

Sections of people on important issues media essay

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AbstractThis paper argues that the media is no longer the fourth estate of journalism and has become like any other marketable product with reference to paid news. The face of journalism in India is changing. The press is mostly owned and controlled by the 'capitalist class' (i. e. the rich and powerful in society; opinion leaders; gatekeepers), who can use the press to report facts which are convenient to them. Over years, the ownership pattern, organizational structure and the content of the newspapers have changed. The only mission of all media organizations is money. They are on sale for paid news and private treaties. The blurring lines between the news or advertorials, or news or editorials, betray the trust of the readers and the presses ethics are questioned. Example: Ashok Chavan used the print media effectively during the Maharashtra state elections in 2009.

IntroductionThe news media's role is to promote public discussion, show concern towards its citizens, present an accurate picture of the life of the readers and viewers, shape public opinion and act as a mediator between the government and its public. However, the news media has failed in its role as the fourth estate and has become like any other marketable product. Public opinion is opinions of large sections of people on important issues. The media plays a large role in shaping public opinion. Largely newspapers shape it, as newspapers give us facts that shape our opinion compared to news channels. However a criticism of the press is that they are mostly owned and controlled by the 'capitalist class' (i. e. the rich and powerful in society; opinion leaders; gatekeepers), who can use the press to report facts which are convenient to them. Other media such as TV and radio can also influence public opinion. The press in any free democracy is diverse and reflects multiple opinions.

Each newspaper or TV channel has its own ideology, and outlook on national affairs. For instance, the approach of 'The Times of India' towards a major national issue will be different from 'The Hindu', 'The Loksatta' or 'Ananda Bazaar Patrika'. In a democracy, every newspaper, news agency, and TV channel is free to propagate its own views. Most media in a democracy have some form of prejudice or ideology guiding them. Some of them are guided by a leftist ideology, which supports public ownership and economic equality, while some are guided by rightist ideology that supports free trade and private enterprises. Some have a conservative slant, in that they support local traditions and are suspicious of foreign culture, and some have a liberal slant, which is more respecting of individual opinions. 'The Times of India' and other English language newspapers such as Daily News Analysis, have a liberal slant, but support free trade, while a newspaper such as 'Saamna' has a conservative slant. In addition, some newspapers, magazines and news channels favour one party over the other. 'The Times of India' favours the ruling party, while 'The Indian Express' is known to always criticize the ruling party. Magazines such as 'India Today' and news channels such as 'Aaj Tak' are favouring BJP, while 'The Outlook' magazine favours the Congress. Saamna is the mouthpiece of Shiv Sena, while Gyaan Shakti is the mouthpiece of CPI. In Tamil Nadu, Sun TV supports DMK, while Jaya TV supports AIADMK. In America, FOX News, has a sharp leaning towards the Republican Party, and hence always supports George W. Bush. Even channels such as CNN are accused of having a pro-American bias in their coverage.

History to Present - The Journey
The first Indian newspaper named The Calcutta Gazette was started by James Hicky on January 29, 1780. For

three decades, all the Indian newspapers were owned by the British and were published in English. Indian social reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Lokmanya Tilak, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gandhiji and Lala Lajpar Rai used the press as a weapon to fight against the British Raj. During the post independence period, many newspaper managements controlled the editorial by allowing their family members to join their organization. In 1975, Indira Gandhi declared political emergency from 25th June 1975 to 21st March 1977 and imposed restrictions on the print media including termination of certain news agencies. Post- emergency, the business of journalism became more corporate and money driven. Around late 1980's CNN and BBC World news channels were available to the Indian viewers. Between 1995-2003 the Indian television news channel started competing with the newspapers. The news that was broadcasted on the television got influenced by the race for highest Television Rating Points. The news channel started focusing more on entertainment and lifestyle coverage. In addition, many regional and Indian editions of foreign magazine were also launched in India. Newspaper owners function under multiple constraints, including newsprint controls, proprietary demands to meet the bottom line, and the pressure to sustain business interest in a regulatory environment, increasing cover price, pressure to depend more on advertisers than on subscribers, advertising/commercial pressures/priorities, labour and technology issues, political pressures of ruling parties and opposition parties, possibilities of government censorship and lobbying. At present, newspapers have multiple editions, circulation wars, competition with electronic media, string operations and newspapers on mobile (e-paper). Managements of

