

INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS ON NEWS DISSEMINATION IN KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

In a democratic country, news is important in framing public opinion. Thus, the role of news media cannot be ignored in any democracy. Earlier the news was disseminated through conventional means of mass communication that include print versions of newspapers, radio and television. However, with the advancement of technology, the news media also got revolutionized. It became more interactive, quick, convergent and inexpensive. Now more news is available in the form of online/web newspapers, e-magazines, and blogs, podcasting/podcasting and news web portals. Besides, social networking sites like Face book, Twitter are also used for news purposes.

While this online media is emerging worldwide, it is also gaining popularity in Kashmir especially among the youth. Leading newspapers and magazines of the valley (Greater Kashmir, Rising Kashmir, Kashmir Time, Kashmir Monitor, etc.) have launched their online editions. Different news web portals were launched and face book also gained eminence as news media.

During the 2010 uprising in Kashmir, a news website was launched from Kashmir called 'Kashmir Dispatch'. Within couple of months of its launch when the print editions of the valley newspapers were banned and news on local channels was restricted, this news portal became popular. Since mobile SMSs were also banned in the valley, the use of Face book walls and accounts for the spreading of information on Kashmir increased.

The paper will study the emergence of NEW MEDIA as NEWS media in Kashmir with the main focus on 'Kashmir Dispatch' - a fast emerging news portal from Kashmir. It will also study the usage of Face book by the Kashmiri youth in disseminating information on Kashmir.

KEYWORDS: Kashmir, New Media, News Media, Social Networking, News Portals.

INTRODUCTION

The news media plays a critical role in any democracy. News keeps the people aware of the activities of the government; it mobilizes public opinion and plays an important role in making the government accountable to the masses. Among the different facets of mass communication, news is the main medium that acts as the mirror of the society. It is the news media through which the public comes to know the problems of the society and is of crucial importance in educating the public mind and enables the people to have their opinions on matters of public concern.

The dissemination of news has witnessed a revolutionizing growth from the times when its concept emerged. Earlier the news was disseminated through conventional means of mass communication that include print versions of