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Communication and Media Research

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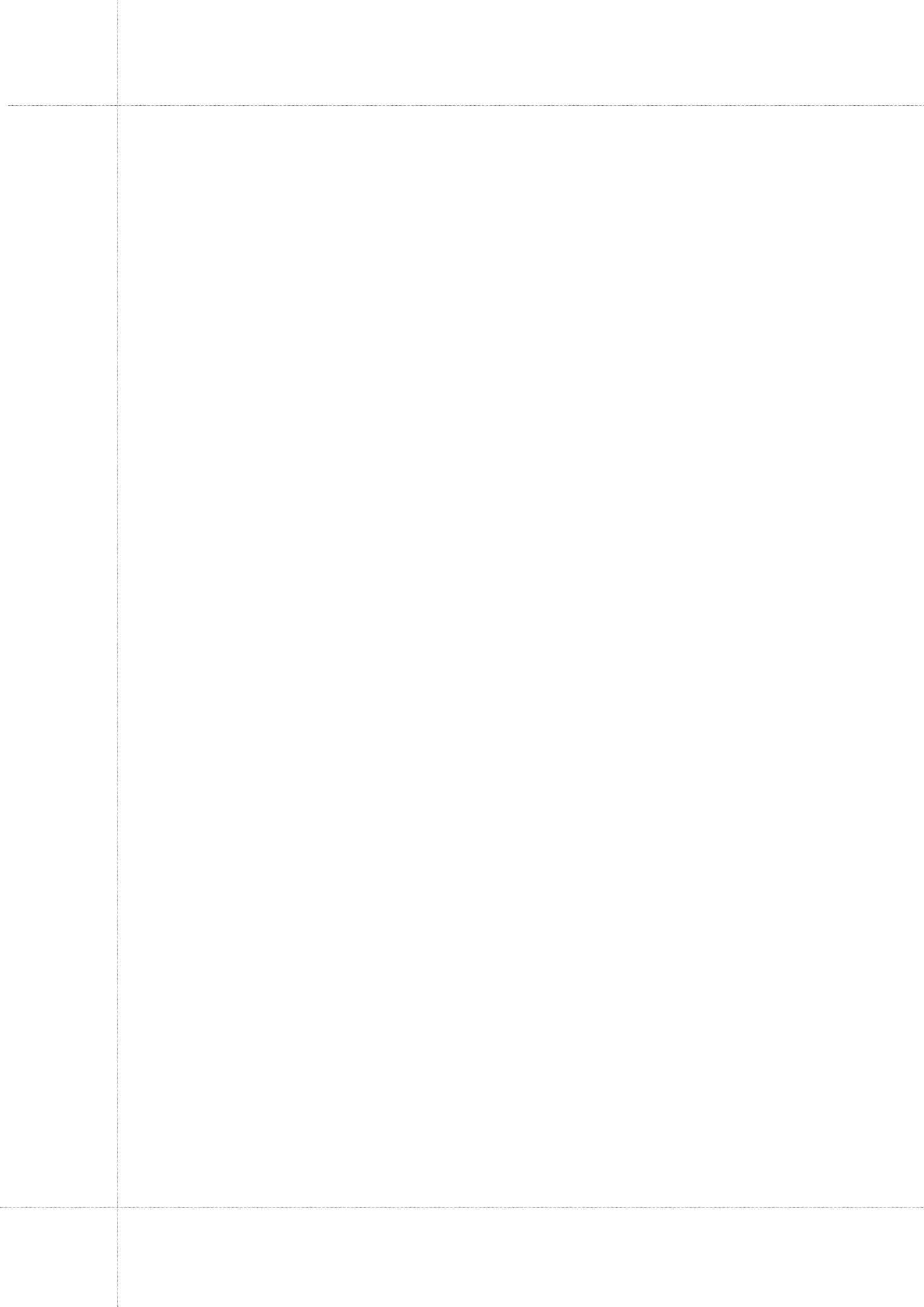
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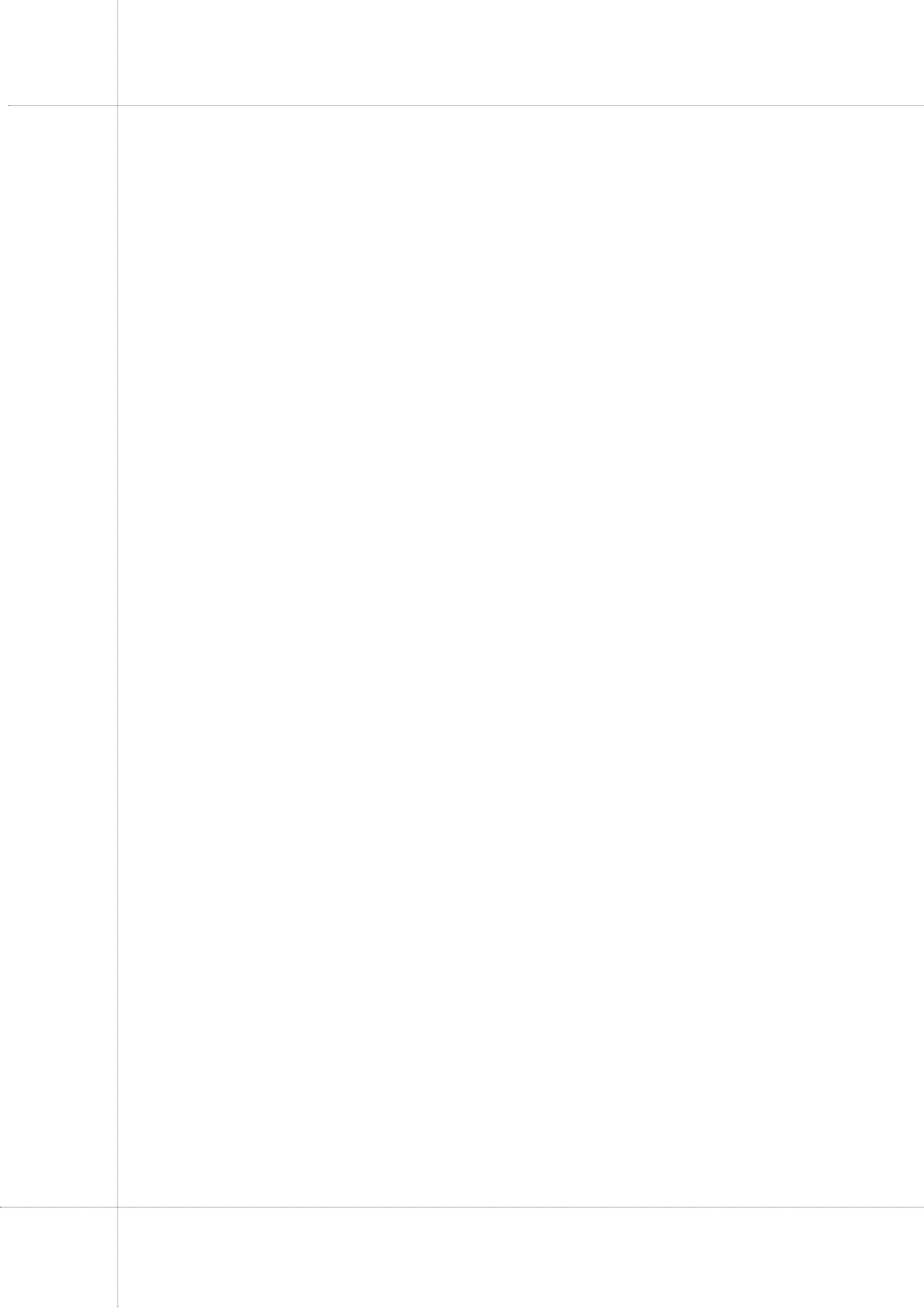
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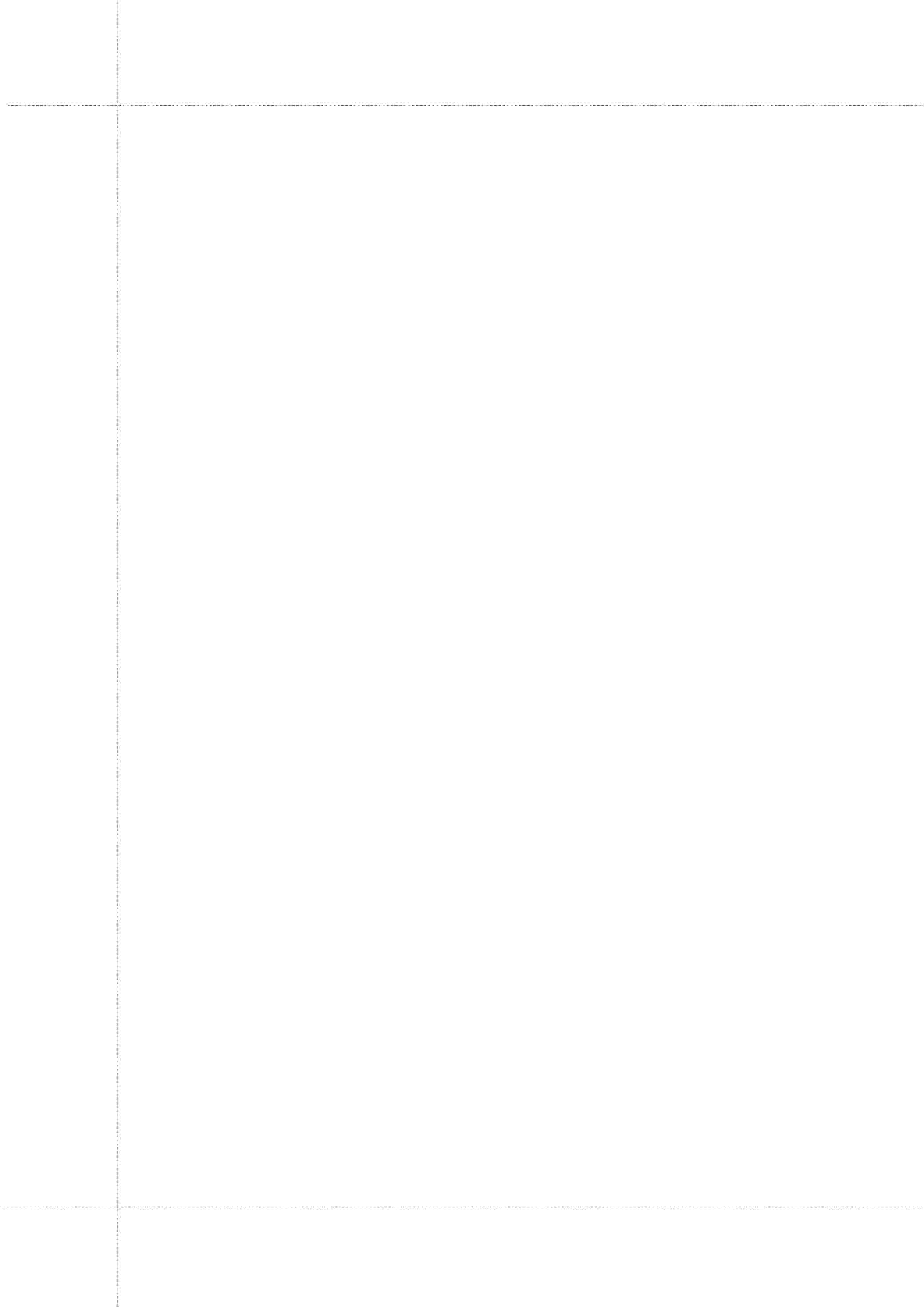
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Media research in India is still at an infant stage in comparison with other disciplines. We know that what goes on as research in our scenario is replete with academic necessity or personal interest, devoid of motivation from the professional arena. Scope for showcasing the net observations emanating from scarce studies is impeded mainly by the non-availability of documentation possibilities. To fill this vacuum in a small way we have ventured to bring out this journal with all its accompanying shortcomings. We hope our humble effort to sustain the publication of this research journal through the present issue will be appreciated by communication students and media scholars.



