



Symposium on
**Vision for Media
& Communication
Education in India**

7 August 2015 | IIC, NEW DELHI

UKIERI
UK-India Education
and Research Initiative


CMS Academy
Nurturing Talent & Concerns



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AGENDA

Time	Theme	Speakers
9:30-10:00 AM		Registration
10:00-11:00 AM	Keynote Speech by Chief Guest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Col. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore* , Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting
11:00 AM-12:30 PM	Session 1 Panel Discussion: Setting Vision for Media & Communication Education in India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dr. N Bhaskara Rao, Chairman CMS ■ Prof. B. K. Kuthiala, VC MCNUJC ■ Prof. B.P. Sanjay, Hyderabad University ■ Mr. N K Singh, General Secretary BEA ■ Ms. Nalini Rajan, Dean ACJ ■ Mr. Q W Naqvi, Senior Journalist
12.:30-1:00 PM	Ranking Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mr. Prabhakar Kumar, CMS Academy
1:00-1:45 PM		Lunch
1:45-3:30 PM	Parallel Session 2A Group Discussion: Media & Communication Industry Requirements and Employer Expectations	Mr. Dinesh C Sharma , Senior Journalist (Moderator) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prof. S Joshi, Former VC KTUJM ■ Mr. Shashidhar Nanjundaiah, Dean ITMI ■ Prof. Obaid Siddiqui MCRC Jamia ■ Mr. T V Venkateswaran, Vigyan Prashar ■ Mr. Shravan Garg, Senior Journalist ■ Prof. Ashok Ogra, Director AIMC ■ Prof. G Ravinderan, Head Dept. of M&J Madras University ■ Mr. Veera Raghav, The Hindu ■ Dr. Amitabh Srivastava, Associate Prof., Galgotia University ■ Ms. Patricia Mukhim , Editor Shilong Times
1 :45-3: 30 PM	Parallel Session 2B Group Discussion: Harmonizing Curriculum and Teaching Practices	Ms. P N Vasanti, DG, CMS (Moderator) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prof. Anil Kumar Rai, Director Centre for Media and Communication Studies, MGHAV ■ Mr. Sudhir Rinten, Assistant Professor MAC ■ Dr. C.K.Ramaiah, Dean, School of Media and Communication Pondicherry University ■ Dr. Mira K Desai, Associate Professor SNDT ■ Prof. Sanjeev Bhanot, Head Center of Mass Communication University of Rajasthan ■ Dr. Mausami B, Associate Prof., Visva-Bharati University ■ Prof. Rakesh Batabayal, Associate Prof. CMS JNU ■ Prof. Kanchan Kaur, Vice- Dean IJNMM ■ Ms. Durga Bhavani, Tirupati University ■ Mr. Arul Selvan, IGNOU
3:30-3:45 PM		Tea/Coffee Break
3:45-5:00 PM	Session 3 Panel Discussion: Indicators of Quality Media and Communication Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mr. Santosh Desai, CEO Future Brand ■ Mr. Vineet Kumar, Author& Media Critic ■ Mr. Alok Kumar, Executive Editor IBN ■ Mr. RajKumar Jha, Communication Consultant ■ Mr. Jayanta Ghosal, Editor ABP ■ Mr. Ashish Sinha, General Secretary BCCC ■ Mr. KG Suresh, Consulting Editor DD News ■ Mr. Abhilash Khandekar, Editor Divya Marathi

*Invited

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Faculty Development Programme
To Support Research and
Innovation in Media Institutions
in India and United Kingdom

CMS and Stirling University project funded by UKIERI. 2013-15

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1. About the Project

This project envisions faculty development as a mode to develop quality standards and standardizations in this sector. This is based on the belief that faculty/trainers are key for enabling research culture and innovation in this sector. The Faculty Development Programme will address emerging developmental needs of educators from the media sector in India with a special focus on News Media Education.

Objectives

- Conduct research to identify key trends and quality issues in media education in India and the UK, mapping the professional, institutional and industrial relationships which contextualize media education.
- Review and analyze Skill Development / Higher Education sector experience, compare delivery patterns and approaches, and document best practice in news media education in the UK and India.
- Set goals and standards for media education to enhance employability of news professionals through development of quality parameters in both Higher Education and Skill Development courses in India, and evaluate educational structures for best performance.
- Create interactive training fora for sharing best practices in both media education and in the pedagogical techniques which best enable faculty development.

There are four key pieces of research in this project – two each in UK and India. In India, both primary and secondary data analysis will be done to achieve the project objectives. The two parts of the Indian research are:

1. **Media Education in India: Key Trends and Quality Issues-** A detailed mapping of Indian media institutions has been conducted in this research through secondary research and interviews with experts and Industry professionals.
2. **Training Needs Assessment of Indian News Media Faculty** -Extensive research was conducted to do the training needs assessment of the Indian News Media Faculty. Faculty, graduate students and senior editors of news channels perspective were included to understand the current training needs of the faculty and quality parameters required for meeting global standards of media education. A special focus was laid on understanding market needs of the industry.

For this study, the following interviews have been conducted to assess the training needs of the Indian Media Faculty:

- Faculty of prominent Journalism Schools, Universities and Institutes from across the country (30)
- Media graduates (60)
- Senior Editors of News Channels, Newspapers and News Websites (30)

Outcomes

Besides the above mentioned two research papers, the outcomes of this project will include:

1. **TOT Plan for Indian News Media Faculty:** Based on the research findings the Training of Trainers plan for Indian News Media Faculty will be drafted. The TOT would include looking at developing the skills of educators across the value chain. Both the creative and technical aspects of training would be included in this TOT plan. Efforts would be made to distinguish the different development requirements of faculty in skill development, vocational education, technical and higher education. A special focus would be laid on innovative research and pedagogical techniques for teaching in different types of institutions. This plan would be shared with a larger audience through the interactive website to use this framework to develop it further.
2. **Quality Parameters for Media Education in India-** This project will advocate for establishing global standards for media education in the country. To initiate this process the project will focus on developing the first draft for quality standards in news media education based on the intensive research conducted on media institutions of the country. The quality standards would address issues like minimum standards required for news media education curriculum, faculty, laws, ethics and regulations, etc.
3. **Initiate Indian Media Faculty Council (IMFC)-** The faculty/trainer development programme will help to organize the faculty by creating the **Indian Media Faculty Council (IMFC)**. This council will provide a nurturing platform for all trainers from different institutes to share learnings in a systematic and consistent manner. This council will also look at encouraging internal and external funding to help collaborative innovative industry relevant research initiatives. It will work to strengthen linkages between the media industry and academic set-ups. This council, will not only help in research based innovative pedagogy in the field of media education but also help to advocate for a regulatory body that would help to standardize media education in the country. A council mandate would be drafted including membership constitution. This would be shared online with all media institutions. Efforts would be made to seek online/ telephonic confirmation of memberships to ensure successful launch at the end of the project.

2. MEDIA EDUCATION IN INDIA: KEY TRENDS AND QUALITY ISSUES

2.1 Introduction

Media education¹ in India is anchored in two dominant systems of media industry and education sector. While the education sector in India is much evolved and is overseen by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), the media industry per say is yet not very organized.

Today, there are over 300 media or journalism schools at the university and non university systems. All these journalism and media schools offer courses at bachelor, master and post graduate diploma and diploma levels encompassing all media including print, broadcast and internet. Only courses that fall under the University system are under the purview of the UGC (University Grants Commission) and or State Governments who both fund Universities and also lay guidelines on curriculum and systems (including faculty recruitment). Private Universities that have emerged in the last few years in India are also mandated to follow certain set systems and procedures set by the MHRD. Other non-university institutes or courses do not fall under any legal authority or need to follow any set standards.

According to a UGC report², “Higher Education at a Glance”, presenting vital statistics pertaining to higher education from 1950-2013, there are 700 degree awarding institutions in total in the country. Of these 44 per cent i.e. 306 are state universities, 129 deemed universities (18 per cent), central universities and institutes of national importance are 6 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. There are only 154 private universities accounting for 22% share. Out of these, UGC funds 39 central universities, 153 state universities, 24 deemed universities and 5420 colleges. In most of these Universities, the Journalism departments receive only a fraction of the funding from UGC.

Higher education institutions in India

Type and Number of Institution	Central	State	Private	Total
University and university-level institutions	152	316	191	659
Colleges	669	13024	19930	33023
Diploma-awarding institutions	0	3207	9541	12748
Percentage enrolment in 2012	2.6%	38.6%	58.9%	100%

Source: ‘Higher education in India: twelfth five year plan and beyond’, Ernst and Young (2012)

¹ In this project, the reference to Indian News Media education is intermittently used with Journalism education, though it is a broader term that encompasses other technical courses or skill based media training courses. In short, media schools with Journalism specialization are the focus of this paper.

² Sharma, K A (2014) “Sixty Years of the University Grants Commission: Establishment, Growth, and Evolution”. New Delhi: University Grants Commission.

The speedy growth of private institutions in recent times has also made this sector highly competitive. The situation gets further complicated by several uncertified course run by reputed media organizations. Several institutes also started these courses without having enough infrastructures. Teachers have little experience as academics or professionals.

While the Indian Media industry is expected to grow exponentially at 18.4 per cent with a size of 918 billion rupees³, it is yet to create significant number of jobs in the market, also considering the number of students graduating from Indian journalism and media schools every year. The workforce demand for media and entertainment sector currently stands at 4.6 lakh, according to a study conducted by Media and Entertainment Skills Council (MESC) in 2013. It is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 13 per cent to 7.5 lakh by 2017⁴.

