SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Press transmits social, economic, political, and cultural values from one generation to another; promotes peace; maintains social order; brings harmony; defends rights and freedom; fights for justice and equality; makes the people politically conscious, develops social awareness in them and helps them in acquiring orientations; airs their grievances and tries to redress them; highlights their sorrows and miseries, pains and anguish; supports their genuine demands; helps them to understand their problems in right perspectives; informs them, educates them, entertains them and enlightens them; promotes their political efficacy; reflects their mind, expresses their opinion, presents their views; moulds their outlook, influences their way of life and shapes their perceptions; reveals their past, discusses their present and shapes their future. It motivates them to fight against racialism, communalism, casteism, chauvinism; helps them to lead a happy, peaceful and harmonious life in the society.

The press, an important political communicator, is an agent of political socialization. It called the Fourth Estate of the realm. It is a chief instrument whereby contemporary society orders and changes its ways in the direction of clearly visioned goals of human welfare. It is a private industry and a public
People, without a reliable press, are without a basis of freedom.

The press is an agency of mass communication and the communication is a necessary tool of learning. It reports facts, comments on political questions, interprets politics, discusses issues, brings to limelight the hidden facts, puts forth new proposals, conducts campaigns, carries on propaganda and organizes extramural activities. It influences and educates voters, canalizes public opinion, aids and effects reforms, provides solutions to the problems and influences the course of public events. It helps the people to play an effective role in the decision making process.

A free and healthy press is highly essential and very much indispensable to the functioning of democracy. Democracy is a Government of the people, for the people and by the people. It can be effective and successful only when people voluntarily participate in the affairs of State and Government. And, by all means, their participation depends on and influenced by the information that they have about different aspects of human life as well as the state. The press provides them comprehensive and objective information on current affairs and broad issues. It keeps them well-informed.

The press is an instrument of social change. It feels the pulse of the people; understands the popular feeling; gives expression to it; it arouses certain sentiments among the people; and whenever necessary it exposes and points out popular defects. The press should present the news without any bias, prejudice, fear or favour. The presentation of news should be truthful, objective and comprehensive. News should
not be distorted, suppressed, vulgar and unnecessarily sensational. The press should have certain commitments, convictions, ideals and principles.

Despite this, the Journalists’ autonomy has also been highly restrained by the newspaper owners. After independence, the press developed as an industry as large investments were required so the proprietorship of the large newspapers shifted in the hands of business houses. Today journalists are working as their employees and, therefore, follow their dictates. In such a situation the question arises that the freedom of the press is for whom? It is for the journalists or for the proprietor of the newspaper. Who has the final say in framing the editorial policies? Another related controversy is whether the free-lance journalists enjoy more autonomy than the employed journalists?

Moreover on various occasions journalists have been blamed for betraying this autonomy and pursuing yellow journalism, distorting and manipulating the facts. Therefore, how much autonomy they should be given? Further, the Press Council has been severely criticized for its ineffectiveness as a self-regulatory body. It is said that the Press Council is a ‘Paper Tiger’ with ‘Rubber Teeth’. The significance of the present study, therefore, lies in seeking answer to these controversial issues in the field of sociology of professions with particular reference to journalism.

8.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In the view of the above discussion we have proposed the following objectives for our study:
To glance briefly at the history of professional autonomy in Indian Journalism.

To analyse the extent of professional autonomy in journalism in India.

To make a comparative assessment of the professional autonomy of employed and freelance journalists.

To examine the journalists autonomy in the Constitution and Laws of India.

To evaluate the role of IFWJ in attaining the professional autonomy in journalism.

To explore the role of the Press Council as a Self-regulatory body.

8.2 UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE

Indian journalism is mostly centered on the political activities. Delhi, being the capital of the country is the centre of national and international activities. Most of the reputed news agencies have their headquarters in Delhi. Further, the head offices of IFWJ and the Press Council are also situated in Delhi. In view of these facts the present study focused to Delhi as the field of study. The universe of the present study consists of all the employed and freelance journalists associated with the three newspaper organizations, each having two largely circulated newspapers both in English and in Hindi.