Freedom from Intrusive Advertising

■ YASEEN P. V.*

ABSTRACT

We are often involuntarily exposed to innumerable advertising of all sorts. Why should the general public be forced to tolerate the relentless bombardment of unwanted commercial messages? Reading viewing or listening any all kinds of advertising shall be made a matter of choice.

Keywords : Advertising Ethics, Intrusive Advertising

Introduction

Let us put it straight, point blank, without mincing the words: Advertising is beginning to get on our nerves. The postmodern society is beginning to suffocate with “the smoke of advertising” spreading in our public sphere and we need to rein the negative tendency.

It appears that age of advertising decadence has come to embrace our society. Our public sphere is being contaminated by the intolerable waste of aggressive advertising of all kind.

Involuntary exposure to intrusive advertising

In many countries smoking in public places has been prohibited by law. This is done primarily to prevent people becoming passive smokers. Smokers are now not allowed to impose the impact their choice on those who do not want to inhale the harmful smoke.

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Quite often, wherever there is no such prohibition, people are usually forced to bear the hazardous consequences of the choice of others. It appears that the time has come for the civilized society to treat intrusive advertising the way it has dealt with the case of passive smoking.

Today, every moment, countless number of advertising—print, audio, visual, and audio visual---are poured out into the public sphere by all sorts of media. The citizens are often involuntarily exposed to innumerable advertising of all sorts in their everyday life

Why should people be forced to listen to what they do not want to do at all?

Why should the public be forced to “tolerate” , the often unbearably high pitched, advertising blasted off the loud speakers in public places?

Indeed, in our public sphere we are compelled to endure the “new soundscapes” (Fortner and Fackler, 2014) and our acoustic ecology is being polluted by mind blogging waves of countless intrusive advertising.

Distracting nature of intrusive advertising

Advertising is often viewed as a sort of paid communication with an intention to persuade its viewers, readers, or listeners to take some action (Shaikh, 2014). But in many situations in public places people are so intimidated with advertising that they might feel the need to take action against advertising itself.

In many public places people are forced either to listen or read totally unwanted messages while seeking useful information, for example, while trying to locate an information counter or an eatery in a railway station. Many often information on the signboards about the various facilities in a railway station often get drowned in the chaotic, much flashy, advertising that goes along with them.

Advertising hazardous to public safety

Sometime, intrusive advertising becomes even hazardous to the safety of the public. This is especially true with regard to the various advertising we encounter in and around our roads and highways.

Huge, flashy billboards with disconcerting content might, at times, distract the attention of the drivers from other vital traffic signals or guidelines. Besides, we often find vital traffic instructions given in a small panel, alongside a much bigger and more colourful and distractive advertising. The vital instruction often goes pushed into the background, the important message gets drowned in the sea of advertising.

Visual pollution by advertising

Nobody needs to tolerate the tobacco smoke that somebody wants to enjoy in public places. As we know, smoking in public places is banned by law in many countries. Similarly, there are laws and conventions in many civil societies to control ruthless use of media including loud speakers in public places (Keane, 2013).

The way the people loathe forced breathing of harmful smoke they often hate the visual pollution of the landscape in our villages and cities. Generally, people dislike to see huge billboards carrying advertising masking other soothing natural scenery.

It is high time we formulated and implemented suitable laws and regulations to control the visual pollution of our villages, towns, and cities through the various, indiscriminate and intrusive advertising.

Freedom of expression and “freedom to listen or not to listen”

Let people freely express whatever they like to—while observing the legendary “reasonable restrictions”.

At the same time let us put this too, quite bluntly: freedom of expression should go hand-in-hand with freedom of non-expression as well. Both—mind you, both—have to be made a matter of choice.

One may freely express whatever one likes, and the other one shall always have the freedom to listen or not to listen. That is an individual shall always enjoy the choice: whether to listen or not to what another guy is expressing in whatever form.

This means that you may talk/write/show/express whatever you like and I may or may not listen/read/view if—and if only—I want to.

Intrusive advertising violates all these points of ethics.

Regulations needed to ensure freedom from intrusive advertising

Ruthless use of intrusive advertising, torturing humanity, shall not be allowed to thrive in the name of freedom of expression or the freedom of the media.

Citizens shall not be forced to listen, read, or view any sort of advertising, especially the advertising in public places. Reading, viewing, or listening to all sorts of advertising shall be made a matter choice by individuals.

Let the lovers of advertising, if they choose to be so, get freely drowned in the turbulent oceans of advertising. But advertising shall not be thrust into the consciousness of unwilling individuals.

This ideal goal may be hard for our greed-fed, thoroughly commercialized, postmodern civilization to achieve. But it could very well be a great ideal for a section of our freedom-loving humanity worth striving for.

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Newspaper Research in India : In Search of a Boost

■ Dr. M. S. HARIKUMAR*

ABSTRACT

Mass Communication research in India is still lagging behind in many aspects. A comparison is virtually impossible on the quality of the empirical studies in this discipline in Western and Indian Universities. However research on print media readership and its evolution in the Indian context are not rare. This study briefly examine such attempts by the Indian researchers and exhorts the need for an industry-academia link for the better prospects of Mass media research in India.

Keywords : Media Research, Communication Research

Introduction

Print is still breathing strong in India while gasping for life in the west. The print market in India and in some of the east Asian countries shows upward trends both in circulation and readership over a period of ten years despite the strong arrival of new media forms. Proliferation and consolidation are happening at the same time. New titles are being launched even as the market is consolidating.

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According to the latest RNI statistics, there is an 8.43 percent growth in the number of publications in 2013 alone. 12,511 titles of newspapers and 81,556 periodicals constitute the bulk of this sector. Around 90% of them are published in Hindi and other regional languages.

In order to combat the decline in readership in all age groups, print media has diversified their offerings and taken steps to acquire new readers while cutting costs. Nearly all newspaper and magazine publishers have added complementary websites to their offering. In an effort to attract younger readers major publishers such as the Tribune and Sun-Times Media Group have long ago launched free circulation newspapers to attract the target audience. Magazines such as Road & Track and Sports Illustrated have provided unsolicited free 6 month subscriptions followed by a renewal subscription contact strategy thereby providing a free trail. In an effort to cut costs, some publications have abandoned long standing formats. Hence both the regional as well as the English press continue to influence a wide gamut of our population and their political and economical patronage have also grown beyond all limits.

It is in this context we have to examine whether there is any serious effort on the part of the academics to study the effects of Indian print media and record their findings in a qualitative or quantitative manner.

Studies on Indian Newspapers

It is foolish to compare the newspaper research studies in India with those in the west, especially in the US. The mass communication research in the west is developed much ahead of any of its eastern partners. Mass communication research as a discipline is still in its infancy in India, as testified by a less number of publications of international repute.

Journalism education in India at the University level is not more than sixty years of age. Journalism departments and educators were very few at the beginning and most of those who established the departments at the Universities were either educated in the West or inter-disciplinarians. The emphasis in curriculum was on imparting skills rather than on focusing the research. Historians and economists have seldom cared the enormous influence of print media on masses in the Indian continent. However there were a few studies which became milestones for the future generations.

Such studies available on Indian newspapers can be broadly classified into four categories.

1. Historical
2. Readership
3. Content Analytical
4. Effects

Historical studies on Indian press is now abundantly available. Historians such as Prof. Nadig, Krishna Murthy, S. Natarajan, Mrinal Pande and Puthuppalli Raghavan have contributed much to the historical research of Indian Press. Their works still stand as touchstones to the younger researchers in the field. But the social, psychological and political roles played by the newspapers of those times is yet to be ascertained fully. The technological advancements and the resulting impact of it on the journalists, non-journalists and readers are also an area of darkness.

Most of the researchers at the University level have tried to study the readership and content of newspapers. Much of the master dissertations and some of the doctoral level dissertations are of this nature. However, most of these dissertations are limited to the four walls of the departments and only a few find places in the accomplished journals or in a book form. Periodical Readership studies conducted by professional agencies such as MRUC, IMRB and ORG-MARG are widely used by media organizations and advertisers for their planning purposes. But apart from their reasonably well documented statistical data, they are of not much use to the scholars and researchers in the field.

Effects studies of Indian Press are seldom available. Reminiscences of senior journalists and studies by sociologists and political scientists are presented in their works which depict a lot about the untold incidents behind each news stories but they are not empirical and most often subjective and speculative.

However, works by an Australian scholar, Robin Jeffrey is indeed a testimony to his grit and perseverance. India's Newspaper Revolution, Media and modernity are his pioneering works which deals with the various aspects of Indian newspaper industry and its historic voyages. Capitalism and politics of Indian language press is well-documented in his book, India's Newspaper Revolution. He argues that from the late 1970s a revolution in Indian-language newspapers, driven by a marriage of capitalism and technology, carried the experience of print to millions of new readers in small-town and rural India. Both of his books are a result of his empirical inquisitiveness.

In India it seems that the Newspaper organizations have not shown much interest in studying their target audience. They take care to get a good market research report to satisfy their stake holders for any initiatives. Most often they depend upon professional agencies like AC Neilson, ORG-MARG or IMRB to get such study reports.

Industry-Academia interface in the west

In the West, especially in the united states, the university-industry linkage is significant in the media sector. Professionals who have high academic qualification join universities and help develop research programmes. There are lot of institutions engaged and specialized in newspaper and media research such as the Poynter institute. They also secure projects to produce high quality research output while the newsroom-classroom hiatus has narrowed down with the graduates in journalism hooding media houses and media houses in turn opting for campus recruitment, the two-way traffic is not happening professionals, except a few, do not have interest in academic programmes including research.

“The quality of Ph.D.s in journalism does not meet the rigorous parameters of international standards. Often there are products of ‘cut-and post’ business drawn from the Internet sources. Original research does take place, but here again the number of quality efforts are far and few. When it comes to quantitative techniques and their application, it is merely duplication or multiplication of what has already been done. Even qualitative research is far from satisfactory. “. Says Prof. K.V Nagaraju, a well-known communication researcher.

