"Media Ethics"

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" Let noble thoughts come to us from every side" is the eternal message of the Rigveda given several millennia ago signifying the freedom of expression.

The modern democratic edifice has been constructed drawing on the above and the individual liberty of expression of thought as the supreme principle. 'Journalism', the concrete form of this expression has grown in power over a period of time. It has become a coveted profession amongst the present day career conscious youth and I am sure I find here today a most promising group many of whom will surely find place amongst the leading journalists in the years to come.

The fundamental objective of journalism is to serve the people with news, views, comments and information on matters of public interest in a fair, accurate, unbiased: and decent manner and language.

In 1948 the United Nations made the Universal Declaration of Human Rights laying down certain freedoms for the mankind. Article 19 of the Declaration enunciates the most basic of these freedoms, thus: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression', the right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek and receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

Article 19 (1)(a) of the Constitution of India guarantees to the citizen, the right to "Freedom of speech and expression".

The press is an indispensable pillar of democracy. It purveys public opinion and shapes it. Parliamentary democracy can flourish only under the watchful eyes of the media. Media not only reports but acts as a bridge between the state and the public.

At a time when the globalization of Indian economy has brought about drastic change in the mediascape and the Indian press is also going global, the responsibility of the press to safeguard the interest of the people and the nation has increased manifold. With the advent of private TV channels, the media seems to have taken over the reigns of human life and society in every walk of life. The media today does not remain satisfied as the Fourth Estate, it has assumed the foremost importance in society and governance. While playing the role of informer, the media also takes the shape of a motivator and a leader.

Such is the influence of media that it can make or unmake any individual, institution or any thought. So all pervasive and all-powerful is today its impact on the society.

With so much power and strength, the media cannot loose sight of its privileges, duties and obligations. Journalism is a profession that serves. By virtue thereof it enjoys the privilege to 'question' others. This privilege includes the right to collect information from primary authentic sources, which are of use and importance to the society or the nation and then report the same in an unbiased and positive way with the aim to inform and not to create sensation and harm the public. Any direct or

indirect interference from state, the owner or other sector is encroachment on its freedom to discharge its duties towards the society.

However to enjoy these privileges, Media is mandated to follow certain ethics in collecting and disseminating the information viz., ensuring authenticity of the news, use of restrained and socially acceptable language for ensuring objectivity and fairness in reporting and keeping in mind its cascading effect on the society and on the individuals and institutions concerned. You will all appreciate that while freedom of expression is no doubt a fundamental right; it has to be broadly guided and bound by societal duties and ethics. This involved a sensitive balancing act to protect the rights of individuals while exercising the right of expression

As Albert Schweitzer, German Nobel Peace prize winning mission doctor and theologian had remarked "The first step in the evolution of ethic is a sense of solidarity with other human beings".

Ethics is a code of values, which govern our lives, and are thus very essential for moral and healthy life. In the context of the press, "Ethics" may be described as a set of moral principles or values, which guide the conduct of journalism. The ethics are essentially the self-restraint to be practised by the journalists voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility and not betray the faith and confidence of the people.

The media all over the world has voluntarily accepted that code of ethics should cover at least the following areas of conduct.

i. Honesty and fairness; duty to seek the views of the subject of any critical reportage in advance of publication; duty to correct

factual errors; duty not to falsify pictures or to use them in a misleading fashion;

ii. duty to provide an opportunity to reply to critical opinions as well as to critical factual reportage;

iii. appearance as well as reality of objectivity; some codes prohibit members of the press from receiving gifts'

iv. respect for privacy;

v. duty to distinguish between facts and opinion;

vi. duty not to discriminate or to inflame hatred on such grounds as race, nationality, religion, or gender; some codes call on the press to refrain from mentioning the race, religion or nationality of the subject of news stories unless relevant to the story; some call for coverage which promotes tolerance;

vii. duty not to use dishonest means to obtain information;

viii. duty not to endanger people;

ix. general standards of decency and taste;

x. duty not to prejudge the guilt of an accused and to publish the dismissal of charges against or acquittal of anyone about whom

