

Development of Journalism Education in India: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract: To cope up the challenge of globalization and information revolution, journalism education in India has flourished extensively by last seventy years of its inception. As a subject of profession, communication and journalism is very significant in the context that communication revolution in India has been identified as the crucial pathway to national development. Therefore, the media industry has expanded immensely and to fulfill its growing demand, within last seven decades from the beginning in 1941, a good number of university departments and institutions have been established for media education. More than 200 departments and institutes in India offer Bachelor, Masters, Post Graduate Diploma, MPhil and PhD programs in the field of mass communication and journalism. Among them, a good number of departments and institutes, enriched with scholarly professors, are internationally renowned in terms of global standard in media education. These prominent institutes, well-equipped with modern facility are playing contributory role by obtaining glorious achievements. However, still there are many Indian journalism institutes which beset with manifold problems including fund constraint, westernized text and curricula, insufficient research, lacking in practical training and so on. Nevertheless, Indian leading journalism institutes deserve kudos in terms of standard media education.

This article strives to pinpoint the status of prominent journalism institutes in India by identifying problems and prospects

Keywords: Journalism Education, Prominent, Media Professional, Journalism Institutes, Information Revolution

I. INTRODUCTION

The educational standard of journalism and communication has been immensely developed in India in the line with information and communication revolution. Since the birth of journalism education in 1941, lots of institutes have been established to provide media education among the students of home country and foreign countries keeping pace with the global requirement. These institutes or departments significantly play an important role in the development of effective journalism which is the vital pathway to national progress. Among many institutes or departments some are very outstanding in the field of communication and journalism maintaining international standard.

Inception of Journalism Education in India

In India in 1941, Punjab University (now in Lahore, Pakistan) launched journalism education by establishing journalism

department. Through this journey journalism education in India has passed more than seventy years (Pattnaik, 2001). In Indian sub-continent, Professor P. P Singh provided first training effort in media education at the Punjab University during 1941-42 (Eapen, 1991).

Following the independence in 1947, the journalism department of Punjab University was shifted to Delhi in 1948 (Pattnaik, 2001). The new campus of the Punjab University (India) was shifted to Chandigarh in 1962. As Professor Singh did his post-graduation from the University of Missouri, being influenced he introduced their text and syllabus in Punjab University. So at the beginning stage of media education, this sub-continent did not get indigenous flavor in media studies.

Likewise, most of teachers at that time and later actually could not overcome the ambience of US orientation in journalism education (Eapen, 1991).

In 1947, journalism department was established in Madras University and the department offered Diploma course in journalism. At the initial stage there were no regular teachers. Some working journalists conducted classes. After three years in 1950, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication was established in Calcutta University which is one of the oldest and top ranking university in the sub-continent. This university offers Masters and Post Graduate Programs in Journalism, Media Studies, Film, Television, Sports and Mass Communication Management (Singh, 1960).

In 1952-53, in the independent India, Hislop Christian College, Nagpur University established a full-fledged journalism department. American Professor Dr. Roland E. Wolsely and famous American text book writer of his time Professor Floyd Baskette contributed much for the development of media education in Nagpur University (Eapen, 1991). Still their contribution plays valuable role in journalism education in India.

II. METHOD

This study has been done on the basis of secondary data analysis. The data was collected from different websites and online portals of prominent institutes of journalism education in India. On top of that, data has also been collected from online newspapers, magazines and relevant websites. To

fulfill the purpose of this study, only prominent institutes and departments pertaining to journalism education have been selected.

Prominent Institutions and Departments in India

Currently more than 100 journalism and mass communication departments in different universities are providing post-graduate diploma, degree, MPhil, and doctoral programmes (Pattnaik, 2001).

Moreover, over 100 institutions offer various courses of communication and journalism including reporting, editing, photography, videography, printing, public relations and etc (Muppidi, 2008).