Future scopes

Newspaper research in India needs focus and direction. Both the academics and professionals have plenty of scope for promoting research in this sphere. Newspaper firms must also take responsibility to encourage research attempts at the University level by adopting a private-public participatory model. A few suggestions in this regard are outlined here for discussion;

1. University departments must institute research fellowships for journalists for a brief period of at least two months to facilitate them to do a research project on a specific topic of interest.

2. Setting up of a Media Research Portal- A comprehensive online repository of documents pertaining to studies carried out at the Master's level and doctoral level in all the communication departments in the country. Make available all submitted theses from the files.
3. Research journal for all departments: Publish an annual research journal of international standard from all the major departments of the country. Funds from the UGC is available for this purpose.
4. Joint PhD programmes and international collaborations: Collaborations with leading communication departments of the world will enhance the academic quality and research outputs in our university departments. Many global Scholarships and fellowships are available for students and teachers in the area of communication and journalism for pursuing study exchange programs. Eg: Fullbright, Erasmus.
5. Mass communication researcher's network for better co-operation among the researchers, professionals and society.

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An Evaluation of Media Consumer Perception

■ Dr. SUBASH K.*

ABSTRACT

The study assessed the nature of relationship between the credibility of the media and the duration of their use. The aim was to know whether a person who spent more number of years in using a medium would give more credibility to that medium when compared to another person who spent less number of years in using the same medium. Accordingly, the correlation between the total number of years spent by the respondents in using each medium and its respective credibility rating was calculated. The result showed that there was no significant correlation between the two. Another specific objective of the study was to understand the difference if any in the credibility ratings given to the three media based on the media dependence of the respondents. The analysis showed that media dependence has a bearing on the credibility of the visual media.

Keywords : Consumer Perception, Media Credibility

Introduction

A source regarded as highly credible is often more influential than a less credible source in communication. Researchers have found the relevance of the credibility variable in several communication contexts. For instance, Haiman (1949), Hovland and Weiss (1951) have observed that more attitudinal changes can be created by highly credible sources. Likewise Bettinghaus (1980) found source credibility as the most striking factor of a communicator's influence in persuasive situations. Also, it was noticed that if a message originated from a low credibility source, it was considered as more biased and unfair than if it emanated from a source regarded as high in credibility.

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In mass communication context, the credibility possessed by a medium can promote or impede its potency to disseminate information to the public. Rampal (1996) underscored this assumption by observing, “Credibility is the most precious attribute a medium can have”. Lee (1978) rightly said, “As more people use the mass media as their main source of information, the media must maintain the credibility of what they present to the public”.

Earlier studies which looked at the significance of credibility in communication were carried out more with relation to interpersonal interactions and public speaking situations. However, as the mass media emerged as major sources of information for the public in due course, the focus of studies was shifted more towards credibility assessment in mass communication contexts. The relevance of assessing the credibility of mass media as sources of information acquires added significance in the present age.

The current media scene in India shows that a variety of mass communication channels are competing with each other to catch the public attention. In terms of reach and coverage our media have grown and are poised to grow further. Though our electronic media are on an expansion spree, scathing criticisms are on the increase with regard to their performance as sources of news.

Hence, it is highly relevant to assess the level of credibility possessed by our mass media. So, the present study was carried out to know the credibility of major mass media as sources of news and information. The study was conducted in Kerala, a state having a very high media exposure in India.

Kerala stands unique in many ways. With its highest percentage of literacy, largest network of educational institutions, high political awareness and highest rate of media consumption in the country both in items of the print and the electronic media, Kerala is distinct from other states. Readership surveys have repeatedly reported that Keralites have the highest newspaper reading habit in the country. In terms of the reach of the electronic media, Kerala is in the forefront of other states. Considering all these factors, Kerala seemed ideal for carrying out the study.

Objectives of the study

The study was conducted with the major objective to understand the credibility of mass media - newspapers, television and radio as

sources of news for the general public in the state. Specifically, the study tried to determine the nature and extent of relationship between the credibility of the three media and the duration of their use and also to understand the difference if any in the credibility ratings given to each of the three media based on the media dependence of the respondents.

Methodology

In the survey conducted for the study, a multi-stage stratified random sampling method was adopted to select the sample. 600 respondents drawn from three randomly selected districts representing the northern, central and southern regions of the state constituted the sample for the study. A questionnaire and a summated rating scale formed the tools of data collection for the study. For collecting the data on the socio-demographic variables and the media habits of the respondents, the questionnaire was used and the scale was employed to get data on the credibility ratings given to the media by the respondents. The data were analysed through descriptive and statistical methods.

Findings

As stated, one of the specific objectives of the study was to determine the nature and extent of relationship between the credibility of the media and the duration of their use. The aim was to know whether the duration of use of the three media in terms of number of years had any association with the credibility attributed to each one. In other words, whether the number of years spent by a respondent in using daily newspapers, radio, and television had any correlation with the respective credibility given to each of these media as a source of news. This would help to know whether a respondent who had been using a medium for a longer period or for more number of years attributed a higher credibility to that medium in comparison with a respondent who had been using that medium for a shorter period.

First, the correlation between the total number of years spent by the respondents in using daily newspapers and the credibility rating given to that medium was assessed. The result showed that there was no significant correlation between the two. From this it could be inferred that the duration of use of daily news papers had no association with the credibility attributed to that medium by the respondents. (See Tb.1)

To know the association between radio use and radio credibility, the correlation between the total number of years spent by the respondents in listening to radio and the credibility rating assigned to that medium was

Table 1: Newspaper credibility and duration of use (Correlation Matrix)

Correlations	Years of Use	Newspaper Credibility
Years of Use	1.0000	0.0565
Newspaper Credibility	0.0565	1.0000
No. of cases	600	

(Not significant at 0.05 level)

assessed. The result indicated that there was no significant correlation between the two. Hence, it could be deduced that the number of years spent by the respondents in listening to radio and the duration of use of it had no association with the credibility possessed by that medium as a source of news (see Tb.2).

Table 2: Radio credibility and duration of use (Correlation Matrix)

Correlations	Years of use	Radio Credibility
Years of Use	1.0000	-0.0119
Radio Credibility	-0.0119	1.0000
No. of cases	600	

(Not significant at 0.05 levels)

When the association between the number of years spent by the respondents in watching television and the credibility rating given to that medium as a source of news was assessed, it was found that there was no significant correlation between the two. Therefore, it could be concluded that the duration of use of television had no association with the credibility attributed to that medium (see Tb.3)

Table 3: Television credibility and duration of use (Correlation Matrix)

Correlations	Years of Use	Television Credibility
Years of Use	1.0000	0.0025
Television Credibility	0.0025	1.0000
No. of cases	600	

(Not significant at 0.05 levels)

Thus, the analysis carried out to know the kind of relationship between media use and media credibility came up with a similar type of finding in respect of all the three media under study. That is, the duration of use of a medium and the credibility given to that medium were found to be not correlated to each other. Hence, based on the study it can be drawn out that whether a person has spent more number of years or less number of years in using a medium is not associated with the credibility attributed to it. In other words, media credibility is not related to media use.

The finding posits that in actual terms the established media cannot take for granted that it might have a high credibility. Even a nascent medium may sometimes acquire more credibility from the users than an established medium. Another possible inference is that familiarity with a medium is not a guarantee for higher credibility. This could mean that media men cannot be complacent due to their organization's long existence.

Another specific objective of the study was to understand the difference if any in the credibility ratings given to the three media based on the media dependence of the respondents. Media dependence, a variable related to media habits was assessed by finding out the medium used most often by each respondent to get news and information. Based on the kind of media dependence of the respondents, they were classified into three groups: those who used daily newspapers most often, those who used television most often and those who used radio most often to get news. Accordingly, it was found that 76.8% of the sample depended mostly on daily newspapers. 14.9% on television and 8.3% on radio for news.

The aim of the study was to ascertain whether the kind of media dependence of the respondents had any bearing on the credibility attributed by them to daily newspapers, television and radio as sources of news. In other words, to know whether a respondent who depended mostly on a particular medium (say, daily newspaper) attributed a higher credibility to that medium as a source of news when compared to the other media (television and radio).

As the first stage of the analysis, the mean of the credibility scores given to daily newspapers, television and radio as sources of news was assessed based on three types of media dependence of the respondents. Then, to ascertain whether the differences in the mean values were statistically significant, the data were subjected to ANOVA.

On examining the mean values of the credibility scores to daily newspapers as a source of news, it was found that the highest credibility rating was accorded by the group that depended mostly on the same medium to get news. The mean value calculated for this group was 58.8133 (std. dev. 4.1959). The lowest credibility rating for newspapers was given by the group which depended mostly on radio to get news, indicated by the mean value of 57.4091 (std. dev. 4.4057). The mean value of newspaper credibility ratings calculated for the group which depended mostly on television was 58.5190 (std. dev. 4.4516). Thus, the mean values indicated differences in the credibility ratings given to daily newspapers based on three types of media dependence. To know the significance of the differences in the credibility ratings, the data were subjected to one-way analysis of variance. It was observed that the F-ratio was 2.2111 at a probability level of 0.1106. This clearly indicated that the differences in the credibility ratings were not significant. From this it could be inferred that those who had their dependence on daily newspaper for news and information did not give a significantly higher credibility to that medium when compared to the other two groups. So it could be concluded that the variable media dependence had no bearing on the credibility attributed to daily newspapers.

On analysing the mean values of the credibility scores given to radio, it was observed that the highest credibility rating was accorded by the group that depended mostly on the same medium and the lowest rating by the group that depended mostly on news papers. The mean value for the group which depended on radio for news was 53.3409 (std. dev. 5.1306). The mean value calculated for the group which depended on daily newspapers was 52.1892 (std. dev. 4.5741). Those who depended on television for news secured a mean value of 53.2785 (std. dev. 5.2255), based on the credibility scores.

To verify whether the differences in the credibility ratings given by the three groups were statistically significant, the data were subjected to one way analysis of variance. The result showed an F-ratio of 2.6186 at a probability level of 0.0739. This indicated that the differences in the credibility ratings were not significant. So, it could be deduced that those who depended mostly on radio for news did not attribute a significantly higher credibility to that medium when compared to the other two groups. Thus, the variable media dependence was found to have no bearing on the credibility given to radio as a source of news.

On assessing the credibility attributed to television, it was noticed that the highest rating was given by the group that depended mostly on the same medium for news and information. The mean

estimated for this group was 54.0253 (std.dev.5.1788). The next higher rating for television was given by the group which depended mostly on radio, indicated by the mean value of 53.2955(std. dev. 6.0907). The lowest credibility rating for television was given by the group which depended mostly on daily newspapers, evident by the mean value of 52.0713 (std.dev.4.6214).

Though the mean values pointed out to the existence of differences in the credibility ratings given to television by the three groups of respondents, one- way analysis of variance was carried out to know the significance of the differences. The result showed an F-ratio of 6.0934 at a probability level of 0.0024. This was indicative of statistically significant differences in the credibility ratings given by the three groups.

