INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF
COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

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IJCD

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

We started a dialogue in the previous issue friends and take it forward from there. It was a great honour for Team IJCD to have got the first issue released by the Honourable Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India, Mr. Kapil Sibal.

The Minister while speaking with us stressed on the need of good and genuine research in the field of comunication, development and journalism. He emphasized on the role of a journal stating that it should not only be a vehicle for researchers to get their works published but should be a tool for improving development opportunities ensuring equitable access to knowledge and information to all sectors of the society and especially to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

He congratulated Team IJCD on its effort and hoped that the journal would encourage good research by maintaining the quality of research papers accepted and help researchers to not only indulge in independent and original research but also in presenting as per international standards.

Different perspectives have influenced over the years the holistic and integrated vision of sustainable development. We must remember that when we talk about communication, we are not talking only about transfer of information but we also include in it the participation of the society, the community we are communicating about. In a society, social institutions can come into existence and survive only when people participating in them are interlinked through communication.

In a country where 73 million children are deprived of their right to education - this is the official estimate and unofficially the situation is even worse - the need for both communication development and development communication have become very imperative.

Friends, Team IJCD needs to inform all of you that please ensure to send the research papers in the standard research format and the articles maintaining continuity. It will help us in not having to return them to you for re-writing. Articles should be between 5000-8000 so that the research has an indepth quality in it. All papers in this journal have undergone rigorous review, based on initial editorial screening, and double blind review by two anonymous reviewers.

We bring out this issue of IJCD with an élan. The first issue – our maiden effort was well received with positive comments and important criticism. Friends I am sure your comments and guidance will help us to strive towards excellence.

Dr. Durgesh Tripathi
Editor, IJCD

FIRST PILLAR vs FOURTH PILLAR
A study of press coverage of Delhi Legislative Assembly

Dr. Pramoda K. Jena* & Dr. Amit Bhardwaj*

Introduction:

US President Thomas Jefferson once said "If I am asked to choose between 'a Government without a press' and 'a press without a government' I will not hesitate a moment to choose the later. In fact one cannot think of a situation where there is no press. Though Legislature, Judiciary and Executive are the three constitutionally sanctioned institutions of democracy which are otherwise called the pillars of democracy press continues to be the fourth pillar even if it does not have the constitutional sanction.

In a democratic set up like India few elected representatives shape the destiny of the millions of people. Of course media widens the sphere of decision makers. It offers a platform to the sensitive elites who debate the issues of national importance in the form of articles, seminars and panel discussions. Nani A Palkhiwala (1994), an eminent jurist and academician in his book "We The Nation: The Last Decade" wrote, "to dissent is at the heart of every democracy." This right becomes the duty of every knowledgeable and right –minded citizen when government acts in a manner detrimental to civil liberties or otherwise against public interest.

Again an analysis of Abraham Lincoln's historic statement "Democracy is for the people of the people and by the people" would imply that the success or failure of democracy lies with the people. More active is their participation more vibrant is the democracy. It is the media that facilitates people's participation by helping them to know.

Parliament or the legislative assembly is the supreme policy making bodies. These institutions decide the destiny of the countrymen. Hence to make the discussion meaningful, the members (MPs and MLAs) have been provided the immunity cover so that they can express themselves freely and fearlessly in the discussion. The people are also very keen to know what decisions their honourable representatives have taken for their welfare. It is the press that brings this information to them.

In any legislative assembly or parliament there are two main players, the ruling party and the opposition party. According to the constitution the role of the opposition is to offer constructive criticism to the ruling party. Its effort is not to derail the government but to put the government back on the track. Sometimes there are government actions which the opposition feels are detrimental to the interest of the common man it opposes and pressurises the government to amend the policy. If the opposition stand is proper press supports the issue and government heeds to the pressure.

Hence press has enormous responsibility. During the question hour, a lot of information is generated. It is again the responsibility of the press to take this information to the common man. So in parliament as well as state legislative assemblies elaborate arrangements have been made for the press people to report the proceedings. But in due course of time there is a clear shift in the definition of news. It is no more the information that caters to the need of the people; it is the information that caters to the taste of the people. Hence newspaper prefers the unruly scenes in the house to the hardcore information. The members of the house have their own complains against the press people and vice versa. While press people complain of deterioration of the quality of the debate in the House, press is accused of biased reporting.

Hence this study was conducted to find out the situation in Delhi legislative Assembly and its coverage in the newspapers.

Research Objectives:

The broad objective of the study was to find out the fairness of the leading newspapers of Delhi in covering the proceedings of Delhi Legislative Assembly.
Specific objectives of the study were
i. To find out the coverage of Delhi legislative assembly in the Delhi newspapers.
ii. To make a qualitative analysis of the news of the proceedings of Delhi legislative Assembly covered in the Delhi Newspapers
iii. To find out the perception of the press people regarding the adequacy of the facilities for the press people in the Legislative Assembly.
iv. To study the perception of the press people regarding the coverage of the Legislative Assembly in the Delhi Newspapers.
v. To know the perception of the press people regard-

ing the proceedings of Delhi Legislative assembly.

vi. To find out the perception of the MLAs regarding the coverage of the Delhi Legislative Assembly in the newspapers of Delhi.

Research Design:

The prevailing perception in the mind of the people is that press coverage of the legislative Assembly is lop-sided. The unruly behaviors of the members, obstruction of the proceedings and other such proceedings are preferred to the hardcore important information that is generated during the question hours as for as press coverage is concerned. Hence this study was conceived to find the truth in it.

12 newspapers- six English and six Hindi were selected on the basis of their circulation. Newspapers during two sessions were collected (of course two days in advance) and the contents were analyzed. The proceeding of the Legislative Assembly was also collected. A comparison was made between these two to find out the discrepancy.

Based on the findings two sets of interview schedules were prepared and journalists and MLAs were interviewed. Only those journalists were interviewed who covered the Legislative Assembly of Delhi. Out of 12 journalists from 12 newspapers 11 journalists could be interviewed. Out of 70 MLAs 33 MLAs were interviewed.

The data collected were collated and inferences were drawn.

Data Analysis:

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Question No.-1

Do you read the news relating to the coverage of Assembly Proceedings:

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
Very attentively and eagerly	Attentively	Like any other news	Sometimes	Never
29	04	-	-	-

29 MLAs stated that they read the news relating to the coverage of Assembly Proceedings very attentively & eagerly while 04 members told that they read such news attentively.

Question No.-2

Do the newspapers properly cover the proceedings of the Assembly :

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
YES	NO	AVERAGE	NO REPLY
08	20	04	01

20 MLAs stated that the newspapers did not cover the proceedings of the Assembly properly. Out of these, 11 members belonged to the Ruling Party and 09 Members were of the opposition party. According to 08 MLAs the coverage was proper. All these MLAs belonged to the Ruling Party.

02 MLAs of Ruling Party and 02 MLAs of opposition party termed it as average. One MLA of Ruling Party preferred no comment in this regard.

Question No.-3

If Not, the lacunae in the coverage?

According to 9 MLAs, good issues were not given importance in the coverage and even the factual details given by the members in their speech were ignored. 04 MLAs felt that the element of negativity was more in the coverage. 02 MLAs alleged that newspapers augment the sensationalism. While 02 other MLAs stated that coverage had no relevance to public interest. Apart from it, one MLA told that regional problems & issues were being ignored by the newspapers. One MLA stated that the initial proceeding of the day was paid more attention during the coverage.

02 MLAs put question mark on the credibility of the Media. While 05 other MLAs alleged biasness, partiality and political touch in the coverage. Out of these, 02 MLAs categorically stated that there was corruption in the media and news were managed.

08 MLAs were of the opinion that more importance was given to the senior and influential leaders in the coverage. Sometimes one MLA got importance more than he deserved while others got no importance.

07 Members of the opposition stated that less or no importance was given to the opposition in the coverage and it was more inclined to the Ruling Party. Contrary to it, 02 Members of the Ruling Party told that more importance was given to the opposition and facts and figures of the Government were ignored. While one MLA defined the limitation of the Journalists and stated that verbatim reporting of whole proceeding

was impossible. One MLA advised that the Journalists should be well aware of the Rules & procedures of the Assembly.

Question No.-4 Perception of the MLAS regarding the coverage of proceedings of Delhi Legislative Assembly.

(A)Coverage is:

Issue-based	11
Personality based	19
Both	02
No response	01

(B)The criteria of the coverage should be

Issue-based	31
Personality based	01
Both	--
No reply	01

(C) Which type of coverage gets priority:

Positive	03
Negative	24
On Merit	04
No reply	02

(D)What should be the criteria:

Positive	--
Negative	01
On Merit	30
No reply	02

(E) Loss of Message.

26 Members accepted the fact that all the points of the proceedings did not find place in the coverage. It should not be done and every aspect of the proceeding should be covered by the Journalists carefully. Out of these, 03 MLAs expressed their anguish over the importance not being given by the Media to the issues raised by them in the Special Mention under Rule 280. One Member stated that less importance was given to the coverage of Delhi Assembly as compared to other states. One MLA himself accepted that main reason of Loss of message was editing while one Member suggested that feedback should be provided by the Assembly Secretariat to the Journalists as they failed to properly note down the proceedings due to uproar in the House. 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

(F)Misinformation

26 MLAs stated that "misinformation was given in the news items. It should be avoided and story should be filed after verifying the facts". 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

(G)Improper Terminology

Regarding improper terminology, 26 MLAs were of the view that it should be avoided and the Journalists should have adequate knowledge of terminology. 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

(F)Distortion of Message

26 MLAs accepted that facts were distorted in the news and the Journalists should properly write the news without escaping the reality. Out of these, one MLA stated that Media was the mirror image of the society like literature. Hence, ethics of honesty should be followed in news writing. One MLA termed the Distortion as 'Main Problem'. While the other MLA straight forwardly opined, 'Distortion is the job of Media'. One MLA repeated this fact in these words, 'News is not written but manufactured by the Media'.
02 MLAs cited the reasons of Distortion as influence of the Government, policy of the newspaper and personal attitude of the Journalist. 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

(G)Spicy Language

26 MLAs while considering the use of spicy language improper, advised that the use of language should be decorous in view of the dignity of the House. Even One MLA accepted spicy language. According to him it enhanced the readability. 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

(H) Bias

26 Members accepted the fact that biasness prevailed in the news. They advocated for impartiality in the news. One MLA quoted the reason of political inclination of the newspaper while the other MLA stated that prejudice of the Journalists towards the ruling party and influential leaders were the main reasons. One MLA commented, "jo jaisa manage kar leta hai waisi khabar aa jati hai." 07 MLAs did not make any comment .

(I) Lack of Objectivity

 26 Members were categorical that objectivity was the casualty which should be arrested. Out of these, one MLA stated that instead of publishing the actual state-

ment of the MLAS, the Journalists mix their own views in the News. Statement of one MLA in this connection was pertinent enough to mention that "writing news for the sake of writing is not appropriate. It creates record in the History which has long term effect." 07 MLAs did not make any comment in this regard.

Journalists Covering the Legislative Assembly:Out of 12 reporters from 12 newspapers selected for the study only 11 reporters could be interviewed.

