

# **UNIT-1: Introduction to News**

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## **INTRODUCTION TO NEWS – MEANING, DEFINITION AND VALUES**

News is defined as current or new piece of data about any happening which is congregated, processed and disseminated via various media to a significant number of interested people. It is the presentation of facts about an affair or a situation which just happened or is expected to occur soon anywhere across the globe. It is something which is not known yet. News is exhibited in a way to spread awareness about the occurrences in the view of public's interest and is collated from trusted, genuine and unbiased sources.

News is reported through different media like newspaper, television, radio, and internet. Its intention is to report and spread awareness on a matter that could possibly affect people. News is anything uncommon and out of the mundane, monotonous happenings of life. It is anything which is anticipated with excitement by the general public and gets talking about. News encompasses any current happening, which is of social interest, and the finest news is the one which grabs the attention from most of the readers.

The word NEWS draws its inception from the word ‘new’ and is typically involved in enlightening people with some information not known before. This word is also considered to be an acronym, taking its name from the first letters of the names of the four directions – north, east, west and south, since it is primarily any information acquired from all across the geographical locations.

News is often confused with a generic term, information. There is a subtle difference between these two terms. While information could just be facts about any subject, news provides with certain new information to its viewers, listeners and readers. The weather report, which provides the information on the day's temperature or precipitation levels, does not make news. However, when there is a sudden change in weather, when heavy rains occur, when thunderstorm happen, which also lead to floods, or when a continued absence of rain leads to drought, then it becomes news. The on-time arrivals and departures of trains or aircrafts constitute only the information. However, any major drift in their scheduled plans or cancellations of a few, which further lead to stranding of passengers, becomes news. An engagement, a wedding or a breakup of prominent personalities is often included in sensational tabloid news.

## **NATURE AND SALIENT FEATURES OF NEWS**

News is the mainstay of journalism. The world of journalism is persisted by the sole basis of news. The basic notion of journalism is to collect, present and interpret news, which is essentially new and novel, to the masses. News has become a key social,

political and cultural phenomenon and an indispensable source of knowledge. News also holds the capacity to define and re-fabricate the world around us.

Any piece of news or incident should answer to all the questions, which could possibly arise in the minds of the general public regarding it, like when, where, what, why, who and how. Unless the news report answers to all these questions, it remains incomplete and inadequate.

The main objective of any news piece is to articulate the factual report of the event which occurred, while retaining neutrality, credibility, fairness and objectivity. The facts should never be distorted or misshaped and should be reported exactly the way they occurred. The language employed in order to communicate to the masses should be simple, easy, concise and clear.

Since the news is being conveyed to the masses in general and not to any specific group of people, its basic aim should be to convey the message in a simple and easy-to-understand manner. The most important elements which evaluate the worthiness of news are timeliness/freshness, proximity/ nearness, prominence, magnitude, controversy, oddity/unusualness, consequence, emotion, usefulness and educational value. It should display courtesy, good taste and respect towards and on behalf of its audience. It must neither be insensitive, nor unsentimental or intolerable.

The news must carry the following values to lead to its ideal standards:

- **Authenticity and accuracy:** Every crumb of details that is produced in the form of news must be precise. Each detail, like the names of people, their ages, places, days, dates and time of the incidents being reported in the news, must be accurate. The language used must be correct in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, structure, and grammar. The statements produced of the people involved must be precise.
- **Meaningful, interesting and factual:** The news story should be eloquent and should make sense. It must be presented in such a way that the listeners or the readers don't lose their interest. The news must avoid vulgarities and obscenities. It should not drift away from the principles of accuracy and objectivity and should not be fabricated or concocted. The most important elements to be taken care of while presenting any news report are facts and truth.
- **Objectivity and conciseness:** A news story needs to be neutral, unbiased, fair and accurate and should be free from any unnecessary details. It must be concise and not unreasonably long.

- Clarity and comprehensiveness: Simplified vocabularies, easy-on-tongue order of the words, correct and clear pronunciation are the key factors of news. The news is considered comprehensive only when it answers every possible question which might arise in the minds of the audiences.
- Cohesiveness: A news item must be well-knit, well-arranged and well-ordered.

News could be further identified as international, national, regional and local, and might cover a range of topics, like politics, sports, economy, entertainment and crime. It is a blend of hard and soft, positive and negative news.

News could also be instrumental in the development of a country. News is the principle source of knowledge on global affairs for people from across the globe. Many a times, it carries valuable messages and, hence, inspires and influences people psychologically, emotionally and spiritually.

### **Conclusion**

News has been defined differently by different sources. However, the heart of each definition remains the same. News is the timely report which covers the events happened recently and interests a significant number of people. “News is what will make people talk” stated Charles Dana, a former editor of the *New York Sun*. It is recapturing of the events, ideas and situations which the audience would find interesting, important and useful. News is categorized primarily into two types, spot and diary. Spot news covers unforeseen event or situation; for instance, natural calamities and accidents. Diary news covers the anticipated events; for instance, speeches by some dignitaries or launch of a new scheme.

There are various criteria which help in enhancing the value of the news. These factors play a crucial role in helping the journalists decide the priority of a news story. All such decisions are made keeping into account the kind of audience the news is intended for. These elements of news are timelines, proximity, prominence, impact, conflict, disaster and progress and human interest. Any news could well be differentiated into two categories, keeping in view its packaging – hard and soft news. While hard news consists of basic facts – 5Ws and 1H – and comprises a bulk of news reporting, soft news covers a wider territory and may not be as timely or important as hard news.

The key features every news report should possess are fairness and balance, accuracy, attribution brevity and clarity. We shall discuss these in detail in the upcoming sections.

## ELEMENTS OF NEWS

A significant characteristic of a news story is that it is of worth to substantial sections of the audience. There are various factors, also discussed below, which are kept in mind while deciding the worthiness of a news story. A news story should perform well in at least two of these areas in order to be considered as worthy. A publishing manager, looking at how well the story meets each of these criteria, decides whether or not it should be broadcasted.

**Timeliness/freshness:** Immediacy or timeliness is an important requisite and an indispensable part of a news story. News is akin to a perishable commodity, which has a very short shelf-life. Time plays an important role in the news business. The newer and the fresher the news, the better it is. In this era of tough competition within the various forms of media, the stories grow old in a jiffy. The fresher the news, the more newsworthy it would be. Even a sensational piece of news, if delivered late, will lose its value.

**Proximity or nearness:** The place of its origin plays a crucial role in deciding the worthiness of news. This pertains to local issues, trends or events. People are more interested in home-grown news than in news from far-away places. Proximity here not just refers to the physical closeness, but also the psychological one. Stories from places with which people share special bonds, despite them being distances apart from these people, also have a similar effect.

**Prominence:** A recognized person, a known place or a familiar event has a stronger news value than something which the audience is not acquainted with. Public always shows profound interest in prominent elements like individuals, places, things and situations known for their social positions, achievements or prior publicity. Reports featuring them have a greater broadcast value.

**Oddity or rarity:** Extraordinary, unusual and unexpected events generate great public interest. If something is shocking or bizarre, the uniqueness alone could make it newsworthy. Readers are interested in knowing more about people, animals or things which don't fit the norm. A journalist should be cautious to not engage in anything bizarre for the sake of adding that shock value to the news. He should also never ridicule any people, group or community.

**Consequence or impact:** The number of people affected by a particular situation will affect its newsworthiness, whether it is a hike in petroleum prices, outage in electricity or an alleged outbreak of an epidemic. It could also be any news about some natural calamities, accidents or some damage, which would have resulted into a greater loss of life. Any happening which could possibly affect the lives of people in

any manner would have greater value and the one which would have a larger consequence or impact would be of greater curiosity.

**Conflict:** Anything which is connected with conflicts, arguments, charges and counter-charges, disagreement, fights and tension amongst people, nations and groups always makes a great news. It could be violent or non-violent; for instance, stories on wars, shootings or political disagreements, the ones involving differences in opinions of prominent personalities. The controversies surrounding various other aspects of lives, like people opposing price hikes or any controversial arguments made by important people also stir inquisitiveness.

**Controversies and scandals:** These are an integral part of human life. Vital news in stories covering romance, marriage, divorce, scandals and other illicit relationships of celebrities do grab great attention from the readers, who enjoy being amused by glitterati.

**Emotion:** Events which evoke sentiments for the fellow human beings and also stir up the emotions of brotherhood and humanity would be liked by the masses in general. Then, there are also certain events which arouse in the readers an instant burst of emotions. For instance, when the space shuttle with Kalpana Chawala in it exploded, it was touted as a countrywide tragedy. When the first human being stepped on the moon, the emotion evoked among the masses was elation. By the end of every war between various nations, the emotion is jubilation. A tragic death of a prominent personality results in sorrow and empathy in the general public.

Therefore, people are interested in knowing about such emotional events and want to participate in the drama of life.

**Human interest:** The general idea is that taking a glimpse at somebody else's life appeals to the voyeuristic part of human nature. This could also be connected with the emotions. We tend to connect with the stories of other people, and that is a part of what gives a story the human interest.

**Progress, usefulness and educational value:** Readers always want to know about the new technologies and how it could improve their lives every day. They also want to gain information on anything which could bring about significant change towards the betterment of the humanity. It could be an accomplishment in the field of research or engineering or an advancement in the parliamentary body. The columns giving details about education or job opportunities, blood donation camps or the ones which serve some human purpose are always credited. Also, news items which help one gain more general knowledge are marked as of great importance.

Further, there are additional factors which decide the importance of a news story. The assigned time on radio or television for the broadcast of a news bulletin or the space it would get in the newspaper determines the weightage it would receive and, also, whether it would be told briefly or in detail. The value of a news story is also determined or altered by its previous presentation via any other media. The most fundamental objective of news is to enhance eagerness and to inform, educate and entertain the audiences.

## **NEWS GATHERING PROCEDURE**

News gathering is a task of persistence and courage. The journalists have to be persistent when it comes to collecting the facts, keeping their approach flexible. The focus should always be on gathering the information before they set out to cover any story or take an interview. They can take the help from reference books or past media coverage of the similar or the same event in order to get their grip tighter on the subject they would be covering. A few big media houses also have their own libraries with important reference books and files with newspaper clippings about influential people.

There are also study materials like yearbooks, encyclopedias, Guinness Book of Records and dictionaries, which come handy at the time of need. Some journalists put various other methods, often deductive or investigative, to use in order to gather relevant information. This not only helps in collecting the facts but also in having a solid knowledge of what has previously been written on the case.

There are three kinds of methodologies commonly followed by journalists while writing news. First, whatever the journalist sees is reported in the report. Secondly, there is interpretative, where the journalist writes what he sees, also adding his own interpretation of the event. Third, there are experts, who have years of experience working in the same beat. They write what they see while also adding their own analyses of the event in the report. A journalist should not go astray from the basic facts which couldn't be deduced further to anything solid or if the deductions are not strong enough.

Sometimes, journalists disguise their guess work for the intelligent deductions they do in order to build reputation for expertise. These gimmicks must be avoided, as nobody wants to know what they think. People are more interested in knowing the facts and a good journalist would always pick the right facts for broadcasting. It could well be a mixture of their discovery and deductions, but it should never be solely their invention.

Journalists must weigh the validity of answers given to their inquiries made while getting the facts. They should try to perceive whether the interviewee is cooking up or putting forth the facts. Having a sharp intellect and a relevant experience comes handy for this task. Of course, building up questions in a definite direction in order to arrive at the basic details of the case is another skill they should develop. There has to be a clear demarcation between deduction and assumption. All assumptions must be tested for authenticity and all facts clearly noted down in sequence before a report is finally framed.

Journalists should have a ‘nose for news’ and should be in search of a ‘tip’ which might lead them to a potential story. They might also get a story idea directly from the source. This source could be primary or secondary. Primary sources might include a person with firsthand information on the topic, an original document or an official report. Secondary sources could be a reference book, reliable websites or people with informed opinion on the subject. A news report must contain the information from at least one primary source.

Journalists often quote ‘anonymous’ sources in order to get the inside information, which the source might not reveal otherwise. This type of source is generally frowned upon in journalism, and must be verified with another source. They should also be cautious with ‘internet’ sources, as the information contained in websites generally does not have a reliable source to quote.

Further, they should refrain from sensationalism, which is a tendency to publish news which arouses an intense but brief interest in the audience. It could be shocking, exciting, unusual, disgusting and, at times, might not be newsworthy, too.

A journalist can't create stories from his/her own imagination. An extensive coverage of any said event must be done for a news story to be intricate. It is a collective effort and action of the entire team that is involved in the same.

### **Gathering Information from credible source:**

The first step in news gathering process comprises of the identification of the news source. The main goal is provide a judicious, timely interpretation of a recent, exciting, and substantial event or development. The news sources must be verified for credibility. The news source could be news agencies, press releases, press conferences, public relation companies, institutions, organisations, local government, court cases and trials, interviews, other media sources, etc.

News gathering conventionally involves calling out an editorial meeting for press briefing. This is when the journalists are given roles which they would

perform through the day, the cameramen are allocated their responsibilities and the team is informed and briefed on what they will cover in the day. The reporters, along with the cameramen, go to the field and start accumulating information from the sources. This is generally done by observing, listening, writing and recording what people say in case of a meeting, by interviewing the sources and eyewitnesses, and by being credible enough to have practicalities in the news items. In cases where the information has to be pulled together comprehensively, the person who has witnessed the event firsthand or the one who has an extensive knowledge on the said topic must be contacted first either personally or via any of the media. Exclusive spot footage of the incident and the pictures supporting the same is a necessity. In case of interviews, a thorough research and planning is must.

In a news item, the basic facts it heart and soul. Without elaborate details, citation of precise sources and exact evidences, the writing will not have the intended influence on the audience.

### **Framing a news story:**

Once all the information is gathered in its basic form, the journalists need to frame it all articulately in order to inform the readers about the circumstances. They, however, must adhere to the actualities collected. The skills like writing and editing are the backbone of the successful journalism. The news story should not only have eye-catching titles and lead sentences, but also the focus on human interest, which could make the reader feel connected to the situation. The structure of the story should be decided in a way that the key points and quotes are picked directly from interviews and investigative notes and observations are included to support the topic. The most important information must be stated in the beginning and the supporting facts must be presented throughout the report. The lead, the heart of the story and the conclusion must be positioned appropriately. All the unbiased, truthful and factual details should be presented to the public.

### **Editing and broadcast:**

All journalists or reporters are eventually lead by an editor. A newspaper or a news channel might have numerous editors to oversee various beats. The news editors and the video editors collaborate with the teams and supervise the planning and the preparation processes. Also, executive editors, managing editors and other editors are appointed to cover various beats like, international, national, local, sports, advertisement, entertainment, features and obituary. The various teams collaborate with utmost professionalism in order to

focus on maintaining authenticity, accuracy, objectivity, precision, clarity and comprehensiveness.

News can be broadcasted through different media like newspaper, television, radio and internet. In the case of television or audio-video media, a good footage is more important as visual footages appeal to the audience more. A news story with the reporters commentating from the live location is preferred over studio reporting. The newspapers or print media should include supporting visuals in the worded report.

In an editorial setup, the editor frames the layout, does the paste-up and seals the report with proofreading. The copy editors check for spellings, grammar and other typo errors and for any other loopholes in the story, which might leave the audience confused or asking for more. The inverted pyramid format should be followed while framing the report. This implies that the most important information should be included at the top of the story and the lesser important at the bottom. In order to make the storyline more credible and to build trust with the readers, attributing the information sources is a must.

News can rarely overrun. The editors, or the *Gatekeepers*, in a media house control what would and what wouldn't be broadcasted in the news bulletin or printed in the newspaper. The decision to accept or reject news stories to be broadcasted or published must be made on the basis of economics, rating, time limitation and the elements of the news. Their decisions translate directly into the content of the newspaper and bulletin.

After the completion of editing, the news is finally broadcasted. In case of newspaper, the tasks like paging, which is creation and composition of the pages of the newspapers, is laid out and designed using various softwares. The tasks like printing, folding and distribution are thereby followed.

Furthermore, developing a follow-up story is equally important in order to record the further developments on the story line. Journalism can be an incredibly informative and useful form of writing as long as proper information gathering and writing techniques are employed. The most important thing to remember when framing a news report is that writing must be done with a goal of informing the public. Doing so requires including facts, not opinions, and providing as much information from all the sides of any given issue as possible.

## **HARD NEWS VS. SOFT NEWS**

Journalism is a method of reporting which roughly tells about the things that really happened. The fundamental of journalism has always been the news; the concluding word has developed so many tributary meanings that it has given birth to two very important terms i.e. Hard News and Soft News. In fact, it is the most fundamental distinction of news. While hard news has a high level of news worthiness and demands immediate publication, soft news doesn't require timely publication and has a low level of significant informational value. These might include gossips, offbeat events or human interest topics. Hard news primarily revolves around politics, economic or social topics, which demand instant reporting owing to its importance and short lifespan. Soft news has very little basic social or personal importance, so it could be reported any time. While hard news often necessitates accompanying analysis or commentary, soft news includes gossip, local social scandal and human interest stories which have little implication beyond their immediate circle.

Let's discuss these two terms with a few examples.

### **Hard News**

Hard News can be defined as up-to-the-minute news and events that should be reported immediately. It relates the circumstances of a recent happening considered to be of general local, regional, national or international significance. The nature of Hard News is perishable, so it should be aired instantly; otherwise, it becomes stale and is replaced by other hard news stories. It is latest news, which the public needs to know. Typically, hard news materializes by itself, for example, accidents and natural disasters.

### **Illustrations of Hard News Headlines**

- The Trump – Clinton Cliff Hanger
- How Big Is the Black Money Catch?
- Confessions of a Digital Start-up Founder
- GST Will Not Change India
- Alexa Send Up Breakfast: Amazon launches Echo for Hotels
- Magnitude 6.1 quake in Japan's Osaka area kills four, halts factories

# Rally chorus: Oust Modi, but need to prove we can deliver

'Must Focus On Stability And Strong Policies'

Times News Network

Kolkata: As they put up another show of unity against the Modi government, opposition parties also took a reality check of the need to buffer themselves against the criticism that they were a razing assembly glued together only by dislikes for BJP.

At a mammoth rally hosted by West Bengal CM and Trinamool boss Mamata Banerjee at the historic Brigade Parade Ground and attended by 22 parties, former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda seemed to recognise that the proposed anti-BJP front would

## FULL COVERAGE: P 2 & 13

not be severely hamstrung if the potential components did not move beyond accusing BJP of arrogance and divisiveness to hash out a common plan. "People are already too used to our 'anti-BJP' call. They will be asking us who after Modi. We have to work together to create an impression among the public that this coalition can provide a stable government. The task is less easy than said," said Tewari. Gowda whose prime ministerial innings came to an end just after a firm withdrawal of support by Congress.

"Next comes seat sharing. There are one or three parties in each state. Senior national-level leaders should get involved and decide over seat-sharing. After this, we



Let all oppn parties support the strongest BJP opponent in each seat. The Modi government has reached its expiry date  
—Mamata Banerjee

We should work together to create an impression that we can deliver a stable government  
—H D Deve Gowda

The Modi government did in five years what Pakistan couldn't do to destabilise India in the last 70 years  
—Arvind Kejriwal

Narendra Modi has allies like CBI and ED; we have announced our allies  
—Akhilesh Yadav

This PM is a publicity PM. We want a performing PM  
—Chandrababu Naidu

Let us get set for the second battle of independence  
—M K Stalin



PM Narendra Modi, after inaugurating the National Museum of Indian Cinema at Peñal Road on Saturday, promised a single-window system for film permissions and said the process to make piracy a stricter offence has begun. Earlier, he called the Kolkata rally a grand alliance against the people

need to form a small team of experts and draft a policy document," said the former PM in what appeared to reflect a recognition to solidify the mutually shared anti-BJP sentiment into a programme-based platform. "We have only two months for the entire process," he stressed.

BJP has mocked the gath bandhan challenge by seeking to tap into fears of instability and by claiming that the unlikely combination of its opponents was no dispensable to be a viable alternative with a clear leadership.

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge also seemed to appreciate Deve-Gowda's concern, but struck an optimistic note that opposition parties have resolved some differences just by coming together. "Our destination is far off. Even if there is not a marriage of convenience, let us walk hand in hand," said Kharge.

Mamata Banerjee, however, chose to focus on a more pragmatic concern: the need to consolidate anti-BJP votes in each LS constituency.

► Related report, P 13

Figure 1 Times News Network (2019, January, 20th). Rally chorus: Oust Modi, but need to prove we can deliver. *Times of India*, Retrieved from <https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/?olv-cache-ver=20190109054138>.

## Characteristics of Hard News:-

- Timeliness: refers to events that are up-to-the-minute and must be broadcasted to the masses; this is also termed as breaking news.
- Importance: refers to what is important to the viewers. Sometimes the magnitude of a story doesn't matter.
- Propinquity: refers to 'what's happening around us'. This could range from worldwide to indigenous. Propinquity is another important characteristic of Hard News, as it keeps the public informed on what is going on across the world.
- Prominence: refers to 'significant people'; everything they say and do makes it to the news.
- Oddities: refers to something which is not quite ordinary, or something which might as well be entertaining; people, perhaps, like hearing the unfamiliar things.

## Soft News

Soft news is defined as the information, which is principally entertaining or personally useful. Soft News refers to a blend of information and entertainment, often relating to people's secluded lives. It could be family-friendly and could be written in an educational tone. Soft News is also called **market-centred journalism**.

Soft media can be involved in the process of television agendas, magazines or print articles. Soft News topics or events are low-impact and sociable.

## Illustrations of Soft News Headlines

- Using Light as a Therapy for Alzheimer's Disease
- Self- Driving Cars: Where Are We At?
- Robots, the Future of Food?
- A DIY Smartphone Microscope!
- Seeing the Brain..... With Diapers (What?!)

The image is a composite of three parts. On the left, there is a photograph of a woman in a black dress. In the center, there is a graphic titled "Five goals to bring out the inner winner" with sub-headings like "Identifying what you want to achieve in life is the key to happiness" and "Define what success means". On the right, there is a portrait of Mukesh Ambani.

**Five goals to bring out the inner winner**

Identifying what you want to achieve in life is the key to happiness

Experts say happiness at home and work is likely to help give you the biggest long-term health benefits — so set some goals to make 2019 your best year yet.

In a study at Ohio University, psychologist David Niven found people who identified a goal were 10 per cent more likely to feel satisfied with their lives and 26 per cent more likely to feel positive about themselves.

Another study by Brandeis University in Massachusetts, New York's University of Rochester and the German Institute for Economic Research found that feeling a sense of control over one's life reduced mortality risk by 13 per cent.

Life coach Royston Guest shares tips for getting the most out of life.

**Take a bird's-eye view of your life**

Most of us fall into two categories and Royston describes them by using a scene from a nightclub. He says: "We're either 'the confidence floor', amidst all the energy and chaos of our modern lives, with fast-paced jobs, demanding home lives and never-ending digital culture.

"But to realise our potential, we need to spend time 'on the balcony' — where we take a step back, observe and study our lives

with a much broader perspective. This self-awareness helps us make conscious choices on how we want to shape our lives without the noise and distraction of everything acting on around us."

**Define what success means**

If you've ever written a bucket list, re-assess it and work on what tangible goals you can achieve. Finding a successful role model can help keep you motivated too. Choose things that make you happy, make your heart sing.

**Analyse your progress**

To succeed, we need to be forming new habits and regularly watching how close we are to reaching our goals. Design your 'high performance week' where you map out what you want to achieve. Include family time or hitting the gym too — because if you don't book them in, they won't happen. At the end, have a 'review' and consider what went well, what didn't and what you can learn.

