

## CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN JOURNALISM: A SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL

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### ABSTRACT

The world of journalism is witnessing a massive shift from traditional to digital platform. Online propaganda has become a big challenge now that anyone can create a blog/ YouTube channel spreading opinions without any fact-checking or editing, and it can go viral. Research utilizing creativity and innovation will play a crucial role in digital age. How the news organizations are navigating from traditional to digital, and bringing in news creatively? How journalism, itself, is changing in the age of algorithms? This qualitative study incorporating in-depth interviews, with the sample size 15, is an attempt to understand the changing face of journalism to the digital journalism among the media professionals with the shift in delivery platform from traditional to digital.

**Key words:** *Creativity, Innovation, Journalism, Traditional Journalism, Digital journalism.*

### Introduction

#### ***Creativity and Innovation:***

The terms “creativity” and “innovation” are often used interchangeably. Creativity is the main asset for the human progress. Many researchers worked over the years illuminating as how creativity happens. Basically, creativity is the production of anything new. Modifying something to the existing idea, thought or a product or anything for that matter. In other words, what is developed today, should be extending or be in contrast from what has been done yesterday. Creativity is a hope for mankind. Humans can always come up with new and useful ideas for the betterment of tomorrow. On the other hand, Innovation is the successful execution of those useful ideas. An interesting connection between creativity and innovation is one can need not be innovative, but can be creative in a chosen field. An Innovation can be a plan or an improved version of a product or a service that makes something innovative. Simply put, we can say that an Innovation is the ability to create something better and offer to the society.

#### ***Traditional and New journalism:***

Journalism is a process of gathering the news stories around the world, with the fact checking, interviewing the data sources and analysing and presenting to the people about the happenings. Talking about Traditional journalism, it is also called as the legacy of the mainstream media.

Though the word “media” is plural, when we are talking about an individual platform, we call it as a “medium.” Traditional journalism includes different mediums such as radio, newspaper or a magazine, television. In other words, any medium which has a content or a message that goes through offline but not online. Usually, these mediums mentioned above are the outlets that are regulated by Media law and press ethics. On the other hand, Digital journalism is about the news, where the editorial content is distributed via Internet. We can call this journalism as a contemporary one. Digital journalism can also be known as online journalism or netizen journalism. The news stories are propagating through online but not through print or broadcasting media.

The difference between traditional journalism and Digital or online journalism is the medium used for dissemination of information. Traditional journalism disseminates the information or news through printed materials, such as newspapers or magazines and through broadcasting mediums like radio or television. On the other hand, Online journalism has its news articles or news stories published in the internet. For online journalism, a writer or a journalist writes her articles on her weblog. Traditional journalists write their articles for newspaper medium. Whether they are working as a freelancer or for a media organisation, they get paid for their articles they work on and have their deadlines to beat. The length of the articles posted also usually differs. In online journalism, the writer can write a prolonged article, while in traditional journalism, the writer has a limited space for her article. Also, in online journalism, the Internet users only will get to read news articles when they are connected online. While in traditional journalism, people have a space to get updated with the latest happenings without being dependent on the Internet.

## Review of Literature

**Muhamad Izzuwan Shah Bin Mazla. Et al.** (2019), *“The Roles of Creativity and Innovation in Entrepreneurship”*

The study says that the Creativity and innovation are the heart of the spirit of enterprise and they strive for the successful and viable enterprise. Organization must feed creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship for many reasons. Creativity and innovation are undoubtedly in purposes to help in keeping the business running for a longer period and to stay competitive.

**Roger Bronson Rozario.** (2013), *“New Media and the Traditional Media Platforms: Introspection on the Differences in Technical and Ideological Factors and Audience-integration Patterns between New Media and Traditional Media”*

The study says traditional media has no choice but to interact and collaborate with new media, as they are increasingly challenged to keep up to a more interactive and involving audience. In this sense of utmost interactivity, new media is highly democratic, also with its varied cultural and ideological expressions. They have, therefore, developed a symbiotic relationship of convenience with new media for better audience associations.

