

Chapter I

Introduction and Design of the Study

1.1. Introduction

Human beings achieved communication long before they could write. They communicated by means of word of mouth, signal and gesture. However, such a communication had many drawbacks. It was greatly restricted in scope and reach, and was weakened by many barriers. Yet, curiosity to share news impelled humans to look for alternative ways of interaction. Newspapers were born out of this curiosity of human beings to exchange news. Today, newspapers have become an indispensable part of daily life. Very few afford to forgo this medium of communication when they wake up from the bed in the early morning. Newspapers not only bring to the reader important events of the society surrounding him or her, but also give a follow-up to the events covered before. Further, newspapers carry many items of social and commercial importance such as advertisement, job opportunity, buying and selling, matrimonial, greeting and other neatly classified information. Although radio and television have robbed newspapers of some popularity and reach, they are still unable to replace newspapers completely.

Radio was once the greatest companion of the workman. Unlike newspaper, it entertained the listeners without much physical difficulty, effort or eyestrain. However, it lost its influence to television. Television, although a

live medium with enormous potential, is rather serving as a substitute for cinema and entertainment. Thus, both radio and television have competed unproductively among themselves instead of complementing each other's service. Print media on the other hand is entirely different. Newspapers do not restrict their scope of news coverage to a particular area. Although politics is the most important domain of news coverage, newspapers report on a wide range of issues catering to the needs of all sections of the society. More than that, it is an information repository and a platform for news analysis, follow-up and prediction. It plays a vital role in bringing information and awareness to the people. If utilised properly, it greatly motivates the masses to be active partners in the nation building process. Newspaper is a skillful synthesis between traditional and modern forms of communication. Its folk and traditional contents, easily read and understood by laymen and scholars alike, are presented by skilled technical staff using advanced technological and communication tools.

Although one takes for granted the finished newspaper in the morning or evening, it would have passed many production and distribution stages before reaching the end user. From technical pre-press to package assortment and distribution, every stage should be so carefully planned and executed that the complete newspaper reaches the reader on time. In this regard, the modern newspaper is an European invention. With the invention of printing technology, news reports gained added reach and reliability and hence became more formal.

The first known printing press used to disseminate news was established in Europe in about 1450. Its publication was News Book, not newspaper. Although News Books carried a variety of news, they did not qualify as newspapers. This was due to the fact that they each appeared only once, reported on only one story and had no separate identity from the particular news story they told. Conversely, newspapers carry a variety of news items. Their scope is the world as a whole. Yet, they are localised to the preferences and requirements of the region or community they intend to serve. This variety and enormity of information within one's grasp has made newspapers the most popular medium of communication. One has to wait for the desired programme on radio or television. Conversely, newspapers readily have everything within one's reach. Therefore, besides the common man, it is predominantly used by various establishments such as the government, industry, religion and even other wings of the media.

1.2. Need for the Study

This newspaper has faced many challenges ever since the industry evolved. It is suffering more so in the recent decades. The trouble started with competition from radio, which began in the 1920's. Despite the efforts to prevent radio stations from using information from the press, radio made significant gains. With the arrival of television after World War II came the true end to the two-century old domination of newspaper. This era of i-phones and e-papers has made things worse as every other news medium attempts to make

inroads into the base of newspaper readers. With the average Indian home now keeping a television set on for more than seven hours a day, time available for reading a newspaper of choice has declined dramatically. In 1940, there was one newspaper in circulation for every four Indian adults. This came down to three by 1990. According to a survey conducted in 1997, the share of adult readers has declined from 85 percent in 1946 to 73 percent in 1965, down further to 55 percent in 1985. According to another survey, only 8.9 percent of Indians regarded newspapers as their primary medium of news and information. Evening newspapers, which once provided refreshment and family discussions in the evening Indian homes, felt the stinging competition from television and disappeared even from many large cities. While about 12 percent of the total circulation of newspapers in the world come about in India, the country is far behind in the 29th place when per capita newspaper circulation is considered (World Press Trends Report - 2012, 2013).

