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ANALYSIS OF PRESS AND MEDIA REGULATIONS IN INDIA- Neha Mohanty¹**Abstract**

This article scrutinizes the analytical role of media in spreading news in the context of self regulation. Its main objective is to acquire the requirement of standards to basically solve all the issues pertaining to the regulations of media, and provides some propositions to the regulations of the media. Furthermore, it examines the need to have a productive system for addressing the complaints from the public. It also highlights the role of media and press in the society with the practical aspect of self regulation in India.

In short, this article tries to find out the effectiveness of the present self operation by the media. It further states that self regulation can only work if proper measures are implemented by the media channels and they adhere to the guidelines and remain devoted to the processes that are developed.

Analysis of Press and News Regulation in India

Media is the fourth pillar of democracy and is mostly self-regulated in India. Media has been portrayed as an influential, loyalist and trustworthy source of information in the socio economic nation. There are various regulating bodies for regulation of media like Press council of India, which is a authorized body, News broadcasting standards authority a self regulatory organization which issue guidelines.

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This article will highlight the issues pertaining to the powers vested in the press council of India which has been blamed as a toothless body for not performing and serving the motive for which it was formed.

This article will also check the efficacy of the present self regulation by the media. The competition has guided the media to be more focused for gaining popularity and seeking attention of the public than giving actual news keeping the interest of public.

Therefore, it states that self regulation would only be workable only if reasonable measures are taken by media outlets and they remain dedicated to the process that is evolving.

Introduction

Communication is one of the most significant human requisite and is very much essential as it is a mode through which it helps human beings to interchange information and this is guaranteed through article 19 of the Indian Constitution (Freedom of speech and expression), the most valued fundamental right of the constitution.

The right to freedom of expression has a wide scope which comprises the freedom to hold opinions, the freedom to exchange information, the freedom to speak against the injustice and protest the democratically elected governments. It is a crucial right to form a good democracy where the citizens of the country are aware of the political happenings.

The improvement of a person's self determination is possible with application of speech and expression. The liberty of communication and expression although guaranteed to the public, it is by means of press and media that the information is spread in the form of news. Hence media is the tool by which freedom of speech and expression is attained. Both media and press functions and regulate to collect, spread and process information to public. Due to this reason, media is said to be the fourth pillar between the state and the citizens and act as a medium of information which make people informed.

Role of Media and Press in a Society

A media plays a very significant role for a democratic society by providing information which is essential for two reasons. First, it makes sure that the citizens express proper and updated views by properly examining the genuine facts and information as provided by the media.

Second, it provides information as a checking function by ensuring that the government and its representatives act according to the promises and achieve the desire of people of those who elect them.

Media thus plays a very prominent role by which the opinion of the public is induced. The perseverance of the country is acquired by the way the media report the news of that country. It becomes the responsibility of the media to spread only valid and genuine facts or circulate information locally and internationally.

The role of media is changing from what it was considered. The impartiality of news in reporting is missing today in the media because of some hidden motives that many press and media outlets hold.

Media is considered as the pillar of democracy that is recognized to act in maintaining the act of professionalism and also to serve the purpose of the country. It is also referred to as the watch dog because it examines and balances the capability of the three organs of government i.e. legislature, executive and judiciary.

The media and press is very essential as they impart information, news, and also enables the viewers to know the performance of state, government, national and international affairs and all other matters of social concern.

Accountability of Media

Media plays a vital role in increasing awareness among the people about the social and human affairs in a society. Article 19 of the constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression as one of the six freedoms. The media is responsible for gathering and collecting the information so it is supposed to be at a dominant position which shall make it accountable and answerable to public. While gathering information, media should be conscious against deceiving and distorted information.

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The general conception was that the media should not be given complete freedom as it can mislead information and can spread fake news. The conception of regulation arose from that logic. There are basically four types of regulation.

The first one is complete regulation which means that there is no liberty given to media and the government checks and regulates the contents.

Second one is co-regulation; in this the non-state regulatory system is connected with state regulation.

Thirdly, there are statutory regulations which are being governed and imposed by the states through the statutes.

Fourth one is the self regulation which means the regulations are governed and enforced by the regulating bodies themselves through domestic policies.

Self regulation was considered one of the most effective options for India.

In India, the Press council of India is an authorized body formed in 1966. It is the apex body for regulating the press and media. It is a self operating body that operates under the press regulating act of 1978.

Practical Aspect of Self Regulation in India

Article 19(1) (a) freedom of speech and expression or press is present in all statutes but is not implemented properly. It is essential to understand the need of regulation of press in India. The principle of self regulation implies the regulation by itself whereby there is no such governing body under it. Self regulation can be done properly by dispute regulation format, adopting corrective procedures, quality guarantee arrangement and licensing and association certification.

In India, there is no single reform on regulation of media. In this the press council of India has very restricted powers. The media of television has formed its own self regulatory body and has adopted its own mechanism known as the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA).

There are various other issues such as paid news, advertisement related for profit, privacy violation, unnecessary news on popular celebrities, fake news being published, and many other which are not highlighted and are addressed properly.

Factors required for adopting Corrective Measures

The press council of India should come with formats in association with journalism training establishment so that the most central topics can be solved. It should draft a common code of conduct for journalists, reporters, editors by taking the ideas separately from working journalists, reporters. It can be said that the government should have authorized self regulatory code and penalties by agreement and by giving decisions to regulatory bodies and suggesting some minimum standards to be followed by them.

The rapid competition has led the media to work solely for gaining attention of the public and rating points. If the media or press give due acceptance and be committed in their work then the self regulation can be workable.

There should be an independent monitor who should be appointed to solve the issues relating to newspapers or channels. The monitor should act as a guide and support the reporters who are denied to cover any matters and additionally for readers to file complaints.

Conclusion

All human activities require some form of control. The self regulating bodies cannot function properly until and unless it is free from bureaucracy, some industrial and particular interests, until a check is done within its body. In the light of these, it needs to be examined as how far self regulation of media is justified.

The media accountability through self regulation can be achieved when the journalists and the reporters together unite to form standard of conduct thereby making it sure that these rules and regulations are adhered to. Media plays a crucial role in the democracy and therefore need to circulate information which the polity requires to make responsible. It is defined as a medium of communicating with others.

A discretionary accord of journalist, media, reporters, management and the broadcasting group should be loyal to craft excellent standards in order to avoid any kind of disruptions to public or viewers for whom they circulate or spread news. A skilled media is very much essential and important for a democracy.

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