1. Your comment on the standard of discussion.

VERY GOOD	GOOD	AVER-AGE	BAD	VERY BAD
NIL	2	2	6	1

Not a single journalist interviewed gave 'very good' certificate to the discussion in the Delhi Legislative assembly. However two respondents opined this as good. The majority six out of 11 interviewed termed it as bad and even one called it very bad.

2. Comment on the facilities provided to the press people

VERY GOOD	GOOD	AVER-AGE	BAD	VERY BAD
NIL	6	5	NIL	NIL

It seemed respondents were not dissatisfied at the facilities provides in the press gallery

The majority six out of 11 interviewed called it GOOD and for the rest it was average.

Respondents those who called it good found the atmosphere in the press gallery very cooperative. For them the sitting arrangement was satisfactory. CC TV, telephone, refreshments, 'agenda reaching timely' etc made them expressing satisfaction over the arrangements.

On the other hand those respondents termed it as 'average' complained the facilities provided in the press gallery as substandard. "Press men should have been provided head phone" opined one respondent. One more respondent said relevant papers concerning proceeding should be made available to the journalists. Internet facility would have helped the scribes to send the reports promptly. One respondent asked for. Permission to carry laptop would be highly beneficial. Even mobile phones should also have been permitted.

However three journalists opined that the existing facilities were adequate.

3. How long do you stay while covering the news?

It was also important to know how long the journalists stayed in the legislative assembly. Because it would determine the seriousness of the scribes at one hand and would reflect the deadline problem of the reporters at the other hand.

Six respondents out of 11 interviewed said they normally stayed till the proceedings were over. But rest five respondents said their stay depended upon the issue and the person who was to speak.

4. What extra facilities you require so that you can stay till the end of the proceedings?

A straight question was asked to the respondents.

Six respondents were very clear-"no extra facility was required". But the rest five respondents asked for fax, internet so that they can stay till the end of the proceedings.

5. Coverage is based on issues or personalities?

Regarding the coverage of the proceedings all but one respondent said the coverage was purely issue based. They said the coverage should be issue based only. But the lone dissent was of the opinion that the coverage should be based on both issues and personality and he practices that.

6. What type of news gets priority? Negative/positive or on merit

When one confronts an idealistic question the answer becomes obvious. Still any contrary response can always make news. The prevailing perception is that "negative news always gets the upper hand while selecting the news."

A straight question was thrown upon the respondents. Except one respondent all the respondents said merit was the only criteria while selecting news. But the odd man out said it was the negative news which always got the upper hand while selecting the news.

7. Your comments on the coverage of the proceedings

A very negative picture has been depicted in the minds of the common man that the behavior of the MLAS inside the house puts the street hooligans to shame. The hiatus between the real picture and the projected picture was put before the respondents to seek their comments.

i. Loss of Message

Sometimes some important information generated during the question hours finds no mention in the newspapers. The respondents cited the following reasons for the loss of message found during the content analysis.

a. Inadequate editorial space in the newspaper.
b. Irrational editing.
c. failing in the parameters of news values.
d. Policy of the newspapers.
e. Readers need.

Besides some confessional statements came from some respondents during the interview:

a. Lack of knowledge of the journalists dealing with the coverage.
b. Short of time
c. Carelessness.
d. Undesirable haste
e. Work pressure
f. Forgetfulness.

"Sometimes it so happened that fearing privilege some messages were avoided," opined one respondent. "Sometimes certain issues raised in the special mention got coverage before. Hence such news was dropped. One respondent was very frank "personal relationship between the journalist and the leaders play an important role in loss of message."

ii. Misinformation

Two respondents downplayed wrong reporting as human error.

According to some other respondents misinformation was owing to

a. Avoidable noise created by some members prevents the scribes to listen the proceedings properly.
b. Poor editing at the desk.
c. Reporters ignorance of the rules and regulations
d. No proper home work by the reporters.
e. One shocking revelation came from two respondents "Even sometimes reporters reported the proceeding without even attending it. They further alleged that even inexperienced young reporters were deputed to cover the proceedings.

iii. Improper terminology

One respondent out rightly dismissed this allegation that reporters carried improper terminology.

But the majority opinion was just the reverse. They listed out the lacunae.

a. Concerned reporter's ignorance of the terminolo-gies.
b. Unwanted interference with the story at the desk by inexperienced subeditors.
c. Of course carelessness, inexperienced reporters and lack of training etc.
d. One respondent was very categorical. "Journalists have stopped reading. Even if there is any doubt they never go to any senior to clarify.
e. One more respondent supplemented this statement- "In the era of Google. Com one can find anything and everything.

iv. Distortion of message

"There is an urge among the journalists to give more than relevant information that leads to wrong reporting. It is lack of proper and inadequate knowledge which results anomaly," opined a respondent.

While one set of respondents felt that lack of training, irrational editing and above all wrong reporting itself were the reasons for the distortion of message.

The other set of respondents saw the distortions from the angle of the market forces. When circulation is the watch word news automatically becomes a product. To make it marketable it needed to be attractive. In the whole process facts become a casualty.

One respondent commented "Narrow personal interests engineer such distortions. Sometimes the distortions are made out of ignorance and some times knowingly".

v. Spicy language

There was unanimity among the respondents regarding spicy language. "This has become inevitable due to market demand, prioritising taste over need and to boost the circulation.

vi. Bias

The answers of the respondents were really eye opening.

a. "Bias was due to the policy of the newspaper" opined five respondents.
b. "Personal bias and prejudice also contributed to the bias". Felt three respondents.
c. "Sometimes to discourage some individuals/issues, reporting becomes bias. It was sometimes the outcome of a reporter's revenge.

vii. Lack of objectivity

While four of the 11 respondents interviewed dismissed the allegation of 'lack of objectivity' in Legislative reporting, rest seven respondents had their own tales to tell. All the lacunae mentioned so far have been repeated by the respondents as the reasons for lack of objectivity

One respondent went one step forward. "Reporters were trained regularly in the newspaper. Style book is no more found in the newspaper offices and filtering of the news has become a matter of the past."

Epilogue:

There existed a symbiotic relationship between the journalists and the politicians. They need each others' help and are also critical of each other. The story of Delhi Legislative Assembly was no different.

33 MLAs out of 70 MLAs of the house were interviewed and a brute majority 26 MLAs were found highly critical of the coverage of the proceedings of Delhi Legislative Assembly. They complained of bias in coverage, personality centric coverage, lacking objectivity, distortion of facts and loss of message. Opposition members complained that ruling members got a better deal while ruling members had the same complain. They said the facts and figures of the Government were always ignored. "News is always managed," alleged one of the MLAs.

On the other hand Journalists opined that the debates are substandard. The reporters engaged in covering the house agreed to all the complaints but they had ready excuses for the same. They blamed it to the desk. "Sometimes lack of editorial space resulted in loss of message", explained one respondent. "Due to noise it becomes impossible to report the factual details," was one more excuse offered for 'loss of message'.

One major complaint made by one of the MLAs was that reporters report not what the MLAs stated in the house, but they report what they think the MLA should have said. Negative news got the upper hand, news is always served spicy. Even reporters did not know the rules and regulations of the house.

"No, not at all," there was a cry in unison, "News is not spicy, news is selected purely on the basis of merit, based on issues", but some of the respondents were very honest in their expression. Admitting their short comings some of them said, "true, reporters lack knowledge of the rules, they do not do the necessary

ground work." Commenting in general one reporter said "the truth is negative news is always preferred to positive news," Yes this was the lone reporter who said so. "We have forgotten reading, there is no style book in the newspaper office, and filtration of the news has become a matter of the past. Reporters are not serious, even without attending the house they report the proceedings".

He put the entire blame on the market forces. "News is that which sells. So news was selected purely on the basis of market demand".

The findings were revealing. The prevailing perception was found cent percent correct, Reasons could differ. But the interviews of the MLAs and that of the journalists revealed that. There is deterioration of ethical values in every walk of life and media has not been insulated. But today's media is totally guided by the market forces and news is a product. So this is anything but common that news is prepared keeping the market demand in the mind.

But can the largest democracy of the world afford this unhealthy trend? Fortunately journalists were forth coming in their expression. They are also victims of the trend. Legislative reporting is perhaps the most important, because proper reporting would educate the people regarding the developments of the state. More they are educated more will be their participation. That will also put moral pressure on the representative of the people. This trend needs to be arrested. Both the members and the media should take the business of the house seriously.

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RECONSTRUCTING PRINT JOURNALISM: THE IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA
Mr. Uma Shankar Pandey*

Abstract:

Mass media, the world over, has undergone dramatic changes in form, content and substance. New media and the concomitant information and communication technology, has shifted the traditional communication from one-to-many to many-to-many; media ownership patterns are converging, cross media ownership is the order of the day especially in countries like India. Media habits of the audience are constantly evolving; 'the primary unit in which the media consumption takes place' — the family is also undergoing remarkable changes. (Bryant & Miron, 2004, p. 662).

Diffusion of Innovation:

The diffusion process is a significant research interest in communication. Since some of the earliest diffusion research was published in the 1960s, communication scholars have published nearly 500 diffusion studies (Rogers & Singhal, Diffusion of Innovations, 1996). In the past decade, English media newsrooms have begun to integrate internet-based resources for research in the news-gathering process.

Rogers has noted that the decision to adopt or not to adopt an innovation is not impulsive, but involves a deliberate process. The decision is a factor of active information-seeking and information-processing behavior. Rogers' model identified five sequential stages that occur in the process of adoption of innovations such as new communication technologies. They are: (1) knowledge about, or exposure to, the innovation; (2) formation of favorable or unfavorable attitudes, or persuasion; (3) a decision to adopt or reject; (4) implementation; and (5) confirmation-reinforcement (Rogers, 1995)

Rogers' theory maintains that the rate of adoption of innovations is influenced by relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Rogers has also described the concept of critical mass required for adoption of interactive innovations. This occurs when a sufficient number of users has been reached to create a 'self-sustaining' rate of adoption. According to Rogers: 'The interactive quality of the new media creates a certain degree of interdependence among the adoption decisions of the members of a system', (Rogers, 1995, p. 513). This means, simply, that there needs to be enough users to make the innovation appealing and useful to other potential users.

After critical mass is achieved, the rate of adoption accelerates. Interactivity, is the reason why a "critical mass" of individuals usually must occur before the rate of adoption of an interactive technology takes off into rapid growth. Critical mass for interactive technology is different from conventional innovation adoption. It is reached much earlier in the passage of time after an innovation is introduced, resulting in a steeper increase rate for the number of users. Behaviour of individuals and the larger system in which they belong is a significant factor (Rogers, 1995).

New Media:

The digital revolution in information and communication technologies has created the platform for a free flow of information, ideas and knowledge across the globe. The new media (internet) has been able to incorporate all other means of communication the newspaper, magazine, radio, television, cinema, photographic image, and video. The consequence is the Internet divergence from mass communication. Not only has it led to normative rethinking on the traditional role of the press, it has also led to the adaptation of publication roles. Apart from the more apparent evolution of the content in mainstream mass media, it has also led to a rethinking of the role of the media professionals. Added to this is the greater 'interiority' and also 'interactivity' of the audience , which is no longer regarded as a passive entity. The fragmentation and blurring of the media institution is fallout. It is no longer an impervious monolith, but subject to constant evolution by the audience. The proliferation of the new media also leads to reduced social control. (McQuail, 2005, p. 140).

