

Importance of The Cognitive Abilities in The Field of Investigative Journalism & Characteristics of Forensic Journalist.

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Abstract- Investigation Journalism is a form of Journalism in which the Journalist must investigate upon topic with the highest degree of interest which especially holds true in cases pertaining to serious crimes, political corruption and corporate wrongdoing. In this paper we will study the importance of cognitive abilities in the field of journalism. We will study the role of the emotional intelligence, which is vital in the investigation, as an investigative reporter must understand the actual depth of the crime and keep themselves calm and conscious while investigating any serious crime cases.

Cognitive abilities like thought process, language, skill of learning, mental presence and decision making are most useful while investigating. These cognitive abilities and mental skills play a vital role in any Investigative journalist's career.

Key Words - Cognitive Abilities, Mental Skill, Emotional intelligence, Investigative Journalism, thought process.

INTRODUCTION.

Investigative journalism is an emerging branch and is of utmost importance for cases in the line of serious crime, political corruption and corporate wrongdoing. When we talk about investigation, we need certain qualities abilities to investigate crimes. In investigating journalism, the reporter must have to focus on how to conduct the investigation, especially in high profile cases. Investigation must be conducted in a systematic and productive manner. Most of the forensic Journalists would have conducted investigation by the means of newspapers, wire services and freelance journalists. Investigative journalism is considered as watch reporting or accountability reporting.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

Investigative journalism was defined by the American Journalism press, it was pointed out muckraking standards promoted by McClure's Magazine in 1902 which came to be an integral character of modern investigative journalism.

It is defined as "Journalism is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating and presenting news and information." Investigative journalism is the product of the forementioned activities. Forensic Journalism is the combination of science and law amalgamated to the field of journalism. Emergence of forensic journalism was to report on crime, media trials (debate on the crime) and criminal justice system (CJS).

India is an emerging nation with the highest population, naturally corresponding to high crime rates. Investigative journalism will be a tool in terms of future perspective to fight against crime and lessen the crime rate.

The common thing to both forensic journalism and forensic experts are 5 W & 1H, i.e., "What, When, Why, Where, Who & How." Forensic journalism means that unveiling of happenings those are subjected as crime, which involves political corruptions, corporate wrongdoing and serious crimes. The wrongdoing, which occurred as a result of accident or deliberation, or by anyone in a position of power or influence, the forensic journalist would have to Investigate and analyse the facts and evidences by scientific methods, finally making them viable to enforce in the court of law.

Forensic journalism has a crucial contribution in the freedom of speech and expression as well as preventing falsehood in media trials. The upside of investigative journalism is to prevent false media trial, which means that without any investigation and analysis, the investigative journalist does not speak anything which reduces the wrong allegations and prevents the loss of reputation of the innocent. If media trial takes place without any investigation, it would spoil the reputation of an innocent person.

GOLDEN RULES OF FORENSIC JOURNALISM.

- 1) Digging Deeply into an Issue or Topic.
- 2) Issue or topic must be in view of public interest, binding to law.
- 3) It is a Process to find truth, no rush should take place.
- 4) Report work must be original, proactive and introspective.
- 5) The report must either produce new information or put together previously available.
- 6) It should be multi sourced and reliable.
- 7) In order to get better information, it is required to call on greater resources, team working and time than routine news report.
- 8) The aim is not to accuse someone or something directly, rather the report should be presented in an indirect statement and in direct presentation.
- 9) Objective, truthful and ethical appealing.

COGNITIVE ABILITIES IN FORENSIC JOURNALISM.

Talking about investigative journalism, the need to acquire certain skills and mental abilities is required to investigate. Cognitive skills or functions are the skills under the domains of the perception, attention, memory, learning, decision making and language abilities.

Forensic journalism can play a vital role in order to resolve the cases like serious crime and corruption. We are going to take a few case studies in which are going to mention the role of cognitive abilities of forensic journalists to resolve and bring facts to the court.

Nirbhaya Case – 2012.