Present study is a humble attempt to draw the attention on various aspects of journalistic professions, their freedom, their autonomy and various controls and regulatory provisions on journalism as employed journalists, freelance journalist as
well as office bearers of Indian federation of Working Journalist (IFWJ) and Press Council of India. Various demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the sample are as follows:

(1) Almost one-third respondents are from the age group of 36 to 45 years. A well representation of youngsters is also evident as almost one-fourth respondents are from the age up to 25 years. Remaining respondents are equally distributed in the age group of 26 to 35 years and above 45 years.

(2) More than three-fourth respondents among the sample are male. The remaining respondents are female.

(3) More than two-third respondents are married; three out of every ten are unmarried whereas little remaining are divorcee.

(4) A little more than four out of every ten respondents are from lower castes, further almost one-third are from the higher castes, whereas remaining one-fourth are from medium castes category.

(5) Majority of the respondents (84.1 Percent) are from Hindu religion and the remaining are from Non-Hindus.

(6) Six out of every ten respondents are from urban background, two out of every ten are from semi-urban background, whereas remaining two out of every ten are comes from rural background.

(7) More than six out of every ten respondents belongs to nuclear families, whereas the remaining respondents are from joint families.

(8) One-seventh respondents are from large-sized families i.e. having 8 or above members. Four out of every ten
respondents are from medium-sized families i.e. having 5 to 7 members,. The remaining less than half respondents are from small-sized families with the majority of employed journalists.

(9) A little less than four out of every ten respondents are from the monthly income range up to Rs. 10,000.00, further a little less respondents are from the monthly income range Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000.00, whereas the remaining respondents are distributed in to the monthly income range of Rs. 20,001.00 to Rs. 30,000.00 and above Rs. 30,000.00

(10) Three out of every ten respondents are from the families with monthly income range up to Rs. 10,000.00, more than half respondents are from the families with monthly income range Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000.00, whereas the remaining respondents are distributed in to the families with monthly income range of Rs. 20,001.00 to Rs. 30,000.00, Rs. 30,001.00 to Rs. 50,000.00 and above Rs. 50,000.00

(11) As concerned with education, nearly seven out of every ten respondents are educated up to Graduation or above; nearly one-fourth respondents are educated up to Intermediate level, whereas remaining respondents are educated up to High School level.

(12) As concerned with the Professional Qualification in Journalism, eight out of every ten respondents have no any professional qualification in journalism. Only one-eighth are educated up to Diploma in Journalism, one out of every twenty respondents are educated up to
Graduation in Journalism, whereas remaining very little segment (2.4 Percent) is P.G. or above in journalism.

(13) As concerned with father’s education, father’s of almost half of the respondents are educated with graduation or above, more than one-fourth are educated up to Intermediate level, a little least than one-fifth are educated up to High School level, whereas remaining are Illiterate.

(14) As concerned with father’s occupation, fathers of a little more than one-fourth respondents’ are engaged in Govt. job, nearly one-tenth engaged in Agriculture, nearly two out of every ten are in private job, less than one-tenth are in journalism, a very little share as daily wages labourers, whereas remaining are in other businesses.

(15) The living standard of more than six out of every ten respondents is average; living standard of one-fifth respondents is high, whereas living standard of remaining respondents is poor.

(16) Four out of every ten respondents have the experience of journalism from 5 to 10 years, two out of every ten have the experience from 10 to 20 years, one-third are distributed in the experience below 3 years and from 3 to 5 years, whereas a very few have the experience as journalist for more than 20 years.

(17) More than two-third ten respondents have no any family member in the same profession, a little more than one-fifth have at least one family member in the same profession, whereas a very few have two or more than two family members in the same profession of journalist.
A little less than half of the respondents joined the career as journalist as their own interest, almost one-fourth taken the journalism as just occupation. Only one-sixth respondents admit that they joined the journalism as social service whereas remaining respondents joined the journalism just for livelihood.