Regulation of media in India

Media in India is mostly self-regulated. The existing bodies for regulation of media such as the Press Council of India which is a statutory body and the News Broadcasting Standards Authority, a self-regulatory organization, issue standards which are more in the nature of guidelines. Recently, the Chairman of the Press Council of India, former Justice of the Supreme Court, Mr. M. Katju, has argued that television and radio need to be brought within the scope of the Press Council of India or a similar regulatory body. We discuss the present model of regulation of different forms of media. This note was first published at Rediff. 1. What is the Press Council of India (PCI)? The PCI was established under the PCI Act of 1978 for the purpose of preserving the freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India. 2. What is the composition of the PCI and who appoints the members? The PCI consists of a chairman and 28 other members. The Chairman is selected by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and a member elected by the PCI. The members consist of members of the three Lok Sabha members, two members of the Rajya Sabha , six editors of newspapers, seven working journalists other than editors of newspapers, six persons in the business of managing newspapers, one person who is engaged in the business of managing news agencies, and three persons with special knowledge of public life.

3. What are its functions? The functions of the PCI include among others (i) helping newspapers maintain their independence; (ii) build a code of conduct for journalists and news agencies; (iii) help maintain "high standards of public taste" and foster responsibility among citizens; and (iv) review developments likely to restrict flow of news. 4. What are its powers? The PCI has the power to receive complaints of violation of the journalistic ethics, or professional misconduct by an editor or journalist. The PCI is responsible for enquiring in to complaints received. It may summon witnesses and take evidence under oath, demand copies of public records to be submitted, even issue warnings and admonish the newspaper, news agency, editor or journalist. It can even require any newspaper to publish details of the inquiry. Decisions of the PCI are final and cannot be appealed before a court of law. 5. What are the limitations on the powers of the PCI? The powers of the PCI are restricted in two ways. (1) The PCI has limited powers of enforcing the guidelines issued. It cannot penalize newspapers, news agencies, editors and journalists for violation of the guidelines. (2) The PCI only overviews the functioning of press media. That is, it can enforce standards upon newspapers, journals, magazines and other forms of print media. It does not have the power to review the functioning of the electronic media like radio, television and internet media. 6. Are there other bodies that review television or radio? For screening films including short films, documentaries, television shows and advertisements in theaters or broadcasting via television the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) sanction is required. The role of the CBFC is limited to controlling content of movies and television shows, etc. Unlike the PCI, it does not have the power to issue guidelines in relation to standards of news and journalistic conduct. Program and Advertisement Codes for regulating content broadcast on the television, are issued under the Cable

regulation of media in india cont..

Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. The District magistrate can seize the equipment of the cable operator in case he broadcasts programs that violate these Codes. Certain standards have been prescribed for content accessible over the internet under the IT Rules 2011. However, a regulatory body such as the PCI or the CBFC does not exist. Complaints are addressed to the internet service provider or the host. Radio Channels have to follow the same Programme and Advertisement Code as followed by All India Radio. Private television and radio channels have to conform to conditions which are part of license agreements. These include standards for broadcast of content. Non-compliance may lead to suspension or revocation of license. 7. Is there a process of self regulation by television channels? Today news channels are governed by mechanisms of self-regulation. One such mechanism has been created by the News Broadcasters Association. The NBA has devised a Code of Ethics to regulate television content. The News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA), of the NBA, is empowered to warn, admonish, censure, express disapproval and fine the broadcaster a sum upto Rs. 1 lakh for violation of the Code. Another such organization is the Broadcast Editors' Association. The Advertising Standards Council of India has also drawn up guidelines on content of advertisements. These groups govern through agreements and do not have any statutory powers. 8. Is the government proposing to create a regulatory agency for television broadcasters? In 2006 the government had prepared a Draft Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill, 2006. The Bill made it mandatory to seek license for broadcasting any television or radio channel or program. It also provides standards for regulation of content. It is the duty of the body to ensure compliance with guidelines issued under the Bill

Ethical guidelines of Indian Media

The guidelines were set up around two important ideas. The first guideline is that "whoever enjoys a special measure of freedom, like a professional journalist, has an obligation to society to use their freedoms and powers responsibly." (Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport, Pg 477) This guideline is useful so that people in power are able to be held liable in case their actions are not professional. People that have high media attention should not abuse the power. The second guideline that was established is "society's welfare is paramount, more important than individual careers or even individual rights." (Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport, Pg 477) Again, holding people responsible for their actions and stating that society is more important due to the vast number of people that could be affected by poor behavior.

