraborty 2022). In an article by Bourgault titled *Diversity in the newsrooms can build better media. Here's why* states that 'more diverse and inclusive newsrooms and coverage can provide better representation of societies, build audience trust and even make news organisation more profitable' (Jeanne Bourgault, 2021).

Studies by World Economic Forum (WEF) have revealed that failure to provide adequate representation in media may lead to dissociation and lack of interest and trust among readers and viewers (Jeanne Bourgault, 2021). Voices are better represented when it comes from experience. For instance, can a person from the general category explain better the qualms of untouchability and the social stigma around it? If the answer is no, then will it be just for an general category person to represent the voices of the SC, ST, OBC & DNT? Diversity at the workplace is essential because it helps present authentic voices and minimise errors. Moreover, studies in different countries on media diversity have suggested that more diversity in newsrooms, the more profitable it is (Jeanne Bourgault, 2021)..

This study is an attempt to find out the status of representation among SC, ST, OBC & DNT in different media outlets. The research team has explored the challenges faced by newsrooms, looked for existing best practices that different countries have adopted and also provided suggestions to make newsrooms more inclusive.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

Of **218** surveyed leadership across print, TV and digital media outlets, **191** were occupied by people from general category.

None of the mainstream media houses had people belonging to SC/ST categories in leadership roles. Two from SC/ST categories held leadership positions in two alternative media platforms.



PRINT MEDIA:

Over **60%** of bylined articles in English and Hindi newspapers were written by people from general category. Less than **5%** of the articles were written by people from SC/ST categories and **10%** belonged to OBC.

Majority of the writers in the top decile belonged to dominant caste groups in both English and Hindi newspapers.

Over **50%** of journalists who have written on caste and tribal issues belonged to dominant castes.

No newspaper had a journalist from SC/ST categories writing on caste and tribal issues.

Around **60%** magazine stories were by people from general category. Around **5%** of the stories were written by people from SC/ST categories.

None of the magazines had any SC/ST writer at the top. Only a few had OBCs in the top decile of writers. Magazines had **14%** of writers from SC category writing on caste and tribal issues. However, it was **3.6%** for the same for ST writers.



ELECTRONIC MEDIA:

Around **56%** and **67%** of the anchors in English and Hindi primetime shows, respectively belonged to dominant/ caste groups. None of the channels had any SC/ST anchors for hosting debates.

More than **60%** of all panelists in Hindi and English primetime shows belonged to general category. Less than **5%** of the panelists in Hindi and English debates were from SC/ST categories.



DIGITAL MEDIA:

Over **55%** of the writers who wrote for various mainstream digital media outlets belonged to general category. Less than **5%** of the articles were written by people from SC/ST categories.

Alternative digital media outlets such as Mooknayak, EastMojo fared better in terms of total number of articles contributed by people from marginalised caste groups. To gather information on caste among leadership positions, we relied on the responses that we received from individuals and from the public domain. This has been explained in the methodology section.

INTRODUCTION

“More diverse newsrooms with inclusive coverages can better represent societies, build audience trust and make organisations more profitable. Media outlets that do not make diversity their priority, stand a chance of facing a decline in both readership and profits”

- Jeanne Bourgault, president and CEO at Internews

Earlier reports on caste and gender representation in Indian newsrooms published at 'The Media Rumble' conference in 2019, 2020, and 2021 received wide appreciation from academicians, scholars and journalists. The studies conducted by Oxfam India have shown that journalists from SC, ST, OBC and DNT categories are under-represented and at times not represented at all. Even now the status of representation has hardly improved. This report, too, studies the representation of people from different caste groups in the media. It documents whose voice has a chance of being heard. The research shows that the dominant castes have benefited because of their social location.

Media has been perceived by the masses as a sacrosanct institution but how these are governed is a matter of mystery. While a wide range of issues are discussed, covered and aired both in print as well as on news channels, caste disparity within media houses has hardly ever been a topic of serious discussion. The deliberate ignorance of the issues that affect marginalised communities has led them to come up with their own channels. To name some, Dalit Dastak, Khabar Lahriya, The Shudra, Mooknayak are some of the alternative digital media houses that represent the voices from the margins.

To provide a clear picture of the existing caste and tribal representation in different media houses, the research has included elements of literature, review, data collection, data analysis, in-depth interviews and narratives of journalists based on their caste locations from marginalised backgrounds. The details are available in the methodology section.

The study analyses the impact of these structures on news coverage by using a mix of tools such as manual analysis of newspapers, television news and monitoring tools such as Meltwater and Media Cloud. Previous studies have also been analysed to understand change in trend, if any.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG THE LEADERSHIP POSITION OF MEDIA CHANNELS IN 2019 AND 2022

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG THE EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS OF THE ALL MEDIA IN 2019 VERSUS 2022.

MEDIA TYPE	SC(%)		ST(%)		OBC(%)		GENERAL CATEGORY(%)		UA(%)		CAN'T SAY(%)	
	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
ENGLISH NEWSPAPER	0	0	0	0	0	2.94	91.7	94.12	0	0	8.3	2.94
HINDI NEWSPAPER	0	3.23	0	0	0	6.45	87.5	83.87	0	0	12.5	6.45
ENGLISH NEWS CHANNEL	0	1.64	0	0	0	3.28	89.3	88.52	10.7	3.28	0	3.28
HINDI NEWS CHANNEL	0	1.61	0	0	0	1.61	100	91.94	0	1.61	0	3.23
MAGAZINE	0	3.57	0	0	13.6	3.57	72.7	89.29	0	3.57	13.6	0
DIGITAL MEDIA	0	11.11	0	2.78	5.3	5.56	84.2	77.78	0	2.78	10.5	0
OVERALL TOTAL	0	3.17	0	0.4	4.06	3.57	86.18	88.1	2.44	1.98	7.32	2.78

[participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research]

The earlier overall report on caste and tribal issues in Indian newsrooms published at 'The Media Rumble' conference in 2019 showed over 88% representation of journalists from the general category and this year, it is around 86%. While the biggest change can be seen in the SC category representation which has gained voice by 3.17% in 2022 from the earlier nil, OBC representation has further gone down.

The 2019 report saw 91% representation of journalists from the general category in English newspapers and this year, the survey states that the number has further gone up to 94%. However, in some good news, the presence of OBC category journalists became almost 3% in 2022 from the earlier zero representation in English newspapers. While not much has changed in the past four years and the representation of SC and ST category journalists still remain nil, the increase in OBC presence in newsrooms could be attributed to more people coming forward with specific answers, instead of opting for 'can't say'.

Hindi newspapers also showed a similar trend with over 3% and 6.45% representation of SC and OBC category journalists this year, respectively, from the earlier zero in 2019. For Hindi newspapers, the representation of general category journalists went down around 5%, but is yet to reach a stage of caste parity.

From the earlier no representation, this year English news channels saw 1.6% and over 3% presence of SC and OBC category journalists, respectively. While representation in the general category has gone down by 1%, more interviewees opted for 'can't say'.

In the case of Hindi newspapers, which had 100% general category representation in 2019, the numbers this year are a welcome change. Not only the general category representation has gone down to 91%, SC and OBC presence has each gained 1.61% foot.

In the magazine section, however, from the over 13% representation of OBC category journalists in 2019, the numbers have gone down by 10 percentile in 2022. While it has gained some voice in the SC category, the general category representation has further gone up skewing the parity chart.

The digital media section is probably the only space where all marginalised categories have gained foot compared to the last report. From the earlier zeroes in 2019, the SC and ST category representation has gone up by 11 and around 3%, respectively. While the OBC category has seen little increase, the general category representation is still around 77%.

HINDI NEWS MEDIA

TV DEBATES THAT HAS COVERED CASTES AND TRIBAL ISSUES

People from marginalised sections are not only educationally backward but they face numerous social and religious troubles; they are exploited in the workplace and also face identity crisis. News channels have been hosting debates to highlight the issues faced by them but shows around them and the crisis they face are far less compared to general category. To get a clear picture on how sensitive Indian mainstream media is on airing news related to caste and tribal questions (issues of caste-led atrocities, reservation, manual scavenging etc.), we have mapped the percentage of coverage done by Hindi TV channels.

While NDTV saw the highest number of debates (3.6%) on caste and tribal issues, News 18 and Republic Bharat saw none. ABP News had a 2.4% share of such debates followed by Aaj Tak at 1.8%, Sansad TV at 1.3%, Zee News at 1.3% and India TV only at 0.8%. Of the total debates on Hindi news channels, 1.6% primetime shows were aired on caste and tribal issues by the news media outlets listed below.

MEDIA OUTLET	DEBATES ON CASTE AND TRIBAL ISSUES(%)
AAJ TAK	1.8
ABP NEWS	2.4
NEWS18	0.0
INDIA TV	0.8
NDTV	3.6
REPUBLIC BHARAT	0.0
SANSAD TV	1.3
ZEE NEWS	1.3
TOTAL	1.6

TV DEBATES ON RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES AND COMMUNAL POLITICS

Communal politics centres around the idea that religion is the main basis of a social community. The followers of a particular religion must also belong to a community. TV channels have hosted debates on the dominance of one over the other and the implications.

In comparison, News18 had the highest number of debates (24%) on religion and community politics, followed by India TV at 18.9%. While ABP News had 11.4% such debates, Zee News was close at 11.3%. Total debates aired by different channels on religious and communal identity was 9.4% while on caste and tribal issues it was just 1.6%. The gap clearly shows that Hindi channels gave more primetime slots to religious and communal issues over caste and tribal issues.

MEDIA OUTLET	DEBATES ON RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND COMMUNAL POLITICS(%)
AAJ TAK	4.9
ABP NEWS	11.4
NEWS18	24.0
INDIA TV	18.9
NDTV	5.8
REPUBLIC BHARAT	5.9
SANSAD TV	1.3
ZEE NEWS	11.3
TOTAL	9.4

ENGLISH NEWS

DEBATES ON CASTE AND TRIBAL ISSUES

When issues are highlighted by the people who faced them, the viewers relate to them. With this, not just the people from the marginalised sections are represented but also awareness is created.

At 2.6%, India Today conducted most debates on caste and tribal issues whereas Mirror Now, Republic TV and Sansad TV held none. While Times Now organised just 1.2% debates on the topic, NDTV and News 18 both organised just 0.5%.

MEDIA OUTLET	DEBATES ON CASTE AND TRIBAL ISSUES(%)
NEWS18	0.5
INDIA TODAY	2.6
MIRROR NOW	0.0
NDTV	0.5
REPUBLIC TV	0.0
SANSAD TV	0.0
TIMES NOW	1.2
TOTAL	0.5

DEBATES ON RELIGION AND COMMUNAL ISSUES

Times Now organised the most debates on religion and communal politics at 14%, followed by India Today at 13% and News 18 at 8%. Mirror Now, NDTV and Republic TV were at 3.1%, 2.8% and 1.1%, respectively. English news channels aired around 4.8% of debates around religious and communal issues compared to 9.4% of such debates on Hindi news channels. There were only 0.5% debates on caste and tribal issues on English news channels.

MEDIA OUTLET	DEBATES ON RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND COMMUNAL POLITICS(%)
NEWS18	8.0
INDIA TODAY	13.0
MIRROR NOW	3.1
NDTV	2.8
REPUBLIC TV	1.1
SANSAD TV	0.0
TIMES NOW	14.0
TOTAL	4.8

METHODOLOGY

This study, conducted between April 2021 and March 2022, used the method of 'byline count' to analyse the representation of people belonging to different caste groups in print media, including newspapers, magazines and digital news portals. For electronic (TV channels) media, names of the anchors and panelists of various debate shows were noted down and their castes were determined based on location, surveys and from information available in the public domain.

SOURCES OF STUDY

We selected seven English and seven Hindi newspapers based on the latest Indian Readership Survey (IRS) ranking of 2019.

In the case of English newspapers, we used editions from cities where they had the highest circulation or where they were headquartered. Among the seven newspapers, four of them belonged to the list of top ten newspapers -- The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Telegraph.

We chose the Hindi newspapers based on their IRS 2019 ranking and Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Hindustan, Amar Ujala, Rajasthan Patrika figured in the list of top 10 widely read dailies. Since most of the Hindi newspapers did not have national editions, except Dainik Jagran, we looked at their city editions from various Hindi-speaking states.

We considered 12 magazines both English and Hindi covering a range of interests, from Politics and Business to Culture and Sports. Of the 12 selected, six of them -- India Today-English, India Today-Hindi, The Sportstar, Grih Shobha, Jagran Sakhi and Sarita-- were part of the list of top 20 magazines in the IRS 2019 ranking.

The 12 magazines include two monthlies, four fortnightlies, five weeklies and one biweekly.

We have also examined nine digital media outlets including two from alternative media platforms and studied over 14,000 bylined articles.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In the 12 months of the study, we scanned 14,000 and 4,000 bylined articles of English and Hindi newspapers, respectively from their front pages, as well opinion, economy and sports pages.

For magazines, we examined over 2,000 bylined cover stories of each issue and also the stories highlighted on the cover page.

Given the sheer volume of their content, the digital outlets presented a unique problem. So, we used MediaCloud, an open-source software tool for media analysis, to collect relevant data, and restricted our analysis accordingly.

While for The Wire, Newsland and EastMojo, we examined reports for alternate days for 12 months -- April 2021 and March 2022 --, for The News Minute, we could only gather data for news videos. Since the Mooknayak had less stories compared to other outlets, we considered all the available byline stories.

For Scroll.in, Swarajya, The Quint and Firstpost, we examined news reports for the first six months of the survey period.

The articles examined were further categorised into 19 sub-themes or topics. While caste and tribal issues were kept as a separate category, health was also taken up considering the unprecedented health scenario that existed in the country during the study period.

In the case of English news channels, we examined 1,094 prime time debates hosted by 36 anchors where 1,992 panelists took part. For Hindi news channels, we considered 981 debates hosted by 40 anchors and 1,326 panelists participated. Five English channels --Republic TV, Times Now, News18, India Today and Mirror Now-- and four Hindi Channels --Aaj Tak, Republic Bharat, India TV and Zee News-- topped the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) 2021 ratings that decides TRP.

While most English channels broadcasted their prime time shows between 7 pm and 11pm, most of the Hindi channels aired such shows between 5pm and 7pm. We watched their shows either from their website or from their official YouTube channels and entered the demographic details of the anchors and panelists manually into our database. We have tried to access most of the archived shows but for some channels, all shows were not available.

Here too, the topic of the shows were categorised into 16 sub topics and apart from shows on Caste and Tribal Issues, health was also considered. The field of expertise of panelists, based on how they were introduced in a debate, were divided into 15 groups. (Appendix no. 1,2)

We have tried to reduce instances of overlap where some panelists were introduced under different fields of expertise.

The raw data collected from all mediums include:

- 1) Name of media outlet
- 2) Date of publication or broadcast
- 3) Page title or prime time slot
- 4) Topic of article/debate
- 5) Name of writer/anchor/panelist
- 6) Gender of writer/anchor/panelist
- 7) Religion of writer/anchor/panelist
- 8) Social category writer/anchor/panelist
- 9) Nationality of writer/anchor/panelist
- 10) Field of expertise of panelist

CASTE IDENTIFICATION

We aimed to find out the number of journalists, writers, and TV panelists from marginalised caste groups in the media, and the volume of their work compared to their general category counterparts. So, we calculated the number of their bylined articles or the number of their TV appearances. The twin data points helped us compare caste representation in absolute numbers as well as in relative terms, that is, how much space they were getting on different media platforms.

A journalist was defined to hold a leadership position if they were designated editor-in-chief, managing editor, executive editor, bureau chief, resident editor, director, producer. Someone holding more than one of these positions in the same organisation was counted only once.

We relied on triangulation methods and on data available on public domain to assign caste categories for persons holding leadership positions as we hardly got any response from the media houses regarding the same.

Leadership date was not available for Jagran Sakhi magazine.

LIMITATIONS

In the absence of official data, it was nearly impossible for us to accurately determine the actual caste location of writers, panelists and anchors. We, therefore, resorted to mixed methods and other statistical techniques. Standardisation of names was another difficulty faced by the research team as same names were either spelled differently or were written with or without surnames/initials.

We relied on the following methods to collect data on caste identity:

We relied on the following methods to collect data on caste identity:

Conducting surveys by sending questionnaires. Appendix (no3, 4, 5).

Exploring secondary sources of information available in the public domain.

Using UPSC results and entrance results of three central universities (University of Delhi, Pondicherry Central University, Tezpur Central University). Using the above methods, we were able to determine the caste identity of nearly 70% of our dataset. The categories are SC, ST, OBC, General, unavailable (UA) (for people belonging to religious minorities) and can't say (Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs).

While mapping the caste of leadership position at different news media organisation, we could not collect the complete information of every individual. At times we failed to receive the caste related information of even a single person and at times we could gather caste related information of only a single person holding leadership position at different media organisation. Therefore, the tally shown in the table may slightly differ with the actual numbers an organisation would have.

QUESTIONS

We had designed certain questions according to the objective of the study.

How inclusive is the media industry in accommodating diversity? What are the challenges faced by media outlets while adhering to inclusivity?

Do the marginalised communities have adequate representation in media houses? What are the challenges faced by journalists belonging to marginalised sections of society?

Who governs the media houses? Is there any link between the content and the castes of people in

leadership positions?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Caste is an ancient system of hierarchical segregation of people determined by birth. It is based on notions of purity and pollution, and is rooted in Hindu doctrine. The caste system divides Hindus into four Varnas of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra. Those who fall outside these endogamous groups, each with a preordained social function, are known as Dalits or Scheduled Castes, and Adivasis or Scheduled Tribes. The system has led to the general category being privileged over the marginalised castes, hence, bringing about caste-based discrimination at all spheres of life, including the work place. Dr BR Ambedkar, the forerunner for the rights of marginalised communities, had warned about the danger of irresponsible journalism. He outrightly spoke against the nature of journalism that was carried out by modern media houses in which some individuals were manifested as heroes and others as the subjects. He could forecast the danger of sensational news back then when electronic media was absent. (Ambedkar, 2014)

Not surprisingly, the media has been under continuous scrutiny for its ideological bias, lately. While there have been allegations of media favouring political parties, social elites and business tycoons, some scholars have criticised it for deliberately creating a space that favours those that come from a general category.

In another study on 'Indian Media and Caste' published in 2021, Pranjali Kureel criticised news media by arguing that it has played a catalytic role to aid discourses of dominant caste, their culture and the popular by "inflicting epistemic violence over oppressed castes".

HOW COUNTRIES FARED IN PUBLIC TRUST

WEF in 2021 outlined the significance and benefits of diversity in media outlets as a means of improving journalistic endeavours. Over the years, lack of diversity within newsrooms has become a structural problem, best exemplified by the issues that are reported and those that are dropped. The manner in which sensitive issues concerning marginalised communities across caste, class, gender and religious oppressions are reported, and by whom, marks the broad contours of the problem. Due to the risks associated with the profession, people from marginalised communities, especially at the beginning of their career, find it difficult to claim spaces and pursue their journalistic efforts given the lack of job security. Keeping in mind these obstacles, it is crucial to diversify newsrooms.

To increase public trust, several countries have opted for better representation of marginalised communities.

Where Trust In The News Is Highest & Lowest

% agreeing "you can trust news most of the time" in selected countries in 2021*



* Research was conducted online by YouGov in January & February 2021.
2,000 respondents in each market.

Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report

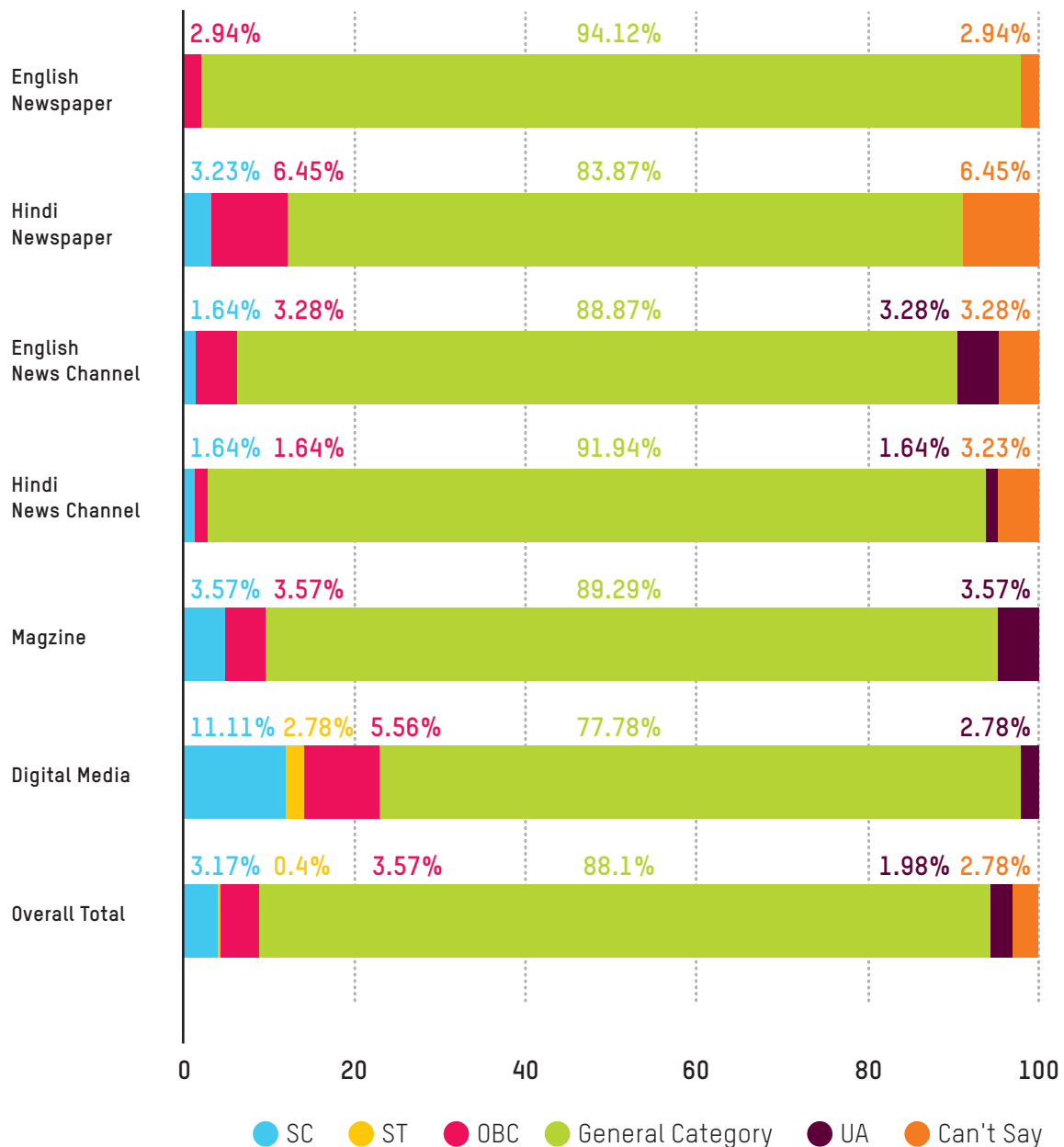


WHO GOVERNS THE MEDIA?

Previous reports on caste representation in news-rooms have shown limited presence of marginalised communities in leadership roles. Under-representation of certain castes and over-representation of

some has been a matter of concern. We hope that this study too opens up a space for discussions and serves as a step towards addressing the problem.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG THE EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS OF THE ALL MEDIA 2021-2022.