The girl from Delhi was raped by 6 six people brutally. An iron rod was inserted in her private part by the rapists following which she was thrown on the road to die but someone saw these happenings and shifted her to sabardjung hospital in Delhi. The news spread like fire and people came forward in protest. In this case, media played a vital role to bring facts about the case forward. Through media trial, the court came to know information about the case and finally the court ordered capital punishment to the perpetrators.

Cognitive based investigative journalism brought many things to the lime light and the entire case was presented before the public. Investigative journalists reported all facts in the correct manner and gave a name to the victim as Nirbhaya (meaning Fearless).

The police of that area where the incident happened, near Saket in Delhi, delayed to lodge the FIR, when investigative journalists started reporting, the police of that area lodged the FIR.

While reporting these kinds of sensitive cases, the investigative journalists must have to use their cognitive and mental abilities as it is a very sensitive subject and if this sensitive information goes viral, it will create public outrage as well a law-and-order situation. One of reasons behind the collapse of the Sheela dikshit government was the Nirbhaya case as she gave statement on the lines of “a girl has been raped, it’s not new thing in India”, this statement went viral and spread hatred against Sheela dikshit as well against her government. Hence the media must have cognitive skills while executing investigative reporting.

Godhra Riot 2002.

When the Godhra Riot occurred, the media was responsible to spread hatred.

On 28th February 2002, two largest circulations, multiple editions of Gujrati Newspapers, Sandesh and Gujarat Samachar, played up the unsubstantiated official version of there being a “Foreign Hand” behind the Godhra tragedy. Sandesh and Gujarat Samachar played blatantly communal role since the BJP returned to power in Gujarat in 1998.

On February 28, the day after the Godhra Tragedy, Sandesh Published photographs of the burning coach of Sabarmati express with headline “Fifty Hindus Burnt Alive” which led to massive communal riots.

When this kind of incident occurred, the investigative journalists must research on the truth and publish the truth rather than any false narratives.

Investigative Journalism During the Indian Freedom Struggle.

The first newspaper was the Bengal Gazette which was published by James Augustus Hicky, which was published in English. Samvad Kaumudi was published by Raja Rama Mohan Roy in Bengali but it was weekly newspaper. Mirat – UI – Akbar was Published by Raja Rama Mohan Roy in Persian. Rast Goftar was a Gujrati Newspaper which was published by Dadabhai Naoroji. Som Prakesh was a weekly newspaper published by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. Indian Mirror was published by Devendra Nath Tagore, the Amrita Bazar Patrika was published by Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Motilal Ghosh. Kesari was published by Bala Gangadhar Tilak which was in Marathi. The Indian Opinion was published by Mahatma Gandhi, Bande Mataram was published in English by Aurobindo Ghosh. Pratap was published in Hindi by Ganesh Shankar Vidhyarthi, Young India, Navjeevan and Harijan was published by Mahatma Gandhi. Mook nayak was published by Dr. B R Ambedkar.

The press played a crucial role during the national freedom struggle which helped in to spread the revolutionary ideas and helped in forming an opposition against the British Government. The press highlighted the plight of the Indians and cruel and discriminating policies of the British Government. With the help of the press , the freedom fighters, journalist, columnists and prominent writers defined the British tyranny.

The press helped India to create a Swaraj. When India was struggling for independence. It helped the nationalists to spread their activities to the general public.

Hickey’s Bengal Gazette and other early papers.

It was published by James Augustus Hickey known as father of Indian press and was started in 1780, it was also known as Bengal Gazette. In this newspaper, hickey wrote about corruption and scandals without publishing the names of British Officials. Later leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Raja Rama Mohan Roy, Bala Gangadhar Tilak, Kumar Ghosh, Bipin Chandra Pal, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Subramanian Iyer and C Rajagopalachari wrote their opinions in the newspaper and magazines etc.

Rise Of Vernacular Press.

The newspapers like Payam – E – Azadi, Bangadoot of Raja Rama Mohan Roy helped to boost the national boycott movement and strengthened the Indian freedom struggle. The samacharsudhavarshan and Rasti Guftar, published by Dadabhai Naoroji aimed to highlight the issues of Indians. The vernacular press act passed under the curtain to control indian publication’s content and compelled all Indian publications.