PWC Industry Size and Projections- 2012- 2017 (INR billion)

	2012	2013	2014E	2015E	2016E	2017E	CAGR (2012-17)
Television	383	437	529	638	753	872	17.9%
Film	112	133	151	170	185	199	12.2%
Print	212	230	255	279	304	331	9.3%
Radio	15	17	19	22	27	32	15.6%
Music	13	15	17	20	23	26	15.1%
Gaming	18	21	27	33	38	42	18.8%
Internet access	171	248	352	476	564	631	29.8%
Internet advertising	23	31	40	52	67	84	29.4%
OOH	17	19	21	24	26	29	11.2%
Total E&M sector	965	1149	1410	1714	1987	2245	18.4%

Source: PWC India Entertainment and Media Outlook 2013

Given the nature of workforce demand in the industry, the focus of the media education is expected to be more on professional training. In this regard, MESC was formed to skill workforce to meet the growing Media & Entertainment Industry which is projected to grow to INR 1457 billion by 2016. According to the MESC Skills Gap Study report, there is sizable shortage of trained professionals that possess the relevant skills for jobs within each sub-sector. "Due to the lack of a standardized knowledge infrastructure and practical training courses, employees in several occupations end up learning technical/ role-specific skills on the job. This leads to time and budget overruns at the employer end, and in one form or another, these organizations end up bearing the cost of training," according to the report.

³PwC India Entertainment and Media Outlook 2013

⁴MESC Skills Gap Study, 2013

The total current employment in the Media & Entertainment Industry is estimated at ~4.6 lakh⁵, and is projected to grow at a CAGR of 13% to 7.5 lakh by 2017. While these figures are not all relevant to the journalism related professions, it provides an overall optimistic picture of this sector.

Workforce size	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	CAGR
Film	160,800	179,300	199,900	222,900	248,600	12%
Television	144,600	170,600	201,300	237,600	280,400	18%
Print	62,800	65,700	68,600	71,700	74,900	5%
Radio	23,000	26,400	27,600	28,800	30,000	7%
Animation	22,100	24,200	26,600	29,200	32,000	10%
Gaming	17,300	18,700	22,100	23,400	25,300	10%
Digital	8,100	10,600	14,100	18,600	24,500	32%
OOH	7,600	8,200	8,800	9,400	10,100	7%
Advertising	15,600	17,200	18,900	20,800	23,000	10%
Total	461900	520900	587900	662400	748800	13%

Source: MESC Skills Gap Study conducted by E&Y

There are 17 regulatory bodies or councils that look into specific disciplines or areas of study such as AICTE, Bar Council, Medical Council of India, State Council of India, State Councils of Higher Education, and University Grants Commission to name a few. Media education comes under the ambit of UGC as of now. Discourse on the need for a separate body that will provide accreditation to institutes offering journalism courses has been going on for long now which will also reflect in our findings later in the report.

The ongoing discourse on media education in India have often referred to a steady arrangement between media schools and the media organizations, somewhat on the lines of medical or law education. However, such an initiative is yet to be taken seriously primarily because of maturity of the industry and also

“As more and more journalists these days in UK are graduates, we are able to prove the value of journalism education which has been a lot of hard work”

Chris Frost, Association for Journalism Education, UK

interest of the industry in the formal/informal media education. In fact, it has been felt that the “media organizations are indifferent to the academic programmes, particularly at the university level⁵”. Institutes such as the Asian College of Journalism, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media, Xavier Institute of Communication have industry focused diploma programmes and have been successful in

⁵Aram, Arul (2004), Malaysian Journal of Communication, “Challenges of communication as a discipline”

Education for Journalism: Vocational, General or Professional?

The question whether Journalism education is a Professional or General or Vocational is often raised even today in India.

In Wilbur Schramm's classic paper (Education for Journalism: Vocational, General, or Professional?; WILBUR L. SCHRAMM; The Journal of General Education, Vol. 1, No. 2 (January 1947), pp. 90-98, Penn State University Press), professional training is explained with reference to the field of health and law.

Schramm argues that professional journalists are made through education, experience and social demand. And hence, journalism schools trained future news men / women. But there is a practical limit with regard to journalism education and society's demand, if there would be an interaction between the two. As Schramm explains, there are three types of education that are loosely connected in journalism education- vocational, general and professional.

What is a professional education? Schramm explains an educational programme that has the following elements makes a professional education:

1. Subject matter related to profession- Journalism has yet not organized and there is no such large central body of subject matter. It rests on general education unlike law or medicine.
2. Practice with supervision – Internship or live newsroom experience
3. Licensing test- This aspect in journalism education has several times been proposed and as often rejected. The right to license implies also the right to take away a license. The right to withdraw licenses could lead to control of the press. And the other aspect is, what would they be tested on?
4. Ethical responsibility – A professional education is accountable to the sector and has certain paradigms
5. Academic and Industry interaction- Journalism schools have developed excellent working relationships with the press and made strides toward the development of research to in building knowledge base and also contributing to the industry.

In this framework, journalism education in India to an extent has made efforts on point # 1, 2 and 5. However, this study finds many experts and professionals do not consider this sufficient and still feel much more needs to be done to consider journalism as a profession. On Point # 3, there has been considerable discourse (including the then Minister of Information and Broadcasting Mr Manish Tiwari making this suggestion in the CMS Academy Symposium on August 19, 2013), however, in a democratic setup like in India, where media and its independence is integral, such a provision is not acceptable. However, the other four points mentioned by Schramm are critical indicators of any professional education and need serious consideration even Indian media and journalism education.

In conclusion, Schramm in his paper suggests the following kinds of professional schools that might develop:

- **Communication School-** Press, radio and pictures are today interlocked and interdependent. The new electronic media are blurring. A top man in any of the media

needs to know other media. On the level of ethics, public opinion, and audience research, problems soon cease to be media problems and become communication problems. Therefore, the concern of this school must be all mass communication.

- **Graduate school-** It will have to leave room for the amount of general education which will be required. It will probably follow upon a four-year under graduate course, conceived in the spirit of general education. The graduate professional school itself will be followed by a professional internship.
- **Academic- Industry interface-** It must combine the knowledge, interest and effort of student, practitioner and scholar. A number of practicing newspaper, radio and advertising profession may be in classes on fellowships or taking classes while they work.
- **Multi disciplinary course-** Without majoring in journalism, an interdepartmental major may be possible. All possible journalism courses will be removed from the undergraduate curriculum.
- **Industries experience during course or internship-** Fifteen week introduction to working journalism and then follow it by a period of experience in the summer after graduation.
- **Seminar based classes-** Basic subjects like communication law, communication and government, public opinion, the ethics of communication, the economics of communication, communication and world affairs. To introduce extracurricular practical experience. Dissertation, professional internship for 6 months and recommendation by employer and faculty of school to become important.
- **Fellowships-** Talented students to spend a year in a foreign country or in the nation's capital, or otherwise to get ready for a special job
- **Research-** Communication has not been studied scientifically. The spirit of the school's research will be akin to the spirit of medical research- to bring the latest scientific findings to the profession, and through the profession to be of help to the public. The school will make readership and readability studies available at cost to all the publications
- Schramm's paper and ideas seem to also fit the current media education scenario and ongoing discourse.

getting industry placement for its students. And it is felt at the university level, that despite their two year masters course being comprehensive, they need to reorient themselves to the changing media trend.

The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) in India is also now integrating with the formal Higher Education system in the country. The need for sectoral approach in education is also becoming more relevant within this new framework. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has listed series of 20 priority sectors (including media and entertainment sector) where human resource needs to be developed within the country. Taking a lead in the Media and Entertainment Sector, the FICCI has taken the initiative to set up a Media and Entertainment Skills Council (MESCC) and is currently developing occupational standards for various job roles in the M&E sector. The MESCC has identified around 41 occupations in sub sectors such as film, television, print, animation, gaming, radio, digital, OOH and advertising. In these sectors, it aims to make national occupational standards for each of the identified profession, so that skill based training programs can be created for each profession.

2.2 Milestones in the History of Indian Journalism Education

The birth of journalism education dates back to the early 1920s. Dr. Annie Besant⁶ made a pioneering effort in training candidates before joining journalism in Adyar, Tamil Nadu. Thereby, the American College of Journalism in Bombay (now Mumbai) was set up by Dr J B Kumarappa in 1936. Similarly, an experiment on the training of journalists was initiated by Aligarh University. It was however terminated in 1940. It was an endeavour of such colleges to introduce formal training in journalism. It was Punjab University in Lahore (now in Pakistan) that introduced a course in undivided India in 1941 with a one year post graduate diploma course. It later started the course in New Delhi in 1948.

Thereby, the need for journalism training was felt and various associations were formed to conduct training for on- the- job journalists. Journalism courses were being introduced in some universities to meet the needs of a growing number of young men who seek to take up journalism and the comprehensive survey made of the profession and industry by the Press Commission⁷. The note to UNESCO also stressed upon the need to train journalists in technical aspects.

The Indian Association of Education in Journalism was formed in January 1956 in Calcutta, with Prof. P P Singh, HOD of Journalism, Punjab University, Delhi; Prof. Averton Conger, Hislop College, Nagpur University; Dr. S N Sen, Calcutta University; Dr De Forest O'Dell,

⁶ Tandon, Ashok (2009) Media MEMANSA, "A case for standardization of journalism, media education in India"

⁷Chalapathi (1956), Note submitted to UNESCO by members of the Indian Press Association, "Comparative analysis of recent curriculum trends of international significance"

Osmania University as members. The association had an accrediting committee with members of All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, the Indian Federation of Working Journalists, the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Inter- University Board.

Similarly the Press Institute of India was set up with this purpose with the support of few prominent newspapers, UNDP and Press Foundation of India in the early 60s to conduct training for journalists. In the same decade, six university departments offering academic instructions and practical training in journalism in universities of Panjab, Calcutta, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Madras and Mysore came up. Proposals to start new departments of journalism at Agra, Lucknow, Gauhati (Guwahati), Bombay (Mumbai) and Poona (Pune) were also sent during this time.

The Government of India established the Indian Institute of Mass Communication in 1965 to set high standards in journalism and mass communication. Subsequently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) sanctioned funds for Journalism departments in central universities including the Delhi University, the Jamia Milia Islamia University, the Film Institute of India, Pune and The Banaras Hindu University, and state universities such as Kurukshetra University, Anna University, Chennai, Jabalpur University, and several other universities in 1980s.

Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism & Communication was set up in 1990. From the 90s onwards, besides state and central universities, several private universities and institutions providing a variety of courses in journalism sprung up devising their own modules and course content. Today, there are more than 300 media institutes offering courses in journalism and other applied areas.

Many valuable recommendations and suggestions have been made by various committees and groups about journalism, media training and education by The All India Newspaper Editors' Conference (1948), The Press Commission Report (1954), The Indian Federation of Working Journalists (1954), The Inter-University Board Committee (C.P.R. Aiyer Committee 1959), The UGC Committee (B. Shiva Rao Committee 1964), and The Ford Foundation group (The Wilbur Schramm Committee 1963) and UGC Curriculum Development Committee in Mass Communication (2001).

The UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems (1980s) said in 1980s, in its report, "In many countries even today, journalists are not regarded as members of an acknowledged profession and they are treated accordingly. To overcome this situation, journalism needs to raise its standards and quality for recognition everywhere as a genuine profession. To be treated as professionals, journalists require broad educational preparation and specific professional training. Programmes of instruction need to be

developed not only for entry-level recruits, but also for experienced personnel who from time to time would benefit from special seminars and conferences designed to refresh and enrich their qualifications.”

The Press Council of India tried to standardize journalism education in India and held a workshop in 2008. The workshop was attended by representatives from the media industry, media education, professional media bodies and academic institutions. A core group was formed which would look into Curriculum & Faculty, Infrastructure & training facilities, and Affiliation/Accreditation.

Improvements in journalism education must be also supplemented with funding and support for empirical research in news media’s performance and media criticism, which currently is very limited in the country.⁸

With the objective to improve education in journalism and mass communication towards the end of achieving better professional practice, discussions have often raised the need for an accrediting body or an association on the line of Media Education Association (MEA) in UK or the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in the USA is often raised. However, no such formal proposals are in pipeline to make media education, especially journalism education more standardized and relevant to the growing needs of this industry.

2.3 Methodology

This paper captures the key findings from the study that aimed to document the state of journalism education and its challenges in India, and also to draw critical lessons both for policy and systems to introduce standards and quality parameters in this important education stream.

A combination of secondary and primary research was used for this study. The secondary study mapped all the courses available online and on available publications for various courses (including nomenclature use) related to journalism and media studies in India. Information for faculty and facilities available in these institutes were also mapped.

A total of 310 universities, institutes, colleges were mapped during this study using a variety of sources including the respective institute websites and the AIU Handbooks (see table below). The various types of courses that are offered in these university departments, colleges and institutes was also reviewed.

“Teach students how to think straight about what is going on in the world at large and how to apply what they have learned to understanding and interpreting the day’s news.”

Willard G Bleyer

⁸ Kumar, Anup (2011), The Hoot, “More media regulation not the answer, media education is”

Related papers, articles and relevant websites were studied for a wider understanding of the journalism related courses and its emergence in India.

For this study, qualitative interviews were conducted with media professionals who were journalists, graphic designers, producers, media experts, veteran journalists, members of journalism associations, and

academicians. The total number of interviews conducted is 31 across 6 cities namely, New Delhi, Shillong, Guwahati, Mumbai, Chandigarh and Hyderabad. Prior appointments were taken to meet the respondents.

The study tool was a questionnaire which consisted of only open ended questions and focused primarily on challenges in the media education sector, relevance of curriculum according to industry standards, faculty development, innovation in classrooms and quality

Institute/ University/ College	Number
Central University	25
State University	81
Private University	29
Distance Learning	54
Private Institutes	48
College affiliated to university	46
Deemed University	10
Media owned institute	11
TOTAL	310

The respondents were shortlisted on the basis of the following categories-

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Print- Newspaper: 7 | 7. Government Body:1 |
| 2. Print- Magazine: 1 | 8. News Agency: 1 |
| 3. Private Broadcaster: 2 | 9. Media firm: 2 |
| 4. Online News Website: 5 | 10. Head of Journalism school or department: 5 |
| 5. Public Broadcaster: 1 | 11. Senior Faculty: 3 |
| 6. Journalism Association: 1 | 12. Freelance/ Veteran Journalists:2 |

standards. It was ensured that the respondents answered the questions emphasizing majorly on journalism education. The responses of graphic designers and producers have been taken into account keeping the technical aspects in mind.

The respondents included mostly mid level or senior journalists (minimum seven years of experience). With prior permission, the interviews were recorded in a digital recorder which were used for analysis. However, to maintain anonymity, this report will only cite the responses without naming the respondents.

These interviews also cross validated secondary findings on various institutes and courses available. Information in these interviews also queried on infrastructure, equipment, faculty details and guest faculty number, curriculum, internship programs and other such industry interactions.

2.4 Discussion on Findings

Journalism education in India is still developing and though it has grown in size and importance, it is still not treated at par with other traditional disciplines of knowledge. This discipline is striving for an identity of its own and unfortunately, there have not been adequate efforts of either the academia, industry nor the policy makers to make gainful efforts towards the same.

Issues facing media education in India relate to theory versus practice, the quality of faculty, updating curriculum and syllabus to keep pace with advancements in media technology, lack of research in media institutes and departments, reference books, modules not relevant in Indian contexts such as some of the mass communication theories.

Based on the secondary study and interviews of media professionals, the following findings and observations emerged.

2.4.1 Diversity of Media Courses

“The major challenge that the journalism education sector is facing is the mushrooming of institutes and colleges. There is no assurance of quality in these sudden spurt of colleges teaching journalism.” This was the response of a media consultant and veteran journalist during interviews conducted for this assessment.

There are two kinds of schools⁹ catering to those with an interest in media: (1) University and Academic programs offered at the postgraduate level that bring a combination of communication theory, social science research, and practical skills; (2) Professional courses that focus almost exclusively on skills with varying amounts of social theory included.

There are also different nomenclatures used for the courses with almost the same curriculum. In the mapping of different institutes and universities/ colleges, the courses offered by them were also mapped. A total of 144 courses with different nomenclatures were mapped. The following courses are currently available:

Bachelor	17
Masters Course	40
PG Diploma	40
Diploma	23
Certificate	16
PhD	6
M Phil	2
TOTAL	144

Traditionally, journalism courses have been a postgraduate offering available for students after their regular (10+2+3) Bachelor of Arts, Science or Commerce degrees. Over half of the total Indian university departments offering journalism courses are providing one-year diploma only and nearly one-fifth are providing bachelor's degree under varied course titles as Bachelor of Journalism, Bachelor of Journalism and Mass Communication, Bachelor of Mass Communication, Bachelor of Mass Communication and

⁹ Raman, Usha (2014) (Media Watch Global) Media Education in India: Caught between ideas, ideals and interests

Journalism, and the masters programme as Master in Journalism and Mass Communication, Master in Communication and Journalism, MA (Communication), Master in Science Communication (MSC), and MSc (Agricultural Communication). A few universities are offering full-time MPhil and doctoral programmes¹⁰.

Few respondents opined on the inconsistency of courses across the country. "Journalism courses even at masters level offered by various Universities vary. One can not expect same level of understanding or skills from the same MA Journalism and Mass Communication from two different Universities".

More than 80 percent of media professionals who were interviewed for this study said that though the fresh graduates came with good technical skills, they lacked general awareness and writing ability. Many senior academicians felt that entry level norms for journalism students must be stringent. Students who pass out of good media schools are well equipped. The reason is because the best students get into good institutes through higher levels of examination and in return good candidates are churned out.

"Providing human resources to the growing media platforms and resources that are not merely craft-oriented but also with a critical perspective that enables them to understand and relay the context behind the events and issues that they report or write; also inculcating ethics that allows the public who place enormous trust in them to get the correct perspective. This is needed to sift through the maze of institutional pressures that confront them directly or at times indirectly in their profession," opined Prof B P Sanjay

2.4.2 Curriculum

Interviews with media experts reveal that most journalism students are quite good at technical skills and savvy with web/social media when they leave their schools. However, irrespective of their grades, journalistic bent of mind is something that still needs lot of effort. An interviewee opined that fresh media graduated still need to be spoon fed in the initial one year and most of them rely on search engines like Google. "They are called Google journalists in our organization" he said referring to lack of depth an understanding of issues and their dependence on the web.

Almost all the respondents believed that there is an urgent need to revise the syllabus/ curriculum necessary. According to a very senior academician, "Some of the topics in journalism syllabus are not relevant now. A new model curriculum need to be rewritten keeping in mind the changes in the industry." The biggest challenge faced by most if not every journalism institute/ department is coping with the dynamic new media tools that are ever-evolving. Especially with the web/ internet becoming the core of the new media

¹⁰ Pattnaik, Dr. Satyanarayana (2002), *Sixty Years of Indian Journalism Education—Prospects and Problems*

techniques, most institutes/ faculty will have to unlearn a lot about the 'traditional' media to fully accept the new medium, according to a media professional who works for the country's first live video streaming interactive portal in the country. Moreover, since the industry is proliferating, skills and technological know-how becomes mandatory. This unfortunately is not updated by majority of institutes.

The skill set of human resources for the varied and convergent media is different although skewed in favor of seizing technology and adapting them to suit media and societal needs. In such a scenario, the genre of media content and the training to meet the software needs of the industry ranges from the editorial and reporting skills to the requirements of general entertainment content, particularly for television. It is worthwhile to point out that the Indian film industry works in tandem to meet and cater to the requirements of television shows and movies¹¹.

Industry professionals opined that the students whom they hire are not practice oriented and have no specialized skills that are relevant to the current job profiles of various types of journalist and related work. It was opined that "convergence journalism must be taught. Gone are the days when it was simply about one stream of specialization". It was even suggested that niche courses need to be offered at master's level rather than having a generic MA in Mass Communication and Journalism.

It was felt by number of industry respondents that even the projects or assignments students do during their course work is not relevant to the industry and reflects the disconnect between the industry and academia.

While some institutes have created their course curriculum as per their understanding on industry needs and placement opportunities, most syllabus in colleges and universities is quite outdated and requires updating to contemporary requirements. Some topics that were suggested to be included in the new syllabus included : various types of writing, new media, local media, Liberal arts, human rights, development communication, media research and data analytics.