More than seven out of every ten respondents are inspired by their own interest to join the career as journalist, further more than one-sixth respondents are inspired by their family members, relatives or friends whereas remaining respondents not felt inspired by anything but joined the journalism just for livelihood.

8.3 TOOLS, DATA COLLECTION AND DATA PROCESSING

The primary data about the objectives of the study have been collected from the Employed and Freelance Journalists as well as office bearers of Press Council and IWFJ with the help of an interview schedule. Secondary data are collected from various Govt./non-government agencies. The primary data have been processed through computer. Secondary data are handled manually.

8.4 MAJOR FINDINGS AND INFERENCES

Every researcher attempts at making certain generalizations regarding the phenomenon under study on the basis of his observations. This is done by drawing inferences from the major findings and unveiling the implications. This is what we aim to do now. The major findings and inferences of this study are being presented in the following parts-
8.4.1 PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY IN JOURNALISM

The major findings about the Professional Autonomy in Journalism are as under-

(1) Almost six out of every ten respondents accept that there is a code of ethics declared by their newspaper group. A small segment denied on it whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(2) One out of every ten respondents opines that there should be a right to declare code of ethics to newspaper management. Four out of every ten respondents are in the view that Journalists’ organisations or Press Council should have the right for that. This view is further divided by two-third and one-third between Journalists’ Organisations and Press Council. A little more than one-fourth thinks that all of the above should declare code of ethics whereas remaining respondents opines that none of these should have the right on this issue.

(3) More than two-third of the respondents admits that they follow the professional ethics of journalism whereas remaining one-third of the respondents are either silent or find impossible to follow the professional ethics in the current scenario. Majority of
the followers of professional ethics are from freelancers, on the other hand employed journalists are in majority who find difficult to follow the professional ethics.

(4) One-fourth of the respondents feel that the censorship is must in public interest. A little less than half of the respondents find it as a tool to curtail freedom of journalists or feel the censor as dictatorship. The remaining respondents are still undecided on this matter.

(5) More than three-fourth of the respondents opine that there is a work freedom to exercise the duties as journalist, among them a little less than half agreed fully whereas remaining find work freedom up to some extent. Remaining respondents either disagrees with the above views are still not able to decide their views and almost equally divided on this opinion.

(6) A little less than two-third of the respondents having the views that in the current scenario the role of newspaper management group is getting the professional touch. Three out of every twenty finds the role of management as social service whereas one out of every twenty find the management group politically influenced. Remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(7) Four out of every ten respondents are not in favour to hide the facts of public interest over management’s interests. Almost same respondents are opine that this is due to professional approach of management
whereas among remaining some thinks that this is not their jurisdiction and other not bothered about that issue.

(8) Six out of every ten respondents finds management’s interference as a major hindrance in journalists’ autonomy, majority of them are employed journalists. One-fourth of the respondents opine that the governmental or political interference is a major hindrance in journalists’ autonomy, whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue. The respondents feeling political interference are freelancers in majority whereas respondents feeling governmental interference are again from employed journalists in majority.

(9) Three out of every ten respondents find the wrong practice to create un-necessary sensation to the news of public interest. A little less than the above feels that publishing sensational news improves business of the news paper. Almost one-third opine that creating sensation is not a mal-practice until it not tarnishes the image of somebody. Rest respondents are reluctant on this issue.

(10) Two-third of the respondents admits this fact that journalist are reluctant to public interests over their own interests. One-fourth of the respondents denied on this whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(11) Almost three-fourth of the respondents agreed that unnecessary communal shade should not be given to the
news of two different religions whereas some of them finds it proper to improve the business of the newspaper. Three out of every twenty find it beyond their jurisdiction whereas remaining respondents are reluctant on this issue.