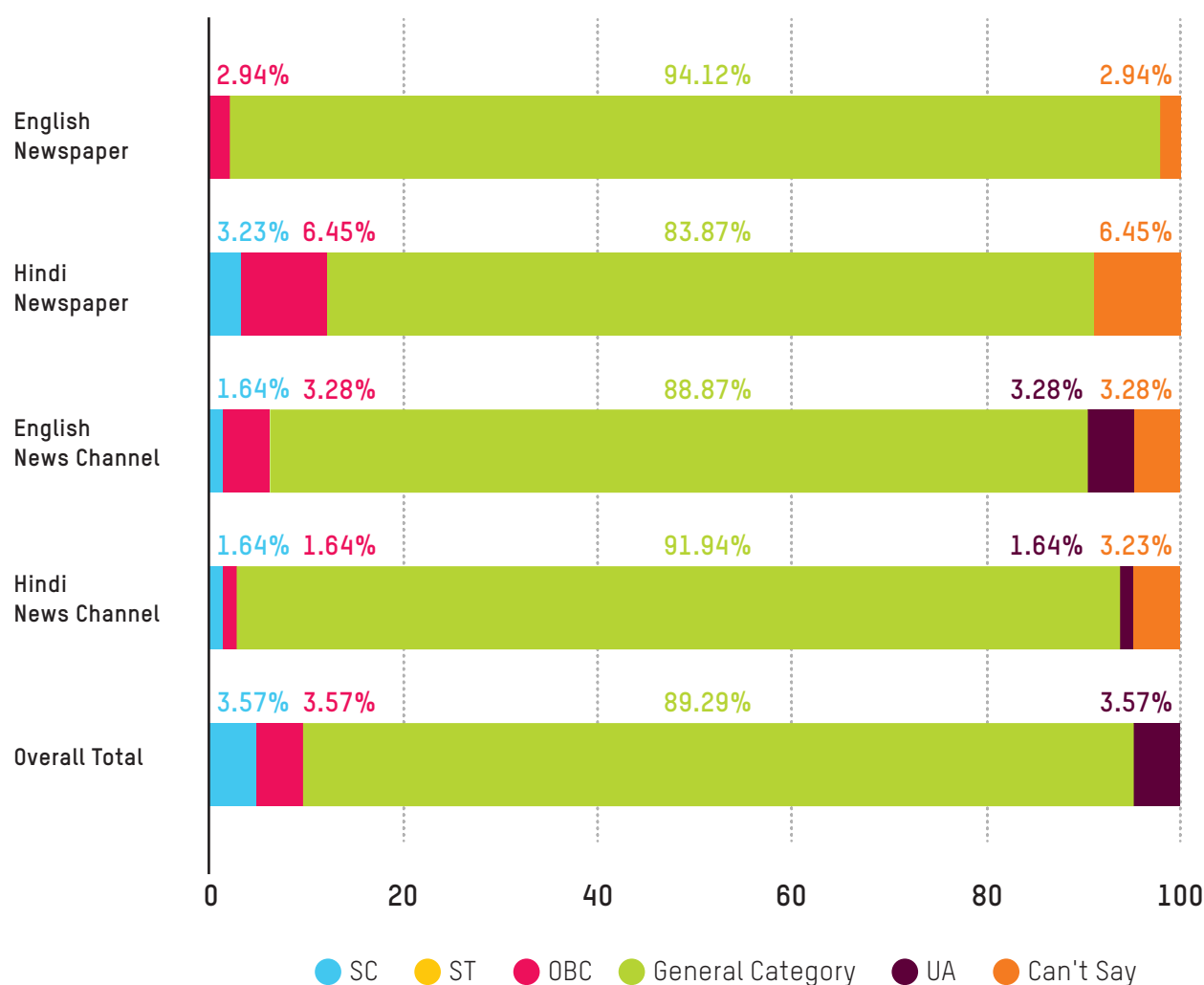


(respondents participants of NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number and is mentioned in the limitation of the research)

After examining data that we gathered for leadership roles, we found that SC, ST and OBC have been heavily under-represented in media outlets. In news chan-

nels, newspapers and even magazines, none from the ST category held a leadership position.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG MAINSTREAM ENGLISH & HINDI NEWSPAPER & NEWS TV CHANNELS 2021-2022 & NEWS TV CHANNELS 2021-2022

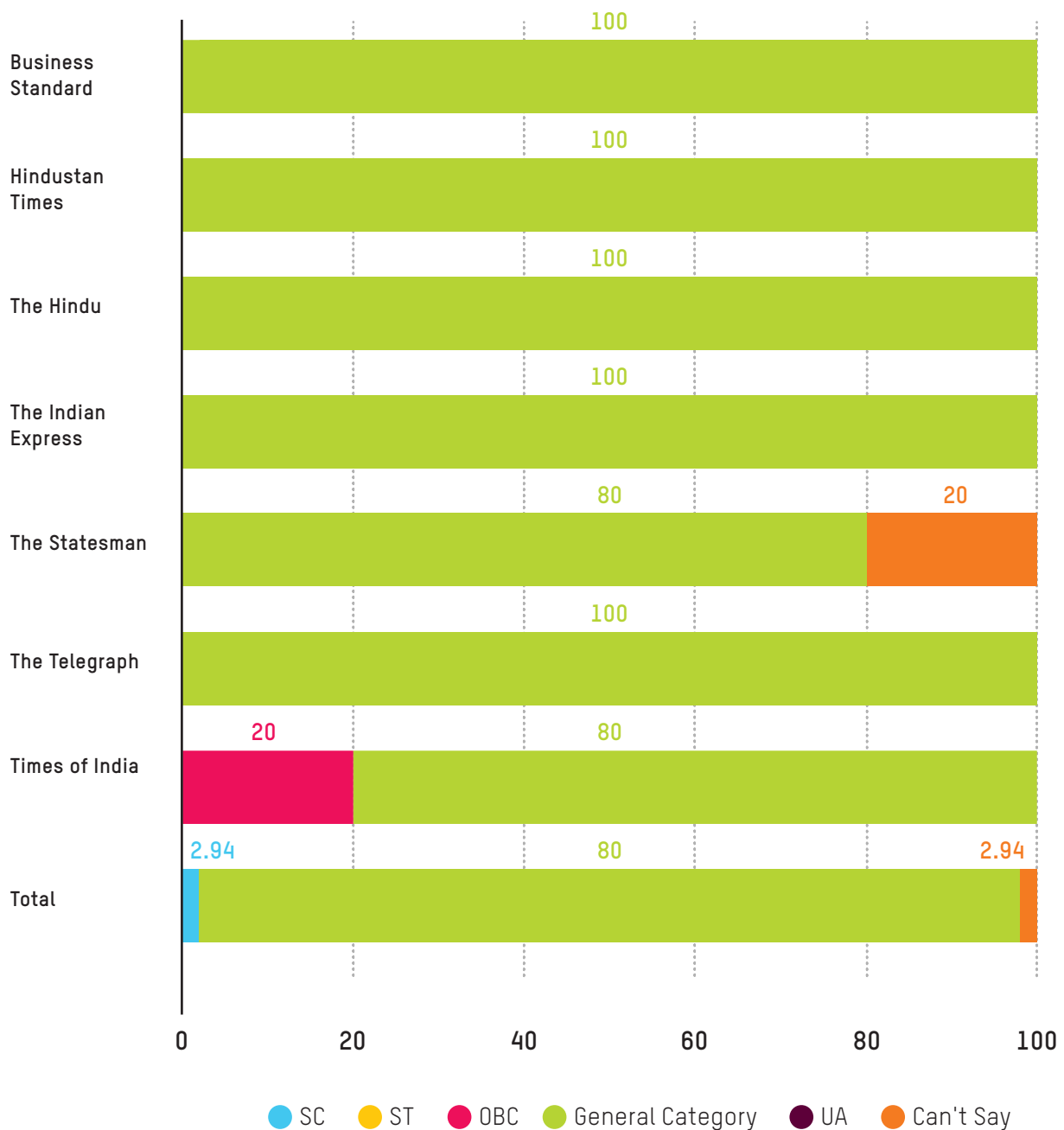


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

We collected 190 samples from across Hindi and English newspapers and TV channels to look at the representation of different communities in leader-

ship roles. Around 91% of the positions were occupied by general category, followed by 2.65% OBC presence and 1.59% SC presence.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG PROPRIETORS OF THE ENGLISH NEWSPAPER 2021-2022

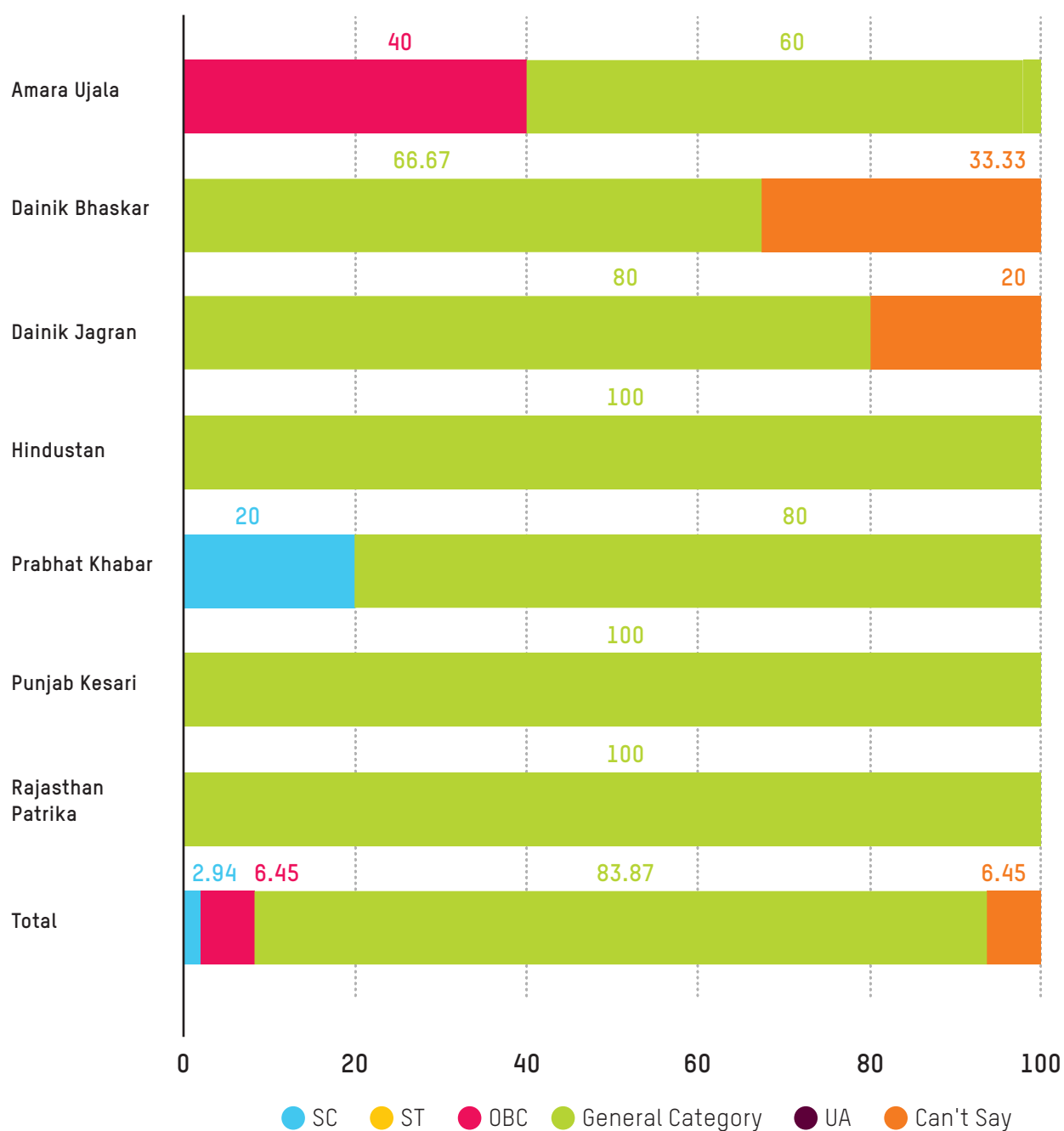


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

We gathered data of 35 leadership positions from eight English newspapers and the table above shows dominant castes have nearly 100% presence across all. This pattern has been observed across all the

English newspapers except The Times of India, where 20% of the leadership positions were occupied by the OBC.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG PROPRIETORS OF THE HINDI NEWSPAPER 2021-2022

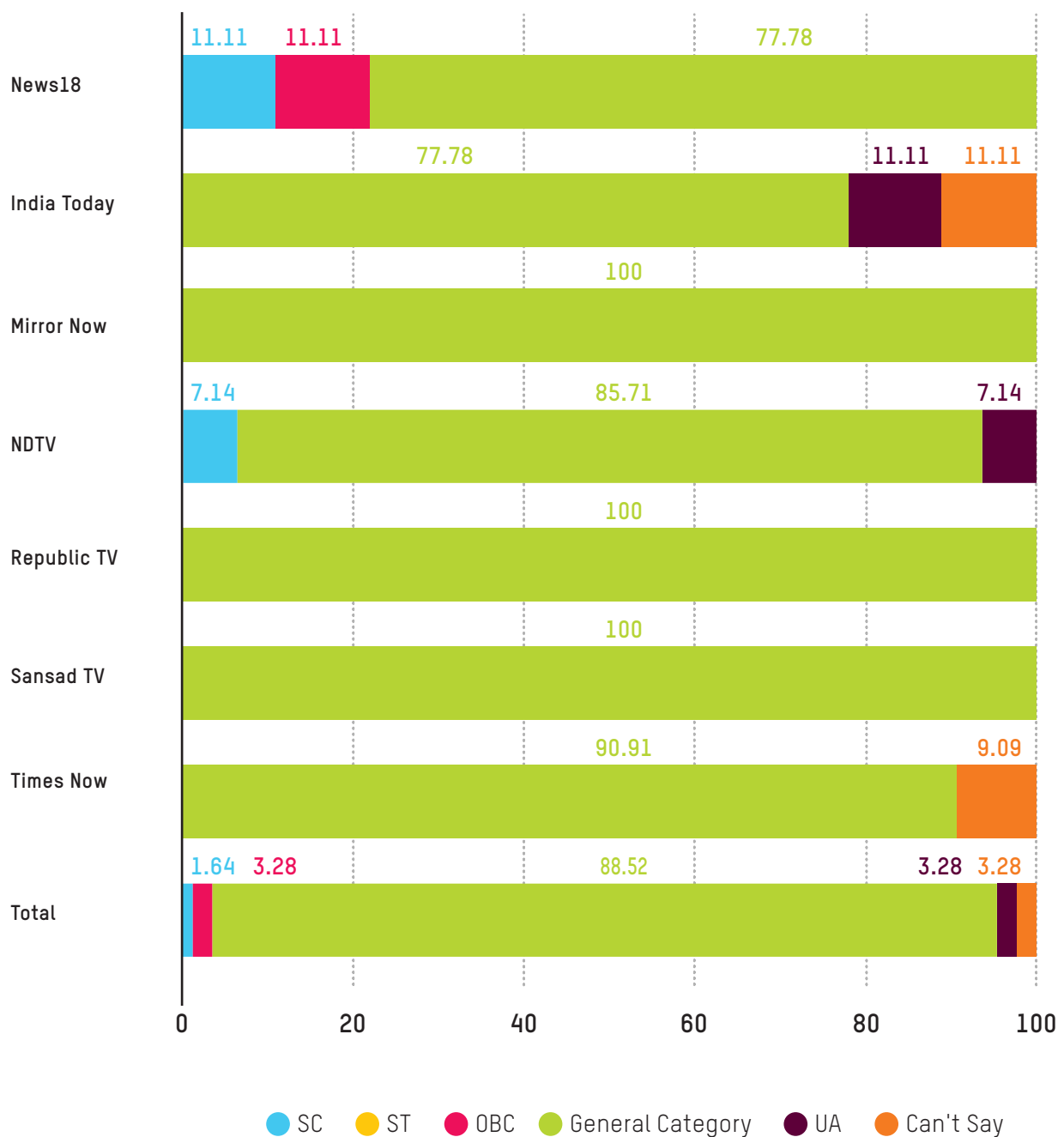


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

Representation of people from SC, ST and OBC categories in leadership roles in Hindi newspapers was better than their English counterparts. Of the 31

positions examined, over 80% were occupied by people from general category, followed by 6.45% of OBCs and 3.23% of SC. People from STs category had zero.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG PROPRIETORS OF THE ENGLISH NEWS CHANNEL 2021-2022

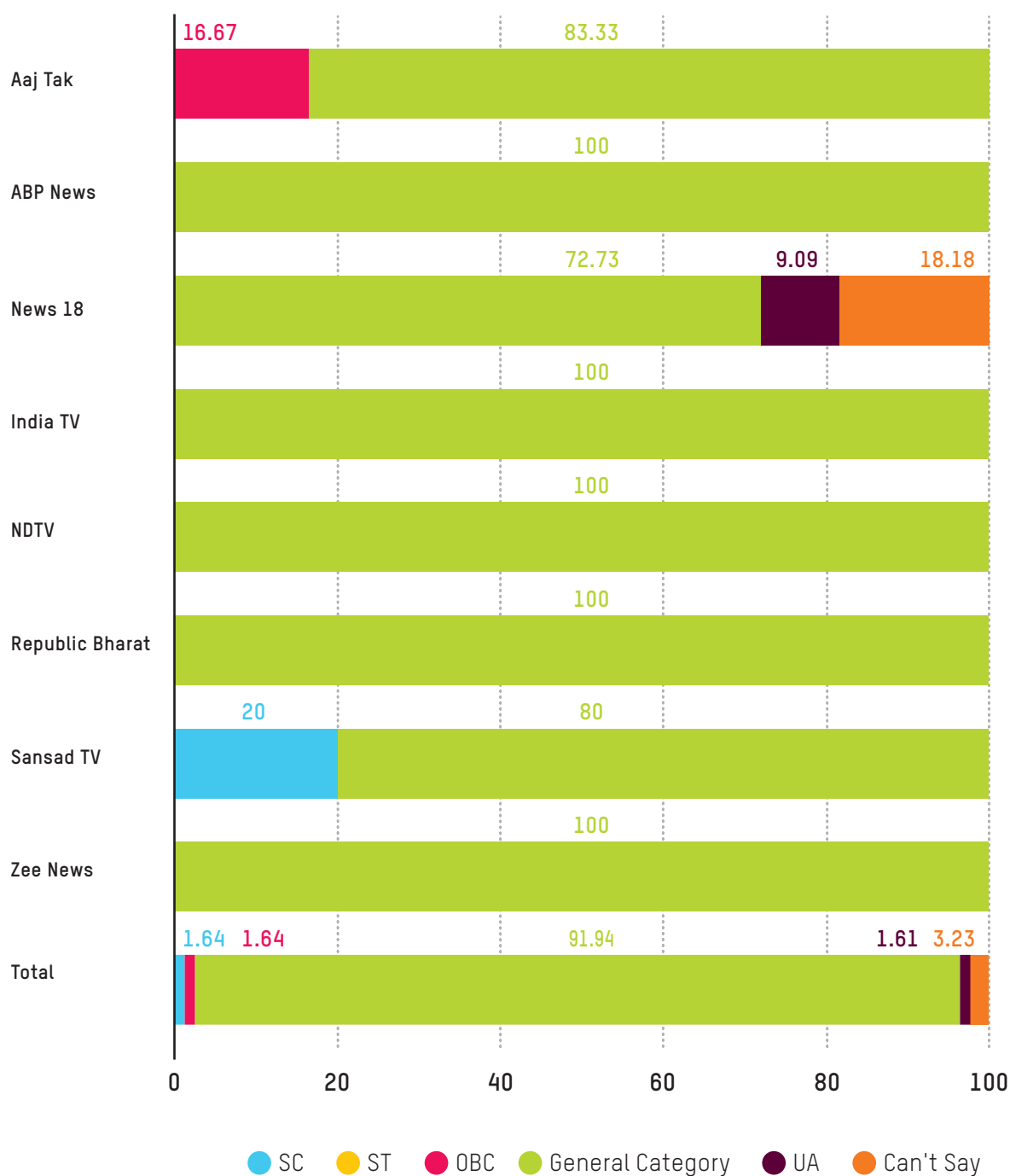


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

Of the 62 samples collected from English news channels examined for leadership roles, 88.52% were from the general category, followed by 3.28% OBCs and

1.64% SC. Like newspapers, no people from ST category held leadership positions.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG PROPRIETORS OF THE HINDI NEWS CHANNEL 2021-2022

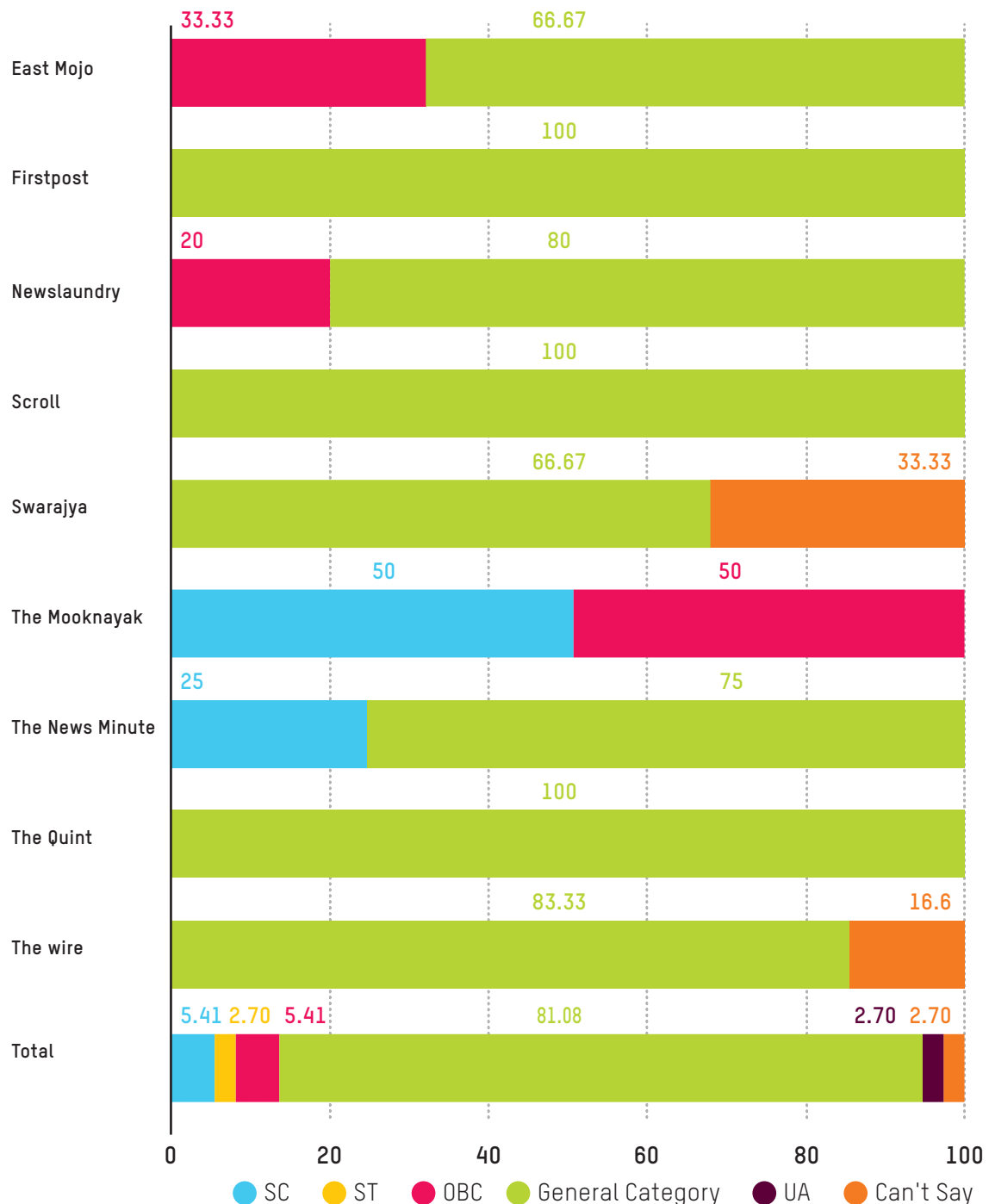


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

Of the 62 samples collected from Hindi news channels, only Sansad TV has 20% SC presence and Aaj Tak has 16.67% OBCs in leadership roles. None of the other five news channels had any SC, ST or OBC

representation. Almost 92% of leadership positions in Hindi news channels have the presence of the general category.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG THE EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS OF THE DIGITAL MEDIA 2021-2022

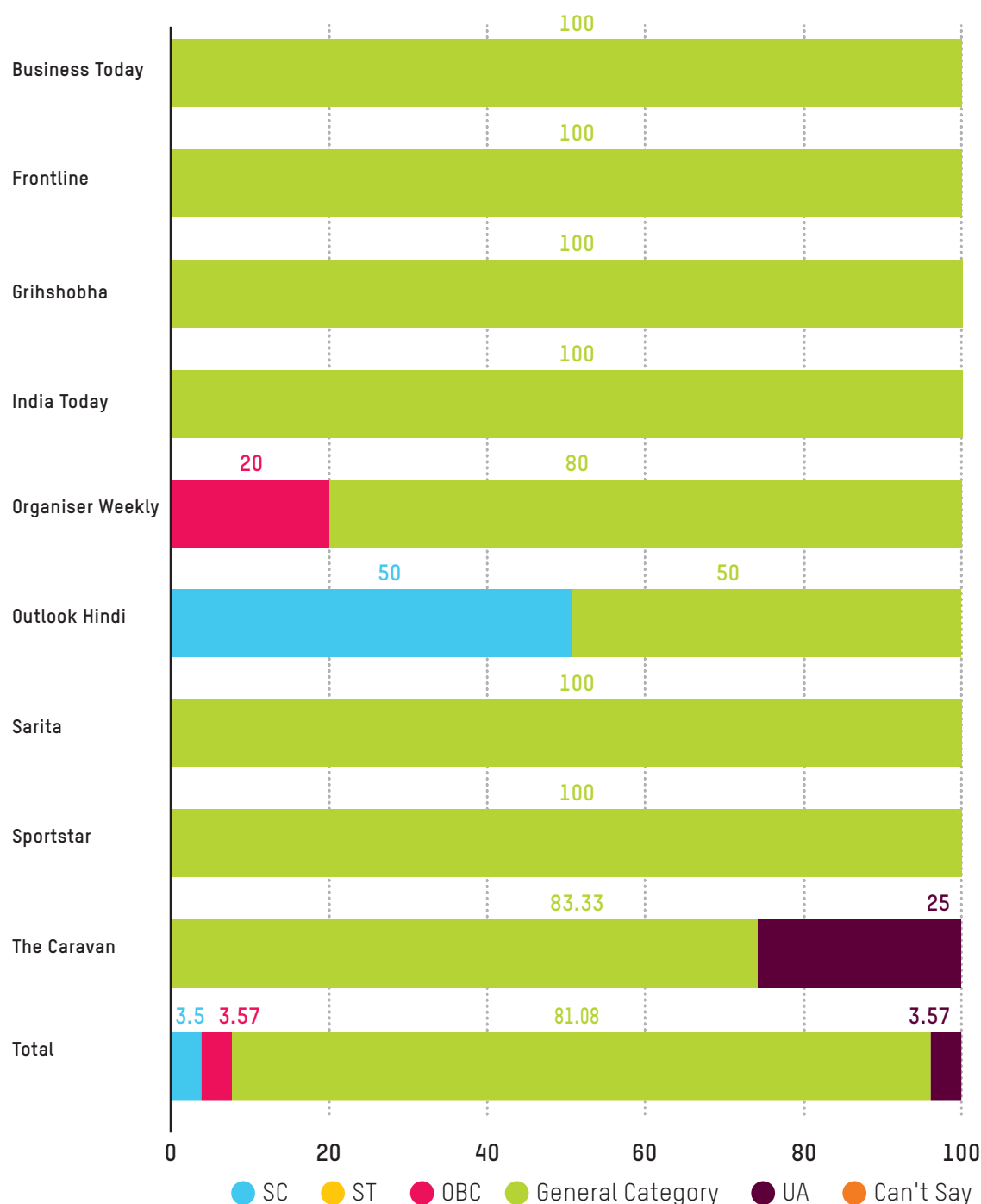


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

While Mooknayak has 50% presence of SC people in leadership roles in digital media, The News Minute has 25%. Only East Mojo has the presence of people from the ST community. Newslandury and Mooknay-

ak had 20% and 50% representation of the OBC community, respectively. None of the other organisations examined for the study had SC, ST OBC people holding leadership positions.

CASTE REPRESENTATION AMONG THE PROPRIETORS OF MAGAZINES 2021-2022.