One significant observation most respondents made was on the declining linguistic abilities of fresh graduates. Sufficient command was not there even for regional languages to be able to express fluently in their writing or speaking. Few respondents also felt this to be because of the weak emphasis on linguistic writing in our school system.

"The disparity between classrooms and newsrooms need to be brought together for the development of good and sustainable journalism education training"

Ralph Akinfeleye, Nigerian Association of Journalism and Mass Communication Teachers

¹¹ Journalism Education: Challenges to Universities & Training Institutions-A Perspective from India B.P. Sanjay

Regional Language Journalism Education.

To feed to emerging regional language media in India, journalism courses and schools have been in vogue for some time now. Given below are few of the prominent and popular courses:

Hindi Journalism- Hindi journalism course was started in 1993 at the Banaras Hindu University by the Hindi department. The course was named as Proyojanmulak Hindi (Journalism). Similarly other universities in India also followed suit. Such courses are mostly taught by literature teachers or continues to be part of the Hindi literature departments. The curriculum of the above course has been formulated by journalists, journalism faculty and media experts, however non-journalism faculty are the ones primarily teaching these courses¹².

Marathi journalism was instituted in 1956 in Pune University¹³ under 'Sandeshkar Kolhatkar Scholarship. A two year, part time diploma course in journalism was inducted in 1964. The course was divided into junior and senior of study. The course was made a one year full time degree course from July 1973. The department became a full- fledged regular department of the university in 1976. A short term part time certificate course was instituted in 1979. It was upgraded to a diploma in journalism (Marathi medium) course in 1986.

Telugu Journalism is offered as a full-fledged course in Telugu University. In Osmania University, it is offered as an optional paper. Affiliated colleges offer PG Diploma in Telugu Journalism¹⁴.

Urdu Journalism- Urdu Journalism course in IIMC started in 2013¹⁵. A considerable amount was spent on advertising the course, however it has not picked up as anticipated since the graduates could not find jobs. Various courses in Urdu Journalism are offered in Universities (like Urdu University and Jamia Millia Islamia), most often the curriculum is not relevant or updated.

Odia Journalism- In Odisha¹⁶, Berhampur University was first to start Journalism teaching programme in 1974. It was Chintamani Mahapatra, a journalist turned media academician who started the department in Berhampur University. IIMC started a PG Diploma course in Odia journalism in 2001. This was for the first time that IIMC started a regional language journalism course besides English and Hindi. This has gone a long way in providing quality training students and has immensely helped in raising the professional standard of journalism in Odia.

¹² Interview with DU Hindi Journalism faculty

¹³ <http://unipune.ac.in/>

¹⁴ Interview with Maulana Azad Muslim University faculty

¹⁵ Interview with IIMC faculty

¹⁶ History of Journalism in Odisha- Mrinal Chatterjee

2.4.3 Teaching Resources

A review of the resources available for teaching journalism highlighted three critical areas:

- i. A large number of text books used in Indian media institutes by the faculty and students are mostly written by foreign authors and are on the foreign media scenario. These books have limited or no relevance to the social, cultural, economic and political realities in India. A senior professor and a practicing journalist said that teachers and journalists should be motivated to write books on various areas of Indian journalism.
- ii. Every department/ institute does not have the infrastructure and equipments required to provide hands on journalism to their students. Also, as digital equipment has a short span of life and technology changes fast, it is difficult for an educational department to keep up with this change. It was opined by a senior editor that “newsrooms today are driven by advanced technology. Many channels keep upgrading their equipments from time to time. Its important that faculty are aware of these changes so that they can give hands on training to the students. This is possible only with constant interaction with the industry”
- iii. Use of technology and online platforms like YouTube, Skype, Whatsapp, Facebook and Twitter and their role in Journalism today was emphasized. For example, News today is first available on Twitter. It's important that the faculty orient students the convergence of all medium. Print and TV journalists are using mobile phones to capture video and photos, which are incessantly being used these days, instances seen in NDTV, Mint, etc.
- iv. Need for Innovation in teaching journalism and related courses was emphasized by a number of media professionals (some who also had teaching experience) interviewed in this study. Few suggested that students should begin with practice first by reporting local stories then evaluating critically such stories. Using examples from what is being practiced in the industry currently, draw and discuss case studies, create real news room situations, upload news on YouTube, etc. in essence most respondents felt that the ‘Teaching hospital’ model- where they study and practice in a newsroom as in Medical schools, was more relevant for contemporary media in India.

2.4.4 Industry- academia interaction

There is no formal interface between the academics and industry in India that look into the broader aspect of the challenges faced in media education sector. According to the director of a journalism institution, as far as the industry is concerned, there is no concern for media institutes. Some respondents felt that there is no clear vision or linkage of the educational institutes for the industry and therefore the emphasis is more on supply of journalism pass

outs than the actual demand. Mushrooming of fly-by-night institutes providing Journalism courses is also a concern reflected by few media experts.

Besides this trend of media institutes opening their own teaching institutes has also changed the sector. A senior journalist opined that these schools initially started to get cheap human resource for the media house but now has also become a source of income. "As most follow very practical and technical skill based approach, most graduates from such schools manage to get entry level supporting jobs in a media organization. But I am not sure how well they are able to rise and cope with their careers."

Media professionals particularly journalists felt that none of the academic research on journalism is relevant. Areas where academic research could come in useful according to some media professionals include competition mapping, content quality, revenue model, etc. However, as there are professional agencies who are already doing this, industry professionals do not seek academic research. Elaborating on what is ailing academic research, a senior academician said that the basic of research i.e. the use of tools and methodologies in academic research are wrong. Other sectors have rigorous research and development which is very up-to-date but there is no such department or area where such efforts are being made in journalism. Collaboration is only possible when the area of research is on relevant issues and is linked to the contemporary industry requirement, said an editor of a Hindi news portal.

"On research, while the track record of a few is comparable to the research practices elsewhere, in many cases, the rigour that is required to analyse is missing. The dilemmas of communication and media research drawing from a variety of social sciences and humanities compound the framework and also the orientation that is required to do quality research. This is where academic research, particularly leading to research degrees, requires considerable improvements and for university departments and other academic institutions to reflect on this to offer meaningful insights. Media research is also mainly pursued by industry and trade bodies. The issues pertaining to TRPs, for example, apart from other aspects, raised several concerns about basics in sampling, ethics, etc. Many of us, owing to resource constraints, depend on industry statistics notwithstanding any errors or agenda. Researchers are also many a time guided by the critical questions they intend to raise or pursue. Therefore, you have a situation where the same set of data is interpreted by researchers and leads to different observations and findings. We need to strengthen ways and mechanisms to address this," Prof. B P Sanjay¹⁷

¹⁷ Interview with Education Insider (04-06-2014, Lijo V Joseph, http://www.educationinsider.net/detail_news.php?id=1087)

Lack of research focus is also highlighted in a survey¹⁸ on the Research Contributions of various universities and academic institutions in the broader field of Communication Studies, with special emphasis on India. A pilot of 30 journals selected from subheading 'Communication' in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) was conducted. During the period 2000-10, only 17 Indian articles were published in the 30 selected journals. It was observed that India had published in 11 journals out of the selected 30 journals in this period. Only a few papers have attracted citations. One of the conclusions drawn from this survey was that India's publication activity is very limited, researchers from India are addressing only a few journals for publications of their study and also are not communicating enough.

“One of the toughest things for in journalism educators is to keep themselves up to speed with what is happening in the industry”

Judy Van Slyke, Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication

2.4.5 Faculty

Most of the experts interviewed emphasized on the necessity of hiring faculty with good practical experience. Some of them said that a balance of industry professionals coming and interacting with the media and permanent faculty must be maintained. For this to happen, the head of the institution needs to be dynamic to be able to take steps and lead, according to a prominent journalist who visits university departments for guest lectures.

Teaching is a specialised area, and when it comes to teaching journalism, despite years of experience on the field, many have failed to engage students and teach. Similarly, a faculty without any industry experience cannot provide any training about what's happening in the industry. “We need a combination of practitioners and in house faculty. And teaching is not everyone's cup of tea. As a professional in the media, you know how to get a work done. But as a teacher, one needs to explain why a work is done a particular way.” stresses a media practitioner and an academician.

Another challenge is the inability to select good teaching staff from media industry due to inflexible UGC norms. Some of the respondents also expressed concern that industry professionals have limited scope to enter the academics as UGC norms of faculty recruitment do not favour work experience and expects relevant academic qualifications and teaching experience.

It was suggested by some of the media professionals that faculty needs to be oriented and trained regularly on the developments and updates on the media sector. Some of the areas of training mentioned technological advancement in electronic media especially

¹⁸ Roadmap for Media Education in India Emerging Challenges and Prospects Centre for Culture, Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia

newsrooms, convergent journalism, market research firm/ experts training faculty on research, styles of writing, research methodology and designs, new media, etc. One of the respondent referred to the BBC's I learn programme which was conducted 5 years ago was a very comprehensive one month programme that helped journalists, faculty to gain hands-on training of BBC's journalism practice.

2.4.6 Quality standards

In the study, many have raised concern over the fact that in the absence of any common framework of journalism and communication education in India, most media universities and private institutions devise their own modules and course content. The training and education facilities in journalism are multiplying but there's hardly anything done to strengthen the existing institutes, departments, etc. Several newspapers and media houses established their own training programs, mainly for the purposes of recruiting and grooming their own reporters and editors.

Most of the media professionals and faculty were in favour of an accrediting body that will keep a check on the quality standards of journalism institutes and departments. One of our respondents was of the view that "Every institute/ department cannot be designated as a centre of excellence. Top institutes do not become the best overnight. Not only should the industry but the government give credit to good institution as centre of excellence for development by providing funds."