(12) More than half of the respondents opine that there should be an immediate publication of the corrigendum as soon as it reveals for the false or non-confirm news. Two out of every ten respondents wants to leave it on editor’s choice. A little less than two out of every ten respondents agreed on it but they find it necessary if somebody objects on it. The remaining respondents are reluctance on this issue.

(13) Almost two-third of the respondents find it wrong to publish the news frame advertisement in the newspapers whereas one-sixth of the respondents believe that it improves the business. One out of every ten respondents finds it beyond their jurisdiction whereas remaining respondents are reluctant on this issue.

(14) More than half of the respondents from freelancer journalists are engaged in another profession simultaneously with the working as journalist, rest are not engaged with any other profession.

(15) More than eight out of every ten respondents are satisfied with their profession. Rest of the respondents either not satisfied with their profession or they are in dilemma. The respondents who are satisfied with their job much more are freelancers and secondly the employed journalists.
(16) Three out of every ten respondents opine that there is no any higher educational qualification required for the career as journalist; even some of them also have the views that only experience is sufficient for this career. The remaining respondents think that there must be a graduation or even higher qualification for the career as a journalist.

(17) More than three-fourth of the respondents opine that the professional qualification in journalism is most helpful to improve working efficiency, among these six out of every ten find it must to improve professional efficiency. One out of every ten feels that there is no need of any professional education to improve working efficiency, remaining respondents are undecided.

On the basis of above findings, it may be concluded that majority of the respondents accepts that there is a code of ethics declared by their news paper group. Most of the respondents are in the view that Journalists’ organisation or Press Council should have the right to declare code of ethics. Majority of the respondents admits that they follow the professional ethics of journalism; most of the respondents find the Press Censorship as a tool to curtail freedom of journalists or feel the censor as dictatorship.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents opine that there is a work freedom to exercise the duties as journalist, most of the respondents having the views that in the current scenario the role of news paper management group is getting the professional touch, most of them are not in favour to hide the facts of public interest over management’s interests, but
some of them opine that this is due to professional approach of management. Majority of the respondents finds management’s interference as a major hindrance in journalists’ autonomy and most of among them are employed journalists.

Most of the journalists opine that creating sensation in news is not a mal-practice until it not tarnishes the image of somebody. Majority of the respondents admits this fact that journalist are reluctant to public interests over their own interests. A handsome majority agreed that un-necessary communal shade should not be given to the news of two different religions. Most of the respondents opine that there should be an immediate publication of the corrigendum as soon as it reveals for the false or non-confirm news. Majority of the respondents find it wrong to publish the news frame advertisement in the news papers.

Majority of the respondents from freelancer journalists are engaged in another profession simultaneously with the working as journalist, an overwhelming majority of the respondents are satisfied with their profession. Most of them think that there must be a graduation or even higher qualification for the career as a journalist and a handsome majority of the respondents opine that like as other professional career such as doctors and lawyers, the professional qualification in journalism is most helpful to improve working efficiency.

8.4.2 ROLE OF IFWJ AS A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION
The major findings about the Role of IFWJ as a Professional Association are as under-

(1) One out of every ten respondents is having membership of IFWJ; seven out of every ten respondents are members of other journalists’ Organisations whereas remaining respondents not a member of any journalists’ organisation.

(2) Four out of every ten respondents are taking active participation in IFWJ, whereas two out of every ten respondents participates often, remaining either not joined any organisation or have not active participation in organisation.

(3) More than half of the respondents agreed that IFWJ playing an effective role to defend the interests of working journalists. One-sixth of the respondents are dis-agreeing on this point whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(4) Nearly six out of every ten respondents think that IFWJ plays an effective role in the direction of amendment in Press Law for the interest of working journalists, whereas remaining respondents either disagree or silent on this issue.

(5) A little less than half of the respondents are aware about the code of ethics of IFWJ, whereas the remaining respondents are either accepts the unawareness or silent on this issue.

(6) A little more than three out of every ten respondents are aware about the code of ethics of National Union of
Journalist (NUJ), whereas the remaining respondents are either un-aware or silent on this issue.