(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

Through the data we have collected, Outlook Hindi had 50% of SC representation and Organiser Weekly had 20% OBC representation, holding leadership positions. However, mere representation had not led to more coverage of caste and tribal questions. Almost all other magazines surveyed for the study had 100% representation of general category in their leadership roles. For example, a reporter from

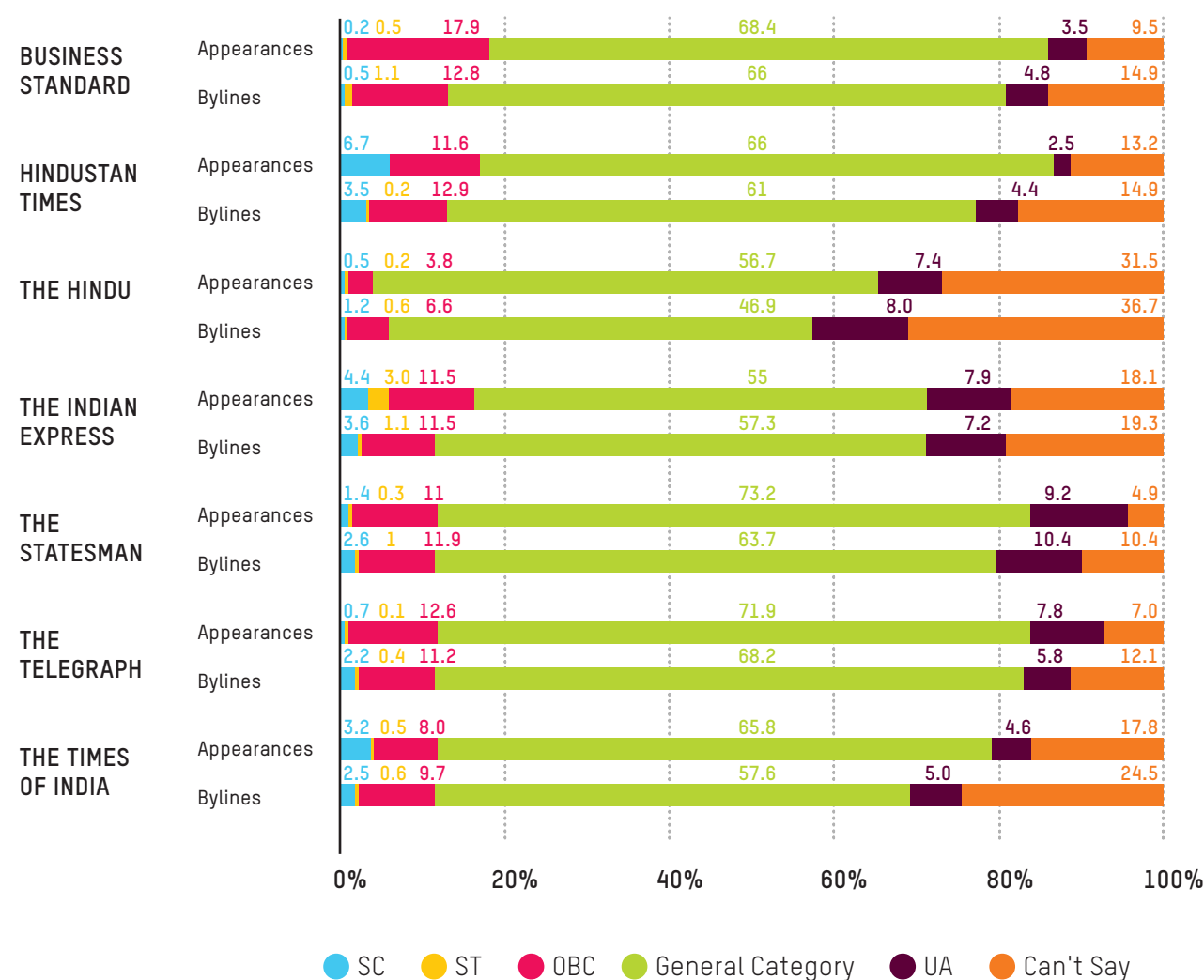
marginalised caste may be interested in reporting or covering stories related to caste but without a senior's approval, his/her stories may not get published or at times get published when the importance of the issue is no more relevant to the viewers. Therefore, it is equally important to diversify leadership position along with newsroom diversity.

THE STATUS OF REPRESENTATION WITHIN SC, ST AND OBC NEWSPAPERS

The research team reviewed bylines of seven English newspapers and captured a glaring gap in the representation of people from marginalised castes and tribes (SC/ST/OBC) within mainstream print media outlets. On the contrary, the status of people from

the general category remains more or less 60% and above. This not only shows the absence of caste diversity but also highlights the lack of coverage of caste-sensitive issues.

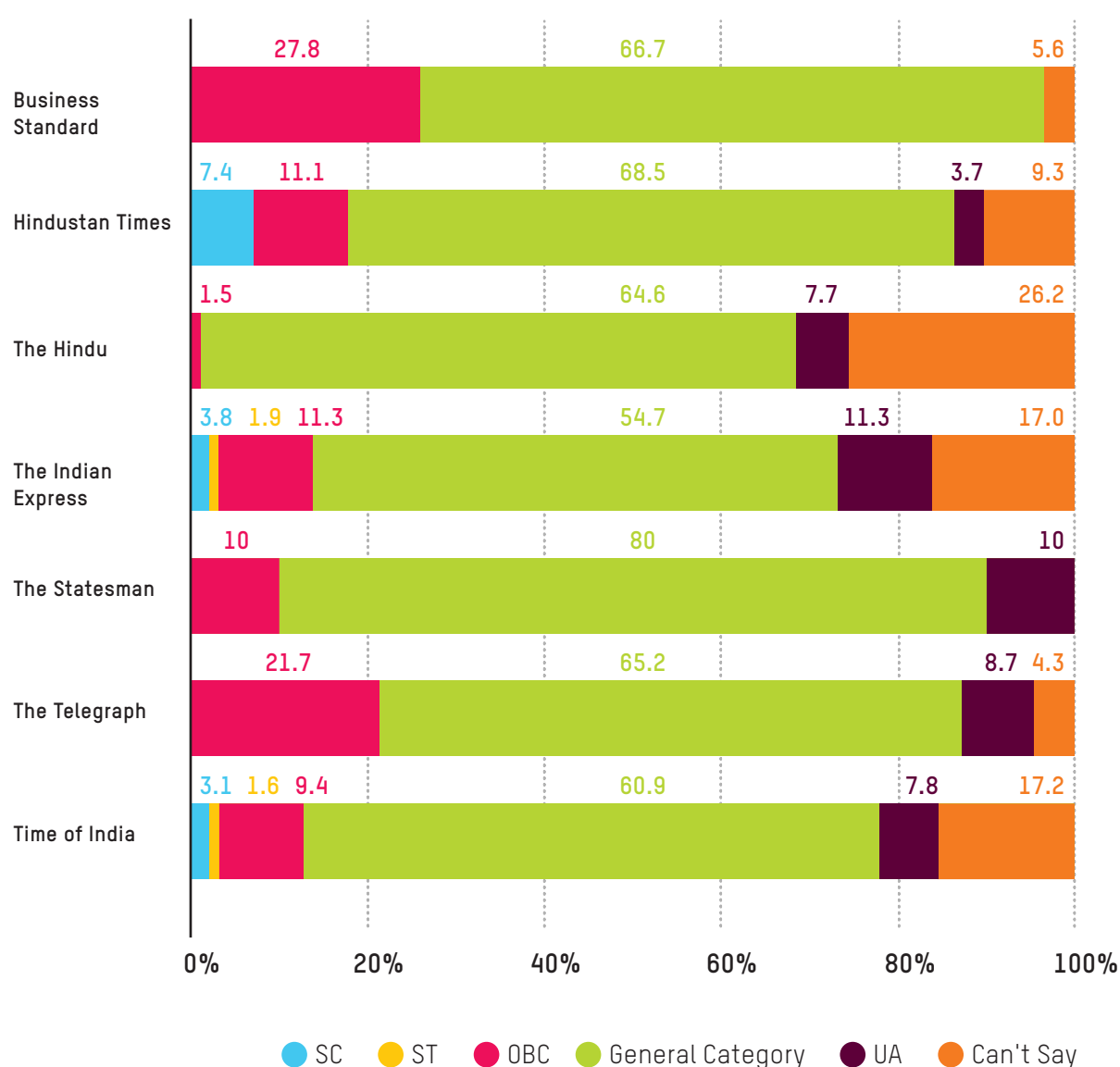
PRESENCE OF THE LOWER CASTES IN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS



Almost all English newspapers had over 60% representation of general category journalists except The Hindu and The Indian Express. The Indian Express fared better in comparison to other newspapers, in terms of composition of journalists belonging to different categories. The demography of ST authors

and their chances of publication across all newspapers remained a miniscule 1%. While journalists from SC category constituted less than 4% in almost all the newspapers, OBC writers occupied up to 12% of reportage. However, it is much less compared to journalists from the general category.

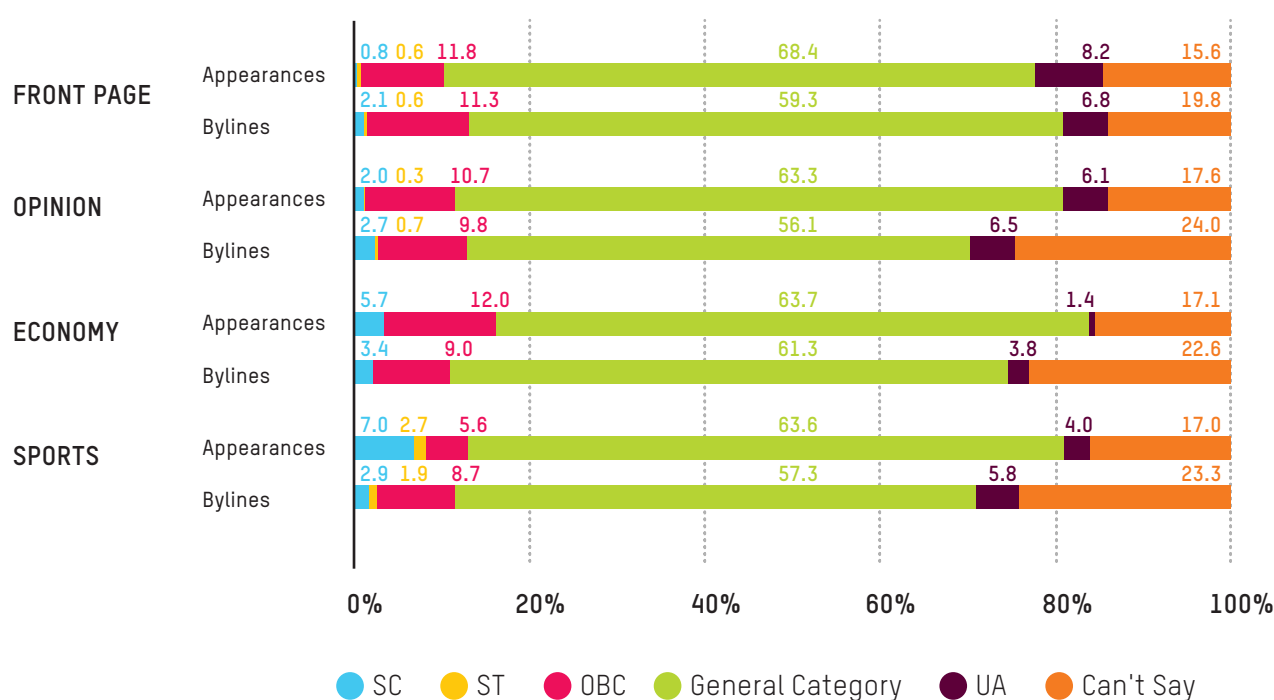
WRITERS FROM DIFFERENT CATEGORY WITH THEIR PERCENTAGE OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES



Except The Indian Express, all newspapers surveyed had more than 60% articles written by journalists belonging to the General category. The Indian Express and The Times of India had less than 2% reports written by ST category journalists. While

Hindustan Times, The Indian Express and The Times of India had only 8% articles written by SC category journalists, OBCs had up to 30% published stories in all the newspapers except The Hindu.

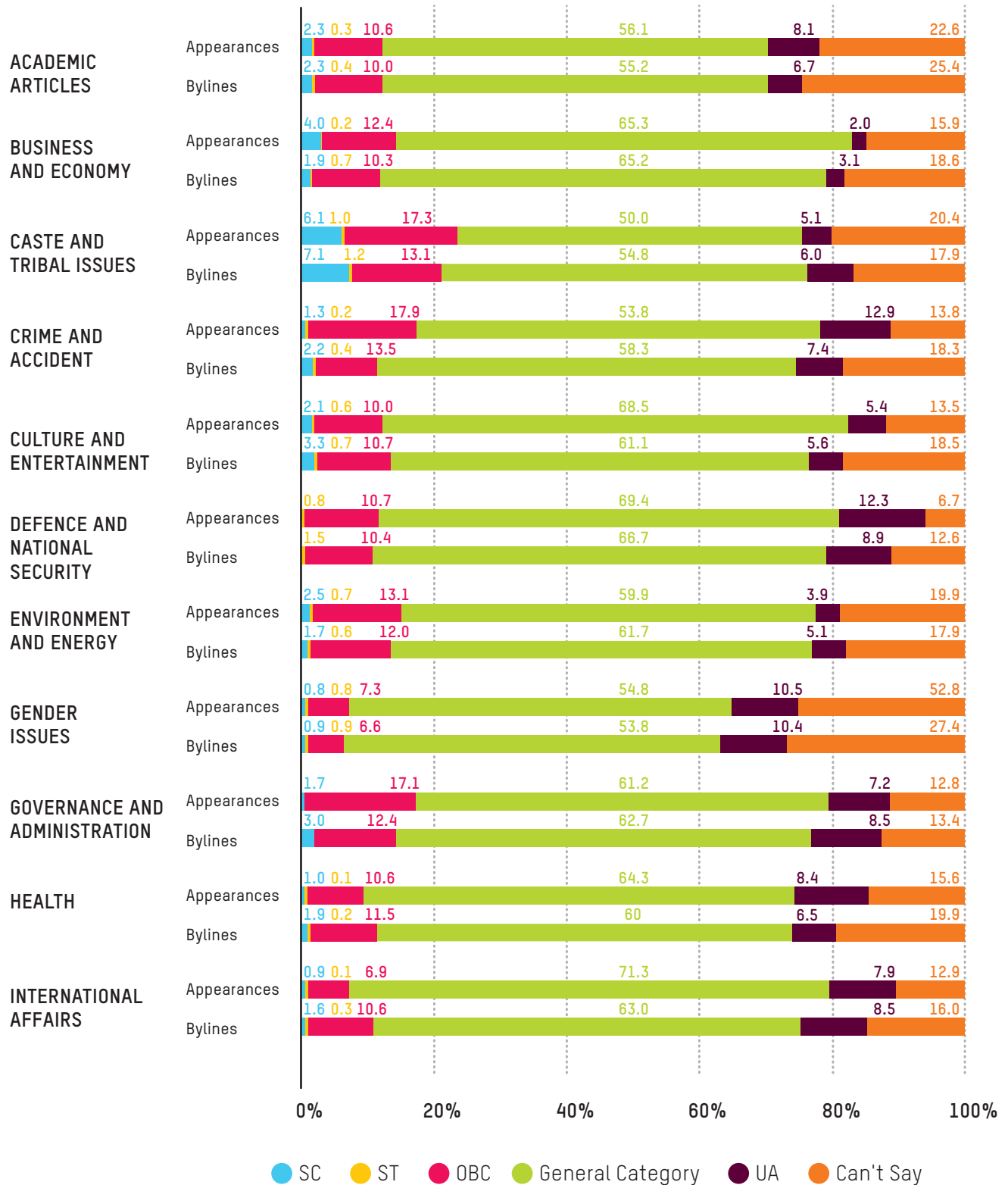
FRONT, OPINION, ECONOMY AND SPORTS PAGE STORIES COVERED BY JOURNALIST FROM ALL CATEGORY



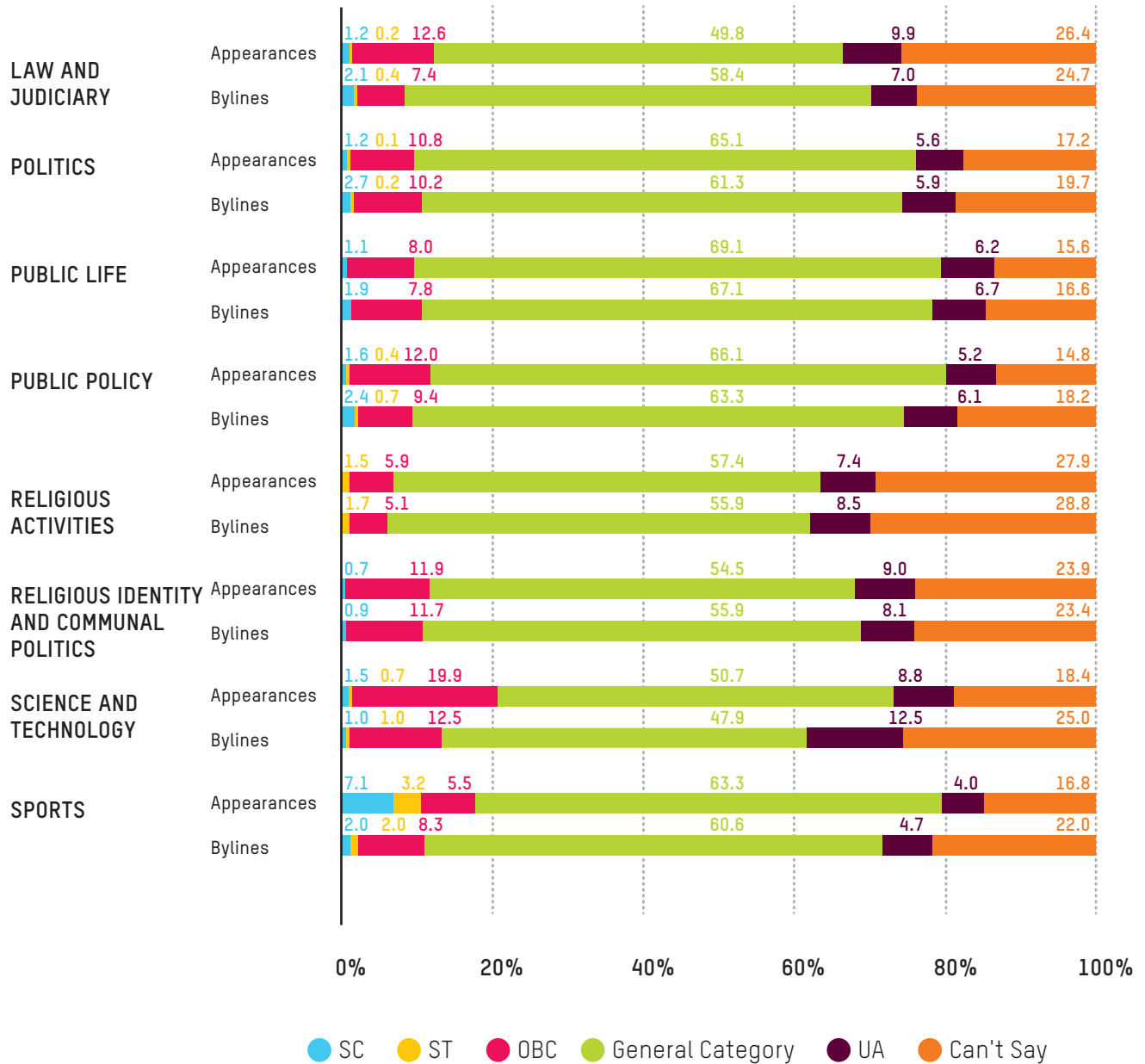
opinion pages, journalists from OBC categories had 9-12% representation. In contrast, writers from General category had 56-64% articles in front and opinion pages. The economy page had no writers belonging to the ST community, against 64% of articles published by general category authors. The

sports page saw better representation of SC/ST authors than opinion and front pages, yet when compared to the general category, a lot remained to be done.

PERCENTAGE OF CASTE OF JOURNALIST BY TOPIC



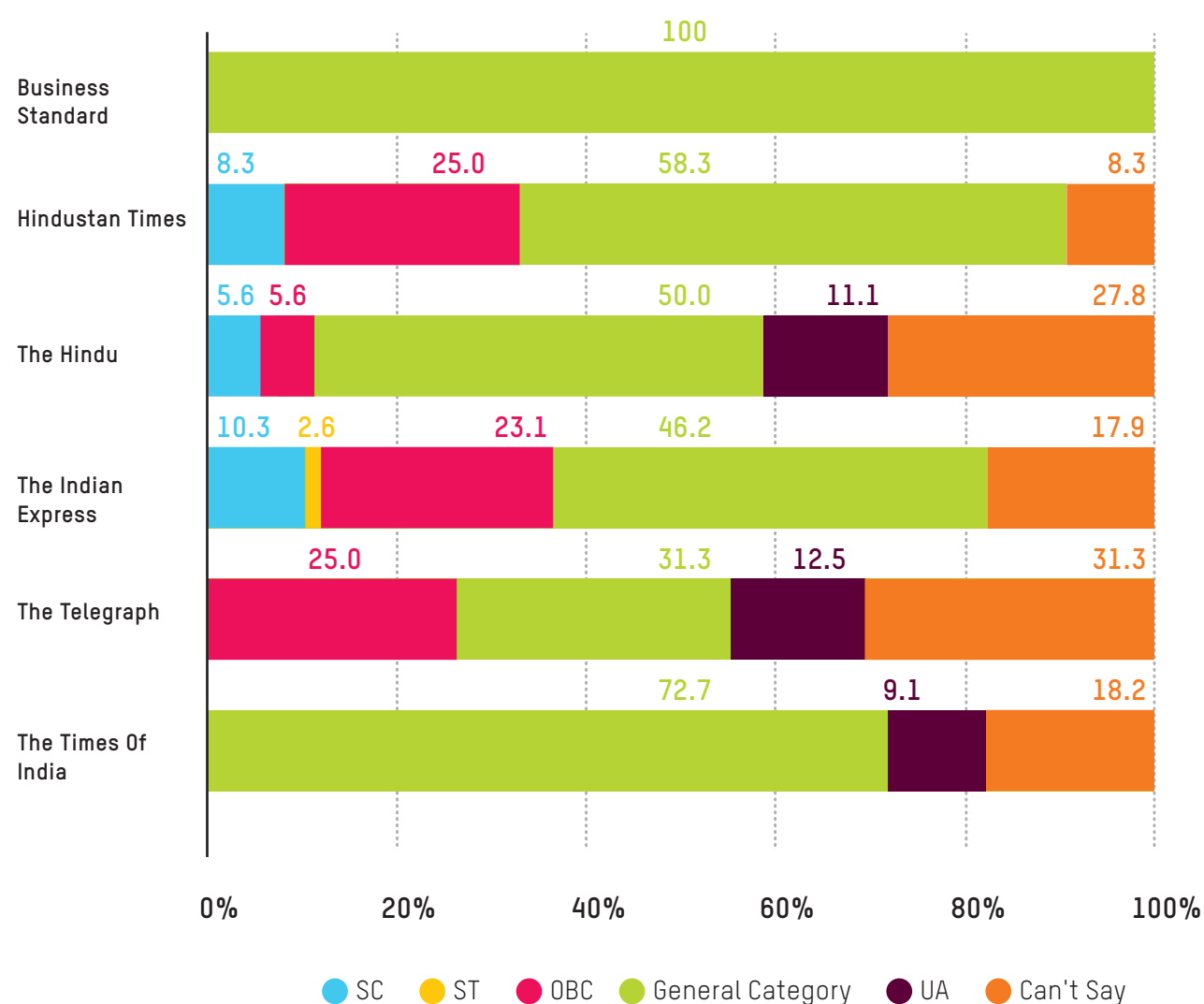
PERCENTAGE OF CASTE OF JOURNALIST BY TOPIC



Close to half of the articles in almost all the topics were written by journalists from general categories. While journalists from the OBC category had improved representation, they tended to cover issues mainly

relating to caste, crime and science and technology. At a dismal 0-7%, journalists from SC/ST categories had least representation in all topics.

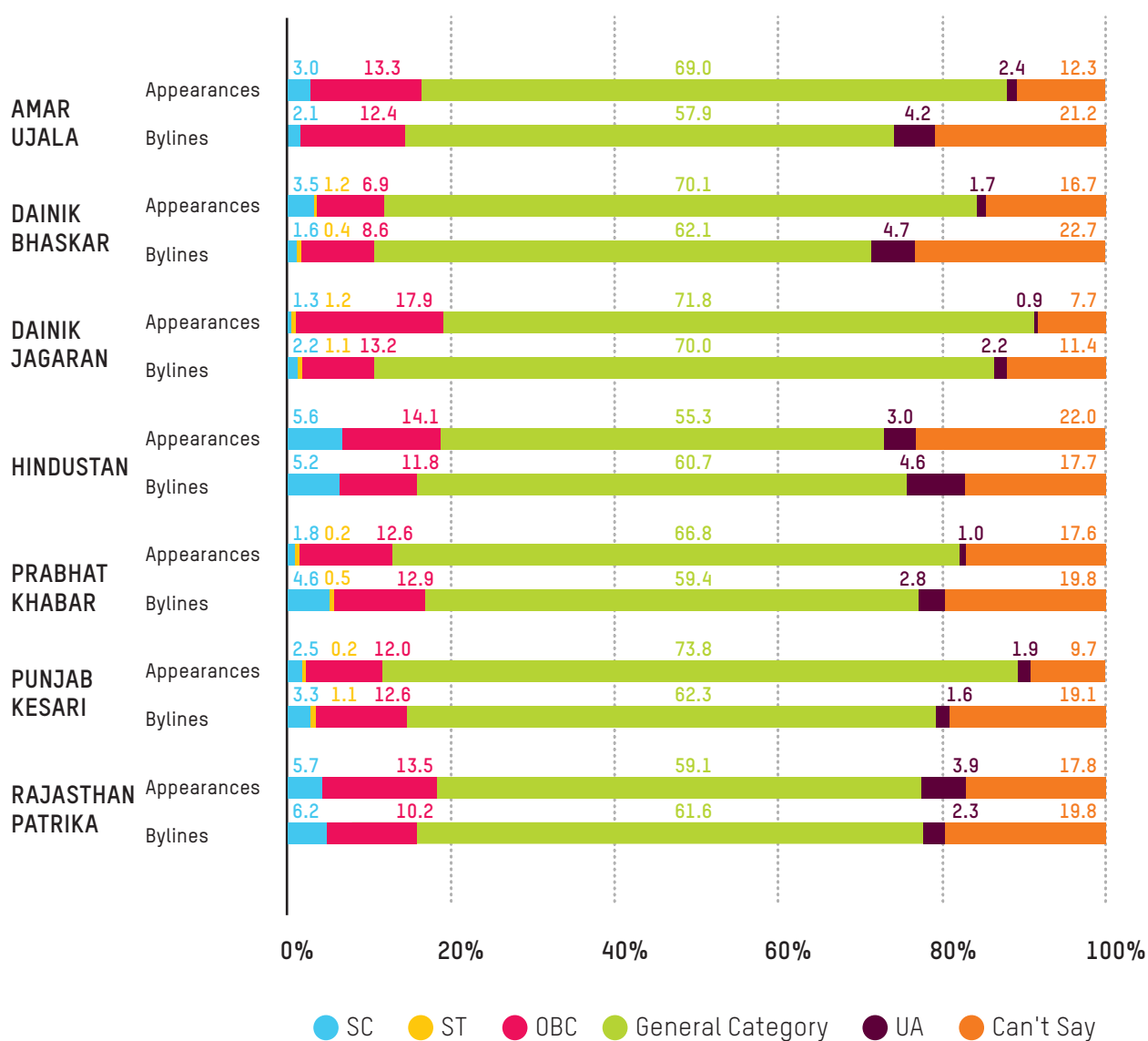
COMPOSITION OF JOURNALIST AND WRITERS COVERING CASTE ISSUES IN PERCENTAGE



Reporting of caste issues in print media appears to be dominated by journalists from the general category. While OBC journalists had 0-25% bylines, writers from SC and ST categories hardly accounted for bylines in any of the major newspapers. Business Standard and The Times of India did not have any

journalist from OBC, SC or ST categories writing on caste issues. Similarly, The Telegraph did not have any journalist with SC or ST background reporting on caste issues. Hindustan Times, The Indian Express and The Telegraph had only a few journalists from the OBC category.