The hyper-local media is now accessible on the international platform. New media outlets have now made it possible for highly differentiated local discourse to be available to a wider transnational media. Interest groups now easily access alternative voices that were hitherto available only to a smaller community audience, across national boundaries. Apart from a plethora of content available for dissemination, new technology also makes it possible for patterns of similar events and issues to be associated across various societies. Solutions to local problems are no longer restricted to the community themselves but are picked up by interest

groups, the world over and projected as exemplars. One of the earlier academic discourses on new media emphasized the following 'new' elements in new media.

Opposed to the traditional mass media role of one-to-many communication, where the source of communication was largely anonymous and impersonal, new media enables many to many conversations. Classical theories of mass communications are being reworked for the new media, because of its structural differences. The new media has also removed passivity among the media audience by enabling simultaneous reception, alteration and redistribution of cultural objects. It dislocates communicative action from the posts of the nations, provides instantaneous global contact and inserts the late modern subject into a machine apparatus that is networked (Poster, 1999, p. 15).

Marshal McLuhan had first associated technology with content in his celebrated treatise. He outlined four different media cultures. The first was the ancient culture of oral communication, exemplified by many of the old Sanskrit texts followed by a literature culture using the phonetic alphabet and a handwritten script which coexisted with the oral culture. The third progression, according to McLuhan described as 'The Gutenberg Galaxy' was that of mass-produced mechanical printing. Finally we are in the midst of what is known as the culture of the 'electric media' — radio, television and computers. (McLuhan, 1964).

But as we have seen earlier, computer mediated communication provides a separate media culture altogether. The important characteristics of the new media are that media texts are dematerialized in the sense that they are separated from their physical — newsprint — form. The data can be compressed into very small spaces and it can be accessed at very high speeds in non-linear ways. (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2003, p. 16).

The media culture represented by the new media provides for a new textual experience. Digital technology has made it possible for new genres and new textual forms to be a part of the media output. It also allows for new ways of representing the world, especially with the use of audiovisual multimedia technology. The relations between content and technology is more profound than ever before, which has not only led to new

patterns of organization and production, but also new ways of distribution and consumption. (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2003, pp. 12-13).

Information Society:
The shift to new media and its attendant consequences has been simultaneous with three other strands in social science, the most prominent of which is a shift from modernity to post modernity. Post modernity implies a nation-state challenged by new world views: feminism, multiculturalism, environmentalism, etc. It rejects the modernist ideals of rationality, virility, artistic genius, and individualism, in favour of anti-capitalist, contemptuous of traditional morality, and committed to radical egalitarianism. (Jameson, 1991). This is accompanied by the intensifying processes of globalisation, which has recently been more defined in terms of interdependence. Post modernism is also characterized by the emergence of the postindustrial information economy. (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2003, p. 10)

The primary thesis of postindustrial information is that the society from the early 1990s has been undergoing a profound economic, cultural, and social structural shift. This is as important as earlier transformations such as the Industrial Revolution. This new information society has been shaped by a variety of forces, the most important of which is the revolution in information technology described as a "new technological paradigm" (Castells, 2000, p. 9). Castells argues that the primary result of the combined forces of the information revolution and existing social tensions is a re-structuring of the social order on the basis of networks of business, personal, and cultural relationships. He defines this society as the "network society." This has given birth to a new economic system. The fundamental and distinctive features of the new economy are the use of information and knowledge as important resources.

Alvin Toffler (1980) generated huge debate for the information society by inventing new terms, such as "new civilization" and "intelligent environment". (Toffler, 1980). He characterized major social transformations in the information society as large shifts in the organization of society driven by technological change (Kling, 1994, p. 154) He regarded the transformation from the industrial age to the information age as a "quantum leap forward," supporting this with new terminologies of his own, such as "techno-sphere," "infosphere," "demassified media".

The genealogy of the term Information Society is traced to the work of the American sociologist Daniel Bell. According to him the main characteristics of the post-industrial society were found in predominance of the service sector where "theoretical knowledge" overran manufacture and agriculture infrastructure. It also led to the emergence of a new class — which possessed these special knowledge skills. (Bell, 1976)

According to McQuail, the Information Society is characterized by :
• Predominance of Information work
• Great and accelerating volume of information work
• Problems of information overload
• Integration and convergence of activities
• Growth of interconnected networks
• Globalising tendencies
• Dependence on complex systems
• Loss of privacy
• Reduced constraints of time and space
• Depoliticisation (McQuail, 2005, p. 108)

Objectivity:
The formal structure of news production involves four distinct processes. The first of which is planning. It consists of reducing the uncertainty of tasks by plotting events in advance and determining which is to become news. The planning process usually takes place at the editorial meetings, which usually is an exercise in the limited discretion involved in the news selection process. (Golding & Elliott, 1999, p. 113).
The second process of news production involves the gathering process, the specialization of the reporter is an important element in the news gathering process. The other two processes are that of selection and presentation which largely is the domain of sub-editors. (Golding & Elliott, 1999).

There has been considerable debate over journalistic objectivity over the years. An important contribution in this field demonstrates how constructions of objectivity have reflected the changing economic, social, and moral climates in which journalism has been practiced over the last century and a half. (Stoker, 1995). Another important stream of scholarly thought describes objectivity as an ideology rather than a value. It suggests that its rise was part of a backlash against post-World War I propaganda. At that time, journalistic objectivity was synonymous with neutrality, or the separation of facts from values and opinions. Objectivity was understood as an ideal counter to the reality of the reporter's own subjectivity. (Schudson, 1990, p. 268).

One of the most quoted works on objectivity describes it as a "strategic ritual" used to protect journalists from risk or attack. The four strategic procedures in the ritual comprise of a) Presentation of Conflicting Possibilities; b) Presentation of Supporting Evidence; c) The judicious use of quotation marks and d) Structuring Information in an important sequence. (Tuchman, 1999)

(Ognianova & Endersby, 1996) argue that journalistic objectivity is a strategic device for economic goals. It is a tactic deliberately used by news organizations to position journalists as political centrists, in the interests of increasing market shares among audiences and also to maximize their audience.

Similarly, (Chomsky, 1989) stresses on the organizational factors that determine the choice of topics and variable coverage given to issues, the range of accepted opinions that guide reporting and commentary, which he describes as a a certain view of the world.

Objectivity in recent years has shifted away from the focus on neutrality and toward a foregrounding of accuracy, balance, and fairness.
Objectivity in the more contemporary sense of impartiality is consonant with another important goal in news production-pluralism, the journalistic mandate to represent a diversity of positions and voices in the interests of responsibility to the public.

Outside the discourse of journalism, (Cunnigham, 1973) identifies the significant arguments against objectivity as: a) the values argument, which contends that scientists' values, psychology, background, etc., influence the selection of problems and the conclusions drawn; b) the historicist argument, which maintains that scientific enterprise is limited by its historical context; and c) the selection argument, which describes scientific method as a series of ad hoc choices made by an investigator from an almost limitless set of possibilities. (Cunningham, 1973, p. 21).

(Durham, 1998) quotes the 1995 ASNE ethics guidelines which according to her incorporate a move toward reflexivity. The ASNE urges reporters to ask themselves the following questions before beginning the process of news production.
1. What assumptions and preconceived views do we

bring to the table-how do these preconceived views shape our news coverage before we even begin to frame the story?

2. What is the essence of the story-how should we frame our coverage to capture where the issue begins, the nuances of the situation and the meaning people are conveying?

3. How are we listening and to whom-what voices do we need to cover to

illuminate news coverage and how do we need to tap into the many dimensions of

our communities to find those voices?

4. How might we think about our coverage over time-when we think about

our coverage over time, what do our conversations within the newsroom need to

sound like and what existing perspectives, experience and knowledge do we need

to tap within the newsroom?

The question then becomes how the media persons who are privileged to study, write, and speak about "social outsiders" can do so without either (1) replicating conventional biases, (2) inauthentically using others' voices to make false claims of being able to see from their marginalized perspectives, or (3) legitimating false knowledge claims? (Durham, 1998, p. 132)

New Media as a Resource for Journalists:

Traditional print and broadcast media journalism has a complicated relationship with the internet. On the one hand, the internet is a very useful tool in news production. With it, journalists can search for background information to put stories in perspective, search through archives, contact sources via emails and interact with readers through social media. A whole range of official documents is also available online. Every kind of a resource that a journalist requires to produce a complete story is also available on the net. Web logs are also an important source of information for the journalist for local issues as well as opinions expressed by a multiplicity of interest groups that helps provide a balanced perspective on various issues. More importantly, the internet allows alternative and non-official voices to be heard. The mainstream media by its very nature has to allow for official versions of events. Alternative sources of information are not encouraged. Often these voices are more important to get a true picture of events and issues.

The internet also provides a platform for non-domi-

nant views, which by definition are precluded from the mainstream media. For a journalist, these expressions of opinion from community leaders and interest groups may serve as a new direction for investigative journalism. Earlier, the local newspapers performed these functions. Very often big national stories including the infamous Bhagalpur blinding were first reported by intrepid small newspapers and then picked up national newspapers. But physical proximity to these small media outlets were limited. New media allows these local views a global platform.

The internet also provides convenient access to a wider range of international news outlets, benefiting especially those media outlets that do not have sufficient resources for foreign news coverage (Callahan, 1999). Technology does not just impact the content of the media but its form as well. It has been well documented that the print media for example is lot more visual due to the impact of television and internet. Graphics and page design software has made it possible for newspapers to provide even complex statistical information graphically. Various design elements including colour tints, illustrations, cutouts etc are easily possible with the new technology.

Various forms of new media technology also allows for greater interactivity and audience participation. Sms polls are almost an indispensable part of traditional front page dailies these days.

However, it also poses a challenge to mainstream journalism by facilitating alternative methods of news production and dissemination. Internet technology, especially with the onset of broadband has led to the the rise of 'online news services', ranging from those offered by commercial portals to those operated by individual 'online journalists'. More fundamentally, producing online news involves skills, judgments and routines different to those in mainstream news work (Stein, 1999).

Some observers thus argue that the shift from print to online newspapers involves changes not only in information infrastructure, structural relationships among journalists, sources and audiences, but also the very definition of news (Boczkowski, 2001). (Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006).

Initial research into the adoption of online news pointed out a number of factors for the adoption of this format. Of these, the ease and convenience of online news and

the specific features generating this characteristic for example, round the clock availability, and the ability to combine news use with other online purposes seem to be the most important. (Nguyen, 2010, p. 225).

In a survey cited by Nguyen, 45 per cent of the users said they preferred online news because of its convenience and easy accessibility. Eleven per cent of those interviewed preferred online news since it was 'available when you want it.' Eight per cent of the respondents preferred timeliness and immediacy of news. Speed of news access was the preferred reason of choice for seven percent respondents.