(7) More than two-third of the respondents opines that Journalist’ Organisations should declare the code of ethics for their member journalists whereas the remaining respondents are either disagree or silent on this issue.

(8) More than half of the respondents follow the code of ethics declared by their own news paper group. One-seventh respondents are follower of the code of ethics declared by IFWJ or Press Council. Almost one-fourth are self bound or following their own ethics whereas remaining respondents accepts that they are not following any code of ethics.

On the basis of above findings we may conclude that an overwhelming majority of respondents are members of journalists’ Organisations such as IFWJ and taking active participation in joined organisation, majority of the respondents agreed that IFWJ playing an effective role to defend the interests of working journalists and in the direction of amendment in Press Law for the interest of working journalists, most of them are aware about the code of ethics of IFWJ, only some of the respondents are aware about the code of ethics of NUJ, a clear majority of the respondents opines that Journalist’ Organisations should declare the code of ethics for their member journalists and most of them following the code of ethics declared by their own news paper group.
8.4.3 ROLE OF PRESS COUNCIL AS A SELF-REGULATORY BODY

The major findings about role of Press Council as a Self-regulatory body are as under-

(1) More than two-third of the respondents agreed that Press Council playing an effective role to defend the interests of journalists. One-sixth of the respondents are dis-agreeing on this point whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(2) Two out of every ten respondents accepts that there is an effective control of Press Council on Journalists, other two out of every ten also agreed on this but they thinks that approachable journalists are still out of reach from control. Four out of every ten respondents think that there is no any effective control of Press Council on Journalist whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(3) Nearly half of the respondents opine that there should be a representation of Journalists and Intellectuals in the Press Council, among this one-fourth are in favour for the representation of journalists only. A very little share of respondents wants the representation of Journalists and Administration in the Press Council whereas remaining almost half of the respondents wants the representation of all of these categories in the Press Council.

(4) Nearly two-third of the respondents either opines that the code of conduct of Press Council is fully effective or
sufficiently effective to control the journalists. One-sixth of the respondents accept that nobody is caring about that whereas remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

(5) Nearly two-third of the respondents accepts that Press Council becomes successful in the direction of implementation of professional ethics. Less then one-fifth of the respondents disagreeing on this, whereas remaining respondents are again silent on this issue.

(6) More than three-fourth of the respondents are aware about the code of conduct of Press Council, whereas remaining respondents are silent due to un-awareness.

(7) More than three-fourth of the respondents are opines regarding the effective changes in the code of conduct of Press Council, whereas remaining respondents either not want any change on it or they are silent on this issue.

(8) More than half of the respondents are fully aware about the functioning and complaint procedure of the Press Council, another one-fourth of the respondents are aware up to some extent, whereas remaining respondents are in dilemma on this point of discussion.

(9) Three-fourth of the respondents are ever in contact with Press Council, whereas remaining respondents are never contacted to the Press Council.

(10) One out of every ten respondents is in touch with Press Council being its office bearer or member, a few were ever summoned by the Press Council, where remaining
respondents are being in touch with Press Council either due to another reasons or they never being in touch with Press Council.

(11) Nearly two-third of the respondents opines that the Press Council still not have effective powers to exercise, one-eighth respondents are denied with that, whereas remaining respondents are in dilemma on this issue.

(12) Nearly three-fourth of the respondents agreed upon that the decisions of the Press Council must be binding, whereas remaining of the respondents either disagreeing or silent on this issue.

(13) Almost half of the respondents admit that journalists are accepting enticement for the publication of some news of someone’s interests. Almost one-third respondents denied journalists’ enticement for such things whereas remaining respondents are in dilemma on this matter.

(14) Two out of every ten respondents accepts that journalists are being induced or involve in blackmailing for the matters being tarnish someone’s public image, if published. One-fourth of the respondents are fully agree with it, whereas remaining respondents either denied on this matter or silent on this issue.