**Be motivated by your own mortality**

Thinking about how long we have left on this planet should be uplifting rather than depressing. Royston suggests imagining that you're leaving a biography in your own funeral. Rather than 'could have', you should focus on achieving the things you want to be known for and feel proud of. Use mortality as a motivator to stop living on autopilot and take ownership of your life. It's a powerful driver for creating meaning and focus in what you do.

Mukesh Ambani has said, "In the journey of an entrepreneur, the most important thing is self belief and the ability to convert that belief into reality."

Figure 2Figure 1 businessinsider.in (2019, January, 20th). Five goals to being out the inner winner. *Times of India*, Retrieved from <https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared>ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIM%2F2019%2F01%2F20&entity=Ar0>

## Characteristics of Soft News

- No restriction of timeliness: The nature of soft news is not perishable; hence it doesn't need to be aired as soon as possible.
- Covering the personal aspects: Soft news always tries to cover the individual aspect of one's life to create curiosity amongst the viewers.

- Mode of entertainment: Soft news serves as a medium for entertaining the viewers and keeping them updated, too, with the present scenario.
- Sharing new ideas and concepts: Soft news tries to share new and different ideas prevailing in the market so that the viewers are up-to-date and their curiosity is answered.

The consumers are often divided on the basis of their interests in consuming various types of news, i.e. ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ news. ‘Hard’ news is characteristically cast-off to topics that are routinely, timely important and consequential, such as politics, international affairs, and business news. On the contrary, soft news covers the topics like entertainment, arts, celebrity and lifestyle news.

Hard and soft news are also differentiated on the basis of their manner of presentation. A hard news story takes a realistic approach in answering the various component of news; for example, what happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why? On the other hand, a soft news story tries to entertain or counsel the reader. A few examples might include guidelines on how to make your dish more delectable, or what to look for when buying a new house.

One more point of difference between hard and soft news is in the terms used to describe them. Hard news involves usage of the terms like breaking news, whereas soft news doesn’t use such terms, as it does not perish with time.

Soft news tends to advise or entertain the reader; the primary objective behind it is infotainment, irrespective of any deadlines. Hard news needs to be circulated within the deadlines only.

Hard news stories emphasize on facts and not opinions or analysis. Hard news covers the most important aspect of a story - 5 Ws and 1 H, i.e., who, what, where, why, when and how. Soft news, on the other hand, doesn't necessarily cover the facts; it might cover opinions also. Soft news has less propinquity than hard news. Writers of soft news often focus on the reader's emotions, not his/her intellect.

The reporting time in hard news is small and covers up-to-the-minute news and events that are to be reported immediately, while the soft news concerns more with background information or human-interest stories.

Let us sum up the major differences between hard news and soft news:

### Hard News

- It has to do with the country.
- It highlights an important issue.
- It is of human interest.
- It is useful.
- It is “out there” (as in, it is gaining widespread interest elsewhere.)
- It could cover the following beats:
  - International news.
  - Political news.
  - Business and economic news.
  - Health or education news.

### Soft News

- It might have a great impact on people.
- It could be unusual or unexpected.
- It could be first of a kind.
- It could be timely.
- It could be controversial.
- It might involve protuberant people.
- It could cover the following beats:
  - Entertainment news
  - Lifestyle news
  - Arts and culture news
  - Sports news

It has been seen that on an average, the curiosity levels are higher for hard news among the masses in a majority of the countries. However, this is likely to be subjected to the interest of the local public. People who might have a great interest in the hard news might also have an interest in the soft news and vice versa. Being able to differentiate between the hard and the soft news helps one to know how news is covered and what sorts of stories various news media are inclined towards printing or broadcasting.

## THE BASIC COMPONENTS OF A NEWS STORY

News story is a written or recorded piece of information or an interview which holds a potential to inform its targeted audience about an upcoming announcement, an important incident or a controversy which requires the masses’ attention. A well-written news story must include all or most of the below mentioned components:

## **The Headline**

The headline of a news story is the first opportunity to grab the reader's attention and is often a one-liner which summarizes the contents of the story. Its primary function is to grab the eyeballs and, thus, helping in setting the first impression of the story right. Effective or impactful headlines should be written with a logical sentence structure, should convey the message in active voice and should be phrased in present-tense verbs.

An impactful headline is crucial in making the reader interested in reading the article.

It uses the right words and thoughts to get the reader's attention and, further, his interest, to explore what follows the headline. It's important to spend enough time to frame the right headline. Otherwise, it could just have the readers glance over it without further getting into the details. Often, the reporters try to keep the headlines terse or abrupt to leave a shocking impact on the readers about a story. However, a good headline should be accurate, clear, and easy to understand.

## **The Byline**

The byline is a printed line of text included at the top of the newspaper or magazine report and tells about the journalist or agency responsible for writing the article.

## **The Place line**

The place line is a brief piece of text, often a part of the dateline, which briefs about the place from where the story has been originated. They are usually placed before the first sentence of the report, right on the first line of its text.

## **The First Paragraph or Lead**

A news story with a strong lead is more likely to be read. The reader would want to gather all the key points of a report by merely looking at the leads. Therefore, a lead should not only cover the most important facts of the story briefly, but also set the tone of the story in a way so that it intrigues the readers to know more. A lead should, however, not deceive the readers in any way. If the readers anticipate some information right at the beginning, it should be delivered in the lead. Through the lead, a reporter should try to answer all the crucial questions which anybody, who confronts the breaking of a news, might ask.

Good leads carry the answers for as many of the basic questions as possible in a single sentence. It should strive to answer the five W's and 2 H, that is, who, what, when, where, why and how. Suppose the news story concerns the damage caused by fire, the lead should answer the questions like, 'who all were impacted?' by telling about the causalities and the loss; 'where did it happen?' by giving the location where the fire broke out; 'what caused the fire?' by giving the details of the factual cause;

'how much of loss has been incurred?' by telling about the probable financial loss and about the insurance coverage.

The length of a good lead should be one-two sentences, containing around 25 to 40 words. Although, there are many ways to write the leads, a good lead should discuss only one idea or perspective to keep it simple and short. This way, the readers will get the straight scoop on the news story, without getting confused unnecessarily. In general, the lead should have the most critical information in the very first sentence and the related information could follow in the subsequent sentences. Additional attribution in the lead can be placed at the end of the sentence.

## **The Body**

The second and the next paragraphs expand on the lead and serve as running text of the news story. The body could be framed in various styles based on the type of the news report. Usually, the facts of a story are presented in decreasing order of importance, not necessarily in chronological order. The least important information should appear towards the end of the article, so that their possible omission during the editing doesn't take away any important facts.

Based on the type of news article and news story, the body might include the following components:

- **Quotes:** Quotes are added to enhance the interest and add support to the story. Attribution of quotes to a certain person is the primary way in which quotes are used in a new story. This helps the reader understand that it is not the author's words put directly, but rather those of another person. It is important to keep the quotes relevant and ensure that they are taken from the right source.
- **Background:** A news story can carry some background for the reader to understand the scenario better. The more complicated the story, the more pressing the need for a background would be. In such cases, the readers of the article need to be apprised of all the facts of the story. A well-written background detail, if included in the body of the news story, can help the reader in connecting the story with the past events.
- **Attribution:** Attribution is the mentioning of the source of the information in the news story. It allows the reader to accept or judge on the facts set out in the story. Its inclusion will elevate the merit of the news story.
- **Reaction:** A news story, which might contain some controversial information, is a good selection to have a part in it that carries the reactions, i.e., a few comments from someone who is familiar with the situation or from a representative of the government or an ethnic group.

## The Conclusion

A news story can have a firm conclusion or a reference to some anticipated future action. If the conclusion is left too short, it would leave the reader discontented. A clumsy conclusion could undermine all the efforts put in by the writer and leave the reader dissatisfied. Usually, the conclusion can span from 20 to 30 words and require summing up the overall news story.

Let us have a look at the following news report. Here, we see that the headline is very descriptive and leaves no space for any guesses. It also compels the reader to know more. The headline is followed by the byline and the place line. The news report adopts the inverted-pyramid style of writing, where the most newsworthy key points come first in the introduction. This way, the main details come first, while the minor details appear in the end. The report clearly specifies the background, appropriately quoting the relevant people from the industry and attributing the officials in order to make the report even more reliable and specific. Lastly, the story ends with a logical conclusion, summing up the details while adding a little extra information.

## It's 'white January' as 5th snow spell hits hills; heavy snowfall alert in J&K, HP

Amit Bhattacharya  
#timesgroup.com

New Delhi: January continues to be "white" in the hills of north India as the month's fifth spell of snow hit the region from Friday. Heavy to very heavy snowfall is expected across J&K and Himachal Pradesh on Monday and Tuesday, with Uttarakhand also in the wings as wet weather.

After barely a day's break, yet another spell of moderate snow is likely to lash the region from January 24 to 26, brightening the prospects of a snowy vacation for Republic Day holidaymakers headed to the hill stations of Uttarakhand and, particularly, Himachal Pradesh.

"We have issued a red alert in J&K from Saturday till Tuesday, and in Himachal Pradesh for Monday and Tuesday, as very heavy snow/rain is expected in parts of the region. For Uttarakhand, a lower-level alert has been issued for heavy snowfall on Monday and Tuesday," said R P Yadav, head of IMD's regional meteorological centre.

With at least six active weather disturbances against a normal of four-five, snowfall this January is set to be the highest in the past several years. The difference between this season's snowfall and what was seen last January —



**WHITE BLANKET:** Tourists at snow-clad Solang Valley in Manali on Saturday

which was a particularly dry month — is clearly captured in NASA's satellite images.

Good snowfall is crucial for water availability in summer months, across north India. "This is the heaviest snowfall we have had in Uttarakhand in at least three years. Snow is the main source of water in the Himalayan rivers that feed the northern plains. If we get two-three more snow spells of in February and March, water discharge in the rivers will remain relatively high till peak summer," said Dr P Duttarai, glaciologist at the Whistling Woods Institute of Himalayan Geology in Dehradoon.

Uttarakhand's lone snow

gauge at Mukteshwar has only recorded trace snowfall this month (as on January 6), indicating that the lower hills in the state haven't received much snow yet. However, the higher reaches are covered in white, including the Badri Nath and Kedarnath shrines.

"In Muniyaryan/Pithoragarh district, we have had around five spells of snow so far this winter, which is around normal," said mountaineer Mai Bika Virka, who lives in Samoli village, near Muniyary.

Uttarakhand has already received 40cm of snow, very close to the normal monthly amount of 50cm. "We expect above normal snowfall this winter."

said Suresh Lata, chief of Sri-nagar Met department.

Himachal too is in line for record snowfall. Kothi in Kullu district has received 100cm of snow this month, nearly 16 times more than what it got last January (6.6cm). "Temperatures have been quite low this month. This, coupled with frequent western disturbances, has brought heavy snow in many districts of Himachal," said Mamotian Singh, head of the regional met department at Shimla.

Shimla has received 85cm of snow so far this month, surpassing last January's 40cm, with more expected in the next few days.

Figure 3 Amit Bhattacharya (2019, January, 20th). It's 'white January' as 5th snow spell hits hills; heavy snowfall alert in J&K, HP. Retrieved from <https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared>ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIDEL%2F2019%2F01%2F20&entity=A>.

## **ATTRIBUTION**

Attribution is stating who said something or in other words, it is a method of telling what the source or root of some information is. Attribution plays a vital role in all the media, be it print or audio-video. Attribution is frequently used by journalists, who deliver credibility and clear perception of an event or a story. The worthy use of attribution reflects on both journalism principles and strong writing. Attribution gives the impending data to readers or listeners, so that they are able to decipher what the source of data is and who is conveying it. Any information, be it spoken or written, could be attributed in a report. It could include data retrieved from interviews, reports, books, films, newspapers, radio and television. For example, if a purchaser has a terrible experience with locally manufactured merchandise and a good experience with an imported one, he or she may draw a conclusion that the terrible product is terrible because it has been manufactured locally.

### **Facts and Opinions Based on Attribution**

There is some information, which is unanimously acknowledged as factual; for example, Earth is round, the month of January follows the month of December, Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Further to this, there is much more information which various people might claim as facts. This, obviously, excludes the information which is not attestable or is deceitful.

Some people are casual with handling the facts and spread only half the information or rather misleading information unknowingly. Attribution is a method of stipulating who said what. Public statements made by people in power carry more weight than any statement made by a common man.

### **How Repeatedly Should Attribution be Used**

Attribution should be used at any point, when the viewers might want to know about the source of information and data collected.

One of the key characteristics of a good journalist is to always maintain a balance between making clear attributions of statements and the tyranny of boring the reader with too many phrases.

Some useful substitutes to the attribution verb “said” are warned, suggested, urged, asked and disclosed. However, all these words have different meanings and usages.

Although ‘said’ is an unbiased verb, which does not signify either belief or disbelief, using it too frequently could make the viewers doubt the information given by the presenter.

Hence, attribution must be used in a state of equilibrium or in a balanced way so that the viewers do not question either the source of information or the credibility of the

data being collected and published. The journalist, too, has a crucial role to play in using attribution in an approved and accurate manner.

## **Merits and Demerits of Attribution**

### **Merits:**

Attribution is one of the most important elements of news writing. It includes stating or identifying the information source. Therefore, one of the biggest merits of attribution is that it helps the reader confer from where the information has come and adds to the reliability of the report.

It also helps in building the trust of the reader. Mentioning the names and the designations of the individuals who are authorized to speak to the media add a lot of credibility to the news report. One can use attribution from both spoken and written information gathered from interviews, speeches, movies, reports, books or even from other newspapers or media houses.

At times, situations may change where the truth told at one point in time may be wrong in the next. In these cases, attribution helps a journalist in specifying who said what.

Also, attributing the words to the person who stated them saves a journalist from proving or disproving the truth in their words, as he would just report them.

### **Demerits:**

Lack of attribution leads the reader to believing that the report is the journalist's own opinion and there is no excuse for this sort of confusion in the story. Therefore, a journalist must play safe in attributing the story where facts and opinions are not easily separated.

A journalist must strike a balance between the requirement in a story for clear attribution and the risk of boring the readers with phrases like, "he said".

The word "said" in attributing both quotes as well as the reported speech could be replaced with the words, like recommended, urged, advised, asked and disclosed. However, each of these words has a strong meaning and must be used very carefully. The journalist must be clear with his selection of attributive verbs. Using neutral verbs, like stated, referred to or according to helps in breaking the monotony and repetition.

One of the greatest dangers facing young media professionals is accepting what people deem as the truth. Just because someone said something, doesn't necessarily mean it would be true. Although they might not be knowingly telling a lie, but they

might just be careless with handling the truth. The journalist should decide how much importance should be given to such opinions.

Here is one example of attribution from the news report we just analysed in the previous section:

Good snowfall is crucial for water availability in summer months, across north India. "This is the best snowfall we have had in Uttarakhand in at least the last three years. Snow is the main source of water in the Himalayan rivers that feed the northern plains. If we get two-three more snow spells of in February and March, water discharge in the rivers will remain relatively high till peak summer," said D P Dobhal, glaciologist at the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology in Dehradun.

Figure 4 Amit Bhattacharya (2019, January, 20th). It's 'white January' as 5th snow spell hits hills; heavy snowfall alert in J&K, HP. Retrieved from <https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TimesOfIndia/shared>ShowArticle.aspx?doc=TOIDEL%2F2019%2F01%2F20&entity=A>.

## BALANCE AND FAIRNESS

Balance and fairness are model catchwords of media and journalism integrities. Fairness channelizes that a journalist should struggle for precision and truth in reporting, and not pitch a story so a reader concludes the reporter's desired assumption. Fairness and balance could be used as synonyms for each other, yet these two words have their own identities catering within journalism. While the word, 'balanced' refers to unbiased and not essentially reasonable, the word, 'fairness' means remaining neutral and not leading the readers to conclusions which may not be wholly authentic or precise. However, both the terms hold key positions in journalism, and many ethical penalties could be levied on the journalists because of the absence of fairness or balance in a news report.

Broadcast journalism represents the power of speech of those only on both extremes of the spectrum or voices. Media detractors and ombudsmen of all party-political influences are hasty to believe such reports without rechecking any of the facts.

Journalists are frequently criticized for keeping balance and fairness at bay in the situation of a breaking news. Some media houses publish unsubstantiated articles or taglines which are incomplete or tell a story in fragments. In order to overcome this problem, the watchdogs of journalism have established several rules and norms.

A journalist must adhere to the rubrics and procedures being drawn by IPSO and OFCOM, which are the statutory bodies regulating the newspaper and magazine industry in order to uphold the highest professional standards of journalism.

Journalists must obey these rules in their work and, obviously, being fair and balanced is an ethical obligation they must sustain. Fairness, in a journalistic milieu, is about exploring all sides of an issue and reporting the investigations accurately.

## **How Should a Journalist Accomplish the Equipoise between Balance and Fairness**

### **1. Usage of neutral language**

For instance, let us roughly state that the resident school board is discussing whether or not certain books from the school libraries should be vetoed out. Many residents representing both the sides of the issue are present in the meeting.

The journalists may have robust spirits about the subject. Yet, they should interview participants who support the ban and, also, those who oppose it. When writing the news story or article, they should convey everyone's opinions in a nonaligned or neutral language, maintaining a balance between the opinions of all sides of the gathering.

### **2. Proper usage of quotes and evidences available**

The journalist should selectively use quotes and evidences to mount a story in a way that the reader is not left upset in any manner.

### **3. Exploring both the sides of a coin**

A journalist must have no impetus other than presenting sited and validated facts. He/she should study and examine both the sides of a coin and should only frame a story after thorough research. Fairness in journalism also implies exploring all the sides of a subject and reporting the conclusions accurately

### **4. Usage of proper tone and language**

Journalists should carefully articulate the report in a language and tone, which safeguards them from imprecise or biased depiction of the facts. As a journalist is an individual who is working on behalf of the public, his primary duty is to maintain equipoise between balance and fairness in journalism.

#### **Important Points to Remember:**

- There are a few points to keep in mind while considering balance and fairness. Such rules apply only to the journalists covering hard news and not to the columnists writing op-ed pages or the critics working for the various arts sections.
- Also, while maintaining balance and fairness is important, they shouldn't get in the way of a journalist while investigating and reporting the truth.
- While considering balance in reporting, every opinion is treated as equally valid, no matter how outlandish it may sound and questions of fact are offered up for public debate. For instance, if a person says that earth is round, someone else is invited to say earth is flat. Simply put, balance is mathematical.

- Fairness, on the other hand, involves listening to people, observing them vigilantly and distinguishing genuine from sham. The journalist should have no motivation or desired outcome other than reporting the facts, otherwise it would be activism.

One example below, portrays balanced reporting done with the help of statistics and attribution.

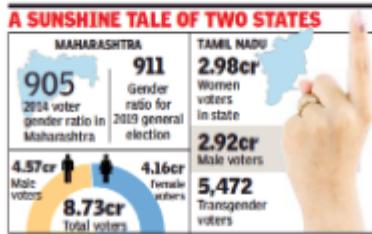
## Woman power: No. of female voters surging across India

### Gender Gap Narrows In Maha Rolls

Bhavika Jain & Siva Kumar | TNM

Mumbai/Chennai: For a country that suffers from low sex ratios and female literacy rates, the 2014 general elections will herald a level of gender parity giving women voters a greater say. The latest enrolment data from two key states—Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu—shows that the gap between the male and female voter counts has narrowed considerably. In one state, while in the other, the number of women voters has overtaken that of registered men.

The increase in enrolment of female voters in both states is in keeping with the broader national trend of improved voter sex ratios (number of women voters for every 1,000 male



voters). In the 2014 polls, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Pondicherry already had more women in the electorate than men.

Tamil Nadu has now joined the club of top 5.6 crore voters, as per the final revised rolls released on Thursday. 2.81 crore are women and 2.8 million men. The number of women voters in the state has increased by 11% against a rise of 8.5% for men, in the last five years.

Maharashtra, where the voter sex ratio was traditional-

ly skewed towards men, has shown an increase in women voters by 15 lakh. As per final rolls, there are a total of 8.73 crore voters in Maharashtra, of which 4.57 crore are male and 4.16 crore are females. The voter sex ratio this year is thus 99 against 96 in 2014.

"The voter sex ratio before 2014 was 97.5 or 98. It was then that we undertook a special drive to enrol more women to increase their representation," said a senior official in Maharashtra. The drive in the

► EC's efforts, P 16

states has involved door-to-door verification, contact programmes using educational institutions, and outreach through women self-help groups and networks such as those established by welfare schemes like the anganwadis.

Over the past decade, there

has been increasing emphasis at the national level in increas-

ing electoral participation of women in all states. The all-India sex ratio of voters had,

from 75 female voters for every 1,000 male voters in the

1960s, improved to 88 female voters in the 2000s. It was 94 in 2011, the highest since 1971.

In 2014, all the southern

states had voter parity or near

parity between women and their male counterparts. Kera-

la, of course, had more wo-

men voters—a reflection of

its overall sex ratio while

Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pra-

desh and Karnataka had near

ly the same number of voters

of both sexes.

## CREDIT LINE

Credit Lines form an integral part of a newspaper. It is a line of text of printed acknowledgement indicating the onset or origin of a news dispatch, published article, film or other work. A credit line also includes the name of the individual or organization which produced or distributed the photograph, map, chart or drawing.

### How does Credit Line Work?

As stated above, the line of text which concedes the source of a news report, photograph, chart or graphics is called the credit line.

The statutory bodies governing a news report could be credited to PTI (Press Trust of India), AP (Associated Press) or ANI depending on which news service has moved the story.

The moment someone sees the credit line of a news report, he/she can easily decipher the source of the news. Besides giving credit to the equitable source, the credit line also gives newspapers a fig leaf in case a question is raised about the legitimacy and accurateness of the report.

### Credit line styles

Different newspapers follow different styles while encompassing credit lines to news activities. The most communal conducts are:

#### Style 1

The name of the organization can be added just before the text taken from the news agency or line service.

#### Style 2

Brackets could be applied to break up the text which is inserted in the middle of a running copy. Also, the added text must have a proper credit line as shown in this story:

Mumbai, January 1st: Five persons were burnt and another 23 suffered serious burn wounds when a fire broke out in the city's Shoppers Stop mall on Sunday evening.

**(According to PTI, the number of those killed in the fire stands at 10.)**

The fire, which broke out on the first floor, destroyed three clothing stores and one grocery store.

#### Style 3

When copy from two agencies is added without clear differentiation, then the credit line must state the name of the agencies at the beginning.

#### Style 4

In case of a photograph, chart, report or graphics, the credit line must be acknowledged clearly at the end of the caption or underneath the graphic.

## **DATELINE**

A dateline is a brief piece of text, which defines where and when the story or the article was written or filed. However, the date is often misplaced in the date line. Simply put, a dateline is a geographical identifier included at the opening of a news article or a press release. Datelines are usually placed after bylines. A dateline should include the name of the city, which in turn would specify the name of the place where the story was created. Also, the dateline indicates the date on which the story was written.

### **Dateline for unknown places**

Sometimes, the place where a story has originated remains unknown. For example, the place where an accident happened may be a very small village. In this case, the dateline would indicate the name of the village followed by the name of the district. This would help the reader identify the place where the story belongs.

### **Dateline for moving locations**

There are no datelines mentioned for a moving location and it remains the same for the afternoon and the evening newspaper.

### **How to Write a Dateline: -**

#### **Identify the Proper Topographical Area**

Before writing the dateline, one should keep in mind the most suitable geographical area. It could be a town or a city from where the journalist is reporting or an event or the hometown of the person mentioned in a press release. He should also be aware of the AP and ZIP Code abbreviations.