**Hao Chen.** (2022), *“Research on the Development from Print Media to Digital Media -- Taking the American Market as An Example”*

The paper discovers difference between digital and paper media and also the pros and cons of them respectively. For print medium, it is easier to collect than audio-visual data and more permanent than most Web based materials but the productivity of it is too low and time consuming. For digital medium, this increases the capabilities of people in finding the resources and shorter the time of sending messages, but there are chances that might cause some health problems if used for a longer period.

**Stephanie Grubenmann.** (2013), *“Innovation in Journalism – Towards a Holistic Approach”*

This paper provides a structured literature review to analyse on how an academic research accesses innovation in journalism and further to explore what other forms of innovation get presented. Although research into innovation in journalism is not restricted to technological Innovations, around 70% of the identified literature deals with this topic. About 9% of the research goes into design innovation in journalism and the remaining 21% looks into different forms of journalistic innovation.

**Anooja A, Prarthana Sharma.** (2021), *“Digital Media: Rise of Online content to makes a Digital India”*

This paper discussed about the downsides of the digital media as harmful intentions like social defamation, altering the human decisions etc. In the existing condition of digital media which comes in many different forms including magazines, e papers, social blogs, podcasts, video etc as well as social media like YouTube, Facebook, etc has become an integral part of media. The paper also presented about the facts that the advertising industry of India is expected to 10.8% growth through which they can reach Rs 62,577 crore by December 2021 and Rs 70343 crore by 2022.

## **Aim**

The primary aim of the study is to examine the changing face of journalism to digital journalism among the media professionals with the shift in delivery platform from traditional to digital, for which the following objectives were undertaken:

## **Objectives**

- 1.To investigate the modes of creativity and innovation in digital journalism.
- 2.To find out the change in preparation, content and delivery of news on digital platforms.
3. To study the strategies being adopted by established media platforms to grow with transition.
- 4.To explore the scope and future of digital journalism with changing / emerging technologies.

## **Methodology**

The qualitative research approach was adopted. Fifteen participants who are media professionals from different media organisations responded to the questionnaire to gather data for the set objectives. The participants were randomly selected from various media outlets who are part of digital media were included for this questionnaire.

## **Limitations**

As mentioned, this research is a qualitative one. Since it is a study using purposive sampling, problem of external validity would exist. The sample is taken only from the city of Hyderabad. The results of this study cannot be generalized across the whole population of Telangana.

This study used qualitative approach which provides descriptive evidence on changing face of journalism. However, it only provided a broad way to explain the phenomenon, which was not deep enough, since it only considers the aspects of traditional journalism. Due to limitation of resources, this study used limited sample and was only subjected to media professionals of Hyderabad.

## **Data Analysis**

### ***Modes of creativity and innovation***

All the media professionals agreed that the primary infuser of creativity and innovation is digital platforms inclusive of blogs, YouTube channels, Twitter, online news sites, social media, etc. There has been a continuous shift to digital platform for last decade, which has exploded to new levels post 2020s with accessibility of smartphones and affordable internet connectivity among the masses.

### ***Change in news***

*“Technically, a decade ago, we used to give live reporting with a DSNG vehicle on the spot. Later, there is a transition from 3G to 5G portable setup which is light in weight and can be fixed to the camera.”* – Chakravarthi, Sr. News presenter at Ntv.

Technology played a crucial role in delivering the news. Majority of media professionals agreed that the pace of news creation and consumption has accelerated to a great degree. Also, the content is more headline grabbing, customized to appeal to the target audience, of shorter duration yet repetitive and lower on content and higher on visuals. Earlier, the literates were the target of news but with new avenues of information dissemination with more focus on video and audio news, the overall audience base across different age groups have increased considerably, however, there is lesser concentration and low retention due to variety of options available and substandard content level across news service providers. Online algorithms, search engine optimization, eyeball grabbing thumbnails, etc., have constrained or changed the reach of news.