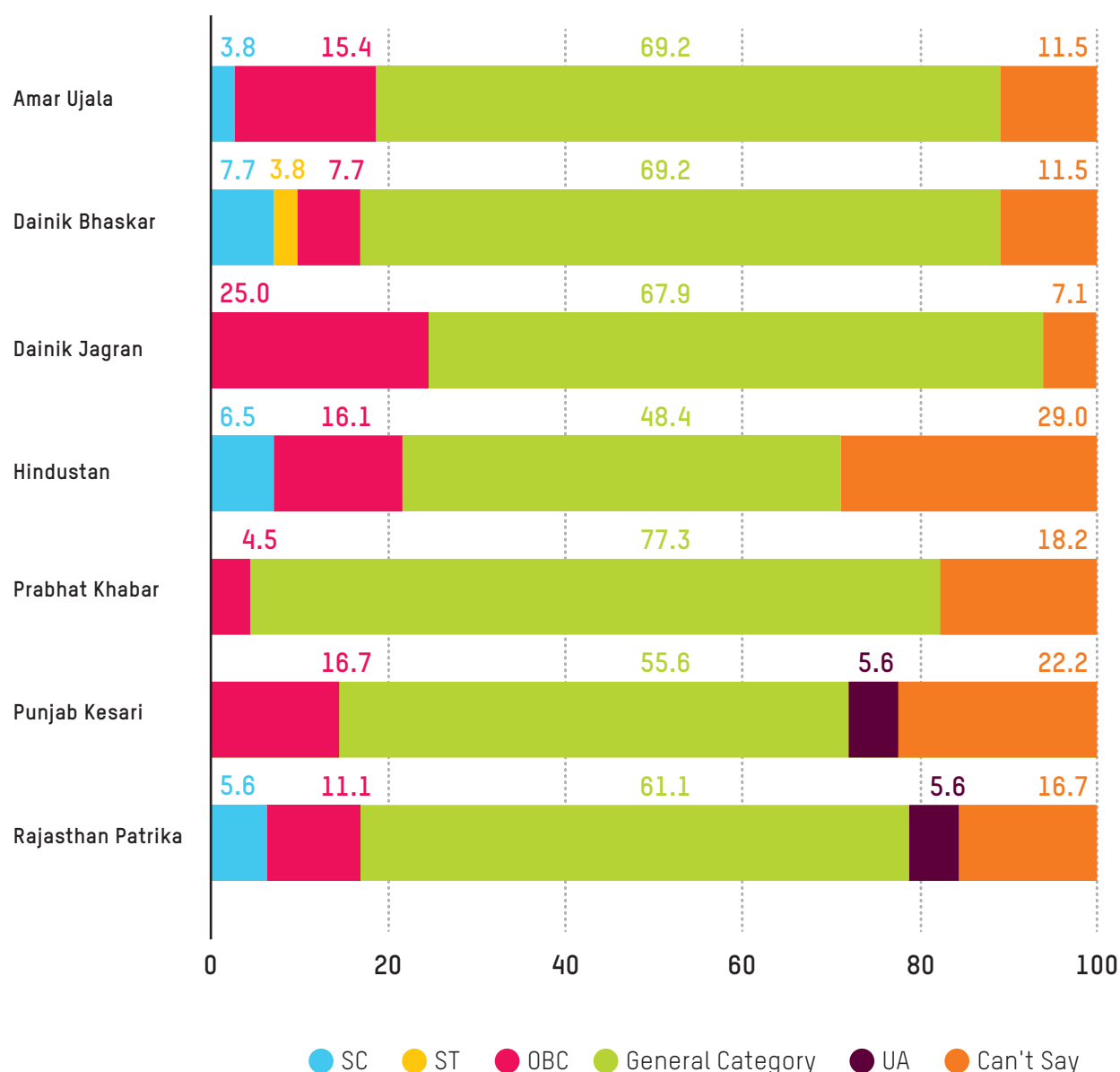
STATUS OF REPRESENTATION WITHIN SC, ST & OBC IN HINDI NEWSPAPER OUTLETS



Similar to English newspapers, an overwhelming majority of bylines in Hindi newspapers were also by journalists belonging to the general category. OBC

journalists had only a little representation, followed by SC and ST journalists, who accounted for a mere 0-6% of bylines and appearances.

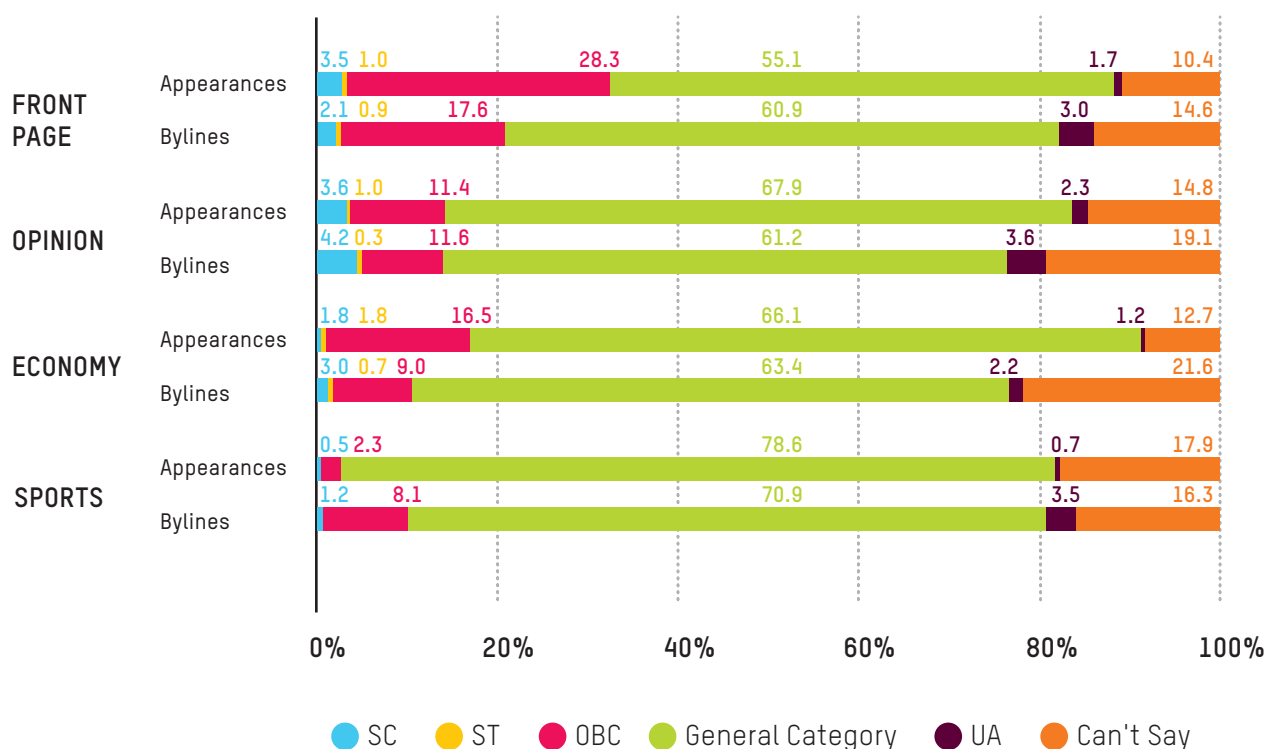
TOP DECILE OF WRITER BY THE NUMBER OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN (%)



While Dainik Bhasakar had the highest 7.7% of SC category journalists in the top decile of writers by the number of articles published, Dainik Jagran, Prabhat Khabar and Punjab Kesari had no representation of SC and ST community. ST writers made it to

the top decile only in Dainik Bhaskar. While Dainik Jagran did poorly in terms of SC and ST representation, it had the highest 25% for OBC representation in the top decile of writers.

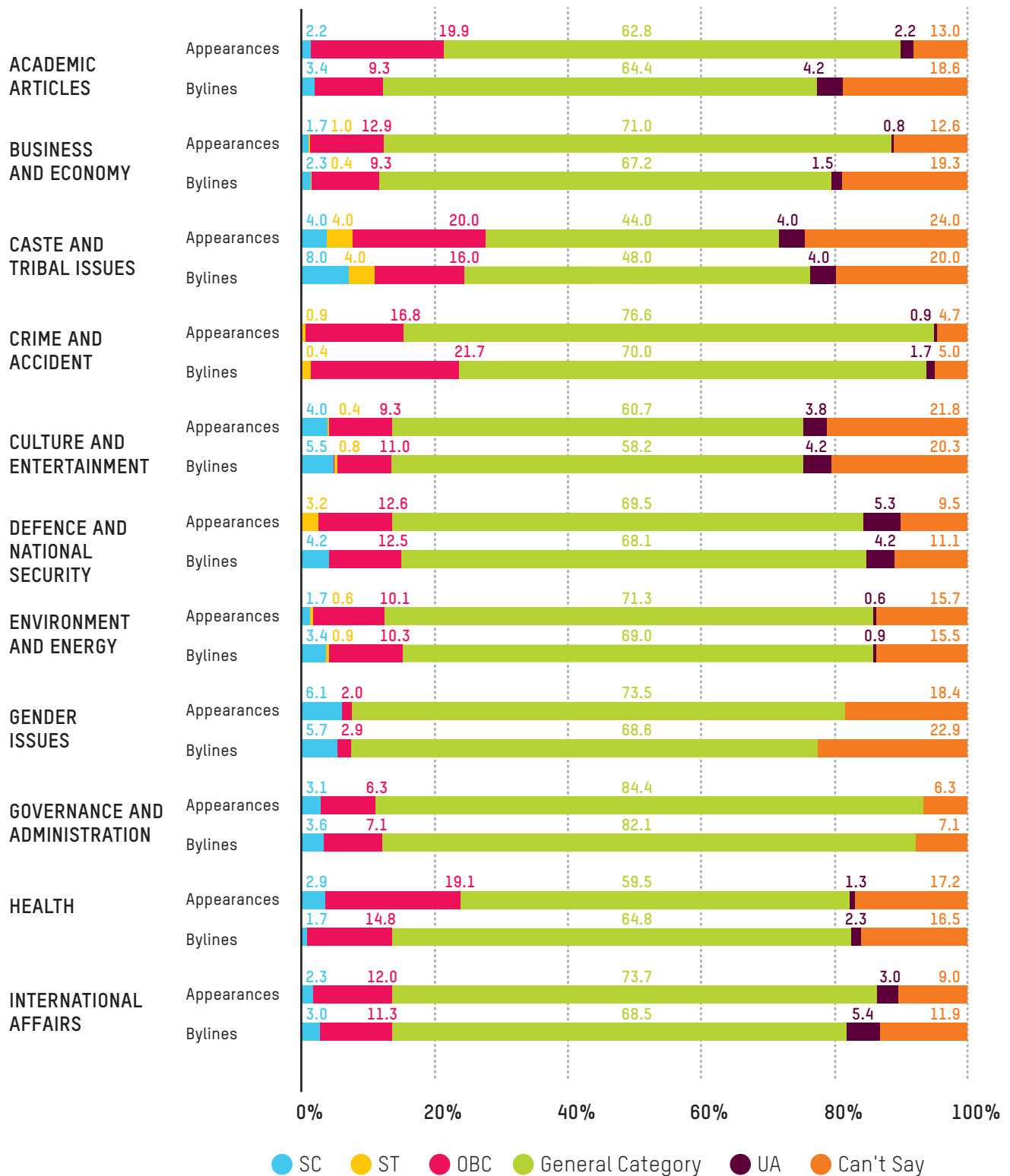
FRONT, OPINION, ECONOMY AND SPORTS PAGE STORIES COVERED BY JOURNALIST FROM ALL CATEGORIES



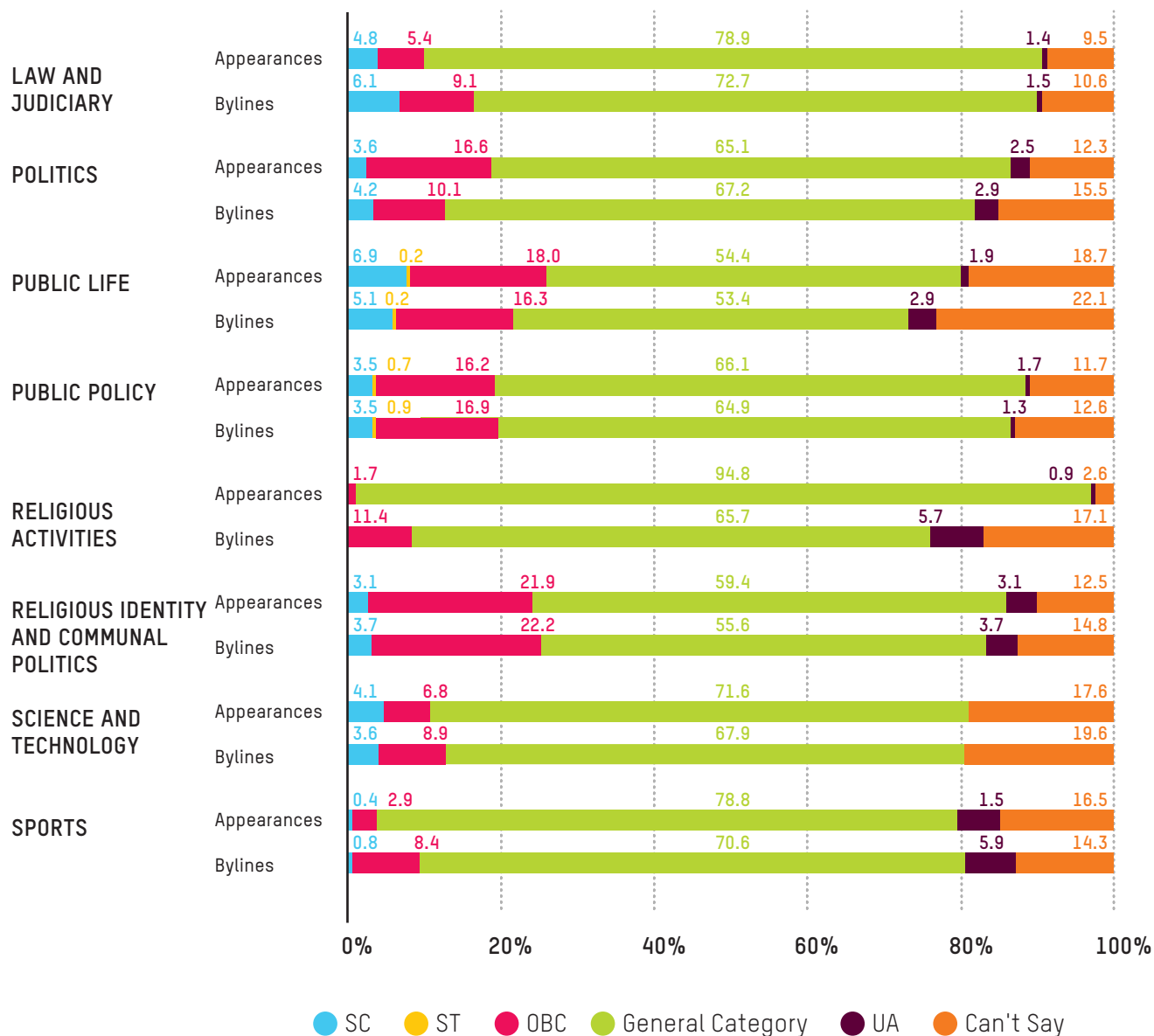
Front and opinion pages saw most articles by journalists from the general category. While the economy page recorded a mere 1.8% each represen-

tation of SC and ST category in appearances, sports pages saw the least number of writers from SC and OBC categories and no writers from the ST category.

PERCENTAGE OF CASTE COMPOSITION OF JOURNALIST AND WRITERS BY TOPIC



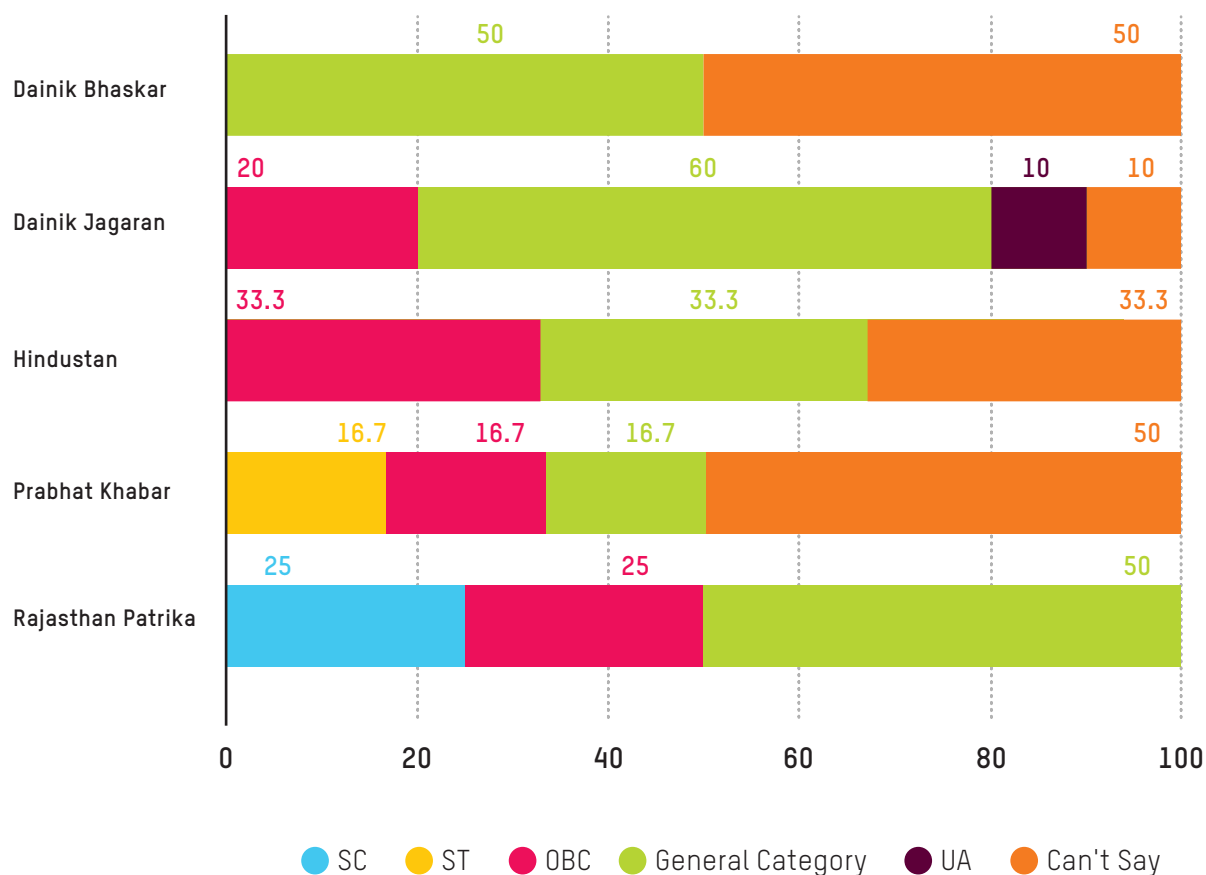
PERCENTAGE OF CASTE COMPOSITION OF JOURNALIST AND WRITERS BY TOPIC



The table shows the composition percentage of what topics journalists from different communities write about. Only 4% of SC and ST journalists each wrote on caste and tribal issues. Topics like sports, crimes

and religion saw almost zero SC and ST representation. OBC representation was more than 15% in most topics with the highest in Religious Identity and Communal Politics.

COMPOSITION OF JOURNALIST COVERING CASTE ISSUES IN %



Around 50% percent of journalists belonging to general category mostly write about caste related issues whereas only an average 20% percent people from other categories get to write on such issues.

Rajasthan Patrika has the highest 25% of journalists belonging to SC category writing about caste atrocities.

STATUS OF REPRESENTATION WITHIN SC, ST & OBC IN NEWS CHANNELS

REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TV NEWS CHANNELS

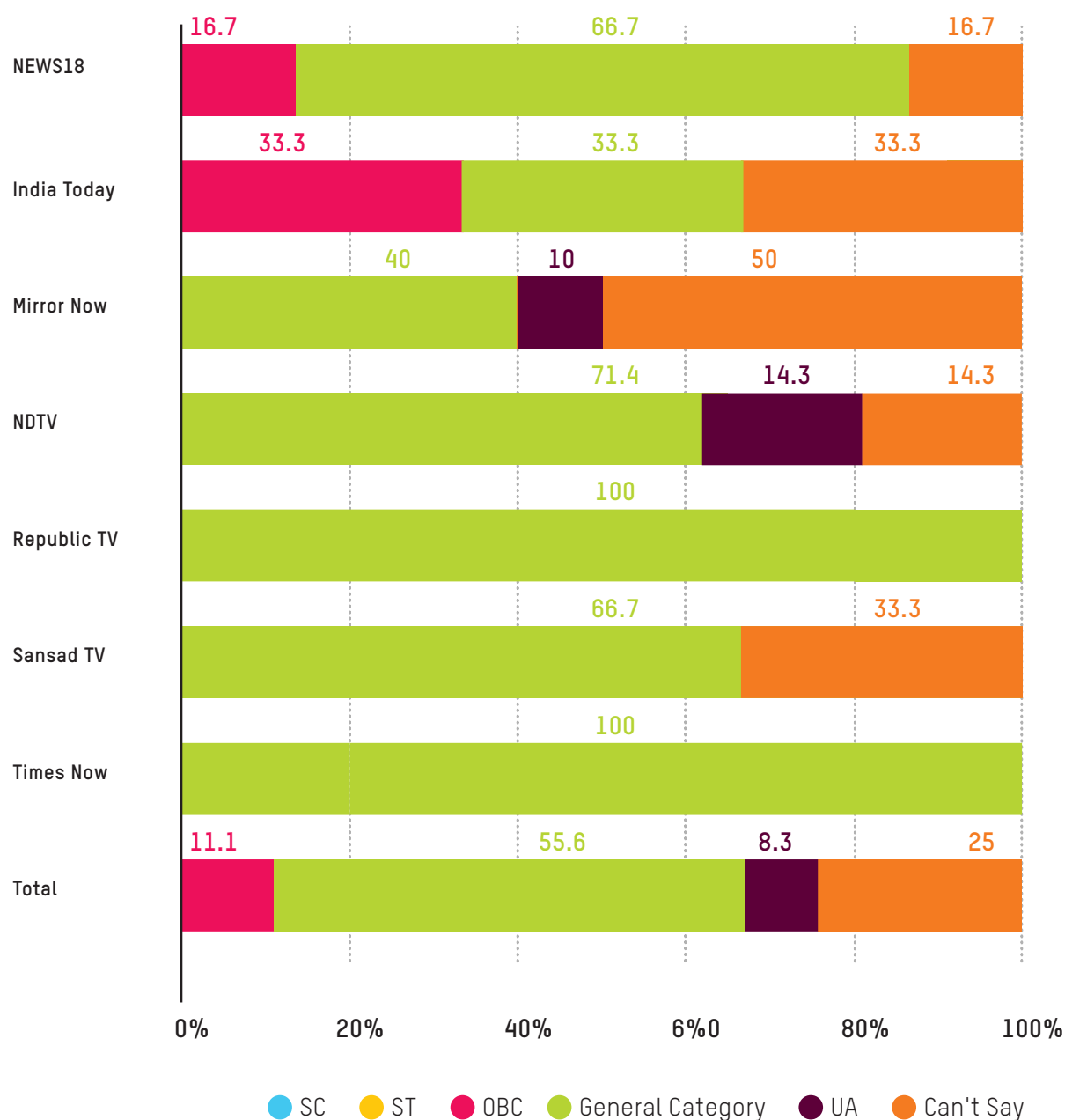
OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION OF ANCHORS RESPONDED OR GATHERED INFORMATION THROUGH SURVEY

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
CAN'T SAY	9	25.0	25.0	25.0
SC	0	0	0	0
ST	0	0	0	0
OBC	4	11.1	11.1	36.1
UA	3	8.3	8.3	44.4
UNRESERVED	20	55.6	55.6	0
TOTAL	36	100	100	100

(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

While 55.6% English news anchors belonged to the general category, there were no anchors from SC and ST categories. English new channels had 11.1% representation of OBC category anchors.

CASTE COMPOSITION OF ANCHORS RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY FOR ENGLISH NEWS CHANNELS



(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

TV anchors belonging to the marginalised communities in the English news channels were heavily under-represented. Four of the seven channels

studied did not have any anchor from the OBC category. India Today and Mirror Now had over 65% presence of journalists from general categories.

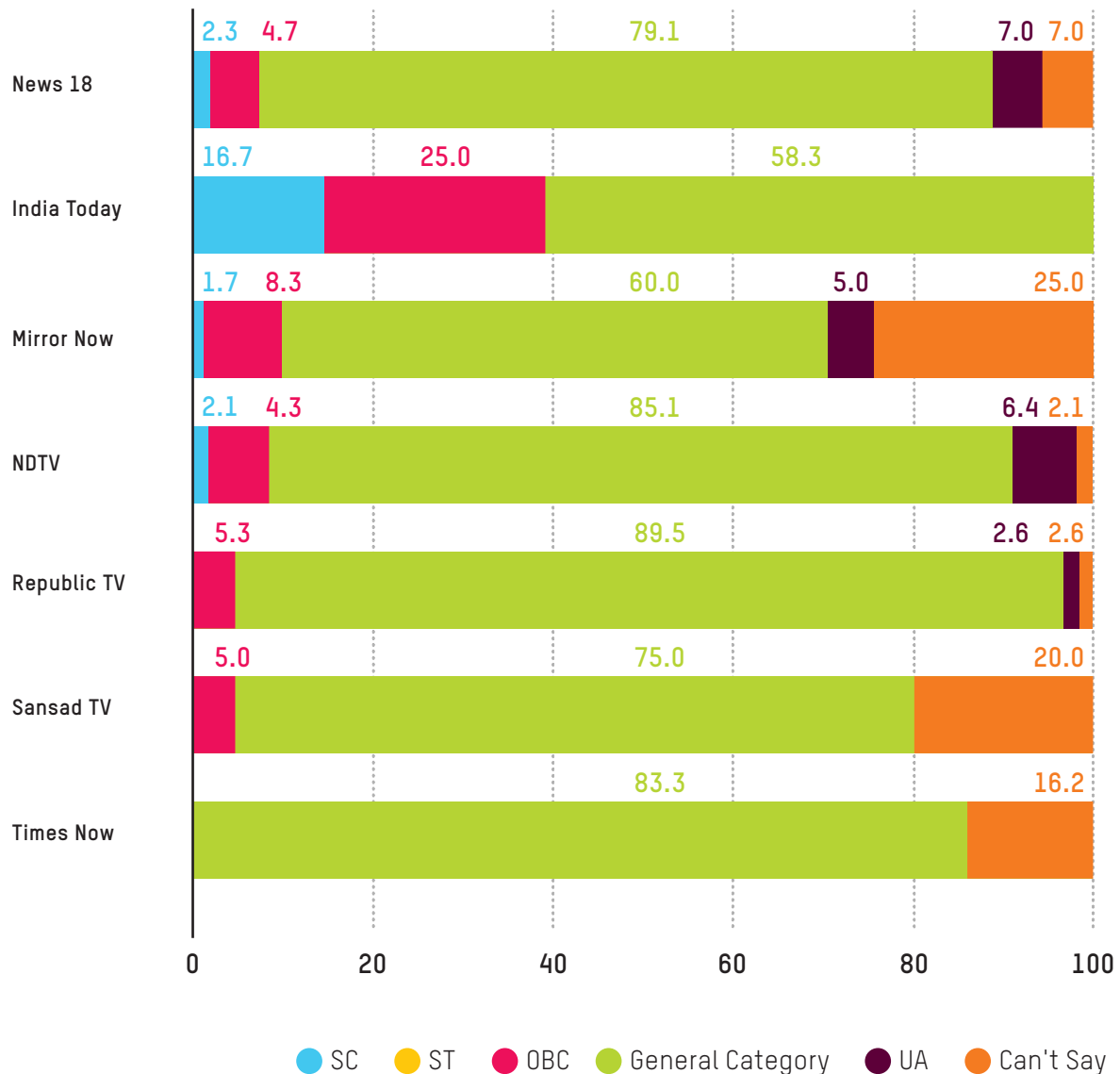
OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION OF PANELISTS IN ENGLISH NEWS CHANNELS



Panelists belonging to the general category constituted over 60%, followed by the OBC category at 15%.

