

Pakistan's Print Media Industry Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract:

Print media is backbone of journalism. This study explores the challenges that print media is facing in the present age. The basic purpose of the study was to find the basic hurdles and problems that decreasing the popularity of print media. Secondly, to explore the prospective for the betterment of print media. For data collection, survey method used and questionnaire prepared consisted on 12 close ended questions and 1 open ended question. Questionnaires distributed among 200 editors, newspaper owners and senior journalist of Lahore, Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar and Islamabad for answering the related questions. The study concluded that different factors which decreasing the popularity of print media which includes electronic media and social media's popularity due to fast and large coverage, low literacy rate in the country decreases the readership, lack of advertising in print media, glamour attraction on electronic media, verity of programs on TV, live transmission snatched the reader towards TV, low salary packages, threats to journalists from different political parties and terrorists and lack of government support are the major factors which print media has facing.

Keywords: Print Media, Challenges, Prospective, Advertisements, Government.

I. Introduction

Print media is the original identification of media. It is also called radicalized media that facing different challenges not only in Pakistan but also all over the world. Though independent compare to some neighboring countries in the South Asian Region, Pakistani media especially print media is under influence and pressure from the security forces, militant groups as well as some political and economic interest groups. Pakistan's 176 million people have access to different media products with 142 proper newspapers

and over 1000 regional, religious and other forms of publications were also counted. Near about 125 radio channels and more than 80 television channels.

It has been observed that in Pakistani media market, number of print media products has decreased within the past decade. This has not affected the competition between major press companies. The trend of broadcast media is totally opposite. The phenomenon of “the first to report” has captured the audience for a longer period. Poor educational standard is one of the major reasons for the low standard in Urdu Journalism. Education system must be changed. This situation leads to poor understanding of sensitive subject matters in the absence of proper media platform.

It was noticed during the one week Urdu press monitoring period that the print media news desk totally depends on the broadcast media. This situation has seen not only in Urdu newspapers but also in English newspapers. Many newspaper stories mention their source monitoring desk which is highly depends on broadcast media reports. This is quick and cheap source of news gathering. It is also fact that some media organizations have their own print and broadcast media and stories are frequently exchanged between two media. That’s why absence of a converged news desk provides the average readers with a view that the particular story in the newspaper has been hijacked from a television (Ranga Kalansooriya 2010).

The most important point is that advertisements are not distributed equally. Usually strong groups made monopoly that’s why most the newspaper cannot get government advertisements that is the major source of income for the print media. The untold factor of this phenomenon is that the government is using advertising budget to dictate terms to the regional newspapers. Government uses its advertising quota as a pressure point on regional newspapers so that no newspaper can stand against the government.

Pakistan has remarkable improvement during the past decade especially Musharaff regime that is positive affected the media. The new ideas came into being with the development in the country but he conservative print media has no progress in this way. Urdu media is less liberal, more conservative while broadcast media has improved itself has snatched the readers of press into viewers. This study is carried out to investigate and evaluate these points (1) To know about the problems and prospects of print media in Pakistan, (2) To study what are the problems of print media, (3) To see the role of print media in the development of country, (4) To investigate the issues of journalists and (5) To search out suggestions and comments for the improvement of print media of Pakistan.

II. Literature Review

Picard (2004), says that the local press is in the siege of the local problem due to the industrial revolution in the globe. He says that due to the globalization the international and national newspapers created problem of dissemination of news story as well as contents of the story.

Dear (2006), prescribes that instead of high circulation of the national and international newspapers is being effected the local press and regional press in the world. He stated that 70% are national and international newspaper circulation while 30% is

local and regional newspaper circulation in the globe. He argued that non availability of new technology of printing is also a main cause of bad condition of local press.

Press council of India (2005) reported that the journalists of local newspapers are being blackmailing the community while ignoring ethical values. It stated that local newspaper have big contribution to the national issue and problems as well as for the national and international journalism. But it's a big problem that the journalists have no proper training of coverage of event as well as use of new technology. The report also described that the council has conducted a study to investigate the numbers of community newspapers and its problem in the area. After a debate the participants have given 22 recommendations to encourage the small newspaper of the community.

