

COMMUNICATOR

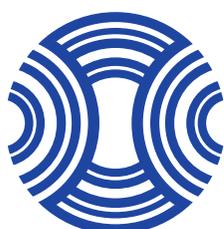
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From the Chief Editor's Desk



Prof. Sanjay Dwivedi
Director General,
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Mass Communication

The Indian media is undergoing a sea change due to the rapid technological developments taking place at the global level. Although the knock of this change in the newsrooms has been increasing continuously for the last two decades, but this change is still missing in media education.

We are witnessing the era of convergence where all types of media have been amalgamated whereas most of the media education institutions are still teaching courses in separate parts like print, television, digital, advertising and public relations etc. Due to this fact, the media is unable to find such trained professionals in its entirety. This is the biggest challenge before media education in India and all media education institutions need to think on this seriously.

When we talk about media education, it also has to be considered in totality. We cannot just confine ourselves to the development of professional journalists as per the changing needs of the newsroom. Today the scope of media has become very wide. Advertising and public relations have already widened to a different level altogether. Professionals trained in mass communications are required in the government sector also. This special issue of *Communicator* is an attempt to make us conscious and initiate a discourse about this issue.

Today, the social media team is playing a pivotal role in media organizations, private organizations, political parties, the corporate sector and even the individuals are utilizing it according to their own needs. Due to this fact, the demand for trained people for handling social media activities is coming from all corners. In the era of 'Fake News' and 'Hate News', media organizations are now using instruments such as fact-checking, artificial intelligence etc., this, in turn, is raising the demand for professionals trained in data journalism. Apart from this, media education institutions also need expert media teachers who are trained to deal with all these challenges of the changing era. To improve the quality of research in media education, we need to have dedicated scholars and researchers. Therefore, all aspects related to media education should be elaborated in a holistic manner.

Many milestones have been established in this journey of 100 years of media education which bears the testimony of 10 decades of development and growth of media from folk to print and online media. In this background, many research papers were received from media experts, communicators, and academicians for this special issue.



This issue consists of a good variety of research papers casing various subjects related to the history, development, advancement and recent trends of media education in India. The collection of research studies included in this issue ranges from the history of media education in India and the establishment of initial institutions solely dedicated to the discipline of journalism and media studies. Various studies included in this issue traces the potential of educational and skill-based courses dedicated to the discipline of media studies in various national and regional colleges, institutions and universities.

Studies outlining the efforts of some great contributors and their struggle in the development of media education in India is also included. It is a collection of varied research papers catering to the demand for knowledge expansion in the realm of development and establishment of mass communication and journalism institutions across the nation. All the papers included in this issue are packed with vast knowledge about the journey of 100 years of media education in India.

At last, I thank our editorial team, the entire editorial board and reviewers for all their support. Comments, suggestions and special issue proposals are always welcome.

Prof. Sanjay Dwivedi





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100 Years of Media Education in India

SANJAY DWIVEDI¹

ABSTRACT

There was a time when people believed that journalists are born and journalism cannot be taught. However, time has now changed. Journalism and mass communication have become important fields of education. One of the strongest arguments that is presented in favour of journalism training is that if doctors require M.B.B.S. and lawyers require law degrees, why should an important profession like journalism be open to all? The truth is that the important profession of journalism itself raises the question of how could every person be fit to be a journalist? Today, journalism is turning into a job, a business but it is a specialized profession. This specialization links it to many responsibilities. Despite being a business, journalism still remains the fourth pillar of democracy. It is not only important that this pillar remains strong but one of the duties of this particular pillar is to make sure that the remaining three pillars of democracy perform their duties properly. The paper discusses the 100-year history of media education as well as its present challenges and changes.

Keywords: Media education, Journalism training, National Education Policy, Media challenges

Introduction

People may remember the year 2020 for the coronavirus pandemic, but to me as a media educator, it is very important because this year marks the completion of 100 years of media education in India. In 1920, under the Theosophical Society, Dr. Annie Besant had debuted the first course in journalism at the Madras National University. Almost a decade after, journalism was introduced as a certificate course at the Aligarh Muslim University. In this order, Punjab University, which was then situated in Lahore, was the first university that established a journalism department. Prof. P.P. Singh, who is often called the founder of journalism studies in India, had established this department in the year 1941. If we talk about independent India, it was Madras University that had first established a journalism and mass communication department in 1947.

After this, Calcutta University, Mysore's, Maharaja College, Osmania University, and Nagpur University went on to introduce many courses related to media studies. On 17th August 1965, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry established the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, which is today the leading institute in media studies in all of Asia (Dutta, 2020). Today, Bhopal's Makhnral Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Raipur's Kushabhau Thakre Journalism and Mass Communication University, and Jaipur's Haridev Joshi University of Journalism and Mass Communication are all fully involved in media studies and training.

The history of media studies has reached the 100-year benchmark in India and yet it is still not free of the confusion of whether the discipline is technical or ideological. While this conflict between the technical and the ideological is responsible for the negligence of media studies, government negligence and absence of active cooperation from media institutions is also a compelling factor behind the hazy history of media studies (Singh, 2011).

Journalism training: An important necessity

Whenever we talk about media studies in India, Prof. K. E. Eapen's name is always remembered. Prof. Eapen advocated for practical training in journalism in India. Prof. Eapen believed that media educationists, apart from having formal media education, must also possess direct experience in working in the media. Only then would they be able to teach budding professionals effectively. Today, most of the country's media and mass communication institutes prefer hiring media educators who have had experience working in the field of journalism along with academic training, so that they can create an academic environment and curriculum that students may be able to use in their actual professions in the future.

One of the strong arguments that is presented in favour of journalism training is that if doctors at least require M.B.B.S. and lawyers require law degree, then why should an important profession like journalism be open to all? The truth is that the important profession of journalism itself raises the question of how could every person be fit to be a journalist?

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Today, journalism is turning into a job, a business but it is a specialized profession. This specialization links it to many responsibilities. Despite being a business, journalism still remains the fourth pillar of democracy. It is not only important that this pillar remains strong but one of the duties of this particular pillar is to make sure that the remaining three pillars of democracy perform their duties properly. It means that a journalist must be capable of this. And this capability must be earned. Any person may be able to earn this particular capability but the question is about the usage of this capability. Training in journalism achieves this to a large extent (Sachdev, 2011).

In India media studies mostly operates in six levels. Government universities or colleges, second, university affiliated institutes, third autonomous institutes under the Government of India, fourth, private institutes, fifth deemed universities and sixth private institutes operated by a private news channel or newspaper (Nanda, 2011).

Lack of Indian media books

In this entire process, our country faces a huge problem, which is a lack of quality books. Our country's students are dependent on foreign media books. However, if pay attention, we can notice the difference that exist between American and Indian media houses and their working structures. Therefore, media teachers have the duty of writing books related to the particular Indian context. These books will help students prepare themselves for the Indian media. But for this, it is equally also important to have practical knowledge. Those who have never reported from the ground and if they write the book, then quality books on reporting cannot be expected. Although it is a challenge to create a curriculum and books in all Indian languages, adapted to Indian contexts, but arriving at a solution is possible if we continue to strive for it. According to a report, there are more than 1500 media educational institutes in India. Even if one institute create only two books a year, almost 3000 books would be ready by the end of one year. But it is often the case that people oppose the idea of India centered curriculum. It is repeated that knowledge cannot be imparted in Indian languages, it is possible only in English while people are studying Sanskrit in Germany. Then why media or other education cannot be imparted in Indian languages (Vijay, 2020).

Media education and National Education Policy

It is important to talk about the National Education Policy in this context. This policy is a revolutionary step in the Indian educational system. If we implement

this educational policy in the right way, it will take us towards quality education. This education policy will create a new nation with the help of knowledge and skills. But for this, we must alter education in mass communication. We will have to create new curricula for journalism, which are relevant in today's time. Also, we must create a vision as to where we want to take media education.

It is necessary to have a media education council to augment the quality of media education. This will not only help improve journalism and mass communication curricula but also help train journalists according to the media industry needs. Today, there is a competition going on in the field of media education, therefore media teachers must decide whether their aim is to be a part of a competition or to improve the academic environment in journalism. Journalism has changed a lot and so it is also important to change journalism training. Today, people expect real news from journalists like they expect right treatment from doctors. It is time, we must introduce courses in media studies that create a synthesis between content and technology. We must decide what is the aim of journalism? Is our journalism for the market, corporates, government or society? If we want a real democracy, we must reflect deeply on the aims of journalism. The point of media education is not just training students but also preparing them according to industry needs. Therefore, media teachers will have to focus on this too (Joshi & Dixit, 2020).

The role of new media in media education

New media is the new normal. We all know that millions of jobs have been lost to artificial intelligence. This is why we must focus on different aspects of media education and create professionals according to the needs of the market. The New Education Policy emphasizes the use of regional languages. The discipline of mass communication education must also emphasize on the same. Media institutes have a great necessity to create curricula in regional languages. Only the language with which we can earn a living remains alive and English is being propagated in India as a language for making a living under a well thought out conspiracy. It is happening at a time when journalism is moving away from English speaking metropolises to Hindi and other regional languages speaking smaller towns and villages. Today, even English channels conduct debates in Hindi. Therefore, it is necessary for media educators to create courses not just in Hindi and English but also in regional languages. Today, media is being taught as a subject under the CBSE curriculum. Is it possible

for us to replicate this in state curricula, so that media education can be given a new direction?

Often the question is raised as to how useful media education turns out to be on the field. I believe that a journalist who has been trained in journalism practices will carry out his/her work more skillfully than others. It is also true that India still focuses on bookish knowledge instead of practical experience, but this scene is changing slowly. Today, journalism students learn everything from newspaper publication to producing news bulletins to shooting documentary films. This is how they get ready for the field but, of course, this does not mean that knowledge from books is not important.

I would like to mention two articles and one book related to media production, which must be read by all media educators and students alike. The first is an article by T.S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent” and the second is an article by Adrienne Rich, “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision”. Students and teachers must especially study Harold Bloom’s book “The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry.” These will not only augment your creative abilities but also introduce you to new dimensions of media.

There was a time when journalism meant print media. In an 80’s American film, *Ghostbusters*, the secretary asks the scientist, “what do you like to read?”. The scientist answers, “Print is dead.” The character’s dialogue was deemed rather funny at the time but in the current scenario, where many questions are being raised about the future of print media, this question seems rather fitting for today’s time. We are receiving information from all developing countries that print media is in danger. It is being said that newspapers will end soon. In 2008, the American writer Jeff Gomez had popularized this notion with his book “Print is Dead.” Anthony Cheetham had written in his review of the book, “This book serves as a wakeup call to those who are in print media but they don’t know how the internet is creating a digital world.” Another writer Ross Dawson ended up creating a chart mapping the timeline of the extinction of newspapers. One of the principal predictions of this chart was that print editions of all newspapers of the world will end by the year 2040.

In such a situation, media education institutes should adapt their curricula in such a way that they may be able to train students in new media. Today, technology is an important part of any curriculum. There are two forms of media. One is traditional media like newspapers and magazines, and the second is digital media. If we talk in the current

context, one of the good things is that these two forms walk hand in hand. Today, traditional media is converting itself into digital media. This change is actually related to changing a company’s operations to internet style operation. But if we talk about this digital transformation, the most challenging part is the cultural transformation. It is very important to make those who are involved in traditional media aware of the importance of the digital. It is challenging, indeed, but most media houses in the country are doing this. If the country’s leading media institutions are already doing this, why shouldn’t media education institutes prepare their students for the digital transformation in advance? As a journalist and media educationist, I believe that if something is facilitating this digital transformation, it is the 4 Cs. The 4 Cs are as follows: Content, Communication, Commerce, and Context. When these 4 Cs come together, then a traditional media house turns into a digital media house. And it is our responsibility to make students aware of this.

Regional media: Changing landscape

Today, the importance of regional language market is increasing in the country. KPMG (2019) report titled “India’s Digital Future: Mass of Niches” includes it as an important subject. According to this report, English language audience has almost fully moved towards digital media. It is being believed that the users number in regional language market will increase to almost 500 million by the year 2030 and people will use the internet in their regional languages. I would like to underline a few endeavours undertaken by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) in this direction. Apart from Hindi and English, IIMC also conducts its courses in Marathi, Urdu, Malayalam, and Odia. We are striving towards creating journalists for the regional language market.

There is another aspect to the digital media. Today, journalism is not being practiced only by journalists working in various institutions. Today if you have Rs 10 in your pocket, you know how to express yourself and you have some cyber cafe around then even without laptop, computer, or a smartphone, you can practice journalism. And if you have made your point well, then it can reach millions of people. Anne Cooper, Professor of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, had written in her 2008 article that the boundaries of journalism have expanded beyond journalists. Considering social media and internet discourse as a part of journalism, she had written, “The question is not about who is a journalist, but the question is who is doing journalism?” She was of the

belief that anyone who has internet could practice journalism (Cooper, 2008). It becomes important to mention British judge Lord Denning in the context of freedom of media. Lord Denning had said, "Freedom of press does not mean that the press has the freedom to destroy someone's reputation, break someone's trust, or contaminate the delivery of justice" (Dixit, 2007).

Conclusion

It is important for us to focus on mass communication education to inspire our media through its roots, traditions, and emotions. If the youth that chooses media can be imparted such ideas through the very beginning which trains them not only in business but also teach them high principles, then we may be able to give more space to human values in the media. Today, the way media has become tech-savvy and how media professionals are being expected to prove themselves, it has become for media institutions to meet those expected standards. Mass communication studies are not just limited to journalism but has reached heights even in corporate and business communication. In advertisement sector, specialists of many types are in demand. Trained people are needed in all sectors of media including print, electronic, internet, entertainment, and radio. This expansion of media has also expanded the challenges for media professionals. An important duty of media institutes is to prepare themselves for these challenges. It is paramount for every media educationist to ensure that their students develop as fine journalists in the era of

social media and discharge their duties without falling prey to fake news and propaganda. Apart from this, it is also important to focus on media education as a job-oriented sector because knowledge is useful only when we can apply it in life. Let us come together to create a new dimension of media education and help to create a better environment for mass communication education.

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Discussion on Media Education must be in Totality, not in Fragments

UMESH UPADHYAY¹

ABSTRACT

The first school of journalism in India was the nation's struggle for independence. All ethical values as well as the craft of journalism in Hindi and other Indian languages came along with the Indian freedom struggle. Right from Bal Gangadhar Tilak to Mahatma Gandhi, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi to Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Shyamji Krishna Verma to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and other freedom fighters – all of them used journalism as a medium to kindle patriotic spirit among fellow Indians. Our ethical values and benchmarks of journalism have been derived from the freedom struggle only. Looking at the working traditions of the editors like Pandit Yugal Kishor Shukla and Bhartendu Harishchandra it can be grasped that it comes from the same rich legacy of our freedom struggle. However, we are living in a different milieu now. Many changes have occurred in journalism during the last two decades and more changes are visible across the horizon. During these years, proper attention was not given to journalistic or media education. Therefore, there is not even a single world-class media institution in India that is recognized globally or attract international students and scholars. The education in present media institutes is not at par with the rich traditions of our freedom struggle. During those days, the knowledge and training of journalism used to be gained during active journalism, resulting in development of the institutions of journalism. Hence now, it is imperative that India must raise standards of world-class journalistic education which are, unfortunately, lacking here. Since technique now plays an important part in modern journalism; therefore, journalistic education has to accommodate technological developments. In view of the above, the time has come to introduce media education courses in IIT-like apex technological institutions.

Keywords: Media education, Freedom struggle, IITs, Journalistic ethics, Media institutions

Introduction

India has always been an authentic 'storyteller'. Our *Vedas*, *Puranas*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and Buddhist *Jataka* tales bear testimony to this fact. Journalism is also a genre in 'storytelling'. Indians are basically 'storytellers' and this explains the plenty of stories in our stock. Our journalistic traditions are quite ancient and we have enriched the world with our stories. If we just talk about the last century only, we can say that the first school of our journalism was our freedom struggle. Ethical values as well as the craft of our journalism was brought along with Indian freedom struggle. Right from Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi to Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi – all of them used journalism as a medium to kindle patriotic spirit among fellow Indians. The values of journalism, its benchmarks, how journalism should be and how to write etc. have been derived from the freedom struggle only. The tradition of the editors like Pandit Yugal Kishor Shukla and Bhartendu Harishchandra is also ingrained in the rich heritage of our freedom struggle. Our post-independence journalism has also set high standards of journalism.

We can take pride in the fact that Indian journalism is among the leading ones in the world. When democratic values were non-existent in many countries and their democracies were nascent, Indian journalism played an important role in establishing democratic values. In many prosperous countries which claim to have deeper democratic traditions, universal suffrage came only in the 1960s. But Indian journalism makes that happen immediately after independence. Therefore, when Jack Dorsey, CEO of Tweeter says that he is worried about the democratic values in India and he wants Tweeter to establish such values, one can only laugh at such claims. It is laughable because democratic values, traditions and processes are inherent in the Indian psyche and journalism has continuously strengthened such values. Therefore, when some profit-making foreign company claims that it aims at ensuring democracy in India, it is only a half-truth. It is actually Indian journalists who have ensured freedom of expression, right to live and other rights with their indomitable courage, independent writing, sacrifice, hard work and dedication.

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Indian journalism does not require somebody's endorsement. Its path is clear. Indian democracy faced many crises during last hundred years, faced crises before and after independence, it faced emergency; but Indian journalism emerged more robust, more lively and richer after passing through crises. It proves that values established during freedom struggle were quite solid. This is the reason that Indian journalism has done so well in establishing and strengthening democratic traditions. Just think of the countries which became independent along with India, how democracy is faring in these countries, how many countries hold independent elections, how many have free press, while how many of them are having freedom of expression, life and religion? Just think of Pakistan and many African and other countries. Democratic processes have not been strengthened in these countries. I am reiterating about democracy because we consider democracy as the fourth pillar of democracy. Therefore, the contribution of Indian journalism and journalists is incomparable. It is stronger than so-called developed countries. This journalistic tradition derives its strength from our heritage and rich cultural values.

Time to set benchmarks of journalistic education

Many changes have occurred in the journalism during the last two decades and more changes are visible across the horizon. During these years, proper attention was not given to journalistic or media education. Therefore, there is not even a single world-class media institution in India that may attract international students and scholars. The education in present media institutes is not at par with the rich traditions of our freedom struggle. During our freedom struggle, media education was imparted during the actual practice of journalism. Journalistic institutions also developed in a similar manner. Now, it is imperative that India should establish internationally recognized high benchmarks of journalistic education. This is a big shortcoming in our country. The front-ranking Indian journalists today have not taken formal journalistic education. They could learn journalism while working in newsrooms as they had the heritage of 'storytelling'. Some of our topmost journalists had studied in prime foreign institutions, like Oxford, Columbia, Singapore's National School of Journalism, Cambridge etc. This is the time to think over the future scenario of journalism and our preparedness to cope with such a scenario. The biggest change in journalism has been brought about by the intervention of technology. This has totally changed the tone and tenor of journalism.

Now, a person having a mobile phone can be called a journalist because he/she can disseminate information. Till now, we used to study journalism in fragments. Syllabi of our Journalism Courses still have separate chapters on Radio, TV, Print, Advertising and Mass Communication. These divisions are not natural. Technology has bridged or is in the process of bridging such segments. Now, it is obsolete to talk in terms of Radio, TV or print journalism. How? If these days, a reporter goes in the 'field', reports the event with a video, synchronised with audio, and the same report is used in the newspaper. Therefore, these divisions have become a thing of the past. The fact is that media education institutions in India are running ten years behind ground realities.

Journalists living in fragmented ghettos won't survive

Where is the way ahead? As already mentioned, this is the time for technological intervention to 'converge' all media. Journalists living in fragmented ghettos won't survive now. Till now, students of journalism were taught different jobs to different people, such as handling the Camera, Script Writing, Voice over, Anchoring, Video Editing etc. Now, technological advancements have broken all these barriers. With a single mobile phone, all these functions can be performed. With the help of 'Edit software' in my mobile phone, I can make a video, write a script about it, have photographs by taking screenshots from the same video, clean the photo with the help of another app, and upload the news in the desired website. All these functions have been converged now. Would it not be useless to teach things in fragments? This is a pertinent question. Now, journalistic education and curricula have to be seen in such 'convergence'. This is not a thing of the future. This has 'already happened'. Technique is rushing ahead and our journalism courses are way behind, so as the teachers. Therefore, serious intervention in journalistic education is required. It would be better to do it willingly, otherwise, we will be compelled to do it. Most important thing is to understand technology and data journalism. Knowledge of artificial and machine intelligence is also essential. If we won't understand these techniques, journalism would be impossible. It would be impossible to provide leadership in journalism.

Media education courses should be introduced in IIT-like technological institutions

How will it impact our journalistic teaching and our journalism itself? At present, journalism

departments in our universities and other educational institutions appear just like extensions of our language departments. Hindi journalism used to be added to our Hindi literature courses. English literature departments were extended to include English Journalism also, as most of the students belonged to either Literature or Social Sciences streams. This is a fact now. However, we will realise in coming days that those who do not understand intricacies of data, machine and artificial intelligence, won't be able to pursue journalism as a career. To pursue journalism in coming days, one has to understand how social media institutions run and promote content through 'algorithms.' Hence, it is necessary to understand the nature and functioning of 'algorithms.' Those, who are unable to understand these intricacies would not be able to pursue proper journalism. The departments of journalism, presently functioning as extensions of Literature and Social Sciences departments, won't survive. You will see soon that technological training institutes of today will start media courses. We won't be surprised to see that IITs shall be running media courses. I wish it comes earlier the better as India requires such changes to move ahead in the area of artificial and machine intelligence and data journalism.

Mathematics should be a compulsory subject at secondary and under-graduate level

I am giving you another example. Most of the prominent international media institutions have made Mathematics at school level as one of the compulsory subjects for admission in their courses. At many places, Mathematics or Statistics at 12th standard level has been made compulsory. We have not made a similar provision in India, but we will have to do so. If you do not know Statistics, you will lag behind in Technique-supported journalism. The plum jobs in today's journalistic organizations are repetitive in nature. You listen in English and translate it in Hindi or other languages. This takes much time in media institutions. Transcription also takes much time in preparing reports. Now, machines are doing many of such chores. Machines are doing transcriptions, as well as translations. If the machine translation is 60 per cent true to the original, in coming times it will be 100 per cent with the help of artificial intelligence. You won't need journalists to do these jobs. You will require such a journalist who can guide the machines to use right words and make right sentences. We will require such persons who would be able to teach machines to do the right translation and transcription. We will need journalists well-versed in techniques. Much of video editing will also be done by machines.

Even now, machines are doing it. Much of the editing will be done by machines, using algorithms. You get translation on Facebook. Earlier, it used to be clumsy but now it has improved. The same is the case with Google Translation.

Bridging the technique and the 'soft skills'

When I started journalism in the Press Trust of India (PTI), there used to be Teleprinter Operators (TPs). We used to write news items and they typed those stories. Then these news stories went on air. Now, the job of TPs has been taken over by machine. You keep on dictating and the machine will translate and type it. I talk in English and the machine translates it into Hindi language, and *vice versa* also happens. Earlier, I used to write and type myself. Initially, it used to be 70 to 75 per cent correct. Now, the accuracy is about 95 per cent. When the machine will fully understand the modulations of my voice, it will do a hundred per cent accurate typing. It means the erstwhile manual chores of typing and preliminary editing ('subbing') will now be done by machines. Our media institutions will have to bring out new-generation journalists with such skills. Therefore, a bridge has to be made between techniques and 'soft skills.'

I am not saying that the importance of imagination and original writing will be over. Original chores will remain original. However, repetitive chores will be done more effectively by machines. It means that our media institutions will have to be well-versed with technology. They will have to do technological innovations. They will have to re-work their curricula immediately. Only with such innovations, we will have world-class institutions.

New courses for new requirements

We are among the best technologically evolved countries. Our medical education is excellent and our doctors are picked up everywhere. Similarly, alumni of our scientific and management institutions are in high demand all over the world. You look at NASA, Microsoft or Google. You will witness the same scenario. However, the picture is not that rosy in journalism. We have to improve the situation. Serious bureaucrats and self-styled champions of the trade.

As India is marching ahead in other areas, the journalism in India should also follow suit and should emerge as a hub of journalistic education and academics. The world, especially in this age of social media, looking towards India with earnest expectations to provide leadership. More so, the people of Asia and Africa are looking towards India as they are not happy with the 'narratives' and the content being imposed

upon them by the western journalistic and social media institutions. Those values cannot be imposed upon all.

Our new curricula must include our heritage, our traditions of democratic values and the skills of ‘storytelling’ inherent in our DNA. We have to

add technology with these values and to open new centres of journalistic education with innovative courses. This is our biggest challenge, as well as the brightest opportunity. Right now, our journalistic institutions have the best opportunity to venture in this direction.



Journalism and Mass Communication Education in India: 100 Years and Still Groping to Strike a Balance Among Stakeholders

SANJAY BHARTHUR¹

ABSTRACT

In academic circles, celebration of 100 years of journalism education in India is both a landmark and an occasion to recall, recollect and critique. Senior professors with whom we worked also reflected in an era where the frequency and opportunities for real and virtual events were less. Nevertheless, they wrote about Journalism and Mass Communication Education (JMCE) through the silver and golden jubilee of JMCE. Many of the departments started in the 1970s have started commemorating their golden jubilee by way of lectures and paying tributes to the founding professors who braved the perception battle and started departments with their background and experience. Their endurance sustained the departments with very little or no resources that now have certain confidence and recognition. Changes in technology and movement towards compact facilities in terms of space and access to embedded content development devices have allowed for creative inputs in their pedagogy and hands-on training. The changes in the demographic profile and dividend supported by shifts in our communication ecosystem challenge perceptions and practices of legacy media. The scope and nature of media content traverse a thin but significant line of verified vs user-generated content. The centenary of JMCE is not only about the struggles but how and where we can look forward. While undoubtedly touching upon some aspects of history, this paper also addresses the constant tussle and resolution of such conflicts in how JMCE institutions have shaped themselves.

Key words: Annie Besant, IIMC, UGC, Curriculum, Media industry

Introduction

Among its numerous recommendations and observations, the first Press Commission very briefly refers to education and training for journalism. The total number of journalists, according to the report, was around 3000 at that time. Commenting on the low salary structure for journalists at that time, it points out that the political emancipation of the country being the goal of Journalism, the salary did not weigh more. General education was what it recognized as a requirement for a journalist. It also observed no well-defined recruitment pattern, and appointments were made on considerations other than merit. It examined the university system, and it advocated that the courses should be of Postgraduate level, and it emphasized the need to have subjects in political science, sociology etc., in addition to specifics of journalism (GOI, 1954).

JMCE post-Annie Besant

The Press Commission report was published when the first journalism department (post-Annie Besant) was established in Punjab in 1941 (notwithstanding, the brief attempt in Aligarh in 1938), Madras in 1947, Mysore in 1951 and Hislop College in 1954. Prof. P.

P. Singh, who launched the Punjab programme and Nadig Krishnamurthy, who consolidated the UG programme and Roland Wolseley, who launched the Hislop programme, were exposed to formal journalism training in the US-based universities. Many programmes that followed had similarities regarding the structure and nature of education. Few leaders such as Nadig, Eapen, Bashiruddin, A. K. Banerjee, Gokhale were instrumental in helping several state universities to launch JMCE. Their long tenure also helped several of their students to enter the teaching profession.

In a recent publication, commemorating 70 years of India's Independence, 17 academicians from different institutions have provided anecdotal experiences of the formation and journey of their departments that, in many cases, had the stamp of a few senior professors. The publication suggests that it is "a collection of reminiscences, arranged alphabetically according to the authors' first names, from different parts of the country. These are anecdotal. This collection is a document of facts. Facts as remembered, experienced, lived by teachers in the domain of communication, media, and journalism" (Ranade, 2017).

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UGC and regulatory framework for JMCE

The examination of JMCE can be institutional or individual. The focus on the institution in the first place, and where needed, the individual roles will be factored in. Launching any programme within a university system was its prerogative, but if it needed support for faculty positions and resources, the approval of the UGC was required.

During the fifth plan period (1974-1979), the UGC constituted a panel for Journalism. Thus, UGC was able to examine proposals for starting or expanding JMCE programmes formally. At least two university departments, Berhampur, Madras, benefited from two high-level committees that examined the need, local employment opportunities and the synergy of institutions in the region that could help them. The status report on the position of JMCE, apart from a brief survey, explains the role of UGC in strengthening the JMCE advocating standardization. The UGC in 1984 recalled that the Shiva Rao Committee had visited Punjab, Osmania and Hislop to make recommendations. While the emphasis on practical skills was reiterated, it also highlighted the need for a sufficient understanding of the Indian Constitution and politics, the history of the Indian press and adequate practical training in a newspaper/news agency. UGC's regulatory role in higher education is binding, and accordingly, it takes credit and flak.

Why JMCE? A recurrent question?

The sailing for JMCE both in terms of perception and support has never been smooth. A silver jubilee of JMCE (the 1941 Punjab University programme as the base year), the reflection by a senior professor captures some of the proactive arguments in favour of education and others who not only felt that it was not needed but compared it to skills such as cooking or hairdressing (it is a different matter that both these compared professions have now formal programmes). That journalism "need not always be a game of chance, proposals for training were gone in by such agencies as the All-India Newspaper Editors Conference, the Press Commission, the Indian Federation of Working Journalists, the Inter-University Board, the University Grants Commission and Diwakar committee" (Eapen, 1995). Chanchal Sarkar, the founding director of the Press Institute of India, was one of the vocal critics, and he argued that the departments are not producing immediate assets to newspapers. The contentious study by the Press Institute of India (PII) funded by the UGC did not go well with the academicians from the university system, and they decided to work on a

parallel study (Sanjay, 2012).

The Press Foundation of Asia in 1990 assessed the trends and status report on Communication Education in Asia. Sarkar, who analyzed JMCE in India, examined the beginnings, problems, medium of instruction and urban orientation. The ten recommendations of the study touched upon the need for careful thinking before the department is launched, the basic infrastructure of faculty and equipment, treat it as professional courses and engagement on a full-time basis and opportunities for working journalists to pursue short term courses in the evening (Sarkar, 1990).

Media boom and training as a revenue stream

The criticism of particularly the university system was strident, but the media boom, particularly television and the glamour and perceived power associated with it, did not deter the youth from pursuing JMCE courses. Cashing in the critique of the JMCE in the public university system, many leading media institutions decided to launch PG diploma programmes for one academic year. They had the comparative advantage of access to practical training and association of their working journalists. It is necessary to point out that the focus on journalism needs to be understood separately from the entertainment sector, and human resources projections are subsumed under the broad framework of the Media and Entertainment (M&E) sector.

The flow of information and the government's constant desire to communicate with the masses must be contextualized in the JMCE. Several organic strands can be identified, including the evolution of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in India in the colonial and WWII context and its retention as the nodal mechanism for both legacy and new media in the present context. Theories surrounding the need and development of radio and television broadcasting in third-world countries (including India) need to be recalled for their policy implications regarding the directed use of radio for rural areas, educational broadcasts for school children. The frequent conflicts with neighbours and the inability of the government to put across its views to the masses focused on expanding the broadcasting sector amidst resource crunches.

IIMC: An institutional framework for mass communication training

Against this backdrop was a Ford Foundation Study team led by Prof. Wilbur Schramm that highlighted the need for mass media and recommended the setting

up the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) in 1965 (Government of India, 1963). IIMC's original intent was to act as the foundation academy for the Indian Information Services that continues its formal effort. Its flagship programme on Development Journalism for developing countries has trained thousands of journalists and media persons from more than 100 countries. Its more visible face is the Postgraduate diploma programme that distinguishes being among the top JMCE colleges in the country. The reputation and facilities IIMC have were one of the justifications for it to seek a university status. While a formal presentation was made to the UGC in 2005, the proposal was unacceptable as the committee felt a single discipline university was not plausible (personal notes and files). However, the idea of a university for journalism has gained ground, with at least four universities currently functioning. The idea of university status for IIMC gathered more steam in the last few years with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi, along with its five regional campuses at Jammu (Jammu & Kashmir), Amravati (Maharashtra), Aizawl (Mizoram), Kottayam (Kerala) and Dhenkanal (Odisha), gaining an all-India profile in terms of their geographical reach. The UGC, while recognizing this and based on evaluations, has recommended to the government, "The Commission considered the report of the UGC Expert Committee and resolved to recommend to MHRD for the status under a de-novo category to Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi" (minutes of the 534th meeting of UGC, August 2018). Considerable work, though, is needed before it can restructure its PG diploma programmes to a bachelor's or master's level, formalizing its research and evaluation competencies to offer research degrees and many other aspects required to realize the university's objectives. At this stage, it is premature to assess the implications of such a status.

Medium of instruction for JMCE: A paradox

English has dominated as the medium of instruction and pedagogical implications of language in higher education are recognized. However, the pace at which Indian language media has grown is acknowledged and analyzed (Jeffrey, 1993). The growth and popularity of television channels in Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada are well established through audience measurement studies by the Industry (BARC India, 2018). The training needs about skills only are being met by many institutions for Hindi media, while for other languages, universities make a conscious attempt although limited by the

medium of instruction. Media academies in a few states, Karnataka and Kerala, address the void to some extent. Many of the graduates have also adapted their skill sets to work in the channels.