Among all, some renowned institutions and departments in journalism education in India are discussed below:

Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi (IIMC):

On 17th August, 1965 the then Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Smt. Indira Gandhi inaugurated this institute (Muppidi, 2008). With the concept of American expert team led by great scholar Wilbur Schramm and assistance of UNESCO, this institute launched its journey in New Delhi. Since its inception, it has been marching forward as a beacon in the context of Indian journalism education (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Regarding IIMC, Gaunt remarked,

“there is little doubt that the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, located in New Dehi, is the best equipped, best funded and most prestigious training institution in India.” (Bockino & Hill, 2015).

Comparing with other institutes in India, IIMC has been termed as,

“If IIMC is the grandfather of Indian journalism programs, then the Asian College of Journalism(ACJ) in Chennai and the Indian Institute of Journalism and Mass Communication(IINM) in Bangalore are its teenage children” (Bockino & Hill, 2015).

Equipped with latest facilities IIMC is now offering different disciplines of media education including Radio and Television Journalism, Advertising, Public Relations, Print Journalism, Photo Journalism and so on (Bockino & Hill, 2015).

Renowned media scholars are teaching at IIMC. A current student (studying in 2015) of IIMC expressed his experience:

“IIMC really boosted my confidence not only with respect to my oratory skills, but also my writing skills. For the course of English Journalism, renowned practitioners like Mr. Amit Sen Gupta, Mr. K.G. Suresh and Mr. Anand Pradhan have taught us about how media works and also gave us an insight into the media industry” (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Having the headquarter in Delhi, IIMC has five regional centers in Aizwal (Mizoram), Amravati (Maharashtra), Dhenkanal (Odisha), Jammu (J&K) and Kottayam (Kerala).

This academia is glorified with having distinguished scholars like Professor K.M. Srivastava, Dr. J Jethwaney, Professor S. Raghavachori and others. Since IIMC was established with one of the missions of providing training to the officers of the Indian Information Service, every year this institute offers a number of specialized short-term course to train up the media persons from private and government organizations (Campus Diaries, 2015).

AJ Kidwai Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (AJK MCRC)

AJK MCRC is worldwide recognized as a leading institution in the field of mass communication and journalism. Through the co-operation of York University, Toronto and the Canadian International Development Aid Agency (CIDA), AJ Kidwai, established this institute.

York University provided the first generation teachers whereas CIDA gifted a range of sophisticated production equipment to MCRC. Renowned documentary filmmaker James Beveridge led the team of teachers provided by York University to MCRC.

This institute offers MA in Mass Communication and MA in Convergent Journalism (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Zulfi Razaa, a current student (in 2015) shared his experience:

“...MCRC has one of the best set of equipment, production studios, radio setups etc. Students can easily issue equipment to have a hands on experience” (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Indraprastha College for Women (IP College)

IP College, established in 1924 in Delhi, is the oldest college in India and it is affiliated to Delhi University. This is one of the prestigious institutes that offer graduate and post-graduate courses in different disciplines including Mass Media and Mass Communication. IP is the only college of Delhi University to offer Bachelor in Mass Media and Mass Communication degree (IP College, 2002).

The University of Mysore

Under this university, the department of journalism started in 1951. This subject was offered as one of the three optional subjects. In course of time, journalism department achieved immense popularity among students. Dr. Nadig Krishna Murthy, one of the pioneers in journalism education in India, joined as the head of the department in 1953 and worked hard to develop the new department for more than two decades. In this university, as per the UGC (University Grants Commission) directive, a uniform three-year degree course was introduced and the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree included Journalism as a principal subject.

On August 9, 1972, the department of post-graduate studies and research in journalism was opened. Nevertheless, the formally the classes were inaugurated on 20th September, 1972. This is how, by offering MA in journalism, the University of Mysore made history in media education in India.

