



3. Review of Indian News Paper Business Management Studies in Shodhganga Database: Identification of the Research Gap

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Abstract

Emerging business models and changing management practices of print media in wake of the new media technology proliferation and speedy digitalization, is an important study area to understand the functional dynamics and economic realities of press. This paper reviews the previous Indian studies to build a scholarly understanding of the subject and to identify the existing research gap in this vital area of social science research. As the paper focuses mainly on the literature pertaining to Indian print media business management practices and revenue models, Shodhganga database of Indian research theses was searched through defined keywords to find the relevant literature. The studies from the year 2005 to 2020 were taken into account. A total of 8 relevant studies were found and reviewed to conclude that most of the previous studies have been conducted by the interdisciplinary researchers and do not address the area satisfactorily from a media scholar's point of view. Huge research gap was identified in the field.

Keywords: Research Gap, News Business, Print Media, Media Management, Shodhganga

1. Introduction:

Phenomenon of convergence is responsible for changing media scenario worldwide by opening up new business ventures and new product ideas in a media organization (Kung, 2017; Chadha, 2017). Companies are taking measures to keep up with the changing times by introducing new media management strategies, business models and revenue streams that form a crucial part of the media analysis studies (Kung' 2017' Dahiya, 2021). Business management practices that are in tune with the contemporary market dynamics and revenue generation strategies of a media firm play vital role in present day media environment (Chadha, 2017).



The area has been an important study field for the international scholars and media people alike. Kung (2017), who is a prominent writer of many media management books, iterates the necessity of the strategic management practices and innovative business initiatives media managers worldwide are relying upon to create sustainable development environment:

“The media industry is at an extraordinary point of transition. Things that were happening slowly are now happening fast. We are at the end of the digital beginning: convergence is a reality, the mass paradigm is eroding, and the media industry is inexorably drawing closer to the technology sector. This is a context that presents both enormous challenges and fascinating opportunities, for researchers and students in the media field as well as for those engaged in strategic activities in media organizations” (Kung. 2017, P -317).

Thussu (2010, p 125-135) writes how the rapid liberalization, deregulation, and privatization of media and cultural industries in India, coupled with the increasing availability of digital delivery and distribution technologies, have created a new market for news vendors. In the market-driven news ecology conforming to global trends, news becomes a commodity that needs to be sold in a competitive and crowded news marketplace. In a July 2, 2015 report published in Washington post, Gerry Yemen, Rajkumar Venkatesan and S. Sriram write how advertising revenue has moved from print to digital as the consumers base has shifted to the digital platforms posing a threat for the survival of news papers that primarily earn revenue through advertising. As a result many news papers in an effort to keep up with the time have also moved to digital platforms. Evens and TR. (2018) researched about the emerging trend of business model innovation in news media organisations in this regard. Other western researchers like Johnson & Gutiérrez (2010), Barthelemy et al. (2011) as well as scholars from East Asian countries like Kawashima (2020) and many others have been studying changing business patterns of print media since long. The studies that have been conducted in western countries, primarily in US, give valuable insights about the innovative financial measures news dailies are adopting. But, they cannot be generalized in context of Indian market where the socio cultural environment is different, government regulations are not rigid and macro & micro factors have distinct characteristics. Distinct, local studies are needed to understand the problems & challenges faced by the newspaper industry of India & counter measurements taken by the organizations.

1.1 Indian Scenario:

Indian Newspaper Industry that traditionally relied on advertising business models has also gone through major changes in the form of new ventures, new revenue strategies and innovative distribution and production policies to keep the ball rolling (Evans, 2018; Dahiya, 2021). It is vital to study the economics and business dynamics of media industry to understand and explain its changing priorities and news production practices. A recent FICCI-EY Report (2021) predicts transformation of print segment in the areas of product realignment, revenue transformation, cost intelligence and digital demarcation in near future. It also suggested market expansion



techniques through identifying new micro markets and forging bundle deals with direct to consumers aggregators like TV, OTT platforms etc. Devanjan Khuntia (2021), a veteran media business expert explains how Times of India introduced the position of brand managers and how content generation, market penetration and advertising became the key elements of new business models. Keval J kumar (2015, p 101-110) specifically mentioned about the business of news trends in India. The case study of BCCL group and its commercial malpractices (primarily concerning to organization's star product- The times of India) have created new business trends in the Indian news market that are mostly of unethical nature. The huge growth of Indian media & fierce competition has resulted in the more troubling measures that increasingly characterize the country's media landscape. The contemporary trends in the Indian media landscape have significant and deeply negative implications for the production of news and the overall quality of journalism in the country (Chadha, 2017).

It is critical to investigate the emerging business management practices of India's newspaper industry, which play a critical part in channelizing a firm's news management techniques. The current investigation was carried out with two goals in mind:

1. To identify prior research in the field of print media business management and to identify research gaps.
2. To learn about the areas that has been investigated so far in the media management arena of the Indian press.

2. Material and Methods:

Shodhganga¹, an online database of Indian doctorate theses, was searched to deepen the grasp of the topic and identify the research gap. Shodhganaga was chosen as it contains over 4 lakh theses and 9632 synopses of PhD research done in India. Additionally, we searched the Google Scholar database, KPMG and ABC records, and other government companies' reports for relevant data.

The search for the fitting articles was conducted through the pre-determined keywords that include- media business, print media business, media management, strategic media management and media economics. The selection and inclusion criteria include:

1. Either the title or the abstract should contain the keyword.
2. The study should focus on the business management of Indian print media.
3. The research/article must be published between January 2005 and December 2020.
4. The thesis or article must be written in English.