*“More than being object oriented, news has become entertainment. Because of news consumers’ needs and their search pattern on online platforms.”- Pediredla Dheeraj Babu, Digital Content Head – South, Red FM (Sun Network).*

Few respondents considered news on social media as a category of online entertainment instead of genuine, verified news, thus, bringing focus on fake and controversial news getting viral. News has become a major propaganda tool instead of sharing of mere facts and the online world is the game changer.

Some respondents mentioned the usage of Google docs, Google translate, ClickUp, Slack news/chat bots, Inshot, Fimora, Kine Master, Grammarly, ClickUp etc, Chat GPT, Headline generator, best-hashtags, social media dashboards, Twitter trends, Google trends, AnswerThePublic.com, etc., for news gathering, trend analysis, SEO optimization and news dissemination, likes of which were not available on traditional platforms, thereby, changing the whole traditional base structure of news creation.

### ***Grow with transition***

Ms. Manju Latha Kalanidhi, the senior feature writer in The New Indian Express, says *“Be adaptive. Be ready for change.”* This summarizes the strategies of existing media platforms. Be present in the areas on mediums, where your potential audience is. Engage them, give them an avenue to communicate. She also suggested that the journalist now must be an ideator, writer/reporter, editor, cameraman, director, and content management system user; themselves adding SEO terms, sharing it on social media with hashtags/ locations and tracking to optimize the engagement & traction.

### ***Future***

Majority of the respondents opined that digital platforms are the future, and with the increasing competition, shorter attention span of audience, digital journalism needs to stay creative and keep innovating to engage, retain and grow their audience.

*“We need regulations in Digital Media to protect the standards in Journalism and the harmony in the society. Fake news in the name of Free Speech is the biggest challenge to the world and the media industry must address this issue to protect the Values.”- Bhanu Kiran, Executive producer at Tv9.*

Lack of fact checking, falling standards of content creation, lackadaisical news gathering, the urgency to publish without proper research, stringent regulations may impact the trust levels of audience/users in the news media houses and they need to maintain their high standards, sticking to ethics and truth to uphold the centuries old traditions of news in quality and content.

According to Dinesh Akula, CEO of HashtagU, Artificial Intelligence /Augmented Reality /Virtual Reality/Automated news/bot news, etc., will be the future of online Journalism.

## Summary and Conclusions

In this digital age there is nothing that is left untransformed. This applies to even news. Though the basic concept and essence of news will never change but the modes of communication and presentation has undergone huge transformation in the recent decades. Technology has not only altered our lifestyles and thought process but even the way we consume news, as a result the huge number of new media outlets have become platforms for varied public opinions giving no clues of 'what is truth'.

A journalist collects, edits and interprets the news before they present it to their readers or audiences, but this major responsibility is now wiped out by netizens who are now producer and also consumers of news and views on digital platforms. This is the one of the biggest challenges these days for media professionals in delivering news to their audiences. In an attempt to know how digital journalist, tackle these challenges, it is understood that majority of the media professionals have accepted and emphasised on the importance of creativity and innovation in the mode of delivery, news gathering, information dissemination and engagement with audience on digital platforms.

Social media, especially, Twitter, YouTube, blogs are going to shape the future of digital journalism. Also, Artificial Intelligence /Augmented Reality /Virtual Reality/Automated news/bot news, etc., will be the future of digital journalism. It is identified as part of this study that for some senior journalists it is challenging to catch up with these emerging new technologies to meet the mindsets of future generations. To overcome these issues some organisation level training sessions are hosted to make journalist up to date with technology.

New media is a double-edged sword, like a coin has two sides the negative aspects of social media is not ignorable. Social media as a category of online entertainment instead of genuine, verified news, thus, bringing focus on fake and controversial news getting viral. News has become a major propaganda tool instead of sharing of mere facts and the online world is the game changer.

'If print media is the gatekeeper of news, then digital platforms are the wings, which need guidance and course correction time to time, as it is still evolving.'

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