While the SC category had just 5% representation, the ST category had even less at around 1%.

TOP DECILE OF PANELIST BY APPEARANCE IN (%)



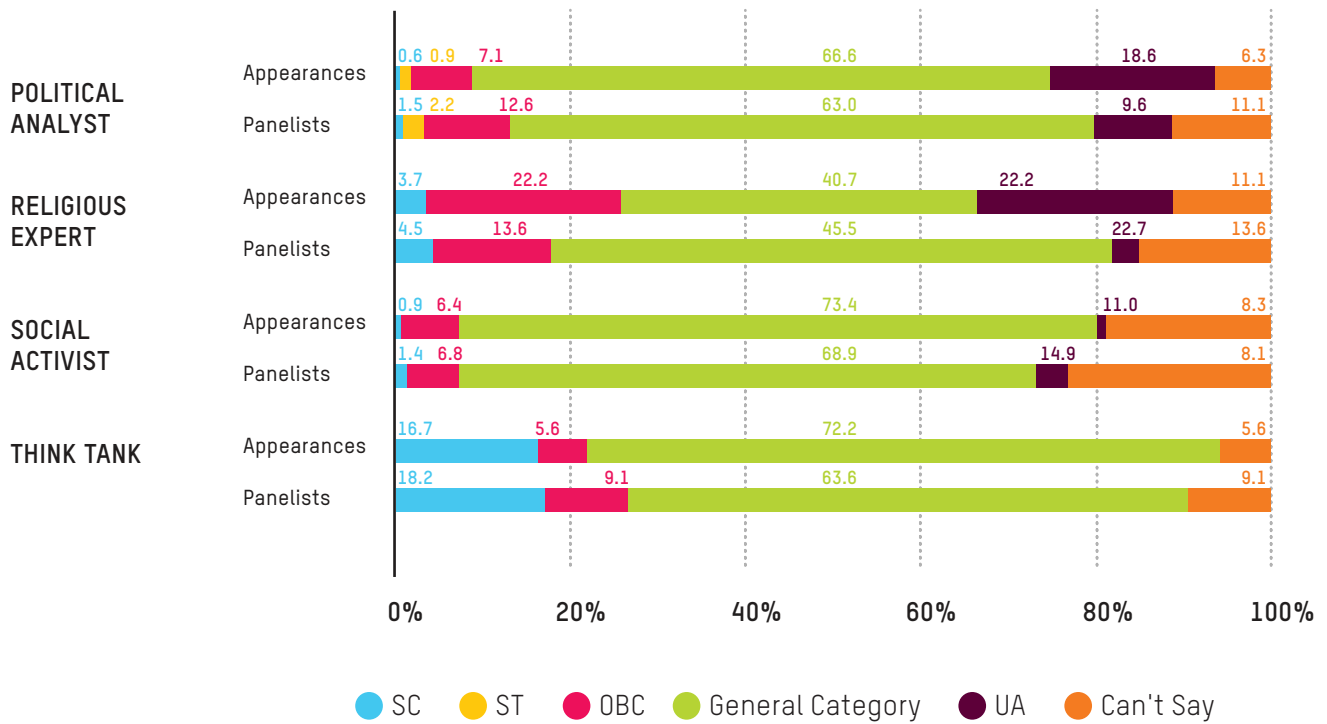
Except India Today and Mirror Now, all other English news channels surveyed had over 75% representation of panelists by appearances in the general category. While there was zero presence of ST panelists,

panelists from SC category had the highest representation (16.7%) in India Today and Times Now and Republic TV had none.

FIELD OF EXPERTISE OF PANELISTS IN (%)



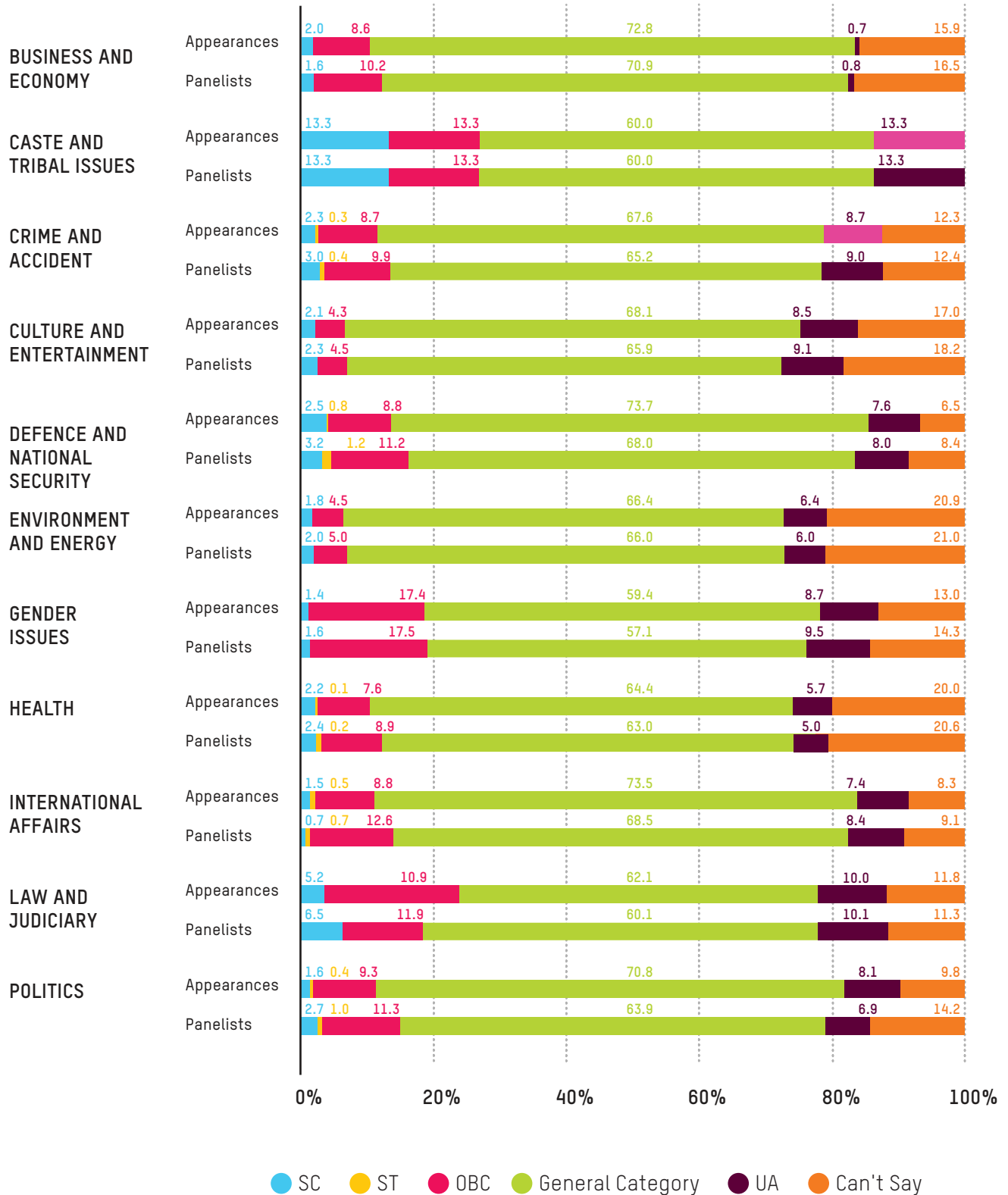
FIELD OF EXPERTISE OF PANELISTS IN (%)



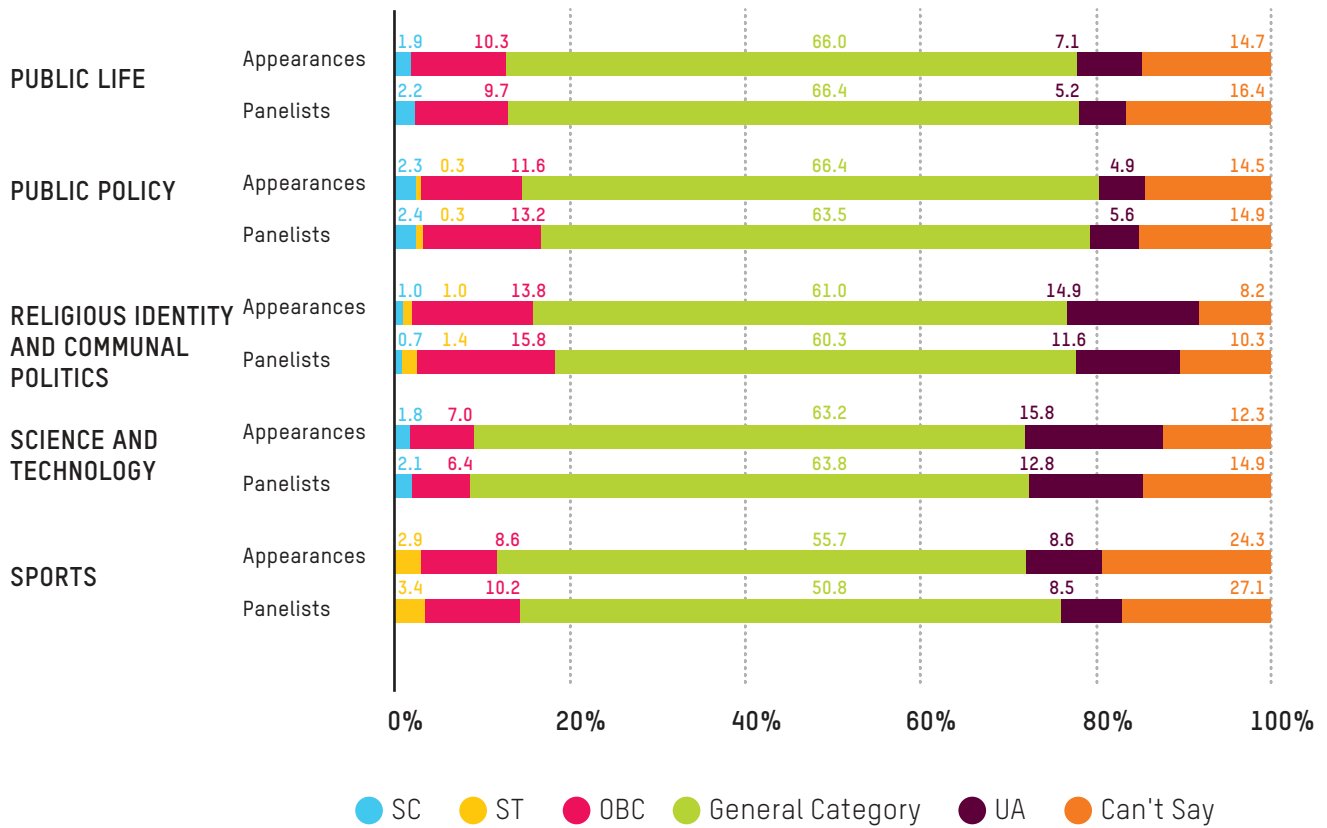
In seven of the 16 topics explored in this report, primetime debates didn't have any experts from

ST/SC categories. Experts from OBC background also saw little representation across all topics.

TOPICS DISCUSSED BY PANELISTS IN (%)



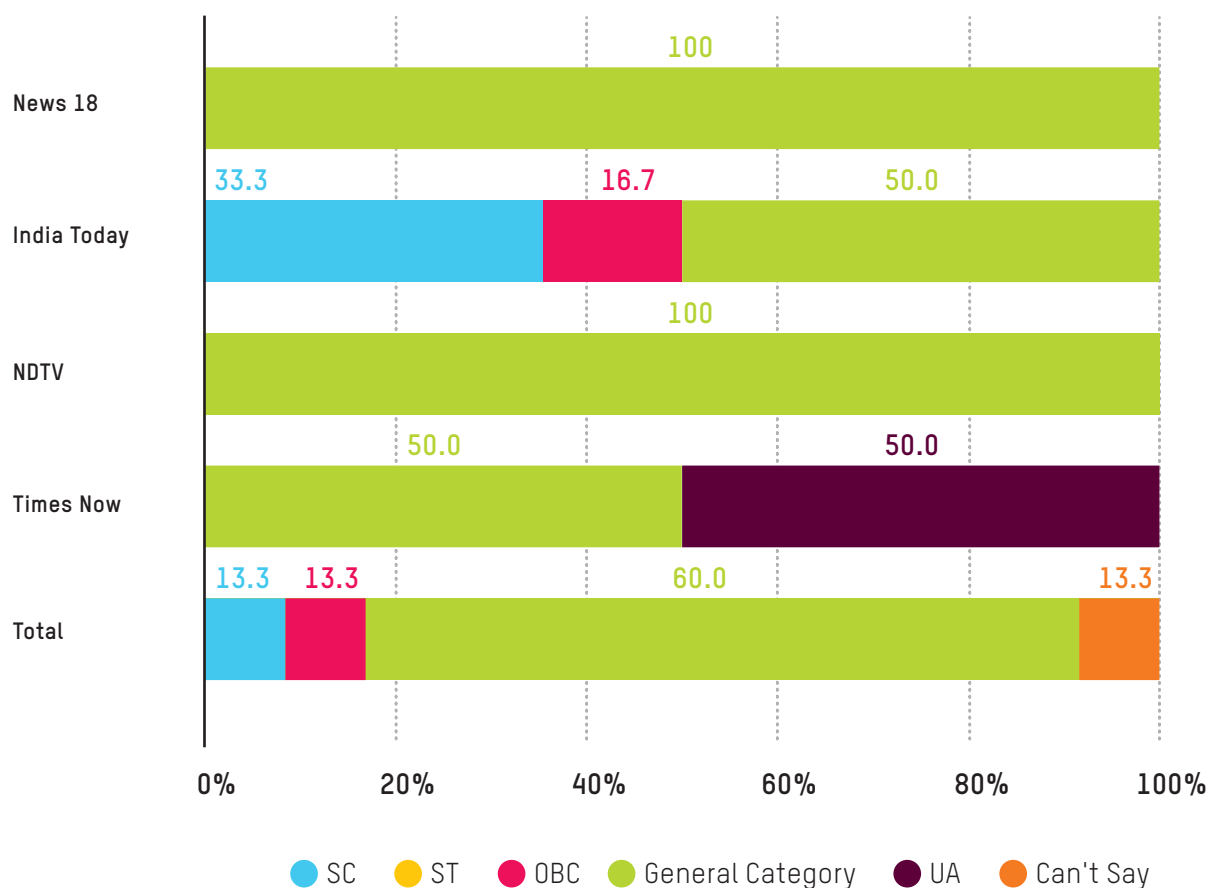
TOPICS DISCUSSED BY PANELISTS IN (%)



While panelists from the general category were preferred for debates on business, economy and international affairs, panelists from the OBC background had most appearances in discussions relat-

ing to religious identity and communal politics as well as caste and tribal issues. ST/SC panelists were hardly called for debates and had very little representation.

PANELIST DEBATING CASTE ISSUES IN (%)



While experts from the general category discussed caste-related issues at News18, similar discussions were held by panelists from the OBC category at NDTV. On one hand, India Today had 50% representa-

tion from the general category and the rest from OBC and SC categories, on the other, Times Now had 50% panelists from the general category and none from SC, ST and OBC categories.

CASTE REPRESENTATION IN HINDI NEWS CHANNELS

OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION OF ANCHORS (%)

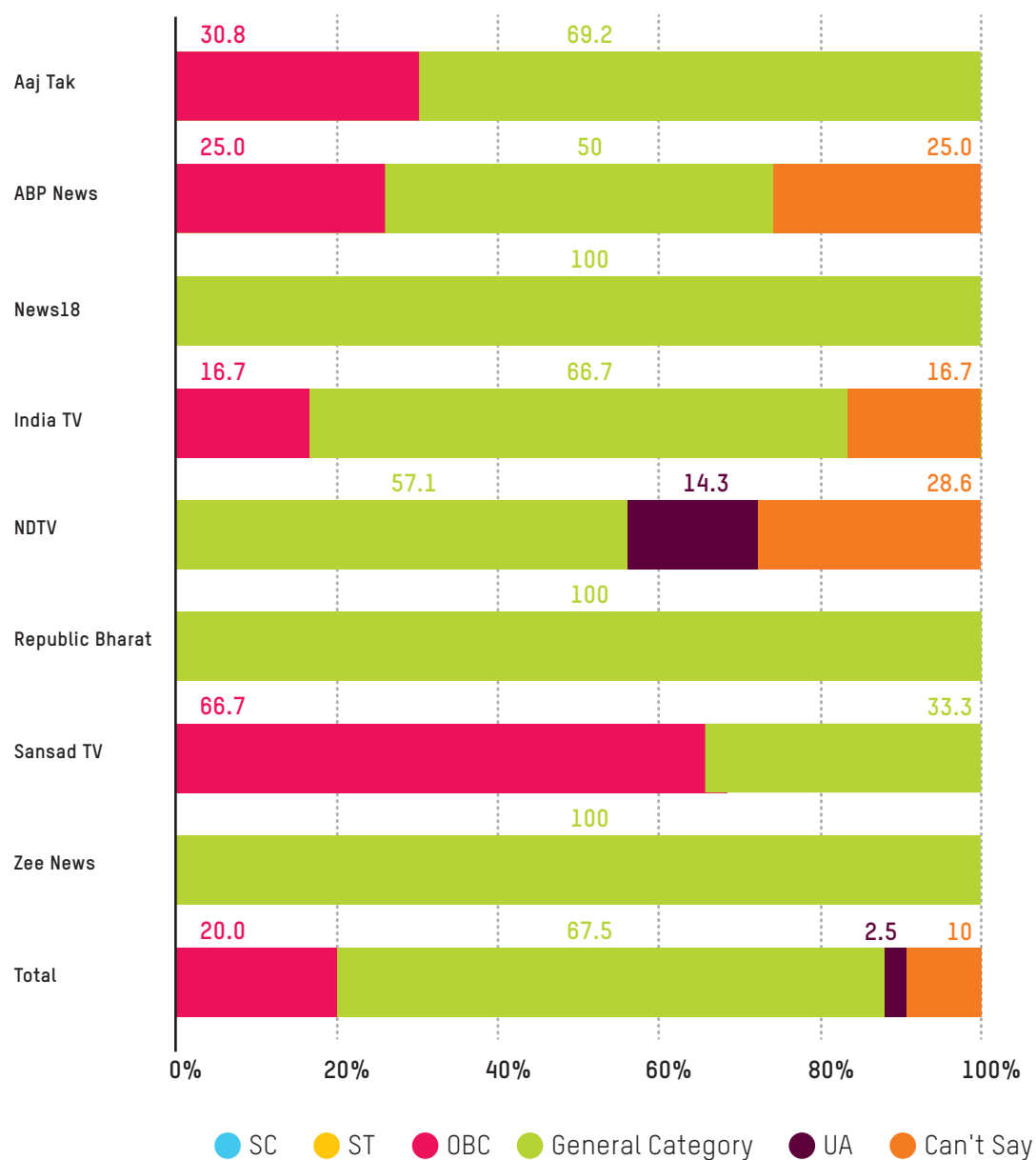
CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
OBC	8	20	20.0	20.0
UNRESERVED	27	67.5	67.5	87.5
UA	1	2.5	2.5	90.0
CAN'T SAY	4	10.0	10.0	0
TOTAL	40	100	100	100

(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

While anchors from the OBC category cumulatively had 20% presence, the frequency of their appearance was only 8%. Anchors from the general category

constituted almost 88% chances of occupying the TV screens.

CASTE COMPOSITION OF ANCHORS IN HINDI NEWS CHANNELS (%)

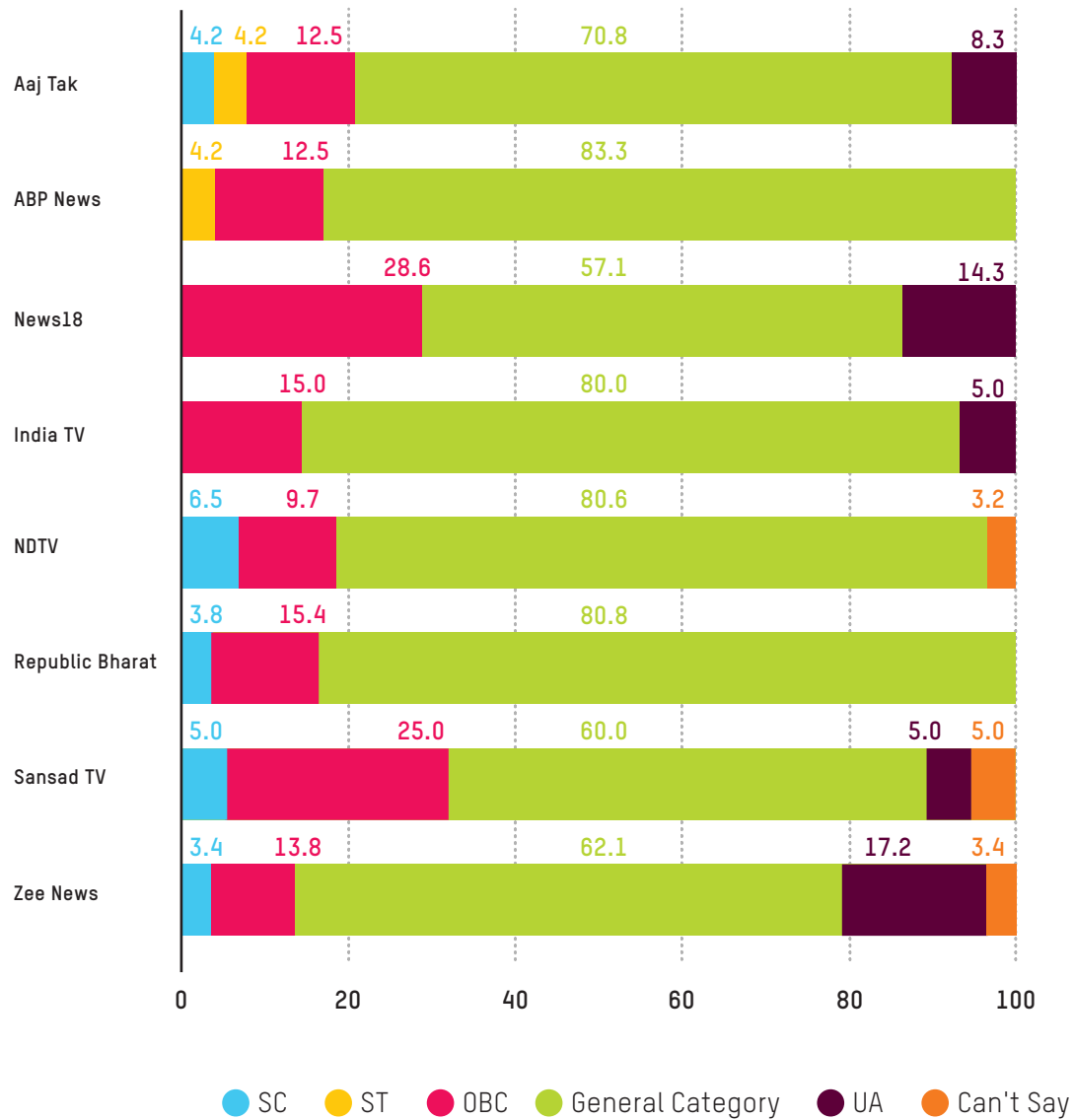


(participants responded to NL & Oxfam India survey, the number may differ from the actual number, see limitation of the research)

None of the mainstream Hindi news channels had anchors representing SC, ST communities. All anchors at News18, Republic Bharat and Zee News

were from the general category. Sansad TV was an exception with 67% of its anchors from the OBC category.

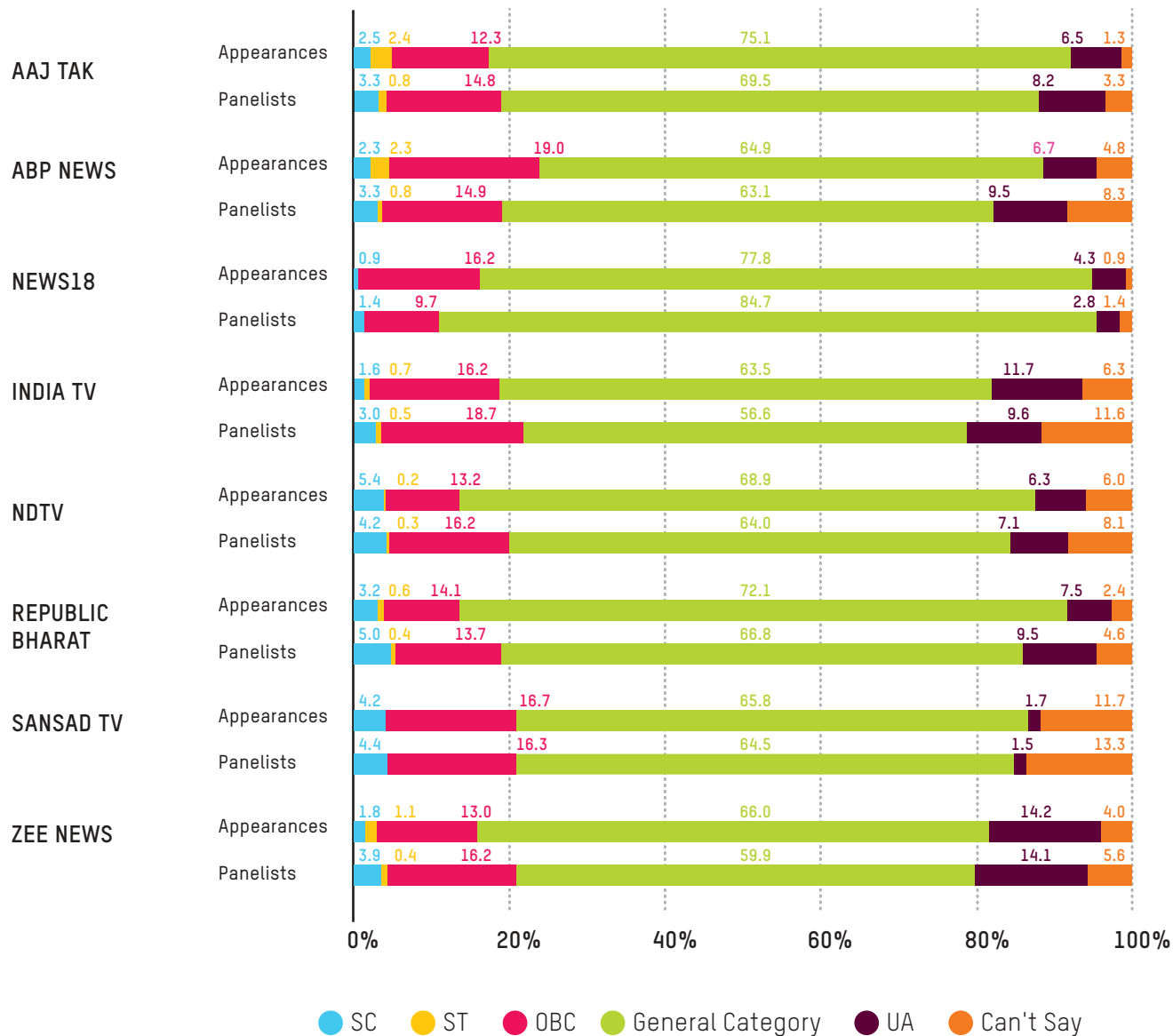
TOP DECILE OF PANELISTS BY APPEARANCE (%)



While SC representation in NDTV was the highest at only 6.5%, ABP News, News 18, India TV and Zee News had zero representation. While OBC representation

looked promising in News 18, the ST community had almost zero presence in all channels.