To know among which group differences existed, the data were subjected to Scheffe test. It was observed that statistically significant differences existed between the group which depended mostly on television and the group which depended mostly on daily newspapers. From the findings, it could be inferred that those who depended mostly on television gave a significantly higher credibility to that medium as a source of news when compared to those who depended mostly on daily newspapers. Hence, the variable media dependence was found to have a bearing on the credibility attributed to television as a source of news.

The study has revealed that people's nature of media dependence or their habit of using a particular medium most often to get news/information has an influence on the credibility attributed to the visual medium. However, media dependence has no bearing on the credibility of the print medium and radio. Or else, heavy use of the print medium or radio cannot be taken as an index of high credibility of the two media. May be the visual dimension of television has an influence on heavy users to perceive as more credible what they see on the small screen.

This study was carried out within the State of Kerala. Even though there may not be much of a difference in the credibility ratings given to mass media as source of news by media users in other states, it is always better to study the situation elsewhere. This will help to know whether cultural differences prevailing in different states are creating variations in the media credibility perceptions. More number of studies are needed to understand the Indian media credibility in its totality.

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Perception of Artificial Pleasant Odors in the Age of Olfactory Consumerism

■ SRUTHY GOPAL*

ABSTRACT

Olfaction is one of the most undermined channels of communication in modern age. Odor can evoke strong emotions, as its highly associated with memories. In this study the researcher has sought to look into the meanings of artificial pleasant odors, its variations with age and gender and its role in the formulation of preconceptions in interpersonal communication. Intense interviews among 60 participants were conducted to analyze the perception of artificial pleasant odors and nature of meanings associated with it. The findings indicated that people generally associate artificial pleasant odors with confidence, acceptance and social status.

Keywords : Consumerism, Non-verbal Communication

Introduction

Smell is a social phenomenon. It becomes a powerful form of communication, when particular meanings and values are attributed to it by different cultures. Throughout the history of human civilization smell acted as the building blocks of cosmologies, class hierarchies and social structures.

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Odors are unavoidable signals in communication as they share their channel with life breath. They spread without any external aid. The only way to silence an odor is to overpower it with another. Human beings have expertise in this overpowering of natural unpleasant odors, including body odors through scenting. And this affinity to scents or intolerance to unpleasant odors is a notable difference between *Homo sapiens* and apes.

Cultural history of perfumes

Our knowledge about the role of scent in antiquity is formed through inference from ancient writings. Greek and Roman writings give the picture of a rich olfactory tradition in west, which was highly influenced by ancient Middle East, especially Egyptians. Scents were available in a variety of forms: as toilet waters or oils, as dry powders in thick unguents or as incense. Whereas when we think of perfumes today, we inevitably imagine them as liquids, an inhabitant of the ancient world is just as likely to enjoy perfume in the form of a thick ointment to be smeared liberally on the body, or a fragrant smoke, infusing the air with its odor. The English word ‘perfume’ literally means “to smoke through, indicating the importance this method of imparting fragrance had for four ancestors. (Classen, Hows and Synnott, 2003, p 16).

Keralites like many other societies in pre-colonial India, had been used to natural scents such as flowers of *Ilanji* and *Kaitha* to keep their clothes perfumed. These flowers have subtle pleasant odors. But western writings about colonial India often described Indians as stinky. When liberated, the Indian market was well set for the perfume industry to exploit our inferiority complex. Thus olfactory consumerism grew in India as in the West.

Olfactory consumerism

Consumerism is characterized by man’s desire to buy things for their style rather than for their function. Advertisers keep on saying that we are imperfects in our original status and better people around are watching us. Therefore, in order to impress them we buy things that we believe will improve our image.

This phenomenon of image marketing is more apparent in the advertisements of deodorants and fragrant than any other products. The control of body odor is major pre occupation of westerners, who have made the deodorant and toiletry industry into a billion dollar business.

Research Objectives

In this study the researcher has attempted to analyze the nature of meanings attributed to artificial pleasant odors by people and its role in formulation of preconceptions in interpersonal communication. Hence the general objective of the study was to analyze the perception of artificial pleasant odors and its influence among people. The specific objectives were,

- To analyze the nature of meanings attributed to artificial pleasant odors
- To analyze whether the presence of artificial pleasant odors influences preconceptions in interpersonal communication
- To verify whether there is any variation in the perception of artificial pleasant odors based on age and gender.

Literature Review

Russell in 1976 conducted an experiment among 13 women and 16 men. They were asked to wear T-shirts for 24 hours without bathing or using deodorants. The armpit regions of these shirts were then presented to subjects in a triangle odor test where the subject's own T-shirt, a strange male's T-shirt, and a strange female's T-shirt were used as stimuli. Each participant was asked to first identify his or her own odor and then report which of the two remaining odors came from a male. Nine of the 13 females and 13 of the 16 males performed both of these tasks correctly, suggesting to Russell that "at least the rudimentary communications of sexual discrimination and individual identification can be made on the basis of olfactory cues. (Russell 1976).

In 2000, Pamela Dalton analyzed the psychological and behavioral characteristics of olfactory adaptation. Sensory adaptation allows organism to reach behavioral equilibrium with the ambient environment and respond primarily to change in stimulation. (Dalton 2000).

In 1990, Dr. Michael Stoddart combined biology and sociology of smell for the first time in his book, *The scented Ape: The biology and culture of human odor*. He suggested the essentiality of being interdisciplinary to understand the social phenomenon called smell. He believed that zoology has something to offer to ethnography, just as the study of man's cultures may help to resolve some zoological puzzles (Stoddart: 1990).

Research Method

The researcher has relied on personal interviews to collect the data. Personal interviews are the most flexible means of obtaining information because the face-to-face situation lends itself easy to questioning in greater depth and detail. But compared to the traditional perspective of surveying, this approach seems to invite unacceptable forms of bias. Since interviewing is always staged and less spontaneous, resulting conversations are less realistic than a natural interaction.

Purposive sampling was adopted and 30 respondents each from both the genders were selected for the study. 10 each of these respondents were from three different age groups. An interview schedule was prepared and a structured interview was done to ascertain the views of the respondents.

Findings

On analyses of the data from the interviews of the respondents the researcher has reached at the following inferences,

1. Meanings of artificial pleasant odors can be classified into two. Affective meanings stand for individual's emotions and attitudes. It is a sense. Social meanings are significations in social contexts.
2. People largely associated artificial pleasant odors with confidence and social acceptance. Confidence is an effective meaning, while acceptance is a social meaning. Both can be associated with power to interact in society.
3. Women associate artificial pleasant odors with social acceptance and confidence more than men do. They are much bothered about the risk of being perceived as malodorous.
4. Association of artificial pleasant smell with neatness denotes influence of western culture in Indian tradition that accepted and acclaimed natural body odors.

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Cover Stories of Indian English News Magazines: A Content Analytical study

■ LITTY SIMON*

ABSTRACT

This study made a detailed analysis of the varied themes and subjects dealt by three leading news Magazines, India Today, Outlook and the Week. The study period was six months and content was employed to gather data. The findings indicated that all the cover story headlines used variety of figures of speech and stylistic devices which included – Alliteration, assonance, hyperbole, irony, metaphor, rhetoric simile and synecdoche.

Keywords : Newspaper, Cover stories, Readership Study

Introduction

The apparently complex modern age of science and technology seeks to make everything simple. Simple in the sense that an endeavour to lessen the effort, physical or mental as much as possible. This process of lightening spares nothing, even those affects human sensibility and reason. That sort of creativity; with an objective to evoke subtle nuances of intricate feelings, are now gradually giving way to mere satisfactions.

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Gone are the days when people used to expand their time and energy for sublime levels of sensations. The overwhelming influence of mechanization has made them almost reluctant to explore the one-time dominant higher concerns of humanity. Today, the objective of all sorts of creativity has become maximum entertainment with the least mental effort. This has invariably gripped the world of information as well. No great observation is required to recognize this increasing phenomenon in the media world.

The recently manifesting bias towards featurising of news events, supplementation of more visual accessories, playing up of occurrences that could possibly have a 'sensational impact' and above all the surging boom of the electronic media are perhaps, the telling examples of the operation of the above said impulses. Holding the view that the discerning appreciation of literature and art must depend as a very small minority, Leavis believed that the very existence of this minority will be threatened by the 'levelling down' phenomenon, arising from standardization and mass production, providing cheap emotional appeals'. As a matter of survival even the most rigid canons of journalism are seen to yield to this end, day after day. (Leavis, 1933: 69)

Technological developments in the field of mass media have brought about a transformation not only in the behaviour of men but also in their outlook. Harold Lasswell has said that the changes in behaviour, attitude, opinion and action are not brought about merely by the mass media. The aim of the media should be not only to provide a truthful and comprehensive account of events of the day but also to provide the content which will enable readers to comprehend the significance of the events. (B. Kuppaswamy, 1976: 36)

The media constitutes a lively and fascinating part of our intellectual existence, and has played a crucial role in moulding the social and cultural form of the twentieth century. Yet despite the important part that media have played as laboratories of experiment, especially in the development of modern principles and visual expressions, the technical, journalistic and artistic evolution of modern media has received only the marginal treatment that general media histories can provide.

Magazines today are timid. They have no self confidence. Something happened to the magazine in the sixties; it was the loss of potency; today the advertising department run magazines, but once there was a kind of congressional immunity for editors. (William Owen, 1991: 158)

Magazines were started by eminent men with the desire to convey their convictions and opinions to the people. Initially they had small reading public. Magazines in the nineteenth century were mainly vehicles of thought and they were carried on with a crusading zeal, and little thought for commercial profit. Popular styles slowly replaced highly literary style.

Editing a magazine has now grown to be an art. They have more leisure for illustrated journalism, and they count on a better display of news and features. They touch the various phases of the social, political and literary activities of the country, and it is to them we look to for pioneering new crusades in various fields of our national activity. (Dr. Nadig Krishna Murthy, 1966: 347)

Magazines appeal to an expanding range of reading tastes and interests. They are designed for homogeneous or special interest groups. Despite their design for special groups, they developed as a mass medium because they appeal to a large number in a National market that cut across social, economic and educational class lines. Magazines have been much more visually innovative than newspapers. Their covers blaze from news-stands to market racks, thus attracting the readers' attention with colour and allure of advertisement besides their articles. These are basically news magazines but they include sections on arts, culture, sports, film, business, politics, industry, and environment and so on. There are about five hundred such general interest magazines focusing on news and current affairs, having largest readership. For example, 'India Today', 'The Week', 'Outlook', 'Frontline', 'G' etc. These are opinion magazines which set agendas, shape ideas and start trends. These are read by government officials, business leaders, educators, intellectuals and others who affect public affairs.

INDIA TODAY

The 'India Today' is an Indian English language weekly magazine. The magazine was established in 1975 by Vidya Vilas Purie (owner of Thompson Press) with his daughter Madhu Trehan as its editor and Aroon Purie (his son) as its publisher. At present, India Today is also published in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam.