(Nguyen, 2010) also cites a a Nielsen/NetRatings study for Washingtonpost.com in 2005. The findings were that the internet was selected over traditional media chiefly due to two convenience-related features – round-the-clock availability (83% of users) and the ability to multitask (70%) – with 'easy ways to get information' coming fourth (63%) and 'convenience of use' sixth (61%).

(Salwen, Garrison, & Driscoll, 2005) cited in (Nguyen, 2010) reported a number of reasons for using news online. Being able get news 'at any time I want' was proffered by 95% of users. 91% users cited being able to go directly to news of interest. 88 per cent felt online news was a quick and easy way to keep up with the news, while 84 per cent of the respondents felt online news was convenient to receive. 82 per cent users learnt more about breaking stories on the internet. For 71 per cent users online news was easier to get than conventional news. 68 per cent found their interests reflected on news sites. The same percentage of respondents preferred online news since they were exposed to interesting news stories while doing some other things online. 65 per cent were able to get different viewpoints while online news items when logging on or off the computer caught six out of ten respondents. The same number of people found unusual news stories online the same as the news that was not available elsewhere. The other reasons were being able to get more news than from conventional sources (57%); and being able to get more depth than conventional news (52%).

The above study reported four dimensions: convenience of use, quantity and quality of news, difference of online news from traditional news, and serendipity. (Nguyen, 2010)

In response, mainstream journalists, hold a generally negative attitude toward the internet. They are concerned with source credibility, information reliability and difficulties in verifying facts. (Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006, p. 927).

On the downside a number of consequences, not just limited to the content has been pointed out. As a part of a larger profit-seeking conglomerate online news operation may open up more layers of news production to market pressure. In addition, the 'anything goes' mode of generating content for websites has posed serious threats both to ways of doing journalism and operationally defining professional standards and ethics.Specific technological possibilities also create problems for journalists who value the traditional newsmaking process. The 24-hour deadline and the public's expectation of 'non-stop breaking news', for example, have led to concerns that online news operators rush information to press rather than taking the time to channel it through a vigorous gatekeeping process. In addition, the customization or personalization of news products has led to concerns with fragmentation of the mass audience (Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006, p. 927).

The flexibility and fluidity expected in the digital media industry is based primarily on time, which brings new pressures and demands on the workers who work with the internet (Deuze, 2007). With the internet, time has been compressed. News online is also influenced by this compressed dimension and has, as one of its characteristics, immediacy. Online news sites are updated, to different degrees, around the clock. The audience, in its turn, expects to be able to find updated news on the internet. (Weiss & Joyce, 2009, p. 598)

A paradigm for journalists' perception of online resources:

A recent study (Chan, Lee, & Pan, 2006) has suggested the following parameters for studying perception of online resources.

Website credibility: With a huge number of online resources available on every conceivable issue, believability of websites of traditional media outlets and those of other online companies is under question.

Web surfing behaviour and attitudes toward the internet. (Chan, Lee, & Pan) used the five-point scale to assess respondents' uses of, and attitudes towards, the internet. The variables included 'I can use the internet skilfully in news reporting'; and (2) 'I am fully adapted

to the multimedia working environment.' Web surfing behaviour is the average of: (1) 'I often browse domestic news websites'; and (2) 'I often browse overseas news websites'. Perceptions of internet potentials for news work is the average of: (1) 'the internet has brought a more open space for news work'; and (2) 'the internet has increased levels of competition in news work significantly.'

Web use at work. Journalists indicate, on a five point scale (where 1 = never and 5 = frequently) whether they often used various kinds of news and information websites at work to: (1) get news leads; (2) gather background information for news stories; and (3) search for news angles.

Specialist orientation is a factor of how often media persons read media and journalism research journals; read trade magazines; and browse the specialized websites devoted to issues and information on journalism.

Evaluation of news media exemplars provides an idea of how close are media outlets to the ideal medium of the respective journalists.

Media role beliefs correspond to the interpretive, disseminator, adversarial and popular advocacy roles of the media.

Perceived competitive pressure is the pressure that the mainstream journalist faces from his online counterpart.

Future of journalism in the digital age:
The digital environment has transformed the mainstream media. The young literate audience who once were expected to become newspaper readers as they matured, no longer do. Their news habits are substantially different from their predecessors. Earlier studies have shown that people used to set aside specific times to 'keep up' with the news – perhaps reading a morning paper, and/or watching TV news broadcasts later. The arrival of 24-hour news networks started eroding that habit; the online environment has completely transformed it. Research reveals that a majority of the young audience essentially consume news in a steady stream of information bites. They are constantly connected, through computers and cell phones, both with each other and with multiple media sources. They are as likely to hear about a major event from a friend's text message or status message on Facebook or Orkut as from TimesNow. In an environment of constant information, already permeable lines between 'news', 'entertainment', and other genres seem to dissipate.

(Bird, 2009)

The mainstream response to the digital challenge has been largely on the content front. One of which has been described as the tabloidization of news. This is ostensibly at the demand of the audience which is no longer interested in hard news. This also entails setting up the personal experience as a legitimate form of knowledge. Described as dumbing down by many authors, the tabloidization perspective seeks to invert hegemonic paradigms and makes obscure topics relevant by linking them to everyday experience of masses. This amounts to linking the public and the private sphere, a charge that is commonly faced by the mainstream media these days. This also inevitably leads to placing private issues in the public arena. Many see this as a democratizing force. Scholars also view this phenomenon as a way of engaging viewers' interests more fully and relevantly.

The two realms that were once considered mutually exclusive; entertain and inform citizens is now enmeshed irretrievably and is often the lifeblood of mainstream media.

The binaries of popular and quality news outlet often described in terms of soft news/hard news, trash/value, personal/political, private/public, popular culture/high culture, emotional/rational, lay knowledge/expert knowledge, celebrity/intellectual, consumer/citizen, trivial/serious, feminine/masculine, profit/service, objectivity/subjectivity, micro politics/macro politics and wants/needs have been blurred beyond recognition. (Harrington, 2008, p. 269)

Popular mainstream journalism now functions at the interstices of these binaries. With the primary function of dispensing information now the sole preserve of more immediate outlets, mainstream media is no longer functioning in the objective gravitas but has to play a more profound role in articulating popular opinion. It is now more a conjunction of the public and the private sphere. The format is as important as the content.

Soft news of no social or political consequence is the staple diet of popular journalism. This is compounded by one-sided subjective opinion inflamed by blogs. This often serves as the basis of regular news stories. Many current anxieties about present day journalism reflect a concern for the news media's presumed function of maintaining a well-informed citizenry. But to such worries we must add another: journalistic vitality

in holding officials and institutions accountable.

'The press can serve as a stand-in for the public, holding the governors accountable – not to the public (which is not terribly interested), but to the ideals and rules of the democratic polity itself", as Michael Schudson has argued (Schudson, 1995, p. 217); but this function as well as that of informing citizens are both threatened by the chronic and progressive degeneration of tough-minded objectivity

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A NORMATIVE THEORY FOR CONFLICT REPORTING

Dr. Ganesh Sethi*

Cultivation Theory:

George Gerbner and his associates at the Annenberg School Journalism developed the cultivation theory also referred to as the cultivation hypothesis or cultivation analysis — in 1969.

The project studied whether and how watching television may influence viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like. Gerbner and his team studied long-term, cumulative effects of exposure to mass media.

They started by content analyzing television programming for their "cultural indicators" and found high level of violence that provided an inaccurate picture of reality. Audience research showed that viewers who watched more television tended to have more consistent (mainstreamed) views and attitudes, and they shared a more pessimistic perception of reality (the mean world syndrome). 1 Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant.

Cultivation research looks at the mass media as a socializing agent and investigates whether television viewers come to believe the television version of reality the more they watch it. Gerbner and his colleagues contend that television drama has a small but significant influence on the attitudes, beliefs and judgements of viewers concerning the social world. Judith van Evra argues that by virtue of inexperience, young viewers may depend on television for information more than other viewers do (van Evra 1990, p. 167), although Hawkins and Pingree argue that some children may not experience a cultivation effect at all where they do not understand motives or consequences (cited by van Evra, ibid.). It may be that lone viewers are more open to a cultivation effect than those who view with others (van Evra 1990, p. 171).

Over 20 years of research has provided only qualified support for high exposure to dramatic programming in adults. (Morgan & Shanahan, 1977). 2

However television news can frame the evaluation of political figures and define political agendas for the public (Iyengar & Kinder). 3

One news source that has the potential to cultivate stable expectations in the public is local television news. Not only has it become the most widely used news source for Americans, but it also has unique conventions that make its content especially relevant for the public's views of crime. Although this news source presumes to give viewers factual stories about their media region, it relies heavily on sensational coverage of crime and other mayhem with particular emphasis on homicide and violence. This coverage could well increase fear of crime by cultivating expectations that victimization is both likely and beyond our control. 4

Television is seen by Gerbner as dominating our 'symbolic environment'. As McQuail and Windahl note, cultivation theory presents television as 'not a window on or reflection of the world, but a world in itself.'

Normative Theories:

Normative theories of journalism concern ideal functions of the press, what the press should do. Journalistic practice does not always align with normative theories of journalism, but these theories remain an important component of ideal practice. Institutions and the state draw upon theories of journalism, implicitly or explicitly, when shaping media policies that carry real incentives or penalties for deviant behavior.

Scholars attempting to classify normative theories (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956, McQuail 1983 and 2005, Ferree et al. 2002, Baker 2002), as well as less systematic reflections about media and democracy, have identified non-democratic theories, including authoritarian, totalitarian, Marxist-Leninist, and developmental, as well as democratic theories, including libertarian, social responsibility, democratic elite, democratic participatory, public sphere, and postmodern.

Authoritarian theory holds that journalism should always be subordinate to the interests of the state in maintaining social order or achieving political goals (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956). At a minimum, the press is expected to avoid any criticisms of government officials and to do nothing to challenge the established order. The press may remain free to publish without prior censorship, but the state retains the right to punish journalists or close media outlets that overstep explicit or implicit limits on reporting and commentary. 5

Under more extreme authoritarianism, a closely censored press pro-actively promotes and extends state control over society. In the context of the Cold War, the Soviet-Communist theory stood out (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956). Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, versions of Marxist-Leninist, or Soviet, theory have survived in North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, and to a certain extent in China, as the most coherent, self-consciously elaborated examples. The Soviet normative theory of journalism posits that media should not be privately owned, should serve the interests of the working classes, and most importantly, should provide a complete, objective view of the world following Marxist-Leninist principles, as defined by the communist-party controlled state. Another normative theory (some writers have described the theory as non-democratic).

Development theory is authoritarianism for a good cause supporting the economic development and nation-building efforts of impoverished societies (Schramm 1964, McQuail 1983). 6

In the context of western dominance in international news gathering, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has also framed development theory in cultural pluralist terms as the right to communicate (McBride et al. 1980). 7 The western press and communication research generally portray these non-democratic theories negatively, as anti-democratic.

In non-Western societies for example, these approaches are regarded more positive. The Chinese government, for instance, defends a market socialist approach to the media, which combines limited market freedoms with continuing state control.