Pronounced ethical concerns regarding media practices in India have obliquely highlighted the need for JMCE to improve the situation with expected induction of values, etc. Availing Government concessions and subsidies along with junkets by corporate houses have in the past figured as ethical transgressions. However, the spectre of paid news formally adopted by media houses has nationally and internationally been condemned (Council, 2010; Thakurta, 2013). Although debatable as to how such practices can be curbed if the owners and managers pursue them, the expectation that the youth could be sensitized to the matter is flagged as a critical component of JMCE. While the Gandhian journalistic model of running a newspaper without advertising is regarded as a far-fetched idea, the nexus between advertising support and shaping the agenda, however, subtle it may be by the media, cannot be ignored. It has become more acute in what is described as the corporatization of media (Lancia, 2009; TRAI, 2014) and the monopolistic or oligopolistic ownership patterns. In a related context, the former PCI chairman observed the need for formal training of journalists in India, and it evoked the stock response of the past that professionalism is not linked to education (Jha, 2013).

A complete survey of all the JMCE programmes as it stands today, although needed, may not throw up any diversity in the programmes. The formation of many media educators' groups in social media does now and then reflect on what their limitations are? However, the critical components of the curricula focus on writing, reporting, editing, ethics and laws, variations of the role of journalism, corporate communication, theories and models, communication and development, specific focus on AV media, photography, deprivation studies and niche reporting for caste and gender and urban-rural context. Preparing and rendering content across platforms is added to skillset training. Teachers are also greatly enthused by their access to online resources that potentially can update their skills and translate the same to their students. The COVID19 pandemic phase in India has virtually flooded the JMCE space with almost daily webinars, workshops, lectures, and alumni interactions. Their outcomes, if practical, can partially redress the yawning gap theory of professionals and academics.

Faculty resources and JMCE

The human resources needed for JMCE is a

grey area that frequently adds to the debate. Extant UGC regulations guide faculty appointments in the universities, and this is a critical aspect that has led to as professionals point out to overvaluation of research degrees as in PhD as a requirement. UGC's subject panels in the past had advocated and sought regulations that could allow persons with ten years of experience in a professional media institution. This regulation had for many years allowed for professionals to enter the university system at the middle level and later rise to higher academic responsibilities. However, this clause was removed in the 2016 regulations despite frequent pleas to the chairman of the drafting committee. The relaxations available to disciplines such as performing arts and management was sought to apply to JMCE to facilitate the entry of professionals.

Consequently, the university departments' core faculty needs to fulfil the regulations and the association of media professionals can be either at the adjunct level, guest or visiting as decided by the respective universities. An undesirable consequence of the misplaced value on research degrees is the quality of the process and research themes. It may be construed as an imposition for JMCE.

Has technology helped JMCE to improve training?

Demystification of technology and related developments in freeware/software has considerably changed the configuration of resources required for JMCE today. In the 1980s and 1990s, access to printing laboratory newspapers, AV studios, cameras and library subscriptions to a host of current newspapers and periodicals were considered essential but not affordable for many departments. The situation was so alarming that the UGC was compelled to make recommendations for minimum equipment configuration. While university administrations were supportive, they could not lend support as the science and technology departments had enormous needs, appetite, and demand on their resources. It added to the distress and the general critique of education.

To some extent, the situation changed with workstation enabled practical instruction possible. It still required an acceptable student-computer ratio, and realizing that was a struggle for many departments, particularly the state universities. Central universities were slightly better placed in seeking their share of resources from their universities. The key argument is that while human resources that can impart critical training are essential for education in the broadest sense, the employment needs of graduates requires

exposure to minimum hands-on exposure regularly.

Legacy media sustains and social media redefines sources of content

Much is said about the fact that media and the ecosystem have changed, and is JMCE keeping pace with it? What has changed needs to be briefly understood. The comparative observation made concerning India is the resilience of the Indian print media. It had sustained growth but was now partially affected by the economic meltdown during the COVID19 conditions. Nevertheless, the localization of print media's approach to content spurred by the phenomenal rise of the Indian language newspapers combined with low newsstand and subscription prices keeps their hold. Broadcasting, apart from television and radio in the ordinary sense, has many other platforms with scope for JMCE graduates. The revenue streams and salary structure are related factors. Online sources indicate that the salary averages around ₹ 21K per month, and it may be lower as the definition and understanding of who a media person is in India varies. There is, of course, a wage board recommendation that some of the prominent newspapers follow to some extent but are more content with the contract system.

The present status

All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) published annually by the Ministry of Education indicates the spread and enrolment for JMCE. The 1043 universities, 42000 plus colleges and 11800 stand-alone institutions form the institutional matrix for higher education in India.

The bachelor's programme in JMCE is 29758, comprising 14694 male and 15064 female students. The enrolment for PG programmes, MPhil and PhD, are 19043, 159 and 993 (AISHE Report, 2020).

Thus, we have a large group of youth expecting to seek employment opportunities in the discipline. While AISHE represents many institutions, JMCE's enrolment in a host of private institutions adds to our responsibility.

The private sector role in JMCE claims higher visibility and relevance regarding the professional qualities of their alumni. The high fees structure not always matched by entry-level job salaries is something that needs to be highlighted.

Private enterprises generate resources from student fees without any regulatory body to control or monitor their finances. Critics argue that while private institutions can proactively meet market needs and job demands, their often-high fees make them

Table 1 Indicating enrolment of students in JMCE programmes according to Ministry of Education (2020), Source: AISHE Report

Programme	Male	Female	OBC	SC	ST
M.J.M.C Foreign	2686 9	2165 5	914	417 (M) 199 (F)	166
B.J.M.C. Foreign	9778 37	8456 41	1496 (M) 932 (F)	1360 (M) 803 (F)	228 (M) 153 (F)
B.J.	1449	1185	321(M) 178 (F)	160 (M) 77 (F)	77 (M) 27 (F)
B.J. (DISTANCE)				66 (M) 20 (F)	
M.J.M.C (Distance mode)	838	635	110 (M) 36 (F)	115 (M) 46 (F)	Nil
M.J. (DISTANCE)	406	109		44 (M) 07 (F)	
M.J.M.C (PASS OUT)	958	870			
B.J.M.C (PASS OUT)	2235	1956			

too expensive for students from average economic backgrounds. And their policies regarding enrolment, recruitment, curriculum reform, and evaluation appear arbitrary when compared to traditional universities' policies (Desai, 2017). Yet, their growth and relevance, in addition to numerous publicly-funded state and central universities, positions JMCE as a recognized discipline.

In many state universities, the replacement of retired faculty in JMCE is tied to the concurrence of state universities, citing financial constraints to replace the faculty. In such cases, it is not surprising to see many single person departments and, in some cases, given to other disciplines as an additional charge. While an actual assessment of this situation has not been made, discussion in social media groups points out such lacunae, including the difficulties of hiring guest faculty to sustain the programmes. In central universities, the situation is better because the payment to guest faculty could be made against vacant positions in many cases. I understand that this provision is encountering accounting and audit issues. Several past guidelines have been issued to have at least seven faculty positions for the discipline. However, implementation is a circular problem where the funding for such positions should come. Any general assessment of JMCE needs to factor in the faculty component as it plays a crucial role. Although highlighted, this factor has not been analyzed to the extent it ought to have been.

Curricular aspects

Every programme, irrespective of where it is offered, needs a structure of instruction, pedagogy, and infrastructure. Some of these aspects have been mentioned in passing earlier. While the century-old programme at Adyar focused mainly on craft and mission for journalism, other programmes that followed were in the formal university system that required compliance with the academic structure and corresponding teaching and evaluation requirements. A diploma programme in the university allows for certain relaxation due to the shortened nature of the programme and its objectives. However, degree programmes need to adhere to specific mandatory requirements of language and subjects and credits earned. The recently formulated National Education Policy (NEP) has recommended an incremental approach from certificate to PhD. It also recommends that these programmes have a fixed duration. The possibility of students wanting to move on to higher levels needs to be factored in. Applied to JMCE, it formalizes offering programmes at various levels enlarging the options to both entry-level students and in-service personnel. The NEP allows institutions to build and concentrate on vocational programmes only where the long-standing articulation of vocational dimensions can be catered. It also allows for the incorporation of the skill sector requirements where the M&E sector claims many opportunities. Institutions can now focus on critical studies, research, philosophy etc.,

as intensively as they wish to without trying to strike a balance to practice that has been the bone of contention in the past. The separation between employment and pursuit of knowledge, the twin goals of education can be attempted. One university has recently revised its approach to JMCE by combining the skills dimension as a Convergent Media Stream and Media and Communication Studies as two separate streams with very few standard foundation courses.

Many of us are called to finalize the syllabus or curricula for our programmes as senior faculty members. It is refreshing to see the younger faculty members desirous of commensurate practical inputs that match the industry provided by practitioners. While this intent is laudable and at times workable, the challenge for the faculty is more in the realm of implementation. At times, modular inputs and workshops can significantly contribute to providing inputs. However, the reflective and critical aspects, as in the context, media content production processes, the societal profile, and requirements, require human and library resources of a different kind.

The challenges of addressing JMCE requirements across several platforms have been recognized. The availability of new forms of producing and sharing content in the journalistic sense requires a higher degree of sensitivity to the latent skills among the students and channelizing them. A comparable situation analysis (Emma-Okoroafor, 2016) recommends the following approaches.

1. JMC educators should, as a matter of urgency, review the mass communication/journalism curriculum to include courses that will equip the students to enter the synergetic world of media convergence.
2. There is also a need for educators to identify and understand the need for developing students to communicate and navigate different media options. It is believed that obtaining these skills while maintaining the fundamentals of the profession is paramount to succeeding in the converged world.
3. Management of journalism/mass communication institutes should provide enabling environment and infrastructure (internet facilities, teaching aids etc.), which will help the students understand better what they are taught.

While recognizing the need for such a shift that is already realized in many institutions, it is also crucial that the Institutions do not lose sight of the context in which such communication occurs. The WJEC philosophy that stems from a series

of workshops across the world has suggested, “We need to be cautious about training journalists solely to meet industry’s needs... Journalism is increasingly not defined by employment. We should seize the opportunity in this regard in this moment of crisis amidst the digital revolution and reaffirm journalism’s usefulness to the community” (Nordenstreng, 2010).

Are comparisons possible? The South Asian region with a typical colonial experience also shares specific cultural values and practices. However, differences in governance structures and also the growth of media, standard media-related issues are raised. They refer to nature and kind of content, the State’s relationship to media, the digital regulatory environment in which new media function, media’s desire for self-regulation and State’s desire for regulation, moral and religious sensitivity and the differential media professional practices, gender, and plurality in media and last but not the least how does JMCE relate to the media and communication ecosystem.

In the past, regional forums such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have made sincere attempts to forge common grounds of media cooperation and positing media as a bridge for enhancing better understanding at the people-to-people level. A press commission to promote the free flow of information in SAARC was mooted (Staff, 2007). A few countries, such as the BRICS, have several layers of cooperation at the global level. Explicit media discourses are absent in these forums (Bharthur, 2016). It may be helpful if JMCE incorporates a better understanding of media practices in blocs where India is a partner.

Detailed country-specific studies of JMCE, although desirable, may be ambitious at this stage. However, there is skewed importance to theory (almost 70 %) and primarily Western. It also reflects on the availability of textbooks or learning material. For example, in 1990, when a South Asia study was undertaken, the dominance of textbook material from the west was primarily North American (Eapen, 1991). On the institutional matrix of public and private universities, a study has noted that public universities follow more traditional liberal arts/ social sciences-focused courses, while private universities journalism curricula are jammed with techno-centric courses. The absence of any clear-cut direction or consistency among various journalism courses makes the climate susceptible. For example, private initiatives follow the path of Western universities now, which focus on cyborg studies, celebrity studies, multimedia gaming, sports journalism, advertising, and media

entrepreneurship courses instead of traditional reporting, editing or communication courses. This inclusion indicates, journalism teaching and learning in private universities is subsequently replaced by more stakeholder-centred overshadowing the public service like the traditional notion of university education.

On the other hand, public universities don't take the risk to change the existing syllabus structure due to the want of any rigorous examination of the suitability of curricula in their local context. These institutions follow the syllabi as it is, for long with minimal change, indicating an uncritical acceptance of the dominant Western notion of journalism courses for higher education. Overall, the existing courses from these universities can be summarized into five broad categories: (a) communication studies, (b) journalism/ media reporting, writing and production, (c) technocentric, multi-disciplinary managerial entrepreneurship, (d) social sciences, and (e) media research tools. This trend, on both ends, seems to be a mere extension of Western journalism curricula- a blending of craft and study (Ullah, 2014).

Buzz words such as infodemic etc., are often used to highlight the so-called information explosion and its paid or free access. Journalism, as many would agree, is just not about information. It is much more than that. It builds on other factors such as honesty, credibility, and trust. Filtering mechanisms and fact checks have become even more crucial where any content can be masked as news and flashed. All societies have respective flashpoints of conflict that can exacerbate due to the hasty and unverified distribution of information. It includes rumours in many volatile situations (Ghose, 2020). In the past, printed newspapers have been accused of adding fuel to volatile situations (PCI, 2010). Countries have resorted to varying degrees of internet shutdowns to avoid flagrant situations, notwithstanding the critique that it impinges on freedom of expression. The same sensitivity that our erstwhile journalists followed may have to invoke different packages and greater familiarity with handheld communication devices. An ethical framework in which communication occurs has become inevitable by transgressions of all sorts by institutions and individuals. The silver lining is that JMC educators can learn and acquire skills that can be translated to their students by investing in time. Journalism teachers and professionals are not necessarily polarized in the present context. The scope for cooperation is immense, and symbiotic learning is possible.

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Changing Dynamics of Media Education in India: Exploring the History, Present Scenario, Challenges and Key Issues

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ABSTRACT

With over one hundred thousand publications in different languages, 900 plus television channels, close to seven hundred radio stations including private radio stations and AIR's FM radio stations, innumerable news websites and more than 1000 colleges, university departments and institutions are offering mass-communication and journalism education courses. India is one of the large media ecospheres of the world. Media education in India has gone through significant changes over the years. Like other professional courses, media education is offered at a university comprising of central, state, college and private institutions at different levels from certificate to diploma, undergraduate to postgraduate and doctoral level. Media houses are now offering media courses that are solely focused on the needs and requirements of the media industry. This paper tries to explore the changing dynamics of media education in India by looking into the history and present scenario. The article also emphasizes the challenges and key issues in media education in India.

Key words: Media education, Courses, University, Research challenges, Journalism, Mass communication.

Introduction

The spread of the media has reached the edge of every society in the era of globalization. Millions of messages are gathered, analyzed and broadcast every day by the media. The masses of different segments of societies are further perceived and analyzed by their interests and satisfaction, which finally determines their ideas, attitudes, sentiments, emotions and patterns of behaviour. It is a difficult process that serves to construct any nation's social-political, economic and cultural fabric. The achievement and failure of every media message rest entirely on both the communicator and recipient's creative and critical capabilities. Thus, media education from pre-school to university level is crucial ("UNESCO Grunwald Declaration for Media Education", 1982). Media education is a process that makes us aware of how and why media messages are being developed, distributed, perceived and analyzed through teaching and learning. In 1977, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) originally defined the idea of media education, which contributed to its orderly evolution as a discipline around the world. The International Film and Television Council (IFTC, 1977) defines, "media education is the study,

learning and teaching of and about the modern media of communication and expression within education theory and practice as a specific and independent area of knowledge, distinct from the use of them in teaching and learning of other fields of the subject area such as mathematics, science and geography." In 2001, UNESCO produced a report titled "Media Education: A Global Strategy for Development," which redefined media education. "Moving image media (film, television, video), radio and recorded music, print media (especially newspapers and magazines), and emerging digital communication technologies all fall under the umbrella of media education" (Kumar, 2017). Its goal is to foster a broad understanding of 'literacy', not just in terms of print, but also in terms of the symbolic systems of images and sounds (Buckingham, 2001). Theory, practice, and research related to diverse mediums of mass communication, such as print, electronic, new media, film, advertising, corporate communication and public relations, are all part of the pedagogical framework of media education. It instils creative and critical thinking skills in the general public to make them 'media literate', and to teach them about the nature, method, and influence of media messages and productions. Media education encourages

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media users to think critically about how media messages influence their life to make them more creative media users. It may be characterized as an educational process in which people become aware of how various media impact their thinking, shape their value system, and transform society. As a result, they become critical and knowledgeable media users who demand high-quality media content and even creating and producing their content. As a result, they can intelligently respond to media productions and manipulations (Srampickal & Joseph, 2002). Among the largest countries in the world by area and population, India ranks seventh and second with a population of approximately 1.3 billion people, respectively. Apart from that, India is a diverse, multicultural, and multilingual country with a literacy rate of 73%. The media's position as a catalyst becomes even more important in such a diverse country. Media provides the general public with information, entertainment and education. In India, the media has grown enormously. In terms of the global newspaper market, India is ranked second. The Registrar of Newspapers for India now has over 100,000 newspapers and publications registered. There are over 900 television channels to choose from, including 300 news channels. In addition to print and electronic media, India dominates the cinema industry. In India, around 1000 films are released per year in various languages. In addition, India has 624.0 million internet users. The reach and exposure of the media have grown to such an extent that it now provides content creators, artists, audiences, and advertisers with unparalleled opportunities. It has opened up new job opportunities in a variety of media and related fields. It is therefore self-evident that effective media education and training should be promoted.

History of media education in India

In India, media began as print publications that catalyzed change and a source of information about everyday events. There was no media curriculum at first, although there were several media training institutions for aspiring journalists. Dr Annie Besant introduced a journalism course as an undergraduate degree in 1920 under the Faculty of Arts in the Department of English at the National University in Adyar, Madras (now Chennai) under the patronage of the Theosophical Society. It did not continue for a long time. A bachelor's degree in English literature, rather than a professional degree in journalism, was

necessary for employment in journalism during the early years of independence. Over a decade later, the course was offered as a certificate course at Aligarh Muslim University in 1938. But it also did not last long. The credit for setting up the first Journalism Department goes to Prof. Pushpendra Pal Singh. He established the department at Punjab University, Lahore, in 1941, and was the first to offer journalism as a formal course. In Southern India, the University of Madras established the first Department of Journalism and Communication in independent India in 1947, making it one of the earliest journalism programs in the Asian region. The journalism course was first offered as a post-graduate degree by the University of Mysore. Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) was established in New Delhi in 1965 by the Government of India under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. In Northeast India, media education was introduced in 1967 at Gauhati (now Guwahati) University. In Banaras Hindu University, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication was established in 1973 under the Faculty of Arts. In India, media education has battled hard to be recognized as a discipline, despite these pioneering initiatives. A lengthy dialogue over its importance has been going on for decades resulting in a gradual growth of the field throughout the first six decades of the twentieth century, from 1920 to 1980. Between 1920 and 1961, just six university departments were established, increasing to 25 by 1981 (Eapen, 1991). That implies 25 departments were established in the first six decades of the twentieth century, from 1920 to 1981. Following them, it grew at a breakneck speed during the globalization period.

Present scenario of media education in India

Media education courses are now available in India in Government-owned Institutions and Central Universities, State Universities, Private Universities and Colleges and Media-owned journalism schools. The course is offered at diploma, bachelor, master, post-graduate diploma and doctoral level in all areas of mass media such as print, electronic, new media, digital media, advertising, films and public relations. Few institutes have been set up by the Government of India under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that are promoting different areas of media education. Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) conduct post-

graduate diploma programmes in Radio and TV journalism, Advertising and Public Relations, Hindi Journalism, English Journalism, Odia Journalism, Urdu Journalism, Malayalam Journalism and Marathi Journalism. The institute also offers a diploma course in Development Journalism. It also offers nine-month professional training programmes to Indian Information Services (IIS) officers which include theoretical orientation, skill enhancement and overall personality development as a part of their two years training programmes as per the Personnel Policy of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Similarly, the Film and Television Institute of India offers post-graduate diploma courses granted master's degree equivalence by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and post-graduate certificate courses approved by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). It nurtures the skills and talents of burning aspirants in two main fields of mass media- Film and Television. Under the Film wing, it offers courses in Direction and Screenplay Writing, Cinematography, Editing, Sound Recording and Sound Design, Art Direction and Production Design, Screen Acting and Screen Writing (Film, TV and Web Series). Under TV Wing, it nurtures students in the field of Direction, Electronic Cinematography, Video Editing and Sound Recording & Television Engineering. Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute offers (a) post-graduate courses in Cinema in the following areas: Animation Cinema, Cinematography, Direction and Screenplay Writing, Editing, Producing for Film and Television and Sound Recording and Design; and (b) post-graduate courses in Electronic Digital Media (EDM) Management in the following areas: EDM Management, Cinematography for EDM, Writing for EDM, Editing for EDM, Direction and Producing for EDM and Sound for EDM.

Out of 54 Central Universities, 40 universities are running journalism/media departments at Diploma, UG, PG and PhD levels. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) offers Master's, M. Phil and PhD courses in Media Studies. Jamia Milia Islamia provides a Master's degree in Mass Communication, Visual Effect and Animation, Convergent Journalism and Development Communication; post-graduate diploma programme in Acting, Broadcast Technology, Still Photography and Visual Communication; and M. Phil and PhD degree in Mass Communication. Delhi School of Journalism, University of Delhi provides a five-year integrated

programme in journalism both in English and Hindi language. Banaras Hindi University (BHU) offers a Master's degree in Mass Communication with specialization in Development Communication, Hindi Journalism, Television, Radio and Film, Public Relations, Media Management and Health Communication. It also offers a PhD in Mass Communication, a Master's degree in Corporate Communication and a post-graduate diploma in Health communication and Journalism and Mass Communication. Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) provides a Master's degree in Mass Communication with specialization in Science and Technology Communication, Writing for Mass Media in Urdu, Human Rights and Media, TV news and Current Affairs Production, Film Studies, Women, Children and Media, Convergent Journalism, Health Communication, Sports Journalism, and Environment and Media. It also offers PhD in Mass Communication with specialization in Print Media, Advertising and Public Relations, Science Communication, Development Communication, Film studies and International and Intercultural Communication. University of Hyderabad offers M.A in Communication (Media Practice) that focuses on convergent journalism, media practice and technology and M.A in Communication (Media Studies) that focuses on theory, research and critical focus. It provides PhD in Communication encouraging research in communication and social change, community media, historical and cultural studies of media, ontology of media and information, health and science communication, digital media studies, feminist media studies, media law and ethics, media and gender, and practice-based research. Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya and Maulana Azad National Urdu University are good example of promoting media education in vernacular language. They offer Bachelor's, Master and Doctoral degrees in Journalism and Mass Communication. North-East region is also not behind in promoting the discipline. Central Universities in North-East India has set up media departments. Tezpur University offers both Master and Doctoral degrees in Mass Communication and Journalism. It also offers a master's degree in Communication for Development. Similarly, North-Eastern Hill University offers a master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication. Other central universities offering journalism/media courses are:

North: Indira Gandhi National Open University,

University of Allahabad, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Central University of Rajasthan, Central University of Haryana, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Central University of Punjab, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, Central University of Kashmir and Central University of Jammu.

Central: Dr Hari Singh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Central University of Jharkhand, Central University of South Bihar, Mahatma Gandhi Central University Bihar, Central University of Odisha and Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwa Vidyalaya.

South: Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh, Central University of Karnataka, Pondicherry University, English and Foreign Languages University, and Central University of Tamil Nadu.

East and North-East: Visva-Bharati University, Assam University, Tezpur University, Manipur University, Mizoram University, Nagaland University, Sikkim University, and Tripura University.

State Universities such as Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Mass Communication, Bhopal and Kushabhau Thakre Journalism and Communication University, Raipur offers under-graduate courses in Electronic Media, Mass Communication, Journalism and Creative Writing, Multimedia, and post-graduate courses in Electronic Media, Mass Communication, Broadcast Journalism, Journalism, Digital Journalism, New Media, Advertising and Public Relations, Film Production, Media Research and Media Studies. Other state universities offering journalism courses to name a few- Kashmir University, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Maharshi Dayanand University, Guru Jambheshwar University, M.S. University, University of Rajasthan, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Lucknow University, Kanpur University, Devi Ahilya University, Patna University, Calcutta University, Guwahati University, Mumbai University, Pune University, Nagpur University, Berhampur University, Andhra University, Osmania University, Bangalore University, Mangalore University, Mysore University, Madras University, Madurai Kamraj University, Bharathiar University, Kerala University, Calicut University etc.

Not only central and state universities but many private universities and colleges have also started

journalism courses in UG, PG and PhD programmes such as Noida International University (Noida), K.R. Mangalam University (Gurugram), Lovely Professional University (Punjab) Amity University, Manipal University, St. Xavier's College (Mumbai), Manipal School of Communication (Karnataka), Symbiosis Institute of Media & Communication (Pune), Galgotias University, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, Sharda University, Ashoka University, SRM University, Centurion University of Technology and Management, GITAM University, KIIT, and more institutions are offering professional courses in different fields of mass media at bachelor's, master's, post-graduate diploma, and doctoral level with international exposure and good placements in media houses. Now, most of the Universities in the country are offering mass media and journalism courses and there is also a long list of private colleges and independent institutes that offer the courses extensively. However, a new trend has emerged with media houses getting into the 'media education' business in recent years. More and more media houses are setting up media schools with an aim to train youngsters to meet the immediate staffing needs of the media house and to create revenue sources. Few media houses schools are Times School of Journalism, Asian College of Journalism, India Today Media Institute, Express Institute of Media Studies, Calcutta Media Institute, Eenadu Journalism School, Manorama School of Communication, International School of Media and Entertainment Studies, NDTV Media Institute, Pioneer Media School, Jagran Institute of Management and Mass Communication, The Tehelka School of Journalism, The Statesman Print Journalism School etc. The courses offered by these media schools are mostly diploma and certificate courses that are industry oriented. These courses are taught by academics and senior journalists who are often from within the organization.

Media education has gained importance for aspiring journalists not only at the academic institutions but media houses too. Currently, around 300 media or journalism departments are running at the Universities and non-Universities system. Only courses that are part of the university system are governed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and/or state governments. They release funds for the universities and also set guidelines on curriculum systems and faculty recruitment. Private

universities that have sprung up in India in recent years are likewise required to follow a certain set of Ministry of Education-mandated systems and procedures. Other non-university institutes or courses are not governed by any legal body and are not required to adhere to any set of rules (CMS Academic, 2015).

Key challenges and issues in media education in India

After being overlooked for a long time, media courses are becoming increasingly popular among students who wanted to make their careers in the field of journalism and mass communication, particularly in the TV news sector. Though media education comes under professional courses, it has still not achieved the status, recognition and importance like other professional courses like MBA, Engineering, Medical, Finance, Marketing etc. Not only this, there are many other key issues in media education mentioned below:

Lack of regulation: The demand for media and journalism education in India is enormous. But what constitutes a formal degree in journalism is still unclear (Muppidi, 2008). The range of degrees offered in media courses is either pure theoretical bases or completely hands-on skills training or a combination of both. There is a wide variation in the degree given in the field of media. Furthermore, the various journalism courses provided around the country lack a distinct direction or uniformity. Also, there is a question mark on the quality of such journalism programmes. These courses are not governed by any formal government document or specialized professional group or organization. Therefore, there is a need for a regulatory body that can monitor the quality of media education and keep track of degrees, methodology and uniformity of media courses (Joshi, 2010).

Ideology asymmetry on media education: There is a question among media academics to media professionals whether media study is a discipline or a multi-disciplinary subject or an interdisciplinary subject. Regarding media studies as a disciplinary form where scholars are unanimous, different dimensions of media studies are being studied as a subject. Elsewhere, the department has opened these different dimensions of media studies such as journalism, radio production, television production, multimedia production, new media, public relations, advertising, cinema, research,

development communication, visual communication etc. Such ideological asymmetry on media education is somewhere blocking the development of media education in India (Jha & Gangwar, 2018). Now, it is important to understand that the media academician should improve more of their subject in the changing circumstances and help in determining the direction of its development (Singh, n.d.)

Lack of quality in the qualification: There has been a quantitative increase in the institutions for media education, but there is still a lack of quality in the qualification (Jha & Gangwar, 2018). Diversity is so much that courses are being run in any one university by name of “M.A. in Mass Communication” while in other universities, it is being run in the name of “M.A. in Mass Communication and Journalism” while in other universities, the same courses are being run by its exact opposite “M.A. in Journalism and Mass Communication”. At some universities, the course run with a different name such as “M. A in Media Studies”, “M. A in Communication”, “M.A. in Convergent Journalism” and so on. It is worth mentioning here that there is no diversity in the contents of different courses, where there is diversity in nomenclature. There is no difference between the content of the Mass Communication course and the content of the Journalism course. Even there is no difference in the content of graduate-level media courses and the content of Master’s level media courses. No continuity or co-relation exists between these courses and no upgrades have been made to either the infrastructure or the course material, resulting in repeated courses and contents in many cases. If you look at the diversity of the courses in detail, it is known that neither this is an Indian media education model nor the adopted UNESCO media education model (Singh, n.d.).

Lack of autonomous status and individual treatment to media fields: Today, considering the multi-disciplinary approach of the media, it is necessary to develop it as a separate ‘faculty’ by keeping it separate from ‘art and social science’, by keeping in mind the needs of the media market and make a balance between theoretical and practical (Jha & Gangwar, 2018). An autonomous faculty should be established in the name of ‘Faculty of Mass Communication and Journalism’. The field of mass media whether it is a newspaper, television, radio, new media, films, advertising, public relations etc. are vast in nature and thus need a total individual study. It is impossible to learn the core and skills

of all these fields together within the duration of three years of a Bachelor's degree or two years of a Master's degree. Students studying everything from Print to Films and other things in between end up becoming "Jacks of all trades and Masters of none". It is high time that all these fields should be given an individual departmental status like 'Department of Print Media', 'Department of Advertising' as we have in other disciplines such as 'Department of Chemistry', 'Department of Physics' under the Faculty of Science. Further, teaching all the fields of mass media together restricts the choices for the students and result in a rigid structure.

Lack of consistent course curriculum and outdated content: In many journalism courses across the country, there is no obvious direction or standardization about the curriculum. If you look at the course details of media departments in universities, they are different from one another. The majority of experts believe that most journalism schools' curricula are outdated and unrelated to the skills needed in the real world. In India, there is delinking between the thematic, conceptual and theoretical framework of media education (Das, 2013). The media curriculum has no relevance in terms of theory and concept. It lacks guidelines in dividing practical and theoretical content in the course curriculum. The syllabus designed for the various media subjects are strongly dominated by theoretical aspects of media studies and many of them are outdated and, not enough to make students technically smart. There is no balance between theory and practical. The practical and technical aspects of media education are ignored. Due to these problems in the curriculum, it becomes difficult to generate conceptual clarity among students. Soon after the beginning of the course students in India develop a feeling that they are not getting exposed to anything that will help them in future. After some time, most of the students just want to finish the course and get their degree. In India, an all-around belief prevails that the degrees are mere entry passes into some job and the real things are to be learnt on the job. Consequently, so-called qualified media professionals are not competent to perform their tasks after recruitment. When students go to work in the media industry, they have to face a major challenge, as many courses of media educational institutions have not been prepared according to the requirements of media industry. There is a lack of teaching material available in the universities and

colleges. The reading material that is available in universities is usually outdated. In libraries, there are hardly any good quality media journals, books, encyclopedia, etc. Thus, students are not exposed to even the basic things required for good education. What is taught in media schools and what is practised in the field is completely different. Media academics take a typical road from graduate to PhD, and media schools and most of them have no expertise in media technology or media field. What they teach is largely based on outdated textbooks that no longer apply to students entering the media industry.

Lack of flexibility and choices in the media course: In India, the range of media courses that are offered is very limited at diploma level, bachelor level, post-graduate diploma and post-graduate level (Gaur, 2013). Also, there is a lack of flexibility in choosing the course of own interest. The students have to study all the fields of mass media together in bachelor's degree or master's degree. For example, the students who are interested to make their career in films get very little knowledge of the subject and skills required in the field because throughout the years they are also studying other areas of mass media. There is a need for flexibility not only in choosing the main subject but multiple options should also be provided under the main subject to choose from. Under 'Films', the students may be interested in production, or direction, or editing or script-writing etc. This flexibility in the structure at the macro as well as the micro-level has an impact of engaging the students more attentively and fruitfully during the entire duration. Since the students are always choosing what they want to study they never lose interest in their course. This blending of multiple options also adds to the versatility of the skills in the students.

Lack of proper infrastructure and adequate faculty: The other major concern which is a blockage to quality media education is the lack of proper infrastructures, such as computer and media lab and studio in universities and colleges (Muppidi, 2008; Gaur, 2013). Most of the universities and colleges are running media departments without media labs or insufficient infrastructure. They are not equipped with proper computer lab, software, media studio and media lab and hence failed to meet the practical aspects of media education. Though TV production is taught in almost all the journalism departments, but many departments do not have production facilities. It is not the case with

TV, even for practical assignments for print media, the journalism departments lack a computer lab with software and those departments which have computer systems are not in working condition. Departments are not procuring original software. In such cases, students find it very difficult to carry out their practical assignments. For courses such as Print, TV, Advertising, Films, New Media that require hands-on experience, lack of infrastructure is a major barrier in developing skills and knowledge among students. Lack of adequate faculty is also a major problem. While some media departments are running as full-fledged departments, still many are running by a one-man army with help of guest faculty. Slow and delay in the recruitment process and rigid recruitment norms are major challenges. There is a need for flexibility in hiring personnel for media education in universities. Recruitment of teachers for mass media should not only be limited to academic scholars who have formal degrees, but it should include people who have expertise and experience in media, though not having formal degrees.

