

A REVIEW OF RISE AND SPREAD OF INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM AND THEIR FINANCE IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT:

Indian media industry production & consumption are under a drastic change. New technology, new models' new concepts are coming up and the whole business model is changing once again. Due to technological changes Anchor is using different models and ideas to run this business with ethics and value as well as profit. This business is using new ways of doing business firms. This research paper focuses on the rise and spread of independent journalism in India and its financial aspect as a review paper. To study this topic research has used secondary data of research publication, reports and articles.

Key words: Journalism, Independent Journalism, Social Media

INTRODUCTION:

It has been 25 years since the internet in India, as VSNL launched it on 15th August 1995. (Goyal, 2020) IT has flourished in each sector of business. Mobile telephony and internet news have created tremendous growth in business. Print journalism which is considered to be the 4th pillar of Indian democracy is somewhere affected by this technological development. User Generated Content (UGC) has become popular and successful. UGC has evolved over the last two decades. It started with self-financing, then sponsorship, then with subscription-based business models. In 1998 we have seen broadcasters were struggling to find the road to profitability. We have also seen that claiming profitability or being at breakeven point were the diverse range of sites including not just niche sites but main stream news providers also. Peter Zollman mentioned in his paper that what are the profit, they are return on investment (ROI) Are they return on equity

(ROE) or its more money comes in than goes out. As per Tribune companies view its online enterprises as an investment and does not expect a near term profit.

Today when more than 1.2 billion mobile subscribers are there in India it becomes increasingly important how this technology has affected print journalism. The researcher has chosen independent journalism as an area in India. It is interesting to study how and why independent journalism is growing in India. What is the future scope for independent journalism in India? To explore their financial aspect.

Independent journalism

When people go beyond mainstream media to find ground reports they find new media independent journalism. It is a place where reporters are reporting from ground zero. Independent journalists are using twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram as a platform to narrate their stories.

Newspapers are the most trusted and popular media among the Indian audience but during covid pandemic it was closed for almost four months, the other most popular media is television news which has 392 news channels that did not work out during pandemic. People raised the credibility of these 24X7 breaking news models. There came the social media which offered them the raw coverage. A research conducted on Indian readership in 2020 by Anjana Krishnan published on Reuters.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out How independent journalism is growing in India.
2. To study the dynamics of business models of independent journalism.
3. To explore the scope of Independent Journalism in India
4. To understand the evolving finance model used into independent journalism.
5. To check the profitability of operation, Subscribers and top Journalist.

The penetration of the Internet in India proved to be a milestone for newspapers opening their E-newspaper edition.

India has recently completed 25 years of the internet.

The penetration of the internet in India increased the access of digital media for readers. This leads to the rise of reading e-newspapers. The emergence of digital media made its impact as print newspapers soon adopted it and started e-newspaper. The Hindu was the 1st E-newspaper in India launched in 1995. Soon newspapers started opening their E-newspaper, Website or news portals.

A study by Reuters conducted on Indian Newspapers' Digital Transition in 2017 and the observation of three leading newspapers from India, Hindustan Times, Dainik Jagran, and Malyalum Manorama.

The observations are as under Zeenab Aneez, S. C. (2019)

1. That these newspapers have invested into technology and expertise.
2. The demand for print newspapers is growing in India and the growth of digital media could be tracked.
3. The growth of print is in the short-term but the growth of digital is in the future.

These newspaper groups are aware of their brand, assets and reputation. This could help them in expanding business.

4. The investment in new staff is not enough, to adopt a new technology needs the alteration in organization, culture to leverage the editorial assets into the digital environment.