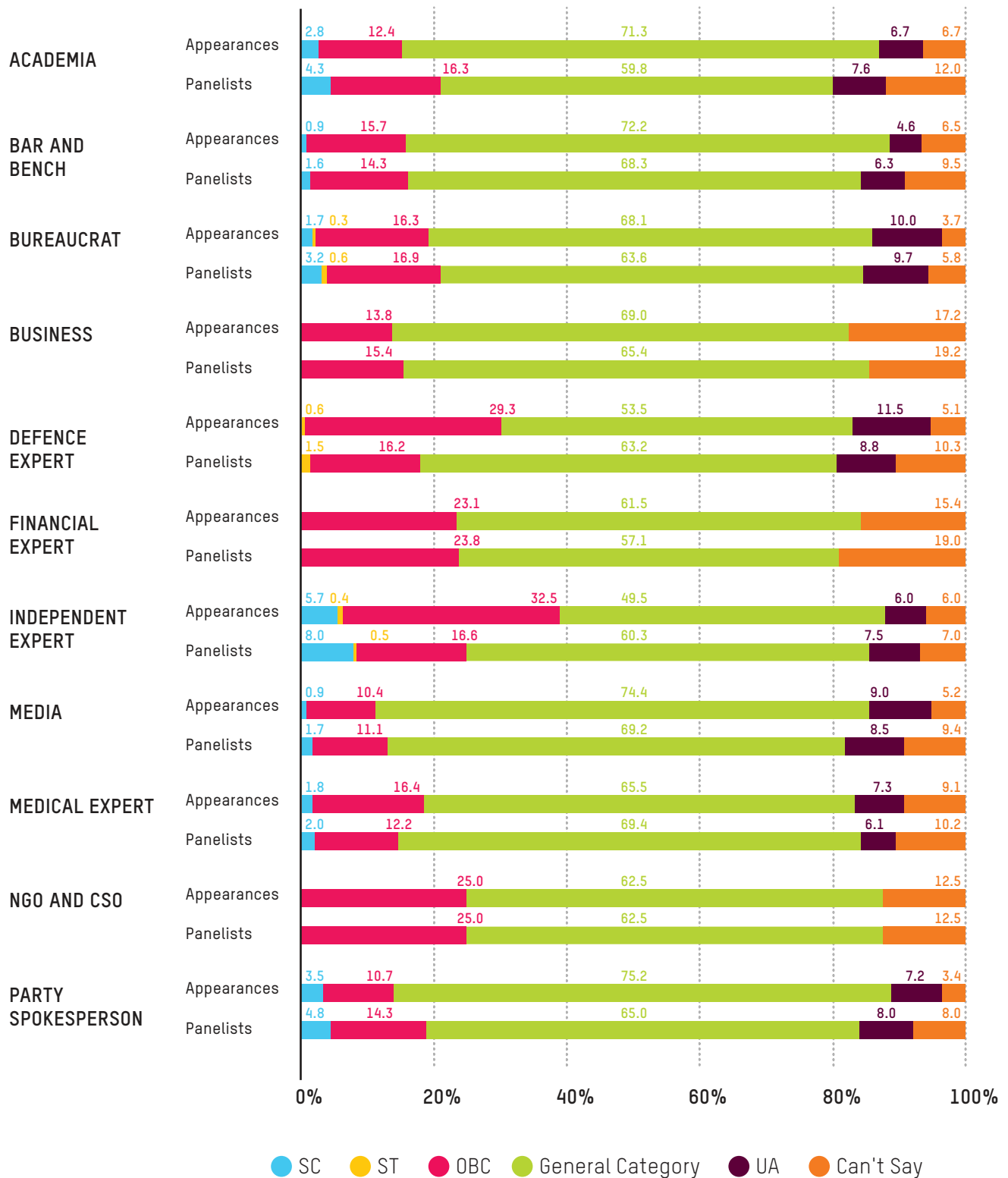
OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION (%)



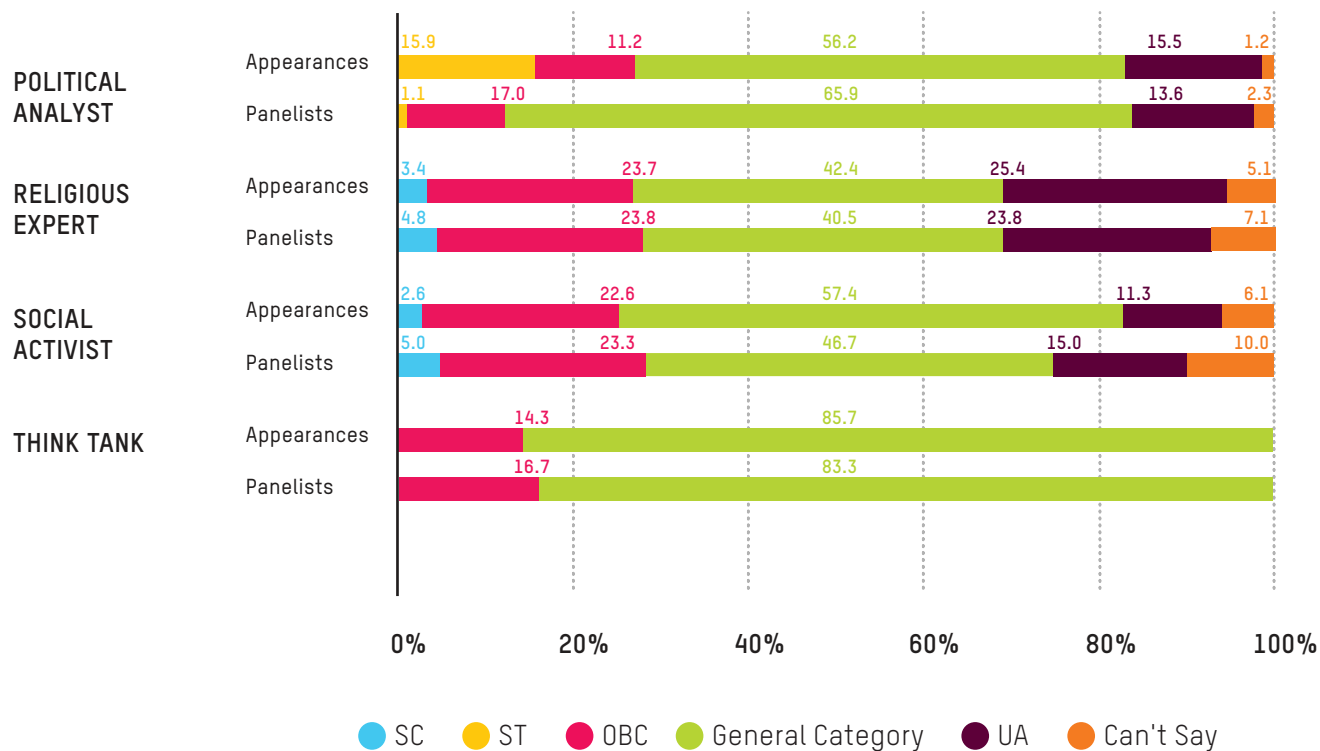
While the general category had over 50% appearances and panelists at all media outlets, SC representation remained below 5% in all with an exception to

NDTV and Republic Bharat. OBC appearances were the highest in ABP News.

FIELD OF EXPERTISE OF PANELISTS IN (%)



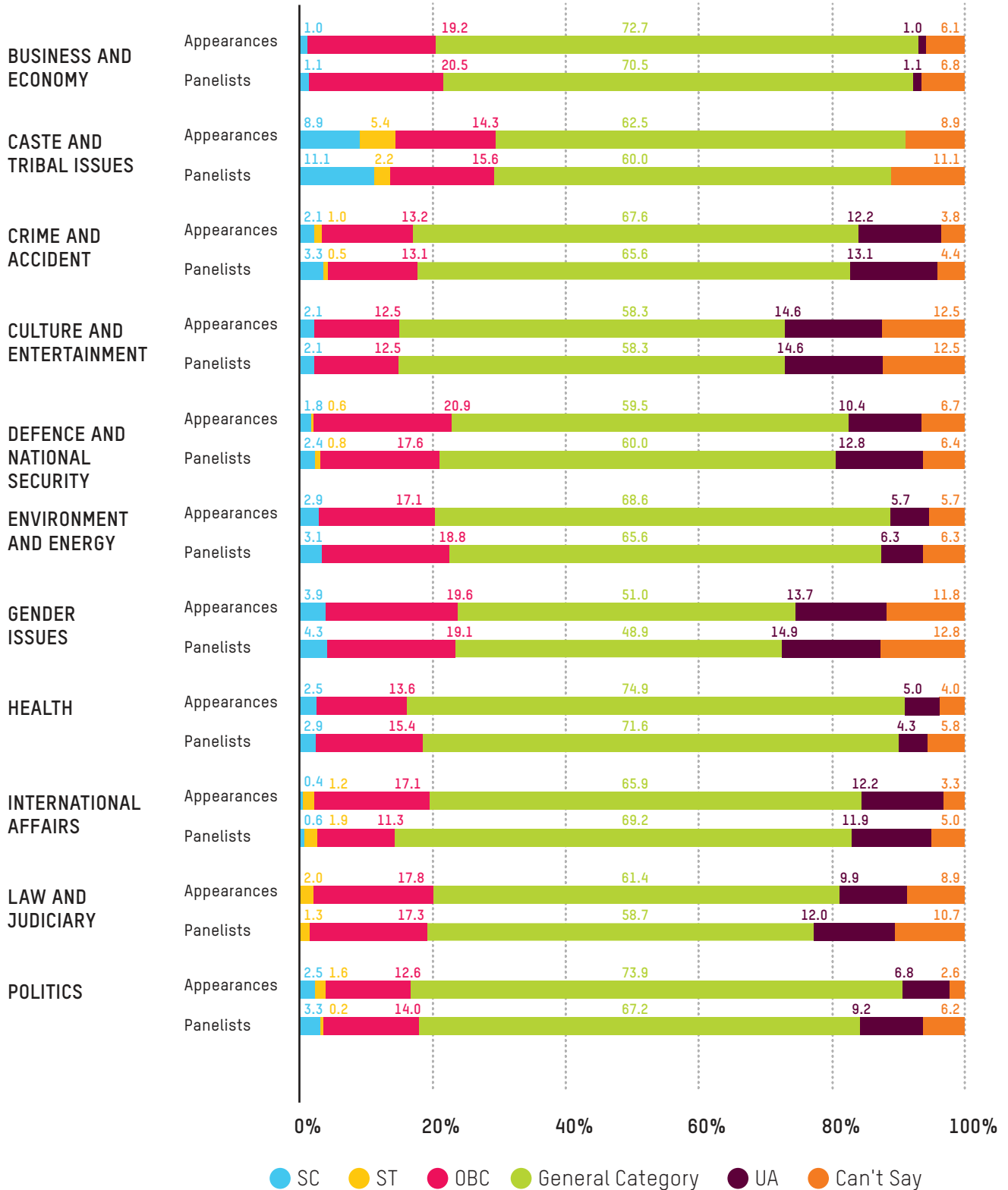
FIELD OF EXPERTISE OF PANELISTS IN (%)

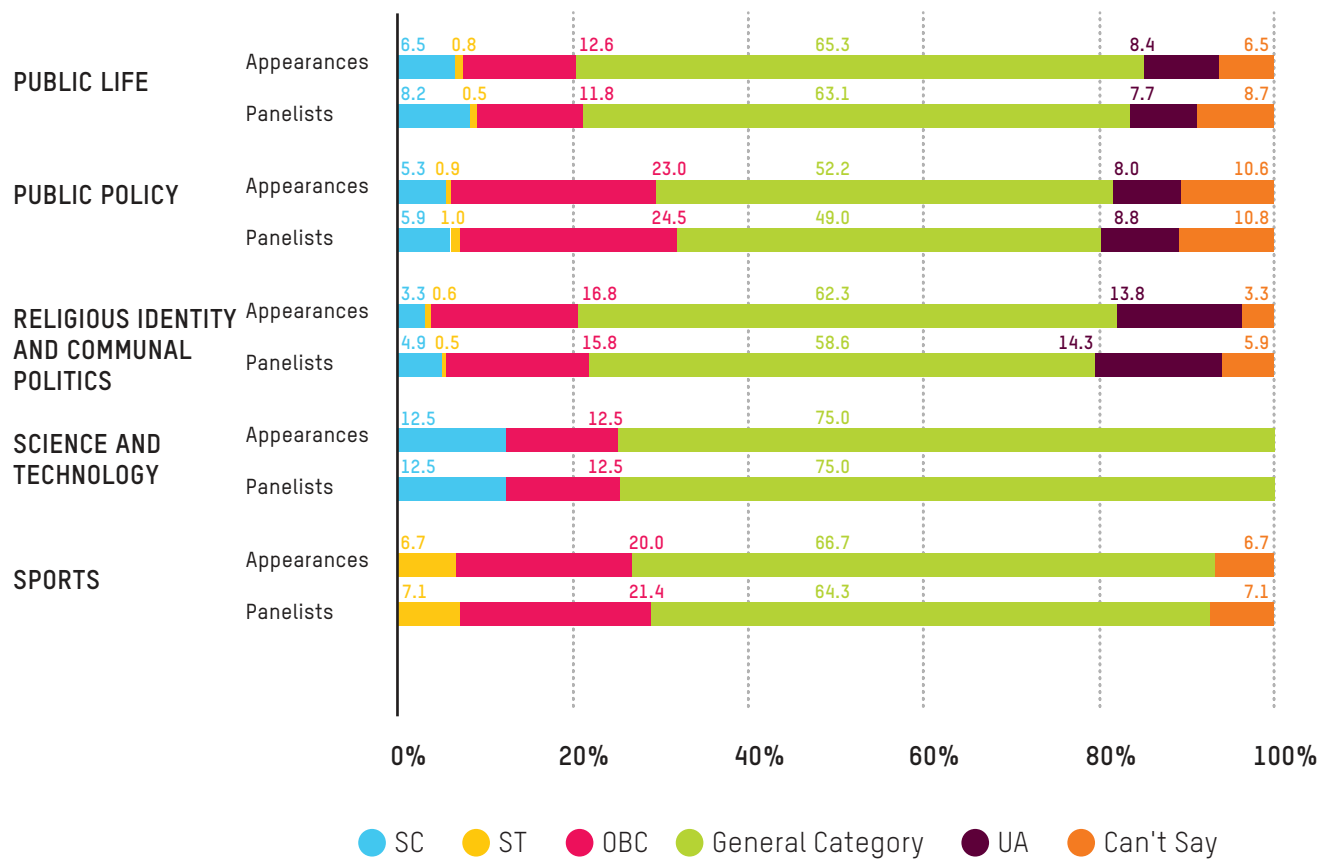


In almost all sections, experts from the general category were called to speak on varied subjects. An expert from ST category was never called to speak on

academia, bar and bench, business, politics, religion among others. However, the trend is a little better for the OBC category.

TOPICS DISCUSSED BY PANELISTS IN (%)

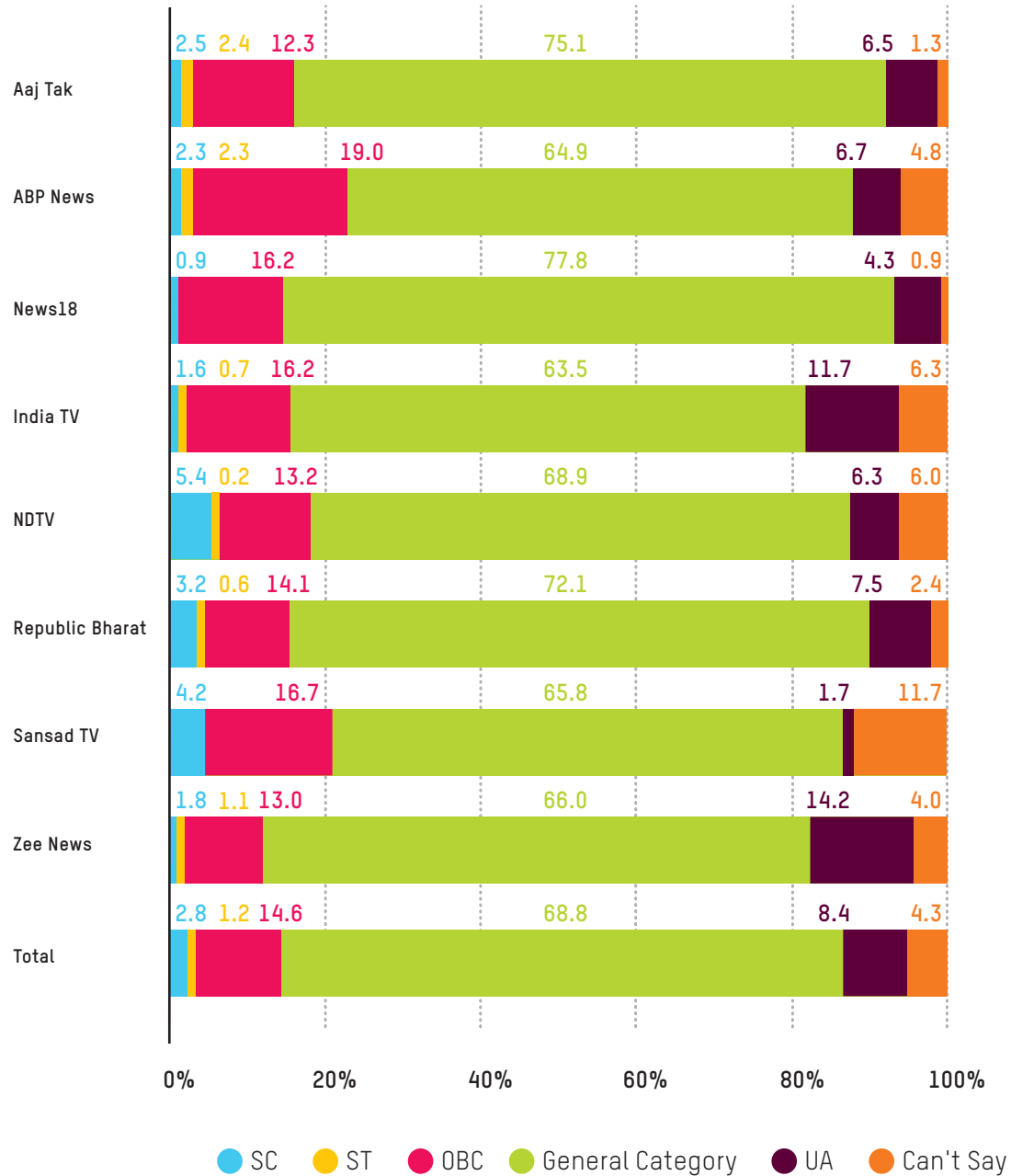




The above table shows a similar trend where panelists belonging to the general categories were

preferred to discuss issues such as science and technology and politics.

PANELISTS DEBATING CASTE AND TRIBAL ISSUE (%)

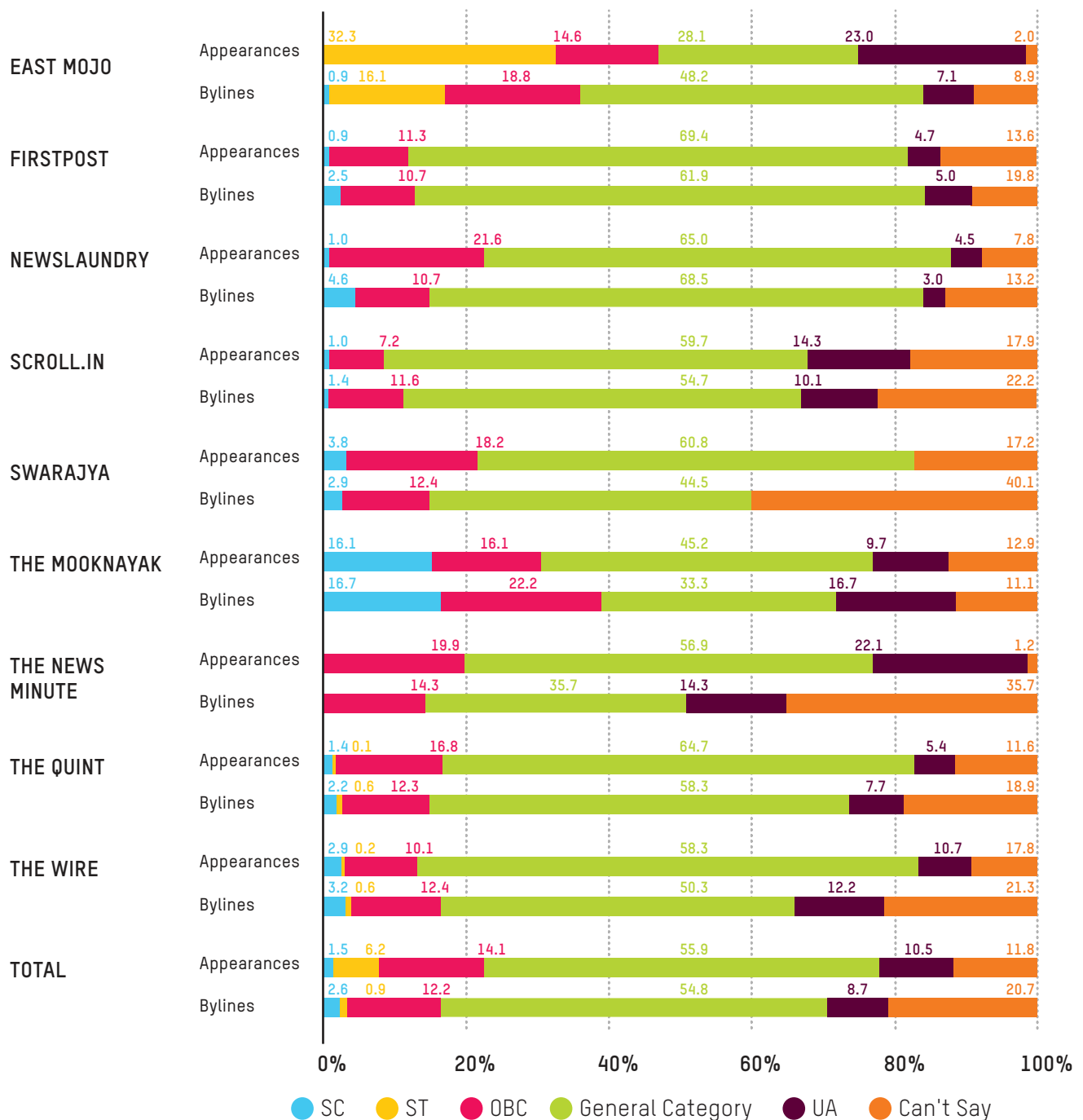


Over 65% experts from the general category took part in debates on caste and tribal issues on almost all news channels. Around 5% panelists from the

marginalised communities were invited to speak on the topic at almost all news channels.