Shortage of competent teaching faculty: Another issue in media education is the quality and competency of available media teaching faculty (Muppidi, 2008). There is a shortage of qualified faculty in the media education field. What is alarming is the lack of teachers who can provide practical and technical knowledge to the students. In addition, the faculty is still heavily tilted towards print media rather than TV and Radio whereas new opportunities are emerging in electronic media, and the media department running in universities are still failing to recognize this new reality. The teaching method adopted by media faculty is limited to theoretical knowledge. In fact, in India, most of the faculty members involved in media education are themselves not capable of using technology that is used by media professionals. Training of faculty members is critical for them to be familiar with both present and emerging technologies.

Standardization of media education: Several institutes in India are not accredited by the UGC. Such non-standardized imparting of media education generates unproductive media professionals and unemployment among degree holders (Gaur, 2013). This affects the credibility of the media courses adversely which are run even by the recognized institutes. Media education in India depends on government policies. Government need to promote

media education. Some competent institutes are not yet recognized or given the status of a university. Policies like a point system for affiliation/accreditation of the institutes and promotion of teachers has created a quantity-based approach in organizing seminars, conferences and workshops. Mostly these conferences are mere formality for documentation and accumulation of points by institutes and faculty. This is unproductive, time-consuming and leads to wastage of funds.

Lack of collaboration between media institutes and media organizations: When it comes to designing the media course curriculum, the academic institutions completely ignore the practical component. There are only a few universities that have a tie-up with media organizations and invite media professionals to interact with the students. In the end, media students have to work with these media professionals. Therefore, universities should collaborate with media organizations to provide students with hands-on experience and exposure to the media work culture (Muppidi, 2008). Extensive lectures by media experts, visits to media houses and exposure to the media working environment can help students develop a professional aptitude for the media course.

Lack of quality mass media research: Media education has not grown in India not just at the Bachelor's and Master's level but also at the PhD level. With mass media becoming an important tool of human communication, research in mass media has gained popularity among many research scholars around the country. The content of mass media is very powerful in influencing its audience at the behavioural, psychological and emotional level. There is no doubt mass media research has increased at the quantity levels. However, quality mass media research is scarce. It is because scholars researching the area of mass media are unfamiliar with the type of research, research processes, and research methodologies used in that area. Quality research is the most neglected child of the Indian academic system. In India, PhD research has only one goal: to meet the recruitment criteria in the higher education system. Students who have completed post-graduate studies enrol for PhD programs without having a thorough understanding of the research process and methodology. Research, which is a wide field that requires a long period of study, is taught at the master's level only as a course subject with other courses over the duration of a six-month semester.

If we look at the media studies course curriculum, research is taught as “Communication Research and Methods,” not “Mass Media Research and Methods.” Further, media education is still battling for autonomous discipline; it is classified as an area of arts, social sciences, and humanities. As a result, little attempt has been made to distinguish mass media research methodologies from those used in other fields. There are no seminars or workshops that are solely based on mass media research. The term “Research methodologies in Social Science” is used by media academics who organize seminars and workshops on research methods. In addition, there are extremely few reading materials and resources, and only few media journals are available in India related to mass media research. They are *Communicator* (IIMC), *Media Watch*, *Communication Today*, *Media Mimamsa*, *Mass Communicator* (Jagannath International Management School), *Journal of Content, Community & Communication* (Amity University), *Amity Journal of Communication and Media Studies* (Amity University, Rajasthan), etc. To encourage researchers, a greater number of media journals that cater to various areas of mass media should be published.

Conclusion

The major concerns in media education are autonomous status, curriculum design, infrastructure, faculty training and development, quality mass media research and the role of academic and media institutions. Need of the market demand and survey should be done what students have to be trained for. The curriculum should be designed to fulfil the requirements and demands of the media sector as well as the actual world. It should be flexible in terms of delivering a diverse choice of course alternatives to students, allowing them to select media courses based on their interests. Proper attention should be given to the practical part of media education. More and more field works should be assigned to the students. This will open more demand for the course. Industry internships and job opportunities must be given by the media organization. More funding is required for media research projects by UGC and IMPRESS- ICSSR and STRIDE. Media experts should be allowed to take classes for exposure. Media academics, media professionals, media organizations, and the UGC should work together

to advance media education as a professional field. Media education should be given an autonomy status as a faculty in all the Universities. The UGC should allocate more funds to media education so that media departments in universities should have proper infrastructure equipped with a media labs and studios. It should also ensure that these funds are used wisely by these universities. The norms of faculty recruitment should allow hiring people who have extensive field experience and knowledge of media technology though not having formal degrees. To encourage quality research, we must amend our higher education system, in which an independent research wing should be established in each faculty of universities that has one-year or two-year programmes on research skills and knowledge. Students can get a certificate or a degree upon completion of the course. And a norm should be included in ‘Admission to PhD’, a student having a Master’s degree is eligible for applying PhD only if he or she has completed programmes/course in the research wing.

Media education has completed 100 years with leaps and bounds but still a lot of improvement is needed as a professional course due to the aforementioned factors. There is a need to have Central University as Media University exclusively. For a long time there is a demand from the students to include Mass Communication discipline in the list of optional courses for the Civil Services examination and state Public Service Commission examination. It is high time that all these factors should be given attention to improve the status of media education in the country.

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The Evolution of Indian Media Education in 100 Years: A Critical Analysis in Retrospect

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ABSTRACT

Indian Media Education has come a long way. In the centenary year, it becomes imperative for scholars, academicians and students in this discipline to introspect and see those milestones that have been achieved over the last 100 years since media education was conceived in India. The journey of these last ten decades has been nothing less than a roller-coaster affair. Despite all the ups and downs in the road, it can be said that the overall picture of the journey can be best described in the phrase, “From Evolution to Revolution”. This paper aims to historically analyze these last 100 years through a conceptual framework by looking into different periods within the last century. The paper aims to critically assess each of these periods. The first period would look into the pre-independence era where the seeds of making journalism into an academic discipline were sown. The next period would focus on the post-independence period where the seeds that were sown in the pre-independence era were now taking roots deeply across the length and breadth of the country. This period would specifically focus from 1947-1991. The year 1991 is special because the very same year turned out to be a paradigm shift not just for the field of media education but for India as a nation. This was the year of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization) reforms which opened the Indian economy and had a severe long-lasting impact on the growth of media and media education in the country. This period would focus on the years 1991-2020 to see the overall shift/s (if any) in the way journalism was started to being taught to the students in India. It will then reflect on the skill gaps between media education and industry. The paper would also focus briefly on the impact of COVID19 and the New Education Policy on media education in India. The approach of the paper will be qualitative in nature. Historical analysis would be used as the method of research in this paper to analyze the last 100 years of media education in India.

Keywords: Media evolution in India, Media revolution, COVID-19, Centenary, Media education, Skill gaps

Introduction

Media is called the fourth pillar of democracy (Baléo, 2020). Being the largest democracy in the world, India boasts of a huge media network comprising of millions of journalists, thousands of publications and hundreds of media schools operating within its boundaries. But this large canvass of a media network that one sees today has not emerged in a vacuum. There is a large volume of history behind it, a history of no less than 100 years. Also, these hundred years are just representative of the media education in the country because media in India has a history of over two centuries. Right from the days of the colonial era where educator and philanthropist Dr Annie Besant had introduced journalism as an academic discipline in the nation to now where almost every state in India has some or other form of media education being imparted to the students in the form of bachelor’s degree courses to master’s degree courses and from PG diploma courses to even research courses and Ph.D., the journalism academic discipline in the country has come a long way (MCC, 2021). But the question that naturally arises to a layman’s mind is why there was a need for journalism to be made into

an academic discipline. Even today many scholars argue that in the context of India, journalism is yet to evolve as a full-fledged academic discipline like in the West. The answers to this are many but one historical fact that jumps out of this cacophony of noises is that during the colonial era most of India’s tallest leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Subhash Chandra Bose, Annie Besant etc., were themselves writing as journalists and columnists in various newspapers, newsletters, magazines; while some of which they were themselves editing. For instance, Gandhi was writing for *Young India* and *Harijan* (Gandhi, 2020). Bhagat Singh and Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi were writing for *Pratap* (Harshvardhan, 2020). Bal Gangadhar Tilak was editing newspapers like *Kesari* and *Maratha* which were used to pen strong voices against the then British rule in India (Sahasrabudde, 2020). These freedom fighters were of the firm belief that the pen would prove mightier than the sword against the colonial rule in India.

This background is necessary to understand the thought process of Annie Besant who had initiated a journalism course at the National University at Adyar, Madras under the aegis of Theosophical Society in

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1920 (Dutta, 2020). Though some Professors believe that journalism education actually began in 1917-18, majority believe that it started in 1920. Since India's tallest leaders who practiced journalism, had millions of masses behind them as followers and disciples, they could impact millions of people, even those who were unlettered. Therefore, Annie Besant being one of those leaders must have realized that although doing journalism is great but making a small yet significant effort into introducing journalism as an academic course would be much greater in terms of its impact to produce journalists with an academic background in journalism itself.

However, most of the attempts by multiple individuals to start journalism education in the era pre-1947 was most a hit and trial sort of an affair. Most of the people who entered journalism were students of literature and were grounded in humanities. The reason why journalism as an academic discipline didn't get deep roots for many decades since its inception in India is that journalism as an entity was itself very new, at least compared to other disciplines in humanities, many of whom were being taught for over two millenniums (Burgh, 2003). Therefore, it is but natural that journalism couldn't gain immediate success as an academic discipline. If one looks deeply, journalism in itself is attached to disciplines like politics, law, society, history and economics because these disciplines are directly related to the lives of people. Journalism on the other hand is a handy tool to make people understand about the day to day affairs of these disciplines which have an impact on people's lives. The relationship between journalism to other disciplines on which journalism is done or conducted is like a "means to end" relationship; *journalism being the means while other disciplines being the ends*.

Therefore, it is natural that people's interests are always in satisfying the ends, which in this case is directly related to their own livelihood in some way or the other. In this whole process, journalism takes a back seat, provided that the means i.e., journalists or media institutions are doing their jobs properly. Otherwise, if the job is itself shabby in its nature and character, then the focus of the people would naturally shift from ends to the means. This is precisely why many journalists and media houses face severe criticism from the audience for doing reprehensible journalism, not doing journalism for the people or carrying a particular agenda which also becomes propaganda against an individual, a group, a sect etc. (Bhushan, 2015). This phenomenon has further become a reason for the focus to be shifted on media itself. Today, media and journalists themselves

become news and therefore one sees the need more than ever for media as an academic discipline to be established.

Conceptual framework

The burning question today is that if media's job is to educate people about various affairs, whose job is to educate the media, whose job is to question the media? Can the phrase "don't shoot the messenger" work anymore (Narayan, 2017)? Is media in India after 100 years of media education just a messenger and not a party itself to the news? These are some pertinent questions that most of the editors try to avoid facing because media of today is more of a business commodity rather than a social commodity (Business Standard, 2013). To look at how this transformation took place, one has to look back into the history of media education in the last 100 years and the social transformation of India which had an impact on media as a discipline.

Objectives

The main objectives of the research paper are:

1. To study the conditions behind the initiation of media education in India.
2. To study the condition of media education in India post-independence.
3. To study the impact of LPG reforms on media education in India post-1991 and post-millennium and digitization.
4. To study the skill gaps in media education.
5. To study the impact of COVID-19 and New Education Policy on media education.

Research methodology

The approach of the paper will be qualitative in nature. Historical analysis would be used as the method of research in this paper to analyze the last 100 years of media education in India. A critical analysis of different phases within the last century would be examined in retrospect longitudinally. The methodology behind the historical analysis is to examine evidence/s in order to assess and make a solid understanding of the past (Buckley, 2016). It is particularly applied to evidence contained in documents, although it can be applied to all artefacts. Here, the historian seeks to gain some certainty as to the facts of the past. The results will be extrapolated qualitatively.

Qualitative analysis is necessary to understand the history behind the evolution and growth of journalism education in India (Ezzy, 2013). It will prove very handy as a tool to understand the issue in question

here. This paper is basically a historical review of journalism education in India since its inception. As the proposed paper attempts to chronologically analyze India's media education from the past to the present, the time period which would be analyzed would be further divided into specific time-frames in order to assess these time period in microscopic detail.

The paper is a critical review of the developments in media education. Facts in this paper would be used more as a tool to understand the background or the context behind the social transformation happening in the Indian media and media education over the last century. Therefore, a critical analysis would help in understanding the nuances of the facts or events which took place over the discipline of journalism in the last 100 years.

Media education in the pre-independence era

The pre-independence era also referred to as the colonial era of British rule in India is where journalism started in the country. James Augustus Hicky's Bengal Gazette in 1780 is from where the first seeds of journalism in India as we know it today were sown (Otis, 2018). For nearly one and a half centuries thereafter, hundreds of newspapers started operating in the country, with vernacular press taking the lion's share of the rapidly increasing volume of publications. From academicians to scholars and from educated elites to freedom fighters, people from every educated section were writing for the press to press their demands for India's independence and showing the mirror to the colonial masters about their excesses against the native Indians.

But before 1920 nobody had given serious thought to formalize journalism into an academic discipline. Although Annie Besant made a daring effort to introduce a Bachelor of Arts course at the National University at Adyar, Madras (Chennai), while its failure to sustain itself for a long duration showcased that the ground of journalism education was far from ripe in India (Media South Asia, 2020). The historical conception regarding journalism has always been that one doesn't need to have an education in journalism necessarily in order to become a good journalist (Jha, 2016). The history of Indian journalism is filled with people having no academic background in journalism and yet learning on the field in the process of becoming good journalists. This historical fact has been a huge force against media education in India (although more so in the past, than today). If one has to look into media education during the pre-independence era, it becomes necessary to look into the educational qualifications of people who were doing journalism

in India. Now that's pretty easy to find out because India's entire top leadership had a law background. From Mahatma Gandhi to Jawaharlal Nehru and from Sardar Patel to Rajendra Prasad most of India's foremost freedom fighters were lawyers (Mishra, 2015). Those who were not lawyers were students of politics, history and society such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bhagat Singh etc.

Therefore, when everything in terms of the quality of journalism by these individuals was of the highest standard, there was never a need that was realized across the sections of educated elites in then India to have journalism courses in the country. It seems that the utility of such a course was questioned. Therefore, one only sees very few examples of journalism schools in India prior to independence. Apart from Annie Besant's brainchild journalism course at Madras, other examples constitute a certificate course in journalism at the Aligarh Muslim University in 1938, a journalism school at the private Bhavan Institute in the city of Kochi in Southern India. It was conceived by the Congress party for those Indian journalists who wanted to aid the nationalist movement's support for Home Rule. Apart from this, the decade of 1940s saw the emergence of two journalism courses, one at the University of Lahore and another one at the University of Madras in the years 1941 and 1947 respectively (Chatterjee, 2020). The number of journalism courses in India was so less in number that they can be easily counted on fingertips. This was the overall scenario of media education in the country. Now let us have a look at how media education evolved post-independence in India.

Media education in the post-independence era

The post-independence era is a significant period to understand the growth of media education and media educators in the country. Right from the onset, media education started to be more recognized and accepted as an academic discipline after the first four and a half decades after India's independence. The growth in media education was slow and steady but not exponential as one would see in the last decade of the 20th century and beyond. The reason was still the question of utility. This question arises largely in societies with hand to mouth existence, in societies that are either largely poor or underdeveloped. India ticked all three boxes. As an independent nation with a literacy rate of just over 10% and millions of hungry masses, the investments that were made during the Nehruvian era were on very few key sectors that were considered as basic for India's intrinsic growth as a country (Roffelsen, 2016). Industries like steel,

iron, heavy industries, scientific institutions were recognized to be the ones where money should be put. In that era of Fabian socialism, money was largely in the hands of government or very few industrialists, neither of whom thought of media education as any kind of requirement. Therefore, it was imperative that a new idea like establishing more media education institutions was never given serious thought by the decision-makers of the country. Even the demands from academicians or scholars to establish journalism departments in colleges and universities were not so strong. That's why one does quantitative analysis of the number of media courses that were introduced post-Independence in the country were still smaller in number, although much higher than its pre-independence status.

Attempts to establish the first media department was made by Prof. (Dr.) Prithvi Pal Singh in Delhi before partition. "The Trailblazer and The Founder of Journalism Education in India: Prof. Prithvipal Singh" by Charanjit Singh (2014) suggests that P. P. Singh wanted to start the department in Delhi after his return from the US. A letter by Professor D.N. Bhalla, Registrar of the nearly constituted East Panjab University was sent to Dr. P. P. Singh on November 11, 1947, communicated the decision of Sir Maurice Gwyer, Vice Chancellor.

The proposal submitted by Prof. Singh for starting the journalism programme was considered in the syndicate meeting and "the Delhi University could be persuaded to run a Department for Journalism for which Delhi would probably be an ideal place in that connection." Dr. Bhalla enclosed a copy of the letter addressed to the Registrar of the Delhi University, laying the onus on Prof Singh that "you will do well to explore the possibility of the Delhi University accepting this suggestion. Perhaps, if you were to pull the strings carefully and cleverly, this may not be a very difficult task to accomplish. I know that, both in your own interest as well as the interest of your students, you will be able to do the needful."

It is evident that sole responsibility to start the department in Delhi was given to P. P. Singh. It is also true that Singh suggested that the department should be started in Delhi because a good number of journals and newspapers were published from Delhi. This proximity to the newspapers could help students in providing better exposure. Registrar of East Punjab University sent a proposal to Delhi to set up the department in Delhi. However, Delhi University did not show a keen interest in taking the responsibility. Besides the fact that East Punjab University had offered to send its staff and other arrangements. After

the no expression of interest by Delhi University, Prof. Singh decided to go ahead with the decision of starting the department in Camp College.

It is very interesting to know that on December 6, 1947, Prof. Singh placed his requirements as- "two rooms" to accommodate a minimum of 50 students, three part-time lecturers for Practical Journalism course in English, Sports and Advertising and Practical Journalism in Urdu (One lecturer for each course) at the remuneration of ₹ 150 per month. He has to send several reminders for the proposal and on February 4, 1948, he expressed concern regarding the fee paid by the students. Within a few days, he received a letter from syndicate regarding the commencement of the students' exam on February 26. Despite the request from Prof. Singh to postpone the exams because of a shortage of time for preparation, exams were conducted. Finally, the proposal of Prof. Singh was accepted by the University on March 1, 1948. The Department was reborn on March 18, 1948, in the premises of the Harcourt Butler Senior Secondary School, Mandir Marg, in New Delhi with afternoon classes (5:45 pm to 8 pm). As informed by Dr. Archana Singh, Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Panjab University, Chandigarh, this was known as the PU centre and it was run by Prof. Singh at six different places including Delhi, Shimla, Solan and Hoshiarpur. It is to this day, on March 18, 1948, we can trace the founding of Journalism education in India on a continuous basis as the School of Communication Studies still exists and functions at Panjab University, Chandigarh. H. K. Dua, former Editor, The Tribune was the first batch pass-out and he studied in the (Proposed) PU Centre in Delhi in 1956 (Dahiya, 2021).

Few other examples of the establishment of journalism schools can be immediately seen just after independence when journalism courses were introduced in Calcutta University (1948) and at the Department of Journalism at the Maharaja's College, the University of Mysore in 1951 (Chatterjee, 2020). The same University of Mysore went on to introduce a Master's degree course in journalism in 1972. However, the 1950s and 60s saw more universities introducing journalism courses than in any previous decade. Nagpur University and Osmania University started journalism courses in 1952 and 1954 respectively as certificate courses in the newly instituted journalism departments. Both these universities went on to upgrade these certificate courses into bachelor degree courses in the decade of 1960s. While Osmania university upgraded its course in 1962, Nagpur University elevated its certificate

course by the mid-sixties with “the university’s Department of Journalism being set up as a unit of the Social Sciences faculty in July 1969” (Dutta, 2020).

Media departments were set up in different parts of India; however, Delhi joined the league way later compared to other parts of the country. Formal media education in Delhi can be recognized with the inception of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) whose foundations were laid in the 1960s, August 1965 under the aegis of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. For a very long time, there was no model curriculum for media education. There was a need of developing course content along with different modules. The institute was and is still based in New Delhi, although now the institution has five other branches situated across India in cities like Jammu, Aizawl, Dhenkanal, Kottayam, Amravati (“IIMC History”, 2021). The institute trains IIS probationers and has expanded over the years to impart postgraduate diploma courses in various subjects like English Journalism, Hindi Journalism, Urdu Journalism, Odia Journalism, Marathi Journalism, Malayalam Journalism, Radio and TV Journalism and Advertising and Public Relations.

In 1982, AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia was established to offer research-based programmes. However, this was the beginning and these premier institutions laid foundations of Media Education in Delhi. In addition to laying the foundation, these institutes also set a benchmark for media education pedagogy by implementing innovative methods for professional training and education. Even Delhi University started offering graduate courses in Journalism in the year 1989 in one of its colleges Delhi College of Arts and Commerce (DCAC History, 2021).

Factual part aside, the point here is that a society and a country like India which was newly independent facing a plethora of challenges since its inception as an independent nation-state couldn’t afford to prioritize a subject as niche as journalism. It is observed that only those societies who are otherwise well off in terms of doing extremely well in their socio-economic indicators and parameters are the ones who invest in niche areas like social sciences, fine arts and humanities. Otherwise, most of the societies including those who are developed today but were undeveloped in the past focused on scientific education.

Whereas Journalism is neither seen as a scientific course, nor a non-scientific course. It started as a course of vocation and developed into a non-scientific skilled based course with some amount of technical

education being imparted, in terms of teaching camera work and production work for newspapers, TV, radio, cinema and documentaries. However, all this was to significantly and rapidly change in India soon after the “Big-bang 1991 reforms” or the “LPG reforms”. Let us see how it impacted the media education post-liberalization.

Media education post 1991: LPG reforms and beyond

The year 1991 turned out to be the most significant year in the entire history of India since its independence. Indian history can be divided into two major eras: the pre-liberalization era and the post-liberalization era. While the former deals with the time period before the year 1991, the latter deals with the time period post-1991. In the period before 1991, the Indian economy and to an extent the Indian economic culture was primarily based on the License-Permit-Quota Raj (Aghion *et al.*, 2015). This ‘Raj’ referred to the very high bureaucratic interference in the day-to-day functioning of various sectors of the Indian economy where for even minute detailing’s, a businessman or an industrialist hailing from primary, secondary or tertiary sectors of the economy and from small, medium and large enterprises had to take license and permit from bureaucrats in government offices. In those days, the business class found it very difficult to get their work done smoothly which thereby impacted both in their business inputs and outputs. This thereby was impacting the entire Indian economy which was still carrying on itself the principles of Nehruvian Socialism on which the ideals of the Indian National Building task was propounded and carried for decades (Rao, 2018). Despite many calls from within and outside the industrial and business class i.e., from the scholars, researchers and journalists to make a shift from this old License Permit Quota Raj, the political leadership in India was just not ready to do away with a whole system and its structure that had worked reasonably well till then (Desai, 2020).

But when India’s economic situation worsened humongously at the advent of the 1990’s, it led to the Balance of Payments Crises. It was India’s one of the worst ever financial crises till then where due to depreciating value of the Indian Rupee in the global market, India was unable to purchase its essential imports or service its external debt repayments. The situation became so severe that India had to forego its old economic policies and while doing that India pledged its gold reserves, took a loan from the International Monetary Fund and other structural adjustments (sponsored by IMF and World Bank)

in the economy was initiated. This severe situation turned out to be a blessing in disguise for India as the then Indian government under Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao was forced to open its economy to the outside world in order to save India from its own economic crisis. The annual financial budget by India's then finance minister Dr. Manmohan Singh went on to liberalize, privatize and globalize the Indian economy in the truest sense of the word. That's why in short, they are known as the "LPG reforms". They're also referred to as the Big Bang reforms because of their big-bang like impact on the Indian economy and India as a nation at large.

Media also received a major impact due to these reforms. The first big thing was the arrival of private TV channels in India, a significant departure from the state-controlled one and only Doordarshan channel era. Many of these TV channels like Star and Zee Networks started to have their own news bulletins on their channels. Production houses like New Delhi Television had started getting slots on-air on Doordarshan to telecast their shows. The gradual increase in media houses post-1991 saw an increase in demand for reporters, writers, copy editors, production assistants, basically entire newsrooms were needed to be recruited across existing and newly opened media networks. For that demand to be satisfied, major cities of India, especially Delhi and Bombay (now Mumbai) and metros saw an exponential rise in the number of journalism schools and courses in India, many of whom were privately run by these very media networks.

Even Universities in Delhi and in Mumbai started offering more courses in journalism in more colleges than before. Media education till now was heavily based on print journalism. In fact, the first significant shift came in the nomenclature of media education. Earlier, the courses were called journalism courses largely but post 1991, the phenomenon of mass communication courses mushroomed and thrived. These new mass communication courses were drawing many students and were getting them ready for the world of broadcast journalism which had boomed in this era. The first satellite TV, Zee TV was launched in 1992. Apart from hundreds of new news channels being launched across the length and breadth of India, many new FM radio stations were also launched post-1991. This also impacted media education as many institutions such as IIMC (Indian Institute of Mass Communication) started offering courses named Radio and TV Journalism (1997). The advent of digital journalism in the second decade of the 21st century further emancipated the expansion of

media courses and media education in the country. Today, the number of media institutes are growing in every nook and corner of the country.

Reinventing media education post-millennium and in the era of digitisation

Post-millennium, the media education focus started changing to digital. There is a lack of currency and innovation in the curriculum, and a lack of faculty expertise in new media, as the new challenges of journalism education. The need of the hour is to teach in the digital age thought more in terms of technology with emphasis on applied than on conceptual learning and striking a balance between the two. Courses should evolve critical alternative approaches to give the intellectual experience of technology induced journalism practice and consumption as personalized media are involved.

We should prepare journalism students for skeptical and fact-resistant audiences, journalism training beyond journalism schools, teaching international reporting via digital global collaboration, preparing future journalists for on-the-job trauma, keeping passion for journalism alive while piling on new journalism skills, and teaching journalists how to overcome their own stereotyping and profiling biases. WJEC – Paris Syndicate of 2019 (Goodman, 2020).

In India, some pioneering institutes of Journalism, like IIMC has introduced emerging technologies in the course curriculum. Some emerging technologies that have been added are Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Processes, Blockchain technologies, bots, immersive journalism, digital storytelling, fact-checking, data journalism, Mobile Journalism (MOJO), Drone Journalism (DOJO) etc. But to introduce it pan India is a challenge. Teaching technology know-how to produce skilled personnel is necessary. It is challenging for educational institutes to adopt technology and teach new technologies to students. There is a need to accept the change and develop technological skills and storytelling abilities and induce the digital mindset in the students. More and more traditional organizations are now going digital-first and entrepreneurial journalism is all about digital-only. So, more and more institutes and Universities are now planning to include emerging technologies in their syllabus.

Skill gaps in the media education

Media industry is currently grappling with numerous skill development challenges including the supply-demand gap both in terms of quality and quantity of workforce. Skill development is an indispensable

criterion to meet the various demands in a job or across jobs. Agencies like the National Skills development agency (NSDA) and Media and Entertainment skills councils have also conducted studies on the same. Both these agencies through their studies came to the same conclusion that the courses that are designed for academic education do not change at the rate of the changing demands of the media industry. Once a course is designed in an academic manner for a university or a college, it takes years for changes to take place in the syllabus. Inherently, the Indian education system has been historically based on imparting theoretical knowledge, an idea which successive governments in independent India just carried over from the education system prevailing under the British rule in India. It's true that the syllabus changed but the thrust of syllabus structure remained the same. For instance, a graduation degree in journalism is not good enough to prepare a student for a career in broadcast journalism because the degree is structured to prepare candidates only for print journalism and that too not the print production but just the desk editing part or copywriting a story or filing a report. Similarly, a TV journalism course can't prepare a candidate for digital or print journalism because journalism is not a 'generalized field' anymore. It has become a very job-specific discipline that requires specific skillsets for different kinds of jobs that are available within the media industry.

Although, journalism courses largely require candidates to do internships mandatorily in media houses to get some idea of the functioning of the media. Sometimes these internships prove to be extremely productive, while for others it may not achieve the same results. This is because it depends on the kind of media network a student gets to do an internship and the kind of mentor who is present there to teach the interns.

The status of specialized disciplines within media such as science communication is also not upto the mark. Talking about this at the International Web Convention on Hundred Years of Media Education, Nimish Kapoor, a senior scientist from Vigyan Prasar opined that the reasons for this are lack of efficient teachers, lack of science communicators, lack of content and even lack of employment opportunities. To add to that there has also been a failure in disseminating the courses and materials to students across the country. Two key suggestions came out from this discussion:

1. Science communication should be integrated with regular mass communication curriculum.
2. Research in areas of science and development communication needs encouragement.

This shows that the amount of skill gap in media education is huge and therefore the whole system requires a major revamping. Even the World Bank in 2010 conducted a study on entrepreneurship whose results showcased that India has much less entrepreneurs across the spectrum as compared to other developing economies like Thailand, Brazil and Malaysia. Further, a report published by the Centre for Media Studies in association with Stirling University mentions that more than 80% of media professionals who were interviewed for skill gaps in media said that though the fresh graduates come with good technical skills but they lacked general awareness and writing ability. According to UKIERI (UK – India Education and Research Initiative) report, Fresh media graduates need to be spoon-fed in the initial one year and most of them rely on search engines like 'Google and that's why they are called Google journalists of the organization.' In India, the Government launched the National Skill Development Mission in 2008 under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The target of the mission was to impart skills to 500 million people by the year 2022. The policy aimed to develop about market information system, both at the centre and the state level. For the implementation of the mission three-tier institutional structure was established in 2008.

- (1) National Council of Skill Development under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister.
- (2) The National Skill Development Coordination Board.
- (3) The National Skill Development Corporation.

Despite all the bureaucratic efforts, media in India today is still continuing to grapple with numerous challenges related to skill gaps. The first step to rectify that lies in the basics i.e., imparting a skill-based media education to students so that once they complete their degree courses, they're market-ready and employable.

The focus on new entrants in the media field is given to look into the debate between the gap in the curriculum of media courses taught in various Indian universities/institutes and rapidly changing professional needs in the media industry. Hypothetically, there is a huge gap between the curriculum taught in Indian media universities and institutes and the new job roles in the different sectors of the media industry. For example, digitization calls for new skill development. One can understand that the media industry lacks skilled professionals to meet the needs of time and technology and it adversely affects the proper functioning of media. It is important to adopt new methods and plans to train the existing media persons and upcoming journalism

trainees in a systematic way.

The sector skill councils play a significant role in bridging the training and need, guiding to development of the curricula based on the industry link. Media and Entertainment Skills Council (MESCC) has been set up under the National Skills Development Mission, Government of India under the aegis of National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) and promoted by FICCI, to address the workforce skill development needs of Media and Entertainment Industry covering the important industries like Film, Television, Animation, Gaming, Digital, Radio, Print, OOH and Advertising. Till now many new job roles in media and entertainment sector have been approved while several job roles have been defined as per National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Although, COVID-19 has drastically hit the efforts to bridge the prevailing skill gaps to the point that it has adversely affected the existing structures of media education and furthered the skill gaps that were already present.

Impact of COVID-19 on media education

COVID-19 has been the most crucial, important and significant paradigm shift in the last 100 years that has affected the entire planet. Naturally, it has a severe impact on media education. The physical classrooms have shifted to digital classrooms. The physical proximity between the teachers and the students for interpersonal communication which is required in a classroom environment is now lost upon digital reach, access, loose internet connections, slow internet speeds and many other factors. With no access to classrooms for over the last one year which continues to date, students are left bereft from the hands-on practical experience imparted to them in a classroom environment. Students who do attend the online lectures also are lesser in number as compared to when they were attending physical classes. There is no way for a media educator or a journalism teacher to know for sure whether their lectures are being listened to at all by the students. Other than this, it has also impacted the examination and evaluation process in media schools. In the last two to three semesters, most of the media institutes are relying on open-book examinations. Now the question that arises is that is it a fair way to assess and differentiate between a good student and the rest. The atmosphere of the examination halls and examination centres is also disturbed sadly, due to this coronavirus pandemic. These are just the conscious elements that one can pinpoint towards but there are still a lot of sub-conscious and unconscious elements that go into a classroom teaching which

cannot be explained merely in words or statements. Classrooms are meant to be felt as much as they are meant to be merely present. Digital classrooms have no such ‘feel good factor’ about them because they’re merely time-constrained spaces or windows of an attempt to learn something. The system simply can’t run longer on digital teaching.

The second big aspect is that the students who have right to talk to their teachers about all aspects of their education, their career and sometimes often even about their own lives are finding it difficult to express their thoughts over Zoom calls, skype calls, MS Teams, Webex and Google Meets. This is coinciding with the rising mental health pandemic as well where many people have succumbed to depression. Many students are going through diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health issues with no productive way for them to be seriously addressed. Sometimes, isolation is good for gaining knowledge but an academic course requires physical classrooms and institutions to give the overall emotional, mental and all-around development of a student into a learned individual. Yes, technology is a big asset to mankind and it has proven itself so in the realm of teaching and imparting education, but it can never be an all-time alternative or even a substitute for classroom education. The good thing is that even the policymakers and the governments across the state and the center agree to the necessity of classroom teaching.

