**Research Methodology** is an organized way to resolve or explore any research problem. It can be called as the science of studying and doing the research in a scientific mode.

The title of the current research study is “**Interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion- (An Exploratory Study of Jaipur, Rajasthan) 2005-2012**”. The study is based on the following Research Methodology-

**Research Problem**

A research problem denotes some deficit or need, which a researcher experiences, in the context of a theoretical or applied situation and attempt to find out possible solutions for the same. *Kothari, C.R. (2004). Pp. 216-218.*

In the present century, Media is having quite a huge impact on the gullible public that come into its contact every day. The Newspapers are still an important means of communication and information dissemination despite of the popularity of Electronic and New Media. The Press/Print Media has developed into a national institution and the most important pillar of democracy by playing an important role in the survival of democratic system and in shaping and moulding the Public Opinion.

At the same time PR is gaining popularity and assisting as well as using Print Media in the dissemination of relevant information. The Print Media has become an important weapon of Public Relations in creating Public Opinion. It creates an impact on the public's opinion of an event by helping PR Professionals. Therefore to analyze the importance, role and impact of the Print Media, PR and Public Opinion, a proper **Exploratory and Descriptive Study of Interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion** is necessity of present time.

A number of studies have been conducted across the world including India, to find out the working, importance and role of Print Media, Public Opinion and Public Relations by
using different performance measures. But no comprehensive study was conducted to make a detailed and critical study to assess the present scenario and inter-relationship among PRINT MEDIA, PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLIC OPINION and to study the line of direction for future as well. Hence, the present study is to fill this research gap and analyze the Interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion.

Sociological Research Approaches:-

Sociologists usually begin any research process with the query that how or why a meticulous thing occurs. It might be a query related to a new trend or any common aspect of life. So, first a query is formed and then begins the process to respond it or to solve it. This procedure or method adopted to solve the question is known as the “Research Design” and the researcher may ensuing with a scientific approach or an explanatory or interpretative framework.

Sociologists use the tried and trusted research methods like experiments, surveys, interview and field research and secondary data analysis is also an important part of any research. Science is related to discoveries and chemical reactions, which proves or disapproves any idea or study and is based on empirical evidence but social and human studies deals with the different nuances of human behavior and it is very much difficult to explain, explore their diverse nature and actions. Thus, scientific method is objective, critical, logical and most of all a systematic empirical research method involves proper steps which have been established over years.

In this kind of research, a researcher is not attached to the results and do not involve his traits, characteristics, preferences and opinions whereas in social science studies, there is an immersion of such personal traits. This is why; sociologists use the scientific methods to preserve objectivity and consistency in their study. The systematic scientific approach
has been thus useful in sociological studies and provides accuracy, reliability and validity to the study. *Ahuja R. (2003). Pp. 194-220.*

Figure 2.1 (Flow Chart) The Scientific Method of Sociological Research
Thus, the 5 phases are included in the scientific method of the research i.e. asking a question, searching existing sources, hypothesis formulation, conducting a study by proper research design and then lastly drawing conclusions.

The strength of a study depends upon the appropriate choice of research methods and techniques and then suitable application of these techniques in the data collection. Also it rely on the topic that the study uses a single method or combination of methods for the genuine and reliable data collection. Thus, it is very much important to plan a suitable research design before the study.

**Table 2.1 Main Sociological Research Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Questionnaires, Interviews</td>
<td>Produce many responses, Are capable to survey large number of people/sample, Quantitative analysis is easy</td>
<td>Time consuming, difficult to encourage participative response, captures the thinking and belief of people but not their behavior in real life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Work</td>
<td>Observation, Participation, Ethnography and Case studies</td>
<td>Provides detailed, accurate and real-life information</td>
<td>Time-taking, Collected data tells how people behave and not what they think and believe. Difficult to organize the Qualitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>Deliberate and intentional manipulation of social customs and values</td>
<td>Examines the cause and effect relation</td>
<td>Hawthorne Effect, ethical anxieties about the well-being of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Data Analysis</td>
<td>Analysis of Government data like census reports, health and crime statistics etc. and study of other historical facts</td>
<td>Uses the previous available information in a good way</td>
<td>Difficult to find the data relevant to the study or topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Justifications of the Current Study

The study analyzes the role of Media particularly the Print Media of Jaipur, Rajasthan in a wider perspective and foregrounds the contribution of Public Relations and the impacts catalyzed by the industry to frame Public Opinion. The study proceeds in two directions where on one hand correlation between Print Media and Public Relations and on the other hand the impact of both on the Public Opinion (particularly on the Newspaper Readers of Jaipur) has been studied. The Print Media even in its grassroots days could succeed in molding the Public Opinion in its own way. The Readers on the other hand have been continuously portraying their high attitude of dependency on Print Media. Therefore the current study had been significantly planned with following justifications:-

- The study would help to find out the growth, changes and contribution of the Indian Print Media industry (with special reference to Rajasthan) which has developed into a national institution and the most important pillar of democracy.