Makaish Kumar (2007) give the light in his research article that online native language newspaper which are lunched by local persons from different location of the that an online newspaper, also known as a web newspaper, is a newspaper that exists on the WWW means internet, either separately or as an online version of a printed periodicals. Going online created more opportunities for newspaper in presenting breaking news in a timely manner. The credibility and strong brand recognition of well established newspaper, and the close relationships they have with advertisers, are also seen by many in the newspapers industry as strengthening their chances of survival. The movement away from the printing process can also help decrease costs. Online newspaper are much like hardcopy newspaper and have the same legal boundaries, such as laws regarding libel, privacy and copyright, also apply to online publication in most countries, like in the UK.

Ahuga (2007) wrote in his book "Theories and Practice of Journalism" that print media's management has facing different financial and administrative problems. He said that due to the competition of newspapers nationally and internationally created problem for the local newspaper in different ways like administrative financial and technical. He also said that due to the competition, the press circulation also damage in the locality as well as internationally. Because new trends emerging in the field of journalism and press which mostly creating problems for those newspaper which are publishing and covering the local public issues in their native languages for their availability. He also highlighted that advertisement circulation is also creating problems among different newspapers because advertisement is the major source of financial support.

Franlin Brob (2006) in his book "Local Journalism and Local Media: Making local news" stated that newspaper has many problems including financial, logistical, typographical, circulative and technological due to the governmental and bureaucrats monopoly in the world. He described about newspaper that due to the limited and classified advertisement facing financial problems in the community as well as the new technology spreading for the community journalists. Because most of the journalists have no well qualified which could operate the new technology. Further he argued that the reporters and correspondence of the local newspapers are involve in unethical journalism which effecting the readership, listenership and viewership of the national and international newspapers.

III. Research Methodology

Research methodology provides the way to researchers to conduct research study. Due to this technique, the researcher easily acquires the task. For the present research, survey research methodology used by the researcher to conclude the results of research questions. The research was limited to a specific area of Pakistan comprises four provinces i.e. Lahore, Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar and federal capital Islamabad. Research questions of the study are presented as (1) What is the role of TV in decreasing popularity of newspaper? (2) In which type of media people interested to get information or news? (3) What are the basic hurdles and challenges print media is facing?

The Hypotheses of the study are given as under:

H 1: It is more likely that Lack of advertisement is a major hurdle in the development of print media.

H 2: It is more likely that by eradicating Financial, professional, administrative problems and government support can promote the print media.

IV. Results and Interpretation

The gathered data shows that 26.5% respondents are strongly agree on this statement that low literacy rate and lack of readership have affected the print media, whereas 43.0% are agree on this statement, 21.0% have no idea, 8.5% are disagree and 1.0% respondents are strongly disagree in this way.

Table 1: Print Media is on decline due to low literacy rate and lack of readership trends in our country

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	53	26.5	26.5	26.5
	Agree	86	43.0	43.0	69.5
	Uncertain	42	21.0	21.0	90.5
	Disagree	17	8.5	8.5	99.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Clients prefer to give advertisement on electronic media as compare to print media due to the coverage at large scale

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	43	21.5	21.5	21.5
	Agree	113	56.5	56.5	78.0
	Uncertain	16	8.0	8.0	86.0
	Disagree	28	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the collected data in table 2, 21.5% respondents are strong agree, 56.5% are agree, 8.0% have no idea, whereas 14.0% respondents are disagree on the statement that clients prefer to give advertisement on electronic media as compare to

print media due to large coverage. According to the collected data in table 3, 33.5% respondents strongly agree that people like to watch TV as compare to read newspaper, 39.0% are agree on this statement, 14.0% have no idea, 12.5% are not agree that people prefer to watch TV as compare to read newspaper whereas 1.0% are strongly disagree.

Table 3: People like to watch T.V. as compare to read newspaper

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	67	33.5	33.5	33.5
	Agree	78	39.0	39.0	72.5
	Uncertain	28	14.0	14.0	86.5
	Disagree	25	12.5	12.5	99.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: People like electronic media as compare to print media because electronic media give quick and live news

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	80	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Agree	88	44.0	44.0	84.0
	Uncertain	6	3.0	3.0	87.0
	Disagree	26	13.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the collected data in table 4, 40.0% respondents are strongly agree, 44.0% are agree on this statement that people like electronic media as compare to print media because electronic media give quick and live news, 3.0% respondents have no idea about this question, and 13.0% are disagree on this statement.