Impact of NEP on media education

The word ‘NEP’ refers to the National Education Policy that came into picture in the month of July 2020, 29th July^{1&2} to be precise (“One year of NEP”, 2020). The National Education Policy which was put forward by the Government of India through its Ministry of Education aims to revamp the old education structure existing in the country in order to create a new structure that is aligned with the goals of 21st-century education. Basically, the idea is to make students skilled so that they are employable. Until now, one of the biggest disappointments of employers in India is that the candidates that come to them for jobs are not employment ready. Some even go to the extent that they are unemployable as the students only possess bookish knowledge and have no practical knowledge of the subject. What the employers refer to is the lack of desired skillsets amongst the candidates who apply for various jobs. The National Education Policy primarily aims to reduce and if possible, eliminate the skill gaps between what is and what is desired from the students or the job-seeking candidates.

The goal of the National Education Policy is not

to leave students on the probability of getting good learning experiences on the luck or fate of getting into a good internship at a great media organization, the goal is to create a new academic structure where all students become self-reliant through the practical knowledge that is imparted to them within their respective classrooms. The idea of NEP looks very progressive on paper but it has got miles to cover before it achieves the desired results. It has been just one year since NEP's inception so it is not the right time to judge on the success of NEP yet, especially at a time when the last whole year has coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings

1. Media education in India has come a long way to establish its roots as an academic discipline.
2. The last 100 years of media education has showcased the utility of media education in India.
3. The seeds of media education were sown in the British rule but its roots grew only after India's independence post-1947.
4. The importance of media education has grown considerably over the years, especially post-liberalization of the Indian economy in 1947.
5. The last three decades have changed media education more significantly than it had in the previous seventy years since its inception.
6. There is still a lack of quality media educators in the country.
7. Specialization in area-specific disciplines within media education such as Science communication is still not being addressed properly.
8. The scope of enhancing media education standards is still pretty huge in India, especially in the academic institutions based in smaller towns and cities.
9. COVID-19 has disturbed the quality of media education, especially the practical portion of media education.
10. Skill gaps among fresh graduates in media are huge.
11. Employers in media are not satisfied with the skill sets of fresh graduates who are also employment seekers.
12. Media educational institutes are picking up pace to introduce emerging technologies in the course curricula post-digitization.
12. The New Education Policy looks very ambitious on paper and therefore it will take some time for its impact to be assessed on media education.
13. Media education needs to cover a long way to be at par with the rapidly changing media industry

demands from the new graduates.

Conclusion

Media education in India is still taking deeper roots and the scope of media education expansion is still pretty huge. The last 100 years have shown that India as a country is more than ready now to expand media education as the utility of media education is now unquestioned. But there are questions that are unanswered. Some of the questions concern new directions for growth, relevance, curricular needs, its recognition as a discipline, its connection with the media industry, and the transition from oral communication to print to broadcast to digital media. Is it a vocational, professional or traditional pedagogy? The nomenclature is different for the same courses taught in many different universities. Is it a disciplinary, multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary field of study? Further, the question is that the curricula should focus on a skill-driven or knowledge-driven approach, or should it be a combination of both? All of the questions are important for media education to grow, redefine itself and keep pace with the emerging technologies.

Strangely, the centenary year of media education in India has also coincided with the period of the coronavirus pandemic. It is but natural that a different phase of media education would start in the post-COVID world not just to demarcate the history of media education in India between its first 100 years and years to come but the demarcation would also be in terms of media education in India pre-COVID and post-COVID years.

Media education is currently suffering a lot due to COVID-19 but one hopes that soon the world would return to a life without the necessity of masks and physical distancing in the post-COVID world. Till such a time comes, the teachers of media are doing their best to teach online classes because they can only control the 'controllable', while nothing can really be done about things that are out of one's control. Even media workshops about production and camera work are being held in digital classes but hands-on experience to touch and use the equipment is being largely missed by both the students and the faculty. Currently, in the era of epidemic disease, how can online media education bridge the gap between those who have digital access and those who do not?

Today, nobody can predict for sure when things would resume normally and when the world could go back to life as people knew it before this pandemic. Till then the idea of media educators is to sustain on

technology to give whatever little one can give in terms of education to the students.

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Notes

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Academia-Industry Interface in Media Education: An Experience Survey of Media Educators and Industry Professionals in Eastern India

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ABSTRACT

Media education in India has grown up amidst the discourse on its various aspects during the last 100 years. It has witnessed enormous expansion due to the rapid growth of the media industry in the post-globalization era. Academic as well as administrative studies have highlighted the need for an effective interface between media departments and industry in order to deal with various deficiencies with respect to departments, educators, programs, curricula, research, publication, infrastructure and production etc. However, the studies have also expressed concern over the present state of the interface, which is loosely connected. The present study undertakes an exploratory research design integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For this purpose, all (29) post-graduate media departments in West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand have been surveyed and data has been collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews of media educators. Further, senior and experienced industry professionals have also been interviewed to understand the industry perspective. The study indicates that the interface between media departments and industry in Eastern India is quite unsystematic and they are loosely associated. The bilateral crisis leads to adverse repercussions on the quality of teaching, training, research and job opportunities. Existing crises should be dealt with a systematic, collaborative and coordinated effort between both the stakeholders through a policy framework.

Key words: Academia, Industry, Interface, Media education, Universities, Eastern India.

Introduction

Academia-industry interface is referred to as a systematic, interactive and collaborative effort between academic institutions and industry that has potential to enhance the quality of teaching, training and research. It is believed that a healthy interface between media departments and media industry helps both by fulfilling the demand and supply of skilled manpower as well. In the era of fast-changing information and communication technologies, academia as well as industry have been witnessing quick technological transformation, demanding a greater need for an improved interface to understand and fulfil each other's requirements.

A strong and positive relationship between academia and industry has also been emphasized by various studies, reports and policy papers of government as well as private organizations. Therefore, it is imperative to develop a systematic interface that will have positive transformation in teaching, training, research and job opportunities. Here, the study primarily investigates the status

of this relationship and how much it has helped in improving the level of teaching and training and providing collaborative platforms for research and job opportunities in Eastern India.

Media education in Eastern India: Higher education scenario in Eastern India reflects a total of 125 full-fledged functional universities prior to the COVID-19. West Bengal leads with 40 universities, followed by Bihar (30), Odisha (28) and Jharkhand (27) (UGC, 2019). As far as the landscape of media education in Eastern India is concerned, it has completed seven decades of its existence with the birth of the first journalism program at the University of Calcutta in 1948 (Dutta, 2020). The discipline witnessed very slow development with the launching of four (04) media programs during the first five decades between 1948 to 1999 in the region. These include University of Calcutta (1948), Berhampur University, Odisha (1973), Ranchi University, in undivided Bihar-Jharkhand (1987) and University of Burdwan, West Bengal (1997). In the post-2000 era, the scenario improved with the birth of more media

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departments and the number of postgraduate media departments at the university level reached 29 in Eastern India.

Media education scenario shows that West Bengal leads with twelve (12) postgraduate media departments out of 40 universities, which include two (2) central, six (6) state and four (4) private universities. In Odisha, ten (10) postgraduate media departments are functional out of 28 universities,

which include one (1) central, three (3) state, four (4) private and one (1) deemed and state open university each.

Whereas, in Bihar, four (4) departments are in existence that offers postgraduate programs out of 30 universities, which includes one (1) central and three (3) state universities. In Jharkhand, three (3) departments are functional out of 27 universities, which include one (1) central and two (2) state universities. However,

Table 1 Media Departments in Universities of Eastern India

Type of University	West Bengal		Odisha		Bihar		Jharkhand	
	University	Department	University	Department	University	Department	University	Department
Central	1+1*	2	1	1	3	1	1	1
State	26	6	18	4	19	3	11	2
Private	10	4	6	4	7	0	14	0
Deemed/To Be	2	0	3	1	1	0	1	0
Total	40	12	28	10	30	4	27	3

*Regional center of a Central University in Kolkata.
Note: The research covers Postgraduate Media Departments in Universities till January 2018.
Source: UGC, 2019.

it has been found that most of the postgraduate media programs in Bihar and Jharkhand are being run under fringes of mother departments like Hindi, English, and Political Sciences or through self-financing mode except in central universities.

The discourse on media education indicates that the discipline has grown up by the force of circumstances. It has pointed out various deficiencies with respect to teaching, training, research and job opportunities in the discipline that has been in existence since its inception (Dua, 2009). In order to deal with the issues, a strong academia-industry interface has been one of the key recommendations of academia as well as administrative studies. Therefore, the present study is extremely important in understanding the state of the interface between media education departments and industry in Eastern India.

Review of literature

Eapen (1982) investigated the status of communication/journalism education in India and expressed concern by mentioning that the discipline lagged behind in comparison to Third World countries like Brazil, Philippines and Thailand. Some of the reasons responsible for this situation are colonial past, the unwillingness of industry to provide endowments and lack of government funding etc. Eapen (1995) pointed out that communication/journalism education

is struggling to be considered as a separate discipline due to the narrow understanding of academicians and industry professionals. He reiterated on the need for an academia-industry interface and expressed that the University Grants Commission (UGC) (in collaboration with media) could evolve a scheme by which faculties and industry professionals could be exchanged for a certain period which will serve the interest of both the stakeholders.

Thakur (1982) emphasized that it is need of the hour to establish a national body more like the American Council on Education for Journalism than like the British National Council for the Training of Journalists. This body should act as a liaison group representing media educators and industry professionals. Eapen (1995) mentioned that the body should lay down norms and standards of admission and evaluation process, academic programs, internship, research and production work, strength of the faculty and their qualifications and experience.

UGC Curriculum Development Committee (2001) also recommended that a media department should have close links with the local and regional media institutions/organizations for providing effective training and job opportunities for the benefit of students. Further, the committee suggested that a department may have a placement cell for the purpose.

Belavadi (2002) expressed concern over

unfocused courses, rigid recruitment policies, poor infrastructure and unsuitable textbooks. He mentioned media institutes should focus on a specialized program in print, radio, television and new media etc. Efficient and experienced teachers from academia, as well as industry, should be recruited to teach theory, practice and research-based programs. He pointed out the faculty recruitment policy of UGC, which is a major hurdle for the industry professionals. It demands doctoral degrees for entering the teaching profession. He stressed hard on the need for suitable amendments in the UGC regulations so that it may attract industry professionals.

Ranganathan (2006) also expressed concern over the UGC guidelines which make PhD mandatory for moving up the academy hierarchy. It is a major obstacle for industry professionals to join media departments despite having experience. At present, most journalism colleges going strictly by UGC guidelines, fill teaching posts with PhD holders having no substantial experience in the media industry. Ranganathan argued that the media landscape is ever-changing due to communication technology, but media departments do not match with that pace. Therefore, collaborative efforts between the media department and industry are the need of the hour. Melkote (2006) argued that the interface between academia and industry can play a major role in providing a platform for teaching, training and research, but this link is missing, which is an area of concern.

Dua (2009) suggested adopting a microscopic and methodic strategies for media education curricula in order to meet the specific need of industry. He emphasized on an innovative, exclusive, interdisciplinary approach, practical based, assignment loaded, and multimedia-tuned classroom teaching. Further, the media industry should come forward in funding and awarding research projects to noted journalism and communication faculty.

Sanjay (2009) believes imbalance of theory and practice in the media curriculum and inability to integrate new technology due to a lack of coordination between academia and industry is responsible for the present state of media education. He highlights the need for professional experience for media teachers and timely industry inputs for updating journalism schools. Therefore, it is high time for introspection with all the stakeholders such as educational institutions; captains of the industry; media professionals; concerned citizens; teachers, young and old.

Dayal and Goyal (2009) stressed upon the need for good relationships between media institutes and

industry to provide qualitative teaching, training, research and job opportunities. To strengthen the linkage, exchange programs for media educators and industry professionals should be encouraged on a deputation basis for one or two years in equivalent positions without any promotional or financial loss. This practice shall be fruitful for all the stakeholders such as media institutes, industry, professionals, educators, researchers and students.

Sectoral Innovation Council of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India (2012) pointed out that there is no academia-industry linkage for research and development. Therefore, it is necessary to build this association by inviting all the stakeholders for a discussion on media policy. Tere (2013) mentioned that most of the teaching positions in the departments remain vacant for years. In absence of full-time faculty, teaching in the classroom, media research, academia-industry interface and the motivation of students to take the course seriously has been adversely affected.

Pattnaik (2013) highlighted the role of the media industry and mentioned that it does not pay adequate attention to find out the ways to resolve the existing crisis of journalism education. Pattnaik referred to the UGC report 'Communication research is an absolutely virgin field in Indian universities' and suggested that the media industry should come forward for research activities in collaboration with the university departments in order to overcome the deficiencies. Media departments should also approach media persons for teaching, training and placement. Centre for Media Studies (2015) pointed out academia-industry interface the most critical factor. At present, there is no interface between academics and industry in India that looks into the broader aspect of the challenges faced in the media education sector and consequent effect on the industry. Yet another challenge is the inability to select good teaching staff from the media industry due to inflexible UGC norms.

Chatterjee (2015) mentioned that academia-industry interface is not vigorous despite the trend of 'industry focus' in journalism and media education. Better media institutes try to synergize their syllabus in tune with the industry practice and requirements by providing more hands-on training and live projects in collaboration with media houses. He stressed hard on the need for more empirical research in media education, which should be need-based and supported and funded by the industry. Therefore, a mechanism should be developed to build an industry-academia interface.

Research objectives

- To investigate the present state of interface between media department and industry from the perspective of media educators in Eastern India
- To examine the viewpoints of industry professionals on the linkage between industry and media departments in Eastern India.

Research questions

- How do media educators look at the state of interface with industry for teaching, training, research and job opportunities?
- How do industry professionals find a relationship with the media department for teaching, training, research and job opportunities?
- Whether students acquire required potential/skill after completion of their education from the media departments?
- What kind of initiatives are needed from both the stakeholders for building up a systematic and effective interface?
- How can the media department and industry contribute to the improvement of qualitative teaching, training, research and job opportunities?

Research methodology

The study undertakes an exploratory research design in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been integrated. The study has examined the interface between the media departments and industry on four parameters i.e., teaching, training, research and job opportunities. Experience survey has been conducted as a method of data collection by using tools of questionnaire and in-depth interviews of senior media educators associated with the postgraduate media departments as a dean or head or coordinator in Eastern India. Total 33 media educators have been interviewed in Eastern India.

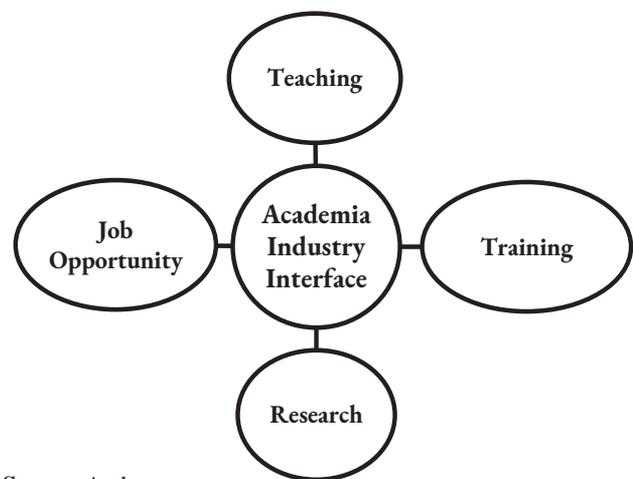
Thereafter, experience surveys of senior media professionals have also been conducted through in-depth interviews on the same parameters. The selection of media persons is on the basis of their association with the industry as well as media department. Two industry professionals holding senior positions in media organizations (one from English and vernacular media each) from every state in Eastern India have been selected and total of eight senior and experienced media professionals have been interviewed in Eastern India.

The process of data collection continued for one year in between 2018 to 2019 during which the

researcher personally visited all the media departments in West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand in order to authenticate the information through a mixed-method approach. The entire process has been recorded in audio-visual mode. The researcher has faced some limitations such as scarcity of literature, unavailability or unwillingness of respondents for providing information due to personal or professional reasons and fast-changing media education scenarios in the region etc.

The study based on academia-industry interface in the media departments of Eastern India primarily focuses on four components i.e., teaching, training, research and job opportunities and their operation

Fig. 1



Source: Author

definitions are:

- **Teaching:** Any interactive effort of the media department with industry professionals for imparting theoretical aspects or sharing practical experiences with the students on a subject matter as per course curriculum through inviting media persons to the institution for delivering special lectures or routine classes.
- **Training:** Any collaborative effort in the form of industry exposure/visits or internships of students by associating students with various media houses. The basic purpose of training is to give hands-on exposure to the media students about various media practices and real-life feel of work-flow and ecosystem of media organization.
- **Research:** Creating interactive and collaborative platforms related to research and innovation for both the media department and industry to access and utilize resources of each other for mutual benefits.
- **Job opportunity:** Any collaborative effort for providing jobs to passing out media students

and providing a trained workforce to the media organization in the form of campus placements, mock interviews etc.

Academia-Industry interface from the perspective of media educators

The study shows that all 29 university departments in Eastern India have prepared an interactive platform by inviting industry professionals for teaching and training as per course curriculum. However, it is to note that engagement of industry professionals for teaching increases or decreases on the basis of existing strength of full-time regular faculty and location of the media department. It means that a department with a good strength of full-time regular faculty members faces less dependence on industry professionals for teaching, whereas in the departments having scarcity of full-time faculties are more dependent on industry professionals as visiting faculty members.

Another practice is engagement of part-time or contractual faculty members who manage the department in absence of full-time regular faculty

members. Further, the location of the media department and industry also increases or decreases the frequency of professional's visits. For example, a media department located in the state capital region is in an advantageous position to invite more industry professionals in comparison to those departments that are located far-flung from the state capital region. It is also convenient for industry professionals to visit media departments frequently due to concentration of media in the state capital region. However, in absence of a systematic mechanism, the interface between the media department and industry and their outcome is below expectations as pointed out by the industry professionals of Eastern India. Further state-wise analysis points out:

West Bengal is the birthplace of media in India and media education in Eastern India as well, yet the concept of media education was initially opposed with this argument that skill required for media is in-born quality, which can't be taught. However, it grew with this discourse across the country. The main deficiencies of media education in the state are lack

Table 2 Academia-Industry Interface in the Media Departments

Sr. No.	University	Department/School/ Faculty/Centre	State	For Teaching	For Training	For Research	For Job Opportunity
1	University of Calcutta, Kolkata	Journalism and Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
2	University of Burdwan, Burdwan	Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
3	Visva Bharati University, Shanti Niketan	Journalism and Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
4	Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata	Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
5	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	Journalism	WB				
6	University of North Bengal, Darjeeling	Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
7	Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Viswavidyalaya, Kolkata	Journalism and Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
8	Aliah University, Kolkata	Journalism and Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
9	Adamas University, Kolkata	Journalism and Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
10	Amity University, Kolkata	Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
11	Sister Nivedita University, Kolkata	Mass Communication and Journalism	WB	✓	✓		✓
12	Xavier University, Kolkata	Mass Communication	WB	✓	✓		✓
13	Berhampur University, Berhampur	Mass Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
14	Ravenshaw University, Cuttack	Journalism and Mass Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
15	Central University of Orissa, Koraput	Journalism and Mass Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
16	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar	Political Science	OR	✓	✓		✓
17	Birla Global University, Bhubaneswar	Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
18	Xavier University, Bhubaneswar	Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
19	Sri Sri University, Cuttack	Media Studies	OR	✓	✓		✓
20	Centurion University, Gajapati	Media and Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
21	KIIT University, Bhubaneswar	Mass Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
22	Odisha State Open University, Bhubaneswar	Journalism and Mass Communication	OR	✓	✓		✓
23	Central University of South Bihar, Gaya	Mass Communication and Media	BR	✓	✓		✓
24	Nalanda Open University, Patna	Journalism and Mass Communication	BR	✓	✓		✓
25	Patna University, Patna	Hindi	BR	✓	✓		✓
26	Maulana Mazharul Haque University, Patna	Mass Communication	BR	✓	✓		✓
27	Ranchi University, Ranchi	Journalism and Mass Communication	JH	✓	✓		✓
28	Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi	Mass Communication	JH	✓	✓		✓
29	Nilambar Pitamber University, Palamu	Journalism and Mass Communication	JH	✓			

of state funding, vacant teaching positions for a long period of time and infrastructural resources. Despite good number of media departments, there is a dearth of regular full-time teachers in these departments i.e., University of Calcutta, Kolkata (1), University of Burdwan (3), Visva Bharati University, Shanti Niketan (3), Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata (2), West Bengal State University, Kolkata (2), University of North Bengal, Darjeeling (1), Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Kolkata (1), Aliah University, Kolkata (3), Adamas University (6), Kolkata, Amity University, Kolkata (8), Sister Nivedita University, Kolkata (2) and Xavier University, Kolkata (3).

West Bengal: In this scenario, the study shows that 11 out of 12 media departments in West Bengal invite industry professionals to teach various components of course curriculum due to scarcity of full time faculty members. Further, nine (9) out of 12 media departments are located in Kolkata, the state capital of West Bengal. The frequency of industry professionals visiting the media department is high in comparison to those located in other parts of West Bengal. The study reflects that a higher frequency of industry professionals' visits to the media departments results in an increased number of job and training opportunities for students in media organizations. Also, students develop personal contact with industry professionals during their frequent visit to the department which eventually helps them get into the industry. T. Basu (personal communication, September 02, 2018) notes,

In state-run media departments, funding is a major issue; therefore, teaching positions to remain vacant for a long and development of infrastructure is stuck in comparison to centrally funded media departments. Further, the gap between academia and industry is another concern, which needs to be strengthened for teaching, training, research, and job opportunities. In order to deal with various qualitative issues as per today's scenario, a media education advisory body, not a regulatory body, consisting of media educators and professionals may be formed.

Odisha: Odisha takes the credit to launch a second media department at Berhampur University in Eastern India. The present study represents that all media departments invite industry professionals for teaching various theoretical and practical

components of course curriculum. Further, the study indicates a shortage of full-time regular faculty members in the departments. These include Berhampur University, Berhampur (0), Ravenshaw University, Cuttack (5), Central University of Orissa, Koraput (2), Utkal University, Bhubaneswar (0), Birla Global University, Bhubaneswar (4), Xavier University, Bhubaneswar (8), Sri Sri University, Cuttack (2), Centurion University, Gajapati (4) and KIIT University, Bhubaneswar (3). It is also one of the reasons for dependency on industry professionals for completion of academic programs as visiting faculties. P.C.Mohapatra (personal communication, November 19, 2019) opines,

Media education needs to include sufficient practical inputs. However, it totally lacks in both regional as well as national media education scenarios in absence of a planned and sufficient interface between media department and industry. Unlike other disciplines such as music and performing arts, UGC has ignored the relationship between media department and industry in framing policies which is essential for effective teaching, training, research and job opportunities. It can be seen in the Western model of media education where they have successfully done it through interactive and collaborative efforts.

Further, five (5) out of 10 media departments are located in Bhubaneswar, the state capital region. Therefore, the frequency of industry professionals visiting media departments is high in comparison to those located in other parts of Odisha. The study reflects that a higher frequency of industry professionals' visits has helped students in getting job and training opportunities.

Bihar: Media education came into existence during the decade of 1990s in an undivided Bihar-Jharkhand. Despite three decades of its existence, the state of media education is in bad shape. The study indicates that three (3) out of four (4) media departments in Bihar do not have full-time regular faculty members. These include Patna University, Patna (0), Nalanda Open University, Patna (0) and Maulana Mazharul Haque University, Patna (0). Therefore, these departments are dependent on contractual faculty members and industry professionals for teaching various theoretical and practical components of the subject. Though students get industrial exposure

during teaching and training, it does not help much in getting job opportunities in absence of systematic efforts. According to S. Kumar (personal communication, November 19, 2019)

Media education still has not enjoyed autonomy as a separate discipline in Bihar. It has been functional under mother departments of Hindi or English. This practice has obstructed the development of the discipline. Deficiencies reflect an acute shortage of teachers, outdated curriculum, negligible research, publication and production and disconnect between academia and industry. In order to deal with these deficiencies, academia-industry interface is a must, which is not yet planned systematically at the policy level.

However, the media department at the Central University of South Bihar, Gaya and recently established media department at Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari have shown an optimistic scenario. These departments invite industry professionals frequently in order to build up a platform for teaching, training and job opportunities, which may contribute to shaping this interface in near future.

Jharkhand: During 1990s, the need for media training was felt in undivided Bihar-Jharkhand, a team comprising of Dr. Balbir Dutt, former editor, Ranchi Express, Rameshwar Tiwari, Bureau Chief, Press Trust of India visited media department at University of Calcutta in order to understand the functioning of department. That paved the way for the first effort of media education in undivided Bihar-Jharkhand in 1987 at Ranchi University. However, the overall scenario of media education in the state is still in bad shape and it has to go a long way. B. Dutt (personal communication, July 12, 2017) opines:

Media education couldn't grow as an autonomous discipline in Jharkhand in absence of full-time regular teachers, infrastructural resources and research due to a lackadaisical approach at policy level during the last three decades. Somehow, part-time or contractual teachers manage the day-to-day activities of the department. Though media professionals are invited for teaching and training, yet a systematic interface is missing due to UGC regulations, which requires

revisions as per fast-changing information scenarios.

In Jharkhand, one (1) out of three (3) media departments invites industry professionals for teaching on various subject components as per the curriculum. However, two (2) out three (3) departments at Ranchi University, Ranchi (0) and Nilamber Pitamber University, Palamu (0) do not have full-time regular faculty members. Students get industrial exposure through teaching and training, yet it does not help much in getting job opportunities in absence of systematic efforts. However, the media department at Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi (4) invites industry professionals frequently in order to build up interactive platforms for teaching, training and job opportunities, but sincere efforts are required from all the media departments to improve the situation.

The study points out that the research scenario in Eastern India through collaborative efforts between media departments and industry is nil as there are no efforts in this regard. The main reason is the existing policy framework which is not in tune with both the stakeholders. Despite having a good number of media departments in West Bengal and Odisha, the collaborative efforts for research between media departments and industry are not channelized due to a shortage of faculty members. Whereas, in Bihar and Jharkhand, media education still struggles to get autonomous status as a discipline. Further, lack of research orientation, acute shortage of full-time regular faculties and most importantly in absence of member collaborative efforts for building research platforms have not even been thought of.

Academia-Industry interface from the perspective of media professionals

West Bengal: Media professionals highlighted that the discipline in the state has grown up at a slow pace due to the discourse on its necessity. However, the media boom in the era of information and communication technologies have paved the way for development of media education and its acceptance in industry. The discipline grew with the different nomenclatures like journalism, mass communication, development communication, advertising and public relations, event management, cultural studies and digital media etc.

Further, media professionals expressed concern over the current state of interface between media department and industry, which is not up to the mark due to the lack of communication and coordination. They pointed out that the policies of the UGC are not

in tune with the industry with respect to inducting media professionals, exchanging manpower and resources and promoting collaborations on the line of other disciplines like management and performing arts. It has ultimately hampered the effective interface between media departments and industry. S. Sur (personal communication, November 8, 2019) points out that:

The gap between academia and industry has been in existence since its inception. However, in a later phase, the need for media education was realized and accepted. The entire scenario reflects that the interdependency of the media department and industry is beneficial for both. However, this interface is still missing for teaching, training, research, and job opportunities due to existing UGC regulations.

Present system does not allow inducting industry professionals for teaching and training for a respectable time period. It is limited to lectures that do not serve the purpose. On the other hand, the media industry has also not been proactive in providing support for teaching, training and research in various ways such as endowments, paid internships and infrastructure.

Odisha: Media professionals highlighted that media education as a study program was conceptualized primarily to churn out skilled and efficient professionals for the media industry, which over the years has expanded beyond newspapers to television, advertising, public relations and research etc. Though the journey of media education in Odisha has completed more than four decades, the current state of media department-industry interface is far from the expectations. The departments take less interest in engaging industry professionals, which ultimately makes them unaware of the current trends being practiced in industry. As per R. Satpathi (personal communication, January 11, 2020):

Academia-industry interface is essential for mutual benefit, but ground reality sadly is far from meeting the expectations. In Odisha, it is rarely seen that university departments imparting media education ever evince interest to invite media professionals to share their experiences and industry requirements with the students, which is the biggest lacuna.

Media professionals expressed concern over the existing course curriculum and teaching pedagogy

that lack in skill orientation and communication skills among students, which is the most important issue for working in media. On the other hand, support from the media industry is negligible for teaching, training, research, and job opportunities. Hence, there is an urgent need to introspect on the state of this interface. Media departments, as well as industry, should approach each other for mutual benefits. N. Rath (personal communication, February 7, 2020) opines,

Disconnection between media department and industry is amply visible in India, the same case is with Odisha. It has not been explored properly except in some departments in the region. Therefore, it is essential for media departments to take initiative and to associate experienced and specialized industry professionals. For effective interface, western model particularly in America may be implemented in which both media departments and industry may collaborate with each other for teaching, training, research, and job opportunities. Exchange of faculty and industry professionals can help in understanding each other's requirements.

Bihar: Media professionals pointed out that there is a fewer number of media departments in the region and most of the media programs have their roots from mother departments of Hindi or English. They function in absence of full-time faculty members and are ill-equipped in infrastructure. Though vernacular media is booming in Bihar, yet industry has not shown interest in building up this interface. Hence, teaching, training, research and job opportunities suffer due to a lackadaisical approach. According to P. Pratyay (personal communication, February 28, 2020):

Though vernacular media is booming in Bihar, yet absence of interface between media department and industry is the ground reality. The reason is the lower number of universities imparting media education. However, newly established media departments in central universities may change the scenario in the near future.

However, newly established media departments in central universities have shown an optimistic scenario. They stressed hard on the development of more such organized media departments with full-time regular faculty members and infrastructure since their role is very important in associating

industry. A well-organized department may only think about better interface with industry and proactively work in this direction. As per P. P. Das (personal communication, January 8, 2020):

Academia-industry interface is indeed very important not only for media academics but also for media industry, especially in the current scenario when the shape and modus operandi of media professionals is changing very fast with the advancements in information technology.

Jharkhand: Media professionals expressed concern over the less number of media departments, absence of full-time regular faculty members, outdated course curriculum, poor infrastructure, research and publication. They pointed out that media departments do not match with the pace of fast-changing information and communication technology scenarios in the region, which resulted in the challenges being faced by the pass out students at master level in general and bachelor in particular. Media students are unaware of many of such changes that occur in the industry, but they gradually learn those trends being practiced in industry while working. According to U. N. Pathak (personal communication, January 26, 2020):

The present scenario reflects a lack of coordination and communication gap between media department and industries in Jharkhand. In order to address this issue, media departments should associate with experienced media professionals which will help them to understand the requirements of industry.

The interface with the media industry is not explored systematically. They stressed on the role of the media department that it should be dynamic and proactive in order to follow the new trends and methods practiced in the industry. They should approach industry for systematic collaboration which will surely help in teaching, training, research and job opportunities. At present, the ground reality reflects the gap between the media department and industry. However, it is also true that the media industry has also not approached departments for their requirements systematically.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study concludes that media departments in Eastern India have been inviting media professionals on various interactive platforms for teaching, training

and job opportunities. However, it is very unsystematic and both are loosely connected from the perspectives of both media educators and professionals in the region. In absence of a systematic interactive and collaborative platform, the gap between media department and industry is amply visible. Consequently, the bilateral crisis leads to adverse repercussions on qualitative teaching, training, research and job opportunities, which means casualty for both the stakeholders. Existing crises should be dealt with effective coordination and systematic collaboration between the media department and industry through a policy framework.

Mutual dialogue between academic leaders such as Vice Chancellors/ Directors/Deans and Editors/ Owners is essential in this regard, which will pave the way for a systematic and collaborative mechanism through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Tie-Up. There must be a Special Cell/Wing at institutional level for academia-industry interface which will prepare collaborative programs/initiatives through which manpower such as faculty member, industry professionals and students may be exchanged and/or recruited and resources may be shared. Accordingly, a placement cell at every department, as well as university level, should be set up for better implementation of these activities.

A list of senior and experienced media professionals at various media organizations should be prepared and they should be approached for teaching, training, research, and job opportunities. In this regard, a suitable amendment in UGC policies is required, which will facilitate the entire activities in a flexible manner to fulfil each other's requirements. And most importantly, a separate media education regulatory framework on the line of other disciplines like management, law or performing arts is also needed in this context to facilitate the process of interface between media academia and industry.

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Awareness and Implementation of the National Education Policy in Media Education

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ABSTRACT

In a world that is evolving at a rate faster than ever, the revision of the policies that govern our education system becomes extremely crucial. Education process has undergone sea change because of technological advancements. All the functions from administration to teaching to evaluation are being impacted by the new technologies. The National Education Policy 2020 aims to address these changes and proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure. It envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is *Bharat*, sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all, and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower. This paper aims to study the awareness about the National Education Policy (NEP) amongst Media Educators and its implementation in the field of Media Studies in Higher Education. The study used an online survey method to gauge how media educators view the NEP and implement it at classroom and institutional level. It also seeks to analyze the challenges faced by them and their recommendations for making the NEP more adoptable.

Keywords: National Education Policy 2020, Awareness, Implementation, Media studies, Media education

Introduction

The National Education Policy is a comprehensive document that is formulated to guide education system in India. The policy was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29th July 2020 and seeks to outline the vision of India's new education system. It is a detailed framework for elementary education to higher education along with vocational training for both rural and urban India. The policy aspires to transform India's education system.

