

An Impact of Emergence of Close Nexus Between Indian Politics and Media on Indian Democracy-An Evaluation

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Abstract:

The current trend in Indian politics is examined in this article, especially how the media electoral process has increased political abuse of the election process for their narrow aims. This article also studies the extent of government advertising in India's most popular weekly newspapers, as well as how advertising influences editorial content development. It shows how political parties sacrifice ideas, ethics, and morality that were once associated with them to win elections. It has further reinforced primal values. They are oblivious to the fact that they have a larger national responsibility in this process. It examines how the media has enabled political parties to reach big audiences and inform them about critical issues such as policies and elections. The media, in theory, should be seen as a facilitator of democracy, with better-educated citizens resulting in a more democratic society. The media has been a more active player in politics in recent years, and the strong relationship that exists between politicians and journalists has become a threat to Indian democracy. However, concerns such as media involvement in governance, corporate involvement in politics, and, most importantly, the use of money, muscle power, and the criminalization of politics must all be addressed.

Keywords: Close Nexus Between Politics and Media, Paid News, Prevailing Trend in Indian Politics, Media, Impacts On Democracy, Media Involvement in Governance, Influence of Money and muscle power.

Introduction

The media has been a more active player in politics in recent years, and the strong relationship that exists between politicians and journalists has become a threat to Indian democracy. However, concerns such as media involvement in governance, corporate involvement in politics, and, most importantly, the use of money, muscle power, and the

criminalization of politics must all be addressed. In actuality, this has become a well-known feature of Indian politics. In India's Politics, Media Trends The media is the world's most powerful force. In a democratic society, it serves an undeniable purpose. The government's watchdog is a free and independent press. A snapshot of media behaviour is necessary due to the process of agenda framing and gatekeeping involved with media. It's concerning that the media is an oligopoly. They have the power to convict the innocent and exonerate the guilty, and they utilise this enormous power to sway public opinion. In addition, my research looks into the operation of the media. Because it shapes and impacts public opinion and highlights issues of public interest, the media has a considerable impact on politics. As a result, the media cannot impose its agenda on the selected huge commercial houses that control it. The only rationale for this gatekeeping is for journalistic purposes. Otherwise, crony capitalism -an unholy alliance between politicians and large corporations would endanger a country's political system. Any situation like this would spell the end of the democratic political system as we know it. It is a powerful tool for detecting the powerful and corrupted. As a result, a free press serves as a formidable check on the government's authority and influence over its citizens, and the media and politics are closely interwoven. the current trend in Indian politics, particularly how the media electoral process has increased political awareness while also increasing political parties' exploitation of the election process for their narrow aims It also highlights how winning elections has become the primary criterion for success for political parties. How to win elections, political parties compromise with ideas, ethics, and morality that were once associated with them. In a democratic country like India, the media is more than just a source of political news. It has an impact on political beliefs and ideals. Various media channels give distinct party policy viewpoints that are related to political participation through news coverage and late-night programmes. It has been discovered that news consumption leads to political persuasion, therefore the more people utilise social media platforms for news, the more their political views would be influenced. The following are the consequences of India's close ties between politicians and the media on the country's democracy.

I. Media shows bias towards certain Political Personalities during the Election campaign:

there are several examples of media prejudice toward certain political personalities. When we compare Modi's confrontational media appearances to those of Rahul Gandhi of the Congress, whose fortunes plummeted after just one wobbly appearance in a widely broadcast television interview, we observe that the former's fortunes have plummeted. Another aspect that Rahul is fully aware of is that the media can veto candidates. An excellent example is how electronic media blacked out his public addresses if they coincided with Modi's. Market considerations such as a target rating point (TRP) (or television rating point for televisions) is a metric used in marketing and advertising to compare target audience impressions of a campaign or advertisement via "Through a communication medium that is proportional to the size of the intended audience population." The election coverage on television was also notable for providing Modi significantly more airtime than other candidates. The current prime minister received 3.2 times the amount of attention as Kejriwal and 7.7 times the

amount of coverage as Gandhi. This evident anti-Modi bias raises fundamental concerns about the role of television in the election campaign.

II. *The emergence of paid news syndrome:* Paid news is defined as the publication or transmission of a news item that is generally slanted or untrue for the benefit of a certain party in exchange for a fee. The Indian media's credibility has been harmed by a growing trend of paid news. Paid news has been reported in the media, with politicians paying media outlets for favourable treatment. This research examines incidents of paid news in Indian media using ethical precepts and a theoretical framework of ethics. It's a long-standing tendency, but it became more visible after the 2009 general elections. In a 2009 report on paid news, the Press Council of India (PCI) defined it as "any news or analysis appearing in print or electronic media for consideration." In a 2009 report on paid news, the Press Council of India (PCI) defined it as "any news or analysis appearing in print or electronic media for consideration in cash or kind." In its 47th report on "Issues Related to Paid News," the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, which is part of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoIB), backed PCI's classification and referred to the problem as "paid news syndrome." For example, The Indian Express reported on November 25, 2013, that the Indian Election Commission had discovered examples of paid news in favour of Madhya Pradesh Parliamentary Affairs and Law Minister Narottam Mishra. When huge money manipulates media content and ethics, news coverage and free speech practice are disturbed, according to the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) created by the Commission in the district, which identified Minister reportage in local publications as "paid news."