- PR, today, is serving as the most significant medium to establish relations with the public, disseminating information among people and taking feedback from the people regarding any service, product or person. The Print Media is serving as a tool of PR. Thus, the Research is an attempt to understand the increasing impact, role and importance of PR. At the same time, it assesses the relationship between Print Media and PR Professionals.

- In the present century, Media is having quite a huge impact on the gullible public that comes into its contact every day. The Print Media asserts that it is reporting the truth to the public, but many a times, it states its own opinions. The research aims to find out the credibility attached to it.
• The Study will assess the impact of Print Media and PR industry on the Newspaper Readers i.e. the general public and their changed behavior and opinion with special reference to the readers of Rajasthan.

• The study will provide an insight into the interdependence, interrelationship and close interplay among PRINT MEDIA, PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLIC OPINION.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the present study is to explore the “Interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion in the context of Jaipur, Rajasthan”. The other objectives are -

• To discuss the dependence of people of Jaipur, Rajasthan on Print Media

• To identify the contribution of Public Relations in shaping Public Opinion

• To analyze the role of PR in molding Public Opinion with the help of Print Media

• To find out how and up to what extent Print Media obliges PR Persons

• To analyze the relationship between Print Media Persons and PR Professionals of Jaipur city

• To assess the significance of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion in the Democracy

• To find the out credibility attached to Print Media as well as PR
**Formulation of Hypothesis:** A hypothesis is an assumption, the reliability of which is to be tested. It may be any idea, guess or generalization which becomes the base of the investigation or exploration.

The main Hypothesis of the study is - **H₀** There is an active interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion.

The current research study also seeks to test the following two assumptions -

- **H₀** Public Relations influences Print Media and Print Media in turn creates Public Opinion. Thus, Print Media directly or indirectly serves as a tool of Public Relations in influencing Public Opinion.

- **H₀** Print Media is serving as a major tool of information dissemination and has become the most important pillar of democracy, but still its credibility is eroding.

**Research Design:** A widespread skeleton of the research study is called as research design which include how the data is to be collected, what techniques and tools will be used, and how the collected data will be analyzed to reach to the conclusion. It aims to provide accurate and reliable data within minimum time, expenses and efforts.

**Type of Research: Exploratory and Descriptive**

"**Exploratory research**" provides enhanced understanding of the phenomena, which one desires to investigate and thus, it frame precise and concise question and develops hypothesis. If one wants to investigate a novel phenomenon, which has not been studied before, this method is much effective and indispensable.

The aim of the current research is to explore and describe the facts and developments related to the theme of the study. A quantitative approach is felt as the ideal method to be used for this study. This is because the literature review has clearly shown that this
approach is widely used in the field of research on Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion. Specifically, the study uses a survey research design method that allows the inclusion of a large number of sample (respondents) while considering several intervening variables. Survey methodology has several strengths that make it more capable to intercultural studies. For the current research study data have been collected through a questionnaire.

Area and Universe:

The research has been conducted in Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan. Thus, the geographical limitations can be assumed to be a hurdle in the authenticity of the research. The universe of the study is the entire population of Jaipur city.

Data Collection

There are two types of data for the conduction of any research study – Primary and the Secondary. Primary data is the one which has been collected by the researcher for the first time on the basis of various tools and techniques applied for the research. In the current study, primary data has been collected through Survey method from the three respondents of the study i.e. Newspaper Readers, Print Media and PR Persons from Jaipur.

The interviews of Educationalists, PR Professionals, Administrators, Sociologists, Academicians, and Print Media Persons as well as the common people of the city have also strengthened the data collected through questionnaires. Also, the observation and analysis of the relevant content of leading Hindi Newspapers of Jaipur City, Rajasthan has further helped in evaluating the contribution of PR in shaping Public Opinion and role of Print Media in it. Finally a Case Study of DIPR, Government of Rajasthan has also served as a significant source to provide the facts related to the study.
The study is also supported with the help of secondary data obtained from reliable indexed sources such as Journals, Internet, Books, E-Books and Reviews published in newspapers, magazines etc.

**Sampling Design**

A sample is a portion of the people selected from the large population which becomes the representative of the entire population, only if it has same basic characteristics of the population selected for the study. Thus, the main principle behind the sampling is that we seek knowledge about the total unit i.e. population by observing few units i.e. the sample and bring out the conclusion about the entire population.

- **Sample Type**– (Non- Probability and Convenient Sampling): In many research situations, particularly those where there is no particular list of persons to be studied, probability sampling is difficult. The non-probability sampling method does not claim representativeness and are used for exploratory studies. The most appropriate type of non- probability sampling is convenience sampling which is also called as accidental or haphazard sampling. In this sampling, the researcher studies all those samples which are conveniently available or accidentally come in the contact during a certain period of time.

- **Sample Unit**– Sample of the study is broadly comprised of 2 segments-
  1. Industry People i.e. Print Media Persons and PR Professionals of Jaipur city
  2. Common People i.e. the Newspaper Readers of Jaipur city.