THE STATUS OF REPRESENTATION WITHIN SC, ST & OBC IN DIGITAL NEWS PORTALS

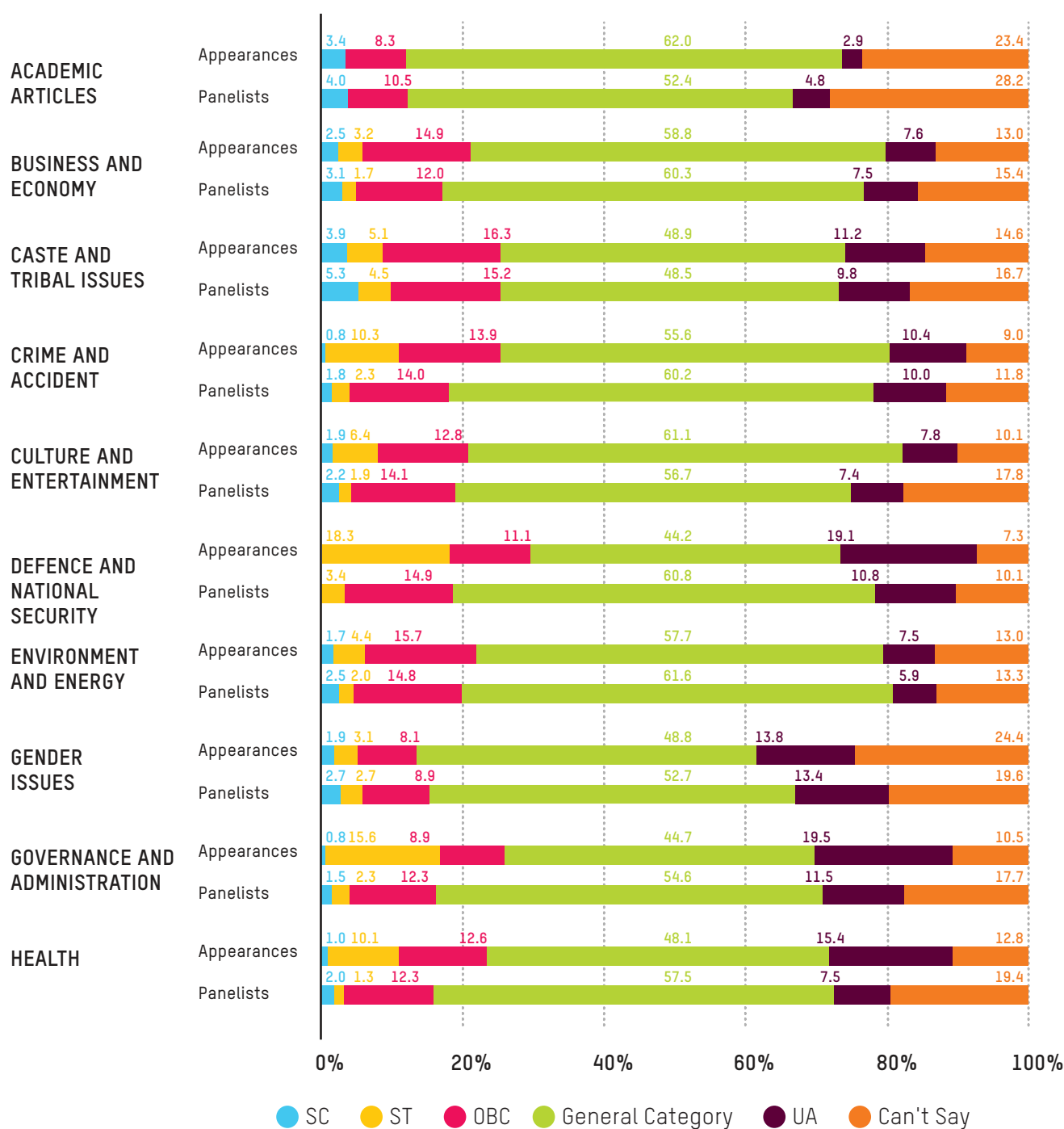
OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION (%) 2021-2022

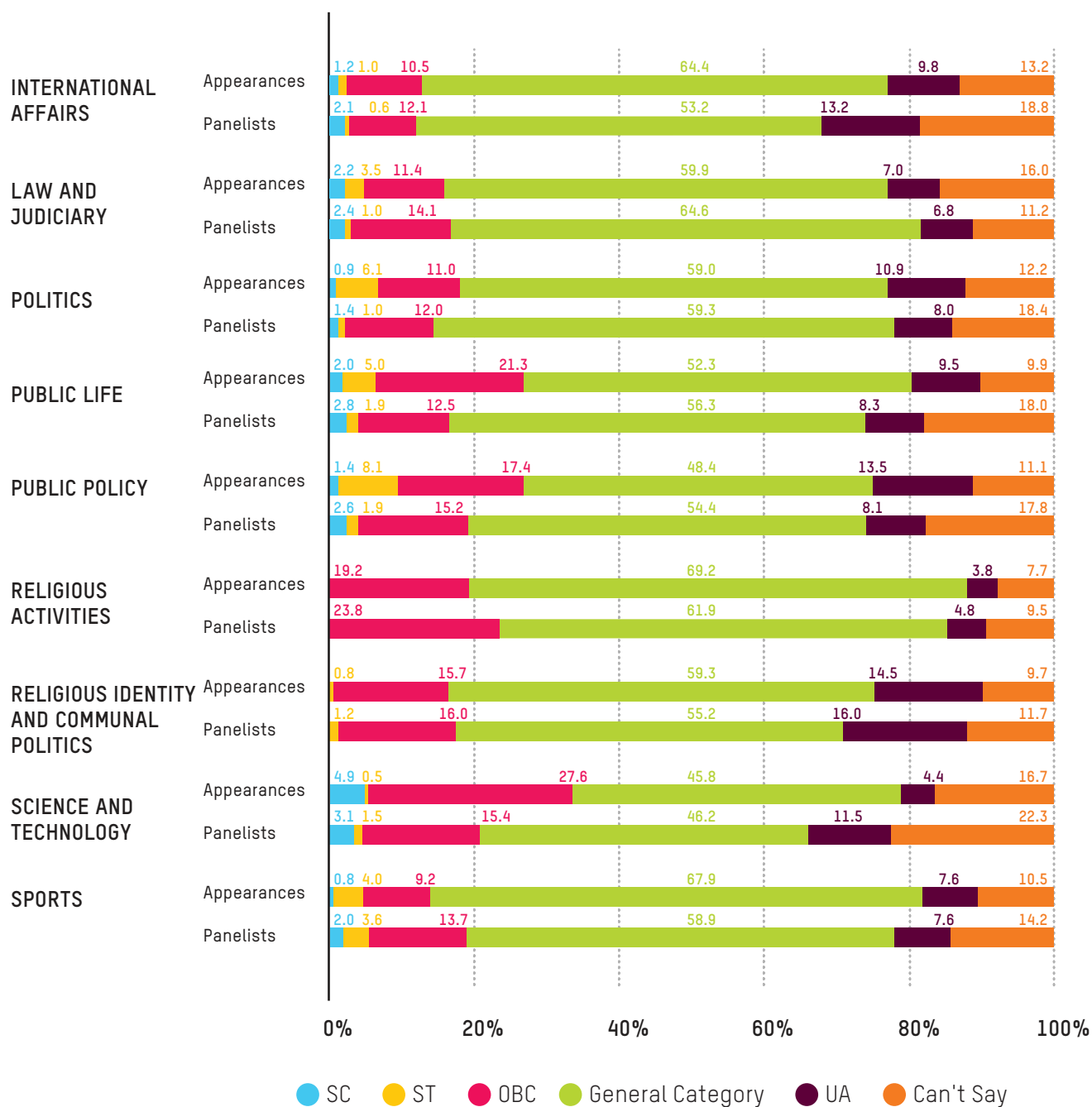


Bylines in digital news portals were also dominated by journalists from general category with Newsland-English topping the list with 68.5% bylines, followed by Firstpost and the Scroll.in. While journal-

ists from the OBC category accounted for only 7-20% of the appearances, ST/SC category hardly had any contributions, with an exception to The Mooknayak, which had 16.1% of appearances.

CASTE COMPOSITION BY TOPIC IN (%)

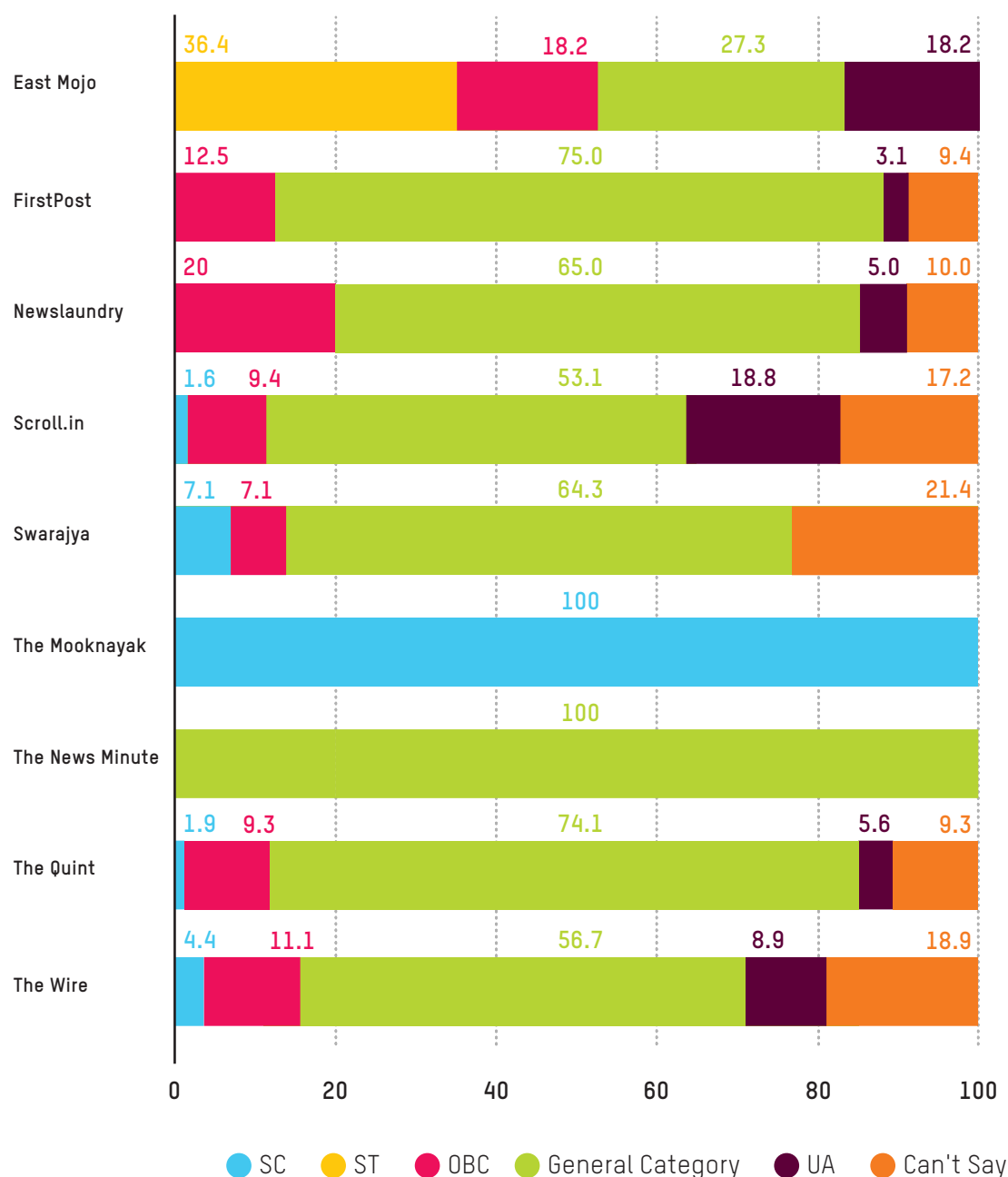




Journalists from general category had the most appearances across topics, including religious activities, sports, international affairs, law and judiciary. While OBC journalists found little representation, only in topics such as science and technolo-

gy, public life and religious activities, journalists from ST/SC categories had more appearances in defence and national security, science and technology, public policy and caste/tribal issues.

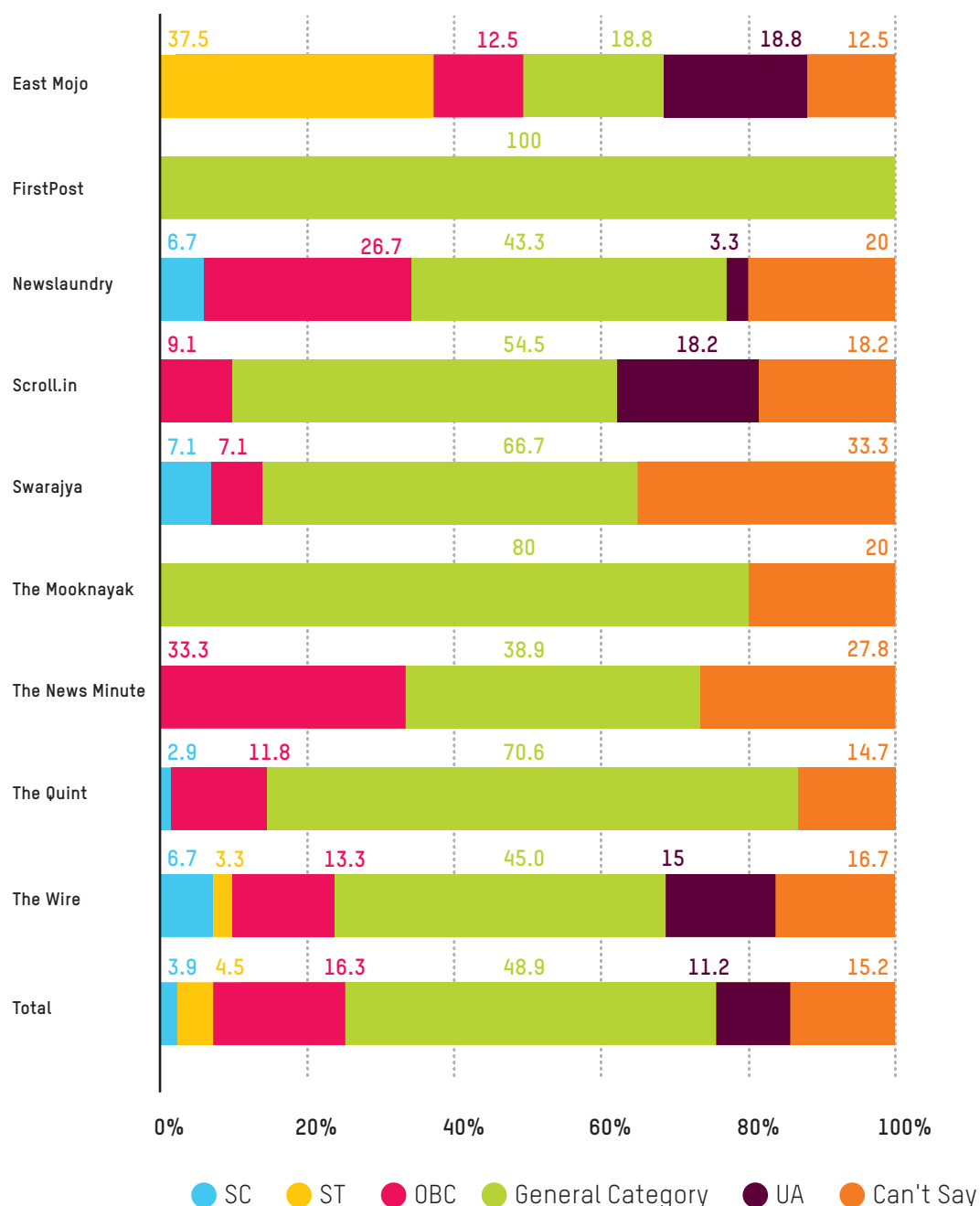
TOP DECILE OF WRITERS BY NUMBER OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED (%)



The Mooknayak was the only digital platform to have all articles written by journalists from the SC category. While East Mojo had good representation from all

categories, over 50% of the articles published in all digital platforms were written by journalists from the general category.

COMPOSITION OF WRITERS ON CASTE ISSUES (%)

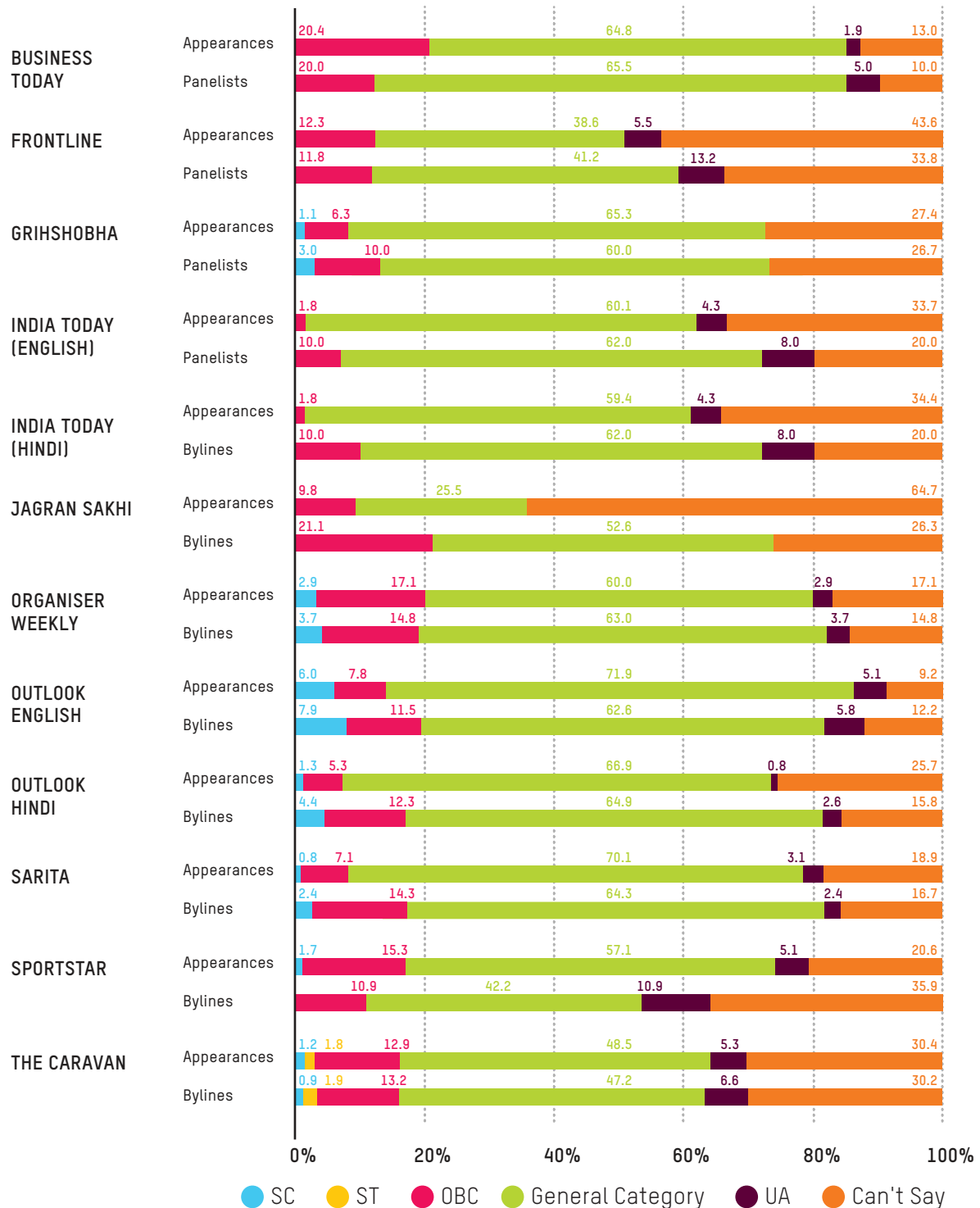


While six of the 10 digital media outlets surveyed did not have any SC category authors, seven digital platforms had no journalists from the ST community. Firstpost, The Mooknayak, and Swarajya had no

articles written by OBC category journalists whereas Newslandry had a fairly balanced composition of journalists belonging to all social categories.

STATUS OF REPRESENTATION WITHIN SC, ST & OBC IN MAGAZINES

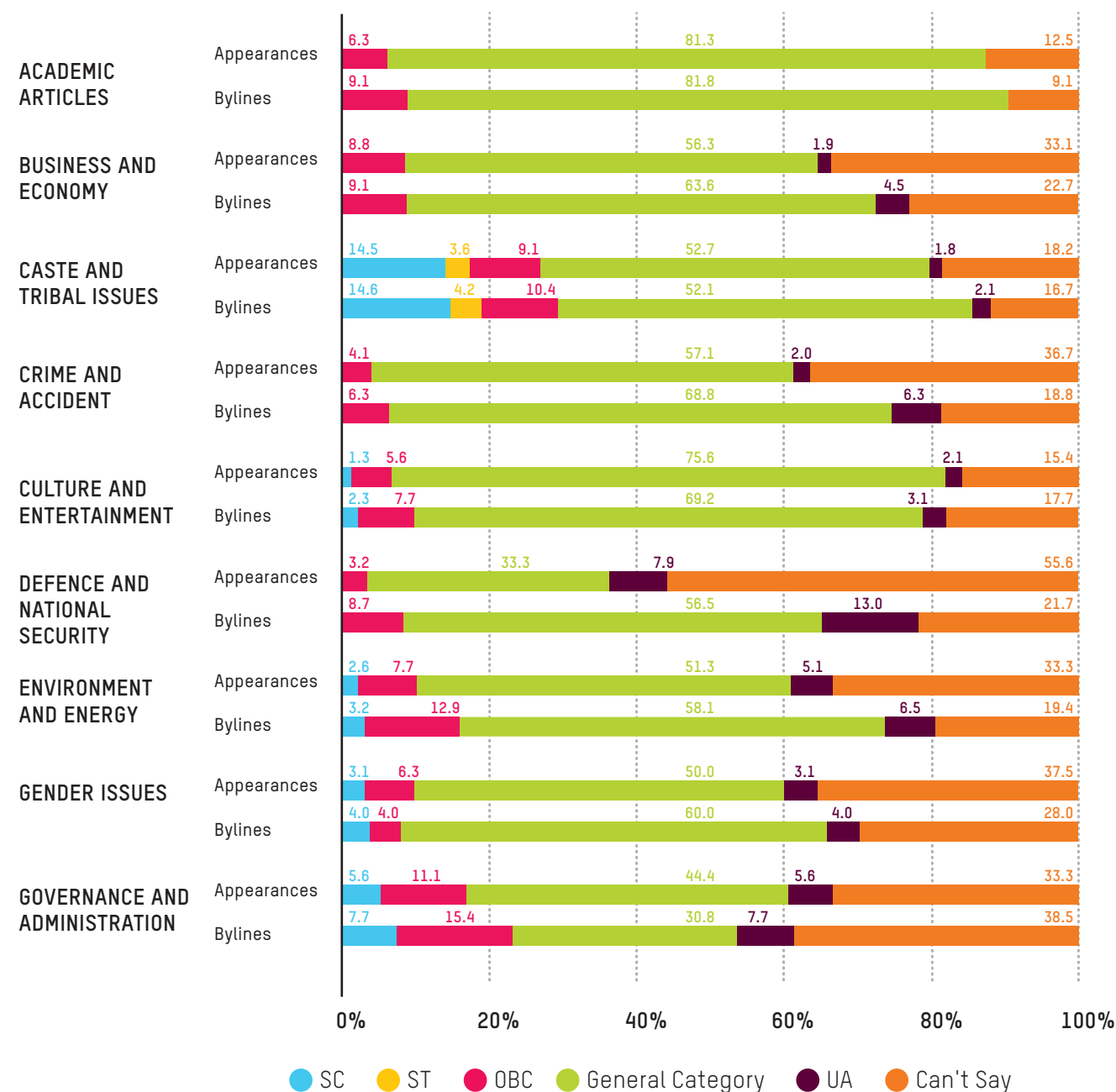
OVERALL CASTE COMPOSITION IN MAGAZINES

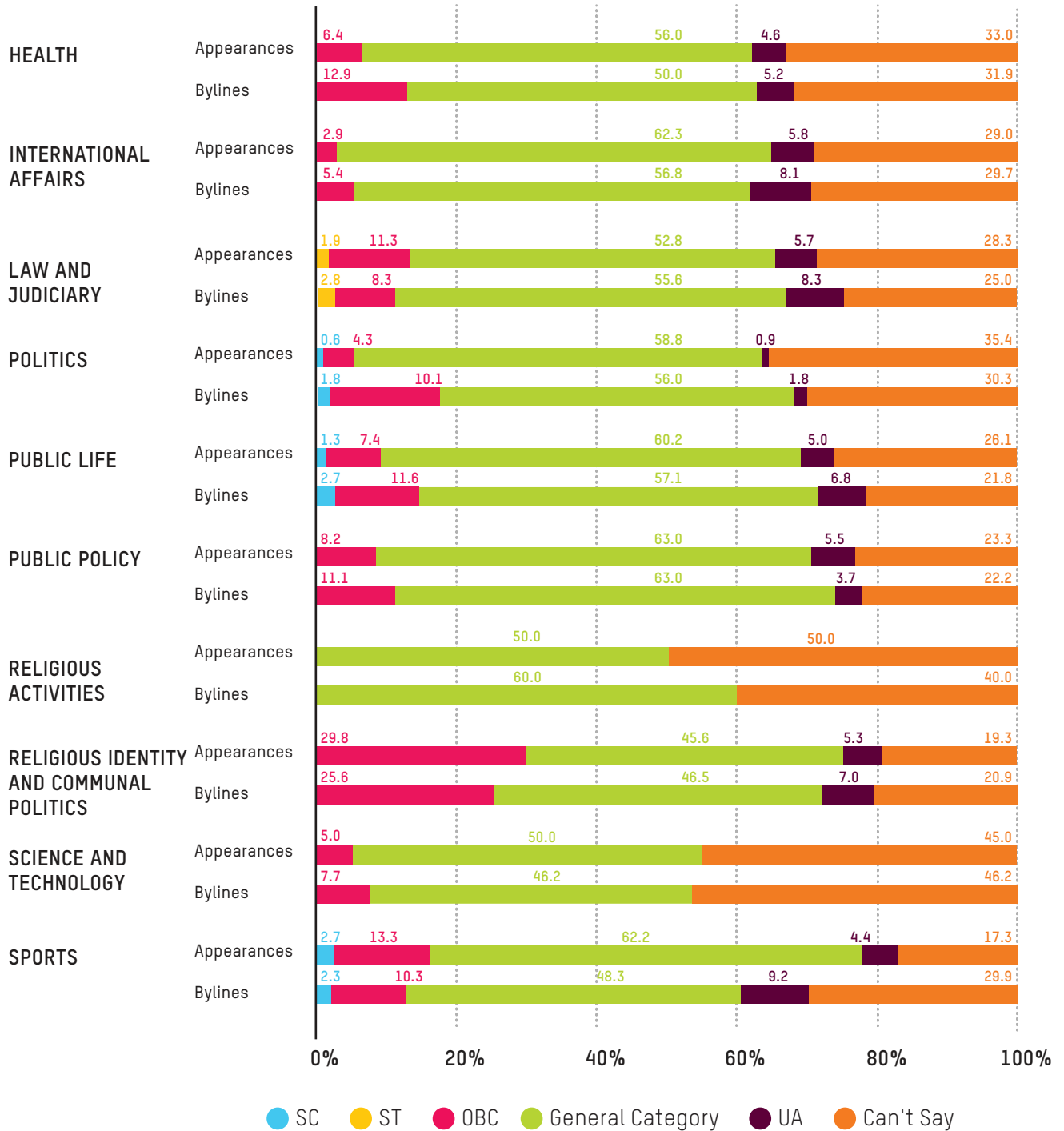


In almost all magazines, more than half of the articles were written by journalists from the general category. Not a single magazine had over 10% repre-

sentation of SC and had either zero or negligible presence of people belonging to ST categories.