Democratic normative theories have been motivating forces behind emerging non-western media outlets such as the Qatar-based Arabic language cable news channel Al-Jazeera (modeled after the BBC and CNN). Even in the most repressive authoritarian states, the language of democracy has become commonplace.

Where authoritarianism stresses the importance of maintaining social order, libertarianism aims to maximize individual human freedom. John Locke and other liberal philosophers of the eighteenth century conceived of the libertarian theory (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm

1956), which relates closely with laissez-faire capitalism. In the oft-used metaphor, the press should offer a marketplace of ideas, pursuing profits in a natural process believed to support democracy. Libertarian theory sees the government as the primary if not only threat to press freedom. Perhaps the best known embodiment of the ideal is the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which specifies that "Congress shall make no law . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." This statement expresses the ideal in terms of freedom from state intervention.

The guiding principle is that the independent press, will represent diverse voices and hold government accountable. The only requirement however is that the press must ensure its own economic interests in the interest of Freedom of the Press. The Press which is not dependent on government dole outs in the form of state-sponsored advertisements can do a better job of holding the government accountable.

Observers and activists who perceive that a pure market orientation does not necessarily support democracy have argued that the press must instead assume social responsibility. In the 1947 Hutchins report, the U.S. Commission on a Free and Responsible Press conceived of the chief responsibilities as factual accuracy, promotion of open debate, representation of diverse views, and protection of individual rights by serving as a watchdog that guards against government abuses of power.

Any theory that the press has a voluntary duty to perform positive functions could belong in this category, but social responsibility theory, as originally described (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm 1956), clearly upheld the U.S. journalistic ideal of objectivity which stresses factual (especially investigative) reporting over commentary, the balancing of opposing viewpoints, and maintaining a neutral observer role for the journalist (Schudson 2001). 8

This ideal has become dominant globally, even among journalists in countries where highly polarized political cultures make it difficult to put into practice (Hallin and Mancini 2004) 9
Social responsibility theory lacks any systematic critique of capitalist media ownership and funding (McQuail 2005). 10

Other democratic normative theories also concern social responsibilities, but emphasize some more than others. Legal scholars, philosophers and social scientists, rather than journalists, largely produced these theories, which may not share the assumption against state intervention as a legitimate means to orient journalism democratically.

The primary duties for the press are to chronicle accurately the range of competing elite perspectives, to examine the character and behavior of elected officials, and to monitor closely their activities for corruption or incompetence (the watchdog function). In other words, the press should adopt a critical, serious tone in covering public affairs, defined as the activities primarily of government but also, in principle, of business or other powerful social institutions.

In democratic participatory theory, journalism is called upon to promote actively the political involvement of citizens. The theory emphasizes principles such as popular inclusion, empowerment, and full expression through a range of communicative styles (Ferree et al. 2002;).11 Its theorists emphasize diverse viewpoints and active citizen involvement more than the quality of the discourse (whether reasoned, critical, serious, or the like). They disagree on the best means to achieve these goals. Tabloid forms of journalism for example, might provide a bridge leading formerly apathetic citizens to an interest in politics, or the mainstream press might provide news from more perspectives. In participatory theory, however, small-scale, segmented media, commercial as well as non-profit, are best for promoting grassroots citizen involvement.

German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1989) combines concerns for the quality (reasoned, critical debate) with the quantity (broad representation and participation) of discourse. 12 However, public sphere theory, places the greatest emphasis on quality, narrowly conceived: the press should create a domination-free environment where the better argument can prevail in a quest for social consensus The public sphere should be free from the state as well as the market.

Public Service Broadcasting, for example, supported with legal guarantees of autonomy from political intervention like the Prasar Bharati Corporation in India may be the best embodiment of the ideal.

The ideal of public sphere theory inspired the U.S. movement among journalists to redefine their role from simply providing information to promoting reasoned and civil public debate among ordinary citizens.

Feminist scholars such as Nancy Fraser say that the ideal of reasoned-critical debate may embody masculine domination and that the ideal of social consensus may suppress ineradicable identity differences. Building on the motto, "the personal is political," postmodern theory gives prominence to personal narratives and emotion over abstract reason, celebrating grassroots media that facilitate the playful search for identity or the articulation of counter-hegemonic interests. A postmodernist ideal is also evident in Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone's (2001) critique of rationalized, modernist newspaper design form and the hegemonic aspiration of professionalized journalism to map the social world. Postmodern theory insists on a journalism open to the widest range of narrative styles and perspectives, especially those emerging from the margins of society. 13

Are normative theories of journalism necessary?
One promising alternative approach, complex democracy (Baker 2002), acknowledges the shortcomings of any type of news media in the face of diverse democratic purposes and seeks to encourage the greatest variety of journalistic practices.14 A working model includes multiple sectors (Curran 2000): a core sector of public service television, a supplementary private enterprise sector, a professional sector under the control of journalists, a civic sector that social organizations including political parties support, and a closely related sector of ideologically or culturally marginal media that operate in the market with partial subsidies from the state.

Conflict Reporting:
A conflict is defined as a situation where two or more individuals or groups try to pursue goals or ambitions which they believe they cannot share. Disputants often frame the conflict in relatively simple (and often self-serving) terms. Very often the sides see the underlying causes as very different. Sometimes they don't even know what they are, as the conflict has gone on so long and become so embedded in the culture, that raw emotions: fear, humiliation, and anger overlie earlier substantive concerns. Conflict and change always go hand in hand. 15

Thus, conflict has dimensions ranging from difference of opinion, disagreement to violent fighting.

The following can be described as the broad reasons for conflict around the world.

Religious Fundamentalism: Elements of the Taliban conflict and those in Kosovo though complex in dimension had religious identities as an important element of conflict.

Ethnicity: Cultural, regional or ethnic identity is also at the root of conflict in diverse places including Africa and Northeast India.

Perceived sense of Injustice: A number of conflict zones in societies are led by people do not have access to democratic means of grievance redressal.

Historic grievances: Often fuelled by stories of what a particular section of the society had lost, or should have got attained rightfully.

Inequitable distribution of Resources: This is at the root of conflicts involving elements as diverse as ultra-leftists like the Marxists to the extreme Rightists. Resources of Land/Oil/Water/Mineral/technology and knowledge are sought to be distributed more equitably.

Ross Howard defines two types of violence apart from the violent physical conflict. 16

Cultural Violence can be the way a group has been thinking about another groups for many years. It can include talk, images, or beliefs which glorify physical violence. These include:

Hate Speech: Different ethnic or cultural groups openly speak badly of each other. One group blames the other for difficulties or problems it is suffering. Violence is encouraged to eliminate the blamed group.

Xenophobia: A people's or a country's hatred or fear of another country creates misperceptions and encourages policies which promote conflict with that country.

Myths and Legends of War Heroes: A society whose popular songs and history books glorify one side's ancient victories can build hatred for the other side.

Religious justifications for War: Extreme intolerance of other beliefs promotes conflict.

Gender Discrimination: To allow practices and laws against women that are not accepted against men is a form of violence.

Structural Violence is harm which is built into the laws and traditional behaviour of a group or society. Harm is permitted or ignored. It can include:

Institutional Racism or Sexism: Laws and practices which allow unequal treatment based on race or sex.

Colonialism: A country's lack of self-determination. A foreign authority forcible assumes control over all important decision-making processes.

Extreme Exploitation: Such as slavery

Poverty: The world's leading cause of violent conflict.

Corruption and Nepotism: Governmental decisions are influenced or decided by bribery, favouritism and family or tribal connections.

Structural segregation: Laws which force people to live in separate groups or places against their will.

Use of language. How do we describe the parties involved in a conflict. Many agencies do not allow the use of the word "terrorist" in a conflict. Others deliberately use phrases like "Freedom Fighters have been martyred."

Facts, perceptions, assumptions: Are we basing our stories on facts? Are we guided by our own perceptions and assumptions or facts? 17

Conflict Resolution Model:

Classically, journalists are expected to be dispassionate observers. He is expected to remain equidistant from the various sides involved in a conflict. However in view of the complexities that frames a conflict, journalists covering the conflict have to perform the role of the mediator. The Conflict-Resolution Model that this paper discusses posits the journalists to perform the following functions:

1. Inform -The media is the only source of communication even to the sides involved in a conflict. Often these sides speak to each other through the media or through specific journalists. The primary duty of the journalist is to provide rounded information encouraging proper balance between conflicting reports from the sides involved in the conflict.

2. Analyse- Each side needs to know about the other's difficulty in moving towards resolution. In an objective appraisal of the events the journalist has to discuss the elements of background, significance and context in analysing the various developments during a crisis.

3. Help in bringing back normalcy- The first step to complete resolution is to build an atmosphere of trust. The journalist has to dig dip into the issues so that there are no secret fears. Also it is important for journalists to bring the human face into the conflict. Putting real people into the story and describing how the ongoing

issues affect them goes a long way into bringing back normalcy.

Often it is through omission that journalists add to the conflict, unwittingly. The must provide an outlet for both parties to air their views. If the media platform is provided to the various sides, they often do not have to take to the streets. But this has to be handled extremely sensitively.

4. Help resolving the conflict- Focus the attention of the international community on a developing conflict, and by doing so bring pressure on the parties to resolve it or on the international community to intervene. The journalist through his reports can actively engage in confidence building measures. Stories of hope need wide coverage.

There are four theoretical ways in which a conflict can finally reach a conclusion. However every conclusion does not necessarily mean a resolution and can lead to another cycle of conflict.

a) One party prevails either in a violent conflagration or through a negotiated settlement.

b) One of the party withdraws from the conflict, does nothing or is annihilated

c) Both parties leave their extreme positions to arrive to the middle ground. This is one of the useful ways of reaching a compromise.

d) Involving the larger community — at times the international community and providing a larger perspective to the problem. Involving more parties in the conflict resolution leads to greater permanence of the settlement.

The above objective points to three important positions. Firstly that resources can be shared where the source of the conflict is inequitable distribution. Secondly when the larger community is involved there is lesser possibility of the use of violence.

As Peter McIntyre writes, "Journalists also need to understand how inflammatory journalism and poor standards of reporting can have consequences for all journalists by souring relations with local groups and institutions. People who target the media with violence do not distinguish between 'good' or 'bad' journalists; they hit out at those they can reach. All journalists have a physical stake in high standards and objective reporting, even if this alone will not guarantee safety."

Recent Regulations on Conflict Reporting in India

India's broadcasters have adopted sweeping guidelines covering reporting. The regulations, agreed to by the Indian National Broadcasters Association, cover the gamut from accuracy to sting operations. But the section receiving the most attention deals with coverage of national security operations.

Although the association was already working on new guidelines before November's terrorist attack on Mumbai, criticism of the live broadcast coverage of the 60-hour siege added pressure for India's commercial television news outlets to tone things down.

Retired Indian Chief Justice Jagdish Saran Verma is chairman of the association's ethics and standards authority, which drafted the regulations. In an interview to Voice of America in December 208 he said: "There should not be any need for any further regulation," he said. "Self-regulation by the broadcasters, based on these guidelines, will be sufficient."