India, having one of the largest education sectors in the world, has over 800+ universities and around 40,000 higher education institutions, reflecting the overall high fragmentation and many small-sized higher education institutions in the country which are affiliated with these universities (Kumar, 2005). It is vital to note that over 40% of these small-sized institutions are running single programs as compared to the expected reform of multidisciplinary style of higher education ("Draft National Education Policy", 2019). It is also worth noting that over 20% of colleges have an annual enrolment of less than 100 students, making them unable to increase education quality, while only 4% of colleges enroll more than 3,000 students each year (Aithal & Aithal, 2019). This low enrollment rate is attributable to both geographical imbalance and the educational

quality they provide.

Some of the reasons found for the fragmentation of the Higher Education (HE) system in India is the early streaming of students into different disciplines and the lack of access to higher education, especially in socio-economically disadvantaged areas which resulted in the current Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 25% only (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). Along with that, there is a lack of institutional autonomy and teacher autonomy to make innovations in higher education to attract many students. While there are insufficient mechanisms for career management and progression of faculty and institutional leaders, there is also a lack of research and innovations at most universities and colleges.

India is expected to be the world's third-largest economy by 2030-2032, with a projected GDP of 10 trillion dollars. It is clear that the ten trillion-dollar economy will be powered by knowledge resources ("National Education Policy", 2020). In order to enhance and surge the growth of the Indian education sector, the present government has taken upon itself to revamp it by introducing a comprehensive National Education Policy 2020. This is also in line with the Prime Minister's recent call, which focused on leveraging the Fourth Industrial Revolution (using technology for the good of humanity) to take

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India to higher levels of growth and prosperity. The recently introduced National Education Policy 2020 envisions an education system that is centered around India and contributes directly to transforming our country sustainably into an equitable and advanced knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to every citizen.

Review of literature

Devi and Cheluvvaraju (2020) highlighted the key aspects of the education sector in the country along with detailed research on its impact in the commerce sector. The objective of their study was to understand the National Education policy 2020 and analyze the effect of NEP 2020 on the Commerce and Management discipline. It further sought to compare the outcome of the NEP 1986 and NEP 2020. They highlighted how practical subjects can give students good exposure using various tools and software applications applicable to commerce and management education.

Maruthavanan (2019) aimed to find out the awareness of National Education Policy among the secondary school teachers based on the independent variables like gender, location, type of management, residential status, and family type. Upon research, they found out that the awareness of NEP (2019) is not above average.

Highlighting various parts of the policy of NEP 2020 and drawing a comparison with currently adopted education policy (NEP, 1986). They also aimed to identify the innovations in the new national higher education policy 2020 and sought to derive a reasonable prediction on the implications of new policy on the Indian higher education system.

Kumar (2020) sheds light on the vision of the policy, its implementation and its key policies. He talked about the Vision of the Policy, Challenging Implementation of Vocalization in Primary Stage, Creation of Regional Languages, Freedom to School Readiness, Reforms in Higher Education, the rise in GDP for the Education Sector, Global Recognition of the Existing Universities, Teacher Appointment and Requirements, Lack of Infrastructure and Facilities, Creation of Knowledge-Economy, Foreign University Gaining Access, Common Entrance Test for Universities and Corruption in the Education Sector and Lack of Financial Resources. The paper concluded that it is an issue of merit recognition that will be the key to rebuilding the Indian education system.

Panditrao (2020) investigated National Education Policy 2020 and its impacts on stakeholders, as well

as attempted to raise awareness and future influence of the policy by posing a series of questions on all accessible social media and assessing the responses. This showed that NEP 2020 will have an impact on the lives of students, the working styles of instructors, and changes in infrastructure or amenities in educational institutions. Parents must prepare themselves for the changes since they have had previous experiences with the old system of education that has been in effect for the last 34 years.

Research objectives

The objective of this study is to study the level of awareness and understanding that media educators have towards the National Education Policy 2020.

It also seeks to carefully evaluate how media educators are implementing the recommendations in the National Education Policy.

The objective of this study is to also understand the challenges an educator faces while implementing the recommendations and the suggestions they have, in their own understanding as to how the policy can be interpreted so as to aid the process of implementation in media education.

Research methodology

The study used a survey-based model of research. A group of Media Educator from the National Capital Territory of India (New Delhi) were approached to participate in the research and answer the questionnaire that had both open-ended and close-ended questions.

This study targeted 30 Media Professors from the National Capital Territory of India, (New Delhi). Media Academicians are used as the sole source of data as the objectives of the study are explorative and diagnostic.

Sampling

The Purposive Sampling method was used for the research. Since the purpose of the study is to analyze the awareness and implementation of the National Education Policy in media studies in higher education, the first set of selection was on the basis of level of education as only higher education was subject to the study. The second level of selection was based on the subject. The respondent must be a learned individual in the field of media studies, for them to be eligible to be a part of the study. This gave the best representation of respondents in the final sample leading to better analysis of the study.

Methods and instruments of data gathering

The research made use of primary data, which was collected using a structured questionnaire shared with the respondents through various digital platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and emails. The questionnaire was filled by respondents at their remote locations and their responses were then used for analysis.

Findings and analysis

The paper seeks to understand the level of awareness regarding the NEP 2020, its level of implementation and the challenges faced during implementation. It also brings into light the recommendations of 30 media academicians regarding adoption and implementation of the NEP.

Level of awareness

Research revealed that the average level of awareness amongst 30 academicians turns out to be 7.56 when the respondents were asked to rate their own level of awareness on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 denoted, 'No Awareness At all', while 10 denoted, 'Completely aware of all major recommendations.' Results also indicated that Government publications of the National Education Policy created maximum impact in increasing the level of awareness among the respondents at 33.3%. Conferences and seminars followed closely at 23.3% in increasing the level of awareness. One important thing to notice is that the least amount of awareness was created by digital news and social media at 6.7% and 3.3% respectively.

Level of implementation

Each respondent was asked to pick a number between a scale of 1 to 5, denoting their level of implementation of the National Education Policy 2020. The question is based on a linear scale between 1 to 5, where 1 indicates 'no implementation of the national education policy' while 5 indicates 'implementation of almost every major recommendation in the policy'.

The mean value calculated from the data turns out to be 3.06 depicting an average level of implementation done at an institutional level in higher education in the field of media studies.

Implementation of the NEP in media studies in higher education institutions

The objective is to understand the relationship between level of awareness and understanding towards the policy to its final implementation. It also helps to understand how an institute adopts the recommendations in its own unique way and what works for them and what doesn't. Upon analyzing

the responses, it was found that the institutions have experimented with pedagogies and skill sets and researched on various pedagogical exercises much before the policy was framed. However, they underwent a process to reassess and redesign their curriculum in order to make it more align with the vision and objectives of the National Education Policy after it was approved. Some institutions have constituted a Task Force Committee to implement the recommendations while others have implemented the policy by incorporating more practical exposure in their curriculum.

The National Education Policy 2020 states that a quality higher education must enable personal accomplishment and enlightenment, constructive public engagement, and productive contribution to the society. Keeping that in view the Advertising and Public Relations Department, Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) engaged students in conducting Media Information Literacy Workshop across the country. Seventy workshops were conducted from December 2020 to March 2021 by the students in both online and offline mode in Delhi and NCR region, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bhubaneswar, Prayagraj, Haridwar, Lucknow, Mathura, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bhopal, Betul, Jamshedpur and Ganganagar. More than 800 people were trained in Media and Information Literacy.

Similarly, the students of Hindi Journalism, English Journalism and Radio and Television develop media messages in the form of lab journal, documentaries on the issues of importance. The Department of Social Media also contributed in the dissemination of #cheer4Indiacampaign launched by the Sports Ministry in which not only students, but faculty members, staff and other stakeholders also participated.

Similarly, AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) has been working on the focus areas of NEP for a long time. The NEP stresses upon high-quality holistic and multidisciplinary education. The Centre has conducted number of diverse and interdisciplinary courses. For example, in Broadcast Technology, Acting, Animation and Visual Effects and Practice based PhD. They also have one Master programme in Mathematics Education jointly conducted with Cluster Innovation Centre (CIC), Delhi University (DU) since 2012 under META University concept. They teach communication and media production courses to MME students who are simultaneously enrolled at DU and JMI and attend classes at both the Universities. This is a unique program in India being

conducted jointly by two universities under Meta University concept.

This shows how the resources and infrastructure strengths of two Universities can be optimally used to enrich educational processes. Jamia has already initiated measures to further strengthen the implementation of the National Education Policy.

Implementation at classroom level

The objective is to understand the relationship between level of awareness and understanding towards the policy to its final implementation at the classroom level. It also helps to understand how media academicians adopt the recommendations in their own unique way and what works for them and what doesn't. Upon analyzing the responses, it was found out that academicians in media education have adopted innovative ways in their teaching and training. Some faculty members are going beyond their call of duty to develop e-content so that the education is accessible to all. Some initiated a series of webinars on important topics in media education.

During pandemic academicians have also experimented with the assessment methods which were otherwise very rigid. Many institutes adopted continuous evaluation rather than depending upon semester end examinations. Focus also shifted from rote learning to application-based exams.

With respect to the potential that NEP has in creating an impact over 70% of respondents believe that it hasn't impacted yet, but has the potential to impact while over 16.7% of the respondents were not sure of the impact NEP would have on the education system in India.

Challenges faced during implementation

Analyzing the challenges shared by the respondents in day-to-day classroom teaching while implementing the National Education Policy 2020, it came out that the major challenge is the culture shift. The transition from a traditional approach to an approach proposed in NEP 2020 is the major roadblock. There is apprehension amongst some teachers for flexible entry and exit scheme, integration of technology, institutional consolidation, multidisciplinary education etc. This apprehension stems from the lack of readiness for change. Another prime challenge is the lack of resources to integrate technology. While NEP stresses new technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, block chains, smart boards, handheld computing devices, adaptive computer testing for student development, and other forms of educational software and hardware will not

just change what students learn in the classroom but how they learn, and thus these areas and beyond will require extensive research both on the technological as well as educational fronts. A lot of media institutions are concerned about the lack of funds to adopt these new technologies. There is also a concern on how to harness the technology appropriately so that the digital divide can be minimized. The COVID19 outburst has added fuel to this problem where accessing online classrooms by the students in itself has become a huge challenge. Another major challenge in implementing the National Education Policy is language barrier. There is very less content available in regional languages for media studies. This becomes a roadblock for teachers and students who would prefer to read and teach regional language. From curriculum to study material, everything needs to be developed in regional languages.

Challenges at institutional/departmental level

While sharing the challenges faced by the institutions in implementing the National Education Policy 2020, there were mixed responses. While some respondents said that their department/institution is completely at it in implementing the policies, some expressed their concern as their department/institution was not doing enough in their opinion to implement the National Educational Policy 2020. The major challenge is funding which is required for such overhaul which may require acquiring new resources, training of the academic and non academic staff and creation of study material.

While analyzing the responses to understand the challenges at a holistic level in implementing the National Educational Policy 2020, it was found that despite respondents sharing the challenges, their spirits were high regarding the policy. Every new thing comes with challenges and we should be ready for that, was the undertone of the responses. One of the key challenges that was reflected was the change in 'the profile of media educator' post the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020. Emergence of artificial intelligence and algorithms are going to drastically change the job profile. Information and knowledge are available in plenty of web platforms. Critical thinking and creative skills are going to be the key. Skills to think out-of-box and generate new ideas and innovations will be desired by the educational institutions. Hence, finding the right kind of people as subject experts will be a challenge for the organizations. It was also reflected that lack of standardization of studies is also a roadblock for quality media education. There is a huge gap between

what is taught and how it is taught across institutions. The challenges listed also involved unavailability of books available in the country in Indian languages to teach a subject matter.

The Outreach Department of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi in collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha, Maharashtra organized a consultative meet on National Education Policy (NEP) and its implications on media education on March 22, 2021. The online meet witnessed an overwhelming participation from media education fraternity. More than 100 Media Academicians, Professors, Media Professionals and Policymakers from different parts of the country attended the meeting with an objective to prepare a roadmap for the implementation of NEP in Media Education sector.

Key areas of discussion were, multidisciplinary approach in Media Education, Curriculum framework, Promoting research and innovation, Multidisciplinary approach in Media Education, Industry-academia linkage for knowledge sharing, Faculty Development Programme. Some of the recommendations that emerged from the media academicians are as follows:

1. Need of a council in media education which can work towards over-hauling the curriculum of media education, making it more relevant from the industry point of view (Dwivedi, 2020).
2. Development of National Curriculum Framework in Media Education: The Model Curriculum in Mass Communication drafted by the Curriculum Development Committee in April 2012 needs to be revised keeping in view the developments that has taken place in last 20 years. Media is being taught at school level, undergraduate level and postgraduate level; it is important to have curriculum framework to avoid repetition of the content offered at various levels (Yadav, 2021).
3. Collaboration with various departments/institutes/organizations to offer diverse and interdisciplinary courses is the need of the hour (Kasim, n.d.).
4. Industry-academia collaboration in development and delivery of courses (Parihar, 2021).
5. Since NEP emphasizes on critical thinking both in school as well as higher education, there is need to offer Media Literacy programmes at all levels. There is need for the creation of content in regional languages (Gautam, 2021).
6. Conventional courses to be replaced with Industry-demanded flexible courses (Mathur, 2021).
7. Define essential balance of theory-practice and then creating nomenclatures with accurate scope. Also focus on Indian research traditions and media practices along with the role of academics in practice as far as media education is concerned (Desai, 2021).
8. Media Educators should avail sabbatical and work in government/private institution for one year in every ten years of their service. On the other hand, the journalists and media professionals should be invited to the Journalism/Mass Communication Departments to share their knowledge and experience with students and teaching by serving the academic departments for about a year in their career. This exchange of expertise and knowledge between professionals and teachers would go a long way in shaping the future course of journalism education.” (Arulselvan, 2021).

Conclusion

In media education we are witnessing critical yet opportune moment when National Education Policy has just been approved and media education in India has completed hundred years. This is the time to look back and appreciate what have been achieved and reflect upon what should be the vision for the next 50 years. This vision should align with the recommendations in the National Education Policy. A detailed policy analysis and mapping it with Journalism and Media Education is the need of the hour. More programmes to create awareness on NEP should be conducted for the media educators. Also there is a need for brainstorming sessions on how NEP can be implemented in media education. A detailed framework in this regard should be prepared. Central Universities, State Universities, Private Universities, Institutes and Colleges should join hands and collaboratively work on the document that aligns the recommendations in the NEP with the needs and interests of the students, educators, administrators serving media and education. A Vision Document that encompasses all the important facets of media education like Curriculum Framework in Media Education, Media Education Council, Integrating Education Technology, Pedagogy of Media Education, Industry Academia Interface, Media Research, Faculty Development Programmes etc, is need of the hour.

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A Futuristic Perspective of Media Education in India

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ABSTRACT

Media has acquired a major space in our lives. After the evolution of various media platforms and new media tools, not only the media consumption behaviour but also the impact of the same is enormous. We abide to cope up with the consequences of the exposure and its impact on the human race, whether it is affirmative or negative. In such an environment of mammoth media exposure, media education becomes more important to deal with the influences over society. This is a very clear and proven fact that only educated audiences will be able to deal with the content, message and its impact on them. Minimizing the digital divide or penetration and development of media tools cannot provide proper education to its users and consumers. This is the role of media educators and policymakers to provide media literacy to their citizens, so that they can wisely deal with the message, propaganda, facts, lies, etc. This paper suggests futuristic approaches to media education towards dealing with such challenges.

Keywords: Media education, Media literacy, Impact of media, Futuristic media approach

Introduction

Media is the best teacher, philosopher and guide in the contemporary era. It has a lot of impact on our lives including sociological (Cheung & Dubey, 2012), psychological (Koshanova *et al.*, 2021) and cognitive (Uri & Hobbs, 2018) aspects. Even after the emergence and evolution of digital media, it has acquired a new height to affect human life. (Tornera, 2008) In such an environment, media education is the utmost requirement of the education system. The active participation, understanding and utilization of the information and text are possible through media education only. The researches show that after the introduction of Media Education and adaptation of the same in education policies, they have gigantic impressions on the learnings of the citizenry. After the adaptation of democratic education in Portugal (1986), civic and moral education along with their contribution to the society was on a different pace (Dias-Fonseca & Potter, 2016). In a country like India, where education policies are observing their major shift these days, the adaptation of media education may become a very important tool to create nation-oriented citizenry. If we look towards contemporary media education in India, various universities and academic institutions are running a different set of courses in the area of Mass Communication. They may be classified into the following (Ankuran & Anamika, 2012):

- Conventional education like graduation and postgraduation in Mass Communication.
- Distance Learning mode of education is also adopted for such courses in Mass Communication and Journalism .

- Undergraduate College Education is also covering such courses as an independent stream of Mass Communication under professional education or in a self-finance mode.
- Apart from that, certain institutions, that are not affiliated training institutes, are being run by media organizations.

All the above mentioned courses are focusing on the technical aspect along with the interpretation of text in media. It is not due to the beginning of media education, that the primary focus is on teaching tools, their use and the subject (Ankuran & Anamika, 2012), but the requisite of the day is not limited to creating media professionals with a greater understanding of the medium and the message. The requirement shows the need for media related awareness in the common citizenry, which is only possible through media literacy. If we are thinking to develop personality socialization, making people aware of the mass media culture, develop the ability of critical appreciation and perception, and create an environment of critical reception, perception and interpretation of the text (Kirillova, 2013), we should provide media literacy to all.

Canada started its “screen education” programme CASE (Canadian Association for Screen Education) long back in the 1960s. Later on, they realized the need for media education and to encourage their cultural expressions in media. So a new association CAME (Canadian Association for Media Education) was formed in 1991 (Pungente, 1989).

Today, various Indian Universities and Institutions / Organizations are running a lot of courses

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focusing on the various aspects of media and human life as a subject. Researches are happening, we have improved a lot as a subject in the last few decades, but the nature of the medium and the consumption patterns are also changing at a very fast pace. The educational requirement of the country is moving towards the requirement of Media Literacy. The known research “The World Unplugged” shows that the process of consumption also affects the learnings about the media, and the findings of the same are affirmative in understanding the digital medium and the consumption habits (Moeller *et al.*, 2012), those who kept themselves far from the digital media, were able to understand the medium better, but this seems next to impossible in case of the overall media environment. We can stop media exposure for a particular period or a particular medium, but it’s impossible to be aloof from various media exposures in contemporary times.

According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) report published in May 2021, the Indian Media Industry has grown up to 18.64 billion US dollars. The share of digital media is increasing day by day and it has superseded the print media industry. According to reports, this Industry may observe a 25% growth rate this year. Such a diversified medium and its growth reflect the adaptability of the medium by the users.

Past reviews

In such a condition, the role of media education becomes very important to meet the challenges that arise due to media usage and its business models. In the past, media education was started in the 1930s to protect the media users from the adverse impact of the cinema (Ankuran & Anamika, 2012). Media education enables the learners to understand the text and its meaning without its harmful impact (Ankuran & Anamika, 2012) on the human brain. The evolution and the development of various media outlets and tools have given an ample number of opportunities to the consumers and users (after the evolution of web 2.0) to interact, execute and participate in the media tasks.

Taiwan also presented a White Paper on Media Literacy Education in 2002 as a policy to cross-curriculum themes in primary and secondary education (Meechai, 2012). In process to evaluate the perception of teachers about the media literacy education and its influences, Orsuwan and Meechai found that the teachers view on media culture, media information and the media consumption were different based on location of school, teaching experiences of

the teachers and the gender.

Mihailidis (2012) analyzed the effect of media education on undergraduate students over media evaluation, comprehensions and analytical skills through an experimental research and revealed that the media literacy students reflected informed cynics—critical but unable to connect critical media viewing with the necessary understanding of media central role in the society. However, on a positive note, he made a conclusion that after completion of media literacy course, students should be able to critically analyze media (Mihailidis, 2012).

Buckingham (2003) accepted the fact that due to increasing convergence of contemporary media, it is important to address the skills and competencies of the learners who are required by the whole range of contemporary forms of communication.

It has been advocated to increase the digital competence of the citizenry to develop a digital sense and civic participation (Cheung & Dubey, 2012).

Research question

The line between consumers and producers is getting blurred in the era of media explosion. With such involvement of the users in media tasks, the coverage and communication themes are also changing. Motive driven content is circulating in the media environment. The less educated audiences and users may receive the adversity of the communication process. Those challenges are visible in the form of requirements of various controls and regulations. Time and again the privacy issues have surfaced. So, it becomes important to educate our citizenry about the effect. It is a proven fact that if we have to develop democratic values among the audiences, we do require a better media environment along with the best media education for the citizens.

Research objectives

The major objective of the study was to find the appropriate approach for media education in the researches and to anticipate the media education in India. The purpose of this research is:

- To study and map the knowledge domain in the area of media literacy education.
- To analyze the research orientation of media literacy education.

Methodology

Content analysis, and mapping the research domain using VOS viewer, the bibliometrics software, this research identified the most used keywords, their occurrence and link strength for anticipating futuristic

approach. For the analysis of the researches, total 254 published works were available over scopus.com with “Media Literacy Education” in their Title, Keywords and in the abstracts, were taken. The map is created based on bibliographic data for co-occurrence of the all keywords used in the papers.

The Process

Total 1043 keywords used by the authors were found, but to keep in mind the proximity of the keywords used, only those keywords were considered for the further processing which had at least 5 times occurrence in the paper, thus the key words were reduced to 68 (Table 1).

Table 1

Keywords	Occurrence	Total Link Strength
Human	35	475
Humans	28	422
Male	26	406
Female	25	395
Article	25	360
Adolescent	19	314
Child	20	283
Controlled Study	15	265
Media Literacy	93	240
Literacy	21	215
Randomized Controlled Trial	11	212
Human Experiment	15	205
Mass Media	14	188
Major Clinical Study	10	184
Psychology	10	170
Questioner	11	168
Procedures	8	163
Education	28	161
Pre-test Post-test design	7	158
Health Promotion	8	151
Mass Medium	9	151
Health Literacy	9	147
Health Education	10	145
Sex Education	7	144
Sexual education	7	144
Student	8	135
Adult	9	126
Students	11	125
Programme evaluation	6	124
Educational programme	7	123
Sexual behaviour	5	120
Sexual health	6	119
Media literacy education	36	116
Adolescent behaviour	6	109
United States	6	109
Survey and questionnaires	6	105
Child-parent relation	6	104
Internet	7	96
Critical thinking	11	92

Keywords	Occurrence	Total Link Strength
Alcohol drinking	5	90
Curriculum	12	90
Media	17	89
Schools	6	88
Decision making	5	87
Attitude to health	5	86
Health, knowledge, attitude practice	5	85
Parent-child relations	5	85
Television	8	77
Advertising as topic	6	72
Media education	34	71
Priority Journal	5	70
Alcohol	5	63
Primary school	7	59
Advertising	8	52
Teaching	9	52
Children	6	51
Social media	10	48
Adolescents	5	45
Marketing	5	41
Youth	9	40
Digital literacy	10	27
Media effects	5	24
Hong kong	5	18
Pedagogy	5	14
Media production	7	13
Critical media literacy	6	10
Fake news	6	7
New media	5	7

Fig. 1 Keywords co-occurrence

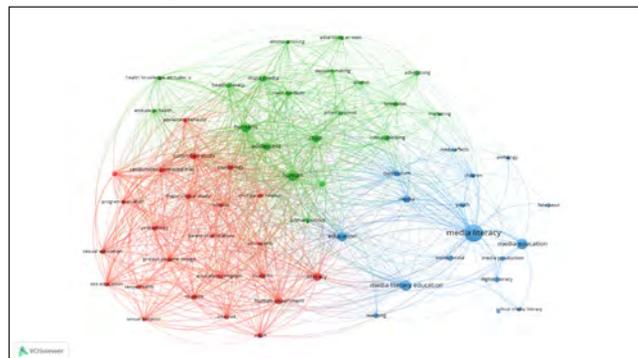
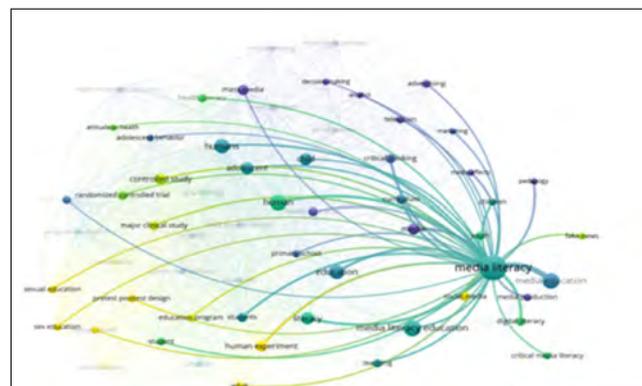


Fig. 2 Prominent co-occurrence linked with media literacy



aware and media literate citizen can easily figure out the pattern and rectify the influences which are not favourable for an individual, a society or a country. Identification of truth, propaganda and lies can further strengthen the democratic values and thus, help creating a stronger democracy.

The New Education Policy of the country is also dedicated towards developing proficiency in languages, scientific temper, sense of aesthetics and art, communication, ethical reasoning, digital literacy, knowledge of India and the world (Human Resource Development Ministry, 2019). If we could incorporate media literacy in the curriculum of school-level education, the desired output may be visible in their learning output and behaviour. Media literacy at the school will provide multi-disciplinary exposure with democratic values and acceptance.

This will enable the students to acquire the disciplinary understanding with ethico-moral values as a learning outcome. Induction of media education may indeed face the challenges of infrastructure and lack of social concerns in the beginning but its outcome will create an environment where all the learners would find social and cultural concerns in their cognitive behaviour. It will not only motivate the learners to understand the text of the media but also provide an opportunity to cope up with challenges that arise due to excess media usage and the impact of the same on their lives. Media education is the only tool to develop a culturally integrated society with values and systems.

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Role of All India Radio in Media Education

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ABSTRACT

Radio is a captivating medium among mass communication due to its unique characteristics. It endures being as pertinent and persuasive as it was in the premature years even with the development of more trendy media. Radio has been used in different formats for educational purposes around the world for highly diversified audiences located across broad geographical expanses – all at a low per cent production cost. Its ability to bridge the literacy barrier was seen early enough. ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.’ Media and Information Literacy (MIL) equips citizens with competencies needed to seek and enjoy the full benefits of this fundamental human right. “In developing nations, radio is the only medium that can be labelled “mass”, where a big chunk of the population can be reached by radio broadcasts and possesses the means to receive them.” But with the dawn of the internet, this statement has changed. In the transformed media scenario, radio is rejuvenating itself with added innovative programmes and formats. The model of media education operates today as an umbrella covering numerous educational forms with different importance on the individual media and problems.

Keywords: All India Radio, Media education, Media and Information Literacy, Radio, Vividh Bharati

Introduction

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.’ Media and Information Literacy (MIL) equips citizens with competencies needed to seek and enjoy the full benefits of this fundamental human right. The realization of this right is reinforced by the Grünwald Declaration of 1982, which recognizes the need for political and educational systems to promote citizens’ critical understanding of ‘the phenomena of communication’ and their participation in media (new and old). It is further reinforced by the Alexandria Declaration of 2005, which places media and information literacy at the core of lifelong learning. It recognizes how MIL “empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes the social inclusion of all nations” (Wilson *et al.*, 2011).

Literacy is defined as getting the capacity to read, write and understand. It is completely involved with the art of reading and writing. It gives information that can be used as a way to get knowledge. The information is

the academic know-how of a subject, and knowledge is the familiarity about the use of that information. It is a core form of information transmission for this time and era. Whereas an educated person can be literate, every literate person cannot be called educated. Education is a broader concept which takes into consideration the all-round development of a human personality.

Mass communication comprises unique operative environments which may be classified as the kind of audience, the communication experience and the communicator. Concerning communication experience itself, mass communication may be described as being public, swift and transient. It is public since the messages are not addressed to anyone in particular. Usually, the purpose of the communicator is to put message across to the masses. This is one of the vital methods by which society has shaped the media. Mass media like radio arrived after the industrial revolution and the expansion of the democratic movement. Subsequently, radio has been making its appeal to the mass audience from the very beginning. There is a close relationship between the radio and society since the radio is focused on the common people and their interests and tastes. The public responds by making greater use of the media. technological advancements have enabled the radio to meet the demands of the growing population. On the

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other hand, the spread of free education has increased the volume of the audience.

The circulation of the mass media has to be rapid because the messages are meant to reach a large audience across the world, particularly over the whole nation, in a short time. This is possible due to the technological innovations in the field of electronics which made radio broadcast messages as soon as the events occur.

Media education comprises the beginning of the school to the entire life, to that which is not of the school but encloses and infuses it, besides formulating it liable for changing passive consumption into deliberate and grave use of the media's mechanisms and messages.

Radio is a captivating medium among mass communication media due to its unique characteristics. It endures being as pertinent and persuasive as it was in the premature years even with the development of more trendy media. It is a maxim that in the first phase of broadcasting extended over three decades from the early twenties, radio reigned lonely or was the dominant player. Yet, over some time, the media scene has transformed radically. Television with its integral strength of audio-visual constituent has caught the imagination of the people. The dawn of satellite television, the Internet and the convergence of technology have complemented extra dimensions in media utilization patterns. Even though the existence of a plethora of media, there is opportunity and space for each medium. Experience has disclosed that 'new technologies add things on but they don't replace'. One medium is not replaced by another - each medium reinvents itself in the circumstance of transformations in the communication environment. The MacBride Commission opines that "in developing nations, radio is the only medium that can be labelled 'mass', where a big chunk of population can be reached by radio broadcasts and possesses the means to receive them" (Abel, 1984). But with the dawn of the internet, this statement has changed. In the transformed media scenario, radio is rejuvenating itself with added innovative programmes and formats.

The model of media education operates today as an umbrella covering numerous educational forms with different importance on the individual media and problems. Experiments are being carried out concerning content and methods, and many activities have been tried in hopes of reaching the goals that have been set. The proposals are based on fact, traditions, demands and intentions which change from country to country. It is, therefore, difficult to give a general description of just what is practised within the

subject. We have as an alternative chosen to discuss the situation in All India Radio.

Media research spent a long time using the Laswell formula for analysis (who says what to whom on which channel with what intent and what effect). Masterman bases his work on the idea that the media are active formulators of opinion (Masterman, 1980).

Objectives

This article elucidates:

- 1 Development in All India Radio and how they relate to radio's past and their implications for radio's future with its importance in Media education; and
- 2 The innovative ways in which old and new technologies are converging and connecting with the media scholars.

Radio industry in India at present

In India, the radio sector has four major types of players currently: All India Radio (the public service broadcaster), private FM players operating from 86 cities with 385 stations at present, community radio (188 stations) and numerous online radio portals.

All India Radio

Radio has become a pervasive medium. It is one of the extremely engaging means that most nations have adapted for their growth and social transformation endeavours. Certainly, many countries have distinguished these advantages. All India Radio (AIR) is the world's largest Public Service Broadcaster in terms of the number of languages of broadcast. At the time of Independence, there were six radio stations and 18 transmitters (6 medium-wave and 12 short-wave) which covered 11% of the population and 2.5% are of the country. Today, AIR has the distinction of being one of the major broadcasting organizations in the world. It caters to the information, education, and entertainment needs of the audiences through its stations in this country of continental dimension and with a plural society. It provides news, music, spoken word and other programmes to almost the entire population of the country, 121.0 crores as per the 2011 Census with 470 broadcasting centres located across the country, covering nearly 92% of the country's area and 99.19% of the total population. Terrestrially, AIR originates programmes in 23 languages and 179 dialects. Its vast reach especially in the rural and tribal areas make it the primary and sometimes the only source of information and entertainment.

Fielden to Keskar

Music, which must necessarily fill about seven-eighths of any broadcasting programme, is naturally a factor of considerable importance. It may be said that music is, to some extent, “padding”, because it does not instruct or inform, and that it is, therefore, actually of less significance in broadcasting than talks or news. Nevertheless, it is obvious that for a large percentage of listeners, music will be the chief source of entertainment and possibly also the general factor governing popularity or unpopularity (Fielden, 1939).

AIR is known for its coverage area, infrastructure and vast repertoire of classical and film music. The services rendered by AIR towards promotion, propagation and preservation of classical music have no parallel in the cultural history of independent India. Music was in the past the preserve of a few in some princely states. The advent of AIR completely changed that scenario; it took music to the homes of music lovers and gave musicians a country-wide audience. Women performers and upcoming musicians were major beneficiaries of this exposure. AIR was mandated to maintain a high standard of music through a system of the audition. For innumerable youngsters with talent, a radio programme was a passport to prominence and a sure means of gaining recognition in music circles all over India. Even maestros first gained a pan-Indian audience through AIR; television was decades away.

News, music and spoken word features constituted the three major components of AIR’s programme repertoire. Music encompassed classical, folk, light, and devotional; it also included Western music.

All India Radio (AIR) is known for its vast treasure of classical music apart from film music. AIR since the beginning made a thorough research on this aspect. Lionel Fielden in his report said that “Music, which must necessarily fill about seven-eighths of any broadcasting programme, is naturally considerable importance (Fielden, 1939).

Educational broadcasts

Radio has been used in different formats for educational purposes around the world for highly diversified audiences located across broad geographical expanses – all at a low per cent production cost. Its ability to bridge the literacy barrier was seen early enough. While the accent of all AIR programmes – whether for the general listener, or specific groups like farmers, women, children, students, teachers, or industrial workers, is on education in the widest sense, some programmes are planned with a specific educational objective (Baruah, 1983). All the primary channels of AIR put

out educational broadcasts regularly on fixed time slots. They are aimed at students as well as teachers of primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary schools (Venniyoor, 2008).