THE WEEK

'India Today' was rising with its best when after seven years in 1982; its competitor, 'The Week' began its publication. The Week is

an Indian weekly newsmagazine published by The Malayala Manorama Co. Ltd

OUTLOOK

Outlook is an independent weekly general interest English News magazine published in India. It features contents from politics, sports, cinema, and stories of broad interests. It was first issued in October, 1995 with Vinod Mehta as the Editor in Chief who is presently the Editorial Chairman.

Aims and Objectives

When an occurrence comes to print it gets some kind of 'establishment' through presentation. Therefore some trends which are in practice only to certain strata or particular people are reported as general and increasing phenomena might get a nature of propagation as new 'idea' and penetrate to various sections of society. Thus this study aimed to focus on some of the basic areas of various subjects dealt in the magazines. The major objectives were:

- To ascertain and pinpoint the variety of Cover Story themes or subjects of the English-news magazines (India Today, The Week, and Outlook).
- To evaluate the Headlines of the Cover Stories.
- To analyze the nature of the headlines of the cover stories.
- Social Significance of the Study

Magazines have a place in readers' lives for they provide in depth and interpretative treatment of current topics and problems which the newspapers, radio and TV cannot.

Even though not so modern, Kerala is one of the most literate societies in the world. And naturally it consumes an immense quality of reading stuff. This explains why there are a lot of newspapers and magazines making a thriving business in the region. Those who live in the most remote villages of Kerala are familiar with the popular magazines. They read them as their major source of information and entertainment. Magazines make the reader think, relax revolt, voice an opinion, and gratify some of the information needs. But when magazines determine

what the reader should know, and what he should not then the problem of independent selection arise.

“Totalitarian restriction of the exchange of ideas and information implies unreasoning tyranny and must be harmful to individual dignity and national civilization” says Margorie Boulton. (Margorie Boulton, 1975: 55)

But should there be unrestricted freedom for magazines? If continuous cover stories go for unimportant events or articles, magazines would indirectly promote the tendency of marketing making it allusive and surrogative.

Methodology

A research design is the arrangements of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedures. (K.Singh, 1984: 44) Selection of samples, method of data collection and the manner in which the data are to be organized constitute the body of research design.

Here the research design was the content analysis. Data was collected from the contents of three English news magazines and their analysis was done by checking with the established hypotheses.

Sample Selection

The universe for the sample of this study consisted of all issues of the weekly news magazines ‘India Today’, ‘Outlook’ and ‘The Week’ between March 2013 and August 2013 i.e. a period of 6 months.

For this study, a purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling involves deliberate selection of sample units that confirm to some pre-determined criteria. This means selection of cases which we judge as the most appropriate ones for the given study. It is based on the judgement of the researcher or some expert. The chance that a particular case be selected for the sample depends on the subjective judgement of the researcher.

The method was appropriate when what was important was the typicality and specific relevance of the sampling units to the study and

not their overall representations to the population. The advantage was that it was less costly and more convenient. It guaranteed inclusion of relevant elements in the sample. (O.R.Krishnaswami, 1985: 169)

In this study, a sample size of 4 issues from 6 months for each of the three magazines was selected as the sample. Thus a total of 72 magazines were analysed for the whole study.

Hypotheses

- Indian English news magazines do cover a wide range of themes and subjects.
- Most of the headlines use a variety of linguistic expressions.
- The present day headlines rarely reflect the essence of the stories directly.

Findings

Globalization versus fragmentation may be the most noticeable two-way tug. News reports leap across the globe in seconds, and this has resulted in some similarities in media styles across widely separated geographical regions. In other cases, the reverse has happened; the

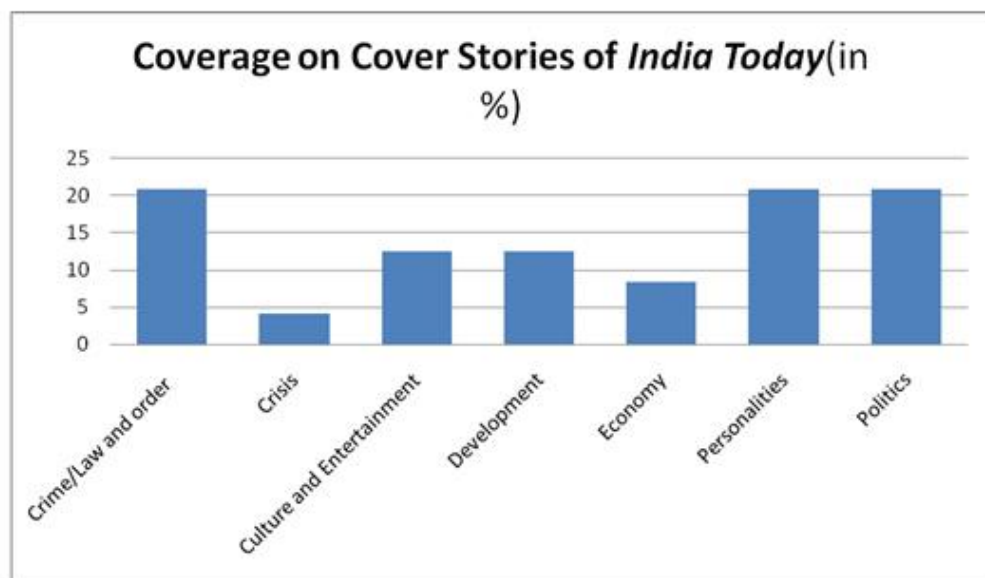


Chart 1

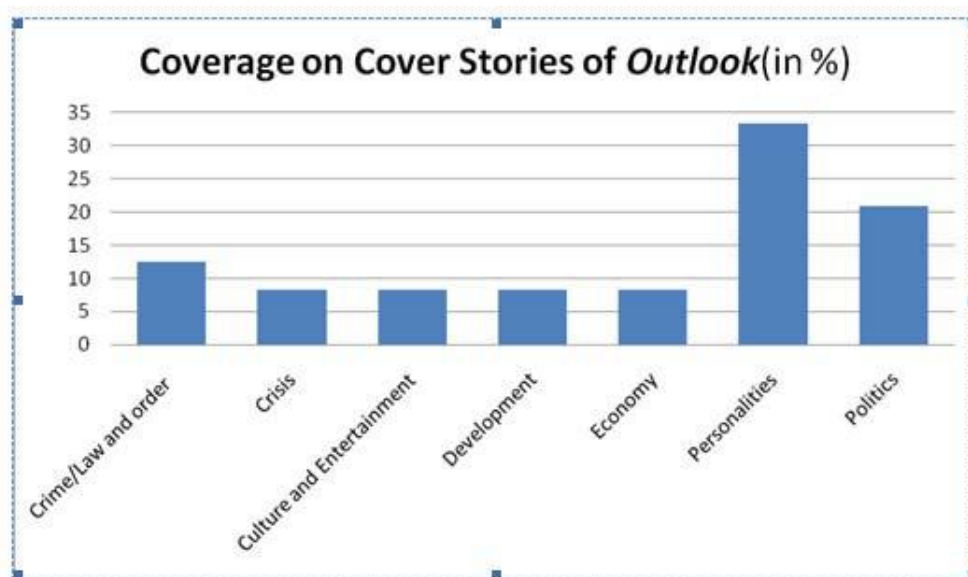


Chart 2

immensity of the world has led to a tightening of small scale networks, resulting in some fragmentation, as people try to maintain local ties and their own identity. Linguistic expansion versus language compression is a second prevalent contradiction. Headlines summarize a whole event in a few words, and various linguistic expressions pack a variety of descriptive facts into a small portion of a sentence.

These conflicting trends is analyzed and found in this chapter, which provide a fresh look at the direction in which magazines and media discourse is moving.

By going through the cover stories of the three magazines, it was evident that there has been a widespread coverage on topics of current events and issues. The bits of information provided by magazines have been selected, shaped and written keeping in mind the agenda setting function of media.

There have been various categories into which all the stories can be grouped. For the analysis of this study, seven categories of themes can be grouped, they are- Crime/ Law and Order, Crisis, Culture and Entertainment, Development, Economy, Personalities and Politics. Among all the 72 samples selected for the study, the three magazines had 24 issues in 6 months.

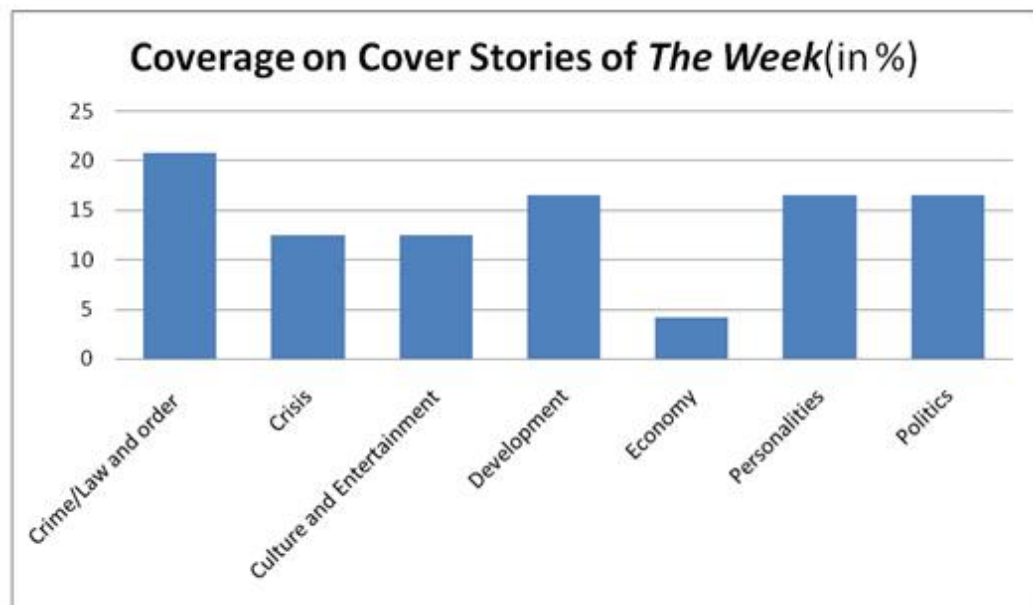


Chart 3

Conclusion

The contrast between the global and the personal has become more pronounced in recent years, and so has a related tug between conformity and individualization. Reporting on varied themes or subjects is now the norm. In fact magazines have been categorized subject-wise. Linguistic expansion and language compression is another bigger norm. Discourse styles have spread across different cultures and even separate languages are used. An appearance of friendliness and informality seems to be a goal which transcends the language concerned. These trends have become more noticeable recently as revealed in the study.

The most obvious differences to a post- modern magazine are that information is scattered among a myriad of short stories. Each sub-event has a separate story where all the information is presented and the categories of discourse are the same, but the way they are realized and structured has shifted.

Modern headlines are usually derived from the lead sentence of the story below it. But now there is a qualitative shift in that aspect too. Unlike starting simply with prepositions, the analyzed headlines were shorter and much more action-oriented and dramatized with stylistic words.