Associations or groups also exist such as the Karnataka State Journalism & Communication Teachers Association that was set up 10-12 years ago. Forty members meet once or twice a year to address issues related to journalism education. Other respondents said that the body should have a multi-faceted approach and without any bias look into the quality parameters of any institute/ course. Reiterating the view of many academicians, one of our respondents opined that there should be a Journalism Education Council in India similar to bodies such as the ICMR, ICAR, Bar Council and Medical Council. The purpose of the body could be to limit mushrooming of institutes without proper infrastructure and faculty.

While some feel that there shouldn't be a mandatory accrediting body. There could be a rating system within the academics and industry, according to one respondent. Some even said that an accrediting body may not bring any change as similar efforts have been made in the past. "There has been numerous dialogues, associations/ bodies have been formed, but an accrediting body cannot really function unless there's a clear objective. I have been part of

"There is a need to make the journalism students more entrepreneurial because many of them are not going to be employed by large media companies, they have to be freelancers. So, the model of profession as a journalists has changed with the shrinking journalism markets"

Loren Ghiglione, Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication

many councils like these,” said a former journalist who is in the business of offering turnkey services to media organizations. While an official said that there is no media professional body approved by government to regulate and audit the curriculum as well as other benchmarks to maintain the quality in media education. A media professional body like MCI, ICSI, ICWA, NAAC, etc should be created to audit the curriculum for different courses as well as set quality standards of institutions.

In order to authenticate quality, identify and certify higher education institutes (HEIs), Assessment and Accreditation process was initiated by Government of India in 1994 through the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) on a voluntary basis. As the only body approved by the Government, NAAC during its last 19 years of existence is able to accredit only 172 universities (28.01% of 614) and 4857 colleges (14.78% 33,023) as on 15th September, 2012 (NAAC News, Dec. 2012). The quality analysis has revealed that of the accredited HEIs only 35.38% of universities and 10.03% of colleges are graded ‘A’. If this quality rating is commuted against the total HEIs, it is extremely dismal which only supports the decision that Accreditation has to be made “Mandatory” instead of “Voluntary”.

2.5 Conclusion

While the overall issues facing the media education is almost similar to the higher education system in India, media education is further effected by lack of clarity of this education in terms of its purpose and vision. The diversity and lack of standards in journalism related media courses and institutes in India is clearly a concern reflected in this study. Common parameters or basic essential courses that are crucial for any journalism education were also found to be inconsistent across the current education provided in this sector.

The interviews with media professionals have reflected key concerns of lack of relevant platforms and interest of both the industry and the academia in interacting for a larger vision or framework for journalism education in India. The historical evolution of these courses have generally followed the perceived employment opportunities with the growing newspapers, 24x7 television channels and recent web based news and information organizations. Relevant policy related to matching requirements from educational (higher and vocational education) has not been pursued.

“There should be a body such as the Journalism Council of India that will provide accreditation to institutes offering journalism courses. And accreditation must be provided only after inspecting if they have proper faculty, infrastructure and other necessities based on four main parameters that play a key role in determining the quality of media education. They are the existence of a dynamic syllabus, practically trained and experienced faculty, updated equipments and infrastructure, and transparent selection of students in entrance exams”

Professor Obaid Siddiqui
Director, AJK MCRC

One common concern reflected by number of experts interviewed was that there are not enough job openings now in this sector. While the television and new media news sector is proliferating and most of the journalism and related jobs are only on contract basis. A senior TV journalist while responding to one of our queries said that, “There’s no job in the media industry, particularly in TV news channels. Even if there were any requirement, the students who are joining news organizations do not come with the basic ability to write let alone have some news sense. The reason is the theory-heavy curriculum our media institutes follow. They completely lack hands-on training which can be achieved by involving industry professionals in journalism classrooms on a regular basis and having field visits with practicing journalists.”

However, a senior journalist who also teaches felt that journalism education and related media courses have only aimed for finding suitable jobs that are now becoming saturated. “But why not creating entrepreneurs and job creators? We need to start thinking on this line and only then can we also contribute in really adding value to this sector.”

The review of existing literature and interviews with media experts do point at various initiatives that urgently need to be addressed to make media education in our country more relevant to this sector, and also to the nation. These include more synergy and forums for interaction between industry and academic communities; procedure for designing courses and regular reviewing courses; mechanisms to support improvements in quality, for example by learning from the experience of others, sharing good practice and ways of supporting faculty.

For creating value to the dynamic media sector, media education needs to be more quality conscious and relevant in terms of curriculum, resources, faculty development, research, management practices and industry interface. On the other hand, efforts are required to systematically address the inconsistency in the courses and delivery system of varied courses and bring in certain quality and standards to media education in India.

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3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF INDIAN NEWS MEDIA FACULTY

3.1 Introduction

Media education has undergone tremendous changes in title and the types of course available in an attempt to address the needs of a booming and dynamic media sector in India. Within the media sector, journalism – both print and electronic are still growing in terms of audience and also numbers. The latest figures show that there are more than 400 news (24x7) channels¹⁹ in various languages and more than 80000 registered publications²⁰ in our country.

By the end of 2010, it was estimated that India would require about 15,00,000 media professionals²¹. Given this large scale opportunity today there are private, government, corporate and semi-government institutions, and even individuals, offering degree, diploma, Higher Education (HD) and certificate courses.

3.1.1 Background

It is estimated that India has over 300 media institutes (including University departments) today from around 25 in the early 1980s. Today, there is a range of technical and creative Journalism courses – at different levels in both higher education (HE) and skill development (SD) system²¹. In addition to this with no separate government body to regulate media education, suffers on a range of quality and standardization issues.

The rapid mushrooming of media institutes (both public and private) in the country has meant a serious shortage of faculty and quality education. The faculty also struggles with the swiftly changing technology and specializations in this sector. Most Mass Communication & Journalism departments either have very few approved positions and or even such approved positions are filled up in very few universities, placing additional burden on existing teachers. In many cases, teachers are forced to teach courses at the PG level that they do not specialize in²². The media market is therefore flooded by professionals who are basically generalists and need further training to really deliver quality work.

¹⁹ Ministry of Information & Broadcasting website

²⁰ Registrar of Newspapers in India

²¹ Skills Gap Study For The Media & Entertainment Sector- MESC

²² Is UGC doing the right thing by privileging one kind of knowledge over the other? Vasuki Belavadi

Media education specifically require faculty that have both practical and theoretical knowledge of subjects²³. Media institutes struggle to cope with this challenge to update their students with hands-on knowledge of the field while providing theoretical grounding. A vibrant faculty that is capable of keeping pace with the rapidly changing media environment requires to develop innovative research projects that allow them to learn through actually working in the media industry. The practical hands on experience would be the context within which theory would then be taught to students in media institutes. The retired professional or the in-experienced young lecturers are both ill-equipped with the requisite balance of theory and practice to impart quality media education²⁴.

Given this context, an assessment of training needs of Faculty teaching journalism or other related courses was conducted as part of the UKIERI funded project titled “FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME – TO SUPPORT RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN MEDIA INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM”. This project envisions faculty development as the mode to develop quality standards and standardizations in this sector. This is based on the belief that faculty are key for enabling research culture and innovation in this sector. The Faculty Development Program will address emerging developmental needs of educators from the media sector in India with a special focus on News Media Education.

3.1.2 Methodology

For this assessment, interviews were conducted with media graduates, faculty and head of institutes located at nine cities and towns namely- New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Bhopal, Kolkata, Guwahati, Chandigarh, Shillong and Tezpur. Prior to the field study, the University Grants Commission list of the universities in both the private sector (deemed universities) and public sector (State and Central Universities) offering journalism and mass communication courses in India was collected from the UGC website. Other colleges and private institutions were listed from various online websites. Using the websites of those universities, colleges and institutions, the relevant courses namely Bachelor’s, Master’s and Postgraduate Diploma (PG Diploma) were identified. The duration of this study was three months (April- June 2014).

Journalism and mass communication departments and institutions across the country that represented each zone were identified. In the north zone, institutes and departments from Delhi-NCR and Chandigarh; in south, institutes, departments from Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai were identified. For east zone, departments of Journalism and Mass Communication

²³ Reviewing Communication/Media Education in India: Many Players, Diverse Directions but Lost focus...?!
Mira K Desai

²⁴ Theory and practice in journalism education- Susan Greenberg, Roehampton University

from colleges and universities in Kolkata, Guwahati, Shillong and Tezpur were identified. Similarly in the west zone, departments offering journalism and mass communication were identified in Mumbai.

The questionnaires for the faculty and media graduate interviews consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. The questions were divided into categories for each type of respondents. The faculties were asked to respond to specifics related to the courses and papers they were teaching; the number of years of academic experience; knowledge of technical equipments and software; curriculum structure; trainings, conferences attended and the academic performance evaluation by UGC (if applicable to the faculty) and the need for an independent, accrediting body. The media graduate questionnaire included questions related to the type of specializations in the course that was offered; technical training received; internship undertaken; teaching methodology; job placement and changes needed in the curriculum.

In each of the cities, Journalists from print, television and digital media organizations were also interviewed. The questionnaire for media professionals was open-ended and was on the challenges in the Indian media education sector and the gaps in the industry and academics. The questions were related to the challenges in the journalism education sector, relevance of journalism curriculum according to industry, faculty experience in industry and factors needed for maintaining quality standards in journalism departments.

In all, interviews were conducted with:

- **31 Media Faculty:** Faculty of prominent journalism schools, universities and institutes were personally met and interviewed using a semi structured questionnaire. The media faculty interviews were conducted after prior appointment and visits to the respective departments and institutions were made. Some of the media faculties have moved from the industry to academics and are working as heads of departments, assistant professors and associate professors.
- **32 Media Professionals:** In-depth interviews with mid-level and senior media professionals in newspapers, news channels and news websites representing English, Hindi and regional media were conducted for this study. The interviewees included senior/veteran journalists, editors, bureau chiefs from newspapers, news channels and news websites. Correspondents at mid level positions in newspapers, news channels and online video forum were also interviewed. Among the media experts, eminent professionals who have been in journalism as well as in academics were also contacted. It was ensured that the technical aspects of news media were also covered and interviews were held with a graphic design professional from a prominent

news channel and a production professional who specializes in news programme production.