Initial innovations in educational broadcasting

The traces of educational broadcasts of a sporadic and informal character have been in existence at Bombay since January 1929 and Calcutta since November 1932 (Fielden, 1939). But, since the opening of an exclusive department of broadcasting on 1st March 1935 at Delhi to originate to commence the organization of any specialized broadcasts (Fielden, 1939). Regular school broadcasts began in November 1937 from Calcutta with half-hour programmes for schools for two days in the week and continued to do so till September 1938. In addition to the ordinary school broadcast, the Madras Station of All India Radio gave extra Tamil programmes for primary schools for half an hour, five days a week.

Subjects covered

In *literature*, English, Hindustani, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu were covered. In *subjects*, Indian History, World History, Science, Biology, Nature study, Horticulture, Physiology, Health and Hygiene, Geography, Biography, Astronomy, Sociology, Economics, Civics, Sports and Current Topics.

In February 1950, the Station Director’s Conference paved way for two innovative methods in educational broadcasts in addition to the prevailing programmes. i.e., instead of one, two programmes were started. One for tiny tots and the other for older children. But a major blow fell on the producers of the children’s programme in 1959 when the authorities decided that these programmes were “for children” and need not be presented “by children”. This was a change of a fundamental nature. The producers, conditions as they were, could never recover from this shock and the programmes were never again the same from the point of view of the staff who were used to large audiences in the studios. Broadcasts for college students fall in a somewhat different category. They are not intended for reception in the classroom, but in the common room of the hostel, or the case of day scholars, in their homes. The timing and frequency of these programmes are, therefore, fixed with this set of conditions in mind. Experiments made from time to time have shown that, except at a few centres, these broadcasts have very little following. The main reason for this is the indifferent quality of the items presented, both as regards their contents and mode of presentation.

Consultative panel

There is a Consultative Panel at each station chiefly to advise on planning these programmes. These panels generally consist of educationist's, teachers from listening schools, senior officers of the department of education, representatives of teachers' associations and training colleges. AIR has been drawing up the radio programmes on the advice of Consultative panels for School Broadcasts composed, at each station, of six members; representatives of the Station Education Department, Principals of Schools and AIR. No teachers have been represented on the panels though they serve on Subjects Committees which assist the panels in drawing up the programmes.

Innovations after independence

Significant growth was made since Independence in 1947, presently, almost all principal regional stations originate these programmes and most of the smaller stations relay. All stations originate school broadcasts. There was a fear that these programmes would replace the teachers though the aim of these broadcasts was only an aid to the teachers' work. Their twin objects were to discuss those topics which are generally not covered in the school curriculum to "widening the mental horizon of students" or "to discuss those subjects which cannot be adequately dealt with in an average institution" (Fielden, 1939). After the 25 years of school broadcasts, AIR determined to undertake these broadcasts, the authorities felt that they did not have to wait for the schools to make listening arrangements. They decided to go ahead with these broadcasts and thought that this in itself would act as an incentive for the schools to provide the facilities. This expectation was belied (Narendra, 1958). The educational objectives of the school broadcasting service were to build programmes around topics which will be useful in widening the mental horizon of the students and concerning these aspects of the school subjects which cannot be adequately dealt with in an average school because of lack of time, resources, personnel etc., thus the main aim of the educational programmes as evolved in 1937 were to widen the horizon and to enrich the lives of students by new experience (Kuppuswamy, 1976).

Radio in higher education

Distance education began in India in 1962-63 on the recommendations of the expert committee on Correspondence Education. Radio entered this field in the next decade with its broadcasts complementing the lesson unit. The Madurai Kamaraj University in Tamilnadu was the pioneer in using this facility.

The same patronage is extended by radio to the correspondence course of the Delhi University, Punjab and Punjabi University, the Andhra Pradesh Open University and Madurai Kamaraj University. In 1966, it was learnt that 26 out of the 34 radio stations had regular school programmes. According to Chanda Committee, Bombay Station broadcasts educational programmes for more than ten hours a week, five times a week. Tiruchi station was in second place with five hours and Madras station ranked third with four hours a week. The Gauhati Radio station programme was brief which was only for one hour per week. A series of 52 Sanskrit lessons was first introduced from 21 stations of AIR in November 1966 and later increased to 23 stations. This has been revised from time to time in the light of comments received from listeners and the recommendations of members of the Sanskrit Programme Advisory Committee.

University of the AIR

A novel design of a half-hour tri-weekly service entitled *University of the AIR* was introduced in Delhi (and broadcast from Madras also) was started in September 1966 to supplement and reinforce the Correspondence Course of the Delhi University for B.A. Degree (Pass) students. This project broadcast five lectures on selected subjects which are broadcasted each week, during the period August to March, for the benefit of students preparing for their B.A. examination. Hindi lessons broadcast in the southern AIR Stations in Trivandrum, Vijayawada, and Imphal Station from the northeast were very popular. During 1968-69, these lessons were introduced at Ahmedabad and Cuttack stations of AIR and during 1969-70 from Dharwar, broadcast by AIR Stations in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh from December 2001.

Change in paradigm

The paradigm of education from teacher-centric to student-centric prompted to bring further innovations in the content of radio educational broadcasts. The advent of the information age has driven the broadcasters to bring in newness in the fresh agenda of education. The one-way radio broadcasts supported by pre and post-broadcast activities converting students and teachers from passive listeners into active learners.

Formats used

There is no single "best" format available for utilizing in educational radio. It is only the experience that can help in finding some such solutions (Das, 2016). But it has been demonstrated from time to

time that radio can teach; it can bring new ideas and knowledge efficiently when good programmes are made. Direct talks should never be used in this programme. Various formats like dialogues, discussions, interviews, documentary, quiz, docu-drama, drama, demonstration and experiments, music and magazines are used. The non-formal educational programmes are originated directly in the concerned stations.

Radio bridge

This is an innovative broadcast content method. In this method, some stations of AIR will be picked up and connected through telephone lines and will interact with each other. In October 2010, a radio bridge programme in Hindi and English was conducted on the theme Science and Society. In this programme, different subject experts from Jalandhar, New Delhi, Lucknow, Patna, Jaipur, Ranchi, Raipur, Bhopal and Port Blair participated.

Agencies involved

As AIR has a vast network, many agencies use AIR's channels for broadcasting their educational programmes (Venniyoor, 2008). Many agencies have been created to look into the successful implementation and improvements of educational radio programmes. To find its utmost utilization, organizations like Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) in National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), State Institute of Educational Technology (SIET) in State Council of Educational Research & Training (SCERT), Training Unit of Teachers Colleges Educational Department of both the Centre and the State are established. Provisions for such facilities were created but they hardly utilized the required context. Now, a systematic arrangement is required for proper coordination. All the agencies should be brought under one umbrella so that the programmes broadcast should be utilized in the utmost manner.

Gyan Vani

This concept has evolved after the Interactive Radio Counselling, conceived in 2001, in collaboration with the Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC) of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). Apart from AIR's in-house educational programmes, it broadcasts programmes for students in English, Hindi, and other local languages from AIR studios. The broadcast timing is from 6.00 AM to 11.00 AM with a repeat one between 5.00 PM and 10.00 PM. It is India's first

exclusive educational radio network. Gyanvani airs programmes covering different aspects and levels of education. The programme is aired on 37 Gyanvani educational FM radio stations providing lessons to thousands of citizens, across all age groups and is teacherless. It has separate programme modules catering to the needs of people pursuing primary and secondary education, higher education, technical and vocational education, and extended education. The channel was closed for a short period from October 2014 but revived in January 2017.

Vigyan Prasar

Vigyan Prasar is an autonomous organization under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. Objectives of Vigyan Prasar are to take up large-scale science popularization tasks/activities, to promote and propagate scientific and rational outlook, to act as a resource-cum-facility centre for S&T communication. All India Radio and Vigyan Prasar have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed in 2007 and revived science programmes. The objective of the MoU was that Script for broadcast will be prepared by Vigyan Prasar and other facilities like studios, recording and broadcast will be provided by All India Radio. The school broadcasts are stopped from the Directorate General All India Radio and the science popularization radio broadcasts are being produced and broadcast under MoU (Sekhar, 2017).

News Services Division – The information provider

All India Radio (AIR) has the distinction of being one of the major broadcasting organizations in the world. The News Services Division (NSD) of All India Radio, has a proud history of more than 80 years during which it has grown to be the biggest news organization in India. NSD fulfils its mandate by providing the information needs of people in every nook and corner of the country. One of the oldest news broadcasting organizations, providing accurate, balanced and credible news since 1937, it has a committed listenership.

NSD broadly functions at three levels: Regional, National and External. It also contributes to the news broadcast of the External Services Division of the All India Radio. Initially, External Services were part of the News Services Division. It was de-linked from the Division on September 15, 1948. However, the external news bulletins are compiled and provided by NSD to ESD.

NSD is also moving with the times, marking its presence in new media such as Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, YouTube and Instagram. News updates are available on Live Streaming on the FM Gold Channel. A mobile application has also been developed for National and Regional News. NSD opened its account on SoundCloud (a very popular audio platform) in May 2014. It uploads audio clips of English and Hindi headlines, and important news stories and major national bulletins and current affairs programmes are also put on SoundCloud shortly after their broadcast. The link is provided through NSD's Twitter handle and Facebook account. At the time of writing, NSD has over 8049 followers and 1996995 plays on SoundCloud.

Vividh Bharati: The entertainer

AIR included film music as a programme component of its Vividh Bharati channel launched in 1957 to counter competition from Radio Ceylon. Sixty per cent of the time was given to film music. The channel also integrated film music in programmes such as Vishesh Jaimala, which seeks to entertain the armed forces. Devotional music, light music and a certain amount of short plays, poetry, etc. make up the rest of the programme list.

Today, Vividh Bharati is the largest entertainment network and has been the epitome of connectivity and the democratic nature of reach which radio stands for.

FM radio and social media

The technological innovations and the integration of social media into radio are encouraging them to become active. The radio medium that was earlier known only as a local medium, today, transcends the boundaries to become a 'glocal' medium. Social media led to a scenario where the content receivers also emerged as content producers. The stations post their best links and other promos/contests on their social media pages daily.

Media responsibility

Whether we call it responsibility, accountability or obligation each type has its responsibility along with the audience attached to it viz., public service broadcaster has to inform, to educate and to entertain. The private FM players have got corporate social responsibility, the community radio has got the social responsibility and the online radio to have a responsibility called universality.

Discussion

Radio relies only on the spoken word and

cannot use pictorial support like television or the Internet. The commentary or narration has to be precise and understandable. Broadcasting shares the characteristics of creative art with other intellectual and aesthetic pursuits, but private FM players often lack these and are not able to fully explore the scope of the medium. It is difficult to prepare educational radio programmes on subjects like Science and Mathematics through specialized organizations like Vigyan Prasar do or try to do so. A public service broadcaster has the responsibility to inform, educate and entertain.

Private FM players have got corporate social responsibility, community radio has held societal responsibility and online radio has its commitments to fulfil. Content innovation is the need of the hour. Sustainability can be achieved through good programme content. Although, there is a dearth of innovation in on-air programming, on-ground content or the activations have evolved very significantly.

Conclusion

The Indian media and entertainment industry is situated at a significant juncture today. In the present day, 'new order' world is lacking historic precedence. Over development potential, the challenge is to influence this capability to generate a triumphant answer. The industry will need to innovate answers and will have to discover the unexplored area as they struggle impeccably to connect clients across a trillion new touchpoints. The necessary transformations will be countless and will vary from rethinking the front end content to reschedule the back end. Front end content will spin around numerous axes viz., format, language, etc., back end restructuring will need novel skillsets, partnership models, etc. Combined efforts will be needed to connect new key stakeholders like marketers who are also reimagining their consumer interactions in this 'new order'.

As we all know that Indian radio industry is just 2%. There was only All India Radio (AIR) before phase I. After that, the private FM stations emerged and they were in the need to compete with the other FM stations that already exists to have high reach among others. Since News is not permitted on private FM they took different strategies to become at the top. In that, the RJ's speaking the social issues, playing the public service announcement and health-related information is one of the tools they took to become one of the topmost FM radio stations.

However, corresponding to the increasing number of FM radios, enough study of reception analysis of each FM radio has not been done region wise. This

grey area opens a lot to debate on the existing radio shows and formats of the radio programmes in India besides the contents of each FM radio currently being aired. FM radios contrary to their commercial posture and features is still wanting at the academic level (Padmakumar, 2012).

Journalism will never become education, for if it did, it would no longer be journalism. However, to deny that journalism can be education is not to deny the undoubted fact that it can be a most valuable and indeed indispensable educational tool. Thus, over time, technology may undergo innovations and adapt to situations, but radio is here to stay. For developing nations like India, where poverty abounds and is not likely to vanish early, radio continues to be the prime mass medium.

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Media Education in India: Locating Gaps and Solutions

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ABSTRACT

Media newsrooms across the world are changing fast while adapting themselves to rapid technological advancements. In Indian media houses also, from big to medium to small, the newsrooms have started adapting to technology-driven journalism practices. With these changes in newsroom structure and the challenges posed by advancements in information technology, it is well-timed to have a review of the media education being imparted in the Indian institutions and identify the gaps in newsrooms and classroom. This paper aims to understand the state of media education in India as perceived by media industry professionals. It invited the views of media professionals working in New Delhi through an online survey titled, “Understanding Gaps and Challenges in Media Academia and Industry in the era of Technology-driven Journalism”. The survey points to possible gaps and likely solutions as results have been analyzed in detail. The paper attempts to locate and detail these gaps and challenges in media education in India. The media professionals suggest setting up of a national regulatory body like the media education council to regulate media education in all Indian media institutions. Since the media functioning is now technology-based and the requirement of tech-savvy journalists is fast-growing, journalism training programmes can also be started in IITs to produce the required staff.

Keywords: Technology journalism, Media professionals, Media education, Media industry, Skill development, Newsroom

Introduction

At the time when India celebrates 100 years of media education in the country, there is a debate, both in the media and the media academia, whether the media training institutes in India are really producing the stuff that is required in the fast-changing technology-driven media. The experts are almost unanimous that the curriculum of the media training institutes across the country needs an immediate review. But the million-dollar question is what should be that change? Whether Indian institutes should copy the curriculum being followed by the foreign institutions or should they revise their curriculum as per their changing needs with roots in India? With the change in newsroom structure and the challenges posed by advancements in information technology, it is essential that the media industry and media academia develop mutual trust and comprehensive guidelines for media education in India. The media training institutions should collaborate with the media industry so that students can have hands-on training experience while pursuing their courses (Muppidi, 2008). When Annie Besant started media education in India in 1920, she connected the students with the

New India Press to help the students have hands-on work experience. Now, particularly during the last two decades, universities, colleges and institutes offering journalism courses have mushroomed at a fast pace in all parts of the country. The media industry, too, has undergone rapid transformation and is constantly changing, further adapting itself to the inclusion of technology in the newsrooms. The challenge lies in the gap between what is taught in media training institutions and the skills required in the media industry. This paper attempts to locate the gaps and challenges in media education in India in the era of technology-driven newsrooms and offer solutions.

Review of Literature

In 100 years of media education in India, the western model of journalism education has deeply influenced the media education for a long period of time. The media education curriculum has inclusion of western models, theories and pedagogies. Gradually, media educators and scholars in India started recognizing skills and aptitude required for media in the country and reworked on the curriculum. Ullah (2014) emphasized that Asian scholars should

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recognize the incompatible western models and theories and they must work on arranging dialogue between local media professionals and researchers to understand the local needs. Prensky (2001) and Jindal (2020) observed that new media has now been adopted in public as well as private universities in their media education curriculum in India. Earlier, private universities were the early adopters of technology; however, the notion is changing in the present journalism education scenario. The introduction of web 2.0 has brought changes into journalism education and it has been widely recognized as an effective medium for ‘curriculum enhancement, instruction, evaluation and feedback mechanisms’. With the acceptance of technology at journalism schools, media educators have now started understanding the need of digital-native students. It was anticipated that with the change in journalism academia, the media industry too will change. The reason for this change is that the prospective journalists will be skilled with the new media and technology, and hence, the entire discourse of media and communication will change.

The split between journalism academia and the media industry has widely been discussed by scholars over a period of time. Josephi (2009) noted that around the globe, journalism education is provided mostly by tertiary institutions, which always embeds mistrust between journalism academia and the media industry. Cunningham (2002) found the absence of a think-tank in the profession of media. Deuze (2006) pointed out that the split between the media industry and media academia is also because there is always a pressure that journalism is more about practice. Also, corporate media has an influence on journalism. The success of journalism schools is always measured by the number of internship opportunities it can arrange and the number of jobs it can land in (Skinner *et al.*, 2001). “In other words, journalism schools are dependent on the industry, whereas the industry is only partially convinced of the validity and usefulness of journalism degrees” (Josephi, 2009). Singh (2017) noted that media education around the globe is developed with a different approach. During the American wave of media education, the emphasis was on media production and how to produce journalists. However, the second wave of media education which is also known as the European wave (mostly developed in the UK) was developed by combining different disciplines such as psychology, political science, economics, etc. This gave an interdisciplinary approach to media education. Singh (2017) observed that the growth of media education in India was parallel to the American wave. This way, the media education

in India was focused on producing journalists. This approach always connects the media academia and media industry.

The gap between media academia and the media industry always remains a challenging area – what to teach, how to teach, etc. There is no common journalism/media education model which can be used as the base for media education. Jha and Gangwar (2020) have proposed a few models for media and journalism education in India, but they also stressed that there should be a proper dialogue between media academia and media industry in order to improve journalism education in India. They suggest that these models will help in finding answers to the question - ‘how to mitigate this [media academic-industry] gap’. They discussed different models which can be applied to journalism /media education, such as Experiential Learning Model, Critical Pedagogy Approach, Teaching Hospital Model for Media Education, Construct Media Education Models, The Umbrella Model of Media Education, Experiential Learning Model for Media Education (Based on Kolb’s Experiential Model), Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Model for Critical Media Pedagogy and Inverted Pyramidal Model of Media Education. Some of these models focus on ‘Learning by Doing’ or ‘Learning by Experience’ which basically promotes a ‘hands-on learning approach’. The authors suggested that ‘Teaching Hospital Model for Journalism’, developed by Eric Newton, can help fulfil the requirements of the media industry. The model suggests that media students, media academics and media professionals should work together under same roof as done in hospitals. Journalism or media education should be similar to medical education where future doctors are trained in a real hospital environment, and thus, to produce good journalists, they should be trained well and in a similar manner.

With the emerging new challenges in journalism such as fake news and hate news Bhaskaran, Mishra and Nair (2017) found that present journalism education fails in inculcating journalistic identity among the media students. They suggested that with the change in journalism, especially the challenges of fake news, it is essential that students must be given training to meet such challenges, along with other skills. In this technology-driven journalism, the technological solutions are temporary and may prove short-lived. Therefore, journalism education pedagogy should be comprehensive and should not be based on simply adopting a technology skill. A holistic understanding should be developed among journalism/media students. Sinha and Basu (2020)

noted that with rapidly changing technology that demands change in journalism education, journalism courses should offer other subjects in combination and highly-trained professionals should be introduced to the media institutes. They also argue that some specific skills are required for the students of media according to the digital age.

There is a continuous argument on the inclusion of industry in academia. Bierhoff *et al.* (2000) have also highlighted that there should be a dialogue between the nations with each other and also with the industry (Deuze, 2006). In the Indian context, Buroshiva has suggested that it is essential that collaboration is established between industry professionals and academics for the need to improve media education (Muppidi, 2008). There is always distrust between media professionals and media academics across the globe but it needs to be tackled well. "The academics accuse the professionals of "not knowing enough", while the professionals say that what the academics learn or teach is not relevant", says Buroshiva. He further suggests that with the challenges posed by information technology, it is now very crucial that the media industry and media academics should work on resolving the 'mutual mistrusts'. There have always been complaints by media professionals that students are not able to write good copies or meet deadlines. They expect media colleges to train media students at least in this direction so that they can write a simple copy (Muppidi, 2008). Journalism education-based studies have always had discussions on inculcating skills and training among the students based on the contemporary industry needs. Social media-based and technology-enabled course contents are very imperative in promoting education and training environments for the students (Sahoo & Srivastava, 2017; Thomas, 2010; Sinha & Basu, 2020).

Sinha and Basu (2020) identified 12 new thematic areas of journalism based on the tweets, along with hashtags, in the last two years (2018-19) by the prominent newsrooms. They found that newsrooms have tweeted the news along with hashtags featuring keywords such as political journalism, data/measurable journalism, brand journalism, business and trade journalism, film journalism, sports journalism, local and community journalism, investigative journalism, disaster journalism, science journalism, environmental journalism and arts journalism. They observed that data journalism, disaster journalism, investigative journalism and brand journalism are the new areas of journalism. These new regions of journalism are interdisciplinary in nature. They pointed out that a 'constant examination' should be

done of the practices emerging in the field. There is an intersection of journalism with other disciplines. Such findings lead to the argument that there should be constant examination of the curriculum being taught in media institutes. Therefore, journalism education must endeavour for providing quality professional knowledge by looking into the popular on a global trend level.

Research objectives

The prime objective of the study is to identify the gaps between media academia and industry in the era of technology-driven journalism and also to provide possible solutions for bridging the gaps. Following objectives were identified for the study:

- Identifying the major skill sets required for a budding journalist in the era of technology-driven journalism.
- Understanding the role of media training institutes in fulfilling the industry needs.
- Detecting the challenges for media institutes in the era of technology-driven journalism.

Research questions

- What are the major skill sets required for a budding journalist in the era of technology-driven journalism?
- What is the role of media training institutes in fulfilling the industry needs?
- What are the challenges for media institutes in the era of technology-driven journalism?

Methodology

The study aims to locate the gaps in media academia and the media industry in the era of technology-driven journalism. The present study is survey-based with close-ended as well as open-ended questions. At the initial stage, a review of literature on journalism education helped in identifying the journalistic skills, new emerging skills, challenges, etc., which helped in preparing the questionnaire. The survey was titled 'Understanding Gaps and Challenges in Media Academia and Industry in the era of Technology-driven Journalism' and is intended to collect information on academia-industry gaps in media education in India and possible solutions. The respondents were the media professionals from different mediums such as print, television, digital, etc. They belong to different media as well as languages including Hindi, English and Indian regional languages. The respondents are New Delhi-based media professionals who were selected randomly and were asked to register their responses through a

Google form-based questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to 280 media persons in the month of May 2021 and 106 responses were received.

Analysis and discussion

Total number of responses received was 106, but after data cleaning, 100 valid responses were considered in the final list of responses. Of these 100 respondents, 89% were male and 11% were female respondents. In the survey, media professionals from various media organizations participated, such as Press Trust of India (PTI), BBC, Jansatta, Dainik Jagran, Business Standard, DD News, The Pioneer, Panchjanya, Organiser, Univarta, Aaj Tak, Janmabhumi Daily, Zee Media, UNI, etc. These media persons were from mostly print media (45%), followed by digital (24%) and broadcast media (11%). The rest of them included those working with news agencies, as freelancers and others. The respondents included media professionals with varied years of experience – Over 20 years: 45%; 16-20 years: 12%; 11-15 years: 11%; 6-10 years: 19%; and 1-5 years: 13%. Among these media professionals, 44% were in reporting roles, 41% desk, 3% from design/illustration section, and the rest 12% were in other roles in the editorial department.

The study sought to understand the role that media institutes play in fulfilling the industry needs. Respondents were asked if they thought media institute pass-outs are ready to work on the job from day one. In response to this question (Figure 1), only 14% of media professionals said ‘Yes’, while 67% said ‘No’. This indicates that many media institute pass-outs are not ready to meet the immediate skill requirement of the media industry, hence may not get absorbed easily merely by doing a journalism course. The respondents were asked a follow-up question, asking “what do these new journalism graduates lack?” The majority of the respondents (Figure 2) are of the view that media students even after going through a professional journalism course lack reporting and editing skills. Out of the various options given, most respondents chose to lack of (a) reporting skills (47%); editing skills (46%) and fact-checking skills (42%); and command over language (42%). Since this question had multiple-choice responses, respondents pointed at other shortcomings such as lack of-nose for news (33%), analytical skills (37%), general knowledge (37%), basic principles of journalism (31%), and multimedia skills (24%). Interestingly, respondents also believe media students lack soft skills such as office etiquettes (8%) and are inefficient at multitasking (20%).

When the respondents were asked about their learning experience in their respective media institutes, the majority of the respondents (Figure 3) said they learnt basic news writing (46%) and news editing (33%) skills. Among other skills, they said they learnt to develop a nose for news (27%), interviewing techniques (20%), verifying information (25%),

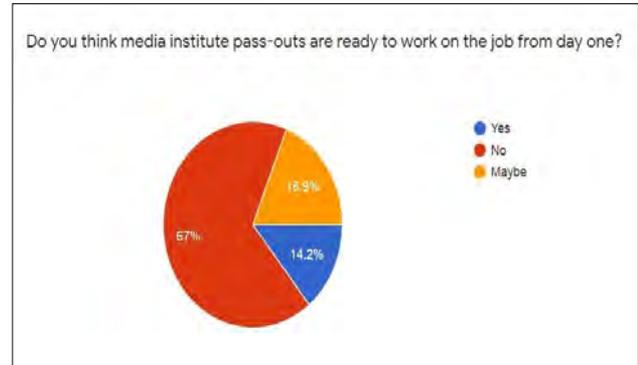


Fig. 1

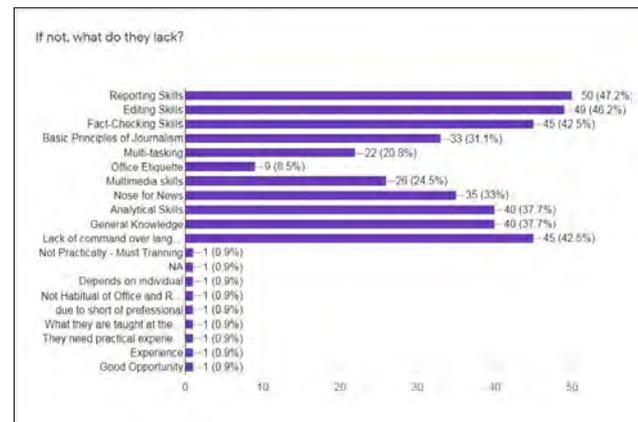


Fig. 2

critical thinking (20%), and basics of photography (9%). Only 17% said they learnt command over language from their institutes. Interestingly, only one respondent said that he/she learnt media ethics, laws, etc. from her media training institute. 22% of respondents also informed that they have never been formally trained in any media institute.

Following pie chart depicts the responses to

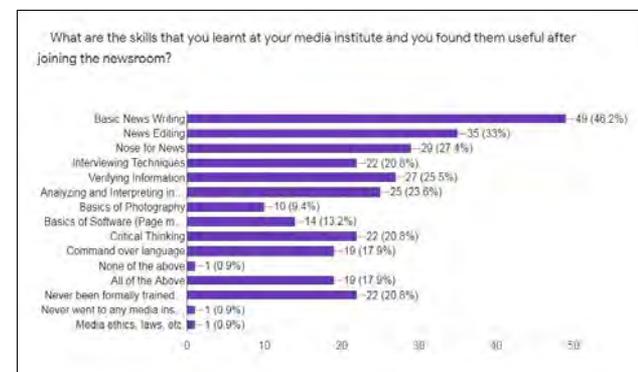


Fig. 3

the question whether the training offered by media institutes meets the present-day needs of the media industry (Figure 4). 57% respondents believe it doesn't, while 21% believe it meets the requirement. In response, 18% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 39% disagreed with the statement; while only 19% respondents agreed with the statement and 2% strongly agreed. About 22% of respondents were not decisive about the statement. This clearly indicates that most of the media professionals are not satisfied with the current training imparted by the media schools.

In order to understand the current industry needs and skills required in present journalism practices, media professionals were asked about the major skills required to be learnt by a media student in order to keep pace with the industry requirements (Figure 5). In response, 75% of the media professionals said that verifying information, 73% said fact-checking, 63%

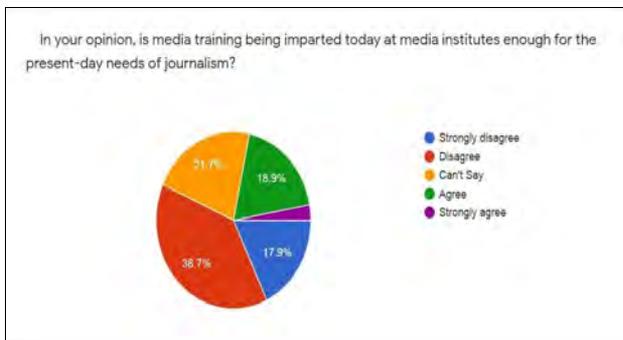


Fig. 4

command over language, 56% data journalism skills, 52% storytelling, 54% mobile journalism, 33% video production, 31% knowledge of the Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), 32% blogging and web writing, 30% podcast journalism, 24% artificial intelligence and 18% said virtual reality.

To understand the perception of media professionals about the media institute, they

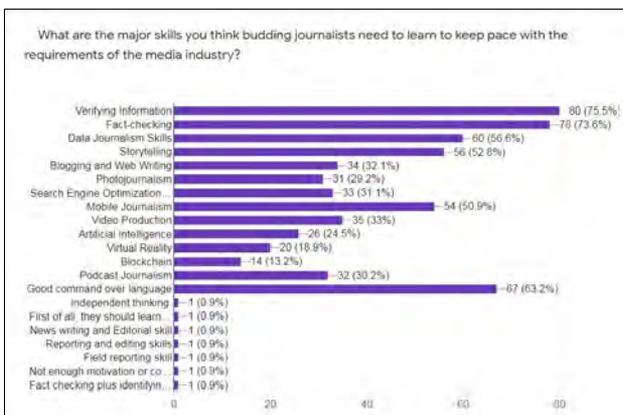


Fig. 5

were asked about their opinion on whether the contemporary media institutes are equipped to meet industry requirements? In response (Figure 6), only 21% of the respondents said media institutes are ready to meet the industry requirements, while 45% believed otherwise. 33% of respondents expressed no opinion on the matter.

In order to obtain the information about the media courses run by media institutes owned by media houses, the survey asked: 'If students passing out of the media institutes run by media organizations themselves made better-skilled professionals than an independent media institute?' In response (Figure 7), it was found that only 23% of the media professionals

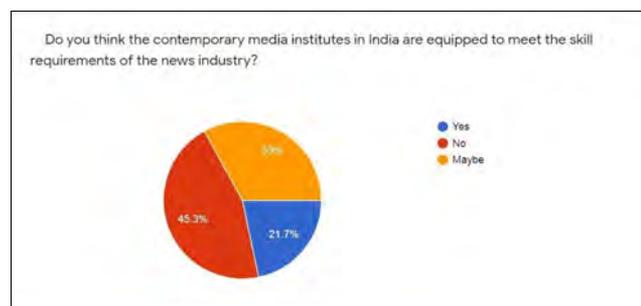


Fig. 6

said 'Yes', while 46% said 'No'. About 30% of respondents were not sure. This indicates that even the institutes owned by media houses are also not able to produce skilled media which can fully meet the requirements of the media industry.

The survey included a few other questions intended at understanding the media academia-industry gaps and possible solutions to filling these gaps. The respondents were asked whether more senior news professionals should be invited to media institutes to teach. In response (Figure 8), an overwhelming 95% of the respondents said 'Yes', and

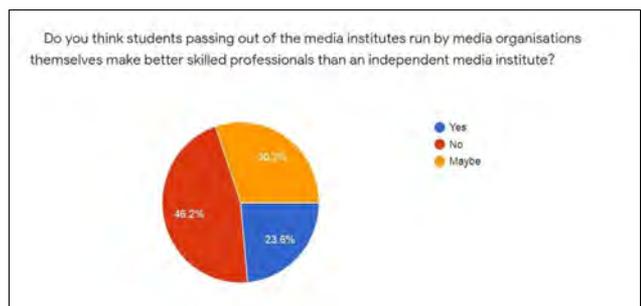


Fig. 7

only 1% said 'No'. The remaining 4% were unsure. It was also asked whether media students be invited to newsrooms and news studios for practical training. In response (Figure 9), again a record 97% of the respondents said 'Yes'. Only 1% said 'No', while 2%

said they were not sure. In a follow-up question, they were asked whether their organization will be opened to allowing media students for practical training, and 60% of the respondents (Figure 10) said ‘yes’ they would. Only 5% clearly declined to allow such an arrangement in their offices, while 37% said they were indecisive on the matter.