Table 5: People attract to electronic media due to glamour

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	85	42.5	42.5	42.5
	Agree	79	39.5	39.5	82.0
	Uncertain	19	9.5	9.5	91.5
	Disagree	17	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the collected data in table 5, 42.5% respondents are strongly agree on the statement that people attract to electronic media due to glamour, 39.5% are agree on this statement, 9.5% respondents have no idea, 8.5% respondents are disagree and have opinion that people not attract to electronic media due to glamour.

Table 6: People have no time to read newspapers when smart phones and 3G internet is available everywhere

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	28	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Agree	70	35.0	35.0	49.0
	Uncertain	14	7.0	7.0	56.0
	Disagree	74	37.0	37.0	93.0
	Strongly Disagree	14	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the collected data in table 6, 14.0% respondents are strongly agree, 35.0% are agree on this statement that 3G internet and smart phones have snatched readers, 7.0% have no idea, 37.0% respondents are disagree and 7.0% are strongly disagree that 3G internet and mobile net have not reduce readers.

According to the collected data in table 7, 26.5% respondents are strongly agree, 44.5% are agree on this statement that people like to read only headlines rather than detailed news. Whereas 4.0% are not sure about this question, 20.5% are disagree and 4.5% respondents are strongly disagree and have opinion that people read whole news story instead of headline.

Table 7: People like to read only headlines not detailed news

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	53	26.5	26.5	26.5
	Agree	89	44.5	44.5	71.0
	Uncertain	8	4.0	4.0	75.0
	Disagree	41	20.5	20.5	95.5
	Strongly Disagree	9	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the collected data in table 8 about rural people, 33.5% respondents are strongly agree and 54.0% are agree on this statement that rural people have less ability to read newspapers and they get information through radio and TV. 8.0% are not sure about this statement, 3.5% are disagreed and 1.0% is strongly disagreed in this way. According to the collected data in table 9, 12.0% respondents are strongly agree, 41.0% are agree about the decreasing circulation of newspaper due to electronic media, 10.0% have no idea, 33.5% are disagreed and 3.5% respondents are strongly disagree on this statement that popularity of electronic media causes the decreasing of circulation of newspaper. According to the collected data in table 10 about news effectiveness, 23.5% respondents are strongly agree, 39.5% agree that news presented on TV is more effective than newspaper due to live footage, 8.5% have no idea, 24.5% are disagree and 4.0% respondents are strongly disagree in this way.

Table 8: Rural people have less ability to read newspaper while they can hear and understand news on Radio and T.V.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	67	33.5	33.5	33.5
	Agree	108	54.0	54.0	87.5
	Uncertain	16	8.0	8.0	95.5
	Disagree	7	3.5	3.5	99.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 9: Circulation of newspaper is decreasing with the popularity of electronic Media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	24	12.0	12.0	12.0
	Agree	82	41.0	41.0	53.0
	Uncertain	20	10.0	10.0	63.0
	Disagree	67	33.5	33.5	96.5
	Strongly Disagree	7	3.5	3.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: News presented on T.V is more effective as compare to newspaper because live footage give comprehensive information to viewer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	47	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Agree	79	39.5	39.5	63.0
	Uncertain	17	8.5	8.5	71.5
	Disagree	49	24.5	24.5	96.0
	Strongly Disagree	8	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to the opinion of the people in table 11 about electronic media is better source of news and entertainment 42.5% respondents are strongly agree, 38.0% are agree, 13.0% have no idea and 6.5% are disagree against the statement.

According to the collected data in table 12, 13.5% respondents are strongly agree and 33.0% are agree that social media and electronic media has decreased the importance of print media, 10.0% have no idea, 34.0% are disagree that print media has not loosed its importance due to social and electronic media whereas 9.5% respondents are strongly disagree.