The new broadcasters' code says live interviews with terror suspects should not be aired and broadcasters should not disclose details of ongoing operations involving national security.

During the Mumbai attack, blamed on Pakistani terrorists, Indian government officials severely criticized broadcasters for live coverage allegedly revealing commando positions to the gunmen inside seized luxury hotels. One channel aired a telephone interview with a hostage taker.

Following the terror siege in India's commercial capital, critics in the media and government here widely condemned the around-the-clock coverage for airing unconfirmed rumors that nearly provoked panic - showing gory scenes, as well as sensationalistic rhetoric and military music.

That prompted India's Parliament to begin considering establishment of a regulatory agency for the mushrooming number of private news channels. Some TV journalists have defended their coverage, saying the government provided little real-time information and that they face too much competitive pressure in a 24-hour working environment.18

An example of Internet War during the Kosovo conflict:

CNN Web sites said they served a record number of viewers in the week following the start of the NATO bombing in 1999. The CNN sites, which include CNN.

com, CNNfn.com, and Allpolitics.com, said they'd served 578 million page impressions (page views) in March, double the traffic a year ago.

Traffic on CNN.com from Macedonia was up 1025%, Croatian traffic was up 946%, Slovenian traffic was up 797% and traffic from Bosnia-Herzegovina was up 570%.

The Net, said The New York Times, had become an alternative source for news-hungry Americans. The war, said Michael Kinsley, editor of the online magazine Slate, "shows the difference the Web can make. "Unless they shut down the whole telephone system, they can't stop information from getting out, or getting back in."

The phenomenon of the Internet war, was widespread. If the war in Kosovo demonstrates anything about the Net, it shows that it cannot be controlled during a war.

This was a New York Times and Washington Post and Times of London and CNN story, a military-strategy, policy-and-politics story perfectly suited for journalism in its traditional incarnation — TV networks and reporters stationed in world capitals. It was conventional, not digital media, that reported on Serbian strategy, that captured the scope of the assaults on Kosovar villages, that reported on the progress (or lack thereof) of NATO bombers.

Like most modern wars, this one was fought at least as much on TV as on battlefields. Three images shaped the Kosovo conflict from the beginning: bombs hurtling toward targets; the three beaten and bruised American soldiers, and the streams of battered refugees pouring into Albania and Macedonia.

The anonymous correspondents, monks and teens filing reports via various Web sites were interesting, sometimes even revealing. So were the facts, history and statistics available on the Web sites maintained by conventional media like CNN, The Washington Post and USA TODAY.

CNN allows all the principals in global conflicts to see the same images and statements at the same time. Bob Dole went on "Larry King Live" to warn Slobodan Milosevic that he was running out of time. And Milosevic or some close aide was almost certainly watching.

Anonymous Net posters are interesting, sometimes even important. But their role is, by definition, limited.

They have little credibility precisely because nobody knows who they are. For all their faults, journalists are accountable for the things they report. And they are accountable for evaluating and describing the people they quote. There is simply no way to evaluate the accuracy or perception of e-mailers, especially anonymous ones.

It's a good thing Internet correspondents don't shape policy, as the potential for abuse is staggering. The Serbian hackers who knocked out the NATO Web site could fake electronic identities in a second. Many could fake e-mail messages too.

Nobody airing an anonymous Balkan report delivered online can vouch with absolutely certainty for its accuracy, or take the source, identity and content at face value. The widepread use by journalism of unknown e-mail correspondents would make the recent scandals and controversies at The New Republic, The Boston Globe and other newspapers seem positively trivial.

But the world, especially the journalistic one, still can't get used to the idea of the Internet. It's continuously either denounced as a plague or hyped to the skies.

But Kosovo is no Internet War. It's all too typical a one - brutal, tragic and incomprehensible. Technology is about human beings, not machines. There's nothing digital about the days and nights of the captured American soldiers, the people who live in bomb-torn Belgrade, or the hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming out of Kosovo. 20

The Conflict Resolution Theory thus in a sense falls between the realm of the democratic and non democratic theories.

There are important areas of divergence between the other normative theories. The Conflict Resolution theory is not Authoritarian since it does not give the state the right to be the only legitimate voice during a conflict. It does not follow the Libertarian ideals and often it is not just accuracy, objectivity and balance that is the guiding principle for communicators. Often certain factual elements are downplayed for the sake of diluting a potential crisis.

It needs to be emphasised that the media does not just remain a vehicle of State opinion. In other normative theories, the journalist remains a passive agent. This is also true of Development theories and Social Responsibility theory. However even Social Responsibil-

ity theory is regarded as somewhat authoritarian where the press is supposed to support the efforts of a welfare state.

The Conflict Resolution Theory however believes that often the State might be one of the sides in a conflict. However the legitimacy of the conflict is an issue that has to be looked into.

The Conflict Resolution Theory thus hypothesizes that the media first looks into the background for the conflict. It also provides a prescriptive regime for the media as follows:

Avoid Reporting a conflict as consisting of two opposing sides. Find others affected by the standoff. These could include students, businessmen, workers, tour operators etc whose normal life is affected by the conflict.

Avoid an elitist approach of only attributing statements to top leaders. Many of them would be repeating oft repeated phrases anyway.

Reporting on common interests and things that do not divide the conflicting sides can also be an integral part of CRT. An approach should be made to arrive to reveal the common ground between the various sides.

Reports should also avoid portraying the suffering of only one side. Human suffering — irrespective of affiliations — is anyway newsworthy.

Use of adjectives and adverbs that border on subjectivity has to be avoided. Value neutral words have to be chosen at all times. Words like tragedy, devastation, exploitation are loaded and puts the reporters on one side. However such words can be used when they are attributed. But even then care has to be taken as not to hurt sensibilities.

Emotional words or imageries should not be used even when a human interest story is reported. It adds to the problem.

Technical words like Genocide, Terrorism, Extremism, Fanaticism, Assassination, Persecution should be used only in cases where they precisely define the situation. There are subtle undertones in each of these words and may appear insensitive in many cases.

Avoid making an opinion into a fact.

Avoid waiting for leaders to come up with solutions. The peace ideas can come from the masses themselves. Journalists can explore these ideas when they find them feasible.

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TEENAGERS TRAPPED IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD OF ONLINE GAMING

Dr. Durgesh Tripathi* & Ms. Kanika Bahl*

Introduction:

Online gaming is the newest addition to the gaming ecosystem in India. In India it started way back with increasing PC penetration. Online gaming has been mounting rapidly in India. It has traditionally been associated with mainstream portals like Yahoo & MSN. For these portals, gaming has not been a nucleus area but merely another application so that it helps its users to search out for some quick entertainment.

This research is a close glance at the present status of online gaming and how are teenagers getting hooked to it and almost neglecting the most important aspect of their life which includes studies, interacting with their parents and so on.

Playing games is a natural part of growing up, though the medium has been shifted via computers. It helps teenagers to socialize and compete. But sometimes, online games become more than just a play. They become an addiction. This further affects their psychological behaviour which may turn in jeopardy.

I have studied the ecosystem for online gaming and how it is becoming a cause of addiction among teenagers. The study thus provides a universal perspective on things as they are at this point.

Addiction to online games is a growing problem among teenagers. The most addictive games are the online multi-player games. They include endless levels of accomplishment Number of players can play and chat online, creating a fantasy world which abscond them from real life.

Addicted teenagers spend hours on the computer and play online games which lead to omission of other activities. As a result they lose interest in their school, fail to complete their assignments, due to which their grades suffer. Much of their conversation may revolve around the games they are playing.

Parents should ensure that which games are installed for their children on their computers. It is important that they should engage teenagers in regular conversations; if they detect a behavioral change in their children it should be immediately addressed.

Online portals like zapak.com, miniclip.com, games 2 win.com has provided teenagers with numerous games categories in all areas be it sports, action, fun, racing and many more. These online game portals have also made a special section for multiplayers. They have introduced more than 30 games in each genre but among all these genres the multiplayer has extracted large number of teenagers as they get time to chat and socialize with large number of people through online.

During this research an interview was conducted. The interview was taken from the group of individuals whose children are between the age group of 13-17, after going through their answers and the behavior of their children I started understanding more about their children's gaming behaviors. The interviewees know that if this gaming of their child not controlled properly it would lead to great problem in future. One interviewee believes that the teenagers are more addicted to multiplayer games as they get addicted to online chats and turns a myth into reality. Ultimately, it allows their children to spend massive time playing on the computers. As Mrs. Neelam (bank manager) said that once her son sat on the computer and started playing games it was hard to stop him. But while other parents said that they had controlled their children from playing games by restricting time limit to it. It was also analysed that people who become addicted to online games lack social interaction, these interviewee's also suggest that if controlled by the parents at right time can curb this addiction.

On the whole teenagers between this age group are tend to get influenced by their peer groups it is their parents who has to be constantly aware of the habits of their children.

Further this will help them in building a better parent child relationship

Following points will be taken in due consideration:

• To understand the concept that how teenagers today are being trapped in this virtual world of online through the medium of online games.

• To understand the addicting factor of playing online games for long duration on the net.

• To understand the psychological variables of teenagers, weekly hours of online gaming and compulsive internet use scale.

Area of study:
Research would be conducted on teenagers who have access to internet and use it on daily basis in Delhi.

Universe:
The research was conducted on 50 users: -
•Age groups: 13-17 years.
•Class: Sec B1 & B2
•Place: Delhi

Sample:
Sample was selected on basis of Purposive sampling technique, wherein the researcher knows the daily habit and routines of all the units. Sample size was 50 units in this group.

Tool:
Questionnaires
I was able to send questionnaire to many people who are available on social networking site Facebook as well as also met teenagers personally to collect and analyse the results.

Method of Data Collection:
Data was collected by two methods:

Primary Data Collection
•Questionnaires

Secondary Data collection
•Newspaper clippings
•Magazine articles
•Books
•Research papers

Interpretation/Analysis:
Q1. Do you like to play online games?

After asking teenagers from the age group of 13- 17 they agreed by that they like to play online games as it is the most convenient and easy way to connect with your friends while playing multiplayer games as you can chat with them and can connect with more people. 85 % teenagers said that they play online games while 15 % does not like to play online games.

Below is the presentation of the graph showing that maximum teenagers prefer online games rather than outdoor games:
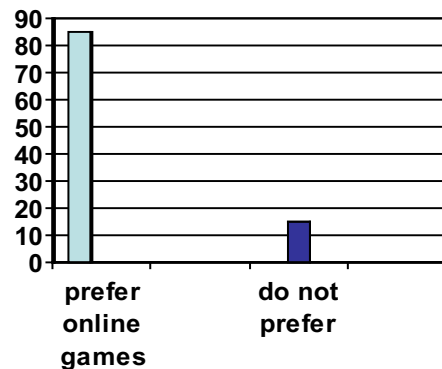
Q2.How many days a week do you play online games?

When this question was asked from school children I came up with an idea that it won't be more than 2 to 3 days a week but the answer which I got was that most of them played everyday but within a time limit. Mostly 75% children agreed to it while 20% of them said that they played only 2 days a week and 5% agreed that they do not play even once.