In the past, newspapers served only to know what happened around in the world. This however has changed. Now newspapers have gone to the extent of shaping individual, group and social behavior of people. They divide people on different lines or unite them on equal lines regardless of caste, creed, colour, age and sex. More clearly, newspapers have effected for themselves a steady and gradual transition from being merely a news medium to a mind control mechanism. Thus, they have substantial bearing on the society's condition and conduct. Any industry or sector has its unique internal functions and operations

and an external environment controlling or contributing to those functions and operations. However, newspaper industry is different in the sense that it nowadays attempts to force and shape its own external operating environment. Paid news, blatant bias, wilful extolment or degradation of individuals, establishments and societies, suppression of truth, highlighting superficial happenings, mixing facts with falsehood, deceptive titling, misleading arguments, confusing wordings and diversionary tactics are the realities of today. Many independent investigative journalists on the Internet, whose list is too long to cite, claim collusion among consortium of publishers to attain their ulterior goal of misleading and finally controlling the society by controlling the flow of information. These independent and honest journalists are readily discredited by the mainstream media as conspiracy theorists, hate speech mongers, deranged individuals or dangerous cult members. While there are many individual journalists and newspapers with true journalistic spirit even in the mainstream media, the system they are part of prevails upon their spirit very easily. Therefore, the need for a study of the newspaper industry with its influence upon the society in individual and community sense was felt by the researcher, and the study was undertaken.

1.3. Study Rationale

This study is concerned about the analysis of newspapers in its historical and social perspective with reader (or subscriber) attitude towards it being the very important component. In this regard, the flow and control of information

should be understood in proper perspective by the reader. The reader should not get swayed away by sensational and trivial news. Nor should the reader allow himself or herself to get corrupted by the news media so that he or she wisely refuses to be a puppet who absorbs the attitudes and values sown by the newspapers as if drinking water. To mention a case, publications claiming to promote women empowerment and gender equality themselves put women as objects of attraction in front pages and advertisements. Therefore, the reader's ability to distinguish between news items is of paramount importance. More than that, the reader's ability to read between lines, as to why the newspaper puts such headings and wordings, why it highlights a news item while playing down another, why it presents a news under a false or twisted comparison, why it wilfully applies different yardsticks for same situations or same yardstick for different situations, why it fails to effect one-to-one correspondence, why it intentionally mixes good and bad, and finally why it offers perversions as the standard norms of the society, ought to rather determine the survival or otherwise of a newspaper than advertisement revenues, product promotion strategies and other external influences.

Once the readers get to know the true colours of a newspaper, they will not believe outright everything written on it. Only readers are obliged to examine the veracity of a news item from its context and content, possibly by way of inputs from many sources. If it is not possible, the news item should be taken merely as a news item and the reader should not let it influence him or

her. Nor should he or she allow it to shape or modify his or her attitude and behaviour in relation to the news item. Moreover, the news is to be taken at its bare minimum value without preformed opinions, preconceived notions and/or post-reading influences. If the subscribers and readers are truly understanding, they will decide the direction the newspaper has to go, the values the newspaper has to uphold, and the set of news items the newspaper has to offer them to read and believe, not otherwise. Conversely, as the symbolism of modern day slavery, news and media organisations, with their worldwide influence and possible collusion with other powers of the world, decide it for the reader.

Disposition of the reader towards one news item alone does not constitute a misinformed and deviant state of mind. A moderate inclination differs from consistent liking which in turn differs from addictive obsession. Therefore, whether the reader realises the trickery, if any, behind the words, whether he or she has knowledge to weigh the worthiness of a news, and whether he or she comprehends what impact the absorption of that news in right or wrong perspective would make on self, family and society matters more. For, it manifests the general condition of various socioeconomic groups as to where they individually stand in relation to the accepted and age old values of morality and behaviour. Therefore, it is incumbent on the reader to seek wisdom or be deceived. This is due to that, when informed, the reader has the power to accept or reject that news and its associated influence. It is up to the reader to prevail upon the news or allow the news to overwhelm him or her.

Therefore, awareness of newspaper subscribers and readers gains centre stage. Their knowledge or lack thereof with respect to the influence of news media on their lives is one of the most instrumental factors deciding the direction of the society. In this regard, the study attempts to analyse subscriber attitude towards various elements of newspaper reading.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

These days newspapers concertededly strive to define the personality of individuals, the characteristics of social groups/communities, and the worthiness of ideologies. This is done to what or whom they both abhor and adore, and is especially true of political and community matters. Newspapers do not paint black and white, that is, take a clear stand in favour of or against any individual, social group or ideology. With carefully developed psychological techniques they enable the reader to cultivate in himself or herself a disposition by associating a sum of attributes that define the total personality of the individual, social group or ideology. That is why they knowingly but tacitly favour one side and publish news items that affirm the words, works and practices of that side in all matters. Not only do they extol one side but also disparage the other side in an undue manner. When extolling one, either they seek to fulfil their ulterior motives or increase their individualistic or organisational gains. Likewise, when disparaging another, they do it with subtle but thorough aversion. When resistance or opposition comes in any form, be it public backlash or legal action, they invariably hide