#### **Choose Your Dateline Style Associated Press Style**

One should use a proper and feasible writing style for dateline. The capitalization of the sentence in which the words are lowercased should also be considered well. All the abbreviations should be put properly in the dateline.

#### **Date Information**

Press releases often include the date when the information is or will be released in the dateline.

#### **Relative Locators**

Dateline should indicate the location of the news,, too. A few instances have been included here to tell you more about the styles of the datelines.

• २५ जून २०१४

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Bombay high court on Wednesday struck down notices issued by Mahar-

**Tushar Pawar & Neha Madaan | TNN**

Nashik/Pune: Dilip Suryavanshi has been cultivating onions all his life in the Nirpur vil-

## उपचुनाव : जींद में भाजपा रामगढ़ में कांग्रेस का परचम

जींद में पहली बार कमल, रामगढ़ के साथ राजस्थान में कांग्रेस का शतक

अमर उजाला व्हारो

जींद/जयपुर। आम चुनाव से ठीक

अमर उजाला व्हारो

हरियाणा 12,935

राजस्थान 12,228

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

1. What role does journalism play in society? What skills does a good journalist must have?
2. Should journalists always protect their confidential sources?
3. What are the issues faced in communicating on a wide scale?
4. List the various news gathering procedures practiced in crime reporting.
5. What are the most basic qualities news must have? How can you measure a story's importance?
6. List down your honest responses to the following questions:
  - a. Why do you aspire to become a journalist?
  - b. What do you think a day in a journalist's life is like?
7. Is it possible to keep all the prejudices or biases out of a news report? Does the social background or the outlook of the journalist not come in while reporting? Discuss in detail.
8. What kind of people do journalists look for as sources? How do they keep their sources going over a longer period?
9. Think of any news which has been big news in a newspaper recently. Then, jot down your ideas on the elements which possibly add to the worthiness of this news. Was this story news at all?
10. Refer to the front page of a newspaper and re-assess the news worthiness of the stories on the page. Do you agree that all front page stories have front page worth? If you were to rearrange the various stories, would you swap the lead story with any other story on that page or perhaps from an inside page? If yes, why?

## **FURTHER READING**

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# UNIT-2: DIFFERENT FORMS OF PRINT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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## 1. Introduction

1. Newspaper
2. Magazines
3. Leaflets/Pamphlet
4. Brochure
5. Banner
6. Flyer

## 2. Yellow Journalism

1. .Origin of Yellow Journalism
2. Characteristics of Yellow Journalism
3. Negative Effects of Yellow Journalism
4. Advantage of Yellow Journalism

## 3. Penny Press

## 4. Tabloid Press

## 5. Language of News

- 5.1.Robert Gunning: Principles of Clear Writing
- 5.2.Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula-Skills to Write News

## 6. Review Questions and Exercises

## 7. Further Reading

## INTRODUCTION

In the media sections, print media is one of the oldest forms of media. Although it is an old technique, but it is very famous and is one of the strongest medium used to communicate messages to the masses. Till today, print media has been able to retain huge audiences. An advertisement published through print media is able to attract millions of eyeballs and has way more impact on the audiences.

There are various types of print media. The most primary and widely used form of print media is newspapers. The popularity of newspapers is very high and reading a newspaper comes as a daily habit of even the celebrities and successful people. People find reading the newspaper both informative as well as entertaining.

There are other popular forms of print media, like magazines and newsletters. There are millions of subscribers of various English or vernacular magazines. The color and the good quality of the pages keep the readers hooked to numerous magazines being printed today. Depending on the genre, readers are free to choose a magazine of their choice and enhance their knowledge on the subject. The various genres of magazines include politics, health, lifestyle, bollywood, cooking, pregnancy, sports, art and business.

Further, there are newsletters, which come handy in getting an array of business-related information. A lot of people get their share of important information regarding the present condition of the Indian economy or the global economic status or the ups and downs of share markets through the newsletters dispatched timely. A variety of newsletters help the readers in figuring out what business would be profitable for them.

Print media also captures a prominent share in the advertisement area. Various popular and effective forms of advertising through print media are banners, flyers, pamphlets, brochures and posters. One can earn huge profits in his business by advertising through different types of print media.

Print media is also a channel to spread informative news or personal blogs. It apparently is extremely popular among reputed business professionals.

Following the history of print media, we can see the advancements and the writing skills employed follow the modern pattern. Over the time, print media has enhanced its structure conforming to the needs of the modern audiences or viewers. The print media was invented in the early 19th century. Gradually, the initial method of handwriting turned into machine typing, which was invented in the early 1970s. Soon after, the method of machine writing was replaced by digital typing.

## Newspaper

A newspaper is a periodical publication, which contains printed information on news, politics, business, sports and art, and often includes materials such as opinionated columns, weather forecasts, reviews of local services, obituaries, birth notices. A newspaper also includes leisure materials like crosswords, editorial cartoons, comic strips and advice columns and other informative articles along with advertisements. Newspapers are usually published on a daily or weekly basis.

History of newspaper publishing:

- The modern type of newspaper is a European invention. The handwritten sheets are said to have been the oldest ancestors of the modern newspapers; these sheets were circulated locally in Venice back in 1566. This form of newspaper was filled with information on wars and politics in Italy and Europe.
- In as early as 1609 in Germany, the first printed newspaper was published weekly. These were vigilantly monitored by the government and, thus, contained information only on foreign news and current prices.
- By the 1830s high speed presses were invented and brought to practice. These presses could print thousands of papers cheaply, allowing for low daily costs, and, thus, making the newspapers a ‘local’ item.
- In 1766, a Dutch adventurer, William Bolts, suggested the start of a newspaper in order to address the English audience in Calcutta. He was deported back to UK before he could bring his plans to practice.
- Shortly after, James Augustus Hicky published ‘*Hicky’s Bengal Gazette*’ in 1780, which is touted as the first newspaper in India. This four-page newspaper has its size as 12"x8".
- Robert Knight, who was an English editor, journalist and newspaper proprietor, founded two English language daily newspapers in India – *The Statesman* in Calcutta and *The Times of India* in Mumbai in the early nineteenth century. Also, he bought out the Indian stakeholders in 1860, did a merger with *Bombay Standard* and started India’s first news agency. It became the frontrunner to wire news dispatches to newspapers across the country and became the Indian agent for *Reuters* news service. In 1861, Knight renamed *Bombay Times* and *Standard* to *The Times of India*. Knight had to fight very hard for a press without prior restraint and intimidation and frequently resist the attempts by government, business conglomerates and cultural spokespersons in order to lead the newspaper to national prominence. By late nineteenth century,

Knight's company employed more than 800 employees and had a considerable circulation in India and British Empire.

- Newspapers in India paved a way for the battle against the social evils and for freedom by publishing revolutionary and enlightening writings.

Advantages:

- Newspapers have extensive penetration with almost 50% or more of households reading newspaper daily. The figure may also exceed 70% among the households with higher incomes and education levels.
- Potentially large coverage includes local as well as world news and has daily morning and, sometimes, even evening editions published. These newspapers keep the readers well informed, improve their general knowledge, language and vocabulary, and give a wider perspective on what is happening in the world and, therefore, boost their self-esteem.
- Newspapers offer more flexibility than any other medium of advertising. They are timely scheduled and are as regular for people as their staple food. The newspapers are printed in various sizes, shapes and formats and interesting elements like colours and special inserts are used often to gain the interests of the readers.
- Readers' involvement and acceptance is better for the newspapers provide not only the daily dosages of news, information and entertainment, but also the assistance with the consumption decisions.

Disadvantages:

- They are a major source of clutter, as almost 64% of the average daily newspaper is dedicated to advertising.
- They typically have a life of only one day and need to be discarded the next day.
- Any information misprinted or misrepresented cannot be corrected or updated.
- Over the time, the readership of newspapers is on a decline, while the production costs are increasing.

## Magazines

Magazines are periodical publications, which are published on a regular schedule and contain a collection of detailed articles on various topics, like food, fashion, sports, finance and lifestyle. The word 'magazine' originally meant 'store' and was often

used in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century in the title of the publications giving away information catering to particular groups of people. Magazines, in general, are published weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly. Most of them are printed in colour on coated paper and are bound with a soft cover.

Historical background about magazines:

- The first and the earliest was a literary and philosophy magazine “*Erbauliche Monaths Unterredungen*”, which was launched in 1663 in Germany by a German theologian and poet Johann Rist. Educated and cultured intellectuals welcomed the periodicals, which summarized new books and included scholarly articles.
- Interestingly, the first ‘periodical of amusement’, called *Le Mercure Galant* was published by French writer and playwright Jean Donneau de Vizé. The magazine contained news, songs, short verses and gossips. In spite of being mocked by other writers for its witty rather than intellectual content, the magazine gained immense popularity in France.
- The 1700s saw increase in literacy and intellectual competence, chiefly among women. Society’s demand for knowledge facilitated magazines to become a popular cultural staple. The first general-interest magazine was ‘*The Gentleman's Magazine*’ published in the year 1731 in London by an Englishman named Edward Cave. He was the person behind invention of the term ‘magazine’ from the Arabic word ‘makhazin’ which meant storehouse. Two of his most noteworthy accomplishments are coining the term ‘magazine’ and becoming the first publisher to successfully champion a wide-range publication.
- In India, the first magazine was published by the British – *Oriental Magazine* or *Calcutta Amusement* (1785–86). This was followed by a number of transitory missionary publications. With its conception in 1900, the first periodical founded and edited by an Indian was *Hindustan Review*.

Advantages:

- Magazines or periodicals can target specific set of audiences based on their interests. Geographic and demographic selectivity could be achieved through purchasing ad space in specific geographic editions of national or regional magazines.
- They could be made attractive and colourful with modifications in size and cost.

- They have permanence. Thus, they could keep the readers involved and receptive for a long time. The articles written could be read any time in a slow pace, have a longer lifespan, could be used for future references and could also be passed on to other readers. They could possibly be good sources of knowledge, information and usable ideas. Statistics say that magazine readers are more likely to look at and recall ads.

Disadvantages:

- Magazines are generally expensive, as they are not available on-demand and are published either weekly or monthly.
- They have a long lead time required for purchase; also, they have limited flexibility for the placement of ads and their formats.
- On an average, consumer magazines have 45% of its space for advertising, which adds on to clutter.
- The advertisers need to book the space for the advertisement in a magazine well in advance.

### **Leaflets/Pamphlet**

A pamphlet is an unbound book which has no hard cover or binding. A leaflet consists of a single sheet of paper which is printed either on one side or both sides and folded in half, in thirds, or in fourths. It could also be a few pages, which are stapled and are distributed free of cost.

Historical background:

- Pamphlets were among of the first printed materials widely used in European countries. The history and evolution of pamphlets is rather revolutionary.
- The first pamphleteering was inspired by the religious controversies of the early 16th century in support of the Reformed religion. Martin Luther was one of earliest and most influential pamphleteers.
- In India, pamphlets played a vital role in the freedom movement. The freedom fighters used printed flyers aggressively in order to spread the word of freedom against British. Almost all the rallies and processions were accompanied by the circulation of pamphlets printed with messages from freedom fighters and leaders.

Advantages:

- Circulation of leaflets from door to door is a very popular method employed by small and local businesses to promote their brands owing to its cost effectiveness.
- Unlike other print media, leaflets can include a lot of information, as there is no word count restriction.
- A leaflet can be formatted in any shape or sizes and can also be made visually pleasing.
- The most common way of distributing leaflets is through mail posts, where leaflets are dropped in people's letterboxes. The other methods include handing them out to masses in congested or busy areas and, thus, planning the promotion keeping in view target-specific demographics.
- Pamphleteering can be very impactful in promoting the business for small organizations or local businesses who cannot afford other types of advertising,

Disadvantages:

- They are generally discarded after one glance. The potential customers might give it a thorough read, but their disinterest might lead to the disposal of the pamphlet.
- Often, restaurant and take-away outlets' menus printed on leaflets are revisited. The other promotions through pamphlets are quickly read and forgotten and, thus, the pamphlets cannot guarantee a long-term impact.
- Generally, they aren't considered as important and are viewed as clutter or waste.

### **Brochure**

A brochure is a paper with printed piece of informative news and is widely used in business sector as a medium of advertisement. Brochures are available in different forms like template, pamphlet or leaflet. A brochure is mainly an unfolded paper containing information regarding a business or any news update.

A brochure might have the information printed on either its one side or both its sides. It is primarily used to give crucial information to people. The information might be regarding a product or a service or might just be about an introduction to a company and organizations. A brochure is mainly of two types - hand-to-hand and digital.

While hand-to-hand brochures could be found in various formats, like pamphlets and leaflets, digital brochures are generally attached with the emails. The attachment could also be included in the form of a template. The designs of templates convey the

information either textually or graphically. The digital brochures could be designed with either text or graphics, or both.

Infographic is an advanced form of design used for a digital brochure, where the entire process or information is explained step by step and is often supported by suitable graphics formats. It's quite easy to create infographic designs these days. A variety of online tools, like Infogram, Piktochart, Visme, Canva and Ceros, are available, making the process of infographics very easy.

A printed brochure also comes in three folds. When the size of a brochure becomes large, the information needs to be placed tactfully in it, as there is a chance to lose the information flow.

These days, electronic brochure, also known as e-brochure, is fairly common. Its format could be PDF or JPEG. At most, four colors could be used in a single three-folded brochure in order to enhance its look and feel. The colors could be used in contrast, yet should be in sync with each other.

If an organization also has a website, an opportunity to design the brochure per the website could also be availed. The next important thing to be kept in mind is the paper used for making brochures. The sheet used should preferably be thick and glossy. This way, it would easily be able to attract the eyeballs. With the advancements in technology, designing a brochure has become quite easy. However, a high definition printer is preferred for proper printing of the brochures.

### **Banner**

A banner is a heading or advertisement placed on webpage in the form of a box, column or bar. A website can be promoted by placing banner and other web advertising methods on popular search engines, web portals and directories. It is usually a graphic image, which presents the name or identity of a site. A banner could either be clickable, which might transfer the surfers to some other site, or static giving away relevant information on site, product or service offered by the e-commerce website.

A banner could also be a long strip of cloth with printed slogans, logos, designs or messages. A flag whose design is the same as that of the guard in a cover of arms is called a banner of arms. It is prepared in a rectangular or square format. Church banners commonly represent the saint to whom the church is dedicated.

Banner is an essential apparatus for internet marketing. There are lots of ways to sponsor an internet business. One of these ways is with banner ads, also identified as web banners. Banners are also used in speaking the testimony of Jesus Christ by evangelists and public ministers engaged in Open Air Preaching.

## **Historical perspective:**

Banners were used as far as the Old Testament. Around 1300 BC during the time of Moses, banners helped in keeping order among the people as they traversed through the desert to the Promised Land. Banners have come a really long way since then. Let us have a look at its evolution.

*The different types of banners founded from old era to the present:*

**Moses:** This type of banner was used in the era of 1300 BCE. Banners were used as far back as the Old Testament. At the time of Moses, banners helped mind the masses as they moved across the desert to the Promised Land. Although some were made of heavily domed materials, others were simply long wooden poles adorned with ornaments.

**Roman Coat of Arms:** This type of banner was used in the era of 44 BC to 1453 AD. In the earliest days in Rome, houses of nobility distinguished themselves by hanging banners with a coat of arms at the front of their entrance.

**Heraldic Banners:** This type of banner was used in 5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century. Prepared in several shapes and sizes, including the oblong pennon, heraldic flags were used in the Middle Ages for personal recognition. Knights used them to differentiate their mettle on the battleground. As they advanced, they removed points of the pennon until it was reduced to a square form by which they were henceforth known.

**Sashimono:** This type of banner was used in the 1500's. During Japanese feudal times, Sashimono were worn by ordinary soldiers as well as elite samurai to tell apart one another from enemies during tough battles. The Sashimono poles were attached to the back of the chest armour with special fittings.

**Palio Di Siena:** This type of banner was used in 1656. In the Palio di Siena, a bareback horse race was hosted twice a year in Italy and the winner was awarded a banner of pained silk, or palio, which is hand painted by a different artist for each race. During this ceremony, the enthusiasm was so extreme that there was occasional outbreak of violence between rival contrades.

**Trade Union Banners:** This type of banners has been used since the early nineteenth century. In Britain, trade union banners have been used since the 1840s and can be counted in the hundred during the May Day parades. Usually made of silk stretched tightly over a wooden frame, these banners are used to represent local industries as well as depict optimistic visions of the future.

**Aerial Advertising Banners:** This type of banner was used in mid-1900s. Aerial banners are most commonly tied behind propeller aircraft because jet engines are too fast and require too much fuel to be efficient. Proponents of this form of advertising point to its ability to reach an otherwise isolated pocket of consumers, such as people at the beach or stuck in traffic.

**Digital Signs:** This type of banner was used in the 1970s. Since that time, digital signage has come a long way in terms of technology and LCD, plasma, or LED boards are now able to interact with mobile phones via SMS or Bluetooth. This technology enables viewers to send messages to the display boards. Some digital signs use a technology called auto stereoscopy to display 3D images without the need for special glasses.

**Web Banners:** This type of banner is being popularly used since 1993. The first clickable online advertisement was sold by Global Network Navigator in 1993 to a now-defunct law firm in Silicon Valley. A year later, Hotwired coined the term ‘banner ad’ when they sold their first ad AT&T in 1994.

### Flyers

A flyer is a paper advertisement printed for wide range of distribution in public or for posting. One of the oldest marketing policies employed to grow business is by distributing flyers among the public. A flyer is also termed as circular, handbill, poster, or leaflet.

Marketing is imperative for growth of a business, as it helps to grow the operations of the business and flyers are one of the cheapest methods of marketing. Flyers can be customized as per the customer’s needs and requirements. Therefore, flyers could be used to create awareness about the products of the company. Even today, in the era of the Web 2.0, we cannot ignore the impact of flyers, as they are still considered to be a very effective marketing strategy to gather the response of the public.

### Design

To make the appearance of the flyer attractive, it is important to design the flyer appropriately. There are some useful tips which must be remembered while designing a flyer. In order to grab the attention of the masses, a few interesting pictures of the business could be placed on the flyer that would help people understand the purpose the business serves. The top left place of the flyer plays a key role in attracting the crowd and it could be used to place some catchy information like offers and discounts. As nobody likes devoting much of their time to reading a flyer, the text in the flyers should be framed articulately and should be crisp and short. It is important

to mention the plan of action for the readers, too, once they are done with reading the information in the flyers.

## **Yellow Journalism**

Journalism is the line of work primarily associated with print media and newspapers. The newspaper plays a vital role in the life of an educated nation. It is a medium through which public outlook is articulated. Ironically, journalism in India today is beleaguered by sensationalism and wrong reporting. Instead of making people aware of the facts happening around the world, it emphasizes on presenting a tailored, partial and corrupt version of bizarre and insignificant events. This presentation is what is known as ‘yellow journalism’. In other words, yellow journalism presents a kind of journalism which commands attention and sensationalism, without focusing on the truth. Further, yellow journalism could also be accused for spreading half-information, setting stereotypes, provoking discrimination or violence.

Fundamentally, media houses employ yellow journalism to grab people’s attention in order to create more business and money in the competitive market. Yellow journalism frequently uses the terms like breaking news, viral or rumours. It often arises when opposition between two foundations arises, since each one of them wants to acquire better profits. Yellow journalism is a way to grab more and more viewers without putting in additional efforts into research.

## **Origin of Yellow Journalism**

Yellow journalism was first devised during the famous newspaper war between William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer II. Pulitzer's paper *The New York World* and Hearst's *New York Journal* entirely turned the table for the newspapers. They both changed the true face of the newspaper by adding more made-up stories and increasing the use of sketches and caricatures.

## **Some illustrations of Yellow Journalism are:**

These days yellow journalism is emerging as a showstopper for several media channels, which they are using to upsurge their TRPs. Surprisingly, there is no breakage of absurdity, too. News channels are showing whatever they deems as interesting without doing the background check or analyzing the facts.

- A current specimen of this is the death of the student of National Law University, Jodhpur. The media presented this case as a ‘*selfie death*’ whereas, in real, it was a mere accident and an unfortunate event.
- In 2017, when some people from the Rajput community took offence over the portrayal of a historical princess, ‘Padmavati,’ in Hindi movie, the protagonist in the movie went on to defend freedom of expression by saying, ‘*nothing to get offended by, it's just a movie.*’
- *Recreation of Amitabh Bachchan* – this was the headline when Amitabh Bachchan got well after an accident illness; media reported it as his rebirth.
- *Be a millionaire in nine days – Madan Maharaj will disclose the mantra.*
- *Terror of which who demands onions.*
- *Rajasthan’s Scissorhands? Panic in villages after ‘ghost’ chops off women’s hair.*
- A powerful instance of yellow journalism could also be seen during the election season.
- Mother Teresa and Princess Diana died on the same day. However, Mother Teresa’s death was demoted to just a transitory mention, while Princess Diana’s death was publicized. It didn’t matter that Mother Teresa was a Nobel Peace prize winner. It didn’t matter that she was a prominent social worker. What counted was the enthusiasm that the news of the death of Princess Diana could attract.

So, above-mentioned examples are of yellow journalism, which basically consists of sensationalized breaking news so as to increase the TRP of the news channel and sales of newspapers. Media houses, these days, are in cutthroat competition to present yellow journalism.

### **Characteristics of Yellow Journalism**

A few characteristics of yellow journalism are that it:

1. has daunting and impactful headlines with excessively large type font in red or black colour.
2. has numerous photos to display, out of which a few are even spurious or morphed.

3. contains made up stories, fabricated interviews and ambiguous headlines.
4. includes colourful cartoon strips making fun of biased political parties or celebrities.
5. covers campaigns for those who endure mistreatment.
6. might also show the writer being overly sympathetic to the ‘underdog’ in the story and overly against ‘the protagonist.’

## Clickbait

Clickbait is the contemporary form of yellow journalism. The term “clickbait” is a negative term that describes web content which is only concerned with producing profits from advertisements. Clickbait articles are well-known for using phrases such as ‘What happens next will shock you!’ or ‘You won’t believe what happened when she ...’ Clickbait is the same thing as a sensationalized headline on a newspaper, only digitized. A few examples from clickbait are as follows.