To summarise,

- News values are same at the macro level while different at the micro level. The hostile subjects are presented as domesticated.
- Change and Continuity in time and place and their relationships are directly pointed out through the magazine's cover stories.
- Accompanying these shifts is a change in the language of cover headline.
- The headline structure has moved from multiple- decked headlines to single, short words with variety of linguistic expressions.
- The syntax has tightened. Function words dropped out; there is a shift to emphasize action and drama.
- Indian English with its special aroma adds new dimension to Indian journalism.

Journalistically speaking, then, the news has become softer, the language loosen.

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A study on the Plots and Characters of Contemporary Malayalam Cinema

■ NITHINRAJ R.*

ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at assessing the plot and characters of Malayalam Cinema after 2011. The methodology applied was content analysis. A sample of five movies were selected from the films released from 2011-2013. The findings indicate that a paradigm shift is happening in Malayalam films on the selection of plots and characters. The present day movies are closer to real life in terms of its characters, plots and situations.

Keywords : Malayalam Cinema, Film Studies

Introduction

Even much before the arrival of cinema, the people of Kerala were familiar with moving images on the screen through the traditional art form 'tholpavakkuthu' (Puppet Dance). Usually exhibited at festivals of village temples, 'tholpavakkuthu' uses puppets made of leather with flexible joints. These joints are moved using sticks and the shadow of these moving puppets are captured on a screen using a light source from behind, creating dramatic moving images on the screen. Stories from the

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mythology were told so, with accompanying dialogues and songs with traditional percussions like the Chenda. 'Tholpavakkuthu' uses some of the techniques widely used in cinema like the close-ups and long-shots.

Apart from the art of 'Tholpavakkuthu', which exhibits the nature of cinema, many of the folk arts and classical dance forms like 'Kuthu', 'Koodiyattam' and 'Kathakali' exhibits very high visual qualities in their form. According to the history, cinema was first shown in Kerala in 1906 as a part of a south Indian tour by Paul Vincent from Thiruchirapally (Thirichy), who reached Kozhikode with a manually operated bioscope. In 1907 Paul Vincent sold his bioscope to K. W. Joseph from Kattoor. Joseph built a cinema hall in Thrissur perhaps the first cinema hall in Kerala which was a temporary shed. But during a travel Joseph lost his bioscope but he established another company named Royal exhibitors. Before the first film in Malayalam was released Joseph becomes a memory. Soon such cinema halls were established in other major cities of Kerala. In the early days, Tamil, Hindi and English language films were exhibited in these theatres. Malayalam cinema had to wait a few more decades to get its first film.

Plot and characters of Malayalam cinema

The plot and characters of Malayalam cinema has always been evolving since its starting in 1928. The Vigathakumaran of J.C Daniel had a social theme which was a contradiction to the silent movies of the era all around India. The movies of that period had plots from our epics and mythology. The presence of women was also a novelty in Daniel's movie. The second Malayalam movie, Marthanda Varma was dealing with the history of Travancore. The plot was based on the novel of C.V Raman Pillai of same name. So the characters were also bold, very much real. By Balan, the era of talkies started in Malayalam.

Balan was a melodramatic film, with more Tamil influence than Malayalam. It featured the struggle of two orphans, Balan and his younger sister, oppressed and exploited by their evil stepmother until they are rescued by a kind lawyer. The succeeding films after Balan were also weak in their plot and characters, but maintained to achieve commercial success. But the films like Nirmala and Vellinakshatram set a trend in the narratives of Malayalam cinema. The plots of these movies were truly dramatic and family centric, alienating itself from the torrid social and political scenario of the State. The characters of these movies were the aristocratic Malayalees dealing with the complexities of the joint families and society.

The 1950s saw a trend in the Malayalam cinema, where the famous literary works in the language were adapted to the celluloid. Famous literary giants were also active in the film making of these times, either as script writers or lyricists. Their presence really influenced the plot and characters of the Malayalam cinema. Strong and bold characters were presented on the screen entangled in the natural life situation. These movies were well accepted in the box office and also presented some versatile actors to the industry who reigned in their life time. The problems within the joint family were the central plot of the commercial movies of the era. There were also different attempts like Newspaper boy, inspired by the Italian neo-realism, told the story of a printing press employee and his family being stricken with extreme poverty.

The 70s saw the emergence of a new wave of cinema in Malayalam. The “new wave cinema” distinguished itself from the outset for its thematic excellence. Even the mediocre films initiated by the early involvement and leftist theatre personalities concerned themselves with social and political issues like tribal emancipation, illiteracy, land distribution and trade unionism. Even a straight forward love story would have deeper allegorical layers. The films of John Abraham, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, T.V Chandran, Shaji N Karun, P. G Viswambharan, M.P Sukumaran Nair, G.Aravindan and several others are testimony to this hypothesis. These film makers have used cinematic allegorization of history questioning its objectivity and neutrality. The synthesis of the highly commercial popular cinema and the parallel cinema called ‘middle-stream cinema’ had meaningful themes.

The period from the late 1980s to early 1990s is known as the golden age of Malayalam cinema, which was characterized by detailed screenplays dealing with social, political and cultural issues of everyday life with a lucid narration of plot intermingling with humor and melancholy.

Nineties saw a sea of change in themes as well as audience expectations and tastes. The buzzwords were liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation. Opening up of the sky an TV channels brought in a flood of images and narratives from all over the world.

It also witnessed a spate of films centred on the upper caste milieu and their rituals, costumes, concerns and mannerisms were established as the normative centre. The Valluvanadan malayalam became the mother tongue of popular cinema. The minorities especially communities like Muslims and lower castes were gradually marginalized and forced into stereotypes, tending to appear more as expectations to the ‘norm’ and

the 'normal'. An undercurrent of communalism runs through most of the commercially successful films of the nineties.

The quality of Malayalam cinema began to descend by the late 90s. The superstar-centric cinema began to grow and the entire film industry revolved around these stars. Stories were made with the superstars playing larger than life characters.

The super star centric films and the larger-than life characters weakened the plots of Malayalam cinema in the 2000s. Some of these movies were box-office hits, but poor in the aesthetics. Slap-stick comedies were another genre in this era. The sequels of many of the hit films of past were also made.

Research Objectives

This Study was an attempt to analyze the changes that has come in the plots and characters of Malayalam cinema after the release of Traffic in 2011. It also intended to search whether these movies followed any unrevealed success formula.

The objectives of the study were the following:

- To study the plot of films.
- To study the characteristics of the lead roles.
- To study portrayal of women.
- To find out whether there is any plagiarism in these movies.

Literature Review

The researcher went through various study on Malayalam Cinema before the research work. Some of them are mentioned below:

1. Amathul Wardha (2009) had done a content analytical study on 'Body as a text; Transgenders or rebels and Hindi Cinema'. The study concludes that films use gender deviant characters to teach gender conformity. The films do not promote this conformity by depicting transgender characters as tragically loveless match makers for straight characters
2. Ramjeev V.K. had done a content analytical study of nature as a metaphor in Shaji.N.Karun's film Piravi in 1995 at the Dept. of Communication and Journalism,

Kerala University. He observed that the nature fills the film and act as a spiritual presence of Raghu.

3. Sreya Sasidharan's dissertation in the Dept. of Communication and Journalism, University of Kerala, analysed the character of "Shahina" in the film Padam onnu Oru Vilapam in 2004. She concluded that though Shahina was active and responded strongly within the male dominated muslim society, she has failed in the society.
4. Fathima Shan K.A. had done a content analytical study on the 'Social relevance of the movie Adaminte Makan Abu' in the Dept. of Communication and Journalism, University of Kerala in 2012. The study concluded that the Director established grim realities of the life through the different frames using character's action and dialogues which effectively convey the message. The character reacts to the present social system in a noble way with many beyond cast and religion.

Research Method

The population for this study was the Malayalam films released from January 2011 to June 2013, ie, the Malayalam Films released over 30 months. The criteria followed for selecting samples was like this: The Traffic, released on 7th January was taken as the first sample. Then 4 more samples were selected at an interval of exactly six months. Thus a sample of size 5 was obtained for the study. The sample set is-

- Traffic (7th January, 2011)
- Salt n Pepper (8th July,2011)
- Asuravithu (6th January,2012)
- Thattathin Marayathu (6th July, 2012)
- Annayum Rasoolum (4th January, 2013)
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Findings

A paradigm shift is indeed happening in Malayalam Cinema. It has detached all the dramatic robes it carried it in the past decades. The movies of these decades are closer to the real life, in terms of its characters, plots and situations.

Majority of these movies are set in urban backdrops, such as Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram indicating the shifting face of Kerala as well as the Keralites. It adds a constant motion and pace to the plot

painted in various hues and tones. These movies discuss simple stories but with complex and fresh narrative styles.

The characters are more realistic, closer to the everyday life. Their looks, language, accent, attires and life style compliments to the portrayal. The characters display urban confusions and helplessness. The characters are either the urban upper class or the lower class. Each character of these movies are unique of their own adding depth to the narratives. The movies are narration prominent, making the characters the key for it.

Our movies have said good bye to the super star centric themes, adding numerous characters to the narrative. The idea of single lead has become outdated in the present era of multi star cast. The movies have a common nature of setting plots where unknown characters are intermingled throughout the narrative. The urban back drop supports this style of narration giving it a good reason to justify the presence of these characters. The life style of the characters, especially the upper class is more lavish, materialistic and brand oriented. These movies promote consumerism, even though in an undertone manner spreads the message that money matters.

Female characters are indeed getting prominence unlike the past decades. Our leading ladies now indeed have screen space of their own. They are attributed to some new shades other than the typical mother, sister, wife and lover. But we still lack strong female protagonists. The movies even though in an understated style convey the same old message of women being fragile.

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Influence of Newspaper Coverage on Reader Perception: A Case Study of Mullaperiyar Dam Issue

■ ANILA BACKER*

ABSTRACT

Mullaperiyar dam is a major bone of contention between the states of Kerala and Tamilnadu. The press in Kerala recently made a detailed coverage on the safety of the dam which triggered a controversy. In this study the researcher has attempted to analyse the coverage and its resultant impact on the readers residing in the vicinity of the dam. The findings indicated that the coverage had created much panic in the minds of people residing in the affected areas.

Keywords : Mullaperiyar Dam Issue, Newspaper Coverage

Introduction

Mass media shapes public opinion on public affairs. Its reach, power and influence make people rely on the mass mediated reality of the world outside. It influences people in shaping their perceptions of the world by prioritizing news, interpreting them and even elaborating opinions. The issues that have received the most attention are perceived

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to be the most important news by the public. Thus media sets the public agenda and ultimately shape their decision making on political and social issues.