3. Findings and Discussion:

A total of 8 research studies that addressed the various areas of the business dynamics of print media in India were found fit for selection and inclusion criteria for the review (See Table-1). The review reveals that in India only a couple of scholars from mass media and communication field have studied the emerging revenue streams and management aspects of country's print industry; 1- Hemlata (2020) who studied two Telangana dailies to conclude that the new business model strategies are being implemented to cope up with the challenges faced by the newspaper industry in present scenario and 2- Manjappa (2014) who inquired about the impact of globalization on media management.

Most of the research work is interdisciplinary that has been conducted by management or commerce stream researchers. Kumar (2019) from commerce and business stream studied an Andhra daily to understand the economic sustainability of print media through advertising revenue and also proposed some price based business models. Harkishan SM (2010) concluded that news organizations should experiment with innovative methods of raising revenues and cutting costs. Shetty (2015) studied the role of positive branding in business while Iyer (2017) suggested ways to keep readers interested after studying the impact of digital medium on print. Gole (2018) from commerce stream studied emerging trends in product positioning policies of print media in wake of increasing Internet penetration. Shilder (2011), also from commerce, has studied role of strategic planning in new brand development and suggested a business model. (See Table-1).

Table-1: Identified Shodhganga Studies

SN	Year & Researcher	Findings Of the study
1	L, Hemlata. (2020) (communication & Journalism)	Branding, marketing & distribution strategies are needed to be incorporated in business management practices of News papers.
2	Kumar, Sanjay (2019) (Business Management)	Business and ethics of journalism should be separated and ethical journalism will increase the credibility of newspapers which attracts more readers. He also proposed some business models that were priced based mainly.
3	Gole, Karuna Suyog. (2018) (Commerce)	Print media is making drastic changes in its products & business Models. Researcher recommended that the Newspapers companies need to soften the policies which they have been following as their legacy.
4	Iyer, Venkatesh Balasubramanian. (2017) (Business Management)	In order to enhance the readership, digital medium expansion is mandatory. Newspapers need to incorporate changes according to the market demands.



5	Mallika V. (2015) (Commerce)	3 Telugu & 3 English newspapers in Telangana- Hyderabad & Sikandarabad were studied to conclude that positive branding is an important strategic factor of business model.
6	Manjappa, SV. (2014) (Communication & Journalism)	Government of India should consider constituting an expert committee for evolving a media management policy in India at this juncture of entry of foreign media, invasion of satellite channels, pluralistic media culture, centralized media services and commercialized media scenario in India.
7	Shiledar, Rahul D. (2011) (Commerce)	News business model which is a combination of two organization & reader perspective, was suggested. He concluded as the revenues from circulation are becoming negligible, newspaper brands need to gain market share through circulation to demand business from advertisers.
8	Harikrishnan, S M (2010) (Management)	Free media will not last. News organizations need new and innovative methods of raising revenues and cutting costs. Creative combinations need to be formulated to sell the services and brand.

It was observed that none of the past researcher has tried to explore the complete business management arena of newspaper industry in India. Though, various dimensions and dynamics for a sustainable business environment like branding, distribution & product innovation strategies have been studied by some commerce & business management scholars (Harikrishnan, 2010, Mallika, 2015, Kumar, 2019). A scholar from commerce stream has also given recommendations for the future business models that could be opted by the news papers to achieve sustainable growth (Shilder, 2011). While a researcher has studied business model dynamics of regional newspapers & found out that Marketing, distribution & Branding policies play important role in formulation of business models (Mallika V, 2015). Iyer (2017) has proposed that newspapers need to find new ways to maximize revenue in today's challenging environment. Indian academics investigated many elements such as globalisation, digitalization, branding, credibility, marketing, and other developing developments that represent a survival issue for print media and point to the need for new revenue streams. In their findings, the majority of scholars determined the importance of strategic transformation in the business models of the newspaper sector. Several scholars have also provided some significant indicators, ideas, and instructions about the lines on which these business models can continue and infuse lifeblood into newspapers' declining earnings. The majority of Indian researchers who have investigated changes in the Indian media arena have not specifically studied the Indian newspaper industry and their innovative business techniques to cope with change. They have not covered all of the negative aspects hurting the newspaper industry.



4. Conclusion

The review concludes that not many researchers in India, particularly those in the field of mass communication, have researched the business management techniques of the Indian newspaper industry. There are only a few studies that focus on the business viewpoint of Indian press. A few academic and integrative researchers have explored other areas such as the impact of technology on the Indian press and the necessity for media branding, among others. Scholars of commerce and business management have studied the economic and management components of Indian print media to some extent. Their findings, however, have been interpreted in accordance with the foundations of these streams. The ramifications of these findings must be translated into journalistic terms. Indian research academics in the field of mass communication have largely left this area of management and new business models in sync with market demands unstudied, and there is a significant research gap that needs to be filled.

Footnote: ¹Shodhganga is an Indian research database managed by the INFLIBNET Centre, an autonomous Inter-University Institute of India's University Grants Commission (UGC). By 2022, 544 institutions in India will have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the INFLIBNET Centre to participate in the Shodhganga project. The complete text of all documents submitted to Shodhganga is available in open access to the scholarly community globally. The repository houses 4 lakh theses and 9632 synopses (Last accessed on 15.12. 2022). The Shodhganga repository was established as a result of the University Grants Commission making it essential for all universities to submit soft copies of PhD theses and MPhil dissertations to the UGC through regulations announced in June 2009.

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