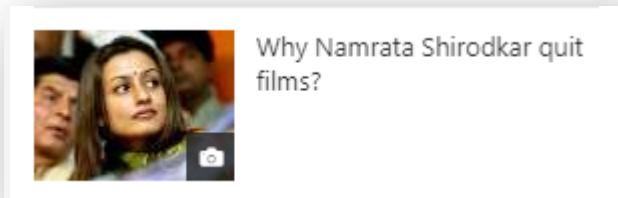


Figure 5 Source: Retrieved from <https://www.msn.com/en-in/> (Date: 12 Feb, 2019)

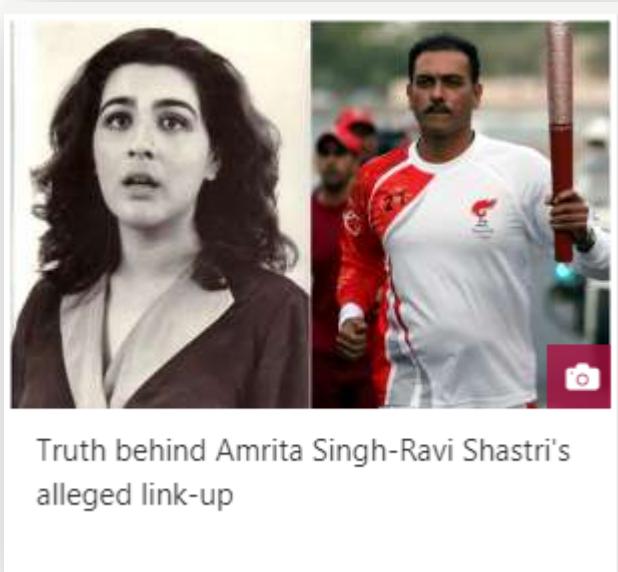


Figure 6 Source: Retrieved from <https://www.msn.com/en-in/> (Date: 12 Feb, 2019)



Figure 7 Source: Retrieved from <https://www.msn.com/en-in/> (Date: 12 Feb, 2019)

## Negative Effects of Yellow Journalism

1. **Society of sensationalism:** Due to yellow journalism, every news media are contending with each other to frame the best headlines, which in turn will increase their TRPs as the mob gets fascinated by rumours without really looking for the facts.
2. **Politics and economy:** Images of several politicians and celebrities get maligned by yellow journalism. Even those, who were innocent, had to face many problems because of fabricated headlines and rumours spread about them by media.
3. **Gender discrimination:** Yellow journalism worsens the issue of gender discrimination in the society as there are several made-up stories regarding gender discrimination, which affects the minds of people and creates a grudge against the opposite gender.
4. **Conflicts and human security issue:** A lot of times, yellow journalism worsens the issues of discrimination already existing within society. This creates conflicts among the people from different castes, creeds, sexes and creates a situation of insecurity on the minds of the people.
5. **Mass media and public interest:** Norms and rules of ethical journalism are framed for the public interest. Media should never exceed these rules and should refrain from unnecessarily hampering the peace in the country.
6. **Promoting violent behaviors:** Yellow journalism might also promote violence in the nation. For instance, if the media is spreading some sensationalized news or

rumours against a person and if that person eventually proves to be sober, then that person might be mentally tormented because of the excruciating media trials.

**7. The form of amusement:** Yellow journalism for some people is a means of having fun or getting entertained. Some people try to start controversies so that they could steal some newspaper or TV space. In short, it is often a publicity stunt for them to capture the mass attention and to be in the limelight.

### **Advantages of Yellow Journalism**

- The only advantage of yellow journalism is that it prevents frauds and unfair practices to an extent, as people who are engaged in malpractices are a bit afraid of being caught in the media. There have been many examples of such people whose frauds were presented in yellow journalism and were eventually proven to be true with evidences.
- It makes people sit up and listen and lays them in a position to look for the actuality when it tempers their inquisitiveness.
- It is also helps media houses and newspapers for generating tons of business and TRPs.

There is numerous exponent of yellow journalism in India; some of them have been discussed above. Now, the question is who will heal this trash? Presently, there are only some self-styled/self-regulatory mechanisms in places like the Broadcasting Content Council, News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA), and the Press Council of India. However, there is a need for a single, peripheral and strong statutory regulator for all the operations of media; an organization which could punish the accused and order for penal actions if he/she is found guilty.

Almost all the media channels put yellow journalism into practice. The media cannot hide behind the provision of Freedom of Speech because the Article 19(2) of the Constitution itself imposes limits on usage of this right in the public interest. Self-regulation for the media has clearly failed in India. There is a need for an external statutory regulator who can work independently for the upgradation of the media as well as the society.

The journalists have gained profound knowledge on how to get an extensive reaction from people and push them to creating a ruckus. Yellow journalism is also becoming viral on social platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. A country should run on facts and not biased opinions. The media needs not stand tall and static, but mature and grow.

Media is known as the fourth pillar of democracy. The responsibility to always keep its value high lies in the hands of the journalists, or the public who are the ultimate consumers of the news, as they are the people who create drama around a certain news with sensationalized headlines.

## PENNY PRESS

Penny press was a type of newspaper available during the 1830s in United States. This newspaper came very cheap and was available to the masses for just one cent, while a general newspaper came for six cents. Due to the low price, penny press sold a lot among the middle class citizens. The popularity of this newspaper further increased with the increase in the working class population of the country.

In the old time, a newspaper costed quite high, as the printing required the use of manual labor. This technique was, however, changed after the introduction of steam engine. The steam-driven machines made everything easy and the process of handling the press became automated. This decreased the cost of printing and, therefore, of the newspaper.

Benjamin Day first took a note of the situation of the newspapers in America. He found that newspapers were mainly centered on the rich class and covered the news mostly related to the activities concerning rich or elite class and the political events. According to H. Bergmann (1995), the newspapers contained mainly the news related to business, ship schedules, products promotions and some old foreign news. He changed this and covered a wide variety of news in his newspapers and, also, priced it lower, so that even the middle class people could avail it. Thus, he was the founder of the first Penny Press in the USA. His newspaper was named as *The Sun* and it became very popular in a short span of time. His ideology was appreciated by other newspaper publishers and they, too, started publishing penny newspapers shortly after.

The newspaper covered various topics besides the political issues. The reports in the newspaper covered the news on crime, tragedy, adventure and gossips. The language of the news was easy, consisting of simple vocabulary and language. This was well received by the common people, for it was easy to understand for them.

The first penny press newspaper was published by Lynde M. Walter and the name of the newspaper was *Boston Transcript*. It was published on 24th July, 1830. Many of the other notable and exceptionally popular penny press newspapers in the USA include *The Sun*, *New York Herald*, *Morning Post*, etc.

The newspapers, then, were not politically funded and the journalists gathered news out of their own interest. The journalists often used telegraph to send news from a remote area to other journalists and the publishing houses. The newspapers also hired reporters and correspondents, who would help in the process of news gathering for the newspapers. This particular practice had a wide impact and many of the ideas of modern journalism were thought to have been originated from here. The idea of interacting with general population and collecting their views and ideas in order to present them in a news report is what the reporters used to do back in those days. This technique is still in practice even in the modern day journalism.

The main inspiration behind the penny press newspapers was Charles Knight's *The Penny Magazine*. This magazine was published to provide education to the poor class people of England and improve their monetary condition. However, it gained popularity not only in England, but also in America. The magazine became extremely popular and had a circulation of more than 20000 magazines after only one year of its inception.

The impact of penny press newspaper on journalism was quite high. Earlier, only the elite and the upper class civilians were able to access the news and understand the political, cultural or national incidents. A large part of the population remained ignorant of the national activities. However, introduction of the mass media at a lower price opened the doors to daily news for the middle and lower income groups.

The penny press also helped the newspaper publishers realize the immense potential of journalism. They became more careful about the news content being published in their newspapers. They also came to know that a large part of the middle class population had different consumption patterns in terms of news than the upper class population. Where the middle class group was more interested in knowing about the stories around crime and criminals, the upper class loved consuming business news and grapevine.

Another significant point about the penny press newspapers was that these gained revenue from the advertising spaces sold in the newspapers but the general, costly newspaper, relied mostly on their costly subscription plans for the revenue.

## **TABLOID PRESS**

Tabloid is a widely used newspaper of the modern times. It is generally smaller than a broadsheet and its standard size is 17 inches by 11 inches. The news included in a tabloid is very descriptive and covers a variety of topics

Tabloid originated from a pharmaceutical company, Burroughs Wellcome & Co. situated in London, who termed their pills as tabloids. J. Harris, B. Clayton (2002) stated that these pills looked like compressed materials. Sometime later, the word *tabloid* was being associated with all types of compressed materials. As these newspapers contained every news report in a simplified and brief format, general people termed it as a *tabloid*.

There is variety of tabloid newspapers around the world. London has the widest variety of these newspapers than any other country in the world. These varieties are aimed at different classes of the population and contain different kinds of news.

The *Red top tabloids* mainly consist of the news collected via tabloid journalism. The reports chiefly cover crime, celebrity chatters, junk food news and information around astrology. These newspapers are largely popular for highlighting the celebrity gossips and contain all the latest news and grapevine about them. The newspaper got its name from the red mastheads present on them. Here is an example:



Figure 8 Source: Retrieved from: <http://joshepq.blogspot.com/2012/12/evaluation-red-tops.html> on 13 Feb, 2019.

On the contrary, there have been a lot of issues related to this type of newspaper. The language in these is kept colloquial and is loaded with fancy adjectives and exclamatory or expressive words in order to add a high shock value. There have been many incidents when tabloids have been accused of spreading fake news and sparking controversies in order to push their sales.

The most popular *red top tabloids* are *The Sun*, *The Daily Star*, *The Daily Mirror* and *The Daily Sport*. Another form of tabloids is the *compact tabloids*. These newspapers cover authentic news and employ editorial style of writing. It is noted by B. Zelizer, et al. (2000) that the news covered in these newspapers is mainly from the national or the international political front. Previously, these newspapers used the broadsheet

papers only, but in order to accommodate the content in lesser space, the publishers started using smaller size papers. Newspapers like *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* were the frontrunner to make this change back in the 1970s. However, many other notable newspaper publishers followed this path later and implemented this change in their tabloids, too.

The small size of compact tabloids helps the readers in reading the newspapers anytime on the go. The content of these newspapers vary as per the style of the publishing houses. Some newspapers concentrate on the political events while others stick to covering the business news. Some of the most popular compact tabloids are *The Independent*, *Daily Express*, *The Morning Star* and *Daily Mail*.

Interestingly, the tabloid newspapers have had a significant impact on the publishing of the newspapers in other countries. There is a considerable proportion of readers of tabloids in Africa who find the use of pictures and catchy narration interesting. It helps them to understand the news better. Tabloids are a popular form of newspaper in other continents too, like Asia, South America, Europe and Oceania.

## LANGUAGE OF NEWS

Whether a person is a news junkies or a low information people, we are all surrounded by news everywhere. But, hey thanks to the news! We can always remain updated on what is happening around the world. We can obtain information on local, national and international current affairs, business, sports, politics which is often enclosed with a dose of shopping advice, showbiz, science and technology, cuisine, holiday, celebrity's lives and fashion, lifestyle etc. News always comes to us in a number of formats.

As noted by Grazia Busa (2013), “News comes to us in a number of systems. The oldest tool for delivering it is the newspaper. The other two traditional media are the television and the radio. News is presented in many forms, ranging from factual reporting of events to sensational entertainment. In news making, every aspect of a news story like text size, ordering of events, relevant topic, visual structure of the text are all carefully planned and the choice made depends on both the communicative goal and the socio-cultural values that are assumed to be shared with the addressees. English, because of its key role as a language of international communication, has been increasingly used as the language of the news. The contents of the newspapers are not facts about the world, but in a very general sense, “ideas”, or also can be termed as “beliefs”, values, theories, ideology etc. Language is not neutral, but it’s a highly constructive mediator. The journalist takes a different view. He/she collects the

information, report them objectively and the newspaper will then present it without any bias, in a language which is designed to be unfaltering and agreeable to the readers.”

As quoted by Roger Fowler (2013), “The formation of news events and the formation of news values is in fact a reciprocal, dialectical process in which stereotypes are the currency of conciliation. The occurrence of a striking event will reinforce a typecast, and reciprocally the firmer stereotype; the more likely are relevant events to become news. News values are rather to be seen as qualities of reports. They are not simply features of selection but, more importantly, features of representation and the distinction between selection and transformation. From a semantic point of view, the text in the contents summary can be divided into different parts. They are in the following order – the initial information relating to the subject of the news, further background details concerning the event and finally explicit editorial comment on how the news will affect the reader. The first part of the title is always present, while the other two elements, especially the last one, are not present at times. The terms, ‘true’ and ‘most true,’ collocate with the relation that the adjectives lose some of their semantic force. Very often, precise information is given as to the basic components of quintessential reportage: details relating to what, where, who and when are frequently found in the title page summaries.”

As stated by Martin Conboy (2013), “The news, in both its elite and popular forms, is extremely important in helping us to build up a normative view of the world and set parameters for how we network with that world. This means that language has an immense pressure on the ways in which we observe the world or in which we live. The language of news plays a major part in the construction of what Berger and Luckmann have referred to as the ‘social construction of reality’ (1976). Newspapers are ‘language forming institutions’ (Bell, 1991) which means that their language informs and is influenced by broader linguistic trend. Most of the newspaper language is driven, as never before, by the economic imperative to retain its audience within a competitive news media environment. Newspapers often reduce the complexity of the world and they often lack context because of the space constraints.”

A part of the development of the conventions of the news language is the division of the content of the newspaper into various and not always mutually compatible types. These can be further divided into two main categories. The first is hard news, where explicit opinion is generally withdrawn and where spot news and the reporting of the routines of politics and public life is included. The second category includes the genres, like specialist news, soft news, news features opinion pieces and editorials, where opinions are more or less foregrounded. It’s the hard news where

‘facticity’ (Tuchman, 1978) of the writing is utmost important. The general tendency is to include the evident, verified information and excluding additional commentary from the journalist. This does not mean that opinion cannot be transmitted in other, less obvious ways. The news media picks events for reporting according to an intricate set of criteria of news worth. So, news is not simply that which happens, but that which can be regarded and presented as newsworthy.”

There has always been some form of headline included, summarizing the content of a newspaper report. The development of the headline was a central feature of the increasing marketization of newspapers. Besides providing a brief summary of the main news, they help in grabbing the attention and, also, in reflecting the style of the presentation of the news values. They are an important means through which a newspaper appeals to its audience.

A lot of times, the written language might also mimic the spoken language, colloquially used in chats, texting, blogs and emails and this form of writing is characterized by little planning. The written language, which mimics spoken language, could well be used by the writers who wish to create a friendly and informal relationship with their readers. For instance, popular magazines, newspapers, websites and discussion forums famously use colloquialism. As quoted by Anna McKane (2013), news stories arise from the events that hold a potential to interest the readers. A majority of these cover actual events ranging from burst water pipelines or road crashes to horse shows and school plays. The news stories might also originate from official sources, like press releases, documents, reports, charities and so on. Direct quotes from people involved in an incident bring a story to life, highlighting the tensions between the groups of people and telling the readers about what happened, explaining its significance and giving a cue to the reader about the possibilities in the future.

### **Robert Gunning: Principles of Clear Writing**

Writing is a part of our everyday lives. There is a famous reference book, which is used as a bible by the journalists when it comes to mending their writing ways per the news medium. As per the book title, *The Technique of Clear Writing*, by Robert Gunning, there are ten points which should be kept in mind while writing the news reports. These are:

- **Keep sentences short:** According to Robert Gunning, the sentences should be framed as short and crisp as possible. This will help the reader grasp the message that is being conveyed through the writing in the exact way as intended by the writer. Long sentences put the readers off and, also, make the sentences too complex to be comprehended. Writers should break long

sentences into multiple short sentences in order to introduce a breather and simply the intended meaning.

- **Prefer simple over complex:** While framing a report, the journalists should use simple languages and words. This will convey the message behind the words in a proper and effective manner. Frequent use of complex words could, at times, create confusion and doubts in the minds of the readers. This will also make the writing tough to be understood. Because of this, the writing might as well be disregarded as waste, as it couldn't serve its purpose to inform the readers. Therefore, simple words and languages should be preferred over complex words and language.
- **Use familiar words:** According to Robert Gunning, it is easier for the masses to quickly relate with the content where familiar words are used. There are times when journalists tend to use certain unnecessary complex words and phrases in order to make their writings sound formal. Little do they know that this practice often makes their writing more unfriendly than official. Proper usage of colloquial words does not necessarily frame the piece as informal. Instead, the use of simple and familiar words will help the writer in keeping the readers engaged with the content.
- **Avoid unnecessary words:** There are times when the writers use several unnecessary words in the writing. This, sometimes, leads to confusion among the readers of the content and a general disregard of the publication. Therefore, it is always better to avoid the use of unnecessary words in the writing in order to make it more effective.
- **Put action in your verbs:** Verbs are used for the expression of actions. Therefore, the sentences could be made to sound natural by putting actions into the main verbs. This can be done by following the below-mentioned three methods:
  - putting the action in the subject,
  - putting the action in the object of the verb,
  - putting action in a phrase of the preposition.
- **Write as you talk:** One of the simplest tricks for getting more readers to read one's writings is to write in the speaking language. There are various people who prefer writing in a different language than they talk. It is a general ideology that writing in colloquial language makes the writing very

simple. However, it is a myth, as writing in conversational language makes it easy for the reader to understand and relate.

- **Use pictureable terms:** It is well accepted that the use of picture-able terms in the writing makes it way more effective. People are able to relate with these terms, as a result of which they are able to understand what we is being conveyed. This helps in increasing the engagement with the readers and, thus, eventually gaining their preference.
- **Tie in with the reader's experience:** Tying the writing with the experience of the readers imparts it a personal touch and they are able to connect with it better. Once the preference for the writing and the writer increases, the readers love coming back to read the reports by a particular writer and become his/her ardent followers.
- **Make use of variety:** When we communicate with people, we use a variety of sentences while talking. This helps us in communicating our ideas to the people in a proper manner. Therefore, adding variety to our writing will make it more natural. It is considered as one of the crucial parts of an effective writing. Our writing will become tiresome, rigid and uniform if we do not use variety in our writing. Therefore, Robert Gunning suggests that we should use variety in our writings in order to make it more attractive as well as effective for the readers.
- **Write to express, not to impress:** We, human beings, need validation for everything. The same applies to a writer. The writer should write according to the demands and requirements of the readers. This will help in attracting as well as engaging more readers in the writing. The expression is much more important than impression in writing. One should write to make the readers understand what is being conveyed than making an attempt at impressing them. Therefore, Robert Gunning suggests one should write to express not to impress.

### Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula: Skills to Write News

Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula is one of the oldest and most accurate readability formula. This concept was discovered by Rudolph Flesch in the year 1948. Rudolph Flesch was a high profile author, writing consultant and supporter of the Plain English Movement. This concept was developed in one of the articles by Rudolph Flesch named as *A New Readability Yardstick*.

Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula is an approach which is used for the assessment of the grade-level of the readers. It is considered as a truthful and accurate

measure that could be relied on without much scrutiny. It has been found to be best used on school texts.

Additionally, it has also become a standard readability formula used by many US Government agencies, including US Department of Defense. However, its primary usage limits to assessment of a reading passage written in English.

With the application of Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula, the writers can make their writings effective and easy-to-understand for the readers. One of the best ways to attract the readers to the content is to frame it to meet the readability expectations of its target audience. Catering to the readability expectations of the audience will help people stick to the website and help increase the conversions, too.

In the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula, there is a definite formula of mathematics which has been discussed below:

- $RE = 206.835 - (1.015 \times ASL) - (84.6 \times ASW)$ , in which following are terms:
- RE: Readability ease
- ASW = Average number of syllables per word
- ASL = Average sentence length

ASL can be calculated by dividing the total number of words by the total number of sentences which have been used in the writing.

ASW can be calculated by dividing the total number of syllables by the total number of words which have been used in the writing.

In the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula, RE is referred to as the output measured in numbers. It ranges from 0 to 100. If the content scores a higher number, then it could be concluded that the writing is easy for the readers to read and understand. The content could be rated in the following manner:

- If the score is between 90.0 and 100.0, the writing is able to be understood by students in fifth grade.
- If the score is between 60.0 and 70.0, the writing is able to be understood by students in eighth and ninth grade, i.e., it should generally be understood by 12 to 15 year olds.
- If the score is between 0.0 and 30.0, the writing is able to be understood by students appearing in college.

Therefore, if we want to make our writings easy as well as easy-to-understand for the readers, we should measure it with the application of Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula, which will help us get the breakdown of the readability scores and text statistics. This will, in turn, help us in streamlining our workflow thereby making it easier for us to reach our target audience.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

1. What is yellow journalism? What are the various techniques of yellow journalism?
2. What is the difference between the content used in a newspaper and that in a magazine?
3. The values of the traditional reporting are taking backseat while the features of tabloid journalism are taking over the newspaper. Do you agree?
4. Where are possible avenues where flyers and posters could be used? What purposes do they serve?
5. What is clickbait? Do you think it is decreasing the worthiness and importance of news?
6. What is the use of the Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula? Explain using examples.
7. Does the style of writing change according to the purpose of the feature; for instance, information, education or entertainment? Please elaborate.
8. Discuss the various aspects of news writing and its relevance to responsible journalism.
9. Discuss in detail how the language and the style of writing changes with the changing mediums of print. Discuss the characteristics which bring about the difference.

## **FURTHER READING**

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# Unit 3: Understanding the Structure and Construction of News

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## 1. Organizing a News Story

- 1.1. 5W's and 1H
- 1.2. Inverted Pyramid
- 1.3. Do's and Don'ts to be considered while weaving news story

## 2. Criteria for News Worthiness: Criteria for News Selection

## 3. Various Sources of News

- 3.1 Radio
- 3.2 Television
- 3.3 Newspaper
- 3.4 Press Release
- 3.5 Hand-outs
- 3.6 Press Statement
- 3.7 Police Station

## 4. Use of Archive as Source in Journalism

- 4.1 Journalism and Archiving
- 4.2 Importance of Archiving in Journalism
- 4.3 Technology to Harness Values from News Archives
- 4.4 News Archive in Digital Age

## 5. Use of Internet as Source in Journalism

## 6. Review Questions and Exercises

## 7. Further Reading

## ORGANIZING A NEWS STORY

News is current or new piece of data about any happening that is congregated, processed and disseminated via medium to a significant number of interested people. It is the presentation of facts about an affair or happening that has just occurred or shall occur soon after across the locations. It is something that was not known earlier. It is exhibited in a way to spread awareness about the occurrences in the view of public's interest and is from a trusted, genuine and impartial source.

News is reported through different sources like newspaper, television, radio, and internet. Its intention is to report and spread awareness on a matter which is presently affecting people. News is anything uncommon and out of the mundane, monotonous happenings of life. It is anything that is treated with excitement by people and gets talking about. News encompasses any current happening which is of social interest and the finest news is that which grab the attention of a majority of the readers.

The NEWS is committed to bringing forth to the audiences whatever is supposed to be most unusual and important in the world: a snowfall in the northern India, a love child of a prominent personality, a set of conjoined twins.

The ‘news’ is an integral part of the twenty first century. Once a discrete thing, only available in certain formats at limited times, news is now available round the clock on radio, television, Internet, sent via notifications on phone, as well as in its traditional format as a newspaper. What is amusing is that despite the increase of news outlets, and the advancements in technology which have completely changed the way it is gathered, processed and received, the product itself has barely changed since the appearance of mass circulation popular press in the latter half of nineteenth century.

A single definition for the news is tricky, because so many factors influence its selection and production. There are so many different approaches to analyzing news selection whereby each views the news from a different theoretical perspective.

Technology has played a significant role in the way news is gathered and disseminated. Advancements in printing technology towards the end of nineteenth century paved way for the production of cheaper newspapers, better systems of roads and rail gave way for mass circulation and the invention of telegraph opened the area able to be reported upon and the way it was presented. More recent advancements have made communication across the globe smoother and faster; and for that matter the impact of technology on news and global influences on news have had great impact on its presentation.

News writing is an art of effectively expressing a news story articulately and concisely. The main objective of any news story is to convey the factual report of any event that has occurred in an accurate manner, with answer to all the inquisitiveness that could possibly arise in the minds of the general public.

### **The Five W's and One H of Journalism**

The hardest thing to do is writing an introduction to a news. The 5 W's and 1 H of journalism includes Who, What, Why, When, Where and How. These are questions whose answers are considered basic in information gathering or problem solving. A story is not considered to be comprehensive or complete until it answers all these six questions and missing any of these details leaves a gap in a story. They constitute a formula for getting the complete story on a subject. It is a simple and sure way to create a great content. This concept is very useful in many professional writing scenarios.