The Hutchins Commission added another five guidelines specifically for the press.

"Present meaningful news, accurate and separated from opinion".

"Serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism and to expand access to diverse points of view."

"Project "a representative picture of the constituent groups in society" by avoiding stereotypes by including minority groups."

"Clarify the goals and values of society; implicit was an appeal to avoid pandering to the lowest common denominator."

"Give broad coverage of what was known about society".

All of these guidelines are important because the press is needed to maintain a neutral viewpoint, providing the basic facts and allowing for readers to come up with their own opinions from the news that they report.

These guidelines provide the frame work and inspiration for the Fourth Estate's Journalism Code of Practice and the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics .

Censorship is needed or not?

Think about the kids Censorships protects minors from the little mistakes they have made following them into their adulthood which is why minors names are never shared when they are in trouble with the law unless they are being tried as an adult. Kids in general are already corrupted by the heavy material going on around them. It is wrong to corrupt young minds. Also, there is a sense of heartlessness that comes with describing a murder or death in detail- it pays no mind to the feeling of the people sorrounding the victim and pays no respects to the victim themself.

Censorship is needed Censorship exposes kids to things they should not be learning or seeing at their age. There really aren't any reason why censorship isn't necessary. Kids will also start learn words that they should not be learning. Kids will learn certain words and start to repeat what they saw or heard

Freedom of speech I believe media censorship should be a choice but not completely banned. There is no actual reason it should be banned. Think about it. Everyone has there opinions but really there isn't any reason it shouldn't be aloud. There are always going to be people that disagree with me but I very strongly think that media censorship is completely fine

Freedom of speech Media censorship is mostly a decision on the person saying it. Of course on dora you can't swear because children watch it. That's a perfect example. If we didn't have media censorship they could say whatever they wanted and children would be subjected to that. There is no reason media censorship shouldn't be aloud but I do think it should be a choice.

questions would be, how do we manage such a thing and how do we decide what is the "truth" in some matters? Admittedly there would have to be an intensive process to reduce the massive field of grey area that covers this subject. Would be nice to listen to the news or read a news paper without wondering how much research I will have to do to get to the objective truth. As far as opinion, that can't be touched. No mater how bad or ridiculous the opinion, we can not become a society that finds it proper to censor it. Rather lets just keep people honest with what they present as fact.

Necessary in today's society Nowadays ,we lie on media for the informations that happens around us or the world. As today's youngsters and childrens are easily affected by this media. It can be said that ,they can be easily affected in negative way also i.E., in trying to do something the negative shown. They are not intended to do that. As this is the cause,if media fails to censor the abuse things,violences,and unwanted things to our culture we may lose our better next generation and even our cultur.

 it is. Media censorship is necessary to use and keep up with. Sometimes parents do not want their kids being exposed to cuss words or indecent exposure, and they want to shelter those kids from harsh violence and gore. It is needed to use censorship to keep everyone happy and sheltered from too much issues.

Media censorship is necessary. Media censorship does not infringe on our first amendment rights. It

censorship is needed or not cont..

is necessary to keep extreme violence and sexual content out of the mainstream media. This is reasonable censorship and it does not damage our political rights to freedom of speech. Some censorship is permissible in order to protect children.

Learning only lies If certain media for example: history textbooks in schools were to have their contents altered to avoid causing any offense, then the children would not be learning the proper truth and they would live their lives believing a lie and perhaps spreading it to others. Not to mention that spreading lies and concealing the truth to many people simply because it's slightly offensive completely undermines the victims of these historical events and what they have witnessed first-hand. In short it teaches children lies and disrespects the victims.