People prefer print media over digital for its physical presence. Some find their increase in vocabulary or some find local news. There are Indian readers who cut newspaper cuttings and paste it on the wall. It is perceived that knowledge is what you grasp through print newspapers and not with the available information from digital content. (JOHAR, 2018)

According to MGI digital India report 2019, there is a 95% decline in internet data cost. There is 90% growth in internet users between 2014-2017. There are 234 million people in India who use the Indian language on the internet. (McKinsey Global Institute, 2019)

4G connection provides a variety of services to customers in India. The affordability, advanced technology for entertainment, banking, office and communication. It has improved the private and public organization for improvement. (K. Krishna Prasad, 2016)

India has the largest number of internet users for 356 million Facebook and 400 million WhatsApp users in the world. Youtube is the most used platform in rural India with 325 monthly active users in India. 750 million people from India access the internet through their phones. According to 2019 Reuters India News Study, smartphones are the main device to access the news for people. (Zarabi, 2022)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

We have used primary as well as secondary data in primary data we proposed model that combines the fundamental paradigm shift. In Secondary data we have search no of research papers which we have used to review the subject. This Study investigate the impact of Individual Journalism. The respondent involved in the study were journalists in India. Journalist who are using social media and technology very well. Interviews have been conducted and information were gathered from the journalist. We have interviewed around 17 Journalist.

Research Model and Development:

The study is based on a proposed model that combines the fundamental paradigm shift. Prior research has shown that trust suggest

THE DYNAMICS OF INTERNET CONTENT AND E-NEWSPAPER:

Newspapers have been the popular media for the consumption of news among the Indian masses but over a period of time digital media is becoming popular. Digital media and its agility to offer the latest news updates make it more popular. Indian readers prefer newspapers as their habit and taste. Print newspapers offer a variety of content at the same time digital media offers the trending issues. A study shows for all print newspapers there is a need to check the digital media often to find the trending news. (Maharishi, 2021)

Product innovation, content and distribution are the main challenges for print newspapers in India. The increasing local specific content demand. There is a local market available for newspapers to explore. (Sanjay Kumar, 2015)

The digital media is more accessible and fast. Youngsters access it the most. It is found in the research conducted into the developing country. The population who is being employed prefer online access through mobile over a hardcopy whereas the elderly prefer the hard copy of newspapers. Advertisers who want to reach out to larger audiences prefer the online version of newspapers over the hardcopy. (Caroline Kalombe, *Impact of Online Media on Print Media in Developing Countries*, 2019)

THE WORKING ON DIGITAL MEDIA COMES WITH FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS

interactivity, hyper textuality, multimodality, immediacy, memory, personalisation, ubiquity, creativity, contextualisation, and other latest new media technologies. (Deepak Joyappa, 2020)

The consumption of digital media is increasing and people prefer more digital media over the traditional media. India is the biggest mobile users' country. The cost efficient smartphone and improved 3G and 4G service with reduced data price attract more users to on demand digital entertainment. The business model for these platforms are evolving. (Deloitte , 2015)

The changing mobile and social media times mass audience shift with trends a big question comes when we put journalism for discussion. Newspaper being an important news producer the pressure of digital mobile and social media builds. There is an urgency of producing news. A few large technology companies who work to collect and distribute the videos, message and texts who gain attention and advertising revenue. With sophisticated technology and availability of a variety of information people prefer their choice of information which is casual and passive. (Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, 2016)

The shift of technological development makes it easy for users to access the information and consume it. The lack of internet access, lack of knowledge of using technology reduce the impact on online media on print media. Majority of youth use online media and spend more time on online media as compared to the older generation. The advertisers prefer online media over print media and it puts an impact on print media. (Caroline Kalombe, 2019)

CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND USER GENERATED CONTENT

A big question which was rolling all over the world about the gatekeeping model, will citizen journalism skip the gatekeeping process? A research scholar made a case study in Kenya, citizen journalism has a public perception that traditional journalism does not cover many local issues and citizen journalism covers it. In spite of being popular, it is helpful to traditional journalism. It is just irreversibly ever-changing the media landscape. (Onyango, 2013)

Citizen journalism is a style of journalism where a citizen who is not trained for journalism but reports the issues faced by citizens. They are called citizen journalists. (Noor, 2017)

Citizen journalism became more popular and a regular term after the 2004 Asian tsunami, it is considered as an adage for the ordinary citizen's reportage or coverage of a local event to help professional news media. This practice is then named as citizen journalism. (Zeng, 2019)

The development in communication gadgets and smartphones become a reason for the growth of citizen journalism. The growing number of smartphones and metiorating social media platforms like orkut, facebook, instagram, twitter engage ordinary people and even the journalists. Society has witnessed a strong influence of social media over the last decade. The use of citizens offers more latest news, it covers many aspects of society and offers yet another platform for sharing

the news. (Mukherjee, 2016)