behind the concept of freedom of speech or liberty of opinion. They even seek cover under the freedom of press. Moreover, under the guise of critical analysis or claiming to have obtained inputs from unconfirmed sources, they easily damage the dignity and reputation of those they dislike for no reason. Conversely, they persuade readers to see good even in the vilest of behaviours, actions, thoughts, deeds and utterances of the leader or social group they hold dear. Thus, they will never want to consider the other side of the aspect. Therefore in today's newspapers, there remains as much likelihood for a news item to be false as it is to be true. Further, newspapers will not apply the same set of parameters in evaluating the quality of everyone or everything. They wilfully treat unequals as equals, deliberately compare apples with oranges, knowingly equate hundreds with ones, and purposely fail to effect one to one correspondence. Moreover, when facts are presented either to refute or question the veracity of the news, newspapers invariably attempt to justify their side by vilification, mockery, suppression and counterclaim. This is done consistently in an unrepentant manner.

Hence, selective publishing at the one end of the spectrum and unbiased dissemination of truth at the other end have consequential impact on the society. To be clear, when newspapers do not mind applying discretion and restraint while publishing sensual, sensitive and abusive contents, they fail to maintain their high morale and business ethics. More than that, when they fail to look for greater common good, they even undermine social harmony. On the

other hand, when they are bearing witness and testimony to the truth, they build individuals, families and societies. Furthermore, influence of advertisers, industrial corporations, governments and vested interest groups should not lead to the creation of unwanted cartels that act against the society. In short, of the factors that bear upon the functions, services and operations of the newspaper industry, the genuine needs and preferences of the society and readers should get topmost priority than any other. Moreover in this regard, they shall not be let off to self-correct themselves by the excuse that it is up to them to be either corrupters and destroyers or watchers and keepers. For, the socioeconomic cost involved is much higher. Readers have the obligation to appraise where individual newspapers and the industry stand in relation to the values of equality, morality, dignity and propriety.

Therefore a study of reader attitude towards newspapers is desirable when the same is effected in conjunction with the presentation of the origin, growth and development of the newspaper industry. This will bring to light past and present conditions as to how newspapers have evolved over the centuries to exert influence upon individual readers, reader communities, societies and nations. Also, this will help to understand and project the direction in which this most important information medium is travelling for the future. More clearly, the study throws insight into the necessity and beginnings, technological improvements, presentation and contextual growth, regulation, control and suppressions, logistical and coverage challenges, subscription

patterns, buying influences and reader preferences with respect to newspapers and their environmental conditions. Moreover, the grey areas to be addressed, from the perspectives of the reader, the government and the newspaper industry, could be identified so that enhancements in appropriate areas are suggested for better functioning, serviceability and operation. Thus finally, the newspaper industry shall be evaluated of its strengths and weaknesses as against the opportunities and threats it faces so that possible corrective and control measures are put forward. This study is an attempt in this direction.

1.5. Review of Literature

The researcher undertook extensive literature review for the study problem. For this purpose hard and online versions of abstracts, journals, books and published and unpublished reports were referred. In this process, one source lead to another, giving a diverse and comprehensive base of information. Moreover, they provided information concerning the methodology, schema, analysis, and organisation of the report. They are presented below.

Sir Henry Ford, (1921) the world renowned industrial leader and founder of the Ford Motor Co., was critical of newspaper publishers for their collusion with the advertisers. In the Ford Motor Co's periodical, *The Dearborn Independent*, he stated that newspaper was a business proposition rather than a medium of unbiased information. He emphasised that newspapers no longer received their main support from the public, but from the advertisers. Further, he underscored that advertising was the main source of income for the

newspaper and without which any newspaper would most likely go bankrupt. The price paid by the reader for the newspaper was not at all sufficient to pay even for the white paper, he claimed. In this way, he argued, advertisers were as indispensable to the newspaper as the paper mills. Thus, he asserted that advertisers often influenced the news policies of the papers, at least with whom they dealt. (1)

Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais (1979) interviewed John Swinton, the legendary American Chief of Staff and Editor of the New York Tribune. He was considered as the ‘Dean of his Profession’. He said in the interview in 1953 to the New York Times that there was no such thing as an independent press in the world’s history, He added that everyone in the administration, business, military and religion knew it. He challenged that no one in the press dared to write honest news and opinions. Even if anyone did, he or she knew beforehand that it would never appear in print. More than that, anyone who would be so foolish as to write such things would be out on the streets looking for another job. Thus, he criticised, newsmen were paid to keep honest news and opinion out of the newspaper they were connected with. He went on further to rebuke that the business of the journalists was to destroy the truth, to lie outright, to pervert, to vilify, to fawn at the feet of mammon and finally to sell his country and his race for his daily bread. He asked what folly was that to boast about an independent press when this was as open as the sunlight. Moreover he charged that the newsmen were the tools and vassals of

rich men behind the scenes. They could be compared to jumping jacks who danced when the rich men pulled the strings. Upon conclusion, John Swinton very strongly reprovved that the talents, possibilities and lives of the newsmen were all the property of rich and influential men to the extent that the newsmen could be even called as intellectual prostitutes. (2)

National Vanguard Magazine (2005), the much-famed American owners of rene.com, published a research paper that discusses the core issues of news media, especially newspapers and television, and its effect on people. Although critical of a particular segment of people called the ‘ruling elite’, it shows to the minutest detail the reality of today’s mass media and swayed public. Rather than analysing it, it is better to quote therefrom, which is largely self-explanatory.

“There is no greater power in the world today than that wielded by the manipulators of public opinion. No king or pope of old, no conquering general or high priest ever disposed of a power even remotely approaching that of the few dozen corporates of news and entertainment mass media. The power is not distant and impersonal; it reaches into every home, and it works its will during nearly every waking hour. It is the power that shapes and moulds the mind of virtually every citizen, young or old, rich or poor, simple or sophisticated.

The mass media form for us our image of the world and then tell us what to think about that image. Essentially everything we know, or think we

know, about events outside our own neighborhood or circle of acquaintances comes to us via our television, newspaper, magazine or radio. They exercise both subtlety and thoroughness in their management of the news and the entertainment that they present to us.

For example, the way in which the news is covered: which items are emphasized and which are played down; the reporter's choice of words, tone of voice, and facial expressions; the wording of headlines; the choice of illustrations -- all of these things subliminally and yet profoundly affect the way in which we interpret what we see or hear. On top of this, the columnists and editors remove any remaining doubt from our minds as to just what we are to think about it all. Employing carefully developed psychological techniques, they guide our thought and opinion so that we can be in tune with the "in" crowd, the "beautiful people," the "smart money." They let us know exactly what our attitudes should be toward various types of people and behavior by placing those people or that behavior in the context of a TV drama or situation comedy and having the other TV characters react in the Politically Correct way."

The above quotations themselves are sufficient to prove the enormous social and cultural power (or as the authors wants to prove - abuse of power) newspapers and television wield towards public opinions and preferences. The authors conclude by exhorting to awaken to the fact that unless the people are

vigilant, righteous and honest, they will never be able to forestall the oncoming social disaster. They must enlighten themselves to counter this urgent situation or face the worst ever human tragedy upon earth. The indicators are already more conspicuous as proved by the authors like degenerate and identity-less individuals, broken and debt-ridden families, incriminated and impoverished society, and finally destruction of social fabric which leads to calamitous consequences as foretold by the Scriptures and Prophecy. There is an online version for free download too. (3)

Anurag Batra (2006) regards that the newspaper industry in every country stands out as an influential body contributing to social development or degeneration. He points out that it acts as one of the most potential platforms to expound values, attitudes and opinions. Moreover, by covering a wide range of topics that are associated with the daily activities of the people in a society, it promulgates the identity of the society, the author claims. He further claims that some traditional and true newspapers even act as as the dispensers of collective public opinion. In this regard, the author is of the view that the contents of newspapers in a country shall be regarded as the assimilation of the people's voice. He reasons that the steady growth over the years of newspaper circulation in India bears testimony to the importance accorded by Indians to the subscription and reading of newspaper. The author concludes that the success of nearly every daily newspaper in attracting more readership reflects the individuality of every reader and the nation as a whole. (4)

The Financial Express (Feb 2007) revealed that the circulation of Indian dailies increased by 33 percent between 2001 and 2005, with the sale of more than 7.9 crore copies. It was the single largest increase within a short period in recent circulation history. In the same period however, global newspaper circulation increased only by 9.95 percent. It further showed that the circulation of India's dailies increased from 5,91,29,000 copies in 2001 to 7,29,39,000 copies in 2003, which again increased to 7,86,89,000 copies in 2005. According to the news item, newspapers represented a \$180 billion industry, which was equivalent to almost 9 lakh crore Indian rupees. It concluded that the circulation and advertising revenues of newspapers was more than the combined revenue of radio, cinema, magazines and Internet. (5)