However, these rules apply to the complete story and not to the introduction. Information overload in the introduction and too much punctuation is a big turn-off. The writer should cut unnecessary information from the intros, like big titles or uncommon abbreviations. The journalist should stick to provide a sneak peek into the story with the intro and then explain it further in the next three paragraphs. The best method to proceed with the rest of the paragraphs is to work chronologically on how the events happened. One would need a blend of direct quotes and indirect reporting in order to keep the story as logical as possible by writing it in chunks. Here, let us look at what the rule of 5Ws and 1H say.

- The ‘who’ refers to the person, place or thing, which is usually in the limelight in the main story. Who is involved? Who is affected?
- The ‘what’ refers to the happening or occurrence which makes the item worth reporting. It begins with the fact of the story; what has caused the story; what might be affected/changed by the story. It could be the election of a public official, an automobile accident, a crime or the announcement of a decision or survey.
- The ‘where’ refers to the place or the location of the happening or occurrence of the event. Where did this take place; where did it...; where will it...; where should it ....
- The ‘when’ refers to the time of an event which is the most interesting aspect of the news. However, circumstances may make it even more significant. When did the story take place; when will it take place; when should this take place.

- The ‘why’ refers to the motive or cause behind an event. At times, the ‘why’ is the most important feature of the news. It defines the actual cause of the main story. Why is this topic important; why did it take place; what were the causes and effects of the incident.
- The ‘how’ refers to the method by which something is accomplished. How does this topic work; how does it function; how does it do what it does; how did it come to be; how are those involved affected.

By knowing who was involved, what happened, where it happened, why it happened, and how it happened, a story will have an obvious flow which will make it easier for the readers to follow a story, lead or an interview.

Writing the collected information or a story needs to be systematic and organized. Writing the news report in this manner would condense the information efficiently, letting readers understand the basics of what happened quickly and easily.

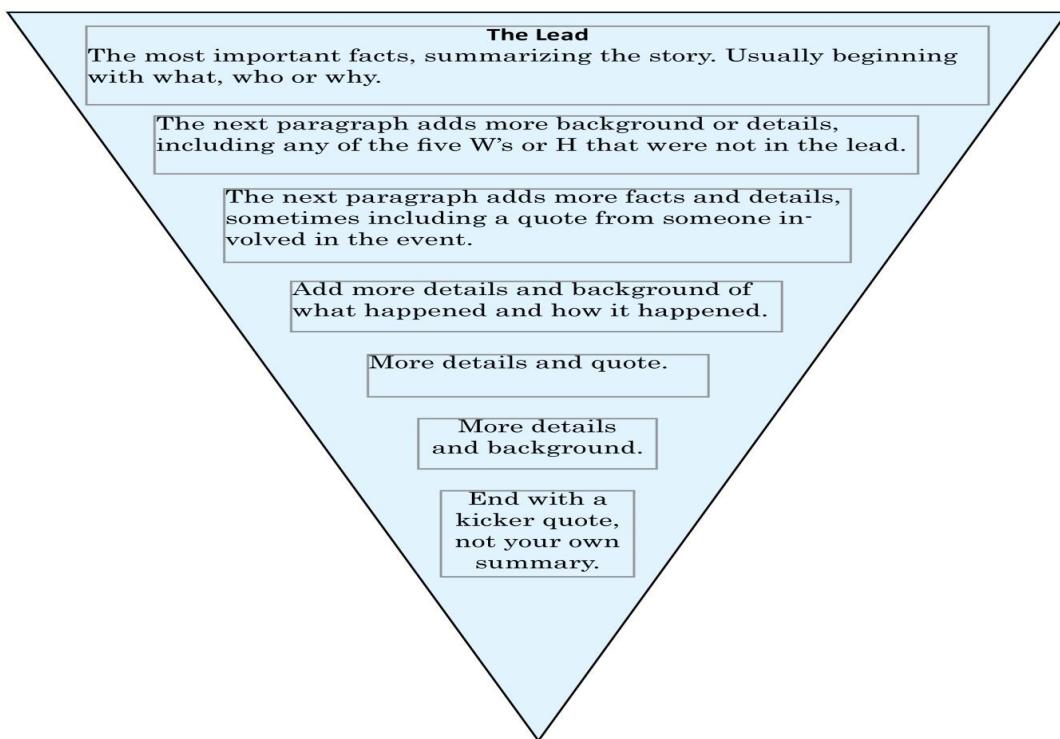
### **Inverted Pyramid Style**

In news writing, a specific story needs to be articulated in an ordered and structured manner. There are a few basic rules for writing and structuring any news story. Historically, inverted pyramid is the most common method for constructing news stories. Interestingly, it has the adaptability to other kinds of texts as well, like, blogs and editorial columns.

This flair of writing is called as ‘inverted’ pyramid mainly because it could be represented as an upside-down pyramid, which has the most important information at the top, proceeding in an orderly fashion until we get to the bits where the unnecessary details could be cut out if required. This method deals with analyzing the information collected, establishing what is most important to the reader and arranging the information in descending order of importance. The inverted pyramid structure allows editors to select key information in the introductory paragraph and cut the article from the end up, so that it will fit into the newspaper. The structure followed looks like an upside down triangle as shown in the figure below.

# Inverted Pyramid

The basic news structure



- The lead or the essential and the most attention-grabbing elements are put first. Usually, this part begins with what, who, why, when, where and how. It should be concise and attractive with the first sentence as the most important and all the subsequent information put in order to make the communication successful, precise and effective.

For instance, “Unusually high and incessant rainfall during the month of July has caused severe flooding in the state of Kerala during the monsoon. Over 350 people died within a fortnight, while at least 661,000 were displaced and all 14 districts of the state were placed on high alert”.

“The most awaited Royal wedding between Prince Harry, the member of the British royal family; and Meghan Markle, American and former actress took place at St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle in the United Kingdom on 19 May 2018 amidst pomp and splendour.”

- The body of the news story is the next, which will include all the added information but not necessarily the critical information. It will contain the

supporting, background, the additional information that is revealed in the diminishing order of importance. Information here is useful for the understanding of the story and can be safely left out.

For instance, “35 out of the 42 dams within the state were opened for the first time in history and all five overflow gates of the Idukki Dam were opened at the same time after a gap of 26 years. Very heavy downpour has left the hilly district of Waynad isolated....”

“Prince Harry the second son of Charles, Prince of Wales, and Diana, Princess of Wales and Meghan Markle, American actress best known for her role in the Canadian-American legal-drama television series Suits have been in a relationship since 2016....”

- The least important information is put at the bottom. The information here is not really necessary for basic grasp of the story and is of value to only those who wish to have a detailed read.

Inverted pyramid style allows the readers to glance through the news for quick updates. They can choose to read only part way through an article knowing that the information they failed to read at the end is not going to be as important as the beginning. They know that the heavier and most crucial news is at the top and the lighter and lesser important details are at the bottom. This style of writing also allows the editors to adjust the story per the space available by cutting the story from the bottom.

### **Do's and Don'ts to be Considered While Weaving a Story**

We have seen how news needs to be organized and structured so as to be effective and, also, what contents a particular story should hold to be complete. Additionally, here are a few do's and don'ts to be kept in mind while weaving a story.

- Authenticity and accuracy: All nitty-gritty details which are framed into a news must be precise and genuine. Particulars like names of people, their ages, places, dates, days and the time of the instance to be included in the report must be accurate. Language used must be correct in terms of pronunciation,

vocabulary, structure, and grammar. The statements produced of the people involved must be exact.

- The most important elements that evaluate the worthiness of news are Timeliness/Freshness, Proximity/Nearness, Prominence, Magnitude, Controversy, Oddity/Unusualness, Consequence, Emotion, Usefulness and educational value. It should display courtesy, good taste and respect towards and on behalf of their audience. It must neither be callous, nor hardened or obnoxious.
- Meaningful, interesting and factual: The news story should be eloquent and must make sense. It must be presented in such a way that the listener or reader may not lose excitement. The news must avoid vulgarities and obscenities. It ought not to drift away from the principals of accuracy and objectivity and never be fabricated or concocted. The most important element to be cared for and taken into consideration in news is its being factual and truthful.
- The facts cannot be tampered with, distorted or presented partially. In other words, they must be reported exactly the same way they have been procured from the reliable sources. Since the news is conveyed to the masses and not to a specific group of people, its basic aim is to convey the message in a simple and unblemished way and the language used must be easy-to-understand, articulate and clear.
- Objectivity and conciseness: A news report should always be neutral, fair, accurate and impartial and should be free of unnecessary details. It should be concise and not unreasonably verbose.
- Clarity and comprehensiveness: Simple vocabularies, easy-on-tongue order of words, and correct and clear pronunciation are the key factors of news. It is considered comprehensive only when it answers every possible question that might arise in the minds of the onlookers.
- Cohesiveness: Any news item must be well-knit, well-arranged and well-ordered.

Journalism is an extremely informative and valuable form of writing as long as correct and appropriate information gathering and writing techniques are engaged. The most essential objective to bear in mind while weaving a story is to write with a goal of providing authentic and precise information to public.

## **CRITERIA FOR NEWS WORTHINESS: PRINCIPLES OF NEWS SELECTION**

Relying on their hands-on experience of decades, the association of reporters, editors and others from media fraternity has come up with certain norms or factors, which help new journalists decide whether or not a specific story is newsworthy.

- Proximity: This has to do with how close to readers or viewers an event is happening, in terms of geography. If an event is taking place close to them, it will have more impact on them than the one taking place farther from them, for instance in another country or continent. If there was an accident in a town, the local TV channels would weigh the news as important and might include it in the local editions of the popular dailies. However, it wouldn't be a matter of interest for people placed far away from there, unless it exhibited other qualities which contributed to its newsworthiness.
- Prominence: News concerning well-known personalities, places, occasions or relating to any person or matter who is in the public eye has more value than the one relating to an unfamiliar subject. We often see celebrities drawing more media attention for their small contributions to the society, while the unpopular faces often stay as unsung heroes.
- Timeliness: The news business needs to focus on what's happening this day, this hour and this minute. So, current events have more impact than something that happened a week ago. One can relate news to a baked bun which is best served fresh; after a while, nobody would be interested in consuming it. Similarly, the media house that manages to present a news story first is always at an advantage.
- Novelty/rarity: If something is unusual, unique, shocking, bizarre or an aberration from the normal, the its exceptional quality would alone make the story newsworthy.
- Impact for readers: The more number of people possibly involved, impacted or affected by an event, the more newsworthy the story will be. For instance, a change in the income tax slab, an alleged outbreak of an epidemic or fall and rise in the prices of petroleum products like LPG, petrol, diesel etc, all are equally newsworthy.
- Conflict/scandals: Readers are always interested in learning about disagreements, arguments, tension, rivalries, etc. The stories that cover conflicts concerning religion, sports, business, trials, wars, human rights violations, politics, human activities against nature, animals or outer space are considered to be newsworthy. If the news is on an honest-to-goodness scandal, reporters as well the readers everywhere are frothing at the mouth to get the scoop on it.

- Extremes/superlatives: Audiences always love to hear about the first, the best, the longest, the smallest, the highest and about any such superlatives.
- Human interest/emotions: Events that involve fellow feelings, emotions of brotherhood and humanity are considered to be worthy. Any event that invokes the feelings like warm, fuzzy or emphatic in the audiences is considered to be worthy, for it will connect with the masses instantly. Further, a glimpse of somebody else's private life appeals to the voyeuristic part of the human nature.
- Educational value, progress and usefulness: Readers are inquisitive in knowing what new technologies are doing to improve their everyday life, or anything that involves any significant change for the betterment of humanity. It could be an accomplishment in the research laboratory, engineering or a parliamentary body etc. Columns on educational and job opportunities, blood donation camps, and ones that serve some purpose would always be credited. Also, news about job or other educational opportunities or the ones which help one gain more knowledge serve to be of great importance.

The more the factors mentioned above are applicable to any event or story, the more newsworthy it is bound to be.

## **VARIOUS SOURCES OF NEWS IN JOURNALISM**

Any source that provides us with correct information on various topics for a period of time is called a source of news. Suppose a person is found at a crime spot and he is ready to tell what he saw, he would then be called the news source. Generally, official documents or their photocopies, witnesses of the incident and the accused himself are essential news sources for validating the actual incident.

In earlier civilizations, the news for the masses travelled through travelers, monks, or town criers, who used to beat trumpets in order to make important announcements. The information written on walls or rocks was also a medium to spread news in Indus or Mohenjo-Daro civilization. But, in the modern times, the advancements in technologies have in a way shrunk the world and have, thus, enabled an easy and quick passing of information.

Today, a variety of sources of news exist. For instance, TV, radio, press releases, press notes, handouts, press conferences, newspapers, press interviews etc. Let us discuss a few of these news sources, which are imperative to the journalists and the audiences equally.

## Radio



Figure 9 In 1957, Vividh Bharati, one of the most popular radio service by All India Radio was launched. Retrieved from <https://www.thebetterindia.com/57573/5-things-may-not-know-about-all-india-radio/> on 28 Feb, 2019.

Radio is an audio medium which is predominantly used in Indian villages as well as towns. In rural areas, where affording a television is rather difficult, radio comes cheap in information sharing. Radio is an excellent source of information and entertainment, which is broadcasted 24 hours a day and provides the most recent news updates to the listeners. In fact, few models of the battery-operated or hand-cranked radios do not even require electricity for functioning and, thus, come as a handy source of entertainment in even the remotest of areas.

Radio in India is considered as one of the vital medium of mass communication, which has a potential to reach all across the country and broadcast different sorts of information to the masses. An array of radio stations, which use vernacular languages in order to maximize the usability of the information being broadcasted, are functional in India today.

Radio has several advantages over several other mediums of mass communication; for instance, it is cheap, portable, handy and easily accessible.

## Television



Figure 10 Source: Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/television/the-world-came-home-2932048/> on 28 Feb, 2019

Television (TV) is one of the most crucial means of communication, which is used for transmitting visual images in monochrome or in color and sound. It continually broadcasts informational contents, like news, sports events, movies and documentaries. One could also see the interviews and listen to the sounds of the events which took places far away. It even provides the live coverage of any incident from its place of origin. TV is a major vehicle for entertainment, education, information and advertising. It, in fact, has the highest number of viewers more than any other form of mass media. This is because TV attracts audiences from all age groups and strata of society. Dr. Rajendra Prasad inaugurated the television service in India on September, 15, 1959 in anticipation that TV would travel a long way in broadening the outlook of the masses bringing it in line with scientific thinking.

In India, television is owned by the government and, thus, it takes the responsibility of furthering the causes of development and spreading the message of the participation of people in government-driven development programs. The Indian model of television programs is exceptional from the perspective that apart from persuasion, it shoulders the responsibility of passing on the culture to generations. Television news has an edge over other sources, for it is immediate and vivid. It holds the potential to show what is happening at the moment and is at premium as pictures take advantage over words. However, it lacks in analysis and perspective, which are the strengths of the print medium. On the contrary, television has no content restrictions, like ink costs, space crunch or word count.

## Newspapers



Figure 11 Source: <https://tinyurl.com/ydys5m57> Retrieved on 28 Feb, 2019

Newspapers provide detailed information at both national and international level. They describe any incident comprehensively and use attractive methods to highlight the important aspects of news. Additionally, newspapers are the most trustworthy source of information concerning crime, local governance, schools, taxes, local jobs, art affairs, local social services, local politics, zoning information, community/ neighborhood events and real estate.

Newspapers are, in fact, reliable for researching the most current and up-to-date coverage of the events and trends. It helps in examining an issue in context of the time when it happened, by examining the variety of coverage given to the same story and seeing how one story related to other. They also highlight multiple points of view about the same issue and permit the researchers to track the historical developments of topics over time. Since newspapers contain retrospective articles on incidents and events, they could also be used as secondary source.

## Press Release



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Government of India

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## Media Center

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### Press Release on the Foreign Office Consultations with New Zealand

February 06, 2019

The Second Foreign Office Consultations between India and New Zealand was held on 05 February 2019 in New Delhi.

The India side was led by Smt. Vijay Thakur Singh, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs and the New Zealand side was led by H.E Mr Ben King, Deputy Secretary Americas and Asia Group, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Second Foreign Office Consultations between India and New Zealand provided an opportunity to review the entire range of bilateral relations, including political, trade and economic ties. India reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with New Zealand in these areas. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues, including cooperation at UN and other International Organizations.

New Delhi  
February 05, 2019

**Figure 12 A Sample of Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (Govt. of India). Retrieved from: <https://tinyurl.com/y2x53tkm> on 28 Feb, 2019**

A press release is a brief, compelling news story sent to various media houses as a measure to get a favorable media coverage. It is generally directed at the members of media fraternity for the aim of announcing anything allegedly newsworthy. The press release should contain all the crucial information (what, when, where, how and why) which could help the journalists articulate their own story.

In other words, press releases are short, printed statements which highlight the important facts of a story in a journalistic manner. They are presented like news stories and composed in third-person with appropriate citation of quotes, sources and standard press release information. Date stamp and location of the news are considered vital in a press release. Press releases are a vital public relations tool and are often a part of the larger communication strategy. The main function of a press release is to swiftly publicize information that could be of significant use or interest to an unrelated and large group of masses. Some of the common issuing sources of press releases are government agencies, trade unions, schools or universities, small or large businesses or professional associations.

## **Press Notes**

Unlike press releases, press notes are an account of the view point of the government issued on essential and pressing matters. They are generally brief and crisp notes with direct messages. They are the final word or viewpoint on various matters in which the government agencies' stands are to be explained. They are prepared logically using proper words. They are to uphold people's interest in the governance. Press notes could also be issued to present one's stand on the issues, which could be in interest of the general public or be influenced by day-to-day politics. The press notes are less formal in character and newspapers can well edit or condense them per the need. They are terse, timely, brief and specific and contain all the facts in figures in truest of their forms.

## **Handouts**

Handouts are released on a variety of subjects like the daily proceedings of various ministries or departments. They could also include the buzz created in the corporate world, speeches by VIPs, question and answers in parliament or any developmental programs of government departments. A handout must include the name of the issuing organization the press notes, like Press Information Bureau (PIB).

## **Press Statement**

The information given to the media by known or authorized people is called press statement. There is a slight difference between press statement and press release. While a press release could be used to convey information in the form of updates or announcements, press statements are rather reactionary statements given by an official in reaction to an event, situation or accident. Thus, press statements could be a public statement made in order to express support, disapproval or general comments on an event already happened in the past.

## **Police Station**

Journalists heavily depend on police as the accepted and authoritative source of information relating to crime. Lately, police has evolved into a key institution due to its expansion and centralization. Also, journalists acknowledge a steady need of people for stories relating to crime and punishment and the continual flow of accounts of individual crimes from the police station provides cheap news content. Journalists should, however, double-check the news for its authenticity and legitimacy and, also, deduce the complete story behind the crime before publishing it on various platforms.

## **USE OF ARCHIVES AS SOURCE IN JOURNALISM**

Archives are a collation of historical records and contain primary source or first-hand documents collected over the course of an organization or person's lifetime and kept

in record to show the function of that organization or person. Archives consist of records that have been hand-picked so as to be preserved permanently or for a long term on the grounds of their literary, evidentiary or historical value. They can include both published as well as unpublished materials and in any format, be it manuscripts, photographs, letters, artworks, diaries, audio clippings, books, videos, artifacts and their digital equivalents. Also, since the materials archived are often unique and rare, the people in charge of caring for them, or *archivists*, strive to preserve them for the use of future researchers.

Archives are important collators of information because of their role in centralizing the access to the records. In order to present any news in great detail, past has to be constructed so that the present could be clarified. The use of archives by journalists in the composition of their stories has the power to provide the public with cumulative meaning, one that will shape how the readers will interpret the news. This is why journalists, nowadays, are encouraged to include a context in their reports and this has been made possible by the access to archives provided by digital technologies, like the Internet. However, online sources, like internet, must be handled with care and should be thoroughly checked and corroborated.

### **Journalism and Archiving**

A large amount of journalistic content gets published every day and once it is retired, the same is archived for a later reference. They are useful and valuable in a variety of ways and, hence, must not be deleted at any point in time. Being able to access decade-old or century-old news could be crucial in order to understand the past. Today, there are a set of best practices in the media industry which have been framed to preserve and manage the content long after it has been created. A few media houses also choose to create internal archives through their news sites and allow public access if the need be.

### **Importance of Archiving in Journalism**

- Archives can help in enhancing reader engagement and providing a fresh perspective into the world of yesteryear. Newspapers have always recorded the first draft of history and, hence, their archives could well be leveraged to gain insight into people, places and times using their past content. Thus, archives are rich sources of cultural, social and historical information. Archives of regional newspapers can offer both business value to the newspaper and cultural and social value to the news readers of a region.
- As journalistic content is the fabric of history, it has a massive educational potential to offer unique and authentic historical source material to students and researchers. While history books provide brief interpretation of events from the past, media archives provide eyewitness accounts of history unfolding and, therefore, is highly valued by students, historians and scholars.

- The news is a journalistic produce with a cultural background and, so, it should mandatorily be archived. The archives have huge revenue potential, which itself covers the costs of converting and preserving them. There are many ways to generate revenue from the archives by performing targeted advertising. News organizations could also generate revenue from archiving by repackaging and reselling old content that they own. Magazine media publishers have started to realise that they could tap the huge potential their own content holds and unlock a new revenue stream by reusing renowned graphical illustrations from the past to make the current newsletters more impressive. This is also helping them revive the yesteryears' popular comic characters in the present scenario, thereby helping the readers to reminisce and relive the forgotten past.
- By applying elaborate data mining algorithms and running digitally-intensive jobs, the researchers can mine the archives to analyse content in ways that would have been impossible for humans. The content mining on the news archives has produced several amazing discoveries. Most of these discoveries are especially evident in the fields of humanities and social sciences.
- Journalists, too, are relying on archives more than ever. Archives are not just about (or for) the past, but also the present and the future. Journalists need archives for investigative reporting, fact checking and validation, preserving their own sources and reporting. From an archivist's perspective, journalists need to learn how to write metadata and tag their content – information that will help provide a better use of it in the future.

### **Technology to Harness Values from News Archives**

Researchers are creating new research methodologies to mine the growing amounts of digitized historical newspapers and, hence, it is important to have digital access to the news archives. Many news archives support the researchers, their students and their long-term scholarly needs as more mining research methodologies are integrated into scholarly community. The challenges are great and the opportunities are significant and the news archives will be an important partner in many big-data and data mining researches.

### **News Archive in the Digital Age**

In the digital age, online journalism plays a crucial role and is considered even better than the conventional media. The news and magazine readers now prefer digital medium over the traditional types for many reasons, like multitasking, more news choices, ability to link to related news articles, 24/7 updates and the opportunity to “talk back to the media”. With the ability of the web content to move into a certain event of the past, most of the online news readers choose to click on the links which cover background information, thereby leading them to the archives. The flexibility to access the previous-dated contents anytime with just a search and a click is

considered to be an important value-addition. By utilising the digital news archives, the news readers are able to trace the shift in provided summaries and understand the changes in the discourse presentation.