An interesting research conducted in Africa, the study is comparing citizen journalism vs professional journalism. It is found that citizen journalists report by attending an event, or covering the event without formal training with an available mobile phone. A professional journalist works with research, working on new stories. It reveals the limitations of citizen journalism with skills and practice. (Benjamin, 2018)

Influencer Definition – It is an extension of word of mouth, as it is the opinion posted on social media and many people tend to believe and follow these opinions. The social media users who put their opinion and in a way influence people are called as influencers. (Anjali Chopra, 2020) An Influencer is a person who achieve reputation within a social media community or his domain and use this reputation to influence others. This influence is terms of content which followers consume, products they use. Anybody who has dedicated and loyal followers who also create good content can become an influencer. (Ralhan, 2022)

The independent journalists also who put their opinions on social media, becomes influencers on social media.

Influencer Marketing in India reports

There is an immense growth into influencer marketing and the ROI is much better than other marketing channels. In India, there is micro influencers who have followers from 10,000 to 1,00,000. And macro-influencers who have 1,00,000 to 1 Million followers. According to India Influencer Marketing Report 2021, 80% marketers are satisfied with results and 90% marketers prefer social media influencers over other marketing channels. (Mehra, 2022)

A market study conducted by GroupM and Exchange4media Group, before pandemic 400 million Indians had access to social media and post-pandemic the number has increased. There is significant consumer behaviour shift is observed in top 4 categories such as Personal Care, Food and Beverages, Fashion and Jewellery, and Mobile and Electronic sector. There is only 27% involvement of celebrities and 73% are individuals who are influencers. This study shows how this sector is growing and how there is a vast scope for an individual to be an social media influencer. (Mehra, 2022)

According to Prasanth Kumar, CEO, GroupM South Asia, the social media influencer market is growing by compound rate of 25% till 2025 and market to reach Rs. 2,200 Crore. Ashwin Padmanabhan, president, partnerships and trading, GroupM India states, Influencer marketing industry at influx and ready to take off. (BrandWagon Online, 2021)

The beginning of independent journalism in India,

Digital India initiative has increased internet usage in India in urban as well as rural parts. As per the IAMAI India has 40% of internet users in the world. Digital start-ups in India like Scroll, The Quint, in shorts, DailyHunt, The Wire, and Khabar Lahariya are growing with the growth of the internet in India. They have the potential to make a cultural, social, or political impact. They are the new innovations which could inspire people connected to them (Nielsen, 2016)

There is a need for transparent and independent media for democracy. There need to be several steps to be taken, like balancing the public and private media. The ownership of media plays a

greater role in its delivery. Government subsidies and funding to media houses. These factors play an important role in enabling an environment for free and independent media contributing to a transparent and accountable government. (Price, 2002)

The Indian media industry which is 1.63 Trillion INR is expected to grow by a CAGR of 13.5 per cent over 2019-2025. It will be INR 3.07 Trillion according to the KPMG report. Digital media has showcased a tremendous growth in recent future and there will be development post launch of 5G. (KPMG , 2019)

The issue of media self-regulation was studied and evaluated on how self-regulation is required for better performance and accountability. Reporters and management can design a framework for journalist conduct to achieve their objectives. (Mathew, 2016)

The growing social media platforms are being used as a platform for putting voices by people. YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram are some of them. As digital media has also helped to raise various local issues, it has become a popular one. There are many individuals who have started their channels to put forth their ideas, views and local news.

Priyata Brajabasi who started their setup on her terrace with some plants in the background. She has experience of working for 9 years for wion Delhi, producing prime time shows to writing scripts for programmes she quit her job and started on YouTube. She along with a two-member team for camera and editing they worked up on West Bengal elections.

It is found that millennials have lost their interest in television news and newspaper readers were scattered during covid19 pandemic.