Timothy Balding (2007) published a news analysis that pertains to the discussion of management practices, marketing initiatives and expenditure patterns of the newspaper industry with top marketers and media planners. They were of the view that newspapers in India could benefit a lot from the exchange of ideas within the industry and by learning from other industries as well. While touching on the challenges being faced by the newspaper industry, some publishers were of the view that the newspaper on print and that on the Web were going to merge some day. While admitting that newspapers were under pressure to innovate and that was turning them into multimedia enterprises, the conference dismissed any threat to the print medium from new mediums like websites and web blogs. In this regard, it concluded that

newspapers were going to stay despite tremendous growth in technology and other news mediums. (6)

According to the data provided by **World Association of Newspapers (2007)**, newspaper circulation in India was growing and new newspapers were being launched at a remarkable rate. This trend was contrary to the conventional wisdom that newspapers were in terminal decline, the Association claimed. The Association also pointed out that the number of daily newspaper titles crossed 10,000 mark for the first time in history. In that, India was accounting for 1,834 dailies in 2005 as against 1,493 in 2001, which was an increase of 22.8 percent. The Association believed that the figures confirmed the healthy nature and trend of the industry. Moreover, the industry was vigorously dealing with increasing competition from other media and was successful in this regard. The report concluded that predicting the death of newspapers should be nothing more than a wishful thinking based on common assumptions that were belied by facts and figures. This was due to the fact that newspaper circulation was far better than prediction and forecasting. (7)

The **INMA Conference (2007)** attended by many Indian and international publishers discussed the issue of building good brands and markets in the newspaper enterprise so that newspapers were valuable and sustainable. While newspaper circulation was declining in the West, crucial figures like circulation, readership, advertising revenue and brand value showed tremendous growth for many Indian newspapers. Finally, the conference called

for building the brand value of a newspaper, as this was vital for its circulation, audiences and advertising revenue. It was readily observable from the conference that advertisers and the newspaper industry enjoyed a good rapport in India and elsewhere. In this regard, publishers deplored that the newspaper industry did not discuss what advertisers expected from them. They went on to stress that if they talked more and discussed such ideas at least once a year, they could definitely improve. This was an apparent manifestation to confirm what Sir Henry Ford and National Vanguard Magazine claimed about the collusion between advertisers and newspapers. (8)

A case study by **Jamsheed et al. (2008)** was aimed at evaluating the requirements and satisfaction levels of television viewers. Performance and quality parameters were identified, categorised and analysed for Tamil and Malayalam channels. Those included cost, broadcasting quality, serviceability, availability, channel variety, span, viewing extend and timings. All indicators were studied under rural-urban divide and preference rankings were done. From simple percentage analysis to more complex two-tailed hypothesis testing were applied to study performance and viewer behaviour. The study found that viewers had trouble confining themselves to just one channel because of overwhelming choice. Hence, viewer loyalty factor remained significantly low for news channels, which in turn affected their performance rankings. For entertainment channels, channel loyalty and viewer satisfaction were stably higher. Finally, the study suggested that deficiencies in neutrality, news

coverage, item composition, ethical standards, moral quality and contextual presentation had to be addressed immediately in order to retain or exalt their rankings. Upon conclusion, the study was critical of the channels for confusing terms, incomprehensive packages and false advertisements. It called for vigilance on the part of the viewer because an intangible and indirect burden always remained on the shoulder of the subscriber once he or she entered into subscription. (9)

In its **Annual Report, the Press Council of India (2010)** lamented the evils of Paid News. Paid News refers to untrue and unfair reporting for monetary considerations both during the electoral process and in day to day commercial activities. It has shocked the conscience of the nation when this issue surfaced during the Parliamentary election of 2009 and also at elections in a few State Assemblies. The Press Council of India (PCI) set up a Sub Committee to study the phenomenon of paid news syndrome. The Committee toured the length and breadth of the country and collected inputs from politicians, journalists, media houses, prominent members of civil society and various sources. Based on data made available to it, the Committee prepared an in-depth report. A final report with recommendations was prepared after scrutiny and verification. This final report was given to the PCI in 2011 and was made available for public access in the Council's website. The report clearly revealed that improper reporting was made by a large section of media houses for monetary consideration. The Committee further found that only a few

media houses had not indulged in nefarious activities including Paid News despite unhealthy competition from many erring media houses. It recommended to the PCI to take urgent steps to eradicate such phenomenon. It further recommended that if a media house reports or publishes articles for a corporate entity, that media house should declare its financial interest, if any, in the corporate entity. Its recommendations translated into some effective steps by the Election Commission of India putting tight vigil on media corporations to control such evil practice. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has also endorsed the report and has since brought out policy changes to mandate disclosures by listed companies having agreements with media. Following these steps, the paid news syndrome has been under check to a remarkable extent. (10)