- **62 Media Graduates:** Media alumni were interviewed for the study. These respondents had an experience of one or two years of working in various media organisations. These respondents were from across nine cities and belonged to various institutes, departments across the country.

3.2 Key Findings and Observations:

Journalism education in India is still developing and though it has grown in size and importance, it is still not treated at par with other traditional disciplines of knowledge. This discipline is striving for an identity of its own and unfortunately, there have not been adequate efforts of either the academia, industry nor the policy makers to make gainful efforts towards the same.

Issues facing media education in India relate to theory versus practice, the quality of faculty, updating curriculum and syllabus to keep pace with advancements in media technology, lack of research in media institutes and departments, reference books, modules not relevant in Indian contexts such as some of the mass communication theories.

Based on the interviews of Faculty, the following findings and observations emerged. They are explained further with the responses of the media professionals and graduates.

3.2.1 New Media Faculty profile

For this study, thirty one media educators from various institutes, universities and colleges offering mass communication and journalism courses were interviewed. Almost all kinds of Institutes/departments providing Journalism and related courses were included in this study. Only, faculty from media owned institutes could not be interviewed during this study period.

Heads of Journalism departments of selected colleges and universities, directors, deans, professors at all levels were interviewed. Only one of the interviewed had less than 5 years of teaching experience, 4 had 5-10 years of experience while most (26) had more than 10 years of teaching experience.

It was found that the Faculty teaching journalism and media related courses included both academic and practitioners who choose to leave their line for full time teaching. Around 10 faculty had industry experience of not less than 5 years before pursuing academics. One of the Faculties had 40 years of experience in journalism and is now serving as Professor Emeritus in the Journalism department of a private university for the past 4 years. However, most of the faculty (21) interviewed had no practical experience of working in the media sector.

Most of the media faculty had a Masters degrees while almost half of them were either had a PhD (2 Faculty had M Phil) or were pursuing the same. Similarly, most (20) faculty also had published articles or books, are doing industry or other projects and also regularly attend relevant conference/seminars.

3.2.2 Research

The research conducted on journalism in India is still at infant stage particularly on the electronic and new media. One of the reasons for this is the paucity of specialised faculty available in media institutions.

Type of Institution	Number of Faculty interviewed
Private Institutes	5
Central University	4
State University	8
Private University	3
Deemed University	1
Colleges affiliated to a University	5
Autonomous colleges	5
Distance Learning/ Open University	1

Almost all Faculty members felt that they do not personally nor generally in the country do sufficient research in media or journalism studies. While some of the interviewed faculty has written and published articles, they still felt that more research was required in this sector. Research and research methodology was also few of the subjects most faculty mentioned

that needed to be included in any faculty development program for Media faculty. One of the Faculties was frank enough to opine that most research conducted either by faculty or students of journalism is neither industry relevant nor do they add to the scholarship. He in fact felt that the word research in journalism is often misunderstood as merely research for journalistic stories or ideas.

Many experts in the industry feel that most of the academic research conducted in India is not at all helpful to the professionals. A prominent news journalist in the regional media said that such studies are biased and lack industry perspective. “These research studies do not add value because the findings are never related to what the industry wants to know. There are agencies already doing it. And some channels have in house research team.” “Industry academia collaboration is only possible when the area of research is on relevant issues and is linked to the contemporary industry requirements” opined an Editor of a Hindi news portal.

A Managing Editor of a regional TV news channel who also visits media departments as visiting faculty, observed that the assignment, projects or dissertation that the students conduct are very theoretical and generally do not learn anything from it.

3.2.3 Teaching methodology

Teaching is a specialised area, and when it comes to teaching journalism, despite years of experience on the field, the challenge to engage students and teach is a difficult one. Similarly, a faculty without any industry experience can find it challenging to provide any training about what's happening in the industry. "We need a combination of practitioners and in house faculty. And teaching is not everyone's cup of tea. As a professional in the media, you know how to get a work done. But as a teacher, one needs to explain why a work is done a particular way", stresses a media practitioner and an academician.

There is an important issue for media educators which is 'to know', 'to teach', and 'to apply'. Unlike other disciplines, the teachers in communication/media education are expected to 'know', and 'teach' as well as 'apply' things in their own classrooms, which can correlate to media industry²⁵.

The medium of teaching of almost all faculty interviewed was English, though few (6) of them also professed to teach in both English and their local language. Faculty also opined that they used a combination of methodologies to teach in class. These include:

- Theory- Notes, PowerPoint presentation, book reviews, film screening, discussions,
- Practice- Campus newspaper, short/ documentary films, field visits

Besides these faculty also used internships, field training, case studies, projects in community and use of mock newsroom, reporting, etc for teaching various journalism courses.

The Alumni who were interviewed also remembered some innovative and impactful teaching methodologies from their courses. These included:

- Analysis of newspapers- headlines, focus of the story, etc
- Public speaking training
- Sample news website pages
- Industry professional lectures
- Mock newsroom

This study brings out that various faculty and institutes are making efforts to make journalism education more practical and skill based. For example one faculty opined, "I think the best way of teaching journalism is to teach it out of the classroom. I mean, teaching what is expected of the new comers in the news industry. It should be more focussed on enhancing skills than teaching the methods only". The emphasis on practical Journalism training was understood as hands on practical training. This also led to most courses including industry internship as a critical component of their curriculum.

²⁵ Reviewing Communication/Media Education in India: Many Players, Diverse Directions but Lost focus...?!
Mira K Desai

Models of Journalism Education

Teaching Hospital Model: An open, entrepreneurial model of journalism education, one that stresses service as much as production, reflective practice as much as professional practice, was proposed by Donica Mensing and David Ryfe in their paper²⁶. Journalism education should be more focused on the demand side of journalism, addressing the needs of citizens, consumers, and publics. Lemman²⁷ writes that it is important to look into the “supply side” of journalism, urging journalism schools to become production centers for journalism to replace losses in the industry. Just as teaching hospitals are actual hospitals, the “teaching hospital” model would have journalism schools become actual news production operations. Train students to use new tools, teach them to report better and deeper, use the university infrastructure to set up a production facility, and the resulting increase in supply will resemble what we had before, only better.

The Entrepreneurial Model of Journalism Education: In this model of journalism education, the purpose is not primarily to serve the news industry. Rather, it is to serve the journalism that comes next: the organizations and institutions springing up to compete with the existing news industry and to contribute to new forms of democratic practice²⁸. If journalism is going to have an institutional identity in the future, it is likely going to be different from the institutional identity it has now. Journalism education can help bridge this transition by supplying students equipped to work and lead in both worlds, in the legacy institutional organizations as well as the new organizations participating in journalistic acts that have yet to be invented. An entrepreneurial model draws attention to the demand side of journalism: the citizens, audiences, companies and institutions that consume and participate in journalism in many forms. Entrepreneurs focus their attention on what people want and need to run their lives, their organizations and their communities²⁹. This is not just about economic analysis nor is it about delivering whatever sells. Entrepreneurship is far more than a purely economic concept. Teaching students to develop their own networks of experts, mentors, collaborators and peers would enable them to be independent, resourceful and successful in a communications environment structured more by networks than the one-way mass media.

3.2.4 Curriculum

This study found that there is no uniform curriculum followed for the various media courses offered in the variety of institutes and university departments. The University Grants

²⁶ Do journalism schools really need to be teaching hospitals?

²⁷ Shaping 21st Century Journalism: Leveraging a “Teaching Hospital Model” in Journalism Education by Jason Smith

²⁸ Do journalism schools really need to be teaching hospitals? Justin Ellis

²⁹ Blueprint for Change: From the Teaching Hospital to the Entrepreneurial Model of Journalism Education- Donica Mensing and David Ryfe

Commission (UGC) that regulates and funds Universities does have a model curriculum drafted in 2001. Few follow or have adapted the UNESCO model curriculum (2007). However, most courses have designed their own curriculums.

Colleges affiliated to various Universities also adopted the University curriculum and systems related to enrolment and examination. A wide variety of courses were available in these Departments/Institutes. Some of these unique courses included:

- Conflict reporting
- Lifestyle/ Fashion/ Entertainment/ Film journalism
- Business Journalism
- Social media
- Media freedom
- Citizen journalism
- Graphic design and animation
- Data Journalism
- Global journalism
- Sports Journalism

In this assessment, most of the faculty (17/31), few of the experts (8) and some of the Alumni felt there is a need to revise and update the syllabus currently followed. According to a very senior academician, “Some of the topics in journalism syllabus are not relevant now. A new model curriculum need to rewritten keeping in mind the changes in the industry.”

Most of the faculty interviewed felt that their respective curricula have a balance of theory and practice. The exception was few media institutes and autonomous institutes who focus mainly on practice and do not have theory courses. A dynamic head of a popular media college opined that “my emphasis in one year the students at my college are to ensure that they have the ability to listen, write and think visually. If I’m able to inculcate these skills with other basic professional etiquette like coming on time and respecting deadline, we think this contribution to the industry is immense”.

A number of faculty felt that training with focus on grammar of the medium and basic skills should adequately prepare the students for jobs.

On the other hand, most media professionals interviewed in this assessment felt that graduates from most journalism schools are unprepared for the industry challenges and requirements. A senior TV journalist in his interview said that, “There’s no job in the media industry, particularly in TV news channels. Even if there were any requirement, the students who are joining news organizations do not come with the basic ability to write let alone have some news sense. The reason is the theory-heavy curriculum our media institutes follow. They completely lack

hands-on training which can be achieved by involving industry professionals in journalism classrooms on a regular basis and having field visits with practicing journalists.”

Alumni Feedback

Most (70%) of the Alumni interviewed in this study felt that their respective course was outdated. Only 30% felt it was somewhat relevant to what they are practicing now in their work. Almost half of the Alumni also felt that their teachers were not aware or trained as per industry requirements. Infact number of the them opined that the knowledge/news sense of some of the faculty was old/traditional.They don't know what's happening in the industry.The faculty should have technical skills and should be a mix of contemporary and old.