III. *Media Ownership and Politics of Convenience:* in any society, media is one of the most powerful vehicles for launching a robust political narrative. The information that is transmitted to the audience and then ingested has a direct impact on public opinion. This information is essential for a democracy's survival and the flourishing of dissent. However, in recent years in India, there has been a concerning trend in which the media has come under fire for straying from its original mission of relaying information instead of catering to special interests. The relationship between power and the media has a long history. Controlling the media has been crucial in obtaining public consent and suppressing criticism. Controlling the information space can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Direct control through the imposition of severe laws and regulations that limit the scope of what can be reported, influence through governmental money, such as for advertising, or covert control through media ownership. The latter is a clever and unobtrusive means of restricting critical reporting and regulating the political conversation. Additionally, using a variety of pressure tactics to compel media outlets to practise self-censorship is a control tool.

IV. *The emergence of a close relationship between media owners and political power:* Over the last decade, the Indian media landscape has evolved dramatically. With technological advancements, the media sector has grown like never before, expanding its reach in terms of

the number of sources available, whether on television, radio, or in newspapers. While this has established an outstanding market growth trend, the underlying repercussions of this quickly expanding media ecosystem have also presented several issues. People with access to power have been successful in influencing information transmission through media houses, partly owning these channels and tangentially influencing the way news is delivered, by partially owning these outlets. It is starkly evident that media is owned by those people who have direct access or are close to power. Media ownership has a considerable impact on the perspectives provided in reporting, and bias is unavoidable in such situations. Viewership and readership are disproportionately controlled by media proprietors with political ties. Dr Subhash Chandra, the co-owner of Zee News, has been an independent member of the Rajya Sabha, the Indian Parliament's Upper House, since August 2016, despite being elected with the support of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members in the state of Haryana. Zee News, one of the top four Hindi news stations in the country, is owned by Zee Media Corporation Limited (ZMCL), which is widely considered as favourable to the BJP and its style of politics. A handful of regional news networks are owned or controlled by politicians.

v. Media Dependence on Government Advertising: This reliance becomes extremely problematic when media organisations earn extra money by running, in particular, government commercials, which helps to disseminate their agenda. Because of the media's financial reliance on government advertisements, they must toe the line of delivering favourable coverage for the government. By using such 'soft pressure,' a transparent and unbiased covering of content is greatly harmed. There is often an unseen pressure on a newspaper or television channel to convey the government's point of view on a sensitive issue. According to 2017 estimates, the government department that grants government advertisements to print outlets, the Department of Audio-Visual Publicity, pays INR 21.34 million / USD 0.32 million for Hindi print advertising and INR 14.09 million / USD 0.202 million for English print advertising. As a result, government advertising is the lifeblood of many, particularly smaller Hindi newspapers, allowing the government to use its ad spending and the resulting financial dependence on media outlets as a tool of control. According to the most recent statistics, there are 380+ TV news channels and 118,239 publications, including 17,239 daily.

VI. Governments, political parties, and large businesses have seized control of the media: resulting in a worsening situation for individuals on the outskirts of society. It begs the question of whether there should be legislation prohibiting huge corporations and politicians from owning media. There is an urgent need to address the issue since the room for critical discussion is rapidly narrowing. Because it is often hidden from the public eye, media ownership is one of the least recognised elements threatening press freedom and jeopardising ethical journalism. According to Free Press Unlimited, the ownership of media by persons with vested interests has enabled governments and corporations to manipulate the media. In India, there are currently no regulatory safeguards against the political influence of the

media. There is no requirement that the owners or their family members disclose their political commitments.

VII. Impacts on Indian Democracy: The practise of "paid news," masquerading as an informative piece of news, has taken on severe dimensions, frequently confusing readers and viewers. It undermines the fundamental democratic value contained in India's Constitution. It has now spread beyond individual journalists and media firms, becoming pervasive, structured, and well-organized. The media should be considered as a facilitator of democracy in theory, with better-educated citizens leading to a more democratic society, but in practice, it is hurting democracy in India. Political leaders, academics, journalists, and media proprietors have all expressed their displeasure with this. Concerns regarding the corrosive impact of such activities in India. Our media sector is the largest and most diverse in the world. Because commercial print media is privately held, it is assumed that it is immune to government influence.

Conclusion

"A free press is crucial to a democratic society," it is suggested, "otherwise people may lose faith in democratic values." This should be prevented by adhering to moral standards and acting independently. The Indian government need a common set of ethical rules, the Press Council of India should be given punitive powers to deal with sponsored news instances, and media ethics should be included in the journalism curriculum at Indian institutions. The basic democratic value contained in the Indian Constitution should be addressed, with politicians bribing media firms for favourable coverage. In India, self-control as well as specific mechanisms should be used to protect oneself. Political ownership of television and print media should be restricted under Indian law. As a result, the PCI and the MoIB recommended that the media and news outlets distinguish between news and political advertising. The news must be impartial, fair, and unbiased for the democratic spirit to survive.

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