Table 11: Electronic media is a better source of news and entertainment mix as compared to print media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	85	42.5	42.5	42.5
	Agree	76	38.0	38.0	80.5
	Uncertain	26	13.0	13.0	93.5
	Disagree	13	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: Social media and electronic media have decreased the importance of print media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	27	13.5	13.5	13.5
	Agree	66	33.0	33.0	46.5
	Uncertain	20	10.0	10.0	56.5
	Disagree	68	34.0	34.0	90.5
	Strongly Disagree	19	9.5	9.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

V. Discussion

Discussion with reference to research questions and hypotheses of the study is as follows:

A. Research Question 1: What is the role of TV in decreasing popularity of newspaper?

To know about the answer of research question, researcher asked the relevant question to his target public that "People like to watch TV as compare to read newspaper?". Result shows that peoples have more interest to watch TV as compare to read newspaper. According to the collected data, 33.5% respondents strongly agreed and 39.0% agreed on this statement that people like to watch TV. They said that TV shows verity of programs which are not presented in the newspaper. Visually presentation of news or any issue attracts the people whereas newspaper needs reading ability and more time and expense to get information. Whereas in low price, people get different type of information in attractive manner and have lot of choice at TV. 14.0% respondents said that they have no idea about this statement and 12.5% respondents disagreed and 1.0% respondents strongly disagreed that people don't life to watch TV as compare to read newspaper. Hence the discussion concluded that most of the respondents agreed that TV has a major role in decreasing the popularity of newspapers.

B. Research Question 2: In which type of media people interested to get information or news?

To knowing the interest of people, the researchers asked relevant question to his respondents that "People like electronic media because electronic media give quick and live news?". Result shows that 40.0% respondents strongly agreed and 44.0% agreed that people like to watch TV because every news or event is shown by the electronic media

whereas newspaper take time for printing and distributing in different areas. TV channels broadcast breaking news and live footages that present comprehensive view. Due to this reason majority of people like to see TV for quick and live news. 3.0% respondents said that they have no idea about this question whereas 13.0% respondents disagreed that quick and live news does not attract the people. Hence majority of the respondents agreed that TV have more attraction as compare to newspaper due to quick and live news. Another related question asked by the researcher to his respondents that “People attract to electronic media due to glamour?”. Result shows that 42.5% strongly agreed and 39.5% agreed that people attract to electronic media due to glamour. There are more than 100 channels which are shown on the cable TV. TV shows the every kind of program most of the programs shows the elite society and European culture. In this busy and boring life everybody wants to relax and entertain. So most of the people watch TV programs instead of reading newspaper. 9.5% respondents said that they have no idea about this question whereas 8.5% respondents disagreed with the statement that glamour does not attract the people.

C. Research Question 3: What are the basic hurdles and challenges print media is facing?

To knowing the basic hurdles and challenges, the researcher asked the relevant question to his respondents that “Do you think that clients prefer to give advertisement on electronic media as compare to print media due to the coverage at large scale?”. Result shows that 21.5% respondents strongly agreed and 56.5% respondents agreed that clients prefer to give advertisement to electronic media due to large coverage and viewers. They said that Finance is the major hurdle in the process of print media. Major finance is covered by the advertisements. But due to limited circulation, clients prefer to give advertisements to electronic media. Due to this drawback, print media owners cannot fulfill requirement to run the system successfully. Printing technology, papers, circulation and reporting requires lot of finance that is not covered by the selling of newspapers. In this case advertisement plays important role to promote print media and its circulation. 8.0% respondents said that they have no idea about this question whereas 14.0% respondents disagreed that clients do not prefer to electronic media for advertising as compare to print media. Hence majority of the respondents agreed that lack of advertisement on print media affect the performance of print media. Another hurdle in promotion of print media is literacy rate of the country. For the answer, researcher asked another relevant question to his respondents that “Do you think that print media is on decline due to low literacy rate and lack of readership trends in our country?”. Result shows that 26.5% respondents strongly agreed and 43.0% respondents agreed that low literacy rate is decreasing the readership and due to this reason, people are going far from print media and electronic media is capturing viewers by showing verity of program live. 21.0% respondents said that they have no idea about this question. 8.5% respondents disagreed and 1.0% strongly disagreed on the statement that lack of education decreasing the popularity of print media. Hence in the light of above discussion it is concluded that majority of the respondents agreed that lack of advertisement and low education standard are basic hurdles in the promotion of print media.