## USE OF INTERNET AS A SOURCE OF NEWS

The revolution brought about by the advent of Internet has given rise to many technological innovations in the journalism and media industry. We can see a huge transformation in the way the news is being disseminated among the masses. This has also opened the floodgates of opportunities for the media societies to reach out to their audience. The Internet, along with other digital transformations, has affected journalism practices to a large extent and opened up great avenues for enhancements in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

- The influence of internet can be seen in every facet of journalism. From information gathering to news editing, the internet has revolutionized the media industry. Today, the journalists are rarely seen using notepads and pens, as most of their research and note-taking happens on internet-enabled devices. Therefore, most of the logistics used for distribution and communication in the past is getting redundant today.
- The speed and reach of internet connectivity in the remote areas has made information dissemination faster and effective. It has not only improved the journalists' production efficiency and pace, but also shaped up their narratives with new writing techniques and better coverage across variety of platforms. Covering live events and incidents has become way more informal and easier, as compared to the conventional style of journalism. The dissemination of news on the digital channels is in sync with the event taking place live.
- With a vast amount of information at one place, Internet gives innumerable possibilities of enhancing a journalist's work in terms of both quality and scope. Journalists can unleash their creative proficiencies more than ever, by using various services and tools available on web. These tools help them to research the stories, vet that research and finally analyse that research.
- With the digitization, contemporary form of journalism involving core journalism skills can be transcended to better heights with the blend of technical knowledge and the ability to create online media content. Traditional sources are limited by time and/or space and cost. Digital age has made the scope of journalism infinite, as Internet offers unlimited information through various content formats, with a plurality of views being represented from a diverse set of people. Work from the past can be readily linked, and even the content from the past decades hosted in the digital archives can be leveraged (to depict the historical events) and, hence, can be used as citations in the current work.

- Technology has enhanced the processes of recognizing stories that are newsworthy, as this gives an outlook of what is trending across the world. The feeds from Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites provide a snapshot of events which are happening around the world. The blogs and citizen news sources offer perspectives of the witnesses, the public and from the live location much faster than print, television or any other media.
- Audience control, nonlinearity, storage and retrieval, unlimited space, immediacy, multimedia capability, interactivity and user-generated content are certain other aspects that web has enabled in journalism today.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

1. Discuss in detail the main elements of news. Which elements of news do you think should never be missed in news?
2. Real-time and live news has turned journalism into a 24-hour business. Discuss the elements of news with reference to the globalized world.
3. Page 3 reporting has gained much prominence recently. Discuss the reasons behind its growing popularity.
4. “Headlines bear the responsibility to index, summarize and market the news story.” Do you agree?
5. List down the contributions of India radio in spreading the message of socio-economic development in the independent India. Do you think Prasar Bharti is now facing a tough competition from the private FM radio stations?
6. How can a journalist utilize the police station as a source of news? What should be the additional cautionary steps he must take when using anonymous sources in the report.
7. Do news organizations pursue a well-researched definition of what represents as substantive coverage? Do they also take responsibility of how their work is pursued and received?
8. “You can’t be a great reporter if you are not an avid reader.” Do you agree? How does reading help you in growing as a journalist?
9. How is internet used as a source of news? How do journalists ensure creditability while quoting sources from the internet?

10. Discuss the importance of archiving in modern journalism. Is technology making the process of archiving easier? Explain.

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# UNIT-4: Different Forms of Media – A Comparison

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## 1. Print Media

- a) Newspaper
- b) Magazines
- c) Leaflet and Pamphlet
- d) Posters

## 1. Electronic Media

- a) Radio
- b) Television

## 2. Digital Media or Online Journalism

- a) Introduction
- b) Forms of Online Journalism
- c) Characteristics of Online Journalism
- d) Four Methods Adopted for Presentation of Online News
- e) Advantages of Online Journalism
- f) Disadvantages of Online Journalism

## 3. Media Analysis in Indian Context

- a) Comparison between Various Types of Media

## 4. Citizen Journalism

- a) History of Citizen Journalism
- b) Forms of Citizen Journalism
- c) Examples of Citizen Journalism
- d) Challenges in Citizen Journalism

## 5. Review Questions and Exercises

## 6. Further Reading

### **DIFFERENT FORMS OF MEDIA: AN INTRODUCTION**

Gathering and timely reporting of the information which is unique and unknown is a compulsive urge of human beings. The term, media, is derived from the Latin word “*medius*” which means middle or between, and refers to anything that carries information from the source to the destination. The main purpose of information dissemination is to facilitate communication and learning. Mass communication refers to the delivering of this information to the masses in a collective fashion. Before the advent of science and technology, the method of communication was scribbling on wooden plates and rocks in order to convey messages to the public. Later, with the advent of the printing press, pamphlets, newspaper and other print media gained prominence. The invention of radio and television, which took place in the middle of twentieth century, gave a boost to the mass communication industry. Then on, computer and other digital media brought a new façade altogether to the world of communication. Print media, electronic media and digital media or new media are the three major categories of mass media.

### **PRINT MEDIA**

Print media is considered to be the pioneer form of mass media. It is one of the means of mass communication, which is in the form of printed publications, like newspapers, magazines, leaflets, pamphlets etc. Whatever that is written or printed on paper and is palpable constitutes print media. Newspapers have been the most influential part of print media since its inception.

#### **Newspaper**

As we have discussed before, newspaper is a periodical publication containing written information about news, politics, business, sports and art, and often includes materials, such as opinion columns, weather forecasts, reviews of local services, obituaries, birth notices, crosswords, editorial cartoons, comic strips, advice columns, various other informative articles and, also, advertisements. Newspapers are typically published on a daily or a weekly basis.

Today, the newspapers present the readers from all age groups amusement as well as information on a vast array of subjects. It provides daily lessons in living history on a wide scale. Also, it is the only chronicle of everyday incidents in one's own society. It not just guards our constitutional rights, but also watches over the public good.

Interestingly, newspaper could play a vital role in helping the readers in upgrading their reading and language skills, like speed reading, in-depth analysis, critical study, spelling, vocabulary and grammar. Besides being a model for journalistic and descriptive writing, the newspaper is unmatched source of topics for debates, panel discussions and dramatics. Also, as newspapers are the mirror of the society, they serve as the best text for all divisions of social studies. Where the world of science fills the newspapers with the breakthroughs in medicine, ecology, genetics and space, the arts also receive a fair amount of attention.

Additionally, newspapers provide abundant knowledge and opportunities to apply practical skills in one's professional life. In short, newspaper also helps in building a whole new set of competencies people need all their lives, for they also called 'living textbooks.' There is a wide range of newspapers which could be categorized on a various basis. For instance, based on the frequency of publication, there are dailies, weeklies and monthlies. *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*, *The Times of India*, *Dainik Jagran*, etc. are some of the dailies, *The Sunday Standard* is a weekly and *Glam Mint* is a monthly newspaper. Based on the type of coverage, there are general, special interest, trade journals and house organs. Based on the type of approach, there are general, tabloid, sensational and underground newspapers.

There are a few basic criteria of a good newspaper, like:

- Adequate and crisp coverage of important news
- Sense of news worth
- Ratio of space dedicated to news versus to advertisements
- Accuracy and aptness of news
- Unbiased style of editing and reporting
- Variety and balance of contents
- Number of correspondents both local and international versus media house's dependence on wire service
- Dependability of editorials
- Wide spectrum of columnists, both in-house and syndicated.

## Magazines



Figure 13 Source: Magzter.in

Magazines are periodical publications that are published on a regular schedule and contain a collection of detailed articles on various topics, like food, fashion, sports, finance, lifestyle, and so on. The word *magazine* refers to a collection or storage location, which in this case is information. Magazines are typically published weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly and are often printed in colour on coated paper, and are bound with a soft cover.

Besides the evident difference in appearance and design, there are a lot of other differences between a newspaper and a magazine. The writing for newspaper appeals to local geographical audience with a wide spectrum of interests, age group and educational and socio-economical background and mainly focuses on national or local news. Magazines, on the other hand, aim their content at a much narrower target group with specific interest and demographic qualities. Where newspapers employ large staff of writers and editors, magazines reply on freelance writers for a majority of their content as this ensures geographical variety in the content. Where writing for newspaper is objective and impartial, magazine writers enjoy more freedom in display their viewpoint, style, tone and voice in their writing. Unlike newspapers, which have daily deadlines, magazines generally have monthly, weekly or bi-monthly deadlines, which implies that readers get to enjoy more complexity, depth, originality and analysis.

Based on the audience they cater to, magazines are of three types – *consumer*, which is the most popular segment and caters to the common man, *business-to-business*,

which seek to help people in some definite profession or occupation and *organizational*, which are published by companies for their clients or employees, by universities for their students or alum, religious groups or organization for their members, etc. The organization magazines are special-interest and generally published privately.

### Leaflet and Pamphlet



Figure 14 Sample of a pamphlet; retrieved from: <https://tinyurl.com/y35skcfu> on 28 Feb, 2019.



Figure 15 Example of a leaflet. Retrieved from: <https://tinyurl.com/yy2scwqc> on 28 Feb, 2019.

A pamphlet is an unbound book which has no hard cover or binding. A leaflet consists of a single sheet of paper that is printed either on one side or both sides and folded in half, in thirds, or in fourths. It could also be few pages that are stapled and is distributed free of cost. They are the most common type of print publications used in advertising today. Where leaflet is often a single page, akin to a flyer, a leaflet consists of five or more pages, with promotional information printed on it.

Print collaterals, like leaflets or pamphlets, are frequently used to promote special events, launch new products or companies or catch attention of people towards anything new happening around them. A leaflet is rather a quick-hitter, single-page piece that includes a few key messages along with one or two images. A pamphlet is more thorough and wordy, providing detailed information of the company or its service/product benefits.

Pamphlets are costlier than leaflets in manufacturing and needs to be handed over to target group who would dig into the content. Leaflets, on the contrary, are flexible in placement and can be easily handed over to people personally or sent via emails. Leaflets, due to space limitation, serve the purpose of attracting attention or conveying the message. Pamphlets have a broader agenda to educate customers. Insurance companies or banks use pamphlets to introduce new policies to their customers or informs them about their policies or mission. Also, it costs higher to make a pamphlet because of its size, complexity of content and amount of paper used. To conclude, leaflet is a cost-effective tool to raise awareness among the masses about a need-to-know information in a crisp, yet aesthetically pleasing format, where pamphlet comes handy when the goal is to give more information to the target group in a way that they keep it for future reference.

### **Posters**

Poster is often a single printed paper designed to be attached to a wall or any vertical surface. Generally, posters are bigger in size and include both textual as well as graphic elements or at times, only one of them. Posters are one of the most popular advertising tools, which are designed to be informative and attention-seeking.

Banners are generally printed on durable materials, like cloth, and do not include detailed information. They only include logo and short messages. They are often suspended and hung about with support. Posters and banners are not functionally different and serve the main purpose of advertising, spreading message and achieving desired response.

### **Advantages:**

- Big and colourful posters of a queer combination of size, colour and illumination attracts attention and creates a startling rapid impact.
- Placing posters in public places, like trains, buses and cinema halls can have a high frequency of impact on the passers-by.
- They can be placed close to the points-of-sale, so as to catch the target group's attention.

- Posters appeal to potential customers faster and boast drawing power through its provocative design and gripping messages.
- Posters are more affordable than various other advertising tools, especially hoardings or banners. This makes them conducive to an existing campaign where new messages are required to be introduced every now and then.
- Posters could also be made interactive to include coupons or QR codes for the onlookers to scan to gain more information on the business, like emails, phone number or website URLs.

### **Disadvantages:**

- Poster and banners demand that the commercial message be brief and relatively simple. They, however, cannot communicate product details, competitive advantages and consumer benefits.
- Limited availability as prime outdoor locations are restricted by costs, space availability and are usually controlled by large, long-term advertisers.
- Potential customers, like the commuters behind the wheel or in public transports are exposed very briefly to outdoor messages and this minimizes their message retention time.
- Posters and banners generate environmental concern and are often seen to breach the environmental guidelines.

## **ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

Electronic media is the means of communication in which the audience uses electronics or electromechanical devices to access the content. In other words, it is the storage or broadcast media that employs electronic technology. A few examples include television, Internet, radio, CD-ROMs or any medium which requires electricity or digital encryption of information. Electronic media serves many purposes, like it is convenient in marketing one's business, products or services. Secondly, it is broadcasted to a wider community, unlike the static media. It is, also, an efficient way of communication with the general public. Let us discuss these forms of electronic media in detail.

### **Radio (AIR/FM)**

Radio is an electronic device, which transmits signals by modulating the electromagnetic waves with frequencies lower than those of visible light. Since its inception in the early 1920s, radio has evolved dramatically. During the World War 1, the need for a medium to communicate with the allies was realized and, thus, radio

filled the requirement for wireless transmission of messages. In India, the first radio club was set up in Bombay in 1923, but it was not until July 1927 that the first journal, 'The India Radio,' was started. This was later renamed to All India Radio in 1936. Since then, radio continues to be relevant and potent medium, despite emergence of other, more technically refined forms.

Radio is a sightless medium, where the performers, like speakers, presenters or actors, are not visible to the listeners and this is why it is often called a blind medium. This also compels the listeners to put their creative imagination to use in order to imagine the performance being presented. Radio is exclusively an auditory medium, which have three major elements for its broadcast – sound effects, music and spoken word. Let us look at its various advantages and disadvantages.

### **Advantages:**

- Radio is classically a low-cost form of traditional media. The radio receivers are relatively cheaper than other models of electronic media. They also come integrated with the communication devices, like mobile phones.
- Among the various channels of media used for information dissemination, radio has the widest coverage and also has the ability to reach out to even the remotest of the household.
- Radio broadcast can be received and understood by the audiences from any socio-economic strata, because unlike print media it doesn't require any amount of literacy from the readers.
- The turnaround time on getting any information on air is relatively briefer and, thus, the intended reactions from the audiences are seen immediately.
- Information broadcast can be done at regional, national or international levels and, hence, radio can address bigger size of audiences.
- The radio listeners need not be actively involved in listening to the programs being broadcasted on the radio, as they need not look at the device and this frees them to do other tasks at the same time, like driving, commuting and cooking. Further, as they are portable, they can be carried anywhere.
- Information and advertisements can be presented as songs, jingles, stories or in endless creative forms, which would enhance the recall value of the listeners.

### **Disadvantages:**

- Since the visual effects are absent, the intended impact might be lesser than expected.
- It could be a source of noise pollution and might lead to air “clutter”.
- The clarity of transmission is affected by weather and other environmental factors.
- Less choices and limited radio stations are present.

## **Television**

A television (TV) is an electronic device with a screen, which converts the broadcast signals into pictures and sound in order to create audio-video effects. The word ‘television’ is derived from the Latin words ‘tele’ and ‘visio’ which mean ‘far’ and ‘sight,’ respectively. Due to its audio-video quality, it is one of the most widely used sources of entertainment and information.

Television was introduced in India in September, 1959. For years, it was debated whether India, being a poor country then, could afford an expensive device like a television. It was even feared that TV might alienate people from their culture and spread consumerism, which could possibly increase the hunger for comfort and luxuries. This could also lead to conflict between rich and poor. However, after a strong advocacy by businessmen, manufacturers and educational institutions, UNESCO offered a grant of \$20,000 to purchase community sets. Since then, television has seen its continual growth in India, in terms of technology and expanding reach. Let us get familiar with its advantages and disadvantages.

### **Advantages:**

- Television provides a wide coverage and cable TV and DTH services have made versatility possible. The information, today, is being broadcasted at regional, national and international level. Television is a common household item today.
- There is an availability of a wide range of channels, which covers almost all aspects of human interests and can engage the viewer’s emotions and empathy. It can help the viewers feel less lonely.
- Information through television holds a potential to reach and get comprehended by everyone including the illiterate people, as the messages are conveyed through moving images. Also, visually impaired people could benefit from the audio.

- Since it has both audio and visual effects, the broadcasting can possibly hold the best impact on the viewers.
- It keeps the public informed of the current affairs around the world.
- As it is an indoor source of entertainment, gathering around the television gives families, friends or even the strangers a reason to bond over.

### **Disadvantages:**

- The cost of a television is fairly high.
- Viewers are exposed to informative and knowledge programs as well as the violent or criminal content. In this case, children, without any adult supervision, might get intimidated by viewing such content.
- TV watching might get addictive and reduce physical activities in the viewers. Excessive TV viewing (more than 3 hours/day) might also reduce children's interest in studies and reduced physical activity could lead to sleep disorders, behaviour problems and various other health issues.
- Television's hidden agenda is consumerism. The advertisements are broadcasted with a motive to lure the viewers into buying the products, which might not be as worthy in real as depicted.

## **DIGITAL MEDIA OR ONLINE JOURNALISM**

### **Introduction**

The last decade of twentieth century witnessed an emergence of digital media and it has, undoubtedly, become the pulse of the modern living. The development in internet and World Wide Web has allowed integration of audio and video with multimedia and has opened fresh avenues of communication and information. Any content, be it text, visuals, audios or multimedia, which is communicated through the internet or computer networks, is called as *digital media*. The digital content needs to be created, viewed, distributed, modified and preserved on electronic devices.

The content in this case makes use of electronic devices like computer, laptop, tablets and smart phones for dissemination. Digital media could be integrated in almost all the industries, like entertainment, technology, e-commerce, health, education, government, sports, publishing and television. A few instances of the channels of digital media are websites, blogs, mobile apps, social media networks, like Facebook , Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn , Foursquare and Instagram, live

streaming apps and television channels, ebooks, emails, e-news, location-based services and virtual reality.

Online journalism or digital journalism is a contemporary type of journalism where the editorial content is disseminated via internet, contrary to broadcast or print media. Even though Indian media houses were using computers for designing pages and writing the reports, it was only in 1998 that they introduced their online editions.

Since the beginning of the twenty first century, a steep rise of online news organizations has been observed in India. Despite that, a growing form of journalism, called participatory or citizen journalism, has been seen as becoming popular among the masses, who now have the power to report things or articulate their thoughts on situations around them.

In a way, rapidly growing forms of digital media is ensuring salvage from media biasness along with giving local news the global exposure. In such a situation, even the online audience is growing in size and substance. It can be said that internet has today almost touched the status of mainstream media.

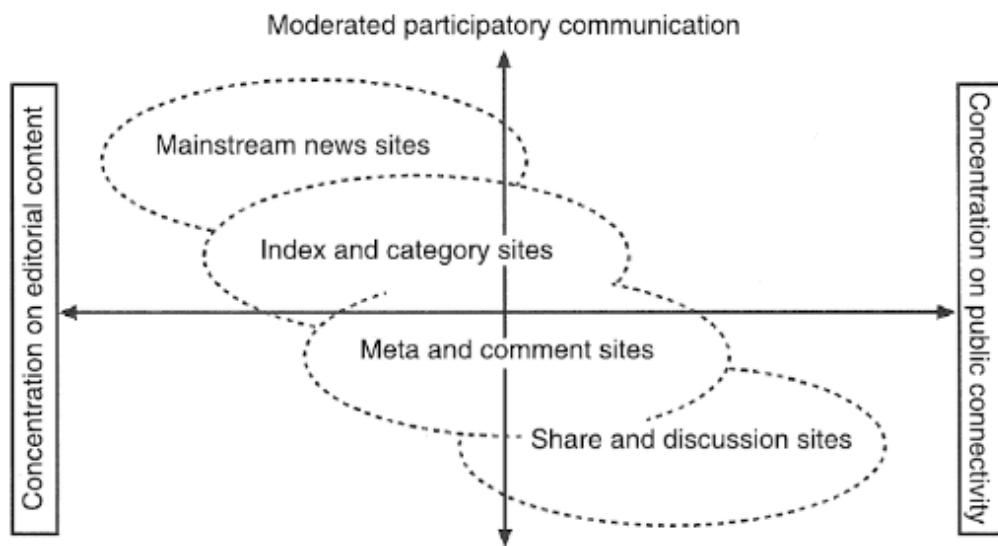
The impact of online journalism could be clearly seen in the journalism practices today. The journalists today are required to be proficient in producing their work suitable for a variety of media, even the public has the access to more information than ever, which has made them more engaged and informed about the matter concerning public affairs and democratic processes.

### **Forms of Online Journalism**

Let us now look at the various forms of journalism that exist within the two dimensions of closed and open journalism.

#### **1. Mainstream News Sites**

The mainstream media is the most extensive type of online journalism, for it presents a selection of editorial content either specifically written for the Web or scooped from a linked website. This could also be considered as a highly filtered and moderated form of participatory communication. Some of the famous examples are much-acclaimed sites like CNBC, MSN or BBC. Also, all the digital newspapers fall into this category. Mainstream news sites primarily follow the exact approach of broadcasting and print media of journalistic storytelling, news values and relationship with the readers.



**Figure 16: A Typology for Online Journalism.** Source: Deuze, M. (2003). 'The Web and its Journalism,' *New Media and Society* 5(2):205 ©Sage Publications.

## 2. Index and Category Sites

Another type of online journalism, i.e., index and category sites were frequently attributed to search engines like Yahoo and Google, a few marketing research firms, like Moreover, and individuals, like Paperboy. In these sites, journalists include deep links to the present news sites by annotating or categorizing these into hyperlinks or accessible lists. These give space for user response, discussions, comments or reactions on the new content published. Web logs or blogs could also be included under this category, as these give the liberty to the public to post their opinions, critical commentaries, personal testimonies or first-hand view on stories and events, leaving the links for further reading for the readers.

## 3. Meta and Comments Sites

These could well be considered as the digital version of journalism as public watchdog, as meta and comment sites let critical comments and substitute media voices come into the picture, for they reflexively monitor and critically analyse the content on new media sites. Alternative news sites, like *Guerilla News Network* reflect on the news provided elsewhere and critically comment on it. They also give space to the news generally silenced by the mainstream media while encouraging the general public to post their own comments and stories, thereby encouraging people participation and feedback.

## 4. Share and Discussion Sites

Odlyzko (2001) claims that the major reason behind the success of online journalism or digital media was the desire of people to connect with others on a larger, boundless scale. The fourth type of online journalism taps the immense potential of Internet by offering a platform or rather open community for the exchange of ideas or stories. They are often centred on a specific theme and bring people from all over the world on a single platform.

### **Characteristics on Online Journalism**

All four types of digital journalism discussed above make use of characteristics of networked computer environment where they function. These characteristics are:

#### **1. Hypertextuality**

Hypertexts, or the text connected through hyperlinks, can either refer internally to some other section in the same document or externally to documents located elsewhere on Internet. The potential of inter-linking various web pages using hypertextuality gives a new shape to the narrative structure of the news.

#### **2. Multimodality**

Multimodality is advanced by elements like hypertextual environments, which includes chunking and interconnectedness of texts visible electronic relations. Journalists can even integrate their content with multimedia elements like images, videos, music, etc.

#### **3. Shifted time**

Journalists often archive their work published online so that the viewers can view it later.

#### **4. Homepage Customization**

Key features, like recommendations, organizing various sections after understanding the interests of the audience, newsletters, push notifications, freedom to republish and letting the users decide the delivery time of the reports or links, can help the journalists customize the homepage characteristics.

#### **5. Text Streaming Technologies**

Text streaming or real-time text is a key feature of websites and applications in which the behaviour of the viewers affect the content being streamed. With technology, media houses can control the content they show and modify it per the reactions it receives from the audience.

### **Fours Methods Adopted for Presentation of Online News**

Additionally, there are four ways in which stories are presented in online journalism:

1. Moving pictures – the type of journalism where the animated images are created on screen in order to recreate the sequence of the news story.
2. The video diary – this is further divided in two categories:
  - i. The video blog, where one can record personal thoughts and opinions on camera.
  - ii. The personal account, where the thoughts or opinions of one person are filmed by some other person and broadcasted live.
3. Edited narrative: this includes recreation of some event or act in the form of a documentary and with the help of a strong narration.
4. TV show/Vodcast: the most redundant type of online videos, primarily meant for the readers who want to download clips from the bulletin.

