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# Journalism & Society

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Highlighting the importance of press for a country, a society and a culture, famous American publisher and editor Joseph Pulitzer has stated that, “Our press, our society and our democracy will peak together. Press functions with prudence, neutrality and is motivated by the passion to achieve public good - both during progression and regression and has an insatiable desire and dedication for truth and knowledge as well as an intrepid courage and zeal to state the truth”. The interrelation between the press and the society can be delineated in the context of the following points:



**1. A mirror to the activities of a society:** Journalism is a mirror reflection of the activities going on in a society. Human beings are social animals and therefore, they want to gather as much information as possible about the society in which they live. Journalism is the most efficient and effective tool to get answers to questions such as when, where, what, why and how regarding the events or incidents happening in a society. Journalism is that medium through which we accumulate all the information in our minds about that world which is out of our reach as individuals. In this manner, a society acquires and

assimilates elements of development in public life and moves ahead on the path of reformation and development and the salubrious values that disseminate in the society by this process find an expression through journalism. In this manner, journalism is a mirror of existent or nonexistent, visible or invisible and auspicious or inauspicious images of the public life of a society. Journalism wages a righteous battle against various evils, superstitions and dogmas prevalent in a society and tries to eradicate them. It critically analyses anything good or bad happening in a society and in the process becomes a prognosticator of the future of the society. In short, journalism is that ray of hope falling on the contours of a society which awakens its conscience and illuminates the darkness hidden within the interior of the public life of a society.



**2. Subtle Power:** Journalism is that subtle power which gives shape to the contours of the public life and ascertains its soul. Today our lives have become quite complex and confusing. Everyday something agonizingly harrowing, appallingly gruesome and heartrendingly fearsome happens around us which leaves us bewildered. A lot of reasons may be attributed to changing human relationships, but one thing is sure that we find a subtle reflection and representation of these changing relationships in the mass media.

**3. Fine Judgement:** Journalism does not have power to make anyone omniscient but it does motivate people to live in a better manner. Wherever in society it discerns injustice, iniquity, ignorance, sentimentousness, corruption and evil; it opposes them with all its might. Journalism gives a very important contribution in formation of a healthy societal structure.

**4. Regulator of Societal Values:** Journalism is a regulator of healthy societal values while acknowledging various mediums of opposition, antagonism and criticism. Journalism does an accurate and truthful evaluation of any discontent prevalent in a society related to country, caste or religion or for that matter anything else and gives expression to that discontent so that it effective measures can be taken

to alleviate it as quickly as possible.

**5. Journalism acquaints us with our environment:** Journalism acquaints or familiarizes us with the environment of our society. It makes us aware of the present condition of our environment and provides ways to make it better.

**6. Dexterous Doctor:** Journalism gauges the pulse of the conditions prevalent in a society and various events happening in it like a dexterous doctor and thus, performs the function of improving its health. Journalists have a sharp and quick eye and therefore, they are able to examine the blood flowing in the veins of the environment of a society or its blood pressure and keep an account of its heartbeats. When it starts to deteriorate and degenerate, then they adroitly present an x-ray report of it in front of the society. Their job is similar to that of the doctors. It is through their reporting that the deformities that have got into a society are brought to the fore and consequently are alleviated. Journalism not only reflects the ups and downs of a society, but also provides a sense of direction to it. It generates public opinion against the deformities prevalent in a society as well as provides remedies to rectify or to remove them by their impartial analysis and intrepid criticism.

**7. Medium of Communication:** Journalism is a social medium of communication. Journalism spreads awareness among people. Also, it educates people, besides providing them gratifying entertainment. This is that very medium which influences us by providing complete information to us about new inventions, events and researches taking place around the world.

**8. Social Motivation and Education:** Journalism can be very motivating for the society of any country. Newspapers publish not only news but opinions and conclusions as well which work as social motivators. Indian struggle for independence derived power from journalism. It was the journalism that awakened the slumbering pride of our countrymen and inspired them to participate in the freedom struggle by instilling in them a strong belief



that only life values such as independence, patriotism and unity can preserve the identity of a human being.

**9. A strong link between the Government and the Society:**

Journalism acts as an important link in maintaining equilibrium in the relationship between the government and the society. Ideals and policies of the government and announcements made by it from time to time get published in the newspapers and it is through them the general public comes to know about the policies being followed by the government machinery. Newspapers also give expression to public reactions to these policies and these expressions help in deciding the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these policies as well in determining that whether these policies are appropriate or defective.

But every coin has two sides and every picture is two dimensional and press is no exception. In a utopian world, the press and the society share a perfectly beneficial relationship, but in reality the press is held responsible for the promulgation of a lot of evils in the society. Therefore, it is imperative that a balance is maintained between preaching and practice and if this is achieved, then we can dream about a blissful future.

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