Many felt that the theory heavy journalism curriculum that is followed in many universities in India is not enough to meet the demands of the industry. Balancing theory and practical application is something that needs to be addressed. Some respondents also felt the teaching and the curriculam is more print focussed and was not relevant to the modern / new mediums. Some of the Alumni also felt that their course lacked hands-on training.

A number of graduates felt that the technical teaching in their classroom, specially efforts to inculcate critical analysis and teaching students ways of thinking, really helped.

3.2.5 Facilities and resources

Journalism departments in the university have to face the challenge to convince the administration that media education is not a mainstream subject. According to the director of a well known private university, it took four years to acquire an infrastructure that would be able to provide the students with a fully equipped studio, newsroom and a community radio station. He feels that their department has been fortunate to have got this funding which no other private university would have received. Many journalism departments, particularly in state universities do not have adequate infrastructure.

Most of the media faculty (25) when asked about technical facilities could recall names of some of the software and equipments used in their studio. The remaining were not aware as they either taught topics that had no relevance to practical work.

Faculty also opined how they are unable to cope with the dynamic new media tools that are ever-evolving. Some of the faculty also suggested that regular orientation to new technology (both hardware and software) and techniques would be useful for media faculty as it has becoming challenging to keep pace with these fast evolving tools. One of the media expert who works for the country's first live video streaming interactive portal in the country opined that, “Especially with the web/ internet becoming the core of the new

media techniques, most institutes/ faculty will have to unlearn a lot about the ‘traditional’ media to fully accept the new medium”.

Moreover since the industry is proliferating, skills and technological know-how becomes mandatory. This unfortunately is not updated by majority of institutes. A few departments, apart from comprehensive package, focus on certain areas or tracks as in print and new media, advertising and public relations, radio and television and communication studies. Many have streamlined their publishing output by way of laboratory journals, campus newspapers and magazines. Very few of them have focused on audiovisual production with suitable infrastructure for practical training. An important dilemma for all institutions is the fast rate of obsolescence of technology, which in turn leads to lack of servicing facilities.”

3.2.6 Recruitment of Faculty

The UGC regulations on the minimum qualifications for appointment of teachers in universities and colleges was amended in 2013. It is called the University Grants Commission Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education (2nd Amendment), Regulations, 2013.

The university norm for recruiting faculty members at the Assistant Professor’s posts include NET/ SLET qualification or a Ph.D degree, minimum of 55% marks (or an equivalent grade) at Master’s degree level. Industry experience is not a prerequisite for recruitment in the university department or a college affiliated to a university at this level.

While for a faculty who are hired at the level of professor and associate professor, a Ph.D degree is mandatory for the appointment of professor and associate professors and candidates.

Due to the norms of UGC for recruitment of Assistant Professor, at times a deserving candidate who comes with industry experience is not selected as he/ she does not qualify the norm of having either a NET/SLET qualification or sometimes a Masters Degree. Many mass communication institutes in the country offer a PG Diploma instead of a Masters Degree which forms one of the prerequisites. A Director of a private university could not select a much deserving candidate despite her journalism experience as she has a PG Diploma from a private institute and had not qualified NET. It thus limits the selection of quality faculty members particularly from the media industry.

A senior editor of an English daily in New Delhi who visits institutes as a guest faculty agrees that the UGC regulations for the selection of faculty limits media professionals like him to foray as a permanent faculty, despite their skills. They may be selected based on their skills but they are required to upgrade their skills only academically by way of research projects, seminars, writing research articles, etc and not practically.

3.2.7 Industry interaction

The importance of bringing a balance in news media curriculum has been stressed time and again. As part of the curriculum, in most courses, industry professionals are invited to interact with students or conduct classes. All media faculty responded that interactions with industry professionals in their classroom were important.

When media educators were asked about the importance of having such kind of interactions, they agreed that it is imperative that such interactions happen regularly and that the students are made familiar to the industry requirements. However, some respondents have voiced their concern over such interactions not being regular due to various reasons. While some institutes and departments make it compulsory to have regular guest faculty from the industry on a weekly, monthly or at least once in a semester, some fail to bring in industry professionals due to the lack of interaction, administrative issues, etc.

A number of media graduates (38) responded that interaction with industry professionals in their classroom were not regular. Few (12) respondents said that they had weekly interactions in the form of classes, workshops, etc apart from internships. In their response, all 62 respondents felt that for quality media training, industry interaction and exposure to the field of journalism is necessary.

Industry experts also emphasized that unless there is an equal involvement of media educator and industry profession, the curriculum cannot be complete in its approach. One of our expert respondents said, "There is a mismatch between the industry needs and departmental outputs. Faculty not coming from the industry is teaching in departments and the very reason why media organisations are opening their own institutes. It is an unfortunate thing for the departments teaching journalism."

As part of journalism education, students need to undertake formal internships in a newsroom. Internships provide a chance for students to apply their formal learning to practice. Most of the Alumni (44) underwent internship in various media organizations for a period of one or two months as part of their curriculum. Some of the organisations where the respondents have interned include ESPN Sport, Zee News, The Statesman, Doordarshan, Rajya Sabha, CNN IBN, NDTV, Hindustan Times, Dainik Jagran, Times of India, Mumbai Mirror, News Nation, The Indian Express and many more. The respondents who underwent internship were given the role of reporting, production (PCR), researching, editing, design (layout), etc.

Respondents who underwent training during the course, felt that these experiences were

useful in acquiring hands-on skills. However, very few institutes or departments evaluated the students' performance or the training they received during this internship.

The University Grants Commission (UGC), in its XI Plan Policy³⁰ paper laying out the thrust and priorities emphasizes the need for increased interaction between the industry and the universities and states the following:

“...In the case of Career development courses there seems to be a need for prioritizing these courses according to the market signals. We do not have a systematic assessment of the manpower requirements over the years... The need of the hour is to develop the norms for understanding the signals from the market, which would help prioritization of the courses and also the provision of suitable assistance for offering these courses...”

3.2.8 Faculty Training Needs

Most of the faculty interviews had not attended any UGC supported orientation and refresher courses for teachers (see Box below). Most of the faculty felt that orientation or capacity building programmes must be attended at least once a year and if possible, twice a year.

Few of the faculty who had attended the orientation felt that these programs were quite general in nature and could be made relevant or specific to their requirements. Some of the areas of training mentioned technological advancement in electronic media especially newsrooms, convergent journalism, market research firm/ experts training faculty on research, style of writing, citizen journalism, research design & methodologies, new media, etc.

An experienced faculty opined that “these courses (UGC orientation & refresher courses) are mandatory for getting points under API – specially for promotion to next level. So often these are both conducted and attended more as a formality than a learning exercise.

“With the widening and deepening of this sector, the teachers also need to broaden their horizons and learn from others in industry and academia across the country and abroad. I recall attending workshops by BBC and they really made a difference in how good training can influence teachers”, opined another veteran academic during this assessment interview.

A young academic felt that there are not many opportunities for faculty in this sector to either interact with other faculties across the country and very limited interactions with mainstream industry. “I think we should have more formal systems of interactions both within academia and also with the industry – these could be either annual conferences or even online platforms. We need to think more in these lines...”

³⁰ Inclusive And Qualitative Expansion Of Higher Education- 12 Five-Year Plan, 2012-17

Faculty Programmes by UGC (University Grants Commission)

The Academic Staff Colleges funded by UGC across various Universities conduct specially designed orientation programmes for newly appointed lecturers and refresher courses for in service teachers. The orientation programmes contribute to the teacher awareness of the problems of the Indian society and the role of education, higher education leaders and educators in the resolution of these problems to achieve desired goals in national development.

For the year 2013- 14, Academic Staff Colleges³¹ of 66 universities in total organised Orientation Programme, Refresher Courses and Short Term Courses in various subject areas. The Academic Staff Colleges of the following state and central universities have been allocated to organize orientation, refresher course and short term courses in mass communication and journalism during the year 2013- 14.

- Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Gachibowli, Hyderabad
- Gauhati University, Guwahati
- Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology, Hisar
- BPS Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Sonipat
- Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore
- Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad
- University of Mumbai, Vidyanagari Campus, Mumbai
- Pondicherry University, Pondicherry
- Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

UGC launched a Faculty Recharge Programme³² to arrest the decline in research environment in Indian Universities and stagnation of faculty and infrastructure. The Faculty Recharge Programme is organised to upgrade and rejuvenate faculty resources in their science - and engineering related departments. Under the Programme, fresh talent, at all levels of academic hierarchy, is to be inducted in selected departments / centers through a nationally-conducted competitive process and the inductees are to be placed as Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors.

AICTE on the other hand has its own Faculty Development Programme (FDP) designed to train and develop professionals from Science & Technology universities or institutes. It also trains professionals to take up entrepreneurship as a career. Through each FDP, 15-20 faculty members of Science and Engineering colleges, Polytechnics and Entrepreneurship Development Organisations are trained for a duration of 2-3 weeks.

And under the UGC Act, Performance Appraisal System for Maintenance of Standards of Technical Entities of Universities exists for faculty of technical departments or institutes.

³¹ Statement showing the Orientation Programme, Refresher Courses and Short Term Courses allotted by the UGC for the year 2013-2014

³² <http://www.ugcfrp.ac.in/>

3.3 Discussion on Challenges faced by Media Faculty

In a number of studies³³, including a recent report by British Council, teacher development or poor quality teaching in higher education across all levels of study, particularly undergraduate level is recognized as the primary concern of the education sector in India.

Other related issues recognized are:

- Lack of teaching skills in faculty and limited understanding of the learning process
- The use of outdated pedagogies (input oriented, lecture-based approaches, rather than student-centred, enquiry driven and outcomes-based)
- Outdated and inflexible curricula
- A rigid assessment system, which encourages rote-learning and does not test students' broader skills or deeper learning
- Lack of an effective quality assurance system for teaching and learning

While the issues and challenges faced by media or journalism education in India is quite similar to the over all higher education systemic issues, the situation is further penitent as there are no standards or even a common framework specific to media education in our country.