### **Advantages of Online Journalism:**

- Digital media has opened the floodgates of information to the common man via various channels. Now, the access to information is instantaneous, easier and just a click away.
- The communication across the globe has become easier and faster than anyone would have ever imagined 10 or 15 years back.
- Portable devices as small in size as a smartphone hold a world of information and learning resources within them.
- Live streaming of various important events is available at a snap of a finger. The internet has given the general public the flexibility to communicate globally. Previously, this privilege was restricted to large media firms and news agencies.
- Citizen journalism made possible by social media sites like Twitter allows the viewers to put forth their views and fill the gaps generated by the mainstream media. These sites project the nation's point of view on a subject.

### **Disadvantages of Online Journalism:**

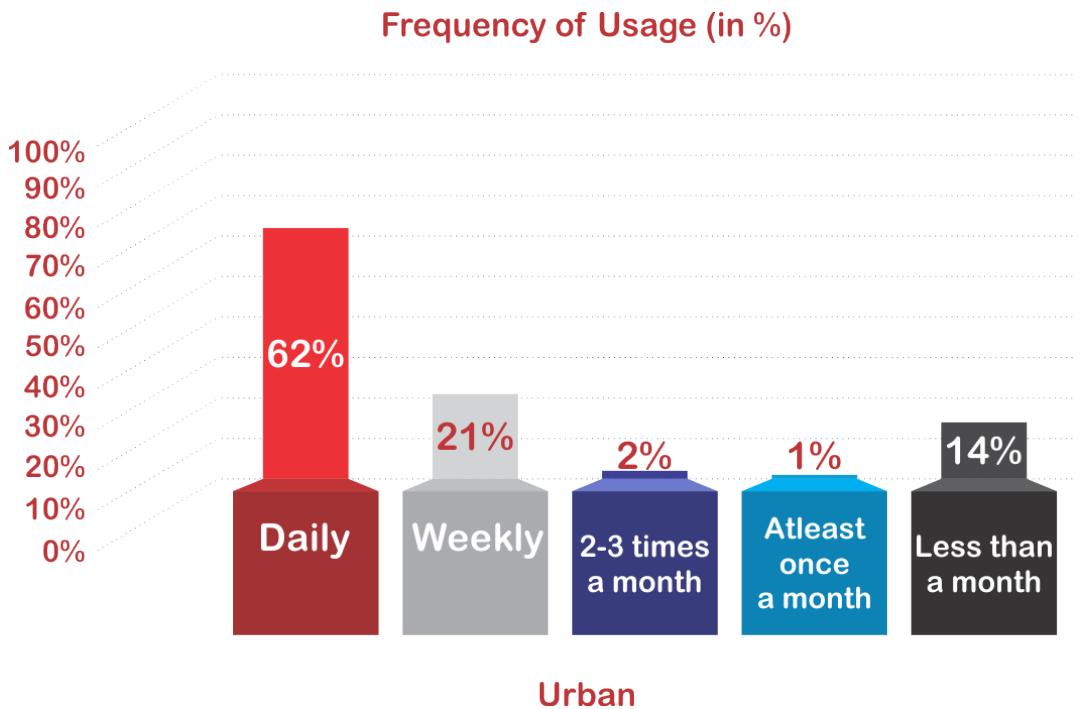
- Accessing the sites online requires internet connection and a compatible electronic device, all of which come at a cost.
- It requires some minimum education for its proper usage and, hence, could be of no use for the uneducated. Further, it could be a challenge for the people less familiar with the usage of technology.
- Giving a lot of time to socializing online is taking away the traditional trend of meeting people in person. Social media is also a source of distraction for anyone who indulges in it continuously. Privacy concerns, anonymity and fake profiles are other major issues which are on a rise today with the increase in the usage of digital media.
- News can be easily manipulated or distorted and authenticity remains a major area of concern. Spreading rumours and hatred is much easier now due to an easy access to the digital media.
- All advantages of the digital media mentioned above could turn into disadvantages, if abused or misused.
- Digital gadgets generally have a short lifespan and could become archaic due to rapid advancements in technology.

### **MEDIA ANALYSIS IN INDIAN CONTEXT**

The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed the arrival of print media in India and the country, now, has close to 70,000 newspapers being published in various languages, majorly English and Hindi. There are over 100 million copies of newspapers sold every day. The early 1930s brought radio and, later, television into the national picture and, now, there are over 1600 satellite channels, out of which around 400 are related to news.

With the inception of first newspaper, i.e., Hicky's *Bengal Gazette*, in 1780, the screening of the Auguste and Louis Lumière moving pictures in 1895 and beginning of radio broadcasting in 1927, Indian media, specifically the private media, has been independent and free throughout most of its operational history.

Going by the report published by Internet and Mobile Association of India (IMAI), India is expected to have 500 million users of internet by 2018 and this would be more inclusive across all age groups, genders and geography. Along with the progress in internet access, the media in India is on the brink of a digital revolution.



### Comparison between Various Types of Media

Let us have a look at the differences between various types of media

<b>Print Media</b>	<b>Electronic Media</b>	<b>Digital Media</b>
Literacy is the most basic requirement for the usage of print media. Only a literate person can read it.	Even an uneducated person can watch a news bulletin and grasp its contents; however, the written matter on the screen wouldn't be read.	Slightly complex for an uneducated person to operate. While the images or sound could be grasped, but what is written on the digital screen wouldn't be read.
Print media works according to deadlines. Usually, a morning daily carries news received until the midnight of the last day.	There is no deadline for the electronic media. News can be updated anytime. Flash news can be displayed and broadcasted anytime.	Information access and updating is instantaneous.
In print media, readers have an option to re-read the contents and recheck what they have read.	Viewers have no control over the broadcasted news. They re-run the show to recheck what they have seen.	Viewers have total control over the content they see online. Rereading, background research and viewing live streaming is all possible. Viewers can even express their opinions on the content.

No scope for discussions or live streaming.	Live telecast is possible; however, viewers cannot involve themselves in the discussions.	Discussions and live streaming is possible.
The language used plays a prominent part and is always reader-friendly.	The language used is primarily spoken and, hence, viewer-friendly.	Both colloquial as well as advanced level of language could be used, depending on the feature.
Frequent refreshing of news is not possible; only when the newspaper would go to press can the reports be updated.	Minute-to-minute refreshing of news is possible.	Instantaneous updates of news are possible.
Till date, newspapers are considered to be the best consumer value product. An affordable expense of Rs. 3-5 provides with enough information to the readers. It doesn't require any device for accessibility.	Requires accessibility to some electronic device and is expensive.	Requires accessibility to internet in some digital device and is expensive.
Indian readers find print media as the most credible.	Indian viewers find electronic media credible.	Digital media has begun to gain credibility. Legitimacy of the information is still questionable.
Frequent power failure for long hours is common in rural as well as urban India. So, there is no viable replacement for a newspaper.	Frequent power failures for long hours disrupt information dissemination.	Frequent power failures for long hours disrupt information dissemination.
Comparatively less coverage for a piece of news is seen.	In comparison to print, the news coverage is more.	There is boundless coverage of all the dimensions of news.
Is of no use for people with seeing disabilities.	Is a better medium for people with seeing disabilities.	Is a better medium for people with seeing disabilities.

Involves clutter and wastage of paper.	No clutter or paper wastage. Also, it reduces the use of paper and, thus, more trees are saved.	No clutter or paper wastage. Also, it reduces the use of paper and, thus, more trees are saved.
No health-related issues are reported with the usage of print media, provided the reading is done in right lighting and body posture.	Over usage results in health hazards.	Over usage results in health hazards.

The main intent of any type of media is to disseminate information to public in any form, be it electronic, print or digital. Each channel holds its own set of advantages as well as disadvantages. The audience needs to be aware of what works best for them based on their convenience. A majority of people get their daily dose of news through newspapers they love to read while sipping their morning tea or coffee. Then, there are others who like to begin their day while watching quick snippets of news on television. As the day progresses, people stay abreast of news through digital media on their smartphones or computers, where they are fed with even the minutest of updates . A few like ending their day having read a book. Thus, we see that individuals cannot confine themselves to a single channel of media. It is a blend which works the best!

## CITIZEN JOURNALISM

Journalism is defined as the practice of collecting and processing information for dissemination to general public. A journalist is a person who collects, writes, edits and publishes the news via print, broadcast and digital media. The development in information and technology has stretched out the possibilities of conventional media. With the emergence of digital media, conventional journalism has adapted itself to latest communication technology and news is being delivered to the public in all possible means.

The concept of citizen journalism is based upon public citizens playing an active role and essentially performing the same tasks that professional journalists execute. It is an alternative and activist form of news gathering and reporting that functions outside mainstream media institutions. The main feature of citizen journalism is that it is usually found online. Because of multimedia advancement, people are in many ways an intricate part of the media world through their comments, photos and video clips.

They are no longer inactive or passive observers, but are active creators and critics. In fact, the emergence of the internet with blogs, podcasts, social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, media-sharing websites, streaming video and other web-related innovations is what has made citizen journalism possible. Dissemination of content is unrestricted and a large number of audiences could be reached through podiums such as Facebook and Twitter. The content could include text, pictures, audio, video or anything which could possibly communicate any information among the masses.

The internet has given the general public the flexibility to communicate globally. This was the power which was once reserved only for large media firms and news agencies. Citizen journalism is the basis of democracy that encourages public to actively participate in social processes. Few of the instances of citizen journalism converging and reporting major world events are 2010 Haiti earthquake, the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street movement, the 2013 protests in Turkey, the Euromaidan events in Ukraine and Syrian war and, therefore, the 2014 Ferguson unrest.

### **History of Citizen Journalism**

The idea that each citizen can participate in the acts of journalism has a long history in India. If we look at the global scenario, the modern movement of citizen journalism began after journalists started to question the certainty of their coverage of the news on events such as 1988 US Presidential elections. Those journalists became a part of the masses or civic journalism movement, which tried to compensate the lack of trust in the conventional news media and the widespread disappointment with civic and politics affair.

Initially, the idea of ‘public journalism’ primarily backed the journalism which was ‘for the people’ by modifying the method through which professional reporters worked. Leonardo Witt believed that the efforts of initial public journalism were a part of the special projects, which were time-consuming, expensive and episodic. While these dealt with the issues and moved on, the professional journalism was driving the discussion. They would have an agenda of doing stories on ‘welfare-to-work’ (or social issues, which had direct impact on public, like economy, environment, etc.) and, then, they would hire a cross-section of citizens and note their viewpoints. Since not all the people from the journalism fraternity bought on this form of public journalism, reaching out to the masses from the news studio was not an easy task. This is where the need of live and local reporting was felt.

The term citizen journalism is often interchangeably used for ‘user-generated content (UGC)’. However, this term lacks a clear form of conceptualization, as it removes the likely civic virtues of participatory journalism and rather regards it as stunted.

With the growing impact of technology, an average person is able to step into the shoes of a citizen journalist by capturing the news and distributing it globally. A recent trend of journalism which is on a rise today is hyperlocal journalism, which invites the local residents of the subscription areas to come on in and report on the topics which convention media neglects. In short, instead of being the gatekeeper by telling people what should be important to them as news, they are asking the common man to be the eyes and ears of the media.

The history of citizen journalism pre-dates professional journalism by about 200 years. The first newspaper in India was published in 1780, and over the next 200 years, there were hundreds of newspapers being published with varying degrees of success. During this time, none of the journalist was a professional as the profession hadn't been created then. They were the citizens who felt passionately about some matter or had access to printing press, who came forward to write, print and distribute their news. This could well be compared with the 21<sup>st</sup> century bloggers or photographers.

With the advent of citizen journalism, the profession of journalism is gradually transitioning back to from where it started – the citizens. Even the media houses, today, look out for the citizen journalists, who are able to find stories, follow events, record sounds, photograph incidents and provide the first-hand account of the event.

## **Forms of Citizen Journalism**

**1. Independent Citizen Journalism:** This includes the stories from the citizen journalists who operate in the ways which are entirely independent of the traditional or professional news agencies. This could also include blogs in which individuals report about the events happening in their communities or offer commentary on a variety of issues ranging from personal to political events.

Blogs are an intricate part of a news website today. The news websites could be run by an individual or a group of people who report on news events in local communities and screen the content before publishing on the live server.

Wikinews is one of the examples of such blogs, where anyone can post and edit their stories. YouTube is another platform, which is often used by citizen journalists to voice their report. Additionally, there are hybrid sites as well where professional and citizen journalists collaborate on the same story.

2. **Semi-Independent Citizen Journalism:** This comprises the reports contributed by the citizen journalists to various popular professional news sites. This not only gives them a platform to voice their opinions, but also gives the content a much wider exposure. Semi-independent citizen journalism also includes the comments posted by the general public on the reports published by professional journalists.

Almost every news website today allows the readers to post their comments or thoughts on the report. They are even persuaded to add any extra information they might have to the information posted by the professionals. There are times when citizen journalists are asked to actively work with the professional reporters in putting together a story. The citizen blogs are even incorporated into the professional news websites, where the citizen journalists are responsible for creation, augmentation and fact checking of the news.

### Examples of Citizen Journalism

A few examples of the popular citizen journalism sites are merinews.com, The Viewspaper, cgnet.com and citizen reporter section in the popular daily, The Times of India.

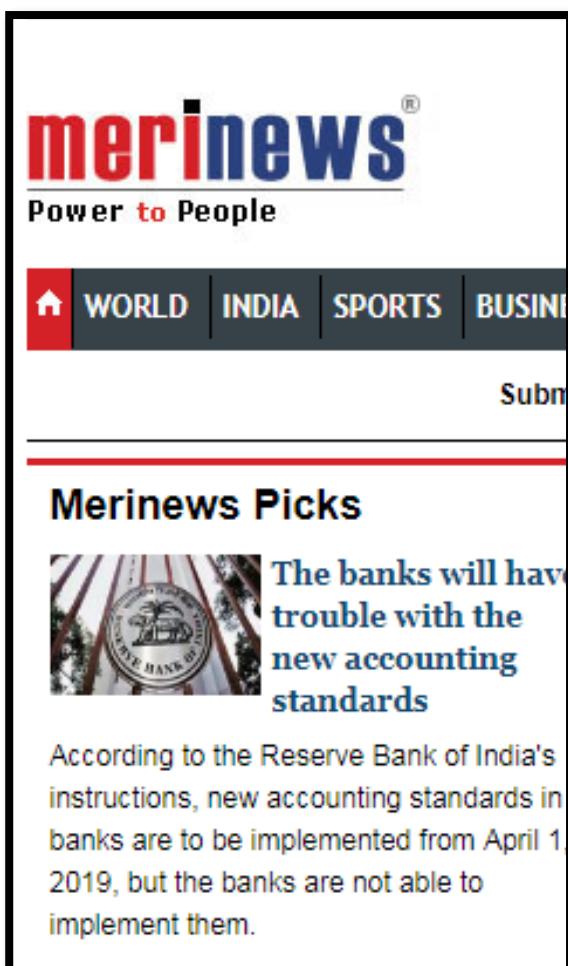


Figure 17 Source: Merinews.com; retrieved on 14 March, 2019.



Figure 18 Source: <https://tinyurl.com/ydbn8njm>; retrieved on 14 March, 2019.

# CGNet Swara

Home Impact

हम राशन कार्ड बनवाने के लिये कई वर्षों से आवेदन कर रहे हैं लेकिन कोई सुनवाई नहीं होती...कृपया मदद करे-

ग्राम-बसनारा, पंचायत-महर्शी, तहसील-ओडगी, ज़िला-सूरजपुर (छत्तीसगढ़) से परमिला बता रही हैं कि उनका राशन कार्ड नहीं बन पा रहा है | राशन कार्ड नहीं होने से उन्हें जीवन यापन करने में दिक्कत होती है | वे 6 साल से कार्ड बनवाने के लिये प्रयास कर रही हैं | अधिकारियों को आवेदन दें रहे हैं लेकिन कोई सुनवाई नहीं हो रही है | इसलिये सीजीनेट के सांथियों से अपील कर रहे हैं कि दिये गये नंबरों पर अधिकारियों से बात कर कार्ड बनवाने में मदद करें : सरपंच@9479281195, सचिव@8225017360, ज़िला CEO@9977407788, ज़नपट

Figure 19 Source: Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/y342mlhc>; retrieved from 14 March, 2019.

Category: Interviews



## Have The Canons Deafened Our Hearts?

TVP Editorial November 20, 2015 Arts, Interviews, News, Society 0 comments

In conversation with Dhruv Sachdeva... The Viewspaper got talking to Dhruv Sachdeva, founder of 'Humour Me', a premium content generator in the Branded Entertainment space. Dhruv has been on quite a journey, he started his acting career with the role of 'Scar' in the musical 'Circle of

Figure 20 Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y3v5jpx>; Retrieved on 14 March, 2019.

### Challenges in Citizen Journalism

There are a few issues facing citizen journalism today. Since it involves the dynamic participation of public or amateur journalists based outside a formal media setup, it is likely that the news-making and news-gathering processes adopted wouldn't comply with the traditional journalistic routines and norms. The content generated by the citizen journalists is 'by the public, for the public' and doesn't follow the journalistic principles of writing, like objectivity; accuracy and fairness. Citizen journalism might be more susceptible to the production and distribution mistakes, false information and fake news. It could also be highly unsystematic, biased and controversial.

This involvement of citizen journalists subsequently could help professional journalists to fill news gaps or see what the public perceives as important. The public due to the accessibility of the digital services could actually benefit as they can generate counter-narrative views to the mainstream news. However in practice, citizen journalism is never perceived emphatically and is often considered to be as competition to journalists' profession and sometimes as unauthorized competition.

The foremost basis behind it is that citizen journalists are not bound to deontological reporting principles. It is noble for the journalists to embrace the citizen journalists; however, it is at best to consider certain guiding principles before framing the report. The news produced by citizen journalists must never be embraced blindly.

Collaborating with the citizens journalists could lead to greater prospective; however, not each newspaper article or news would require the cooperation with the citizen.

Collaboration demands time and resources and ought to be worthwhile. Hence, quality takes the upper hand in this case. Citizen participation ought to take advantage on the quality of the news and not the quantity. Citizen journalism can, of course, co-exist with professional journalism with constructive intention of filling each other's gaps.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

1. “Mass Communication has in several ways become less massive and less centralized.” Do you agree?
2. Differentiate between leaflets and posters.
3. Compare print, electronic and digital media on the following grounds:
  - a. Reach
  - b. Affordability
  - c. Minimum education required
  - d. Minimum resources required
4. Explain the principles of online journalism.
5. Explain the basic principles of writing for web.
6. What are the characteristics of radio medium? Explain the process of writing for radio.
7. Serious news is now news in contemporary journalism. Discuss.
8. List various disadvantages of online journalism.
9. Are anonymous web comments and letters to the editors ethical?
10. Do you think citizen or participatory journalism is blurring the lines of the limitations of professional journalism?
11. What inspires citizen journalists to report a story? Is h/she driven by journalistic values, grievance or just the benefit of being in the right place at the right time?
12. What are the various forms of citizen journalism? Explain with a few examples.

## **FURTHER READING**

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# UNIT 5: ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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1. Role of Media in the Contemporary World
  - a. Historical References and Future Possibilities of Role of Media
  - b. Role of Media in Democracy
  - c. Role of Media in Nation Building
  - d. Media and Social Responsibility
  - e. Media and Indian Democracy
2. Issues and Debates with Media in Contemporary Society
3. Journalism Ethics and Issues
4. Ethical Issues that Plague Journalism
5. Emerging Issues with New Media in 21st Century
6. Review Questions and Exercises
7. Further Reading

## ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Right from the early times, media has remained an integral part of human civilization. From the times of Vedas and Upansihads to the era of emperors and kings like Asoka, Chandra Gupta, further to the medieval age of Indian mass gathering to, now, the modern times of print, electronic and digital media, media has played a vital role in shaping our society. During the reign of East India Company, newspapers like Mahatma Gandhi's Young India and Tilak's Maratha acted as solid platforms of freedom struggle, helping in the expression of support to the freedom fighters, while also placing the demands of united India. Indian media, after the independence, has grown tremendously and, today, comprises thousands of newspapers, radio and satellite channels.

Without the media, people in the society would be isolated from the rest of the world. Reaching out to a large targeted group or audience is the main quintessence of media. It serves as a source of information, knowledge, entertainment, advertisement and shares the responsibility of correlating the different parts of the world. In the media industry, boundaries are infinite! Here are the few important roles media plays in the contemporary world.

- **Informative role:** The flow of information is important for the development of communities and the media facilitates this. Without extensive range of information through media, public's thoughts and opinions would be restricted and their impressions and inferences of the world around them diminutive. The media is probable to be one of the most sprawling and booming industry and is considered to be the "mirror" of the modern society. Information is need of every citizen and it is media's responsibility to feed the people with updates on politics, government, social world, economy, environment, etc. so that they could make informed and rational decisions.
- **Adversarial role:** Media today is playing an outstanding role in creating and shaping of public opinion and strengthening and shaping of our society. It is the sword arm of democracy and acts as watchdog to protect public interest against malpractice and fight against corruption, nepotism and create public awareness. For today's contemporary society, media is considered to be a sole entity that makes life easier, bridges the gap, fills all voids and makes communication at all levels extremely simple, remarkable and substantial. Media also makes sure that the government not only acts in the interest of public and free of fraud, personal benefits and illegality, but also remains transparent, responsible and accountable.

- **Educative role:** Media not just informs the citizens about the happenings in the world, but also helps them in having an in-depth understanding of the events. This is how they are able to sensibly make out the right or the wrong in any given situation. While media educates the masses about the why's and how's of the events, it is left up to the public to make an informed opinion about it.
- **Platform role:** Media provides a platform for the voices of various groups of the society, be it government, leaders, corporate or the common man. Media play a pivotal role in allowing voices from all of the society as well as the government to be heard; however, it has to make sure that it remains unbiased, objective and diversified and provides an opportunity to the public to hear all sides of a story.
- **Publicity role:** Often, media play an important role in publicizing the politicians, leaders, celebrities, intellects, etc. and their duties, mandates, causes or goals. Media presents a wide platform to these people to order to address the masses and attract their attention.

The influence of media on the modern-day society is undeniable as it can make or break the belief of the people, or start a movement for a right cause. However, it is also important to acknowledge the responsibility of the media in society. The mass media is a double-edged tool. On one hand, they form and, on the other, deform. It is considered that the mass media has the power to be positive as well as negative image creator, a source of information as well as a tool of propaganda, a sine qua non of modern society as well as, at times, an institution overstepping its limits and to some extent, misusing its freedom.

### **Historical References and Future Possibilities of Role of Media**

Mass media refers to a section of media primarily designed to reach a large audience. This term was coined in 1920, when nation-wide radio networks, like TV, radio and newspaper, came into existence. Shortly after 1780, when *Bengal Gazette* was launched in India, a score of journals were sprouted, a majority of which were missionary oriented and addressed Indians. Apart from English, there were a range of journals, like *Dig Darshan* and *Samachar Darpan* among some of the noted publications released in Indian languages.

In 1818, the first newspaper, *Samachar Darpan*, was published in a vernacular language in Bengali. However, there is an agreement that Raja Ram Mohan Roy's publication marks the commencement of Indian journalism. *Oodunt Marthand*, which was the first Hindi newspaper, began in 1826. Since then, there has been a tremendous growth in the print publications in various vernacular languages, like Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu, Kannada and Hindi.

On 15 April, 1823, the Press Ordinance Act was passed which made the registration of press compulsory. This act made sure that no print material would be printed or press be established without a necessary license to be obtained from the government. Until mutiny of 1857, the freedom of press was firmly established. Thereafter, the Licensing Act of 1857 was passed, which restricted printing and circulation of printed material. Shortly thereafter, Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 was passed, which is still in force, albeit with amendments made in 1893 and 1940.

