

Difference in sports news coverage



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The world of sports has evolved in the last century and in the first decade of the 21st century as a prime source of entertainment. The world has seen greater development in sports as it becomes tougher and more competitive. The reflections of the more serious approach could be seen in media and specifically in sports journalism. The sport based program became the crowd puller of leading television channels in the visual media fraternity. The tougher competition and crave for being unique, redefined the approach of media to sports, collectively sports Journalism.

This study tries to understand the impact of geographic and cultural orientation towards setting the agenda for sports programs in visual media. The study checks the impact of changing audience trends in determining the agenda of sport news . Qualitative and Quantitative research methods have been used to prove the hypothesis.

The world of sports got an enhanced pace and shape during the end of last century and early period of this century. With sports, sports journalism as well has grown over the years. Sports journalism emerged as unique, out of its old status as filler in political and socio political news.

Apart from being a prime source of dynamic entertainment, sport news now became the hot commodity with high demand in heterogeneous audience. Based on the latest trend and the dynamically changing market demands, specifically audience pulse, determine the agenda and strategy of sports news.

Whether the hot sports like cricket and American football are the children of media hype or commercialized news? This study tries to reveal how the agenda of sports news are determined by audience trend and market pulse.

Background

In 1960, the winter Olympics were held in Squaw Valley, California and the media coverage was nowhere close to that of the 2002, Salt Lake winter Olympics. The 2008 – 2009 UEFA Champions League final between Barcelona and Manchester United was the most watched live event on television history beating that year's Super bowl. This shows the differences in the way sports journalism is active in different countries and regions. This was the first time the Super bowl was defeated by a football match. They promoted the event of the Champions League final as the match between the two best footballers in the world, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo and also the winner would be declared as the best in the world. One can see how the media uses its tactics and production strategies to promote the event.

The preset target of the producers and advertisers are the decision maker of each sport programs or sports based programs.

In most of the countries it depends with tradition and culture.

America

In America the four major sports are basketball, ice hockey, baseball and their version of football. Most of the sports played in countries apart from North America are mostly the same. The most popular sport in the world is

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football and not American football. In America any big news relating to any other sports would not be given much importance and even if it is, it will find very little time in the whole sports segment of a news channel.

Britain

Britain claims that they have invented most of the sports that are being played in the modern day. Their way of covering sports is different to that of America; they give all sports almost equal importance. They also focus on the four American sports and give them more coverage than what America gives to others.

India

In India, Cricket gets high coverage and telecast with high importance even in peak hours. Whereas, football or hockey are subsided and limit in the 1/5th portion of the total sports news slot.

People watching the pre and post events of any sporting events more than the event itself. The summer Olympics is an example of this case, the opening and closing ceremony of the event is watched by more people than the Olympics or any part of it. This shows how the media and journalism has changed in a massive way along with the sport itself. The market for sports journalism is by far the most improving and expanding one and the producers and advertisers know this and want to make full use of it for their benefit and the viewers will be shown what they want and not what exactly is happening, the whole thing is to make the event sell and to get the Television Rating Points (TRPs).

It has all become commercialization and deregulation of televised sport. It has become such an important commodity. In America it has always existed as a system emphasizing the entertainment values.

In many European countries it has been a model emphasizing neutrality. With the existence of exclusive sports channels like Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN), Sky Sports, etc. the news channels have to find something different to make their sports segment sell to the public. So, they use different methods of telecasting sports news. Only in sports one can find other interesting details like the lives, hobbies, relationships of the sports personalities and discuss about them in detail.

There is politics in sports as well and the extra information attracts the people especially women to the sports. The term “Plausibly Live” was coined to describe the production of the 1996 Atlanta summer Olympics. The phrase was used as the broadcasts were not live but could have been.

During any event one would get the entire extra detail on any particular team or player as the television crew would be sent to find the information. Then at any time during the show they would give out the information to the viewers. The advertisers now will decide that when there must be a break and how long it must last. Now there will be more cuts in any match as it will create more interest and make the sport much faster and better. The camera angles in modern times are such that they will enhance the event than it actually is. The sport has evolved or it has been made to evolve. That is the whole idea of sports journalism in modern times. To enhance what is there to a level that is more interesting to the viewers than it is, is the way it is in these times.

Research Problem

The study concentrates on the characteristics of sports telecasted by two different news channels and how they telecast and cover sports in their respective countries evaluated against the value of sports journalism. The two news channels are NDTV (New Delhi Television Limited) in India and CNN (Cable News Network) in USA.

The study will be based on, the relation between journalistic values in sports broadcasting, the broadcasting of sports that are prominent in the two countries.

The commercialization of sports and sporting events in broadcast media.

How the changing audience trends determine the agenda of each sports item in the sports news slot.

Geographical and cultural impact on the sports news coverage and character of sports journalism.

Methodology

The methodology for this dissertation would be of two kinds. The first will be quantitative method where there would be the analysis of all the sports segments in both news channels and how they have allocated time and news coverage to each sport and sports personalities.

Every news channel will have its own policies on telecasting any sport and how much to telecast and it will be different for every news channel. NDTV

would mostly have more focus on cricket and cricketers more than any other sport.

In quantitative method the time allocated for each sport, e. g. cricket, football, hockey, badminton, etc. is very important. The time given for individuals and other sport personalities in one channel would be analyzed and compared to that of the other news channel. What is the time given for interviews and for news and features would also be analyzed. With this one can see the difference in the way both news channels differ from each other.

The news content in CNN would definitely differ from that of the Indian news channel. As they are in USA they would focus more on the sports that are famous in that part of the world. But the focus is on the news content of CNN in India and whether it would change for the Indian viewers or whether they would try and promote their sports in India. All facts and figures that would come from the analysis of these news channels would be a part of quantitative methodology.

There is also qualitative method where the main criteria for the analysis are the interpretation that comes out from what the news channels telecast. If one news channel gives more emphasis for one sport genuinely or if it gives more emphasis on a sport if a special occasion is there like the world cup, then the interpretation that comes out would be the basis for qualitative method.

Both the methods would be used for this study as it is imperative to know the facts and figures as well as the understanding as to why there is a difference in the way each of the news channels differ in the telecasting of

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sports news from each other. The analysis and the comparison between these news channels would be essential to determine the difference in policies and the interests of the people in that region, so, both the methodologies are highly essential.

Hypothesis

Indian news is dedicating time for personalized and sensationalized news items than that of news channels.

The language of commentary used by news casters and reporters in Indian news channels are using sensationalized and emotional words than that of US channels.

The visual language of Indian sports news is deliberately generating sensationalism.

Scope and Limitations

The scope for this dissertation is that in the future more studies can be made on more news channels. The study can be vaster as news channels from other countries can also be included. Further research can be done as news channels can be compared to exclusive sports news channels. This will help to learn the difference in cultures, traditions and interests for sports for the people in the various regions of the world.

The limitations to this study is that this study and analysis is only between two news channels, one in India and one in USA. With this it is difficult to analyze the difference between the trends in sports in both countries. By the

selection of one news channel in USA one cannot determine the trends and traditions in sports there are that of the whole country. Each news channel will have its own policies and ideas, so, one cannot say that the sports news that they would telecast is the trend of that country and that is their mindset towards sports.