Justice Markandey Katju (2012), present chairman of the PCI, suggests the setting up of a 48-member statutory regulator for media with punitive powers and representation. He is of the view that any proposal for media regulation is being opposed irrationally. He asserts that the media's cry of self correction and regulation is utter folly and farce. He expresses his unhappiness over the media's indulging in the practice of paid news and sensationalising trivial issues related to cinema and cricket. On the other hand, he laments, they ignore real issues related to education, poverty, hunger malnutrition, equality and healthcare. He reinforces his argument with an example that while 512 accredited journalists queued up to cover a fashion

show in Mumbai a few years ago, hardly any reporter wrote about the plight and suicide of farmers just a few kilometres away from the place. Therefore he urges the journalists to take up the cause of people and their rights this time of transition wherein the country moving away from a feudal agricultural system to a modern society. Justice Katju concludes that people will respect the media if it highlights real issues. (11)

Santanu Sinha Chaudhuri (2013), a veteran reader of The Hindu, wrote his opinion in response to the editorial by Harish Khare titled ‘Why the intellectual is on the run’ on February 6, 2013. Harish Khare is one of the editors of The Hindu, and formerly Media Advisor to the Prime Minister of India. The reader said that the editor presented a convincing case for moderation in the thoughts of readers and media persons, which only would help to keep thought policing at bay. He added that as India had many problems, rising intolerance disabled the capacity to address all these problems. He further opined that the electronic media with its great powers to shape informed public opinion had become a pernicious element that dumbed down the level of discourse and debate. He rightly said that the very format of the debates that offered 30-minute panacea for all evils with crude exhibition of lung power by a mix of experts, charlatans, thinkers and bigots guaranteed its failure. Finally the reader, in relation to the editorial, called upon the society to shun these charades and turn to a handful of newspapers and magazines for truthful opinions. (12)

A.S. Panneerselvam (2013) in his piece of editorial opinion column analyses the nature and relevance of headlines in newspapers. He says that headlines are comparable to the naming process. This process gives an identity to a story and invites the reader to its content. He underscores that the naming has to be as precise as the academician's categorising of social and political events. Moreover, it should be imaginative with rich vocabulary. He adds that the difficulty in writing headlines lies in conveying a complicated set of facts in a few attractive words. Thus, the author stresses, every word must be weighed in the headline. In this regard the author shows that there is a double responsibility for headline writers. First, they have to attract as many readers as they can into the text of the story. Otherwise the story is condemned to unread obscurity. Second, even when the headline fails to have an effect, it should nonetheless give a sort of impression of the story from scanning the headline itself. Thus those who do not read the headline still contemplate its context and relevance. In a nutshell accuracy, intelligibility and vigour are the requirements for a headline, the author clarifies. He cautions that any newspaper which is careless with its headline writing is careless with its own purpose and vitality. He concludes that when every headline goes unerringly to the point with precision and wit, the whole newspaper comes alive. (13)

A.S. Panneerselvam (2013) was again writing this piece of opinion against the suggestion by the former Chief Justice of India and the present Chairman of the Press Council of India Justice Markandey Katju. Justice Katju

had rightly said that as there was no qualification for entry into the profession of journalism, very often persons with little or inadequate training entered the profession. And this led to negative effects because such untrained persons did not maintain high standards of journalism.. The author was of the view that Justice Katju's recommendation would lead to unintended consequences that undermined the wellsprings of democratic entailments. He claimed that journalism could not be compared to other professions except politics. He further strangely asserted that journalism was the sibling of politics. Therefore the author stressed that journalism and politics had some inalienable rights that needed to be protected at any cost. He sang the same old song that although journalism today was facing a crisis, no corrective attempt should undermine this. Instead, he asserted, there was a real need for on-the-job training for journalists to keep in pace with the changing reality. He concluded that the focus should be on setting high professional standards, good ethical practices and having a series of refresher programmes for journalists to deal with new challenges. (14)

The reviews show that newspapers are indispensable tools of information and news analysis in the modern world. Moreover, they are powerful to the extent of changing or bending public opinion in favour of or against any individual, group, community, political party or even a nation. Moreover, some of the literatures are critical of existing system for its unfair working or poor implementation. Second, some literatures emphasise the need for enhancement,

changeover or complete revamp of existing system for it to be more efficient, truthful and productive. This is to be done both internally and externally. Supervision and control are also the factors for concern. In this regard, role of the governing bodies in overseeing their activities is emphasised at some places.

