

JOURNALISM

Journalism: Definition and meaning

Journalism is that part of social activity, which is concerned, with the dissemination of news and views about the society. Modern journalism feeds five departments of mass communication. (1) Newspaper and periodicals, (2) Radio, (3) Television, (4) Films and (5) Advertising.

Journalism is the systematic and reliable dissemination of public information, public opinion and public entertainment by modern mass media of communication.

In modern societies, journalism has become the media of mass education providing supplementary education to students at all stages and to the general masses - educated and uneducated.

All activities concerned with the communication of mass media is not journalism but the part of that activity involving writing, preparation and production of the communication messages is journalism. Thus, essentially journalists are writers, authors, reporters, correspondents, editors, sub-editors, interviewers, storywriters, scriptwriters, scenario editors and allied specialists.

Principles of modern journalism

The main function of journalism is to bring to light to the people what its members feel and think journalist are therefore supposed to possess a good deal of intelligence, knowledge and experience as well as natural and trained powers of observation and reasoning. A journalist has the same obligations as a teacher or interpreter as an educationist has. A journalist who misuses his power for any selfish or unworthy purpose is to a high trust. While the freedom of the press needs to be guarded as a vital right of humankind, it has to suffer certain explicit restrictions to subserve social needs. Freedom of the press does not imply promotion of any private interest of the journalist contrary to the general welfare. That is the way the so-called news communications from sundry sources are not published by sensible journalists without substantiating their value as news both in form and substance.

In addition, partisanship in editorial comments, which is knowingly based on a lie, does violence to the best spirit of journalism.

Rules to be followed by a journalist

- a) Study the field and have an estimate of what type of articles is published in newspapers, magazines, books etc.
- b) Look ideas
- c) Develop the idea
- d) Keep an unbiased mind
- e) Write clearly and meaningfully
- f) Remember the people to whom the articles are written
- g) Write with a purpose
- h) Write on timely subjects
- i) Keep in touch with editors
- j) Watch out for important events/occasions
- k) Establish credibility, politeness and do not assume familiarity
- l) Understand the communication process and the elements of communication.

Agricultural journalism

Agricultural journalism is a specialized branch of journalism which deals with the techniques of receiving, writing, editing and reporting from information through the media like newspapers, periodicals, radio, TV, advertising etc. and the management processes connected with such production.

It is the timely reporting and editing with words and photography of agricultural news and information for newspaper, magazine, radio and television.

Importance

The mass media are capable of reaching vast widespread audiences, thanks to fast moving newspapers/radio broadcasts, TV telecast and the celluloid films. A single broadcasting network today can reach millions of people at the same time. The world stands of the threshold of new communication systems which enable large number of citizens to regularly and effectively interact with each other. To make full use of the interactive information systems made possible by the computer technology, citizens can remain so well informed that they will be able to perform their duty adequately and efficiently and accelerate the process of development in different social fields.

Modern communication systems reflect the philosophy and achievements of society in all spheres by fast flow and pave the way for the homogeneity of culture-not only with in its geographical unit but also beyond.

Journalism is the publication of news and views on various aspects of human activities in newspapers and periodicals. In a broader sense, the functions of journalism are to convey national policies to the public and to keep the governments at local state and central levels, informed of public needs. It also brings to the notice of the government public reaction to government policies and decisions. In addition, it keeps the public and the government informed of events and happenings at home and abroad.

On one hand, it performs the utilitarian purpose of information and on the other, it provides entertainment to its readers by publishing short stories, poems, sports, cinema, features, etc. A clever journalist by his penmanship creates interest in day-to-day political happenings. He presents the dramatic events and incidents in an artistic way, which provides the reader information

In modern times, the horizon of journalism has widened and it has transcended the limits of mere reporting of political as well as entertainment and economic news. As it is a vehicle of mass-communications, it is performing the function of social intercourse between the people having identical interests. Hence, we find literary, political, economic and scientific magazines as also household or industrial magazines, which cater to the interests of their respective readers.