With the Mullaperiyar dam issue addressing the safety of dam being received immense media and public attention since the 1960s, the study examines the role of the media in shaping public opinion towards it. The issue that has resulted in interstate dispute between the two neighboring states Kerala and Tamil Nadu is apparently over the height of the water level maintained at the Mullaperiyar dam and over its safety. The extensive media coverage of the issue impelled it into the public agenda and can be considered to have a major role in shaping the conflict as well as the emotional responses of the people.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the researcher was to analyse the newspaper coverage and its impact on readers and also to determine how media influence reader's perception by prioritizing and sensationalizing an issue.

The specific objectives of the study were;

1. To determine the extent to which the Mullaperiyar dam issue is covered in the newspapers of the state of Kerala in 2011 and 2013.
2. To determine the retention of the coverage on the readers in its locality.
3. To determine whether the newspaper coverage of the issue created panic among the people.
4. To analyze the viewpoints of readers across their demographic variables

Research Method

With an aim to find the relationship between the newspaper coverage and the readers' perception, the study employed both the content analysis and the questionnaire survey method. The coverage of the issue in two years 2011 and 2013 when the issue gained great media attention in two newspaper samples, The Hindu representing the English dailies and The Mathrubhumi representing the Malayalam dailies was taken for analysis. A period of 30 days from each year when the issue gained prime importance was studied. The period from November 20 to December 20, 2011 and from July 20 to August 20, 2013 were taken from which 16 days were selected purposively based on a criteria that the days having some major coverage of the issue.

The questionnaire survey was conducted among people in Idukki district where the dam is located. The sample size selected for the survey was 100 with 50 samples from Vallakkadavu near Mullaperiyar dam and 50 from Chreuthoni near Idukki dam was selected for the survey. There were 19 questions in the questionnaire including the demographic part. The questions were aimed at what people knew, felt and their opinion regarding the coverage of the issue. The coverage of the issue in the newspapers was considered equivalent to publics' exposure to the issue and the questionnaire contained questions to determine their retention of coverage.

Hypotheses

The study has three hypotheses;

1. The Mullaperiyar dam issue got into the media agenda during 2011 but not in 2013.
2. The coverage of the issue created panic among the people
3. The visual media played a major role in creating the emotional impact than the print media

Findings

The study provided further evidence to the fact that the priority given to an issue by the media and the attributes emphasized by it influences the readers' perception of the issue. It was found from the study that the Mullaperiyar dam issue entered into the media agenda in 2011 but not in 2013, even though 2013 received heavy rainfall in Kerala contributing to the dam's water level and it was worth discussing it.

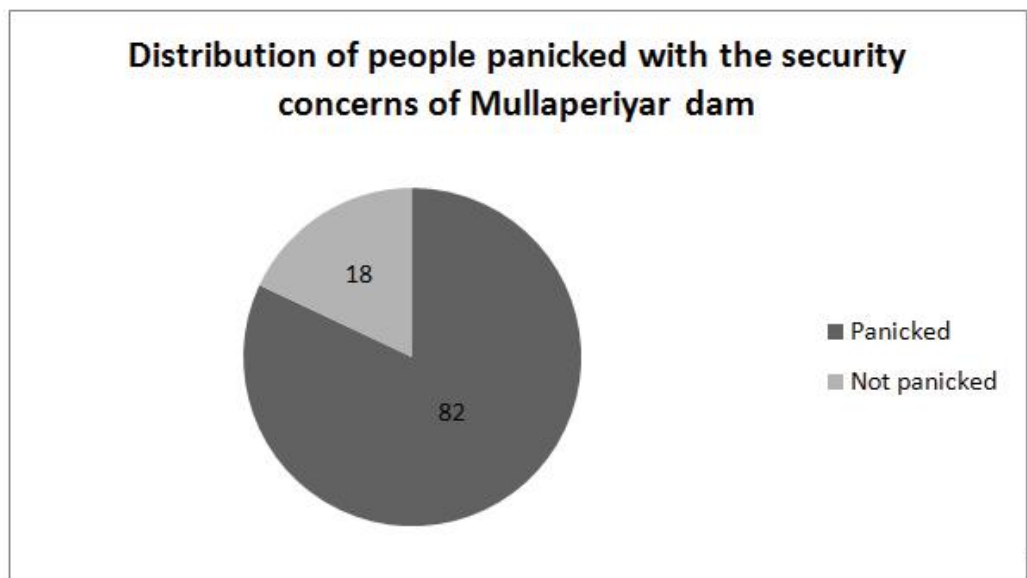
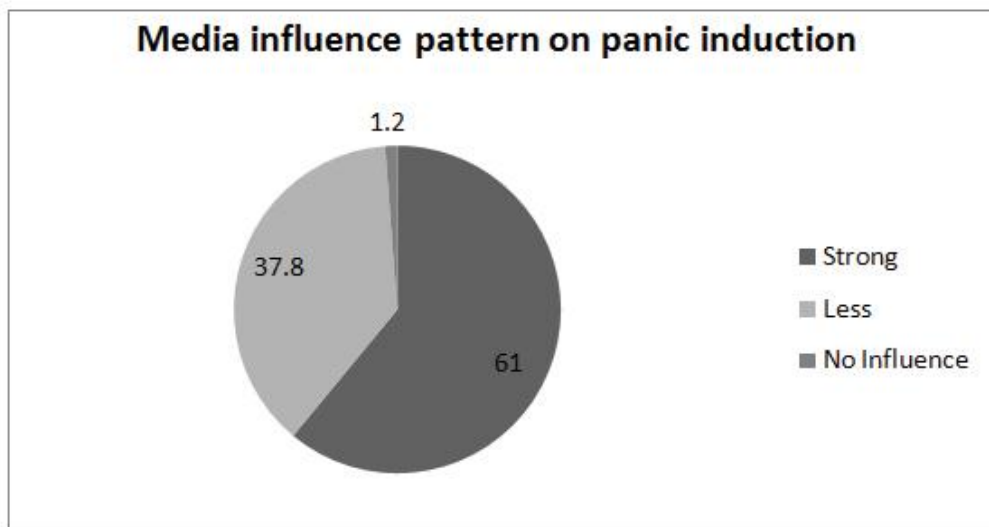


Chart 1

Among the eight issues of each newspaper sample taken in 2011, Mathrubhumi allotted a total space of 2421.1 column cm for the Mullaperiyar dam issue and The Hindu allotted 2601.2 column cm whereas the space allotted during 2013 counts to only 329.1 column cm in Mathrubhumi and 353.3 column cm in The Hindu,. The placement of photographs relating to the issue in front pages of four among the eight samples of Mathrubhumi, taken to analyze the coverage of the issue in 2011 further shows the importance awarded to the issue during the period.

Along with the coverage of the issue, the views and opinions concerning the issue appeared in the newspapers further proves that

*Chart 2*

the issue got into the media agenda during 2011 and not in 2013. The total editorial page space consumed by the issue is 381 column cm in Mathrubhumi and 44.9 column cm in The Hindu during 2011 and no space was devoted in the samples of both the newspapers in 2013.

The sensationalized media approach to the issue might have influenced people's perception so that they retained topics of media discussion in 2011 till 2013. While analyzing the responses to the questionnaire, the majority of the respondents were found answering correctly to the questions asked to check the retention effect of the coverage in both 2011 and 2013. The impact of the coverage in 2011 is evident as people still retains it and it could have prompted them to notice the coverage of 2013 and to retain it even though the issue failed to enter the media agenda. The importance attached to the issue by the newspapers and the emotive content of them resulted in emotional impacts.

The study found that the threat of safety of Mullaperiyar dam evoked panic among 82 % of the total respondents. Among those got panicked, 61% were strongly influenced by the media, 37.8 % had a little influence and 1.4 % believed that they are not influenced by the media.

While analyzing media influence on demographic variables, age and gender were not found significant. Whereas, the educational level was a significant factor that kept people less influenced by media intrusions. People living in the dam premises, who depended more on visual media, appeared to be more panicked. Ninety six percent of people from Vallakkadavu where the Mullaperiyar dam is located found to be panicked while only 68 percent of those at Cheruthony were panicked. Thus the general turbulence regarding the threat cannot be solely attributed to media interventions.

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Growth of DTH Service as a Major Broadcast Technology in India

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ABSTRACT

The Direct-to-Home (DTH) services acquired a key position in Indian TV broadcasting Industry in the last decade. As a developing broadcast technology it has relevance to be studied. The primary objective of this study is to introduce the key players in the Indian DTH broadcast industry. This study also introduces the benefits of DTH services over conventional cable TV services, and how they become a key competitor to DTH providers by digitising their services. This study also examines the changes that occur by the introduction of digital broadcasting technology.

Keywords : DTH Services, Satellite Technology, India's DTH platforms, Mass Communication, Communication Technology

Introduction

DTH stands for Direct-to-Home television. As the name suggests, channels are gathered and broadcasts directly to the home. In earlier period satellite transmission was not that much attractive. Analogue signals were gathered using huge parabolic dish antennas and decoded with analogue receivers. But it was not easy to point to the correct satellite to collect quality signals. Later digital receivers replaced analogue ones, thus creating a sea change in broadcasting.

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The users had to use more than two parabolic dishes and LNBs to receive more channels. But by the introduction of DTH services, the game changed. The same satellite technology used to receive numerous TV channels from the same direction employing a mini-dish instead of huge parabolic antennas. The core attraction of the DTH service is that it always provides quality picture and sound as it is digital. Both broadcasters and viewers get immense opportunities to sell and buy quality services.

DTH satellite television has become a buzzword in the satellite broadcast industry. In a single delivery platform, the DTH broadcasters can provide more entertainment and news and much more add-on services that really change the face of the conventional TV broadcasting. These 'active' services are truly interactive in nature, and that makes it more competent.

The digital technology allows to effectively utilize the frequency spectrum, which allows to transmit huge number of TV channels and big amount of data through a single platform. The increased number of television channels allows the operator to satisfy the demand of a number of niche markets with dedicated transmissions.

DTH as a New Broadcast Technology

DTH technology is a new trend in the present day life. The Direct-To-Home (DTH) satellite receivers were developed in the early 1980's. The original concept of satellite television started over 50 years ago. The working principle of DTH service is the same as the existing satellite broadcasting. The Direct-To-Home (DTH) service provides television services direct to subscribers anywhere in a broad geographical area. The individual user is connected directly to the service providers.

Cable TV operators gather satellite channels using many parabolic dish antennas and distribute through cables. DTH providers also follow this method. They congregate the channels and re-send it to a satellite. The subscriber has to receive these packaged channels using a small parabolic dish antenna and a Set Top Box (STB). This mode of reception facilitates the use of small dish antennas of 60 to 90 cm diameter installed at convenient location in individual buildings without requiring elaborate foundation or space etc.

Since it makes use of wireless technology, programs are sent to the subscriber's television direct from the satellite, eliminating the need for cables and any cable infrastructure. This is particularly valuable

in remote and difficult to reach areas where cable and in many cases, terrestrial television services are poor or non-existent. DTH offers better quality picture than cable TV and multi-channel sound effects. It reaches even those places where cable is not available. This service is also providing value-added services that include teletext, multichannel audio, multiple language support, internet, parental control, electronic programme guide and radio channels.