Mahatma Gandhi's Papers.

- 1) **Harijan** - This Newspaper was published by Mahatma Gandhi in order to develop the lower section of the society. Harijan means The People's God (Hari – God , Jaan – People)
- 2) **The Young India** - Mahatma Gandhi published many articles on non- cooperation movement, Indian freedom struggle and how to fight against the British Empire.
- 3) **Navjeevan**- This was also published by Mahatma Gandhi for rejuvenation of the ideas and thoughts which motivated the people to participate in Indian national movement.

Shaheed E Aazam Bhagat Singh's Published Papers.

- 1) **Kriti**.Bhagatsingh Wrote many articles and column for kriti, the journal of kriti kishan party (workers and peasant's party).
- 2) **Veer Arjun** Newspaper - wrote many articles and columns in order to make people aware and to motivate them to join Indian independence movement.

When bhagat Singh wrote these articles, he used the names such as Balwant Ranjit and Vidhrohi.

Bhagatsingh wrote many articles when he was in lahor jail. He wanted to bring himself before the people. He believed that people can confine the body but not thoughts and he spread his thoughts through his writings. He established Naujawan Bharat Sabha and renamed Hindustan Republican Association to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. Bhagatsingh motivated the entire India youth through his writings. We can consider bhagatsingh as an effective writer, communicator and an investigative journalist must have these skills. In other words, we can say that Bhagatsingh was an investigative journalist.

The impact of yellow journalism in forensic journalism.

Yellow journalism is totally opposite of investigative journalism. In yellow journalism, news is being published without Research, analysis and no legitimacy. It is published for eye catching in order to get more commercial benefits. This kind of journalism makes criminals as hero and victim as criminals. This kind of journalism is very dangerous for the society.

The Characteristics of Forensic Journalist.

The following characteristics or qualities, the forensic journalist must have to acquire as to be a forensic journalist. These qualities are-

- 1) Passion to work in the field of investigation.
- 2) Curiosity to look into the deep.
- 3) Ability to take an initiative.
- 4) Logical thinking, organisation and self discipline to control instantaneous emotions.
- 5) Flexible to accept the facts and truth.
- 6) Team working ability and good communication skills.
- 7) Well developed and influential reporting skills
- 8) Broad general knowledge and research skills.
- 9) Strong in determination and patience to invest time in the investigation.
- 10) Fairness and a very strong ethical character during investigation.
- 11) Should not be envious and biased with anyone while investigating.
- 12) Discretion to increase objectivity of the investigation
- 13) Courage to tell the truth and avert bias.
- 14) Mentally strong and withstand in all conditions.
- 15) Honest, empathetic, integrity and well in behaviour.
- 16) Workaholic person.
- 17) Having high Cognitive Abilities to investigate the matter.
- 18) Should be fearless and bold in the investigation.
- 19) Good in language learning and data interpretation.
- 20) Must have high knowledge of the contemporary technology.

These above are the characteristics, the investigative journalist must have to acquire while investigating serious crimes and its reporting.

Author Review.

The cognitive and mental abilities are playing a vital role in the investigation based reporting otherwise the proper investigation won't happen. When we talk about the indian independent movement, we found many newspapers and articles were published by many freedom fighters in order arouse the people and motivate them to participate in indian freedom struggle and national boycott. The investigative journalism was required to publish those contents which was helping out to strengthen the national movement and make people aware about the movement like quite india movement , non cooperation movement, Salt Satyagraha (Dandi Yatra). In order to publish these kinds of serious and national interest matter , journalist had to do many research works and analysis and also investigation on the issue hence we can say that the investigative journalism is not new branch but the application we are using with a new name , it was used at the time of indian independence movement.

CONCLUSION.

In this current scenario, investigative journalism is required the most to get apt information and to strengthen the Criminal justice system. If the news articles would be published without having prior investigation and research, it will be threatening to the society. Yellow journalism is totally opposite from Forensic Journalism, hence yellow journalism causes an immense destruction to society. Paid journalism is also responsible for the distortion of the news to the society.

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