Looking for possible solutions

The study also aims at providing possible solutions for the gaps. Thus, media professionals, in the open-ended question, were asked to share their opinion on how the gap between media academia/training and industry can be filled? In response to this

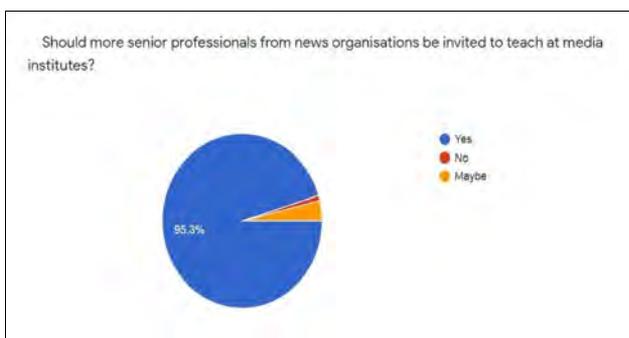


Fig. 8

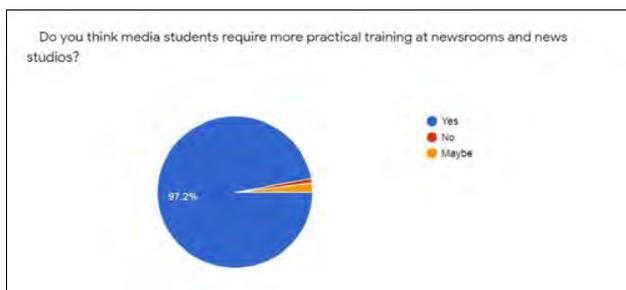


Fig. 9

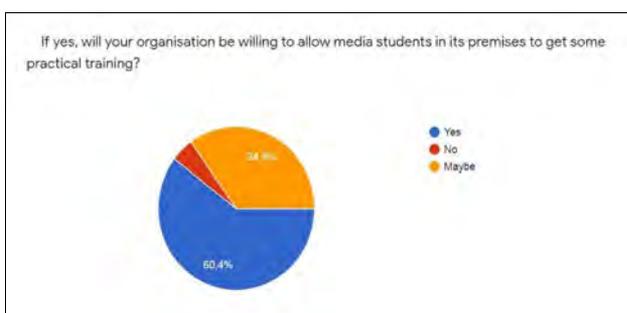


Fig. 10

question, different media professionals shared their opinion. Giving a holistic view of the media academia and industry gaps, a respondent noted:

“First, the set of skills to be imparted should be based on the actual requirements of news media. For print media, the schools need to have classes from senior professionals from the News Desk who are

at the centre of production, with precise knowledge about news reports for the day/week, the perspectives, and how headlines define the news. Second, training in improving language has been ignored by almost all media schools. A weak or banal language, particularly in the print media, is abhorred for the readers. Third, storytelling has not been given the desired thrust in the media schools. At a time when media schools are ubiquitous, the early birds who impart storytelling skills will surely shine as readers look for quality products.”

Many of the responses/suggestions received can be recorded under various themes. These responses have been organized thematically in following paragraphs, and these themes have been identified according to the recurring words in the responses.

Industry trainings and practical learning

In an apparent view, respondents mentioned industry training and practical learning. This was mentioned recurrently in the opinion shared by the respondents. A senior editorial hand with a Hindi newspaper said that “one-year practical experience” should be a must so that “the newcomer understands the different departments of a media organization”. A freelance journalist with over 20 years’ experience said, “Industry training should be compulsory for journalism graduation, as is in medical colleges. As a well-equipped hospital is a pre-requirement for recognition of medical college; similarly, a well-equipped media organization should be a pre-requirement for the recognition of a media institute.” A freelance reporter working with digital media said, “Let there be more focus on practicality. Take students to media houses, teach them multimedia skills, analyze their reporting skills, make them write copies, teach them video editing software; and if possible, send them on reporting assignments with some established journalists.” A senior woman journalist working with a news agency said, “By applying a more practical approach in media studies and focusing on social media, the journalism schools can fill this gap. Also, video stories are a much-needed skill for aspiring journalists.”

Collaborative media programmes

The respondents also shared that to improve media education and to fill the gap between media academia and industry, it is essential that collaborative programmes should be promoted. Such an approach will help media students learn in a real-time environment. A reporter with a news agency with over 15 years experience in journalism

said, “Joint (media institute-industry) programmes can be designed for the students. Such collaborative efforts will also help more campus selection of the candidates. More attention is required for preparing students to be involved in other communication fields such as corporate communications, PR, politics, film and television, etc.” Another senior journalist working in an international news media organization, shared: “Working journalists should be invited often to teach the students to impart practical training.”

Mentoring system for media students

To fill the academic-industry gap, respondents also mentioned that there is a need to introduce a mentoring system in media education. Media students should be attached to the media houses where they work with media professionals as their mentors. Such a training arrangement would certainly brush up the skill of a student. “There is a need to introduce a mentoring system in the media. Every media student should have a mentor who is a professional working journalist in a media house,” said a senior reporter with a Malayalam daily. A senior editor with a TV news channel said, “All students studying in any media institute should be connected with some working journalists as mentors and they should be encouraged to go to the field frequently, instead of confining them into the classrooms.”

Quality faculty and quality institutes

There were responses that drew attention to mushrooming media schools and the need for faculty training. “To fill the gap between media academia and industry, we have to check the mushrooming of media institutes...there should be a screening test like IIT-JEE in the media at the pan-India level,” shared a senior editor who worked with a news agency. Another respondent who worked with a government-run news channel said there is a need for faculty training too. “Apart from only focusing on the curriculum structure, it is also imperative to provide the right exposure and training to the faculty. Most of the faculty do not possess requisite industry experience which comes in the way of imparting practical knowledge about industries. It will be great if the faculty can regularly undertake short industrial projects in collaboration with industry experts. This will help ensure that the faculty is in line with the current industrial trends.”

Conclusion

Indian newsrooms are changing very fast adapting to the rapid technological advancements. Not just big media houses, even small and medium newsrooms

are also adapting to technology-driven journalism. The data collected for this study reveal that majority of respondents are working for digital platforms in English, Hindi and Indian regional languages, which is a clear sign of adopting technology-driven journalism. The study found that media professionals are of the opinion that students passing out of media institutes are not ready to fit into the job immediately. They lack crucial basics of the skills required for newsroom and field journalism. Media students entering into the professional field lack basic skills such as reporting, editing, and basic principles of journalism. The respondents also have expressed concern over the lack of general awareness and lack of command over language among the fresh media graduates. In this technology-driven era, newsrooms are going digital and adopting technology for covering news stories. The media professional who participated in the survey said the new entrants to journalism need to master in new skill requirements of the industry, which includes verifying information, fact-checking skills, data journalism skills, storytelling, blogging and web writing, photojournalism, search engine optimization, mobile journalism, artificial intelligence, podcast journalism, etc. Media professionals expect the media institutes to impart training of such skills to meet the industry challenges. However, the media institutes need to first equip themselves to train media students for such skills. The suggestions shared by the media professionals revealed that industry professionals are not against the theoretical training of budding journalists. However, they suggest a model of education which could accommodate both – theory and practical knowledge for which they expect an updated curriculum, trained media faculty and tie-ups with the media houses for real-environment learning.

The journalism training institutes run by media houses themselves are also a failed concept as per the response registered by the respondents. They do not find those students any better than the students trained at the independent media institutes. Therefore, pure academic learning and pure skill-development learning are not the accepted models for media education. Secondly, the certificates issued by such institutes to the pass outs are of no use because they are not recognized in any government agency or the other media houses. There is a need to find out mid-way where both types of learning can be developed for the holistic training. Most respondents, however, emphasized the need for more practical training in the real news environment. The study found similarities with Singh and Basu (2020) where they have also recommended the collaboration of the media industry

and academia. The study found that responses from journalists suggest that the ‘Teaching Hospital Model for Media Education’ could be applied, which is basically a medical education model of education, also suggested by Jha and Gangwar (2020).

The present study recommends the establishment of a governing body similar to medical and law education, which will guide media institutions for constant examination and upgradation of their curriculum. Such a body can be named as media education council. The Press Council of India can also be renamed as the Media Council and it can have a special wing that governs media education in India. The proposed media governing body will also help in bridging the gaps between the media industry and academia. Media professionals from different domains can be identified and nominated for this governing body and those recognized media professionals should be called by media institutes for special lectures and workshops. This governing body is required because the media landscape is fast-changing and this discipline is dynamic in nature. The traditional media course should always be upgraded and updated. Media institutes should get recommendations from this body while upgrading their curriculum. Since the media functioning is now technology-based, journalism training programmes can also be started in IITs to produce technology expert stuff. Now, when India is celebrating one century of media education in the country, it is time for the media industry, media academia and government agencies to sit together and identify the gaps and take corrective steps without delay.

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Media Education in India: Observations on Uniformity in Curriculum

RAGHAVENDRA MISHRA¹

ABSTRACT

Media education in India has completed its hundred years. It has grown enormously in terms of number, diversity, and regional expansion in this period. Thousands of students, hundreds of institutions, breadth of academic research, and abundant teaching subjects have become its distinct identity in the educational scenario. Ever-changing digital communication technology is at the locus of media education thus impacting the objectives, curriculum, pedagogy, and outputs. The concept of core subjects, core skills is interpreted differently and is reflected in the curricula. The glorious history of journalism has played a significant role in establishing this profession as a respected and intellectual activity. Media curricula have seen massive changes in the structuring and organization of courses. Since media degrees are recognized professional degrees with their prime objective to prepare skilled and oriented professionals with a critical understanding of the national and international media world, it is pertinent to examine the structure, theory-practical ratio, and weightage of the courses. The present paper attempts to investigate existing course curricula of select universities with specific objectives.

Key words: Media education, Curriculum, Internship, Media visits, Journalistic skills

Introduction

Journalism courses in their beginning focused on print media and the skills needed for it. Besides, communication and its various aspects such as development communication, TV and Radio, and public relations and advertising remained the exclusive aspects of journalism education. "Journalism education in India began in pre-independent India, with its roots in university language departments. Linguistic purity and journalistic responsibility drove the early years of journalism education" (Desai, 2017). Let us consider the beginning of media education with the training of journalism. The credit should be given to Annie Besant, and with this context, media education in the country is also celebrating its centenary. 'Annie Besant, founder-editor of New India, started mass communication training in Madras in 1920. The first University-based mass communication school was tried out in Aligarh Muslim University in 1938, followed by a regular communication school at Punjab University then located in Lahore in 1941' (Aram, 2018).

After liberalization, rapid changes were seen in media, and also profoundly affected media education. Media emerged as an umbrella term and the media and entertainment industry redefined the media landscape. Along with the information trade, entertainment

also increased, and media emerged as an economic component. This has attracted many institutions to start Journalism and Mass Communication teaching Departments. "As the country developed economically and started acquiring its station among the new and emerging nations, the need and importance of journalism education began to be realized in media in particular and the academic world in general" ("Mass Communication", n.d.).

The advent of satellite TV and the rise of TV journalism affected the entire journalism landscape in the country. TV grabbed a large share of advertising and gave a new direction to the advertising business. The entry of TV journalism, glamour, and cameras into media education should be seen as a substantial change of the twentieth century. The entry of private universities into higher education and institutions equipped with studios and cameras emerged as new destinations to attract students into media education. In the changing scenario and with growing complexities in society and the polity, the emergence of technologies and increasing interest of new consumers in varied media contents, media education and curriculum also needs to be changed in its structure, content for teaching, and approach. More balance is required in theory, practices, and critical evaluation of media behaviour and their

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interaction with society. "New strategies need to be evolved so that a critical interpretation of the old and the new media both as technologies and as sources of information and media content become an integral part of education at all levels- schools, colleges and universities" (Kumar, 2007).

Current market and business trends impact professional courses, so journalism courses have also been no exception to this. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the new media started interfering. In the first decade of the new century, online journalism spread globally, news portals began appearing, and social media emerged as a new possibility. With the turn of the second decade of this century, it became clear that digital media, and mobile or smartphones, are the new platform for content acquisition. Its massive impact is also visible in journalism education. Journalism was left behind in the twenty-first century, and technology, mainly digital technology, began to find a place in the curriculum increasingly. Effects of technological upliftment were also visible in many academic departments, and names like Mass Communication, Communication Studies, and Media Studies emerged. Today, topics ranging from Mobile Journalism, Web Design, Animation and Graphics, Visual Communication to Media Literacy are gaining importance as core subjects. Today, topics like news reporting and editing, history of journalism are getting reduced in journalism courses, and writing and language efficiency components are also compromised. With several new classes, creating balance, adherence to the core topics, and developing thinking professionals have become a big challenge for media courses. Besides, developing critical thinking and understanding social-political dynamics and media functioning with empirical evidence also needs to be focused in the curriculum.

There have been creative discussions about journalism education in the country in the past, and large gaps have been drawn between the needs of the market and society and the system of education and training. These courses in India were originally started to prepare skilled manpower for the business of journalism profession. As journalism education developed, most people began to feel that it was not fully capable of meeting professional needs. Many scholars have affirmed a gap between journalism and mass communication academia and industry (Murthy, 2011; Sanjay, 2012; Victorovich, 2019). "There is a wide gap between the research conducted in the educational institutions and the prevailing pattern in the journalism industry in the country" (Sinha & Basu, 2020). After economic

liberalization, privatization, and the emergence of ICT and digital media platforms, media education has also gone through noteworthy changes. We need to see the impact and it is also necessary to discuss the core ingredients of the curriculum; basic skills of journalism; research orientation, language training and similarity in structure and balance in the courses, to name a few.

Now media education has become a generic term and changed the focus of the courses offered by different institutions. A gap in the structure, course selections, and organization of the course curriculum has increased. The present paper tries to make logical observations on this specific issue with the help of a qualitative approach.

Objectives

1. To understand the structure of the course curricula of various universities imparting journalism education in India.
2. To examine the balance between theory and practice in the adopted curricula.
3. To examine the place of core skills required for journalism i.e., Reporting and Editing in the course curricula.
4. To evaluate the contemporary changes in the course curriculums and reasons for such changes
5. To compare the curriculum for equivalence in structure, balance between theory and practice and distribution of units

Methodology

The qualitative content analysis is used to attain the objectives of the study. The researcher has collected source material from the official websites of the select universities. A total of four central universities located in Northern India have been selected where PG programs are running. Out of four universities, two old and established central universities, one central university established at least 20 years ago, and one newly established university having Journalism and Mass Communication Department is selected.

Limitation of the study

No study can analyze the different aspects of any research problem or present many perspectives appropriately. The present study is also not the exception and completed with the following limitations-

1. The study has taken sample universities from North India only.
2. No state university, no distance learning institution is being taken in the sample.

3. The study is restricted to use qualitative method only.

Basic curriculum structure

Structuring the curriculum is crucial as it can provide the essential inputs to understand pedagogical perspectives. Differences in the allocation of units in each course, the number of courses taught in each semester and provision of special papers shows the standard and norms of the course and the curriculum. The difference in the curriculum has been a significant problem of media education in India. Different courses for the same degree, non-uniform distribution of units in the curriculum, and differences in specialized courses indicate that there is no uniformity in the curriculum as to what to teach and what to leave out. Where Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) offers 33 papers, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) offers 16 papers, Central University of Haryana (CUH) offers 25 papers for their PG degrees. Significant differences were observed in the distribution of units for each course as AMU's theory-based courses are structured in 03 units, BBAU's most of the courses comprise of 05 units and one in 04 units. CUH's courses are divided into 04 units, whereas BHU's courses are in 05 units (block term is used for units). From the data that is obtained from the syllabus available online, it can be concluded that a significant difference is found in the distribution of credits, allocations of units in each subject, and number of subjects to be taught. Data also establish that with the change in media and communication landscape, the subject area is expanded, so the challenge has arrived in front of learned experts in the selection of different courses. It also indicates that the local board of studies goes with their wisdom in selecting subjects, and establishing overall similarities is not possible without a central guideline or advisory.

Theory-Practical Ratio

Mediacourses require a balance between theory and practical. Language skills, knowledge of technology reporting-editing, of broadcast technology, and of digital technology have become essential for media professionals nowadays. Along with this, knowledge of the principles of communication and journalism is also necessary for mature intellectual understanding. This ratio is considered 50-50 or at least 60 theory and 40 practical in media courses. UGC Committee on Curriculum Development in Mass Communication also suggested 'that laboratory-theory instructions should be 50:50' ("Mass Communication", n.d.).

Out of the selected curriculum, significant differences were observed. BHU offers a total of 80 credits for the paper, where no separate paper is assigned exclusively for practical. Moreover, in three paper, namely Print Journalism, Reporting, Writing and Editing, 30 marks are given for theory and 70 marks for practical. The same ratio was observed in papers that demand skills for communication and Radio, TV, and Film. University offers specialization in Hindi Journalism, PR and Advertising, Development Communication and Media Administration, TV, Radio, and Film. Practical components are added as part of the curriculum with no separate marking schemes mentioned in the chart. Based on the mark division mentioned in the structure, the theory-practical can be determined as 60:40, where internship marks are included in practical. BBAU offers 80 credits out of that 26 credits are assigned for practical components, including 08 credits for the newsletter, practical, and viva voce. Practical components excluding two papers in different semesters for the newsletter, practical and viva voce have been associated with theory papers. Based on the credits assigned to theory and practical components, the ratio can be fixed at 68:32 per cent. AMU has a total of 09 independent papers on practical components, including viva voce, presentation and production work, and vocational training. The theory

Table 1

S.No.	Name of Institution	Total number of subjects (Excluding GE)	Units in each course with credits assigned	Remarks
1.	DJMC, BHU	16	05 units, 04 credits, aggregate 08 credits for dissertation	Internship incorporated across three semesters
2.	DMC, AMU	33	03 units, no mention of credit	
3.	DMCJ, BBAU	16	05 units, 04 in one course, 04 credits and 06 for two courses	
4.	DJMC, CUH	25	04 units, 05 credits, 08 credits for dissertation/project/portfolio and 04 credits for optional papers	

and practical ratio are obtained 67: 23 per cent from the total number of papers. In CUH, 70 per cent marks are assigned for theory components and 30 per cent for practical components.

No uniformity has been observed in the curriculum of the select universities. Very few universities have separate mention of the specific practical papers. Only a few have followed the 50:50 or 60 theory: 40 practical ratios in their curricula. Since most of the components taught in journalism and mass communication degrees are practical in nature, underrepresentation of practical components deprives students of having sufficient scope for practice the tips and tools of the profession. This small proportion leads to widening the gap between industry and academics and, hence, narrows the scope of preparing equipped human resources for the profession.

Language skills in the curriculum

Today in the age of digital media, knowledge and the use of language have become even more critical. In such a situation, it is also expedient to look at the status of language teaching training in media education.

After observing the PG curricula of the select universities, it can be said that significant differences were observed in the inclusion of language skills in the curricula of different universities. BHU offers specialization in Hindi journalism; therefore, major components related to the language are covered in that section. In the curriculum of the other select universities, no separate paper/ subject was found on the language skills. Moreover, some components of writing skills have been incorporated into subjects of reporting, editing, and writing. AMU offers one paper for Urdu journalism which is more devoted to journalistic skills rather than language efficiency. In these inclusions, more focus was given to technicalities and fitment of the writing with medium and the profession; very little to no attention was found on grammatical components of the language.

Internship and media visit

The internship is an essential component of media education. How an institution arranges media internships and how it assists students affects both the students' attitude towards the industry and their preparation to enter the industry. It is not very easy, so often the institutes do it imprecisely. For ever-changing disciplines like media, students need to go through rigorous training and in-house practices. The internship offers an opportunity for students to be part of industrial practices and the existing professional

culture. After analyzing the curriculum of the select universities, incorporation of the internship was found with variations. BHU, AMU, and CUH all have internship provisions as part of the curriculum, with 04 credits assigned. BBAU does not have a formal mention of the internship program in its curriculum. AMU and CUH have introduced their internship program in the second semester, whereas BHU has made unique provisions by introducing this program in the first, second, and third semesters. This three-time internship compulsion is extraordinary as it creates scope for ample industry training opportunities for students throughout their studies. Internships are crucial for every media student to enhance their skills in the profession; therefore, it should be given sufficient importance. "Journalism educators must value the opportunities provided by institutional environments to expose students to learning by doing as knowledge and skills obtained through such means provide a good foundation for better productive working life"(Ojomo, 2015). Media visit or media tour is another vital component, helpful in familiarizing students with industry and society, culture of the different parts of the country. No mention was found in the curriculum of any select university for any media tour/excursion or media visit.

Research component

There have been significant changes in media education from the past. Today taking media as an umbrella term, many aspects of communication, the process and effect of media as an institution, the relationship between media and society, and the epistemology of the nature of journalism also form a large part of media education. These subjects and issues can be analyzed with the help of an established system and culture of research in media teaching departments. Media education departments are increasingly inclined towards research, and there is a direct correlation between departmental recognition and research efficiency. To appropriately analyze the relationship between media, culture, society, and political system and accurately assess the media world, it is imperative to focus on research. "Students pursuing postgraduate programs in communication and journalism must have a thorough understanding of research methods so as to function as academic and media industry researchers" ("Communication Research", n. d.).

All PG curricula of the select universities have research as the core subject, but differences were observed in assigning weightage and credits. BHU has an independent course on research methodology and

dissertation proposal writing. Conducting research and submitting a dissertation with 05 credits are also part of the curriculum. This additional attention on the research component must be instrumental in developing research understanding among students and build sincerity toward research. CUH has a mention of research as an independent theory component, but they have made the dissertation optional. BBAU has introduced its Communication Research paper in the third semester with the preparation of the report as a practical component within the same paper. No separate mention of the dissertation work was found in the curriculum. AMU has an independent theory paper on research as well as a separate paper on dissertation work. The observation distinction found in the incorporation of the research components in the select universities. Old and established universities like BHU and AMU have given due attention to the research component, whereas others have either incorporated in one paper or made it optional.

Observations

This study highlights several important issues with the help of analysis of the PG course curricula in Journalism and Mass Communication of select central universities of India. Variations and differences were observed in the curriculum. If we talk about the basic structure, then there is no uniformity even in the number of units under one subject. Even after the credit is equal, the subject is taught with three units and sometimes with five units. This disparity indicates that we are not unanimous on the basic structure of the curriculum and that students are studying more topics for the equivalent degree.

Another problem arises in the understanding of proportions. There does not seem to be any uniformity in how much space is to be given to basic skills, language efficiency, technology, and the analysis of the interrelationship between media and society. The focus on news reporting and editing training in the media curriculum has diminished, which can subsequently be seen as a factor in the decline in the quality of news organization and their democratic commitment.

There is also a lack of focus on the practical component in many media curricula. Many of the curricula do not include practical as a separate question paper. It directly reduces the learning experience. The media curriculum should compulsorily provide 50% or at least 40% of in-house practical besides their internship programs.

There is also a lack of internship and industrial training for media students. This has been an issue

of concern for a long. "In India, management and computer education at university level succeeded whereas mass communication education failed because of a weak academic-media link" (Aram, 2018). No such bridge has been made between the educational departments and the media institutions where there is a smooth system of training of students made available by establishing a system like Memorandum of Understanding. Here, coordination is felt at the level of policymaking, where every institution should provide training to the students of media schools. The internship is essential in media education. "Industry internship plays an increasingly central role in training graduates in a range of disciplines, including journalism" (Forde & Meadows, 2011).

Language-related knowledge is fundamental in media education. Whatever be the medium, without the understanding and authority of the language, there can be no proper expression. Very few media education departments find a place in the curriculum of the language. It is imperative to remove this shortcoming. In terms of language, more work needs to be done on local and Indian languages because this side of the students is generally weak from the very foundation.

With the expansion of the media industry, specialization has also become the need of the hour. The specialization provides students with ample opportunity to explore their area of interest. Not every course is very conscious of specialization. Provision of specialization in core areas is also necessary to enhance the richness of the curriculum and employment opportunities of the students. Along with this, the availability of resources should also be kept in mind, and arrangements should be made for specialization accordingly.

Developing a strong tradition of research is essential to establish ideological frames with the cultural orientation of the country. Research can provide important inputs for the balanced development of both theory and practice. Although the research aspect in media academics has not developed as much, it has to be kept in mind that research will be the criterion of academic excellence in future media studies. Along with making research a part of the curriculum, it is also necessary to increase research facilities in the departments. "The introduction of a tradition of research will help ensure that educators think critically about the field and pass on this habit thought to students, both consciously and otherwise" (Ray, 2007). Separate funding agency arrangement is also the need of the hour for media research to have an independent existence. Media research also requires

a balance between industry and society components.

In Media Teaching Departments, in most of the universities of the country, we generally conduct courses with prescribed teaching posts and non-teaching general administrative positions, when it comes to allocating funds and providing resources in the university, sometimes the administration does not understand the requirements of the media departments. In such a situation, problems like lack of technical staff and labs also come to the fore, affecting the courses. The committee constituted by UGC for media courses is almost two decades old. Although some of its recommendations are still relevant, however, forming a new committee for curriculum uniformity and academic freedom for general homogeneity is need of the hour. As it was observed in the study also, "no standard syllabus is followed. It is necessary to standardize the syllabi. They should consider such present trends as globalization, liberalization, and privatization, as well as workforce, resources, technologies, equipment, literature, and extensions" (Dutta & Ray, 2008).

Conclusion

For various reasons, media education is an essential part of any democratic system. It is required to develop media professionals with knowledge of technology, methodology, the culture of the media industry, and a critical and balanced approach towards social and political dynamics. "Media education as an area of studies can address and enlighten many issues and concerns" (Das, 2009). In recent years, many changes have changed the face and priorities of the media industry. 'Media are undergoing tumultuous change, and media education needs an equally profound reinvention' (Pavlik, 2013). Media courses are essential to meet the needs of the industry and develop a comprehensive understanding of the profession. Although media courses are being conducted at the undergraduate level, postgraduate courses are necessary to prepare skilled and mature human resources. It is only because of the similarity of the curriculum that a level of understanding and a level of skill can be inculcated in the students who have taken the same degree. In media courses, the similarity is necessary in terms of structure, number, and theory-practical ratio. The media field is a constantly changing, so the formation of a Central Expert Committee or Curriculum Committee can be beneficial in this direction. Keeping in mind the autonomy of the institutions, if the committee presents an upgraded model curriculum, in which constructive suggestions are presented regarding structure, course

numbers, research, and theory-practical ratio, it will be beneficial for media fraternity as a whole.

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Indianisation of Media Education

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ABSTRACT

Presently media education is more focused on media-related skill efficiency and is not balanced correctly between promoting practical skills and imparting conceptual depth and critical thinking among its students. Media education in India completely relies on western model and theories of journalism. References and course materials are also based on western textbooks and practices. Indian media educational institutions have no clue about the importance of considering education to social, cultural, economical and political settings. There is a need of separating media education itself from training for the media industries and becoming a part of a larger, more theoretically communicative discipline which will result in not only the trained journalists but also broadly educated and ethical journalists. This paper examines the present status of media education in India and addresses the issue of Indianisation of media education in terms of teaching, learning and participation for holistic and integrated development of Indian society through media education.

Keywords: Media, Media education, Indianisation, Journalism, Indian media, Media training

Media education in India: Brief history

In India, most of the media education programmes were started by Catholic initiatives however initially it was not a form of media education but was just a kind of media training. It was taken care of by groups outside the purview of the academic institutions. Annie Besant, who was founder-editor of 'New India', started communication training in Madras in 1920. University communication department was first tried out in Aligarh Muslim University in 1938 (Aram & Paul, 2009). Mass Communication was recognized as an academic discipline in India in the late '70s. Before that, it was recognized as a foreign subject. In 1971, under the shelter of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), the teachers of journalism education united and formed the Indian Journalism Education Association (IJE), a body to drive the cause of media education. Veteran journalists and academicians like D.N. Kalhan, I.P. Tewari, M. Chalapathi Rau and others were a part of it (Tere, 2012). In 1977, University Grants Commission (UGC) constituted a subject panel for journalism education giving the way towards formal media education. In 1978, the Second Press Commission of India recommended the setting up of a National Council for Journalism Training but that did not come into effect as there was a lack of the industry support. Despite several hurdles, this was the time when journalism education and training started budding.

Many universities started offering various programmes in journalism education and seeking

training for students in different print media organizations that built industry-academia relations. Audio-visual media training was very limited because of financial constraints and hard access to government media houses. But in few decades when the growth of newspapers and magazines increased and televisions became popular, the scenario of media education completely changed. Now, more emphasis began to be given to training and education of electronic media and that gave rise to young aspirants of journalism. Institutes like IIMC, the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), the National School of Drama (NSD), and the National Institute of Design (NID) flourished and started contributing in imparting education to fulfil the requirements of the media sector (Das, 2009). Many polytechnics, press academies, advertising associations and other professional bodies also started training programmes of varying courses in communication.

At the initial stage, there had been many societal risks that acted as a barrier for the media education to gain an identity as an academic discipline. Somehow, it has been overcome due to the course of time. Training and education about media slowly but steadily became the need of the hour. Reach, accessibility, impact, and versatility have made the "fourth pillar of democracy" into one of the most dominant and outstanding enterprise industries in India (Muppidi, 2008). Privatization (as well as new technology) has absolutely changed the scenario, which is now blossoming into job opportunities.

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This consists of electronic media (documentaries, television, radio, films), print media (newspapers, magazines, books, journals), online media (blogs, forums), and more. These highly professional jobs require proper education and training.

Present state of media education in India

Presently media education in India is offered by over a few hundred public and private institutions (Cheung, 2009). Apart from central universities, state universities are also offering degree, diploma, postgraduate diploma, and certificate courses in journalism and communication but it is not limited only to undergraduate and postgraduate level, it is gaining popularity at doctoral and postdoctoral level also. There are certain colleges and universities which are dedicated only to media education in the country. Media education is also being offered through distance learning. A number of media houses also train some of their own journalists by selecting deserving students. All these institutions offer a variety of courses ranging from media history to communication theory, communication research, media management, advertisement and public relations, print, radio, TV journalism, film studies, documentary production, new media technology, traditional media etc.

Media education has changed from a practical, vocational program to a broad professional program but in India, it is still in its infancy. Media education has made enormous progress but lots of challenges still lay ahead. It is fighting for its own existence even in this new era. With the emergence of new technology and liberalization, media scenario has changed. It is not limited only to print or broadcast journalism. Today, merely text cannot justify the work of journalism, but a wide combination of sounds, texts, and visuals are needed. Now it requires professionals who can handle camera, web pages and corporate newsletters (Deori, 2017). There is convergence of various media which demands a single person with several set of skills such as print, audio-visual and the internet skills.

Today, media education in India is not balanced correctly between promoting practical skills and imparting conceptual depth and critical thinking among its students. It is more focused on media skill efficiency. The academic communication centers are completely media-centric not society-centric to cater for the needs of the society. There is fight between theory versus practice but they have no idea that both are crucial for a journalist (Gaur, 2013). Media education institutes are busy only in developing good writing skills and the knowledge to operate new media technologies keeping aside the holistic vision

of the profession that influences the way societies' function. Journalists are having a sense of news but they are lacking the analytical capacities. There is no inter-disciplinary approach. It seems that there is no relationship between what is taught in the media institutions and what is practiced in the media profession. Academicians blame the professionals for 'having no knowledge enough to practice journalism' and the professionals blame academicians that 'what they teach or learn is not relevant'.

Media educational institutes have proliferated in numbers and have increased the number of seats in the same but there is no set standard of quality. A mere increase in quantity of media educational institutes will not justify well for the true mission of journalism. Also, the media educators from older times are not able to cope with the need for present-day media technologies. Most of them are self-taught and are from the literature background. Further, most of the media educational institutes today are busy in making themselves like management institutes that offers lucrative pay packages to their students (Dickson, 1999). There is a kind of competition between the media educational institutes to attract the students rather than focusing on promoting the course and the institute itself. They are just busy in increasing the number of enrollments to get funds from the funding agencies. Even, students are seeking an institute which can provide them placement in a big media house or in a well-known public relation firm. Students seek admission just because they find this profession as a field of glamour which in return is harming the media education as well as the journalism profession.

Need for Indianisation of media education

From the beginning of media education in India, it has completely relied on western model and theories of journalism. References and course materials are also based on western textbooks and practices. This has left students of media education with very low knowledge of the rich legacy that Indian journalism possesses. Indian media educational institutions have no clue about the importance of considering education to particular social, cultural, economical and political settings. The negligence of regional language education in Indian journalism has created a huge gap between the heavy media-saturated urban areas and the relatively less media engaged rural areas (Hirtz, & Kelly, 2011). For imparting regional inclusivity in media education there is a need for locally relevant study materials. It will help media to work for the sake of the larger society and not for anyone individual's interest. Eventually, academic communication centers

will become society-centric to cater for the needs of the society. It would be easier to evaluate the media text to develop analytical and critical thinking which is integral to education.

In national reconstruction, Indian media theorists have neglected the role of culture which was the basis of its foundation. In the development project, the role of culture was kept aside. Presently, media education is not giving emphasis on critical thinking about the media ethics, role of media in society and nation-building. There is not much attention paid to writing skills and language proficiency (Muppidi, 2008). Coverage of art and culture through feature writing and magazine journalism is missing. There is a need for a democratic set-up in media production to impart the cultural expressions and to examine the issues of communication, culture and their implications (Sinha & Basu, 2020). This will only be possible by institutional establishment that theoretically, and empirically promotes critical intellectual engagement to deal with these issues. It will help people in critical engagement with media which is affecting their knowledge construction, political consciousness and social experience as well as promoting their cultural expressions and meanings. Media education is based on critical citizenship, accomplishment of social justice and searches for information. It balances the social and political powers in a democratic society. It gives meaning to participation and action through creative and critical dialogue. It empowers society with development and liberation through self-expression. So, the media education in India should have to focus on the advancement of the society, civic engagement and social justice (Nagaraj & Guha, 2012). There is increased dependence on global media content which is giving birth to a different form of youth culture in our country.