The following graph will present a clear picture-
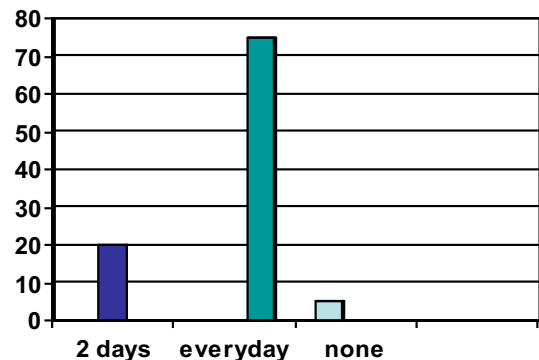
Q3 Do much of online games put a negative impact on your studies?
This was an interesting question as most of the time teenagers are restricted from playing online games because it brings a negative impact to their studies when not managed properly.

It harms their studies which affects their grades due to less concentration in studies and more in online games.

On the whole 70% agreed to the fact that it leads to negative impact in terms of studies while 30% said that it does not matter to them as they can balance appropriately.
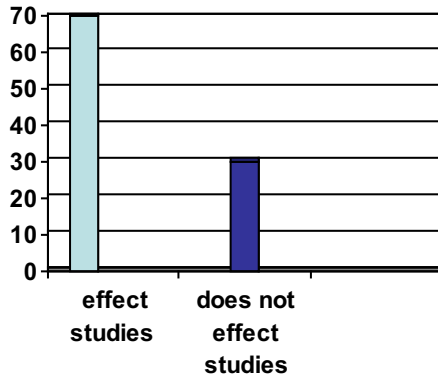
Q4.Which games do you prefer more when playing on online game portal?

Through this question I analyzed that teenagers tend to play more of multiplayer games rather than racing and action games which took 3rd and 2nd place respectively. As they feel that multiplayer games increase the interaction with other people through the medium of chatting.

The following graph will show the actual picture:
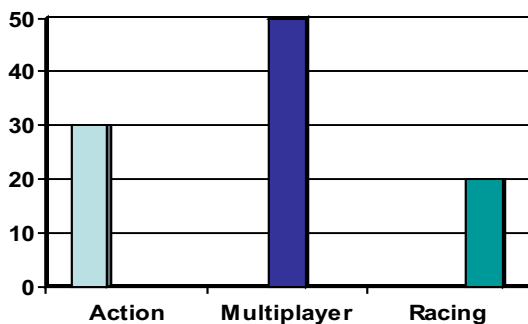
Q5. Do you feel restless or irritable when asked to cut down or stop online gaming?

Mostly children responded in the favour of this question that they feel irritable when their parents ask them to study instead of playing games. Teenagers further stated that as they reach to next level of gaming it increases their anxiety level. So after conducting a survey on this question 75% said that they feel irritated when asked them to stop online gaming. While 25% do not feel restless or irritable.
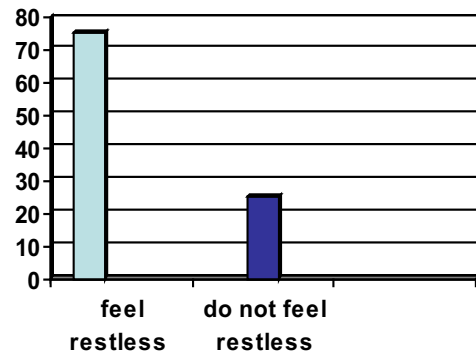
Conclusion:

On the whole, the result which I gathered was that online games are addicting because they allow players, to disembody themselves from the real world and enter into the world of fantasy.

This has been further proved through extensive research and interviews which I had conducted.
Online games are addicting due to the characteristics of the game and the personal driving forces
That keeps an individual playing.

Gamers put themselves in their characters shoes, for the duration of the game, becoming their characters.
Also, from the survey conducted mostly teenagers agreed to the fact that they play online games and they prefer it more than outdoor games as they believe that there is more level of interaction with too many people at the same time mostly when they play multiplayer games.

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DEFENCE REPORTING IN INDIA: GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY MUST HAVE

A study of changing trends of information disbursement by Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry of Defence, Government of India post Kargil Operation.

Ms. Sangeeta Saxena*

Introduction:

In an age of instant global communication, governments have refined their public diplomacy; particularly in the way defence issues are covered in the media, to market their version of events effectively to their domestic as well as the international public. Indeed, ignorance and misinformation are far more dangerous for the military than is informed reporting, however critical in tone. But the media need help here. Because the press is fragmented, competitive, sometimes ignorant of military realities, and constantly whiplashed between the demands of the market and those of journalistic ethics, the quality of coverage of military events is inevitably uneven at best. The tendency of unprepared reporters, charging from crisis to crisis, unaware of the issues at stake or of how the military functions, is to frame complex matters in simplistic ways. For its part, the military owes access to information both to media and the Indian people. Furthermore, it needs to get its story out—for the military will be competing with other groups, and enemies, eager to put their "spin" on events. To do this, it needs the media.

Abstract:

This study examined the coverage of matters relating to defence in Indian press and the influence of the changing trends in information disbursement by Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry of Defence, Government of India. The timeline taken is post Kargil operation which means 1999 July to 2010.

The focus was on the of the information given by Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry Of Defence, Government of India and its stations at various formations from all parts of the country, on the Indian English press coverage of matters related to defence of the nation.

The study brought to light the role played by reportage in communicating peace time activities of the defence forces and analyse the effect of ministry statements on controversial and routine subjects covered by the magazines. It also reinforced the theory that a picture speaks more than a thousand words, by analysing the pictures released by the DPR and the PROs functioning under the directorate.

The use of graphics in conveying the message in a defence story is also very important in today's defence journalism and how often stories are assisted by charts, graphs, sketched re-creations in the newspapers and magazines under study, was also a focus of research .

Statement of need:

In an era when defence not only makes headlines but also takes away the majority chunk of the annual budget of the country, government announces the mother of all deals, ever volatile borders and not-so-friendly neighbours, defence cannot remain a holy cow. Matters military matter to every citizen of the country and is the right of the ex-chequer to know how his taxed income is spent on keeping the nation secure. The message is important but so is the messenger. And thus it is essential to study how this message is formed by the messenger and what influences the content of the message. In this research study the message is the defence coverage, messengers are the four newspapers and magazines chosen and the source of this message is the Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry of Defence, Government of India. It is the influence of DPR which needed to be studied and understood, as the basis of maximum defence reportage are the MOD press releases, events, exercises and press conferences.

The influence of defence coverages in these national news media is visible many a times on defence relations between two nations, sale and purchase of arms, ammunition and equipment, policy decisions, R&D in defence, international polity and security operations. Hence in the current era this makes the defence coverage in these magazines all the more important and the influence of the primary source of information a very important study. Hence the study is very timely.

Objectives:

•To identify the subjects, formations and activities covered by DPR in peace and war times.

•To analyse the levels of the disbursement of official press releases and informations in other formats by the DPR, MOD, GOI.

Research questions:

• What is the best way to collect the DPR releases?

• What is the right methodology to analyse these releases?

Hypothesis:

• Post Kargil years have seen a gallop in DPRs activity.

• Too much importance is being given to official defence information.

Methodology:

1. Content analysis

This was the main methodology of research in this study . To study the content data had to be collected from various sources as explained below.

2. Data Collection Techniques

• Clippings files and web coverages of the DPR, PROs of Army, Navy, Airforce and DRDO

• Interviews of defence journalists, Senior defence officials posted in DPR

• Press and photo releases of Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry of Defence, Government of India which are archived with the Press Information Bureau.

• Past coverages of events covered by DPR taken from their stock with permission.

3. Research Design:

Research design for this study is quasi-experimental. It is a mix of quantitative and qualitative content analysis after data collection and preparation.

It is a mixture of explorative, descriptive and diagnostic research. Different aspects of the problem are considered and eventually one arrived at the suitable design which minimizes biases and maximizes the reliability of the data collected.

Of Information to the News Organisations By Department Of Public Relations, Ministry Of Defence, Government Of India

News releases issued by DPR from 1999 to 2010

Year	No. of press releases
1999	10 to 14 in a fortnight
2000	6 to 8 in a fortnight
2001	4 to 5 in a fortnight
2002	4 to 5 in a fortnight
2003	4 to 6 in a fortnight
2004	5 to 7 in a fortnight
2005	5 to 8 in a fortnight
2006	6 to 8 in a fortnight
2007	7 to 9 in a fortnight
2008	8 to 9 in a fortnight
2009	9 to 10 in a fortnight
2010	9 to 10 in a fortnight

Pictures released by DPR from 1999 to 2010

Year	No. of photo releases
1999	1 to 2 in a fortnight
2000	1 to 2 in a fortnight
2001	2 to 3 in a fortnight
2002	2 to 3 in a fortnight
2003	2 to 4 in a fortnight
2004	3 to 4 in a fortnight
2005	3 to 5 in a fortnight
2006	4 to 6 in a fortnight
2007	4 to 7 in a fortnight
2008	5 to 7 in a fortnight
2009	6 to 8 in a fortnight
2010	6 to 8 in a fortnight

Press conferences organized by DPR from 1999 to 2010

Year	No. of Press conferences
1999	12
2000	10
2001	9
2002	9
2003	9
2004	9
2005	9
2006	9
2007	10
2008	10
2009	11
2010	11

Coverages of special days and events by DPR

Year	No. of special days and events
1999	27
2000	22
2001	24
2002	26
2003	25
2004	26
2005	28
2006	31
2007	29
2008	32
2009	36
2010	38

One to one interviews scheduled by DPR

Year	No. of interviews
1999	23
2000	16
2001	18
2002	15
2003	19
2004	21
2005	18
2006	22
2007	17
2008	19
2009	24
2010	28

Media Visits organised by DPR to cover exercises, formations and installations

Year	No. of Visits
1999	17
2000	13
2001	11
2002	14
2003	12
2004	15
2005	14
2006	12
2007	11
2008	14
2009	15
2010	14

DPR Sourced Information In News Organisations Studied: A Content Analysis

1. News releases issued by DPR from 1999 to 2010: The number of press releases issued every fortnight by DPR sees a sudden fall in 2000 from 1999 and then again a fall in 2001. And then a steady rise from 2002 to 2010.

2. Pictures released by DPR from 1999 to 2010: Photo release sees a rise but not very steep as plateaus exist in them for every two years till 2002. And thenceforth is sees a steady rise. The minimum number of pictures released remains same for a couple of years and then an increase in number is seen in the third year.

3. Press conferences organized by DPR from 1999 to 2010: The number of press conferences organized takes a fall in 2000 and again in 2001. Henceforth it remains steady till 2006. From 2007 it again increases but in aslow and steady manner.

4. Coverages of special days and events by DPR: After a fall in the number of special events covered in 2000 there is a steady but slow increase visible right upto 2011.

5. One to one interviews scheduled by DPR: A steep fall in the number of interviews organized by DPR was visible in 2000. And since then it has been a story of a little less and a little more every year making it stable requirement by the media.