1.6. Objectives

This research has the following objectives.

1. To study the origin, growth and development of newspapers in a worldwide perspective.
2. To study the historical growth of printing and related technology.
3. To study the evolution of newspapers in the Indian context.
4. To study the history of printing and newspaper journalism in Tamil.
5. To study reader attitude towards newspaper by analysing the readership environment, reading characteristics, distinctive choices and tendencies, reader preferences, usefulness measures and prominence rankings.
6. To put a overview upon dealer and channel aspects such as deposit, distribution, commission and return of unsold copies.
7. To study recent trends in newspaper journalism and finally offer suggestions for reader, government and newspaper industry.

1.7. Research Hypotheses

Based on the Objectives, the following hypotheses were framed. Not all hypotheses were statistically proved. Instead, most hypotheses stood proved/disproved by qualitative analysis, logical inference, ranking or historical facts and figures.

1. People do not want to interact with others and are not eager to share information and opinions. Newspapers have been imposed unnecessarily upon them with hollow utility value.
2. Growth of newspapers is independent of social and technological developments and do not reflect changes therein.
3. Growth and evolution of newspapers and the development of printing and publishing technology have not gone in a parallel and mutual manner.
4. The history of newspapers in the Indian and Tamil contexts does not serve to understand the social, communal, political and economic conditions which prevailed during the respective times.
5. Influence of newspapers upon modern readers, communities, societies and nations is too insignificant to deliberate.
6. Every newspaper serves to disseminate truth by publishing unbiased information regardless of caste, community, region and ideology.
7. Newspapers always submit themselves to government oversight, will of the masses and ethical and moral standards.

8. Reading preferences towards newspaper do not set in readers based on the social environment, information content, coverage and presentation of news items.
9. Reading newspaper and taking its contents word for word are enough to understand social perversions, communal influences, distorted meanings, vague interpretations, unfair comparisons and hidden motives, if any.
10. Inclination of reader towards a newspaper does not have any qualitative correlation to his/her individual, social, economic, communal and/or political standing.
11. News presentation, coverage, content and composition have no correlation to the prevalent socioeconomic conditions and social direction.
12. Reader attitude, news agent/dealer information, circulation data and structure of distribution channels do not reveal the prominence of individual newspapers.

1.8. Scope

The study is restricted to newspaper readers of Tuticorin, Tirunelveli and Madurai districts of the state of Tamilnadu. In covering the geographical region, the study chose a selective group of respondents scattered over the districts. Only urban and semi-urban areas were considered. The reason is that this population has the predominant percentage of the middle and higher

middle class families that constitute the socioeconomic heartland of the study area. Although the study is restricted to this geographical scope, its information scope was extended upon need. The environment representing the society, economy, polity, culture and technology was considered whenever the implications were pertinent to the newspaper industry. Moreover, some external agencies were approached upon need, as they were providing secondary data. Within this geographical and analytical scope the study attempts to analyse the attitude of subscribers and readers towards newspapers and fulfills all the aspects presented in the Objectives.

1.9. Methodology

1.9.1. Nature

This study is of qualitative, theoretical and descriptive nature. It keeps generality and is not meant for solving any institutional or organisational problem. Conversely it is a field study in which a sample of randomly selected respondents register their opinions regarding newspaper reading habits, choices and preferences, and subscription patterns. Thus regular newspaper readers with permanent subscription constitute the chief information base of the research. As emphasis is given to qualitative aspects, quantitative analysis (statistical and/or mathematical) is only to enhance the qualitative study.

1.9.2. Sampling

The population of the three districts taken altogether is about one crore heads. Identifying regular newspaper readers and subscribers in this vast

population and geography is a tedious task. Taking a percentage therefrom as sample is not viable either. Moreover, methodological stratification is difficult as there are many socioeconomic factors involved, which increases the complexity. Therefore Convenience Sampling was employed. However, it is purposive in the sense that respondents are seen not to get polarised on any personal or social parameter. For that originally four hundred and fifty respondents were chosen and virtually subjected to stratification in terms of personal and social factors including gender, age group, education, income and the like. Therefrom, three hundred newspaper subscribers and/or regular readers were absorbed to have a representative sample.