The Print Media Persons of different departments/beats and experience from leading Newspapers of Jaipur city and the PR Professionals of various sectors i.e. Government, Industries, organizations and PR agencies etc. have been questioned and interviewed to
find out the facts attached to the “Interplay of Print Media, Public Relations and Public Opinion”.

The Readers have also been divided into four age-groups i.e. 15 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45 and 46 years & above to cover all the segments of the society. The study also classifies the common readers on the basis of their readership level and found that there are 3 types of Readers i.e. Primary, Secondary & Tertiary Readers -

1. **Primary Readers**- are those who are very sincere and regular readers. They read more than one Newspaper and are very much active readers. They read Newspaper with a purpose i.e. to satisfy their intellect or curiosity, to update their knowledge about current affairs and to participate in the democratic set-up i.e. to use their fundamental rights.

2. **Secondary Readers**- include housewives, old people, service class people and specially those who don’t use their say anywhere but they are aware of their rights and when they give their opinion or raise their voice against something, it is very much effective. They normally read Newspapers regularly but it is not a thorough study, it may be a glance.

3. **Tertiary Readers**- are a bit indifferent section of the society who has nothing to do with anything which is not directly concerned to them. They read Newspapers very often and too very selectively. Such readers don’t read hard news; they only see headlines, sports page, and page3 or city supplements.

<table>
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<th>Table 2.2 Description of Respondents</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Description of Respondents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kind of Respondents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readers (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Media Persons (Newspaper Industry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR Professionals (of all sectors from Jaipur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tools and Techniques-

Description of Tools-

- *Questionnaire in 3 sets (for Print Media Persons, PR Persons and Readers)*
- *Interview Schedule (20 questions)*
- *Case Study of DIPR, Government of Rajasthan*
- *Observation of content of leading Hindi Newspapers of Jaipur city*

The main tool of the study to collect primary data is the questionnaire containing 3 specific types of questionnaires, separately formed for each of the three respondents (viz. Readers, Print Media and PR Persons). Each questionnaire is divided into 4 parts – Section A - Socio Dynamic Information i.e. primary information of the respondents Section B deals with the questions related to Print Media and Social change, Section C constitutes the questions related to Impact of PR in shaping Public Opinion & Print Media’s role in it and last but not the least is Section D which deals with Public Opinion influenced by Print Media and PR. *(Questionnaire is attached as Annexure A, B and C at last of the thesis)*

*The sections framed in each questionnaire are same but the questions are specific and related with specific category of respondents. On an average 25 questions are there in each questionnaire, which are followed by 20 questions of interview schedule.*

Pre-testing of Questionnaire-

Also, pre-testing of the questionnaires was done in order to make the questionnaire more relevant and appropriate. The sample questionnaires were distributed among selected respondents in order to test the viability of the questions and later, on the basis of the responses and reluctance of the respondents, the questionnaires were further revised so that maximum response can be collected.
Classification, Presentation and Analysis of Data:

The survey has been conducted in the city of Jaipur, Rajasthan. Out of 300 distributed questionnaires, 100 forms were distributed to each category. All the three category of persons were also asked some Interview schedule questions and their views on the topics were noted. The researcher categorized and classified the collected raw data by the way of tables so that the analysis of the data becomes easy and useful. After the tabulation of the data, significance tests has been conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the data by the application of various well defined formulae and proper software to prove or disapprove the hypothesis.

The following significance tests have been used to test the tabulated data:

- **Students “t” Test**-
  
  The most common theory of statistical significance tests which is applied to small sets of data or small population samples is the Students “t” test. It is used for the comparison of two means. In the current research study, Students “t” test has been applied to various tables to test the hypotheses.

- **ANOVA Test (Analysis of Variance) -**
  
  This test is also called as F test and is closely related to t test. The major difference between the both is that “t” test measures or evaluates the difference between the means of two groups whereas an ANOVA test measures the difference between the means of two or more groups. The one-way ANOVA is the simplest version of this test and it involves only one grouping to define the groups. The current study also uses this method and values have been interpreted with the help of SPSS software.
• **Chi-Square Test (a goodness of fit)** –

Hypothesis test can be performed on the basis of contingency tables to find out the presence of effects. These effects are defined as relationship between the row and column variables means whether the levels of row variable are differently distributed over the levels of column variables. In this test, significance means that the understanding and analysis of the cell frequencies is justified whereas non-significance means that the differences in frequencies could be explained by chance. The Chi-Square tests have been applied in this study.

• **Available Software**

  ✓ **SPSS**: - The ANOVA routines in SPSS are OK for simple one-way analysis. Anything more complicated gets difficult. All statistical packages (SAS, Minitab etc.) provide for ANOVA.

  ✓ **Excel**: - Excel allows testing ANOVA from the Data Analysis Add-on. The instructions are not good.

**Interpretation**: - Interpretation is essential and useful as the proper understanding of the research findings lie in proper interpretation. It is through interpretation that the researcher can well understand the abstract principle and final outcome of the study.

*Agarwal, N.P. (2011).* Pp.54-58, 441-448
REFERENCES