6. Media Visits organised by DPR to cover exercises, formations and installations: A steep fall in the number of media visits organized by DPR was visible in 2000. And since then it has been a nearly stable number with no steady rise.

7. Streams covered by DPR in its content disbursement :DPR through its releases covers the Army, Navy, Air force, Defence Research & Development Organisation(DRDO),Joint Service training establishments , Academies like National Defence Academy, Pune, Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, Air force Academy, Hyderabad, Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala, Officers Training Academy, Chennai and many other such establishments run by the armed forces. These releases also cover all the non-classified activities of the Ministry of Defence, Minister of Defence, Minister of Defence for State, the offices of the three

chiefs, Secretary of Defence , Secretary of Defence Production and Scientific Advisor to Minister of Defence. Also the major coverage include activities of the various formations starting from the battalions to the different commands.

8. Subjects covered by DPR in its releases: The releases issued by DPR cover statements of ministers, chiefs and diplomats, raising days of combatant formations, non-combatant units and higher establishments, acquisitions, procurement of arms and ammunition, floating of Request for Information and Request for Proposal in deals, visits of foreign military delegations, visits of Indian military delegations to friendly countries, action at the borders, discoveries and inventions by DRDO, individual service exercises, joint-services exercises, Indian forces' participation in international and bi-lateral exercises. Appointments, change of guard, announcements , welcomes and farewell are also covered in these releases. Aid-to-civil authorities in times of natural calamities and man made disasters, adventure and sports activities, attachment of the services formations to United Nations and other such important bodies are also talked about in DPR releases.

9. Language used by DPR releases: The language used by DPR for writing its releases is simple but the use of defence terminology is extensive. So this makes it imminent for the defence journalists to be adept in defence usage and have a thorough understanding of the armed forces and defence organisations.

10. Analysis of the defence information conveyed: The theory of give the people want they must have is followed extensively by the DPR in writing its releases. No classified information is made available to the media via these releases. MOD, Government of India believes in self-censorship and disburses only that information which it feels is safe for nation security to circulate.

11. Analysis of pictures : Pictures are all high resolution and apart from sending some as a part of releases most of these are archived in the photo section of the Press Information Bureau website www.pib.nic.in date wise. These pictures are taken by the official photographers of the DPR and the Photo Division of the MOD.

12. Analysis of graphics: Very few graphics have been issued by the DPR over the years except in of sheer indispensability. From 1999 to 2010 such graphics is-

sued have been the design of the indigenous submarine Arihant, maps during 1999 of the Kargil Operation Vijay and some tables and charts of defence budget distribution every year.

Inference:

1. News releases issued by DPR from 1999 to 2010: Operation Vijay more popularly called the Kargil war in 1999 saw the DPR in its maximum activity. Despite the fact that the daily briefings were done by MEA , DPR had its briefings and press releases issued during the operation constantly. Once the war was over the frequency of these releases decreased and kept doing so till 2001 . The reason for this could be a sudden dip in military action at the borders and not very much peace time activity. Then a steady rise in issuing of press releases from 2002 to 2010 is proof that activity of the peace time defence forces in India saw an increase and all the information had to be given to the masses and hence had to be disbursed to the media.

2. Pictures released by DPR from 1999 to 2010: Photo releases should have been in good number during the Kargil war but since the non-digital technology did not permit a lot of pictures to be developed not many photo releases were issued. This continued till digital photography came and DPR started taking pictures of events regularly and started releasing them to the press a higher frequency. Hence a steady rise is seen in the photo disbursement from 2002 onwards.

3. Press conferences organized by DPR from 1999 to 2010: The Kargil war year saw press conferences being held in quite a few numbers. Then the reasons to break information to the press took a fall in both 2000 and 2001. Then from 2002 onwards there was a steady rise in occasions when press was invited to share. These events remained practically same every year till 2006. But sudden splurge in activity was seen in MOD and the armed forces and DPR wanted the press to cover them. This saw a steady increase in the press conferences organized till 2010.

4. Coverages of special days and events by DPR: Once more Kargil year saw a good number of special days and events covered by the press on invitation from the DPR. A sudden increase in efforts towards developing a strong military-media relationship seemed evident and it started becoming obvious that the ministry wanted to keep the press in the loop of its general and non-classified activities.

5. One to one interviews scheduled by DPR: 1999 saw the press seeking interviews of the three chiefs, ministers of defence, soldiers fighting at the borders and officials of the MOD. Post Kargil war the requirement for interviews lessened and later on became a staple requirement for special days and events only.

6. Media Visits organised by DPR to cover exercises, formations and installations: Operation Vijay saw media being ferried to the war zone in groups and special permission was given to journalists and cameramen to cover the war. Once the war ended such trip lessened in number and this drop became a standard and stable figure. Now media is taken to see special exercises a number of times in the year by DPR but this is neither very frequent nor very regular.

Conclusions:

The Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) acts as the gatekeeper of information. It is the only authorised channel of communication for disseminating information about the programmes, policies and activities of the Ministry of Defence and all establishments of the MoD including the armed forces.

Currently, the Directorate of Public Relations (Defence) a part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD)interacts with the media on matters related to defence forces. Through its civilian and defence services officers spread out through-out the country, it indulges in PR exercises during peacetime. However, although its raison d'etre is the defence forces, the representation of the defence forces is only at the Lieutenant Colonel/ Major and equivalent level; no specific corps/regiment/branch for these officers exists and they could be from any branch, service or arm. In contrast to their junior ranks, the Directorate is headed by an officer from the Indian Information Service who is of the rank of Director (equivalent to a Brigadier in the Army or a Director in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). However, the current incumbent is of the rank of additional Principal Information Officer (equivalent to a Major General of the Indian Army or a Joint Secretary of the IAS). Within the MOD, the Directorate comes under the Joint Secretary (P&C). In short, the bureaucracy has a complete and unquestionable hold over the organisation for handling of the media on military affairs.

DPR prepares and operates contingency plans for publicity during operations and emergencies. It also provides feedback on the reaction in the media to the programmes, policies and activities of the ministry and armed forces, and analyse the various angles of the stories. DPR acts as media advisor to the Ministry of Defence including the armed forces.

Limitations & recommendations:

Besides this attitudinal reform, a major revamp of the Directorate of Public Relations (DPR), which acts as a link between the services and the media, is a must. It has to become a genuine and dynamic public relations organisation and not remain content with issuing 'bland' handouts riddled with officialese and conduct media parties to ceremonial functions. It has to acquire the ability and resources for gauging public opinion, conducting opinion research and taking proper anticipatory action.

The status of the Director of Public Relations is extremely relevant, as he/she should be a person of sufficient standing and seniority to have sat in important decision-making meetings, so that what the spokesperson says is convincing and authentic. The Director is an officer of the Indian Information Service and his rank was recently upgraded to the equivalent of a Joint Secretary in the IAS or Maj Gen in the Army. Despite this elevation, the DPR still comes under the control of JS (G) in the Ministry of Defence who has powers to overrule all or any proposals emanating from the DPR. The Director has not been authorised to give briefings on operations in J&K, and disturbed areas of northeastern states. Nor can he give any information to the press regarding procurements, DRDO projects or developments in the neighbourhood like missile tests by Pakistan. Thus the very purpose of the elevation is being nullified.

The authority of the DPR should be matching that of the JS who heads the External Publicity Division. He has two Director level officers working under him. He also sits on important policy meetings and thus can conduct briefings with authority on subjects like armament acquisitions, missile tests, strategic relationships with major powers and so on. A fairly definitive indication of JS(XP)'s authority was evident during the Kargil conflict when he was allowed to hold daily briefings for the media alongwith an official each from the Air Force and the Army.

Another problem is that of selection of PROs, who work under the DPR. Uptil 1992, there was a three

member committee, comprising JS (G), Principal Information Officer and the DPR, which selected officers for posting to the directorate. This practice has been abandoned and postings are made on an ad hoc basis and changes often take place without giving notice to the press. This selection committee needs to be revived because far from posting experienced and knowledgeable persons from the Army, Navy and Air Force, the respective HQs preferred to send officers with virtually no knowledge or flair for PR or no thorough understanding of the Services themselves. These postings carried no value in the career chart of the deputed officers, who stood little or no chance of getting promotion.

Previously, PROs, before postings, were given the benefit of familiarization training of about six weeks, which included attachment with news agencies or leading newspapers. There used to be a curriculum for such exposures. This practice, which has been fading out over the years, should be imparted a new impetus with the would-be PROs being given insights into the working of the media, understanding their needs and operational compulsions and so on, besides being given media orientation courses at institutions like the Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

In some concerned prominent quarters the suggestion has been made that the directorate, which is currently a wing of the MoD, should be placed under the respective chiefs of staff. Till independence the DPR was under the Army. It is argued that with the DPR once again becoming a part of the services, there would be smoother execution of the media projection policies.

An innovation since 1996 is the establishment of the Army Liaison Cell which has virtually taken over the task of providing information on operational matters. It is headed by a Brigadier at Army HQ in South Block who functions directly under the Vice Chief of Army Staff and hence enjoys better access to all formation commands in the country, which the DPR does not have. In a way it is an encouraging development, but the protocol between the Cell and the media should be clearly defined in the larger interest of defence media coverage.24 Also, the Cell needs to be relocated as it is housed in a prohibited area to which the media has no easy access.

Devolution of information dissemination system should be the key to the military's interaction with the media.

At present there is little interaction between the staff and the media at the command, corps and divisional level. Any press release which has to be issued is required to be cleared by successively higher authorities. It may come as a surprise to many that even at formation/unit level one is not clear as to whose staff function it is to deal with the media—General Staff (GS) Branch or Adjutant's (A) Branch. Thus when it comes to ceremonial occasions such as raising days, it is the A Branch which issues press releases, and when it is an operational matter it is the GS Branch. There is therefore a need to designate an official army spokesman at the level of command, corps, divisional and independent brigade headquarters. These spokesmen will act as a single-window agency for military-media interaction.

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Address for Correspondence:
The Editor,
International Journal of Communication Development
45, Street No.-2
Radheshyam Park, Delhi-110051
Mob:+919212556700, 8130606700
Email: editor.ijcd@gmail.com, Website: www.communicationijcd.com

LIST OF CONTRIBUTERS

1- Dr. Pramoda K. Jena is Associate Professor, Department of Communication Management & Technology, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, Haryana.

2- Dr. Amit Bhardwaj is a doctorate in Hindi literature and working as a translator in Delhi Legislative Assembly. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Mass Communication under the supervision of Dr. Jena.

3- Mr. Uma Shankar Pandey: Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Journalism & Mass Communication Surendranath College for Women, Kolkata 700009.
Email: mailusp@gmail.com

4- Dr Ganesh Sethi: Assistant Professor Dept. of Mass Communication, Manipur University, Imphal email:dr.ganeshsethi@gmail.com

5- Dr. Durgesh Tripathi: (Assistant professor) University School of Mass Communication, Guru obind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi.

6- Ms. Kanika bahl: (Student) University School of Mass Communication, Guru obind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi.

7- Ms. Sangeeta Saxena: Chief of Bureau India Strategic, New Delhi, India
Email: sangeeta saxena1@gmail.com

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