Freedom of Speech It is in our First Amendment to have freedom of speech so why would it be ok to take that away from someone because they view something or think something that you don't? With this so many people argue we need censorship to protect the kids. Well what happened when you were growing up did they pull the wool over your eyes or did your parents actually watch you and pay attention to you to protect you from what they could and let you see other things for what they really are? Maybe if these parents would get off of Facebook and Instagram and actually act like parents instead of teenagers they wouldn't have to worry so much.

It is wrong They shouldn't censor social media. It is a right... People should be able to see whatever we would like to see!!!!! Free dom of speech))) kids can see something in appropriate cuz they are going to do it anyways when they grow up they are going to have kids !

It is A Right. I believe that media censorship is not necessary in todays society. Media censorship is much more than blurred body parts and bleeped out words. Media censorship is a curtain which tries to cover the issues no one wants to talk about. Media censorship often times leads to ignorance. This is because it is not just tv that is being censored. Newspapers, the Internet, and books are all considered media and are therefore all subject to censoring. Do you want censored news, or the raw and uncut truth? Do you want to be blinded by what society deems it is necessary for you to know, or would you like to be able to make that decision for yourself? Speaking for myself, I would like to know the whole story behind whatever is being covered, not just what someone else wants me to know.

Freedom of speech. When the media is censored by our government, the government is infringing on our rights to free speech. We should be allowed to say whatever we want, and whoever we want to hear it hear it. You may think I am being supportive of just violence and sex in our media, but it is much more than that. A movie came out recently about bullying, directed at kids, and it was given an R rating because of language. The movie used just 4 f words in the ENTIRE movie. Censorship is impeding our progress as a society.

1. Cultural taboo – theoretical formulation

"Taboo" is a word generally understood as the deep and fundamental cultural prohibition. This phenomenon functions in each society in a different way. It is differently called, formulated and understood. Taboo "is a group of attitudes about very heterogeneous and internally contradictory characterization" [Wasilewski of 2010, p.11]. The word 'taboo" was introduced and universalized by the traveller – captain James Cook in the second half of the 18th century. The first mentions about taboo appeared around ten to twenty years after the Cook's journal was issued. For the first time taboo was defined by The English Dictionary in 1791, as a forbidden area." Taboo was also associated with the term "familiar cultural reality" [Wasilewski, 2010, p.17-18] Taboo also consists of everything that people make, think and possess [Sztompka, 2012, p.291].

The cultural taboo can be described as enforced prohibitions imposed by a certain social group, community or the whole society. In other words, it is an external prohibition, which is connected with two terms: the consequence of avoidance or negative consequence. Cultural taboo exists where the external prohibition does not exist, and the reasons for the avoidance of taboo subject lie in its quasi-objective properties. [Panasiuk, 2009, p.284]. The creation of taboo is decided by individual orders. Just because some people functioning in a particular culture react to a certain subject with silence does not mean that all of them will react in the same way. This rule applies to the whole community. In other words, "taboo is a cultural occurrence including everything, that is enfolded by social prohibition (at times also legal); these are behaviours that are not acceptable, and subjects that should not be discussed in communities (it is improper to mention them), because they are seen as embarrassing, dangerous, controversial, unpleasant or immoral" [Dąbrowska, 2008, p.175].

Cultural taboo is connected with beliefs, convictions, rules, values, standards and norms accepted by certain societies. There are differences between them depending on the history of community, customs, cultivated traditions, religions and habits distinctive for the whole society. Avoidance of taboo is caused by religious beliefs, magic, fear, decency, modesty, shame or good upbringing. All these individual features are the result of culture, which has an influence on human beings since their birth. The violation of taboo results in huge social sanctions. Taboo revolves around different cultural conditioning and it mostly belongs to a social zone which means that it is imposed by society, and to violate it can cause personal or group consequences [Afek, 2013, p.20-22].

