

PRINT MEDIA (PART-3)

PG HISTORY, SEM-4, PAPER EC-2

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NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Certain innovations in the printing technology and other socio-economic developments have had a significant effect on the role and functions of the print media. The two notable developments are shift towards commercialization and introduction of new printing technologies.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Commercialization

The national newspapers, during the British period, functioned primarily with a missionary zeal and acted as the voice of the freedom fighters and stimulated the movement through advocacy journalism. They underwent a significant change after Independence. Having successfully helped the nation to win freedom, the missionary zeal of the newspapers evaporated.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Journalism in India, like elsewhere, had already become a publishing industry. The cost of production and distribution was increasing fast in India; so were wages of journalists and others engaged in newspaper production. The competition too was growing. Although the two Press Commissions stressed "public utility service" as the main attribute of a good press, they did not completely sidetrack the financial aspect because without financial viability the freedom is not possible.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

The theory of delinking of the press from business houses engaged in other industries was not accepted by the newspaper magnates.

New Printing Technologies

The induction of modern printing technologies has brought about a new climate of working in the print media organizations. It of course varies from unit to unit, depending upon the nature of technology employed.

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In big organizations, reporters now type their copy straight on the computer linked with video terminals (that is, the electronic type-setting machines) and not on the mechanical typewriters. Copy, after corrections, is stored in a small computer where it can be retrieved by the desk for final selection and electronic editing. The next stage is to prepare the layout, page by page, again by the video process.

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The final copies of pages are sent to the bigger computer which transmits them to the especially sensitive plates for printing. The desk is no more clustered with edited copies or proof read material. There is no noise of whirling machines or that of the deafening rotaries. No storage of galleys or stereo plates used in the former rotary printing. No spoiling of hands by the lead.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

The front portion of a newspaper or a printing press resembles the office of a bank or any other corporate office. The copies of newspapers, you read at home, are now elegantly printed, bearing creative typographical and layout designs. In fact printing today has become a graphic art. Whether you are browsing through The Times of India, Saptahik Hindustan, India Today, Swagat, Nai Duniya, Aaj or Tribune, it is a pleasing exercise in eye scanning.

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The seductive tabloids, both in English and Indian languages, have flooded the metropolitan towns. Their consumers are largely the train and road commuters who are anxious to know about the latest news. The lure of their catchy titles and big size pictures, along with the ever-present sparkling magazines, has so far enabled the print media to hold well in competition with the electronic media.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

The press is widely acknowledged as watch-dog in a democratic country. The Characteristics of print Media diversification and segmentation of reading material, together with the emergence of new styles of reporting, writing, and editing have helped the print media to flourish. Today the press is not merely informing, illuminating, investigating, and exposing but even warning and biting.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Particularly when acting in the public's or reader's interest, all these roles are justifiable and perhaps axiomatic. According to Dinning and Backer, all media in the emerging society act as,

- (1) purveyors of information,
- (2) provides of pleasure and enjoyment,
- (3) furnishers of channels of expression and interaction,
- (4) economic activists and changers of perception, influences of behaviours,
- (5) builders of institutions, and
- (6) shapers of the future.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Some researchers may not agree with these big claims, but all the print media meant for mass communication have subtle potentialities in this respect; they must of course be used professionally and according to well-planned strategies. Notwithstanding occasional bias or slant in their reporting or writing, newspapers today occupy a prestigious position in the galaxy of mass media with their roles varying from an informer to a critic, from a narrator to a commentator, from an investigator to an analyst, from a mentor to a teacher the newspapers are expected to play a special role as constructive critics, stimulators of debates on crucial issues and social vitalizer.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

OTHER PRINT MEDIA

In a multilingual country or vast distances, textbooks, paperbacks, pamphlets, brochures, posters and certain formats of printed publicity and promotional literature also constitute mass media. They provide information, enlightenment, and useful reading material. Textbooks published by state government, NCERT, other government organizations, and private publishers are the mass circulated publications. As compared to other forms of print media, books of any sort are a more durable source of learning and knowledge.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

Apart from providing segmented and specialized knowledge, they help to sharpen the sensibility and critical perception of the community. They also play an important role in the programmes of adult literacy, formal and informal education. Their contents can be reprinted. The book industry has developed much after Independence. Today the country is reckoned among the top book producing countries of the world. India is again a big producer of publicity and promotional pamphlets and brochures in various languages.

NEW TRENDS IN MEDIA AFTER INDEPENDANCE

As regards posters, you must have seen yourselves how walls everywhere are littered during election time with posters of rival candidates. This is indicative of the special pulling power of posters in smaller towns and villages. Leaflets are distributed in abundance as a cheap means of advertising all over the country. Direct mail literature invades the houses of prospective investors and customers.

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