newspapers are also highly profit oriented, and normally do not like their newspapers criticizing the government, because they always expect favours from the government to expand their business activity. They often encourage the journalists to cover stories that show the government in good light. E. g. in England, Rupert Murdoch supported Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party when it was in power, and later Tony Blair and the Labour party, when it came to power. Sometimes newspapers come under pressure from the government and are forced to project views are not true. Ownership Patterns While newspapers' ownership, content and role in the last few years have changed, the Indian journalism history has moved from dissent to treaty. 2 Most of the newspapers before independence were published from the financial support of Marwari seths (a financially sound community) in Calcutta or Bombay or blessings of ruling political party politicians. After independence, many industrialists, highly successful in industries like jute, textiles and cement entered the world of newspapers, but the part played by the newspapers in the industrialists' financial empire is (was) small. Three newspapers, Times of India, Statesman and Pioneer having British ownership at the time of independence became ' Indian' by 1964. The growth from about 3000 newspapers and periodicals including 300 dailies at the time of partition to 69, 323 of them including 7, 710 dailies in 2008 indicates a tremendous increase in the number of players. In India, all the top dailies and periodicals are published by chains of ownership.[3] Eight publishing groups were registered or had been found to be ' registerable' under the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act, 1969 as their assets exceeded \$25 million each in March 1980. Out of the eight MRTP companies,

four are controlled by the Indian Express Newspapers Group. The assets of this group are estimated at \$125 million. Metro Now, published by Delhi-based Metropolitan Media Company, a 50: 50 joint venture between Hindustan Times Media Limited and BCCL, was shut down. However, it was restarted, and it came as a free supplement along with Hindustan Times and The Times of India. In addition, Mid-Day no longer has its morning edition in Mumbai. The reason: to make profits, build brands and alliances with the advertising and marketing organization. Such ownership patterns are unknown to the public. Most newspaper owners are engaged in multiple businesses. However, the government is still debating on cross-media ownership at Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of India website, but, still has not been so successful in controlling the cross ownership patterns of the news media organizations. ContentWhen the newspapers were run by freedom fighters, the content consisted of personal attacks, scandals, religious affairs and private affairs. In 20th Century, Eenadu newspaper in Andhra Pradesh started a campaign against liquor by providing it extensive coverage to rural women's fight against local drink shops. Such examples are rare in 21st Century. 4Although the Indian press is often credited for its activist roles, such as helping in the fight against alcoholism, preventing farmer suicides and protecting water sources. It seems to have 'reverted back to its pro-establishment stance of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century'Now days, the purpose of news media is to bring out gossip and entertain its viewers and readers. In addition, it protects the businesses and sociopolitical interests of the elite class. Example: The Times of India which is owned by Bennett, Coleman and Company is now a

Corporate Entity, Brand Capital and Brand Equity Treaties. According to the Brand Capital Website, It has entered into more than 200 companies in product categories like education to healthcare, consumer durables, and real estate to retail and so on. Brand equity picks up a stake in a company in return for positive coverage to organization in form of editorials coverage and discounted advertisements. In late 1990's the public relation department opened within the newspapers organizations and the power of journalists was replaced by the power of management.[5]The power of the unsaid statement, ' do not pay anything extra; instead pay the media house directly' points clearly the difference between Gandhian journalism and modern-day journalism. Gandhiji considered journalism primarily as a service to society and as a vehicle for his views on religion, ethics, morality, politics and economics. Modern day publishers and editors look upon their work as a business like any other business, motivated by considerations of profit, economic advantage and social prestige. Today, journalism is more about Public Relations. Most stories published in the newspapers are image consultants then investigative stories. The Times of India is criticized for carrying any investigative reports. On the other hand, The Indian Express is praised for carrying investigative stories. The news channel has also been criticized for sting operations that are carried by them. Example: Zee news VS the Jindal case, Tehelka expose (on casting coach in Bollywood, false sex-racket by Delhi school teacher funded by local business man leading to ban of the channel by Government of India and so on).[6]Scholars have pointed out issues like creation of news instead of covering news, dismal handling of

news during disasters and news as entertainment. Role of Journalists: Write or Hide?