The relation between taboo and culture is a variable. Taboos create prohibitions. These prohibitions are the result of culture. It is impossible to include them into a system and describe them as true for each community. Taboo prohibitions are not justified, and their origin is not entirely explained. What is more, taboo creates a certain symbolic border between what is good and what is not, what is religious and what is not. This is a

cultural category in the process of the arrangement of the world, giving it sense and integrating it. This category keeps and modifies the identities of social groups. Simultaneously, it protects people from foreign influences and evokes fears, bad taste and at times simply repugnance. It emphasizes the existence of something unsuitable, something that requires silence and omission [Mach, 2002, p.172]. Taboo is also an important part of a social identity. The adoption of a certain identity means acceptance of taboo and of the social norms characteristic for a particular community [Fiske, Tetlock, 1997, p.255].

The term taboo is strictly connected to the so-called breaking taboo. This is nothing less than breaking of an unwritten rule about crossing the cultural barriers, which were not publicly spoken about. Nowadays, the best catalyst for taboo displacement from the culture is media. Fast social development, globalization and practically unrestricted access to the media, creates a great environment for breaking taboo. Media became a serious threat to taboos and gave the opportunity to raise sensitive subjects. However, the ease of breaking taboo does not refer to all aspects of everyday life. It is necessary to mention, that sometimes together with breaking cultural taboo extreme emotions and reactions such as aggression, lack of acceptance, but also approval and excitement arise. Suppressing taboo leads to the creation of new rules and cultural values as well as creation of other areas dealing with prohibitions. What is more, taboo cannot disappear entirely. It exists as long as it evokes the feeling of guilt [Cudny, 2012, p.41].

To summarize, taboo as social phenomenon evolved together with the development of society. Initially, it referred to the sphere of beliefs among primitive cultures, but contemporarily it is used to indicate subjects that should not be discussed. Taboo is also used to describe everything that should not be publicly expressed. „Taboos are sometimes referred to as doing the "unthinkable." Even thinking about violating a taboo is problematic. The sanctions associated pertain not just to the behaviour that contradicts the taboo, but also to merely thinking or considering such a behaviour. According to this interpretation, a taboo is a form of "thought police" that governs not just human behaviour, but also its thoughts" [Fershtman, Gneezy, Hoffman 2011, p.140]. This way of understanding cultural taboos is a basis for more in depth analysis in this research paper. Taboo became an element of advertising transmission through euphemization of contents.

3. The cultural taboo in Indian and American advertisement– introduction

The intentions of broadcasters differ to a considerable degree from the expectations of the receivers in the advertising transmissions. The first one wants the contents of advertising to be difficult to discredit, whereas the latter wants the content to be true. In reality, the content seems to be credible at most. The way that advertising introduces reality does not have to be real. These are so-called relational features, which constitute a relation between the text (of contents) and the reality [Bralczyk, 2004, p.37]. Therefore, advertising should be attractive, suggestive, understandable, easily remembered, concise and original. From a point of view which is presented in this article, these features are differently understood by the different communities, and the catalysts of their comprehension are cultural contexts that had been described above.

In each community, taboo is comprehended in a similar manner but can refer to completely different things. Things that are normal for some, for others can be forbidden. Subject such as freedom of sexes, is one of the examples. There are equal rights between women and men in America. Since 1920 when the 19th amendment to the Constitution introduced women's right to vote during the election, they have begun to be more and more liberated and equal to men. The so-called liberation from gender stereotypes took place although in many situations women were still considered as a weaker sex (mainly on the job market). American women are responsible and are able to take autonomous decisions and to solve majority of their own problems as well as their family [Leśniak-Moczuk, 2015, p.67]. In American society the equal rights are not a taboo subject.

This subject is treated very differently in India. In this country, contemporary modern culture clashes with traditional culture based on patriarchate. For centuries, two opposite models on the subject of treatment of women have been clashing together. Women were goddesses, servants, saints and harlots. For hundreds of years, marriage used to be the greatest honor for women. What is more, marriage and bearing children is an absolute necessity. In Hindu culture there is a very clear division between male and female roles. Equal rights are seen as a western ideology and an exotic concept. Therefore, the subject of the equal rights of women should never be discussed in India.