On the basis of above findings we may infer that a clear majority agreed that Press Council playing an effective role to defend the interests of journalists but there is no any effective control of Press Council on Journalist. Majority of the
respondents opine that there should be a representation of Journalists and Intellectuals in the Press Council; they find that code of conduct of Press Council is fully effective and successful in the direction of implementation of professional ethics and they are aware about the code of conduct but opines regarding the effective changes in the code of conduct of the Press Council.

Majority of the respondents are fully aware about the functioning and complaint procedure of the Press Council and are ever in contact with Press Council, either due to different reasons. A handsome majority opines that the Press Council still not have effective powers to exercise, they agreed upon that the decisions of the Press Council must be binding. Majority of the respondents admit that journalists are accepting enticement for the publication of some news of someone’s interests, and being induced or involve in blackmailing for the matters being tarnish someone’s public image, if published.

8.4.4 ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The major findings about role of Role of Professional Education and Training are as under-

(1) Seven out of every ten respondents find professional education of journalism necessary to become a reporter or journalist. One out of every ten respondent not agreed on this view whereas remaining respondents are undecided on this issue.
Almost two-third of the respondents are satisfied with the level of professional education in journalism in current scenario. Two out of every ten respondents are not satisfied with this, whereas remaining respondents does not show any interest to opine on that issue.

In the opinion of one-third of the respondents there should be a minimum tenure of six months to one year for the formal professional education in the field of journalism. A little more than one-fourth finds the two year period as sufficient for that, whereas almost for out of every ten respondents opine that there should be a tenure of three years or more for the formal education in the field of journalism to become a journalist. Little remaining respondents are silent on this issue.

On the basis of above findings we may infer that an overwhelming majority of respondents find professional education of journalism necessary to become a reporter or journalist, most of them satisfied with the level of professional education in journalism in current scenario and opine that there should be a tenure of three years or more for the formal education in the field of journalism.

What emerges from this study is the fact that most of the Journalists accept the professionalism of management and find management’s interference as major hindrance in journalists’ autonomy; most of among them are employed journalists. Majority of them agreed that un-necessary communal shade should not be given to the news of two
different religions, but agreed to create sensation in news until not tarnishes the personal image of somebody.

Majority of the freelancer journalists are engaged in another profession simultaneously with the working as journalist. Most of them think that there must be a graduation or even higher qualification for the career as a journalist and opine that like as other professional career such as doctors and lawyers, the professional qualification in journalism is must to improve working efficiency and find three years or more tenure of professional education in journalism necessary to become a reporter or journalist.

Most of the journalists joined journalists’ Organisations and taking active participation. Majority of them agreed on effective role of IFWJ to defend the interests of journalists, and are aware about the code of ethics of IFWJ, but most of them following the code of ethics declared by their own news paper group. There is no effective control of Press Council, and the Press Council still not have effective powers. The Yellow Journalism spreading wings, journalists are accepting enticement for the publication of news in someone’s interests, and being induced or involve in blackmailing for the matters being tarnish someone’s public image, if published.

**8.5 MAJOR OBSERVATIONS**

The major observations based on the results and inferences of this study are as follows-
(1) The publication group may declare and implement their professional code of ethics in consultation with journalists.

(2) Sensational and communal news must be handled carefully with close monitoring of editor and management group.

(3) A close watch on Yellow Journalism to eradicate the corruption in the field of journalism is needed.

(4) The professional qualification in the field of journalism may be essential at different levels to join as journalist like other professional fields.

(5) The Press Council and Journalists’ Organisations must seriously watch the public interests.

These observations, from this empirical exercise and ground reality, may be utilised to improve the autonomy of journalist and safeguarding public interest. There is a need for the close monitoring on public interests, if journalists desire and demand for greater autonomy. Emerging corruption in the field of journalism will definitely lead to deprofessionalization in journalism, resulting in reduced or curtailed autonomy. Journalists’ autonomy depends on the extent of their professional competence and orientation to safeguard and serves the interests of the public.

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