3.3.1 Contesting expectations:

- **Employment:** There are considerable issues related to the employability of the students who pursue courses in mass communication and journalism. Most (36) of the students were not placed from the campus. Many of the well known journalism departments in university and university affiliated colleges did not have a separate placement cell where media companies could be contacted for campus recruitments. These departments informed the students about openings, who go for walk-in interviews or through appointments. In some departments, the students are supported for internships but were not for employment.

With the number of students churned out of media institutes and departments by hundreds, the industry has no jobs to take these graduates, according to one expert. It has also been observed that many journalism students do not pursue the profession of journalism and take up public relations, corporate communications, advertising or marketing as a preferred sector. The reason has been attributed the remuneration in journalism and the work culture.

- **Entry criteria:** More than 80 percent of media professionals who were interviewed for this study said that though the fresh graduates came with good technical skills, they lacked general awareness and writing ability. Many senior academicians feel that entry level

³³ Understanding India - The Future of Higher Education and Opportunities for International Cooperation, Richard Everitt Director Education & Society British Council India 2014

norms for journalism students must be stringent. Students who pass out of good media schools are well equipped. The reason is because the best students get into good institutes through higher levels of examination and in return good candidates are churned out.

Another challenge mentioned by faculty (and also Media Professional) interviewed was the poor language skills of students. This was not just for the English language but also for local languages in general. Most educators agreed that training with focus on grammar of the medium and basic skills was required to adequately prepare the students for jobs.

- **Curriculum:** In an article, Prof Dua suggests, “In fact eminent media persons should give constant advice on updating the course content. The courses in all languages could be split into two general areas – (i) core and (ii) general, or optional. The core courses should include – (a) subject orientation, (b) inter-disciplinary back ground, (c) theoretical research and field survey, (d) basic and applied skills in all spheres of media- print, film and broadcasting including television and video, public relations and advertising, (e) compulsory media internship and production of professional assignments to be judged by senior media executives.”³⁴
- A large number of text books used in Indian media institutes by the faculty and students are mostly written by foreign authors and are on the foreign media scenario. These books have limited or no relevance to the social, cultural, economic and political realities in India. A senior professor and a practicing journalist said that teachers and journalists should be motivated to write books on various areas of Indian journalism.

3.3.2 Industry interactions

- There is no interface between the academics and industry in India that look into the broader aspect of the challenges faced in media education sector and subsequent effect on the industry. According to the director of one of a journalism institution, as far as the industry is concerned, there is no concern for media institutes. It was felt that unlike in the west, where there is a constant interface between the industry and academics, in our country we are completely working in silos.

The industry involvement in most courses reviewed in this study was limited to internships by students and guest faculty or guest lecturers:

- Internships that now have become a practice in most courses have been welcomed across board. The work experience in “real” settings provides critical learning and confidence to students.
- Most institutes that have come up in competition to the University Journalism

³⁴ Dilemma of Course Content and Curriculum in Indian Journalism Education: Theory, Practice and Research

departments and some of the affiliated colleges have taken the extreme approach of depending on guest faculty (mostly practitioners or retired professionals. One of the media professional interviewed said that she left teaching as she was dissatisfied with the course or occasional lecture that she was requested to take up. “The piece meal approach was obvious and I felt quite dissatisfied with just taking one course and no follow up. I did not even know how my course was tied up with others and the overall course. I was asked to prepare my own syllabus and implement my subject in my own way. While that was convenient to me, it did not make sense”.

- Another head of a college opines, “It is useful to give students real time newsroom training by industry professional. A partnership in imparting training needs to be there. Interactive session between academics and industry, but since the mainstream is based in the Delhi NCR region, so sometimes due to distance it becomes a problem”.
- Competing with general university and private institutes, now media houses have also started their own institutes. There is a need for such media owned institutes to also collaborate with academia and the general discourse of media education in the country.

3.3.3 Faculty Development

One cause of concern is the recruitment of faculty who has just passed out of the department and has cleared NET as per UGC norm. And yet another challenge is the inability to select good teaching staff from media industry due to inflexible UGC norms

- **Faculty Performance:** Departments of Journalism and Mass Communication require the expertise of faculty members in various emerging fields such as convergent media, E-learning and Instructional Design, Advertising, Public Relations, Corporate Communications, Animation and Radio & Video Production whose inputs are mostly skill-based. The UGC had so far allowed candidates with considerable media experience in the relevant field to be appointed at the levels of Professors and Associate Professors. These industry experienced teachers are required to update themselves so that the API scores add up based for the purpose of their promotions.

The UGC mandate of evaluation performance of a faculty is through an API (academic performance indicator). Number of the faculty interviewed felt that for journalism, evaluating a teacher’s performance based on the API is unfair. One of the faculty said that much of the research work and other activities mandatory for API are done were for promotion purpose. Many respondents felt that such practices only promote mediocrity. While most faculty feel that there is a need to have standards to evaluate media faculty, API is not sufficient and needs to include a person’s experience in the industry and knowledge of the subject matter.

- **Faculty working conditions:** The rapid mushrooming of the media institutes in recent times has made this sector highly complex in its growth. There are several institutes that use the same faculty to teach higher education and skill development courses. Faculties in media institutes do not enjoy permanent positions at large; especially in the private institutions. They are often overworked and underpaid; therefore they lack enough incentive to invest time in faculty development programmes.
- **Barriers to training:** Senior permanent faculty in Government run institutes or reputed institutes have another set of psychological barriers to training. They are often reluctant to accept the fact that they need to keep upgrading their skills through training programs to keep pace with the rapidly changing media industry. Training programs are generally seen as a holiday program that does not in any way affect the permanent nature of their careers. So training platforms have to be creative and interactive and immense amount of convincing would be required to make them successful.
- **Competitive Scene:** The speedy growth of institutions in recent times has made this sector highly competitive. The situation gets further complicated by several uncertified course run by reputed media organizations. Therefore, several earlier initiatives taken for faculty development by any one institute on their own has not been sustained effectively because of the internal rivalries emerging due to stiff competition. These conditions highlight the need for a neutral coordinator with rich experience in media research and the ability to coordinate all key diverse stakeholders to make such initiatives successful.

3.3.4 Role of faculty in quality debate

There were variations in response from media experts and faculty regarding their opinion on factors necessary for maintaining quality standards in journalism education. While both opined that academia-industry interface (including keeping update with the industry) was most critical factor, more number of experts felt that the curriculum needed to be updated and faculty qualification (and entry criteria) needs to be reviewed. Among faculty responses, infrastructure (including equipments and technology), capacity building / training of faculty, better and relevant standards, and regularly updated curriculum were prominent factors for maintaining quality standards in journalism.

The XII Plan document of the Planning Commission³⁵ states: “Faculty being the single most critical factor responsible for the overall quality and excellence in higher education, it is a matter of grave concern that a large number of faculty positions remain perennially vacant due to either non-availability of suitably qualified persons or due to procedural

³⁵ Higher Education in India. Strategies and Schemes during Eleventh Plan Period (2007-2012) for Universities

restrictions/fund constraints in State universities/colleges. In order to ensure that expansion drive in higher education is sustained, initiatives shall be taken to attract and retain the best talents as faculty resources by creating conducive working ambience and by making teaching and research as a lucrative career destination through continuous central assistance.”

Necessity of an accrediting body and a network- Almost all media professionals and all faculty interviewed in this assessment were in favour of an accrediting body that will keep a check on the quality standards of journalism institutes and departments. Some respondents said that the body should have a multi-faceted approach and without any bias look into the quality parameters of any institute/ course.

Reiterating the view of many academicians, one of our respondents opined that there should be a Journalism Education Council in India similar to bodies such as the ICMR, ICAR, Bar Council and Medical Council. The purpose of the body could be to limit mushrooming of institutes without proper infrastructure and faculty. While some feel that there shouldn't be a mandatory accrediting body but we should think of a rating system within the academics and industry. Some even said that an accrediting body may not bring any change as similar efforts have been made in the past. An official said that there is no media professional body approved by government to regulate and audit the curriculum as well as other benchmarks to maintain the quality in media education. It was also suggested that a media professional body like MCI, ICSI, ICWA, NAAC, etc should be created to audit the curriculum for different courses as well as set quality standards of institutions.

Mr H K Dua has also suggested the constitution of a regulatory body called Indian Council for Journalism / Mass Communication Education, Research and Training on the lines of Indian Council of Medical Education, Bar Council of India or Institute of Chartered Accountants. This could be made responsible for standardization of course curricular, contents of training, quality of research, monitoring job opportunities and also collaborating with advanced Journalism / Communication bodies in abroad³⁶.

3.4 Conclusion

According to a report of National Skill Development Corporation for media and entertainment industry, the total employment in the sector will increase from about 1 to 1.1 million persons in 2008 to about 4 to 4.1 million persons in 2022. The total current employment in the Media & Entertainment Industry is estimated at 4.6 lakh, and is projected to grow at a CAGR of 13% to 7.5 lakh by 2017²¹.

³⁶ L, Dr B P Mahesh Chandra Guru and Madhura Veena M. Journalism education in India: A quality perspective. 2005

According to the report, due to the lack of a standardized knowledge infrastructure and practical training courses, employees in several occupations end up learning technical/ role-specific skills on the job. This assessment respondents also supplement this and felt that they learnt more on their job than in their respective courses. However, a number of the Alumni interviewed felt that they would have not been given their current job if they did not have their degree. Specially those from premier colleges felt that it is comparatively easier to get a break if one is a graduate of a prestigious school/university.

Clearly, media education is at cross roads in India¹ and faces very similar challenges as the higher education sector in India. While the controversial issues regarding standards and policy need regular debate, the faculty paucity is one area that can be immediately addressed. While the number of institutes and universities offering media education is increasing, the faculty dilemma is something that is still addressable.

Focused attempts like research resources, networks, platforms for interaction with Industry and specialized training programs, can still help improve standards of education in this sector. This study identified skills and capacities that can be developed among faculty which in turn can directly impact media education in the country.

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