For the development of knowledge and skills of students, the post-graduate department of journalism renders lectures from renowned scholars and professionals (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Asian College of Journalism, Chennai (ACJ)

ACJ was founded in Chennai in 1994 by the Indian Express Group. This institute offers 11-month long post graduate diploma, divided in three terms, comprising the basic requirements of journalism including reporting and editing. Moreover, ACJ also provides the adequate training for radio, television and new media (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Anujeet Datta Majumdar, alumnus of ACJ, remarked the following:

“The most important thing that you can learn from ACJ is resilience and self-reliance. Those qualities, the cornerstone to any good journalistic career, are why I think ACJ is such a good school to go to. Learning how to write, cover all the angles and having a good peg are all incidental; things you can learn on the field, or in any decent writing course” (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication (MCNUJC)

MCNUJC was established in 1990 and formally inaugurated in 1991 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh by the provincial legislative assembly. This university offers full-time programs only and does not offer any correspondence or distance education programs. It offers Bachelor's, Master's and PhD degrees. MCNUJC possesses 11 departments including the Departments of Electronic Media, Journalism, Mass Communication, New Media Technology, Public Relations & Advertisement Studies and so on (MCNUJC, 2015).

Editworks School of Mass Communication NOIDA

It was founded in 2002 in Noida in Delhi and it is affiliated to MCNUJC. It is one of the prominent institutes for training in media, multimedia and web media (Editworks School of Mass Communication, 2015).

Maharashtra Institute of Technology-International School of Broadcasting and Journalism (MIT-ISBJ)

This institute is a center of excellence in providing mass media education and training which is the combination of tradition and modernity. It especially offers Broadcast Journalism, Video Production, Advertising, Public Relations and etc..

Dr. Vishwanath Karad, the founder member of Maharashtra Academy of Engineering and Educational Research

(MAEER), had a vision to build a world-class institution in Maharashtra. Dr. Karad took the initiatives and became successful to establish MAEER and MIT in 1983 with a mission to train the students with modern facility by inspiring them towards the ethical values of journalism to contribute for the betterment of society (MIT, 2015).

Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Pune (SIMC)

The Symbiosis Institute of Journalism & Communication (SIJC) was inaugurated in 1990 in Pune. It was renamed as Symbiosis Institute of Media & Communication (SIMC). It provides global standard media education by reputed scholars and professionals.

A student, Jui Mukerjee, current batch of 2016 says,

“SIMC is one of the top colleges that provides a full time masters unlike others that give just a PG Diploma. Its location is vital as it is close to Mumbai which is the media hub of the country” (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Khusababu Tharke University of Journalism & Mass Communication (KTUJM)

This university was particularly set up for journalism education in December, 2004 in Rajpur, Chhattishgarh. Former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee inaugurated this university on April 16, 2015.

This university especially provides Bachelor, Masters and PhD programs in journalism related subjects (KTPAJV, 2015).

Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media, Bangalore (IJJNM)

This is one of the South Asia's leading institute for post-graduation in journalism and media. It was founded in 2001 by a charity trust in Bangalore which is the heart of high-tech industry (Campus Diaries, 2015).

A current batch student (2014-15), Saheli Sen Gupta said,

“At IJJNM, we not only learn how to be journalists but also work towards being one in the process. Here we're not treated as mere students but as trainee journalists” (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Apart from the said academia, in media education in India there are some other reputed institutes mentioned below:

Xabier Institute of Communication, Mumbai, Manorama School of Communication, Kottayam, Times School of Journalism, New Delhi, Manipal School of Communication, Manipal School of Communication, Manipal (Campus Diaries, 2015).

Moreover, some other famous universities in communication and journalism are mentioned below:

Banaras Hindu University, University of Calcutta, Chennai University, Pune University, Kurukshetra University, University of Mumbai (UOC, 2015).

American Influence in Institutes and Departments in India

From the above discussion it is evident that there is strong influence of American academicians in the media education in India since the beginning stage. We find that Professor PP Singh, Masters from USA, provided first journalism training in India in 1941-42 and being influenced by his alma mater University of Missouri, he prepared the pattern of journalism education in India. Many of later professors followed his structure (Eapen, 1991).

During 1952-53 the journalism department was organized with the complete collaboration of American scholars Dr. Ronald E. Wolsely and Professor Baskette (Eapen, 1991).

India's renowned journalism institute IIMC in Delhi was founded by the direct co-operation of American expert team. Recognizing the contribution of US team, in IIMC'S website in early 2014, it was mentioned,

“the blueprint for the institute was drawn up by a team of internationally renowned mass communication specialists, representatives of UNESCO and of the media in the country” (about US)” (UOC, 2015)

Likewise, US orientation is also found in many other university departments and institutes in India. At the initial stage of establishment of journalism department in the University of Mysore, the School of Journalism, Southern Illinois University extended full co-operation (Bockino & Hill, 2015).