In 1948, Press Trust of India took over the flow of news to and from India, in collaboration with Reuters. This agreement allowed the Indian press to gain the complete control over its internal delivery of news. PTI is a non-profit organization, which offers an open membership to all the newspapers of the country. This organization is now independent of Reuters.

Talking about electronic media, which include TV, radio, desktop computer, telephone and game console, the birth of electronic media was marked by radio. Radio began regular broadcasting in 1927, although All India Radio was setup as a public broadcasting service in 1936.

### **Role of Media in Democracy**

Wikipedia<sup>1</sup> defines the term, democracy, as a system of governance where the citizens exercise their power of voting and, as a whole, form a governing body in order to vote directly on each issue. The people in democratic system have the privilege to vote and elect their representatives and, thus, it is quite obvious that democracy and freedom are closely associated. A democratic system can run to its utmost potential successfully only when there is active participation by the masses. The mass participation by the citizens is not possible without them being informed about the actions undertaken and also about various other issues.

Media has a significant role in shaping a healthy democracy. Any liberal democratic system has a need for reliable information resources and, therefore, media is an essential constituent of any democratic society. This is where media plays its role of the fourth estate of democracy. Media has evolved leaps and bounds since 1780 when

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<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy>; accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2019.

the first newspaper was started in India. The conventional print media, i.e., newspaper, was considered to be the leader of mass media for over a considerable period of time. However, with the advent of electronic media, television and radio took the responsibility of reshaping many of the social responses, apart from providing news and entertainment to the general public. And with the coming of internet, the reach of media has become global and, thus, has increased the responsibilities it has to shoulder in order to generate a democratic culture which supersedes the political setup and become engrained in the conscience of the masses.

Media educates people with the political information that voters base their decisions on. It identifies and highlights the various issues in the society and serve as a channel for deliberation. They also function as watchdogs which the general public relies on for uncovering errors and misconducts of people in power. Democracy is, in fact, meaningless without a free, active and neutral media. Media acts as a catalyst working for the growth of development and democracy, thereby, making public participation meaningful. If media works honestly and stays committed to its core functions, democracy is bound to work efficiently and any loopholes present in its functioning could well be plugged up to the satisfaction of the people.

### **Role of Media in Nation Building**

In a democratic setup, media has the right to freedom of speech and expression and by exercising this right, media plays a great role in making the Indian society and culture come to the front on the global forum. Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the US, had once said, "*Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter.*" Also, the first prime minister of India, Jawahar Lal Nehru, had made a powerful statement on the role of media, "*I would rather have a completely free press with all the danger involved in the wrong use of that freedom, than a suppressed or regulated press.*" Media has, indeed, the power to touch almost every aspect of public life.

Communication is the key to progress and development. As the fourth estate, media plays a vital role in nation-building and bringing forth the social and the cultural activities so as to preserve and sustain the very identity of the Indian culture.

A country's growth and development greatly depends on the power of communication. Presently, the country is riding on the wave of new media, which has opened the floodgates for new opportunities and immense potentiality and, also, bridged the gap areas left by the traditional media. The country can benefit from this revolution to achieve the thus far unreachable, the have-nots and write a success story for nation-building. Communication has brought the whole world together and with

the limitations of time and distance blurring, media has become a blessing for humanity at large to be integrated at cultural, intellectual, economic and emotional levels, by sharing and exchanging a global treasure of information resources. Let us have a deeper understanding of the role media plays in nation-building.

**Media as an informer and a watchdog:** As discussed before, media works as a watchdog of the government and is responsible for conveying about all the aspects of governance and the actions undertaken by the administration, thereby, keeping the citizens informed. In a democratic setup, it is the media, which strengthens the democratic norms and values and, also, accelerates the pace of development. Extensive liberty and privileges are provided to the media fraternity by the Constitution of India, as an awakened and free media is invariably essential for smooth execution and functioning of the government. They are also the watchdogs that the citizens rely on for uncovering errors and wrongdoings by those who have the power. It has the responsibility to make and the ability to break by influencing the opinions of the citizens of the country. It also has the capability to swing perceptions and evoke emotions. This is the primary reason why media has gained faith of the public. Through various means like newspapers, television and digital media, it rules the hearts and minds of people.

**Media as instrument of expression:** Along with the political developments, economic developments and the updates in the man-society relationship, media covers various other aspects, which impact the masses. They have the responsibility to disseminate information on economical, religious and cultural aspects and provide information and entertainment to not just people from a specific region but also to people across the globe. They play a critical role in identifying the problems in the society and functioning as a medium for deliberation.

The media – print, electronic or digital – has become an integral part of the lives of the people, who are largely dependent on the media coverage for their diverse needs including information and entertainment. From the issues associated with the general public to their feelings, necessities, sensitiveness, expectations and other emotions concerning their lives are closely associated with the media. Media keeps the people informed and awakened and there is no denying to the fact that it has become one of the major instruments of social change. Media, in large interest of the masses, has the capacity to rise sometimes above or beyond the control and limitation of the government.

**Media as an aid in shaping the democratic society:** The media has provided assistance in shaping the democratic society by providing a space to vent out the concerns pertaining to social issues, like women care, child birth and care, domestic

violence, sexual harassment and several issues which, at one point in time, were reasoned as strictly private subjects. It makes the citizens aware of the various social, political and economic activities happening in the country as well as around the world.

Transparency and accountability are vital for the proper functioning of a democratic system. Media strives to bring to the front the nexus between corruption and democrats intertwined by political relations, which has snatched the serenity and tranquility from most of the countries. The lethal politics played by these democrats – politicians, bureaucrats, criminals – is unleashed and the bare truths and harsh realities are reflected by the truthful media.

**Media as a tool to educate masses and spread awareness:** The press can be the most important mass educative resource and this grants this institution a position of high influence and authority. Educating the ignorant masses on a large scale is, indeed, a tough task. Only press or mass media can do this efficiently and effectively.

Media also plays a pivotal role in spreading social awareness. Through media communications, which include news, dramas, meeting, course of study, live coverage, interactive sessions, both urban and rural, even the uneducated population can be taught about the human rights and, thus, public opinion can be built successfully. Media holds the power to communicate about the various reforms and new schemes introduced by the government and other social organizations to the masses. By using mass media, the general attitude of people towards certain social stigmas and habits can be transformed. By imparting the right knowledge and, at times, the skills, media can help bring about a change in the society.

### **Media and Social Responsibility**

The conduct of the media should always prioritize the public interests. There are a few important points regarding public interest that the media should always focus on, like information diversity, freedom of publication, culture and sentiment, support for the democratic political system, plurality in media ownership, support for public order and security, comprehensive reach, quality as well as quantity of information disseminated to the public, regard to human rights and avoiding any harm to sentiments and feelings of the individuals and the society.

The media is required to be fair, objective, relevant and truthful. Further, along with the freedom of the press, there is a necessity for self-regulation. The media houses should adhere to the professional code of conduct and ethics as set by the governing council. Under any circumstances, media must not supersede these ethics and should always perform in the interest of the masses. It is, therefore, reasonable to consider that media should perform and abide by a certain standards with respect to these

mentioned functions, for the democratic society rests on the assumption that they do. The media has, undoubtedly, evolved and become more active over the years. Right from its inception, media been playing a very important role in shaping human minds and has grown and matured leaps and bounds. That is why people bank on the media and its activities, which are in the country's interest. Also, effective functioning of the Indian democracy cannot be thought without the intervention of media.

### **Media and Indian Democracy**

India is considered to be the largest democratic nation in the world with its political system close in spirit to the model of liberal democracy. Along with the freedom of the press, there is also the freedom of criticism and that of assembly. Media plays a role, which deviates from merely disseminating information and entertainment, and has got the responsibility towards developmental journalism. In a country where there is large-scale poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment and illiteracy, media plays a major role in educating the masses for their empowerment. It has a role to play in formation of public opinion, which could possibly enforce the political parties to address the core issues haunting the country's progression. It can be concluded that media in India has to undertake various vital roles to strengthened democracy.

The media in its role of a watchdog has unearthed various shortcomings of the democratic system. Investigation and reporting in print and television media has helped in exposing large scale corruptions, which have continued to rob the nation. However, at times, media could also conceal facts and project doctored reports to influence the electorate and public opinion. Media houses, in an attempt to exercise their vested interests to serve their own goals, completely forego their values like objectivity and truthfulness in the presentation of news.

The media organizations, be it print, audio-visual, radio or web, have to be accountable to the general public. The media should, thus, be monitored in a way that the professional integrity and ethical standards are not sacrificed for sensational practices. The freedom of press is a blessing for the people of a country; however, this blessing can go terribly wrong when manipulations are set in. The regulatory mechanism across media organizations must be strong enough to stop anomalies whenever they occur and must be vigilant to stem out the rot. The social and the economic conditions of the nation play a role in setting up the responsibilities, which are deeply associated with them.

### **ISSUES AND DEBATES WITH MEDIA IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

One of the basic tasks of the media is to provide honest, authentic, verified and objective facts to the individuals, so that they could form rational opinions. This is

essential, crucial, and indispensable for a democratic nation. Here are a few issues or debates with respect to the media.

### **Media is plagued by sensationalism:**

Sensationalism, typically seen as the editorial bias in mass media, is generally the events or the topics in news stories deliberately over-hyped to increase viewership, readership or the TRP figures. It involves reporting or scripting about insignificant or trivial matters and events , which do not have any constructive influence over the public and prejudiced, and glamorous presentations of not so newsworthy topics in a sensationalist, trivial or tabloid manner.

This characterization of sensationalism can be extended to include reporting serious, grave issues and events in a startling manner in order to fascinate more audiences. Media is frequently held responsible for crafting news out of thin air. Celebrity gossips, breakups and scandals are the best examples of sensationalism. Instead of publishing real issues, which the public should be informed about, media creates hype around the trivial issues in order to create a stir and attract more attention.

### **Tweaking of facts:**

One of the flaws in the working style of the media today is that it often twists facts to make the report look more controversial and interesting. The media holds a great responsibility to ensure that the news they present is accurate and serve the interests of the people. However, unfortunately, more attention is given to the presentation of the news, packaging it in an interesting and jazzy manner.

If ever media conveys false or twisted news, it may harm the reputation of a person or a section of society. It may also do great damage to the mental health of a person, since reputation is a valuable asset for everybody. Irresponsible news reporting results in aggravating the grief of the already anguished. By twisting facts and publishing wrong news, media clearly breaches the right to privacy of those who are being wrongly portrayed. The journalists should be mindful of their content and have an obligation to continue to be ethical. The media must not cross its boundaries to the extent of victimizing and being judgmental. Twisting information is, in a away, breaching the trust the masses lay in media.

### **Paid News:**

Paid news or paid contents are those articles or reports published by the media in favour of various organizations or institutions in exchange of some payment. This is more like an advertisement but without a clear ad tag. Such kind of news is considered to be serious malpractice as it deceives the citizen, not letting them know

that the news is in fact a method of paid marketing. Paid news is usually considered to have been funded by politicians, businessmen, celebrities, eminent personalities or such social figures in order to accomplish ulterior political goals or to improve their image in public.

### **Non-issues as real issues:**

Media, these days, frequently presents not-so important issues as genuine, while sidelining the genuine ones. These factual and grave issues in India might relate to various social or economic conditions, in which a majority of people are living, like poverty, unemployment, lack of housing or medical care, and so on. Instead of addressing or publishing stories about these real issues, the media often tries to divert the attention of public to not-so important issues by giving more prominence to these.

A few of such instances include news pieces like *the wife of a film actor becoming pregnant, whether she will deliver single baby or twins, the controversies during Lakme India Fashion Week* etc. This is not a responsible way of functioning for the national media. They must not turn a Nelson's eye to the harsh economic realities prevalent in the country, while giving attention to glamour and show biz.

Although media addresses genuinely important issues, like farmers' committing suicides, rise in the prices of essential commodities, etc., but such coverage constitutes only 5 to 10 per cent of the total coverage. The bulk of the coverage goes to portraying subjects like lives of the film stars, pop music, fashion parades, cricket, astrology, advertisements and several others which are non-trivial.

### **Tendency to brand:**

A media issue or debate is always concerned with some social, political, technological or economic issues. However, even before the factual conclusions about the issues are identified, the media has the tendency to brand, relate or speculate the same. Within a few minutes of a bomb blast or murder of a high-profile person, various TV news channels start showing news stories around it and speculate the acts to be connected to terrorism or blame certain groups like naxalites, communists, anti-social elements for the same. Thus, media is responsible for branding certain groups of society as bad, wittingly or unwittingly, and, hence, become responsible for communalism within the country.

### **Journalistic Blackmail or Blatant Journalism:**

Blackmail by journalists (Blatant Journalism) is something which has been prevalent in journalism industry since long time and is practiced by errant journalists who

indulge in such activities. Errant journalists or freelance journalists try and capture stories, clips or pictures of eminent personalities, executives etc. by either breaching the conduct of privacy or by trespassing. The journalists thereafter threaten/blackmail to release the evidences to the media. Risking the possibility of negative or damaging stories appearing in media, eminent personalities usually yield to blackmail threats. These captured evidences are, then, used by the journalists to extort huge amount of money.

### **Media Bias:**

Media bias is the prejudiced or perceived bias of the news producers or the journalists in the selection of events and stories in the way they are reported or covered. The term "media bias" refers to an enveloping or widespread bias contravening the standards of journalism. Ethnic or racial bias includes racism or nationalism.

Corporate bias includes reporting of issues in favour of the interests of the owners of the news media and the corporate. Class bias includes favouring one social class and ignoring the other. Political bias includes bias in favour of or against a particular political party, candidate, or policy. Religious bias includes bias in which one religious or non-religious viewpoint is given preference over others. Ideological bias includes bias based on personal philosophy which may include liberalism, conservatism, progressivism and communism.

### **Social Media negative impacts:**

Social media is integral part of everyone's lives. Not always fun and useful, it can get harmful in ways nobody would anticipate. Social media allows spreading of misinformation which may be perceived as facts even with nimble or no evidence. It creates a notion in which a single mistake, such as a lewd image or poorly thought-out remarks, result in irretrievable harm to a person's reputation. It also provides information that increases the risk of identity theft and creates a platform for cyber bullying.

To conclude, in developing countries like India, the media has a great responsibility to fight the orthodox ideas, such as casteism and communalism, and to help the people in their struggles against poverty and other social evils. The media is termed as the "fourth pillar" of Indian democracy. If it has been given such a status, it must also abide by the responsibilities that come with it. Media should have social responsibilities and not involve itself in tweaking news and creating controversies. Instead, it should work to help the large section of the people who are backward and ignorant, and necessarily strive to educate them and imbibe modern ideas in them. This would possibly result in them shedding off their backwardness and become a part of the enlightened India. The media needs to serve and show greater

responsibility in doing empowering work towards making the citizens and the nation progressive.

## JOURNALISM ETHICS AND ISSUES

Journalism is considered to be the watchdog or a pillar of democracy and, thus, the press is undoubtedly an essential element of the public sphere. Ethics in journalism are built on professional conduct, morality and truth. Not adhering to these ethics and principles might lead to the public being misrepresented or mislead and betraying media ethics could jeopardize the career of the journalist. There are certain elements of journalism ethics, which vary among media sources and professional societies or organizations. However, there are a few basic professional standards which are universal across the boards. Let us have a deeper understanding of these.

- Accuracy and truth: Journalism works on facts-based information and accuracy is one of the critical aspects. Journalists must always strive for accuracy. There should be no deceptive handling of facts and all the relevant facts must be ensured that they have been verified, corroborated and truthful and without any distortion, exaggeration or sensationalism.
- Independence: Journalists must bear independent and unbiased voices and must not act, formally or informally, keeping in view any special interests, be it political, corporate or cultural. Journalism must exhibit transparency, independence and no political affiliations, financial arrangements or other personal information which might constitute a conflict of interest.
- Fairness and impartiality: News stories and facts are largely multi-faceted. Journalists tend to present all sides of a story; however, it should be balanced and should have comprehensiveness to the context. Objectivity and impartial reporting builds trust and confidence with the viewers. There should be a clear distinction between opinions and facts. When an opinion is presented as a fact, it misguides the readers and whenever the partiality would become apparent, the professional credibility of the journalist would be undermined.
- Humanity – avoiding obscenity and vulgarity: Journalists must be aware of the consequences and the impact of the words and the images used. They should do no undue harm and should not indulge in hate speeches, publishing obscene images or the ones spreading violence. Publishing or broadcasting such content might be hurtful to the public and, thus, journalists should be conscious of the impact of such content on the lives of others.

- Avoid defamatory writing: Although media has the right to comment and criticize, it must refrain from defamatory writing against any individual or organization. It should not distort or misrepresent a fact. In fact, the published elements must be an honest expression of opinion. No dishonest means should be used to obtain information.
- Avoid plagiarism: Using or passing off the works or ideas of others as one's own, without crediting the source, is a wrongdoing and against the ethics of journalism. This practice of plagiarism of lifting news from other sources and subsequently publishing as one's own is in contradiction to the high standards of journalism.
- Avoid intrusion into the privacy of an individual: Journalism shall not encroach or invade the privacy of an individual. The things concerning a person's home, family, religion, health, sexuality, personal life or private affairs should be protected by the concept of privacy, except the matters where any of these impinges upon the public or public interests.
- Accountability: When any factual error or mistake is detected or confirmed in the published news, they should promptly publish the correction with due prominence and with apology or expression of regrets in the cases of serious lapse. When errors are committed, they must be corrected with respect and the expressions of regret must be sincere not cynical. A journalist is held accountable for all types of credits for his works, be it bad or good.

## **ETHICAL ISSUES THAT PLAGUE JOURNALISM**

Majority of professionals in journalism uphold the core values and the cardinal principles of journalism; however, there are exceptions to tarnish the popular perception and to undermine public trust.

- Paid news: Paid news or paid content are those articles or reports intended to be published in some channel of the media in exchange of some payment and generally in favour of some organisation or institution. This kind of news is a serious malpractice as it deceives the citizen by not letting them know the fact. Paid news is normally considered to have been funded by politicians, businessmen, celebrities, eminent personalities and such social figures to accomplish certain political goals or improve their image in public.
- Opaque private treaties: Media groups and organisations enter into agreements called as private treaties with organisations for a stake in the company and in return providing media coverage through biased and imbalanced reporting.

This may lead to inaccurate perceptions which are the beneficiaries of such private treaties.

- Blatant blackmail: Errant journalist try and capture stories or clips or pictures of eminent personalities, executives etc. by either breaching the conduct of privacy or by trespassing. The journalists threaten or blackmail to release the evidences to the media. Risking the possibility of negative or damaging stories appearing in media, usually eminent personalities yield to blackmail threats. These captured evidences are then used by the journalists to extort huge amount of money.
- Flawed measurements of audience reach and readership: Audience measurement is used to gauge the readership or viewership on how many people are in the audience. These ratings sometimes fail to tell the real picture of as they are paid off to tamper with the system and they do so in ingenious ways. This gives a flawed measurement and public is misled.

## **EMERGING ISSUES WITH NEW MEDIA IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Digital media have brought up unbelievable potential capabilities to deliver information in new and innovative ways. Arrival of internet communication and penetration of mobile devices has led to a consequent shift towards a new media, where social networks, blogs, forums, digital marketing etc. are influencing consumers' media usage behaviour. One of the biggest additions in media platforms is through the advent of social media, as it has the power to generate insights, build awareness to stimulate demand and more importantly deliver offerings tailored to a group or even to a specific person.

**Proliferation of Digital media and Citizen Journalism:** Though the biggest benefit is that new media removes boundaries, eliminates silos, and can associate interactions from any part of this world, it has also brought hitherto unheard of moral issues and variety of challenges. With the way that the web has progressed toward becoming an information haven for individuals to distribute whatever they consider fit for public utilization. Thus, it is becoming harder to stay on with the journalistic practices to put up with the ethical commitment to the general public. Perhaps the thorniest issue is anyone with a tad of computer knowledge can be a content creator, where one can disseminate the information from his or her own personal perspective with the world and may end up selling it better. Though citizen journalism and social media haven't replaced professional journalism, but it has put up a lot of pressure traditional media houses.

**Sensationalism over factual content, less emphasis to real issues:** In 21st century the media houses are under continuous pressure to play up and dwell on stories that are sensational. There is a major shift in the type of content that gets reported like reporters often over-dramatize a certain event and even deviate from actual source and even end up making factual errors. This way the genuine issues that distress our lives might be deprived of the actual attention. Though there are several reasons for emergence of such practices, one of the primary reason is to sustain and stay relevant, the media houses are expected to bring out the information faster, make them exciting and to make exclusive coverage on a certain type of stories, even though they are less important. The news coming out of social media are directly consumed and even read out in the television to carry further discussions on them.

**Overuse, misuse of Slacktivism:** Another potential issue in the new media is that it is slowly killing real activism and replacing it with slacktivism or hashtag activism. In the process of chasing social rewards and political gains, hashtag activism campaigns gets plotted and circulated. The real danger of hashtag activism is that users misinterpret and then misrepresent the activities and associated events and this tendency is often exploited for political and radical gains. While this can happen with any development, it's particularly normal with developments that distort their issues to a hashtag. In the name of social change, it can be used as a tool for social gain. In the similar lines, malicious campaigns and oversharing of the content can have severe negative impact on a product or a brand. Even though, the new media helps customers to share their experiences of the overall customer service, misrepresentations, it can also be used by the competitors and extortionists to amplify harmful underpinnings of a certain product and raise awareness of convenient untruths.

**Spreading fake news and mongering:** Though the new media in 21st century can be better utilized to build awareness and improve the situation especially if there is a disease outbreak or a political situation, it's often seen that the fear mongering and hate mongering that overstates the level of danger or a ground reality. Thus, the public confidence in the emerging media has been going low and it's slipping further due to the level of inaccuracies and the content sharing that goes around in the social media. The vast amount conflicting evidence and opinions makes it difficult for the modern media consumer to discern what is truly accurate. Sharing information within online social circles can also create a vicious cycle of self-reinforcement. Social scientists have observed that more rumours someone encounters, the more likely he or she is to share them with others; and thus more opportunities that others have to encounter the rumours.

**Addiction and other psychological issues:** The emerging media has also changed the trend of addictions in twenty to thirty year olds. Online networking surely looks as though it has supplanted liquor as a preferred method for social cooperation with others. Spending time online is coming out as more appropriate option than spending time in person with friends. Cyber Bullying, sexting, selfies and self-obsession, challenges, social networking sites and many more has become a habit that is impacting mental health of the age band. It is found that emerging media is giving raise to higher narcissism among current generations especially in students compared with previous generations. Instead of seeking help with a teacher or mentor, students feel it's more desirable to check them online. Giving no preference to direct face-to-face interaction is perhaps the less perceived danger, can be linked to depression and loneliness. In spite of the fact that we are beginning to wind up mindful of the issue, there is no characterization of online life dependence as a psychological issue.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES**

1. How does media influence the general public to be for or against something? Explain using a recent example which has been in trend.
2. List down the differences between older media and new media with respects to the journalism ethics.
3. How does mass media affect our perception of reality?
4. Discuss in detail how mass media serves as an enforcer of social norms.
5. Elaborate the various roles played by media in shaping a country's democracy.
6. How do media and marketers manipulate the public? Do you think this is ethically right?
7. Do you agree that 'sting operation' aptly follows the approved notions of journalistic ethics? Discuss critically. Also, explain the code of ethics of journalism.
8. What are the various codes of ethics in journalism? Do you agree that yellow journalism supersedes all such ethics? Explain using examples.
9. What are the various issues which plague journalism today?
10. What do you think are the three most important issues with media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

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