Scope

The farmers are information hungry and present public extension system is not able to meet the demand of the farmers for information. The farmer and extension worker ratio is widening. On the other side, communication tools development is enormous. Private extension is also coming into picture. Today, journalism in India has got lot of scope with media barons opening new channels or newspapers or publishing houses on a regular basis. The competition is so rife that each channel or newspaper tries to produce something exclusive, which in turn has given the audience a great deal of variety.

Sources of News

1. Result demonstrations
2. Research Stations
3. Research publications – Annual reports, highlights
4. Kisan melas
5. Farmers fields
6. Agricultural Universities / State Departments

7. Other extension activities like field days/training programmes, rythu sadassus etc
8. Plan estimates related to agriculture and allied activities
9. Agriculture finance institutions
10. Agriculture input agencies
11. Agriculture Market committees
12. Electricity and irrigation sectors
13. Farmers committees and associations
14. NGOs etc.

Types of News

- Before and after event stories
- Experience and success stories
- New development – such as pest outbreaks, scientific discoveries, weather and crop conditions, progress made on plans
- Predictions – such as long range crop and livestock report economic outlook information, long range weather forecasts
- Subject matter - when tied to an event, situation, development or problem

Purposes of Journalism

1. They may inform, disseminate news and miscellaneous non-news items.
2. They may influence, giving the public either a social or commercial message.
3. They may be entertaining, presenting features, fiction, humour, comics and similar methods.

Functions of Journalism

1. News function

The primary function of press is to inform. Examining the glut of public occurrences, ideas and situation, newspapermen must determine which will interest the public. Apart from

factual presentation of news, for the complex situation the interpretation and explanation are also required.

2. The opinion function

Modern man frequently finds himself in the midst of confusion which product to purchase? What decision to take? Whom to vote? He requires a medium of communication, which will guide him to understand the positive and negative points of the situations because of logical arguments. Thus, the modern press has to be both a daily teacher and a daily tribute. Therefore, the editorial is the only means of building public opinion.

3. The Entertainment function

Entertaining the public is the function and a business too. Since it is too big a job for the local staff, newspaper relies upon syndicated materials. Entertainment is where you find it. It pops up in human-interest stories and news features. Public interest in various features, comics in particular sometimes determine the choice of a newspaper.

Principles of Farm Journalism

Our purpose in writing is to communicate information. Therefore, our first consideration is our reader audience. If you were writing for a scientific paper, you would use a vocabulary and style different from what you would use when writing for the general public.

How clearly you communicate information to average readers depends on how well you select, sift and sort your facts

(1) Select Facts

- a) Suitable subject matter. Does it meet a need? Is it timely? Is it of current interest? Does it
- b) Readers: Who are the people you want to reach? What are their problem, interests and educational levels, Do they have the environment and capacity to make use of the information?
- c) Purpose of Publication: What do you want it to teach and accomplish? Do you want to stimulate interest in a programme or do you want to influence the people to do something?

(2) Sift Facts

- a) Sift essential facts necessary to give information clearly.

- b) Screen out difficult concepts, which are beyond reader's experience or understanding (e.g.) p^H value, calorific value.
- c) Give layman an application of subject rather than a detailed explanation.
- d) Express highlights.
- e) Do not try to impress the lay reader with all you know.
- f) Do not document everything.

(3) Sort Facts

- (1) Arrange facts in logical order
- (2) Set out important points in 1-2-3 order(step y step)
- (3) Guide reader with attractive subheads and suitable illustrations and pictures.

(4) ABC's of Journalism

Accuracy, Brevity and Clarity which are fundamentals of good writing.

(5) Adopt the following Tips for Readability

- (1) Short sentences, clear in meaning, simple in construction with few prepositional phrases and dependent clauses.
- (2) Simple words which are familiar and concrete words.
- (3) Personal or human - interest words.

Photo-Journalism

It is a process of creating a mental picture through the combined use of visual and verbal medium that could come about on the printed page.

Elements of photo-journalism

- (1) Possesses a visual impact
- (2) Defines life in the picture form
- (3) It represents reality.