The influence of US is clearly reflected in Indian media education in most of the prominent institutions including IIMC, ACJ, IJNM since many scholars are teaching there after obtaining Masters and PhD degree from leading universities of USA (Bockino & Hill, 2015).

The influence of US education contributes significant role in the development of journalism education. However, over dependence, to some extents, badly distracts the students in learning media education through indigenous paradigm (Pattanik, 2001).

Problems and Prospects of Journalism Education in India

After passing over seven decades Indian journalism education is glorified with many achievements. Nevertheless, still the standard of media education is not up to the mark of expectation though it is undoubtedly the best among South Asian countries.

It is praiseworthy that different Indian institutes including IIMC, IJNM, ACJ, MCRC and so on have been providing combined teaching and training of theory and practical aspects of mass communication and journalism rendering modern equipment. Renowned scholars and competent professionals are teaching in the leading institutes. As a result, lots of

brilliant students are being nurtured duly to establish themselves to be skilled journalists. Moreover, through such institutions, working journalists are also getting scope of effective training to excel their professional development.

It is a very positive sign that in many leading universities in India the syllabuses of journalism studies have been revised or upgraded by incorporating advanced topics like broadcast communication, rural communication, science communication and agricultural communication and some other special modules (Pattanik, 2001).

In the line with the importance of news on money market, many institutes are offering the course of business journalism and it deserves kudos

Hereby some drawbacks have been focused. A major constraint to media education in India is the lacking in locally relevant textbooks, advanced study materials and professional journals (Pattanik, 2001).

Moreover, course curriculum still needs to be modified to indigenous pattern though significant changes have already been from western-oriented to Indian pattern (Muppidi, 2008).

Another problem is that most of the universities are located in urban areas including metro cities and these universities do not provide training for the students to be rural communicator and as a result students cannot build their career for covering reports on problems of rural area (Pattanik, 2001).

Although sufficient funds are available for medical, engineering, management and other professional subjects in universities, mass communication and journalism departments have to search for funds from several corners (Muppidi, 2008).

Still in India media and communication research is insufficient albeit many vital studies have been done. According to the UGC report,

“Communication research is an absolutely virgin field in Indian universities. It is more true in the case of university departments which cater mainly to the needs of the language press” (Pattanik, 2001).

The problems stated above can be overcome by timely and effective steps adopted by policy makers of relevant government and private organizations.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Course pattern should be more upgraded by rendering latest technological exposure so that students can effectively face the challenge modern media industry.
2. Journalism training program should be designed in tune with the updated mode and expectations of global media.
3. Media education should be planned as an integrated development program considering the current trends like privatization, liberalization and globalization.

4. To standardize the whole education system in journalism, renowned scholars, policy makers, bureaucrats, professionals should be engaged to prepare the curricula, admission procedure, recruitment norms and assessment techniques.
5. The teachers should be internationally trained by ensuring their participation in international training, seminar and workshop. There should be abundant scope for the teachers to develop themselves by achieving advanced level of degrees from top universities of the world.
6. Adequate funds should be provided to journalism institutes for the overall development of media education.
7. In order to produce technologically more skilled journalist, special focus should be given to IT knowledge pertaining to communication and journalism.
8. Curricula should be restructured in applicable cases to design special courses on web journalism, web designing, digital communication, online radio, online television and etc.

IV. CONCLUSION

After passing more than seventy years, at this stage, journalism education in India has almost reached the global standard although there are some limitations in a good number of institutes. With the passage of time, leading journalism departments in India have been significantly playing very vital role by providing competent professionals who shoulder the global challenge of information revolution for the betterment of the country. However, still the status of journalism education reflects series of constraints with respect to adequate fund, media research, qualitative learning method and so on. In order to promote the journalism education in India the relevant policy makers, bureaucrats, prominent

scholars and competent professionals should come forward to adopt and implement the befitting steps.

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