D. Hypothesis 1: It is more likely that Lack of advertisement is a major hurdle in the development of print media.

Technology has made this world global village. For every media industry, finance is major factor that affect the performance of organization. For the print media, advertisement is the only source of finance. In Pakistan, print media can be divided into three types i.e. International, national and local. Each type of newspaper needs different expertise which can be fulfilling only by finance. In Pakistan, print media is decreasing its popularity due to different factors. In print media government advertisements are not distributed equally and private commercials choose electronic media due to large coverage and heavy viewers. In the light of above discussion it is concluded that hypothesis 1 “It is more likely that Lack of advertisement is a major hurdle in the development of print media.” is true.

E. Hypothesis 2: It is more likely that by eradicating Financial, professional, administrative problems and government support can promote the print media.

Print media is the basic of journalism and is called true journalism. But in the modern era, print media lose its importance due to different factors, main factor is finance, paper purchasing, printing, using latest equipments, hiring reporters, camera men, editors, administrative staff, circulation; all these thing require fiancé which is not possible without advertisements and government support. Newspaper is not distributed everywhere especially in rural areas. And low education is also factor of decreasing popularity of newspaper. Second factor is lack of professional ability. In the age of competition, every organization is trying to compete other. In this way, there are more chances to lose objectivity. Journalists have no strong ability to judge the news and prepare such news that attracts the readers. The third factor is administrative problems. Administrations of the organization appoint non-professional journalists with low salary or give them journalist credit to earn their own. This thing effect the popularity of newspaper rate of yellow journalism increased. Another important factor is lack of government support. Print media cannot work successfully without the support of government. Government advertising goes to some popular newspapers while others are ignored. In the light of above discussion, it is concluded that hypothesis 2 “It is more likely that by eradicating Financial, professional, administrative problems and government support can promote the print media” is true.

VI. Conclusion

To conclude, First important factor that study conclude that the major source of income of print media is advertising. So, due to unequally distribution of advertising and lack of advertising is the main hurdle in the promotion of print media. In this busy and fast age, electronic media attracts the clients for advertising due to fast and large coverage. Most of the viewers prefer to see TV for news and information, that’s why they do not prefer to read newspaper. Moreover, the monopoly of some popular newspaper is hurdle in the promotion of print media. Most of the governmental advertising goes to popular newspapers while others cannot get advertising. Attraction of electronic media has gained the attention of advertising and print media is suffering without or less support of advertising.

People attraction to electronic media is also factor of decreasing popularity of print media. Electronic media is covering every corner of life. People have choice to see the program according to their mood. Electronic media have the combination of different

verity and have visually look that can easily judged and understand by the viewers. Computer technology fill the color in any event that is not possible in newspaper. Electronic media is combination of drama, film, news, current affair, entertainment, commercials, Islamic programs, cooking and many more whereas in newspapers only news published which cannot entertain the people in such a way as electronic media can. Verity of channels and glamour attract the people more frequently.

Another hurdle is that electronic media cover the large area and have large viewers whereas newspaper circulation is limited and time consuming. Electronic media is broadcasting its programs 24 hours a day. Every event happens the world shows on TV as live footage whereas newspaper cannot be published and circulated in such speed in which electronic media give news to its viewers. Another hurdle is that newspaper cannot be circulated in rural areas due to low literacy rate and non interest of people. Rural people get information from radio and TV. Most of them have no interest in news. They use radio and TV only for entertainment. So, they not prefer to purchase read newspaper.

The overall discussion is concluded that popularity of electronic and social media, lack of advertising, financial problems, lack of educated people to join this profession, lack of government support, low literacy rate limited coverage of newspapers are basic challenges that is facing print media in present age. Government should support the print media and governmental advertisement should be distributed among all newspapers equally. There should be b plate form where journalists should be given proper training. Government should given the financial support to newspapers by giving relief in different ways. Proper security should be given to print media organizations and journalists so that they can do work with zeal and zest. Literacy rate of the country should be improved and convince the people towards readership.

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