Advertising is not familiar with the definition of taboo. Since there is a mass communication for the anonymous receiver, advertising becomes one of the best tools to suppress cultural taboo. Social changes result mainly because of the democratization and liberalization in everyday life. A commercial advertisement fits perfectly to this de-

scription because it does not break the taboo but it provokes receivers to reflect on it. For example, Eastpak has depicted death in their advertising campaigns. Sisley has represented various deviating sexual practices like sadomasochism and United Colors of Benetton (starting from 1991) evoked the sentiment and the compassion of the public for different social problems. The most well-known motifs of Benetton's advertising were: a dying AIDS patient, a priest kissing a nun, an H.I.V. positive and child labor [Guardian Fashion, 2011]. Then there is the question: what does breaking the taboo of women's equality look like in India? Does a similar problem exist in America at present?

Taste/Taste Culture

Taste is the ability to make discriminating judgments about aesthetic and artistic matters.

It is one component of symbolic systems of classification whose content and structure both reflect and shape particular states of social relations. Taste is part of the process by which social actors construct meaning about their social world, classifying people, practices, and things into categories of unequal value. It is displayed in conversation, habits, manners, and in the possession of goods, which signal co-membership into communities of wealth or knowledge. Taste serves as an identity and status marker, being used simultaneously as Afences or bridges@ (Douglas and Isherwood 1979: 12) in processes of exclusion and inclusion. Displays of taste contribute to the creation of networks and shared identities within groups, but it also allows for the identification and exclusion of outsiders whose standards of taste differ and who do not belong. Taste cultures are clusters of cultural forms which embody similar values and aesthetic standards.

Taste Cultures: Highbrow, Lowbrow, Nobrow

One of the most ubiquitous and ritually potent classification of tastes in modern times is the distinction between high culture, based on formal aesthetic standards and displayed in museums, theaters and symphony halls, and low or popular culture, in its commercialized and folk versions. The ritual strength and universality of the high/low boundary, however, has varied over time, in different societies, and across cultural genres. In the United States, several observers have noted that after a period of relatively low differentiation and hierarchization through much of the 19th century, tastes became more sharply polarized at the turn of the 20th century. In a process whose pace varied in different geographical locations and across cultural genres, high and low culture became more strongly differentiated and the boundary between them gained in ritual potency (DiMaggio 1982, Kammen 1999).

The debate about mass culture, which culminated in the 1950s, may be understood as one manifestation of the polarization between high and low culture. Critiques of mass culture reflected anxieties about the coming of mass society, in which traditional hierarchies were seen as rapidly tumbling down. Mass society was perceived as an aggregate of atomized and depoliticized individuals, whose passive consumption of standardized cultural goods made them easy preys for totalitarian ideologies. The commercialized forms of popular culture, produced for mass consumption by profit-driven cultural industries, were seen as aesthetically worthless and socially dangerous. Radical (Horkheimer 1986) and conservative (MacDonald 1964) critics of mass culture cast a pessimistic look on social relations, arguing that declining standards of taste were evidence of a degradation in individual autonomy and independent judgement, capacities seen as essential for participation in an egalitarian and democratic society.

It is in this context that Herbert Gans (1974) developed the concept of taste cultures. In explicit contrast to much of the literature on mass culture, Gans wishes to go beyond any sharp distinction between high and low culture. He identifies several taste levels within high and low culture and

encompasses them all within a single theoretical framework. As stated above, taste cultures are clusters of cultural forms (e.g. in art, entertainment, architecture, consumer goods, etc.) which embody similar values and aesthetic standards. The concept of taste cultures applies as much to classical symphonies performed by the best orchestras as to garish landscapes printed on black velvet. Gans thus rejects the negative connotations associated with low, mass, and popular culture. He advocates what he calls Acultural pluralism@, arguing that all cultures should be considered of equal value and be placed on an equal footing, at least from the point of view of social analysis and public policy. Taste cultures correspond to a diversity of taste publics, defined as unorganized aggregates of people sharing similar aesthetic standards. Gans acknowledges that the conditions for appreciating works of art associated with different taste cultures are unequally distributed across taste publics, but he does not examine how these inequalities both reflect and reinforce social processes of domination and exclusion.