PERCENTAGE OF CASTE COMPOSITION OF JOURNALIST AND WRITERS BY TOPIC

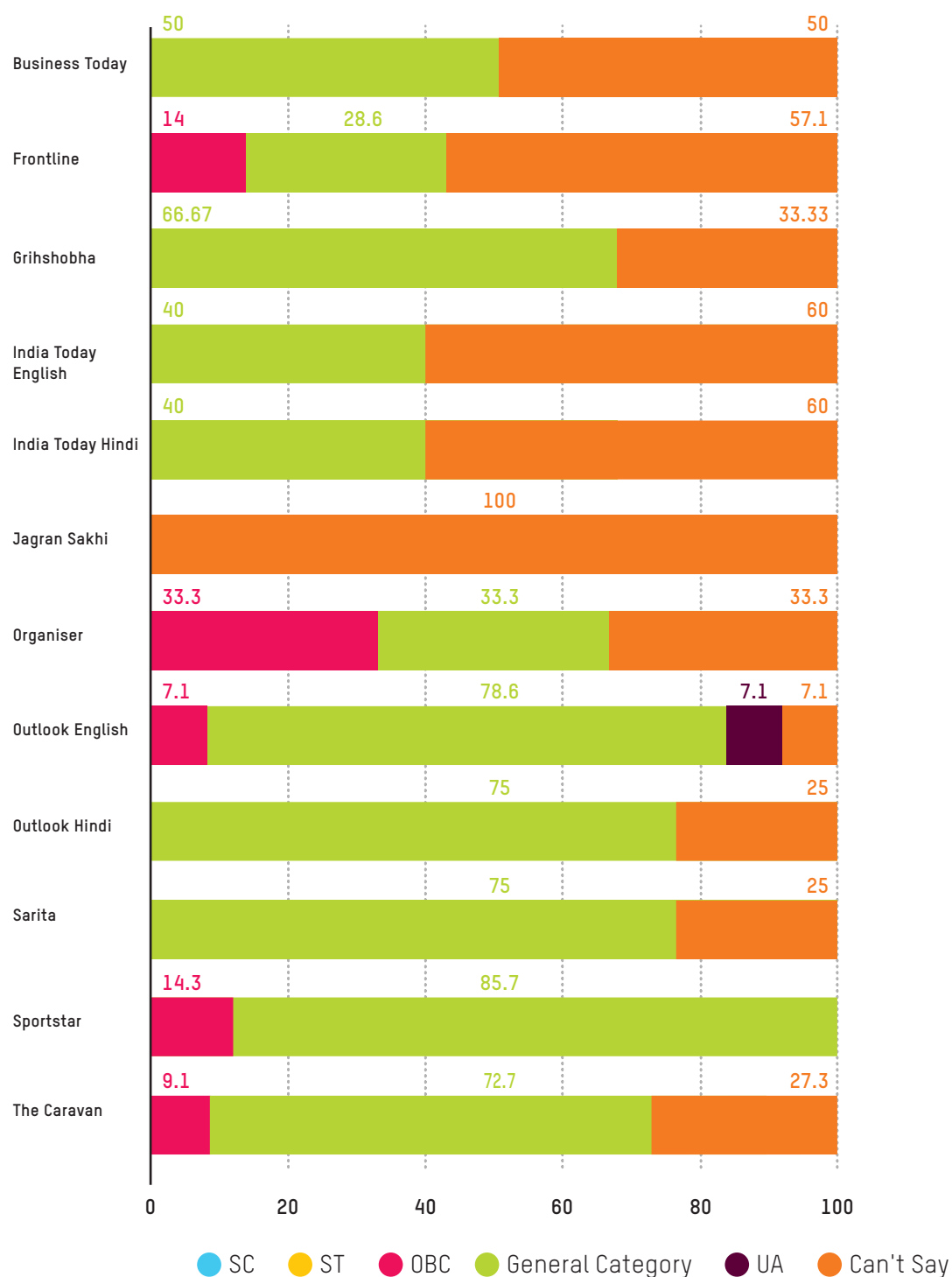




At 52%, people belonging to the general category have the most write ups on caste-related issues. While around 14% SC's got to write on caste and

tribal issues, they have much less representation in writing articles on other issues.

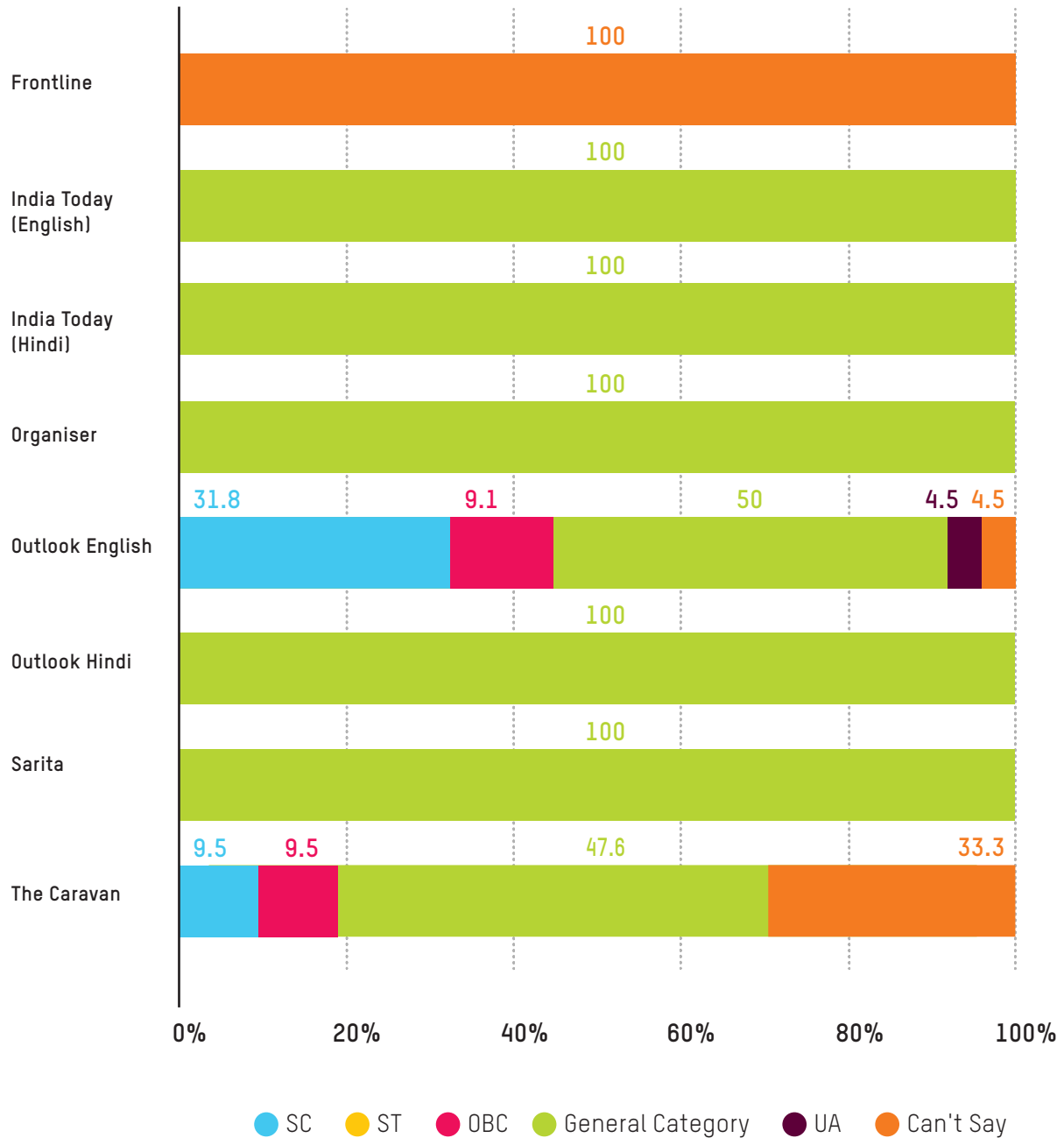
TOP DECILE OF WRITERS BY THE NUMBERS OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED (%)



Except Frontline, India Today (English & Hindi), and Organiser, all other magazines had 50% or above writers belonging to the general category. Only

Organiser had a daily presence of 33% OBC and 33% general categories.

PERCENTAGE OF JOURNALIST COVERING CASTE ISSUES



We could gather limited information on the caste of journalist covering issues related to caste at magazines that we have covered. While India Today English, India Today Hindi and Sarita had 100% general category journalists, Outlook Hindi had all its

authors belonging to SC category to cover stories on caste issues. The Caravan did not have any SC representation to cover caste issues while Outlook English did not have journalists from ST communities.

EXISTING BEST PRACTICES FOR MAKING NEWSROOMS INCLUSIVE

Diversity in media outlets leads to enhanced and efficient performance, which is profitable to the industry in the long run. To make media houses truly democratic and multivocal, some international best practices should be followed. These include:

Sensitisation programmes and training: Media organisations should start sensitisation programmes on inclusion and diversity. Accenture promises that "no one should be treated differently because of their distinctions, including age, race, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation." The organisation follows three categories of training – diversity awareness, diversity management and professional development.

Novartis, a leading pharmaceutical company, has substituted the word 'disability' with 'diversity' within the organisation. The organisation doesn't see people with impairments as lacking in ability, but as having a different variety of skills and proficiencies.

A former editor-in-chief of a national newspaper in Austria mentions that they always feature women on the first page of each weekly issue. They encourage journalists to take more input from women while reporting and ensure women experts are fairly represented in each field.

Removal of pay disparities: Many countries have implemented various regulations that aim to curb discriminative and exploitative labour practices. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination vide UN General Assembly Resolution 2016 ensures that all the member states should promote universal respect for human rights without any discrimination. In 2017, Iceland became the first country to implement a legislation that requires companies to prove that both men and women are paid equally.

Hyper-local media outlets: Hyper-local media helps provide detailed information to a concentrated group of people residing in any local area which is not within the reach of national media. The Internet has helped the sustenance of an evolving stream of hyper-local media outlets whose coverage often include "town hall meetings, school events and unedited interviews with local politicians". Hyper-local media outlets help fill the socio-political regional journalism gap. It is crucial to understand the significance of hyperlocality as an "organic approach to multimedia integration" and not reductively as an economising approach; it is an extension of and complimentary to the emergent model of digital media, which has taken to multiple means to disseminate reportage such as video commentaries, online articles as well as on-field reporting. The bottoms-up approach of hyper-local media outlets aids in fulfilling the socio-political regional journalism gap, which does not limit itself to a sensational news item from ignored demographics but, practices a sustained effort to document issues specific to that particular region.

A recent Reuters-Oxford study – Changing Newsrooms 2021– on improving diversity within media channels emphasised how hyper-local media outlets can ensure the representation of ethnic minorities within the journalism industry. A local Scandinavian broadcaster focuses on providing news to the younger ethnic minorities in their region.

Even in India, hyper local publishers like Khabar Lahariya are more likely to be representative of communities they report on. Unlike their legacy media or national publishers, reporters and writers of hyper local publishers often come directly from the communities they serve and report on, and hence are closer to reflect the caste and community break up of the audience that reads them.

Promoting disadvantaged groups to leadership positions:

Diversity in leadership leads to understanding and representation of oppressed groups. Marginalised people, when represented in media documents, are imagined as passive subjects and their stories are often narrated by people belonging to oppressor groups. 'Blind hiring practices' can be followed wherein the identity of a person is not revealed to the recruiter. To evaluate a prospective candidate, their ability, skills and work samples should be prioritised. Diversity-oriented policies should be implemented.

Laws against discrimination at the workplace:

Discrimination or profiling of a person is done in two stages – pre-hiring and post-hiring. While pre-recruitment profiling could mean rejecting candidates based on their gender, religion, caste, marriage history, pregnancy, etc., discrimination after employment encompasses lesser incentives and even termination. The Equal Remuneration Act 1976 prohibits discrimination in employment, wages and terms of employment between male and female workers doing the same or similar work, unless the law requires or permits different treatments.

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE BAHUJANS IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA

To understand the challenges faced by the marginalised communities, we reached out to 22 journalists. We interviewed them and asked them questions pertaining to instances of discrimination and challenges faced by them. They were also asked to give suggestions to overcome those challenges.

Questions were asked to journalists from National Dastak, Dalit Dastak, The Activist, The Mooknayak, DNN Hindi, Khabar Lahariya, Janhit Awaz, Mass Media, Jan Media, News Week, and The Shudra and also media outlets such as The Print and Caravan.

Experiences shared by Bahujan journalists were an eye opener and lead us to the invisible part of the world: the Dalit, Adivasi and backward classes. Through them, we documented several forms of disadvantages, discrimination, and harassment.

They told us that the general category work as gatekeepers to big media houses, making it difficult for them to gain access. One interviewee gave the example of NDTV and stated that the general category thinks that the Bahujan individuals are not meritorious. Discrimination also works in an unconscious manner for them where it is difficult to make a case given the lack of tangible proof.

The founder of a well-subscribed YouTube channel who worked with All India Radio (AIR) narrated that once he was selected to be the newsreader but he was not called for training. He added that the discrimination is double when the employee is a woman and a Dalit.

The founder and editor of The Voice Media Babita Gautam said that owing to misinformation among the general category, marginalised communities carry extra emotional, mental, and professional baggage in proving their 'merit.' "Their stories and ideas are either constantly rejected or criticised. For a person who is already dealing with socio-economic and cultural trauma, such disappointments severely affect their self-confidence. Sometimes, there is also a constant spree of casteist abuse by colleagues. The remuneration gap oppresses them further," Gautam says.

Another Dalit Trans journalist narrated the subtle nature of discrimination that operates in Indian media. In contrast, journalists associated with Bahujan media platforms hardly felt any discrimination. However, general category journalists hardly join Bahujan media. Some reporters from marginalised sections said that they were not allowed to cover stories that are popular.

Some journalists believe that it is difficult to create a democratic space in existing mainstream media houses since these are owned by private corporations. There is zero accountability, thereby intensifying caste monopoly. Some journalists said that the ignorance of general category on the issues of identities, castes and tribes is also behind the bias towards their colleagues.

QUESTION OF DISCRETION IN RELATIONS TO COMMUNITY ISSUE

While journalists working with The Mooknayak told us that they have been given full discretion to work on their interests, they said that they didn't have such liberties at mainstream organisations.

They faced the first hurdle in raising issues and feared negative consequences as most of the board members, who belonged to the general category, might take the complaint as an attack on their communities. They narrated that "if at all they happen to reach the authoritative tables, their cases are silenced and they are terminated under false accusations". Women journalists felt that men were given priority while they had to work extra to prove their merit.

Some journalists said that discretion is given depending on the area and stage of their career. As an intern, there is hardly any freedom to raise any concerns. They said that caste atrocities were covered only when the news became a sensation.

NEWSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Most journalists agreed that it was difficult to get a space that was conducive for pushing stories. There have been instances where a lot of stories on caste oppression were rejected by sheer nitpicking because it wasn't an issue that concerned the majority. So, in most cases, story ideas die at their initial stages. They added that it is very rare that

Dalits or Adivasis are given the roles to get into reporting space.

DISCRIMINATION AND ITS IMPACT WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE NEWSROOM

Most Bahujan journalists said that discrimination affected both their work and mental health. "Every morning it is a struggle to get back to the newsroom in the same toxic environment where our voices are constantly shut down." One woman journalist said that the trauma gives her suicidal thoughts and there is no one to provide any insight or help.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS

Journalists from marginalised sections have to prove their credibility at different junctures in their professional career. Moreover, journalists from the marginalised caste were of the opinion that they have been subject to the exploitative nature of the media industry. Some of the challenges faced by them are as follows.

Some suggestions that we have come across in our interviews with marginalised caste journalists are:

- 1) Almost all the interviewees from marginalised castes questioned the diversity in newsrooms. They want an adequate number of Dalits and Adivasis be appointed to editorial and sub-editorial roles along with caste-based reservations in the private sector, including media houses. They also sought women's representation.
- 2) Promote positive views and greater social awareness for the inclusion of marginalised communities. Programmes related to inclusivity need to be aired. Media houses can play a vital role in campaigns for an inclusive work space. Newsrooms should organise shows to reflect on the essence of diversity and treat the marginalised communities as a source and not as a subject.
- 3) Respondents from marginalised castes said that though leadership positions may create a favourable working environment for journalists from the marginalised sections, a mere change in leadership position will not address the issue. Representation should be ensured at all levels to bring about a democratic transformation.
- 4) There should be SC/ST grievance redressal cells in the organisations comprising of members from Dalit, OBCs and Adivasi communities. Open discussions and workshops on stigma associated with caste identities should be held.
- 5) Caste sensitisation is needed in leadership positions to initiate a trickle-down effect on the organisation as a whole.
- 6) Organisations should be asked to prepare an Annual Diversity Report. This will make media houses more accountable on the question of representation.
- 7) Many journalists believe that the support of community leadership is essential in nurturing Bahujan journalists. They pointed out that social media played an important role in lending a platform to the voices of the communities. Therefore, Bahujan communities should invest in social media for their own voice.
- 8) Some of the marginalised caste journalists pointed out the direct connection between educational advancement and economic vulnerability. Without addressing educational and economic vulnerability, it is difficult to produce professionals in any field from these communities, they said. The process of recruitment needs to be more transparent so that general category candidates do not get an undue advantage.

We tried to inquire about the problems faced by the mainstream news media organisations from journalists holding leadership positions. The journalists, who shared their opinion, were from the general category. However, journalists from the marginalised caste did not agree with the opinion shared by the general category on the recruitment process.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) To maintain diversity within the organisation, media houses need to display profile of their employees on their website and constitutional intervention to safeguards the rights of SC, ST, OBC and DNT communities
 - 2) They should conduct a uniform and transparent recruitment process. The entire process can be recorded for cross verification
 - 3) Placement drive should be conducted in the government educational institutions to receive applications from diverse categories since government institutions have students from across the communities
 - 4) Introduce affirmative policies in the news industry for marginalised groups as done by the Indian government
 - 5) A body should to be constituted to look after the diversity in the Indian news media houses and news houses fulfilling constitutional mandate should receive higher government aid
 - 6) Equal work, equal pay should be applied across the spectrum
 - 7) Media organisations have to conduct caste sensitisation workshop regularly to dispel biasness and promote discussion on caste issues
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APPENDIX 1:

DATA CODING FOR TV CHANNELS

Organisation:

Date of broadcast:

Primetime slot:

Name of programme:

Anchor:

Anchor's gender: Female | Male | Transgender | Non-binary | Intersex | Prefer not to say

Anchor's religion: Hindu | Christian | Muslim | Sikh | Jain | Buddhist | Parsi | Atheist | Other

Social Category: SC | ST | OBC | General Category | EWS

Panellists:

Gender of the panellists: Female | Male | Transgender | Non-binary | Intersex | Prefer not to say

Panellists' religion: Hindu | Christian | Muslim | Sikh | Jain | Buddhist | Parsi | Atheist | Other

Social category: SC | ST | OBC | General Category | General | EWS

Nationality of the panellists: Indian | Foreign National

Field of expertise of the panellists: Academia | Bar and Bench | Bureaucrat | Business | Defence expert | Financial expert | Independent expert | Media | Medical Expert | NGO and CSO | Party spokespersons | Political analyst | Religious | Social activist | Think tank

Debate topics

Business and Economy: Macroeconomic indicators, financial markets, individual business, domestic and global trade; Caste and other identity (ST) related issues: Caste atrocity, honour killings, displacement, eviction, ethnicity; Crime and Accident: Accident, murder, building collapse, fire, corruption, scam; Culture and Entertainment: Film, music, art, dance, books, authors, literary awards, reviews, art and literary festivals; Defense and National Security: War, conflict, armed forces, insurgency, naxalism, terrorism; Environment and Energy: Climate change, weather, wildlife, plants, earth science, renewable energy, fossil fuels, environmental science research, natural calamity/disaster; Gender-related issues: Sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape; Health: Covid-related issues, Health Policies, Other topics related to healthcare; International Affairs: All foreign news, Indian diplomatic affairs; Law and Judiciary: Constitution, Judiciary, Acts of parliament; Politics: Parties, elections, statement by politicians

Public Life: Protests, demonstrations, social unrest, daily life, media, journalism, death of renowned persons; Public Policy: Government policies and schemes related to agriculture, industry, service sector, education, transport, rural and urban affairs; Religious Identity and Communal Politics: Communal violence, rioting, lynching, hate speech, statements by religious organisations; Science and Technology: Inventions, discoveries, science explainers, communications technology, artificial intelligence, machine learning; Sports: All sports, sports organisations, doping, scandals

APPENDIX 2:

DATA CODING FOR NEWSPAPERS

Name of the Newspaper:

Date of Publication:

Title of the Page: Front Page | Opinion | Economy | Sports

Sub themes: *Academic articles:* Articles on politics and policies written by people from academia, books (physical sciences/social sciences/literature/art)

Business and economy: Macroeconomic indicators, financial markets, individual business, domestic and global trade

Caste and tribal issues: Caste atrocity, honour killings, displacement, eviction

Crime and accident: Accident, murder, building collapse, fire

Culture and entertainment: Film, music, art, dance, books, authors, literary awards, reviews, art and literary festivals

Defense and national security: War, conflict, armed forces, insurgency, naxalism, terrorism

Environment and energy: Climate change, weather, wildlife, plants, earth science, renewable energy, fossil fuels, environmental science research.

Gender related issues: Legality, Empowerment, Sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape

Governance and administration: Bureaucracy, transfers and recruitment, ministries

Health: Covid-related issues, Health policies

International affairs: All foreign news, Indian diplomatic affairs

Law and judiciary: Constitution, Judiciary, Acts of parliament

Politics: Parties, elections, statement by politicians

Public life: Protests, demonstrations, movements, social unrest, daily life, media, journalism

Public policy: Government policies and schemes related to agriculture, industry, service sector, education, transport, rural and urban affairs (excluding policies related to health)

Religious activities: Gatherings, festivals

Religious identity and communal politics: Communal violence, rioting, lynching, hate speech

Science and technology: Inventions, discoveries, science explainers, communications technology, artificial intelligence, machine learning

Sports: All sports, sports organisations, doping, scandals

Name of the writer(s):

Gender: Female | Male | Transgender | Non-binary | Intersex | Prefer not to say

Religion: Hindu | Christian | Muslim | Sikh | Jain | Buddhist | Parsi | UA

Social Category: SC | ST | OBC | General Category/General | Unavailable (UA) | Can't Say

Nationality: Indian | Foreign National

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LEADERSHIP POSITION

This survey is being carried out as part of the annual 'The Media Rumble' research project to examine gender, caste and tribal diversity in the newsrooms across India. This questionnaire is designed for leadership position holders working in various media houses (TV, print and digital). Your feedback will be used for our analytical study and your responses will be kept confidential.

Name:

Organisation:

Designation:

Age:

Gender: Male | Female | Transgender | Non-Binary | Intersex | Prefer not to Say

Educational Qualification: Senior Seconadary | PG Doctorate and Above

Medium of Education: English | Hindi | Vernacular Medium

Religion: Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | Sikhism | Jainism | Buddhism | Parsi | Atheist | Other:

Constitutional Category: UR | SC | ST | OBC | EWS | DNT |

Work experience: 1-5 Years | 6-10 Years | 11-15 Years | Above 15 Years

Is gender representation necessary in news outlets?: Yes | No | Maybe

If yes, why?:

Composition of General, SC, ST, OBC, EWS and DNT employees in your organisation

	NIL	1-5 %	6-10%	11-15%	16-20%	21-25%	25-30%	31-35%	36-40%	41-45%	46-50%	ABOVE 50%
UR												
OBC												
SC												
ST												
EWS												
DNT												

Do journalists cover stories related to their own gender better? Yes | No | Maybe

Do SC, ST, OBC, DNT members cover issues related to their communities better? Yes | No | Maybe

Is caste and tribal representation of SC, ST, OBC & DNT necessary? Yes | No

Why is caste and tribal representation not necessary in news media?

Does your organisation focus on gender while recruitment? Yes | No | Maybe

How does your organisation ensure gender diversity?

Criteria to recruit from SC, ST, OBC & DNT: Education | Experience | Recommendations | Reservation | Other

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LEADERSHIP POSITION

How does your organisation ensure SC, ST, OBC & DNT representation during recruitment?

Is gender-related discrimination addressed? Yes | No | Maybe

Is there any mechanism to seek redressal for social discrimination? Yes | No

Have you faced gender-related discrimination at work? Yes | No | Maybe

Is there any social discrimination at work? Yes | No

What do you suggest for gender-inclusive newsrooms?

What should the media industry do to ensure representation of SC, ST, OBC & DNT?

APPENDIX 4:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE JOURNALIST

This survey is being carried out as part of the annual 'The Media Rumble' research project with the objective of examining caste, tribal and gender diversity in Indian newsrooms. This questionnaire is designed for journalists working with the Indian news media houses (TV, print and digital). Your feedback will help us to come up with better suggestions and policy recommendations to make newsrooms more socially inclusive. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Name:

Organisation you are associated with:

Designation:

Age:

Email:

Gender: Male | Female | Transgender | Non-Binary | Intersex | Prefer not to Say

Religion: Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | Sikhism | Jainism | Buddhism | Parsi | Atheist | Other:

Constitutional Category: UR | OBC | SC | ST | EWS | DNT

Educational Qualification: Senior Secondary Graduate | PG Doctorate and Above

Medium of Education: English | Hindi | Vernacular

Place of Residence: Urban | Rural | Semi-Urban

Issues/beats on which you report: Politics and Governance Science and Technology Business and Economy Gender | Law and Judiciary | Environment | International Affairs and National Security | Health | Education | Art and Culture | Religion | Caste Sports | Other:

Experience: Fresher | 1-5 Years | 6-10 Years | Above 10 Years

Is gender representation necessary in media outlets? Yes | No | Maybe

If yes, why?:

Is representation of SC, ST, OBC & DNT necessary in the media? Yes | No | Maybe

Are marginalised communities adequately represented in your organisation? Yes | No

Do you think SC, ST, OBC, DNT members cover issues related to their own communities better? Yes | No | Maybe

Can journalists cover stories related to their own gender better? Yes | No | Maybe

Criteria to recruit from SC, ST, OBC & DNT in media houses: Education | Experience | Recommendations | Reservation | Other

Criteria to recruit from different gender: Education | Experience | Recommendations | Reservation | Other

Are you allowed to pursue stories of your interest? Yes | No | Rare

Are stories on SC, ST, OBC, DNT published on time? Yes | No | Rare

Do gender issues get published on time? Yes | No | Rare

Is gender in focus during recruitment in your organisation? Yes | No | Maybe

Have you faced gender discrimination at work? Yes | No | Other

Is there any social discrimination at your workplace? Yes | No

Do your organisation address gender-related discrimination? Yes | No | Maybe

Can SC, ST, OBC, DNT members seek redressal for social discrimination? Yes | No | Maybe

What are your suggestions to make newsrooms gender inclusive?

What do you suggest or representation of SC, ST, OBC & DNT in the media industry?

APPENDIX 5: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JOURNALIST FROM MARGINALISED CASTE

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your suggestions, experiences and opinions will help us understand and ensure the representation of different marginalised sections including women, transgenders in the newsroom. You may also fill the form anonymously.

Name:

Email:

Age:

Gender:

Religion:

Category:

Name of the organisation you are associated with:

Designation:

- 1) What are the challenges you think people from marginalised communities, women and other marginalised genders face in newsrooms?
 - 2) How much discretion has been granted to you or other employees from marginalised communities in the newsroom while reporting/editing issues related to their community?
 - 3) Was the newsroom environment conducive during pitching of such issues?
 - 4) Is there some kind of hierarchy between general caste and lower caste in the newsrooms? Yes/No
 - 5) Did your identity limit your professional role? Yes/No
 - 6) Have you ever felt that your editorial inputs were ignored due to discrimination? Yes/No
 - 7) Was there any discrimination from a news source, which affected a story you were working on? Yes/No
 - 8) In what way did such discrimination affect the work process?
 - 9) Is there any disproportionate pressure on social media while raising issues linked to your community and gender? Yes/No
 - 10) Do you find your sense of objectivity questioned while reporting on such issues? Yes/No
 - 11) Will appointing more employees from marginalised communities and gender in leadership positions will address such problems? Yes/No
 - 12) Do you feel that news is curated while keeping audiences from your community in mind? Yes/No
 - 13) Do you think promotion in newsrooms takes place based on identity? Yes/No
 - 14) Please list steps on how newsrooms can be more diverse and representative
-

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