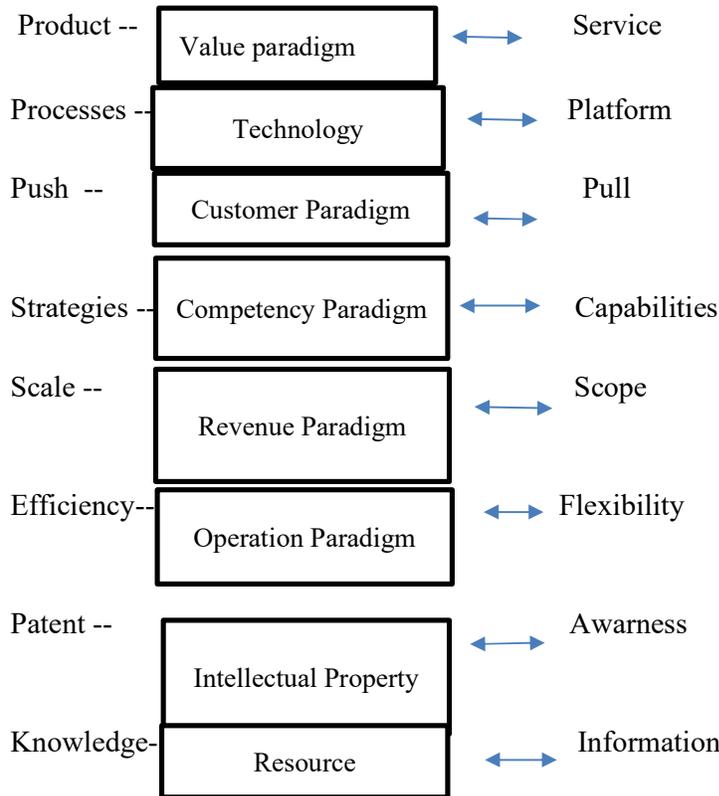
Vibhu Grover, an independent photojournalist from Haryana has 40,000 followers. Sandeep Singh freelance journalist from Ludhiana reported farmers to protest from ground zero, Dhanya Rajendran a Bangalore-based independent journalist reports the south Indian local issues from his platform. Chitra Subramaniam and Vignesh Vellore also started their news bulletin for south Indian local issues which are not reported on TV news. They use Youtube and Twitter. (Mohan, 2021)

Social media does affect news journalism in three fundamental areas of journalism.

1. The public trust
2. The importance of local news network
3. The way news is covered and will be covered.

The lack of trust, the need of local news networks and now the availability of tools to report has made a huge impact. Social media tools like YouTube, tweeter, Facebook offer news directly from eyewitnesses. The future of professional journalists will not verify the news sources but disseminate the truth. Social media will be showing what people say or what is happening and if you want truth then it is better to check TV news channels or newspapers. (Harper, 2010)

The Fundamental paradigm shift: (Figure 1)



Source : Own

Bernard et al 2006, Albert et al 2008, Business model in turn stress profitability & market success as their primary operational mode (whatever was the best & enables us to make money out of it. Business party is interested in how to gain profit of that activity. There are many social sight also where knowledge creator will work without taking any remuneration also, but here journalist wanted to spared the knowledge, educate the people and aware the people about the thing where the inventor will not be interested in money. Another model is publishers or Journalist will get views and through that they will earn profit.

Printing Revenues stream where their main profit came from the sale of space or sports in the newspaper or magazine for advertising. Newspapers have employed a revenue model for decade which the paper is sold quite inexpensively at a nominal level insufficient to cover cost) while publishers looked to advertising revenue to cover remaining costs plus provide a profit (Teece 2010)s

THE FINANCIAL ASPECT:

Bernard et al 2006, Albert et al 2008 , evolution of the model of operation in the internet era. The Journalist will get benefit through accesses to democratization, learning, collaboration and user-centric approach. Through copyright, through intellectual property rights, Trademarks, Trade secrets they have been earning revenues Self-funded, subscription-based or advertising revenue-based business models are applied. User-generated content was once looked as armature but today it is considered as most sought-after and raw content. It is the news feed for some international channels as well. It starts with local interior coverage to narrate opinion pieces. It has money involved and now it is growing at rapid speed.

Revenue came from print revenue stream where main profit come from the advertising. These channel follows online business environment where information is available it is accessible yet no clear model implemented (Teece 2010) like buzzfeed has created a quunique business model which is following the interaction & sharing strategy.