1.9.3. Data Collection

The research is based on survey method. For this study both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data was collected from the sample respondents with the help of a questionnaire prepared on the basis of the objectives. The study area was Tuticorin, Tirunelveli and Madurai districts in Tamilnadu. Data collection was carried out between September 2010 and September 2012.

Initially a pilot study was undertaken with a sample of 40 respondents from Tuticorin and Tirunelveli districts so that the questionnaire could be put to a pretest. Based on the responses, questions were added, deleted, rephrased, remodelled or simplified. Moreover, offensive, intrusive, odd, redundant, difficult, unclear and unfruitful questions were identified and fine tuned. After

finalising the questionnaire, 300 sample respondents from the three districts were selected. This included the 40 respondents of the pilot study.

Once ready for data collection, each respondent was personally handed over the questionnaire by the researcher. The questionnaire was in English. Whenever needed an unstructured personal interview schedule was executed in Tamil to minimise response errors. The collected data was properly classified, edited, coded and tabulated according to the need of analysis.

For secondary data, books, journals, bulletins, articles and back volumes of unpublished research in university libraries were consulted. Internet websites were also the source of e-books, research papers and reference information. Within the geographical and analytical scope, the study was intended to fulfill the Objectives.

1.9.4. Method and Tools

When rating opinions, Likert's Scale with a five-point measure was used to ascertain the degree of favourableness in opinion towards a problem statement. Newspaper readers thus expressed their opinion on the statement in any of the five points of agreement. Each point carried a score in the sense that the more favourable the opinion the higher the score. Besides Likert's Scale, rankings were also employed. To analyse data quantitatively, the following tools were employed.

- i. Central Tendency Measures
- ii. Rankings

iii. Hypothesis Testing

iv. Chi-square Analysis

1.10. Limitations

1. Primarily data was collected from newspaper readers of Tuticorin, Tirunelveli and Madurai districts. Authenticity of the results solely depends upon the data provided by the respondents.
2. The study is specific to the newspaper industry. It can not be applied to any other similar or dissimilar situation.
3. Since the study is based on sampling, representativeness of the sample have a degenerating effect on the study.
4. Sincere effort was taken to minimise response errors from the respondents. However, absolute validity of the same is not assured.
5. The researcher had no control over the respondents' indifference to disclose information, unwillingness to fill the questionnaire, refusal to oblige, disregard to return the questionnaire and misplacement of questionnaire.
6. Constraints of the researcher with respect to sample selection, time, cost, geographic coverage and effort also affect the study.
7. The responses reflect the prevalent social, economic, business and cultural conditions. Only they will be manifest in the study.

1.11. Presentation of the Study

The study is presented in nine chapters.

1. The first chapter, 'Introduction and Design of the Study', provides a theoretical startup, and details on the design and methodology adopted in the preparation and presentation of the research.
2. The second chapter, 'Origin and Growth of Newspapers and Newsprint Technology', deals with the origin, growth and development of newspapers in a worldwide perspective. Also it covers the growth of printing and related technology.
3. The third chapter, 'Overview of Indian Newspaper Industry', discusses the beginning, growth and development of newspapers in the Indian context.
4. The fourth chapter, 'The Tamil Press', analyses the origin, evolution and growth pattern of the Press in Tamilnadu and in Tamil language.
5. The fifth chapter, 'Profile of the Study Area' presents an overview of the historical, geographical, demographical, social, economic and industrial aspects of the three districts of Tuticorin, Tirunelveli and Madurai.
6. The sixth chapter, 'Analysis of Circulation, Readership and Revenue Statistics' analyses a wide range of quantitative parameters related to the newspaper industry such as circulation, readership and revenue, in worldwide and Indian contexts with emphasis on the Indian side.
7. The seventh chapter, 'Analysis of the Readership Environment' provides a context and foundation for the deeper analysis of

subscriber attitudes by dealing with the readers' personal and socioeconomic qualities and the reading characteristics engendered from those qualities. In addition, it discusses information regarding newsagents and delivery channels.

8. The eighth chapter, 'Analysis of Subscriber Choices and Preferences' analyses subscribers' distinctive choices and tendencies, reading preferences, opinions upon usefulness of newspaper and supplements. and ranking of Tamil and English newspapers with qualitative and quantitative methods.
9. The ninth chapter, 'Recent Trends and Concluding Discussions' details the latest issues and trends in news and media industry. Moreover it summarises the findings and also suggests measures for better functions, operations and services in the newspaper industry.

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