The term DTH predates Digital Broadcasting Service (DBS) and is often used in reference to services carried by lower power satellites which required larger dishes (6 feet or greater) for reception. A DTH network consists of a programming source, broadcasting centre, satellites, encoders, multiplexers, modulators and DTH receivers. DTH service is the one in which a large number of channels are digitally compressed, encrypted and beamed from very high power satellites. A digital receiver is needed to receive the multiplexed signals and view them on a TV.

Prominent DTH Service Providers in India

There are presently seven major DTH providers in India. They are, Dish TV, DD Direct Plus, Tata Sky, Big TV, Sun Direct, Airtel DTH and Videocon D2H. All of them are private providers excluding DD Direct Plus. The private DTH services provide many interactive channels and value added services. DD D+ is the one and only Free to Air (FTA) DTH service. The service includes mostly regional channels in diverse languages. Though DD D+ is completely free it does not provide interactive channels and value added services. The private DTH networks recently included many HD channels, which will provide High Definition video, compatible to modern television systems. The major DTH service providers in India are:

SUN-DIRECT

Sun Direct is a DTH service in India, with its headquarters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Sun Direct is a joint venture between the Maran family and the Astro Group of Malaysia. The SUN Direct DTH service was started on 7 December 2007.

AIRTEL DIGITAL TV

Airtel Digital TV is the brand name for Bharti Airtel's DTH service in India. It was launched on 8 October 2008. Interactive Service (ITV) of Airtel digital TV includes an add-on service that allows a user to shop, book movie tickets etc. It also provides Video on demand interactive service that can be ordered on demand.

DISH TV

This is a private DTH owned by ZEE groups. Dish TV was the first private player in DTH industry to provide entertainment services. DTH service began in 2004 by the launching of Dish TV by Essel Group's Zee Entertainment Enterprises.

TATA-SKY

It is a joint venture between the Tata Group and STAR Group. Tata Sky was incorporated in 2004 but was launched only in 2006. The company uses the 'Sky' brand owned by British Sky Broadcasting.

DD DIRECT PLUS

Doordarshan, the national broadcaster in India, was the first media player to introduce DTH services in India. DD DIRECT+ is the only FTA Direct-To-Home (DTH) Service. DD is the public television broadcaster under the Government of India and is a division of Prasar Bharati. DD DIRECT+ provides a combination of Doordarshan channels, Private TV channels and Audio channels of All India Radio. Its transmission is free of cost but comes with a limitation of lesser number of channels.

RELIANCE BIG TV

Reliance BIG TV is a DTH satellite television provider in India, based in Mumbai. Reliance BIG TV limited is a part of Reliance Communications Ltd. BIG TV started operations from 19 August 2008. It offers dedicated movie channels and interactive channels, many Radio channels and gaming channels. Reliance BIG TV has launched India's first HD digital video recorder (DVR) DTH set top box with a Universal Remote.

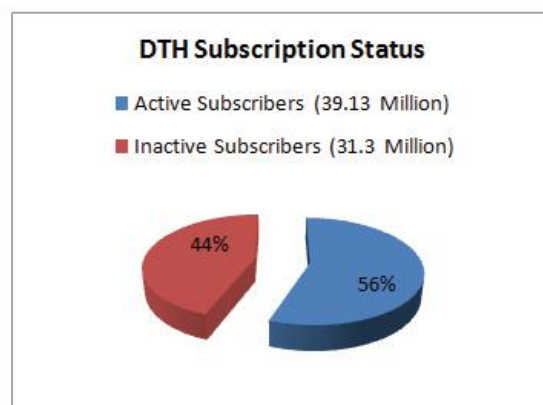
VIDEOCON d2h DTH SERVICE

Videocon d2h is the seventh company to enter the DTH space in India and was launched on May 1, 2009. The d2h broadcasting is based in Mumbai. It came with a very good strategy for selling its electronic products like TVs with Set Top Box. The Videocon is the first provider to bring television with STB circuit inside. That is when a user bought advanced TV from Videocon they provide a Television system included with a Set Top Bob inside the TV. The user can insert their VC into the side slot provided.

As per the reports published by TRAI, 813 private TV channels were registered as on September 2014, under the Ministry of Information

and Broadcasting, Govt. of India. Registered DTH subscribers are 70.33 Million, while only 39.13 subscribers are active.

Chart 1: DTH Subscriber details



Source: TRAI Report 2015

Advantages of DTH over Analogue Cable TV

DTH is an encrypted transmission that travels to the consumer directly through a satellite. DTH transmission is received directly by the consumer at his end through a small dish antenna. There are numerous advantages for DTH platform over cable TV. Some of them are mentioned here.

The major advantage of DTH is the availability of satellite broadcast in rural and semi-urban areas where getting cable TV is difficult. It is now possible to use multiple audio channels, by which the viewer can experience surround sound ambience as in a movie theatre. Another feature of DTH broadcasting is to switch between different language audios in the same channel. For instance, if one is watching a cricket match in a particular channel the user can switch its commentary to his/her mother tongue.

Users can subscribe for 'on demand' services like 'Movie-on-Demand' (MOD) by paying extra charge along with their normal subscription charge. Interactive channels will open possibilities of added entertainment and helps in the acquisition of knowledge. Many interactive education channels are there to help students in their studies by which effective learning is possible.

The introduction of digital TV viewing propelled many possibilities in the field of Television broadcasting. TV broadcasters are now equipped with advanced digital systems to produce high quality programmes for transmission. They transmit High Definition version of their channels along with normal digital channels.

Some advantageous of DTH Services:

- Due to digital compression techniques, many more niche channels are available
- DTH also offers digital quality signals which do not degrade the picture or sound quality
- It also offers interactive channels and program guides to customers
- Geographic mobility is another advantage. That is one can use the same STB and Dish equipment all over the country
- Value Added Services like gaming, dedicated movie channel, interactive channels etc.
- Multiple Language support, the subscriber can choose a language from a list of available languages
- The subscriber only needs to pay for what they want to watch. The subscriber can use top-up cards or channel packages to watch channels they want
- Uninterrupted service
- Flexibility in choosing channel packages
- DTH includes radio channels. Both AM and FM channels can be received
- It is possible to record and watch channels later with the STB provided

DTH services ensure excellent Picture Quality and Sound Quality for all the channels provided. There is no intermediary and one gets the signals directly from the broadcasters. The signal can be received anywhere in the country and it is made available through satellite and doesn't require any tower or cable for its distribution. DTH services can provide value added services like internet, video conference etc.

The Dish provided along with the STB can be installed on the roof-top or on the wall. The Dish should be pointed to the appropriate satellite. It may be possible to get the dish fixed on the window grill with slight modification on the grill or the fixtures but it is desirable to fix the dish on rigid wall or roof top.

Before buying a DTH, firstly one should enquire all the features and services rendered by them such as activation, coupons, rates, after sale services etc. DTH services have no limit in providing channels. A subscriber is not needed to worry about the channel strength of his TV set. The DTH service providers increase the capacity of their satellite transponders according to the increase in channels.

As a developing country India still has several milestones to achieve in the field of broadcasting. DTH service is slowly becoming a convergent medium. The service providers will offer internet and video conferencing facility along with television viewing. Many other value added services accompany the subscription.

DIGITAL CABLE TV: The new Competitor

In October 2011 the Government announced the implementation of a phase-wise digitization programme of pay TV services throughout the country. That initiated the digitisation of the local Cable TV networks. It propelled an open war between DTH and Cable TV providers.

Earlier, analogue Cable TV transmission was poor in quality, had lesser channels and there was no proper service. After the introduction of digital Cable TV these drawbacks vanished.

The local Cable TV providers enhanced their services. They offered digital set-top box to their customers. The same cables used for analogue transmission were also capable to carry digital signals. The set-top box is used to decode the digital signal.

The only difference between Digital Cable TV and DTH is in the transmission medium used to send channels and services. DTH is using satellite wireless technology while Digital Cable TV is using the physical cables having particular standards.

To compete with DTH providers, various cable operators all over the state organised together and brought out new policies. They agreed to exchange channels and services. Optical fibre cables are used to carry signals from one location to another.

The new set-top boxes provided by them are also capable of enhanced services like, HD channels, Channel Recording, Interactive Channels etc. The customers will get a Unique ID, like a SIM card as in DTH service. Using this viewing card, customers can recharge their subscription as in the DTH service.

Expected Technological Growths in DTH Service

The broadcast arena is witnessing a vast technological growth. The advent and growth of mobile phones in India were fast and sudden. There are many technologies like 3G, 4G, GPS, etc which were launched to support the growth of mobile phone technology. The introduction of android operating system made smart phones more convergent and affordable to the common man.

Direct to Home services were an intelligent substitute for analogue CATV networks. Now internet streaming TV services (IPTV) is growing to challenge DTH. Internet Protocol television - IPTV is one of the systems that offers its services through architecture and networking methods of the internet protocol. It uses broadband internet instead of being delivered through satellite signal. Today Television is becoming completely digitised. Since the Television is changing to digital, broadcasting stations use faster and better technologies. Digital TV (DTV) supports better sound, pictures, interactivity, pay-per-view etc.

In future DTH services will not only provide channels and interactive services. The digital Set-Top-Box (STB) receives and processes digital data and has become a converged medium like mobile phones. The DTH subscribers can access high speed internet using their STB. Also the subscribers can carry out video conferencing with relatives and colleague. Using a single STB the subscribers can watch TV, surf internet and transfer huge amount of data simultaneously.

In India the analogue cable TV service has disappeared and transformed into digital. The introduction of digital Cable TV paved a way to subscribe television services at a cheaper rate than DTH. They also began to provide facilities like high speed internet. DTH providers are yet to start high speed internet service in full stretch. These advancements predict tough competition between Digital Cable TV providers and DTH providers.

Indian DTH industry is looking for a vast growth in the coming years. The DTH providers are competing to provide many attractive services to the subscribers. In rural area many families prefer to buy a DTH, because the STB and dish can be obtained free of cost or at a lesser amount. The subscription charges are also affordable to the common man. In urban areas they prefer to buy high end DTH equipment. High Definition DTH services are now available with all private providers in India.

Conclusion

The DTH industry is getting mass popularity within a short period of time. The TRAI reports predict that by 2016 the number of DTH subscribers will double. Obviously the DTH industry will flourish in the coming years, as technology develops, enormous possibilities will emerge.

Apart from the volume of business, a cautious DTH operator should also take a serious look at the substitutes and complements. He should diversify and create his presence in the entire spectrum of broadcasting and telecommunication services. With seven operational players, the competition among DTH providers in the market region is quite high. The introduction of Digital Cable TV brought a new dimension to the war.

The increasing consumer awareness and expectations make it difficult to satisfy the consumer. The consumer always prefers high quality for lesser amount of money. Only attractively priced and feature rich packages will sell. The final winner cannot be a pure DTH player but a convergent player who offers all in one to the value-conscious, price sensitive Indian consumer.

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