This business getting revenue from person to person , they generate it from their own company, and other is they get most of their income from Advertisement.

Mathial felipe de lima , santos, Ruiqui Zhole. The User Generated Content is going to grow by 26.6% CAGR from 2021 to 2028. It is expected to reach USD 18.65 billion by 2028. A study conducted by Grand View Research and some of the findings say, it needs close supervision and can be the only challenge. There is a great demand for web content management, online video platforms and digital marketing software. (James, 2021)

Social media help people to interact and also facilitate marketers to reach their audience. Social media affects in nonporous ways to individuals and marketers. As social media has become culturally relevant it has immense potential for marketing. It is going to be a dominant form of communication and could raise geo-political ramifications. (Gil, 2020)

Globalization and Digitization has changed business operations all over the world. All business houses use social media to keep up-to-date. This has evolved many business models. The E-retail who make transactions on the internet follow a transaction model. Facebook follows a hybrid business which is a combination of an opening platform for service and even use of advertising revenue. Their use of the fermium model, subscription model, virtual good model opens an array of possibilities for business. Some models have proved to be useful and need further study into this domain. (Rasananda Panda, 2017)

The Osterwalder (2002) help us modify business models, network properties are crucial in social networks, social media is more of self-expression. The seven ontological aspects of a business model are innovation, customer relationship, infrastructure management, marketing, technology, regulations and financial aspect. These aspects play a vital role in shaping the business model. (Hu, 2011)

Social Media is slowly becoming popular for marketing and advertising. It offers a chance to marketers to understand their market and understand the need of their audience. An effective social media strategy could be prepared with clarity of social media goals, auditing current status, developing a content strategy, use analytics to track the process, and adjusting the strategy as per the requirement to get optimum results. (GOYAL, 2018)

Figure :2 Name of Independent Journalist and their subscribers

Name of Independent Journalist	Venture	Platform	Subscribers
Priyata Brajabasi	Priyata Brajabasi	YouTube	3.13K
Vibhu Grover	Vibhu Grover	YouTube	40,000
Sandeep Singh	Sandeep Singh	Tweeter &	32,000-strong Twitter followers

Nimrat Kaur	Rozana Spokesman	YouTube	9,75,000 over 40 countries
Raees Muhammed	Raees Muhammed	Tweeter&	72,000
Dhanya Rajendran	The News Minute ,	YouTube	2,74,000
Saurabh Dwivedi	The Lallantop	Tweeter & YouTube	21.07,00,000

Source for the data compiled – (<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blink/cover/the-revolution-will-not-be-televised/article33931788.ece>)

Figure : 3s

India’s Top Journalist on Tweeter

Indian Journalist	Tweeter	Associated with
Sudhir Chaudhary	1.18M	Daily and News and Analysis
Rajdeep Sardesai	7.16M	India Today
Vikram Chandra	2.8M	NDTV
Barkha Dutt	6.4M	NDTV
Rahul Kanwal	4.5M	India Today
Shereen Bhan	81.6K	CNBC-TV18
Shekhar Gupta	1.7M	The Print
Faye D’souza	421K	Mirror Now
Rega Jha	170K	Buzzfeed

Source for the data compiled – (<https://www.entrepreneur.com/slideshow/300103>)

Above table we can see the business has captured a market and these are the earning models for the industry.

CONCLUSION:

The researchers have found out the unique characteristics of Independent journalism. It is more of a development than a trend. It is more dynamic, fast, interactive and based upon user-generated content. It is easy to access and easy to share. There are several issues these independent journalists cover from national politics to local civic issues and local news where independent journalists can go in a hyper-local mode where newspapers face limitations. There is tremendous growth found in user-generated content on social media. There are many journalists who prefer

to start their independent journalism on social media. They use subscription-based or advertising revenue business models. This trend is growing in India and few of these portals are also been merged into big media houses.

The overall study suggests the overall development of perception among millennials that they prefer news content from actual eyewitnesses through new media or independent journalists but when a need comes to understand the core issue then it is newspaper which is preferred over social media reporting. It has immense scope, demand and growth in the near future.

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