The recent advancement in the field of communication tools has challenged the existing pedagogy of media education in India. There is a need of finding the gap between media education and the present patterns of practices in the media industry so that the gap can be filled by designing a suitable educational curriculum in media education. In a country like India, specific attention is needed from media educators in the field of recent development of journalism such as disaster/crisis journalism, data journalism, investigative journalism etc. Further, media education needs to be based on interdisciplinary subjects to harness its maximum potential. There is a need of separating media education itself from training for the media industries and becoming a part of a larger, more theoretical communication discipline

which will result in not only the trained journalists but also in broadly educated and ethical journalists. Media education should focus on objective dissemination of information in order to promote the public good rather than concern for persuasion and propaganda.

Conclusion

Media education is not a new subject to teach but a new way of teaching and learning. Media education as a separate subject in schools and colleges in India is still not feasible. But to guard the students from the unsafe outcomes of the media and to take advantage of the really useful components of the media, media education has to be delivered at least as aspects of distinctive subjects. Equal participation of all individuals is necessary to harness the maximum potential of media education for larger democratic goal of strengthening governance, civic participation and democratizing communication. Journalism education should approach a holistic and integrated view of society. Training and instructions of humanism and human value-laden course structures for media education can be designed. Set of standard professional parameters for media courses can be implemented across the media institutions in the country.

Opportunities can be created in the field of media education on the basis of ability by imparting social inclusivity, removing class, caste, and gender to promote greater social justice and civic engagement. Commoditization of media education should be avoided so that all groups and individuals in the society will have right to self-expression which will help in development and liberation of the society. Realistic assessment of demands of media outlets can be done to cater for the needs of the media industry which in return enhance the employability of the young aspirants in the field of journalism. Further, the industry-institution collaboration can be done to tackle the rapidly changing scenario of media technologies and to overcome their mutual mistrusts and drawing up a guideline for a quality media education.

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Market Forces and Media Education: Contextualizing Cultural Factors

PARTHA SARKAR¹

ABSTRACT

Like any other academic sector, media education has increasingly come under the control of market forces in India. The privatization of higher education and the entry of media houses themselves in the media education sector have affected the earlier notions of media education. With focus on skill development and employment orientation of media education, the conventional format of the course has compelled the policymakers to revise their knowledge production strategies. However, the cultural angst of education has to be contextualized. The wholesale adoption of the western education may not make much sense. While one cannot deny the rigor of application of western methods, the instructional content must incorporate with the local flavors. The approach can be global, but the structural inputs will have to be local. This can lead to real glocalization of media education. The Indian media education has recently celebrated its centenary, but the discussion on classroom-news room gap is still raging. Despite the inroads of new technology, the gap remains unaltered. Thus, this paper focuses on how the Indian media education can grasp the global context of media education for meaningful adaptations that includes cultural factors.

Keywords: Media education, Market forces, Cultural factors, Skill development, Media market

Introduction

Market forces and media education are challenging topics to discuss since the concepts and measures utilized in the argument are complex, contentious, and, in many cases, subjective. As a result, it's vital to start with the most generally utilized ideas and measures. Media competition issues are basically economic in nature since, at their most basic level, they are levy issues. Market structure, on the other hand, has significant implications for the conduct and performance of organizations and industries, as predicted by the Industrial Organization (I/O) model. The concept of the market is defined by two things for most products: the product itself and the geographic area in which it is marketed. By definition, media markets are fuzzy (Sharma, 2009). To put it another way, it's impossible for media companies to predict how many competitors they'll face, how likely consumers will replace one product for another, or what obstacles to enter will prevent new competitors from entering the market. Furthermore, the line between media types has gotten increasingly blurred.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the present study are:

- 1) To study the contours of media education in India.
- 2) To make analyse the impact of market forces on media education in India.

- 3) To assess the effects of new technology on curriculum designing for media course in the Indian Context.

The contours of media education in India

Despite proliferation of media education in institutions as well as universities and production of students on a massive scale, the market requirements are not met qualitatively. The media market requires skilled manpower. But these media institutions cannot produce even one-third of manpower acceptable to the media market. The reason for the inability of the present media education to produce quality manpower is basically due to the poor quality of the infrastructure as well as resources. The newly created institutions could not find quality staff from the market for the sudden expansion.

Moreover, media education in government sectors have fixed fees and intake of students and as such, they cannot violate the norms. The entity of media houses in media education has created problems by exploiting the people by setting up sub-standard education and extracting huge amounts of money from the students and producing students of poor quality which is far below the expected standard of the market (Chattarjee, 2011). Now, media education has quickly entered the market with a pure business motive of producing students in quantity. Academic

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and research programmes have been designed to find market and fees have been fixed arbitrarily and the whole process is a free ride to students as consumers and education and research as products and as such media educators are behaving increasingly like business executives.

For the last few years, media education has been experiencing dilemma of transformational changes. This dilemma is the result of commercial and market forces acting upon every aspect of academic enterprise. Media education, of late, has started functioning more and more like corporate bodies, giving emphasis on vocational as well as professional training. Implicit knowledge is gradually being replaced by explicit knowledge and attention is being paid to commercially lucrative media labs and skill-building, while general classroom teaching is valued low on priorities (Shrivastava, 2017).

Media educators have to decide that what, who and how media education is to be shaped and defined from both outside and inside the academia. The changing context of the job market invites many difficult and vexing questions, in fact, it has triggered off a spiral debate on the need for fundamental change in the purpose and future of media education. Many media education institutes and universities both in India and abroad are responding to the need for change within the traditional paradigms by effecting incremental change with the time-honoured processes of deliberate reflection, consensus, expansion, contraction and programmatic reform (Torraco, 2005).

With over 750 million mobile handsets, India is one of fastest-growing markets for mobile phones. By 2020, there were over 200 million internet connections, as reported by IWS. The Indian Media and Entertainment (M&E) sector is expected to grow by 25 per cent in 2021 and is expected to reach ₹1.73 lakh crore (\$23.7 billion), according to a FICCI-EY report. In 2020, while television continued to remain the largest segment, digital media has overtaken print, and online gaming has overtaken a disrupted film entertainment segment. The Indian media and entertainment sector has de-grown by 24 per cent to ₹1.38 trillion (\$19 billion) in 2020. Digital media and online gaming were the only segments that grew in 2020 adding an aggregate of ₹2,600 crores. Other segments have de-grown by an aggregate of ₹46,700 billion (“Indian media and entertainment”, 2021) The situation looks unfortunate for the Print Media too. Like in many western countries, circulation and number of publications are in fact decreasing.

Media Education in India: The cultural context

The journalism education in India is, at least from a theoretical perspective, on the right track. It provides a good mix of theory and practice; an understanding of ethics, values, and tools to help students appreciate and practice their profession. However, the problem remains in actual ‘teaching’. Many of the media institutes and universities do not have adequate number of qualified and experienced faculty who are professionally trained. Infrastructure is another big problem. Lack of equipment and exposure to the emerging technology is a big handicap. Partly because of this, and partly because of lack of enthusiasm, industry-academia interface is not vigorous. The scene, however, is not bleak. Things are moving as the media industry and people’s engagement with media is developing fast. This is the main reason behind emerging new trends in media education in general and journalism education in particular (Chikeleze, 2018).

Teaching and learning should be more collective in nature. Teaching and learning have changed drastically in the previous years due to some extent to the occurrence of internet and online tools for coursework and others. Media convergence is giving new learning opportunities in the profession both educators and students. As the young generation is more open to working in groups and sharing on social networks, willingness to create partnerships to produce collaborative work is one of the key trends that will influence learning in the future.

The impact of market forces on media education

Media specialists believe that media education must have a strong element of values and ethics. Without a strong foundation of values, media education is just a skill training. At present, all over the world, there is growing resentment against media, especially new media for increasing trivialization of content and dumbing down of serious issues (Chattarjee, 2011). In developing countries like India, it assumes greater importance. Hence, there is an urgent need for teaching future journalists, content creators and media managers, ethics and values related to media.

However, recent trends suggest that media education is turning toward a more business-oriented curriculum, whether by moving media departments from their traditional home in journalism and mass communications into business schools or by infusing the media curriculum with business-oriented courses. In this context, for institutions of higher education, and for media education institutes, in particular,

government support is predicated upon these institutions so that ability to align with the interests and needs of corporate and other for-profit systems. Finally, it is important to note that a degree in media, at present, is not a pre-requisite for employment in media houses. In fact, considerably more of those who don't have formal education in media are currently employed in media organizations. So, the media educators should significantly decide what courses should be taught, whether more emphasis should be on practice or on theory, whether there should be a narrow or broad approach to media education, whether students are getting adequate education, and who should be teaching media education courses, that is, teacher-practitioners or academics.

The value of the framework in contributing to content enhancement is to be highlighted, specifically through creating valuable material for case studies. Media education is being called upon to respond to the unprecedented and urgent needs of the current world of work to produce media practitioners or professionals with the skill and competencies to thrive in a dynamic and changing environment. Considering this, the inclusion of the new technological content in media education curricula could significantly contribute to preparing professionals for futuristic roles within the media industry by enhancing the content offered.

Media educators must train students for a job market that is constantly changing or for technologies that are also constantly changing. Today's expectation is that media education, and its programs must serve a corporatist and functionalist agenda by offering a practical skills-based curriculum that will carve out ready-made-go professionals who can perform tactical and technological skills that are presently needed by the industry. The expectation is that institutions of higher education and universities should educate media and communications students to meet industry needs that, however, change by the day; in turn, employers have to re-think that why they do not choose to hire media students.

The challenges ahead

Media is clearly moving toward associations with business schools and in house media institutions. The arguments are made that media education programs are not part of business schools and it should not include business courses in their curriculum. But it is a fact that media students need a foundation of knowledge in business and economics and that should be taught as an elective subject. However, this trend will not potentially be trouble if it leads the media profession away from its communication foundation.

Media is currently being emphatically blended with advertising, visual communication and others in part because new technologies have blurred the lines among traditional differences such as paid versus earned content.

It is assumed that the future of media education is based on rebuilding bridges between theory and practice in the curriculum, rather than on championing theory-based learning to educate future media professionals. As the trends suggest, the media educators need to first educate students with a curriculum that is focused on fulfilling immediate industry needs and on training future employees; rather, to create students capable of thinking critically about the role that the practice of media and communications plays in shaping our societies and our common futures. This trend is already happening in the industry, and it is believed that such blending threatens to eliminate media education as a distinct academic discipline (Richards, 2019). Certainly, a fine balance is needed; however, regardless of recent alignments with a business curriculum, most educators and practitioners see media education as best placed within journalism and communication departments.

But the question is whether the newly created private media education institutions have performed their role professionally to meet the market's demand. When we look at the newly created institutions in terms of their performance, the performance of the other set is in dark indeed. Hence, the mess is in the whole system (Kumar, 1995). There is an urgent need to set right the maladies in a comprehensive framework enforced through a well-regulated mechanism. So, a series of steps are needed now to revamp the media education and primarily the government and government-aided media institutions who have to be well equipped in terms of facilities and faculty. There is no doubt that the public-funded media institutions have qualified staff. Of course, they are qualified educationally but they are may or may not be professionally equipped (Edward, 2010). But in the long run, there is no practical utilization of the "communication theory" in present media market as it does not "meet the need".

Conclusion

To conclude, media education necessitates a paradigmatic shift that would liberate its potential to develop into a true liberal arts discipline that would be not away from the vocational grip. Otherwise, we as educators will continue to remain complacent about an exploitative neoliberal education system that does

not serve media students. Today's media education is not preparing students to become successful human beings but to meet the need of an increasingly multicultural and complex global society based on technical and tactical digital social media skills and knowledge of business acumen.

The approaches and goals of media education as noted above has definite synergy with the goals of media industry. The ubiquitous and all-pervasive nature of contemporary media especially the new media which has even entered the bedrooms makes it imperative to incorporate skills to critically analyse and understand media in any media education programme. The goals of media education like ability to use media and construct media messages necessarily which should be linked to media industry. Increasingly the advent of digital media and content journalism has enabled citizens around to world to reflect on media coverage.

Value orientation to media education is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. The techniques outlined above are by no means exhaustive. The purpose of this paper is not so much to talk of the 'why' of value in media education but to emphasize the 'how' of it. It is said that if the 19th century belonged to Europe and the 20th century to America, the 21st century verily belongs to Asia. As the country prepares itself to take its rightful place amongst the comity of nations, media educational institutions have a yeoman role to play in the task of nation-building. The edifice of a strong and happy nation can be sustained only if it is built on the bedrock of a vibrant value system in tune with our cultural ethos.

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Discipline or Field: A Deep Dive into Multi-disciplinarity of Media and Communication Studies

RAJESH KUMAR¹ AND NITIN KUMAR²

ABSTRACT

Whether the communication is a Field and/or a Discipline is a debate among media educationists and scholars for a long, and this is concerned with the historical development and academic–professional institutionalization of communication studies. Many scholarly articles covering the history of the communication studies, professional organizations and issues relevant to it, and the current state of communication research and education in different geographical regions around the globe have been written over the years articulating one position or the other; and also advocating a meeting ground while positioning it as a field or a discipline. Where the question of communication’s disciplinary coherence is concerned, these institutional and professional aspects of the communication field also touch on matters of theory and methodology. This paper dives deep into the debate whether communication is a field and/or a discipline referring to a host of literature, scholarly works and discourses relevant to this question. It has been found that this field is slowly taking the shape of a discipline in its own right alongside such traditional disciplines as history, literature, sociology or political science. However, the nature of the discipline is still in clouds, while its identity is typically determined by academic positioning and demands emanating from industry and profession. The dominant position in this debate has been that communication is still a field that draws heavily from different disciplines of social sciences and humanities. It is essentially multidisciplinary and largely technology-driven.

Keywords: Discipline, Field, Communication studies, Media studies, Multidisciplinary.

Introduction

Communication and media studies emerged as an integrated discipline or a field of study following the second world war. Independent schools or departments of media and communication were established for education and research, drawing hugely from relevant disciplines for theories and methodologies of research. With this, a debate originated as to whether communication is a *field* and/or a *discipline* (Nordenstreng, 2009, 2007, 2004; Craig, 2008; Hansen *et al.*, 2006).

By the early 1960s, communication and media studies started seriously looking for its independent position out of departments of sociology, psychology, political science, economics etc. However, this field of study still lacked theories and methods of its own and whatever it had were actually drawn from other disciplines that couldn’t independently answer many communication problems. These media and communication schools and departments either emphasized media education and research or catered to the requirements of media industry and profession, viz., print media, broadcast media, public relations, advertising and so on. Slowly and gradually, the importance of media education and training was recognized by both industry and the

public. The significance and need for media and communication education, research and training were also felt by institutions of higher learning. By early 1980s, media and communication scholarship extended its footprint around the globe and in many universities and institutions of eminence. Media scholars started meeting in national and international conferences and appearance of scholarly works in communication journals grew significantly. Scholarly platforms for academic deliberations and discussions like the International Communication Association (ICA) and the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) significantly enhanced their members list giving definite impetus to media education and research; and it also gave a boost to international collaborations among academics and academics for media and communication education, training and research.

Over the years, communication and media studies became highly diverse in methods, theories, and objects of study. But a few questions remained: Is communication merely a connecting tool for different disciplines and professions? Is communication an essentially interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field in which knowledge interpretation and creation could be possible only through close cooperation

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and synergy among several distinct disciplines? Is communication a potentially distinct intellectual discipline in its own right? This paper addresses these questions and dives deep into the debate as to whether communication is a field or a discipline referring to a host of literature, scholarly works and discourses relevant to these questions.

The debate

The status of communication and media studies as a discipline and/or an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field has been fiercely debated internationally for decades. A special issue of the *Journal of Communication* (JoC) in 1983 addressed the “ferment in the field” and engaged itself in the debate of multidisciplinary of media and communication studies. Articles and scholarly works were solicited from eminent scholars in the field (Gerbner, 1983). The purpose was to review the field from the point of view of research and challenges. This resulted in the summer special issue of JoC in 1983. This effort on the part of JoC did not conclusively say anything about the status of the field, but it definitely reminded the existing scholarship to constantly revisit this question.

The ferment in the field was also taken up in an annual conference organized by the International Communication Association (ICA) on the theme “Beyond polemics: Paradigm dialogues” and a subsequent two edited volumes of essays (Dervin *et al.*, 1989). Two major interdisciplinary theorists, Stuart Hall and Anthony Giddens among others representing diverse approaches to communication research were included in deliberations at this ICA conference and they also contributed their essays in edited volumes which was the outcome of the ICA conference. In several chapters and commentaries in these two volumes, the framing vision of “paradigm dialogues” emphasized epistemological pluralism, interdisciplinary openness, and critical reflexivity in communication studies. One essay proposed that communication should be regarded as a “practical discipline” that uses both scientific and humanistic methods to pursue a common, essential purpose, “to cultivate communicative praxis, or practical art, through critical study” (Craig, 1989, p. 98).

This debate was revisited by JoC in 1993, but that also turned out to be just another episode “between fragmentation and cohesion” (this was the punch line of the issue) without any conclusive statement and/or perspective. The JoC revisited the question of the disciplinary status of communication and media Studies in two successive special issues in 1993 on “The Future of the Field” (Levy & Gurevitch, 1993).

Authors who contributed to these special issues differed in their perception and understanding in relation to the disciplinary status of communication studies. Many authors referred to communication studies as ‘the discipline’ in a casual manner without any supporting argument as if there was no debate in relation to its disciplinary status. Many others emphasized that the field of communication was not a discipline at all, but they did not have sound arguments for this position. A few contributors were optimistic that it was a field of study but was emerging as a discipline while a few others averred that no such thing was happening. Some scholars saw the continuing fragmentation of the field as a problem; others found fragmentation as an invaluable source of adaptive strength and a forte. Some writers suggested urgent efforts to define the intellectual focus of the discipline while a few others were sceptic about such effort and opined that it would be not only useless but counterproductive as well. Thus, this big exercise by JoC yet again failed in laying a conceptual ground in relation to the debate of media and communication studies being a discipline or a field or something with some distinct status. The increasing presence and continued growth of the departments and schools of communication studies in institutions of higher learning without any consensus on a theoretical core and a rigorous scientific epistemology was seen as a problem (Donsbach, 2006). The pluralistic vision of ‘paradigm dialogues’ also continued (Dervin, 2006; Putnam, 2001), as did efforts to define a disciplinary theoretical core that could still accommodate the field’s pluralism (Craig, 2007).

With this, a communication science model of communication as a social science discipline was also articulated in a series of publications by eminent scholars of the time (Berger & Chaffee, 1987). The communication science model while acknowledging a broader field of communication extending across academic disciplines and methodological approaches also emphasized the existence of and potential for a discipline of communication marked by its own methodologies of research and theories. The communication science model described the discipline in terms of five salient features: one, its historical origins in the mid-20th century interdisciplinary communication research movement; two, its rapid institutional growth and consolidation in the last decades of the 20th century; three, its core identity as an empirical social science; four, its proper place as a “variable” discipline spanning different “levels of analysis” in the scheme of academic disciplines (Paisley, 1984); and fifth, its imperatives to bridge the disconnect between interpersonal and mass

communication that was the most significant barrier to the development of a cross-level theoretical core in the discipline (Hawkins *et al.*, 1988; Craig, 1994). The scholars averred that communication science indeed did not yet have a well-developed theoretical core; however, its distinct focus on messages was said to provide a framework for constructing new theories to explain how messages perform specific functions across micro to macro levels of analysis of communication. Whereas disciplines like psychology and sociology focus on certain “levels of human interaction”, disciplines like communication and economics focus on “variables” that perform related functions at all levels.

Even though communication in the last few decades has acquired many of the features of a discipline, not even scholars in the communication field universally regard it as such. By one relatively straightforward definition, an academic field becomes a discipline when it forms a faculty job market in which PhD-granting departments at different universities regularly hire each other’s graduates (Abbott, 2001). Communication does appear to meet this structural criterion. For example, a survey of ICA members conducted in 2005 found that two-thirds had received academic degrees in communication (Donsbach, 2006). However, academicians still may debate whether communication is sufficiently coherent and distinct from other disciplines in its methods, theories, and objects of study to warrant admitting it to that exclusive club. However, as communication departments formed separately from the other social science disciplines, their research lost the close connections it had to other disciplines of social sciences. In recent years, however, the pendulum has swung back again, and many communication scholars now actively employ a multidisciplinary approach in their work, often in collaboration with colleagues in other social science fields. This combined effort allows scholars from different areas to bring fresh insight and methodology to the work.

Moreover, communication as a discipline will continue to have distinctly applied emphasis. As Donsbach (2006) has stated that growth of the communication field has been stimulated by the high demand for communication expertise in modern societies. This field has significant practical relevance as well, be it public policy framing and analysis, information policy and guidelines, public health programmes and campaigns, new forms of conflict resolution and so on — all these have also attracted research funding and have drawn communication scholars into policy debates. Also driving the field toward an applied emphasis is its incorporation of, or close association with, a series of professional/occupational

areas, including, among others, journalism and other media fields, public relations, advertising, intercultural training, and organizational training and consulting. Creative efforts to resolve the inevitable tensions that arise between the different needs or value priorities of professional training versus academic research may transform both of these constructively. People from communication education and research who may differ in their epistemological commitments still agree that communication research must be applicable to key normative questions and social problems (Deetz, 1994; Donsbach, 2006).

Craig (2008) in his widely cited work *The International Encyclopaedia on Communication* has given a roadmap for communication studies. He says, “Formation of the communication field has resulted from a partial convergence of various disciplines and lines of research that intersect in complex ways, all somehow related to the phenomenon of ‘communication’, but have never been tightly integrated as a coherent body of thought. As it was established, the field constructed an eclectic theoretical core by collecting ideas relevant to communication from across the social sciences, humanities, and even engineering and the natural sciences. This body of knowledge has no universally accepted overall structure. Sub-fields and topics can be grouped and organized in various more or less systematic ways for different purposes (p. 685)”. With the development of modern research universities since the nineteenth century, the notion of a discipline has evolved in relation to specific institutional and professional structures (university faculties, scholarly societies, peer-reviewed journals, funding agencies, etc.) that interact in complex ways with conceptually defined categories of knowledge. Craig (2008) avers that not even scholars in communication and media studies today universally regard it as a discipline. Hence, the state-of-the-art is itself ambiguous regarding the question of its shared scientific status. Craig (2008) concludes, “No matter how intellectually or institutionally well established the discipline of communication may become, many areas of the field continue to be highly interdisciplinary. Contextually focused areas like health communication and political communication inherently straddle disciplinary boundaries. Study of the media as social institutions is unavoidably a multidisciplinary endeavour involving psychology, sociology, economics, legal and policy studies, technology studies, etc. The question is not whether communication will continue to be an interdisciplinary field, as it certainly will. The open question is whether communication may also have a theoretical core that enables communication scholars

to approach interdisciplinary topics from a distinct disciplinary viewpoint that adds real value to the interdisciplinary enterprise (p. 687)”.

Amidst these diverse views and comments over its disciplinary status, we have seen impressive growth of centres of communication and media studies in institutions of higher learning, education and research. Irrespective of its status as a field or discipline, it is now a well-established domain of study in today’s “Information Society”. George Gerbner rightly put it in the editor’s epilogue to the ferment issue of the *Journal of Communication*, “If Marx were alive today, his principal work would be entitled *Communications rather than Capital*” (Gerbner, 1983, p. 348).

Conclusion

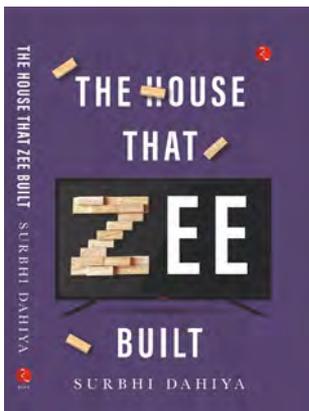
Even if communication and media studies has now positioned itself very well in institutions and in the intellectual arena, its many areas still continue to be highly multidisciplinary. For example, areas like health communication and political communication by its very nature and context are bound to breach disciplinary boundaries. The study of the media as social institutions is unavoidably a multidisciplinary endeavour involving psychology, sociology, economics, legal and policy studies, technology studies and so on. The question is not whether communication will continue to be an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field, which is inevitable and unavoidable and more often desirable as well. But a significant question remains as to whether communication may also have a theoretical core that enables communication scholars to approach interdisciplinary topics from a distinct disciplinary viewpoint that adds real value to the interdisciplinary academic efforts. As Nordenstreng (2007) says, “The growing centrality of communication as a theme in global culture involves the discipline of communication in a ‘double hermeneutic’, a process in which the academic field derives much of its identity and coherence from its profound engagement with communication as a category of social practice while also contributing to the ongoing evolution of that very cultural category that constitutes the discipline’s centrally defining object of study (p. 221)”.

In sum, the dominant position in this debate has been that communication is still a *field* that draws heavily from different *disciplines* of social sciences and humanities. It is essentially multidisciplinary and largely technology-driven. The field has expanded and diversified a lot taking into its fold manifold studies relevant to culture, linguistics, gender, data and information, augmented reality and so on, besides other aspects of media and communication.

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Book Review



Book: The House That Zee Built
 Author: Surbhi Dahiya
 Publisher: Rupa Publications
 ISBN: 978-93-90918-68-3

Major Contribution to Contemporary Media History and Media Management

It has been only 30 years since satellite TV made an entry into India, but so much has transpired in this short period of time that it demands to be documented as events unfold. Zee, the first Indian entrant in the Indian satellite space probably warrants more special attention because it paved the way for other Indian entities. The story of Zee is a stellar example of how a home-grown company with its fingers on the socio-cultural pulse stand up to established media giants, and be the leaders in many a segment in the television as well as entertainment industry.

Over the years various writers and journalists have written extensively about influential media entities including Zee. Dr. Chandra also has published his autobiography. Still, a comprehensive book that was well-researched and objective was required to fill in the blanks.

Probably that is what prompted Prof. Surbhi Dahiya to chronicle the journey of Zee from its establishment to growth. As a media educator Prof. Dahiya has been keenly watching the developments in the media field, and discussing them with students. With her latest book 'The House that Zee Built' she goes much beyond the curricular details, and provides an important resource that is of significant academic and literary value. She also offers a perspective that is different from previous writings.

The book is divided into nine chapters with catchy headings like *Mantras of the Millennium: Zee Makes Friends(2000-2002)*, *The Strategic Saga: Zee Demerges (2003-2006)* etc. goes about charting the journey in a chronological sequence. The first chapter traces the roots of the family that Dr. Subhash

Chandra came from and how he developed a keen business acumen that equipped him to rightly sense where the real opportunity lies; and the last chapter poses the question *Which Foot Forward for Zee?*. With Dr. Chandra having stepped down from the leadership of the group it will be really interesting to watch what shape the empire takes. The book also has two separate chapters on ZEEL and ZMCL (ZNL earlier).

Making the book interesting and enriching for the reader was a challenge before the writer, as the readers are already somewhat familiar with the subject matter. Prof. Dahiya has overcome the challenge by meticulously gathering data, and presenting it in a very objective manner. Dr. Chandra himself finds that "the narration is balanced between tangible figures and abstract motivations that compound the axis upon which Zee rotates".

Prof. Dahiya has painstakingly collected many behind-the-scenes anecdotes, exclusive inputs, and expert analysis, and has tried to shed equal light upon the obstacles faced by the institution as well as its victory over the obstacles. So much so that at places it becomes an enthralling roller-coaster journey akin to the one offered in Essel World that was one of Dr. Chandra's early ventures.

As Prof. Alan B. Abarran mentions in the preface "While on one side, it [the book] looks at the excellence some channels achieved, it also flips the coin to point out channels that shut shop mid-career". This book does not remain an account of the corporate and managerial functions. It also considers the content strategies, and puts forth the views of the keyfaces and news anchors. Through the insights gained from the personal interviews the writer has provided details of the company's internal functions, and has analysed the latest developments in the company. She has also brought into discussion important themes like strategic intent enunciation, genesis, product development, diversification, marketing, distribution, technological leaps forward, regional expansion, geographical spread, international footprint, branding, financial management and business model.

Prof. Dahiya's writing style is engaging. The narration is lucid and the argument logical. It demonstrates the author's command over the subject matter. Therefore, the book has emerged as a major resource that all media educators must glance through, and recommend to students. It will be equally useful to scholars of media management.

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Indian Institute of Mass Communication

Exhibition of Hindi Publications



The Indian Institute of Mass Communication has always been committed to the promotion of Hindi, the official language of India. Like every year, a one-day exhibition of Hindi books and magazines was organized at Pandit Yugal Kishore Shukla Library and Knowledge Resource Center under Hindi fortnight organized from September 14 to 28 2021. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Director General Prof. Sanjay Dwivedi on September 15, 2021. On this occasion, Additional Director General of the Institute, Shri K. Satish Namboodiripad, Dean (Students Welfare) Prof. Pramod Kumar, Head of the Department of Publications Prof. Virender Kumar Bharti, Library in-charge Dr. Pratibha Sharma and

Dr. Pawan Koundal were also present. The exhibition was visited by a large number of faculty members, officers and staff.

The Institute has the largest specialized library in mass communication in the country. On June 17, 2021, an exemplary initiative was taken by the institute by naming this library after the publisher and editor of Hindi's first newspaper 'Udant Martand' by keeping 'Pandit Yugal Kishore Shukla Library and Knowledge Resource Center'. About 1000 new books on media, communication and literature in Hindi have also been purchased in this library this year.

It has collected about 36,377 volumes of Books and bound

Journals on different aspects of mass communication and allied subjects such as print media, broadcasting, advertising, communication, communication research, public relations, radio and television, film, information technology and traditional media.

The library subscribes to over 92 Journals/magazines and 32 Leading Newspapers. It has also been providing a newspaper-clipping service to its users, including complete record of news items and leading articles on Mass Communication published in various leading professional journals and periodicals.

The library is fully computerized and has automated its housekeeping and service operations through the latest version of Library software LIBSYS 10, On-line public access catalogue (OPAC) and Online Journals are available for students and faculty members. Library has also developed a state-of-the-art Multimedia, reference and Research section for students, faculty and research scholars.



Prof. Sanjay Dwivedi, Director General, IIMC glancing the exhibited books and publications.



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ABOUT 'COMMUNICATOR' JOURNAL

Launched in 1965, *Communicator* is a peer reviewed journal of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) that publishes original research on Communications. The flagship journal of the IIMC endeavours to publish the best literature available in the field of communications and its related branches for the greater benefit of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers. It is the oldest communications journal published from India. The *Communicator* also has a book review section. In order to maintain its high standard of scholarship, *Communicator* follows a rigorous procedure of blind peer review. The main aim of *Communicator* Journal is to focus on communication theory, research, policy and practice. It is especially interested in research which is interdisciplinary and based on the experience of South Asia and other developing countries. This UGC-CARE listed Journal is published on quarterly basis. '*Communicator*' journal is now being indexed in the Indian Citation Index.

The *Communicator* Journal includes the following category of papers for publications:

- **Original Research Papers:** Papers in maximum 4000 words (excluding abstract, keywords, all references, tables, figures, appendices and endnotes) typed in double space, in Times New Roman 12 point font can be submitted for publication. The papers should present a connected picture of the investigation and should not be split into parts.
- **Short Research Communication** not more than 2000 words (about 4-5 pages, typed in double space), which deals with (a) research results which are completed but do not warrant comprehensive treatment, and (b) descriptions of new material or improved techniques, with supporting data. Such notes require no headed sections. Summary (not more than 80-100 words) is to be provided at the end of the text.
- **Critical Research review:** These review articles besides containing introduction, exclusive review of literature, must point out lacunae in research carried out so far and suggesting possible lines for future work.
- **Book Reviews:** *Communicator* also has a book review section. Reviews of books published on journalism and mass communication and related subjects can be submitted (Word limit: 1500) for publication. However, reviews of books published on other nomenclatures such as social sciences and humanities, social work, anthropology, art, etc. can also be sent if their title is related to media study or at least 40 percent of their content is related to media, mass media or journalism or related subject. Book reviews should be sent along with their complete details such as publisher, year, price, page number etc.

Contributors are requested to ensure that the research papers or notes submitted for publications have a direct bearing on Journalism and Mass Communication.

PUBLICATION ETHICS AND PLAGIARISM

- Authors should obtain necessary permissions for using copyright material in terms of artwork, adaptations etc.
- Plagiarism in any form is not acceptable under any circumstances. A declaration of original work must be submitted with the final article, failing which the article will not be considered for editorial screening. Author/s must ensure the authenticity of the articles. Any unethical behaviour (plagiarism, false data etc.) may lead to the rejection of the article at any stage (peer review, editing etc.). Published articles may be withdrawn if plagiarism and/or falsifying results are indicated.
- Authors submitting articles to the journal should not simultaneously submit them to other journals, nor should the articles have been published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS

All submitted papers are subject to rigorous double blind peer review process. The Editorial team undertakes initial screening of the papers before sending them to the reviewer. This process generally takes 6-8 weeks. The peer review is based on six stages:

- Screened by editorial team and send to reviewer;
- Paper accepted as suggested by the reviewer;
- Paper can be accepted after minor revision suggested by the reviewer;
- Paper can be accepted after the moderate revision suggested by the reviewer;
- Paper which needs major revision suggested by the reviewer is liable for second review;
- Rejected

EDITING STAGE

If the paper is accepted for publication, it has to go through at least two editing stages. It may also be noted that all the accepted papers are subject to the modifications/alterations required by the Editors at any stage of the editing.



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Focus on New Technologies

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Indian Institute of Mass Communication

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