UNIT 1 THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH PRESS IN INDIA

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit on the Role of the English Language Press in India, you should be in a position to:

- state the importance of the English Press in our society,
- describe the origin and growth of the English Press in our country,
- discuss the contribution of the English Press to the national freedom struggle,
- discuss the changing functions of the English Press over the decades since Independence,
- explain with examples, the three categories of newspapers,
- describe the nature of ownership, with particular reference to the phenomenon of 'chain' publications,
- list the characteristics of the English Language Press in their content, style and presentation.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Course 1, we have so far studied the general characteristics of the mass media in India. In Block 4, we had discussed the ownership, organisational structure and management of the print and electronic media, the film industry and the educational media. In Block 5, we shall study in detail some aspects of print journalism, viz. the English and Regional Language Press and Periodicals; Professional Media Organization and Principles and Ethics of Journalism.

We start with 'The Role of the English Press in India'; the topic for Unit 1. In this unit, we shall discuss the origin and growth of the English Press in India. We shall also discuss the qualitative appraisal of our English newspapers, the three categories of newspapers, their classification, and ownership. We shall also discuss some valuable facts about our English Press.
explore the importance of the English Press and discuss its contribution to our freedom struggle. We shall trace the role of the English Press in Independent India right up to the present day. Besides, we shall also list the characteristics of the English Press in India such as ownership, circulation, presentation of content, etc. We shall briefly mention the recommendations of the second Press Commission that have a bearing on the improved functioning of the English Press.

This will be followed by the unit on the role of the language press. You can then compare the situation in the English Press with that of the Language Press. In the third unit, our theme will be ‘magazine journalism’. This will be followed by a description of the professional organisations and statutory bodies in unit four. In the last unit, we will study the various principles and ethics that are applicable in the field of Journalism.

Activity 1

Would you not like to find out if English newspapers are read widely by your neighbours? In the first instance, visit ten families near your residence. Ask one of the members from each of these families,

i) if they subscribe to any newspaper
ii) if they do, which language is it in
iii) and how many members in the family know how to read, speak or write English.

Do not forget to ask how many members there are in the household and the number of females in the family. Also, find out if any one visits the library.

Now, tabulate your findings in the table given below:

1) Number of families which subscribe to an English newspaper.................
2) Number of families in which at least one member pays a visit to the library to read an English newspaper............
3) Number of families where the literacy of the female members in English decided whether or not the family would subscribe to an English daily.................
4) In your survey are there more local/regional newspapers in English than national ones...............

1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENGLISH PRESS

From your activity, did you gather how important English Newspapers are in your locality? Well, let us compare it with the situation on the national scene. We are told that the circulation figure of English newspapers crossed 8.6 million in 1989. From this we may conclude that English newspapers in India enjoy an impressive following. In this context, we may mention a notable feature in the history of the English Press in India. In 1965, when English was to cease being a principal language of the country, English newspapers numbered more than newspapers in any other language. They also claimed the largest share of the total circulation of all papers.

The English language newspapers deserve a strong mention in the story of India’s struggle for freedom. And ever since Independence, they have acted as a beacon light for the regional language press by setting high standards of professionalism in reporting and packaging of their content. Since circulation is a good measure to gauge popularity, we may say that the English language newspapers are in great demand. Not so long ago they occupied the leading position in number and circulation, followed by the Hindi newspapers. It is only from the early 1980s that Hindi newspapers have overtaken their English competitors in both number count and combined circulation. The readership profile of English language newspapers holds the reason for their popularity. Government officials and the educated elite form a considerable percentage of the readers. Important public matters that are discussed threadbare in the English Press eventually have a bearing on policy decisions. One can estimate the extent of their influence from instances when
governments at the centre, or in the states, have been either constituted or pulled down because of investigative reports appearing in the English press. If a news item in the newspapers is important enough, the Parliament or State Legislatures may be forced to discuss it immediately. And if an election to a legislative body is due to be held shortly, then strong reports appearing in the newspapers could affect the voting behaviour of the people.

In general, the English newspapers' style of reporting is good and therefore they enjoy a high credibility. In addition, the people attach a lot of importance to these newspapers' capacity to impart education in the English language. All this has contributed to the wide readership of English newspapers.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Answer the following in one or two sentences each.
   ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Why are English newspapers popular in India?

2) Why is 1965 the turning point in the success story of our English newspapers?

1.3 THE GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH PRESS

To began with, English newspapers were published by Britisbers in India expressly to convey news from Britain and Europe to those residing here. The Christian missionaries were among the first to start newspapers in English. With a circulation of a few hundred copies per newspaper, the English press enjoyed popular support among the readers from the initial stages itself.

If the proprietors of the newspapers were those who had fallen from the grace of the officers of the East India Company, they were likely to criticize the operations of the company in the subcontinent, in their papers. To this category belongs James Augustus Hickey, who takes the credit for having started the first English newspaper in British India, in the year 1780. The first English newspaper in India was also the first newspaper in India.

1.3.1 Origin in British India

Hickey brought out the Bengal Gazette on January 29, 1780. He later renamed it as the Oriental Calcutta General Advertiser. It appeared weekly, every Saturday. He attacked the East India Company vigorously through his paper. Finally, when he indulged in casting aspersions on the wife of the then Governor-General, Warren Hastings, he was forcefully deported on the Governor-General's orders. A prominent merchant by the name of James Silk Buckingham, was another pioneer of English newspapers in India. He started the Calcutta Journal as its proprietor editor. From October 2, 1818 till November 9, 1823 (the day it ceased publication), the paper enjoyed uncommon popularity as it carried items of local Indian interest and did not play favourites with any political party. However, on March 1, 1823, Buckingham was deported after Chief Secretary to the Government, John Adams announced his regulations on the free press by way of compulsory pre-publication licensing.

Bengal Harkaru, Friend of India and Bengal Herald were other newspapers that were quite popular in the beginning of the nineteenth century.
Bombay Herald was Bombay's first newspaper which was started in 1789. Madras Courier was the first newspaper to be published from Madras in 1785. The first regular venture of the natives in the field of English journalism was Reformer started by Prasunna Coomar Tagore and Bholanath Sen in 1831. Earlier, in 1829, Prasunna Coomar Tagore and Raja Ram Mohan Roy had invested in Bengal Herald along with three other Indians and one Britisher who was officiating as the editor. But, the authorities would not entertain native association with any publication and prevented the Indians from running the Bengal Herald. The Reformer, however, was popular with the Europeans as it carried moderate views. Prior to the arrival of the Reformer, the first Indian-owned English newspaper appeared in 1816. It was called Bengal Gazette after Hickey's venture, and was owned by Gangadhar Bhattacharya.

1.3.2 Contribution to India's Independence

In the nineteenth century, when just a few Indians were acquainted with the English language, some educated leaders ventured to publish English newspapers. Their efforts were twice successful, as these publications put across the majority viewpoint to the British rulers and also initiated British-influenced Indians into the freedom struggle.

Soon enough the fledgling press invited trouble in the form of severe government restrictions on the freedom of information and the right to criticize. Although licensing was not required, registration of newspapers was made compulsory in 1835 by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the interim Governor-General in Place of Lord William Bentinck. Licensing was reintroduced by an Act in 1857. The Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 was essentially directed against the Vernacular Press. An interesting reaction to the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 which was promulgated by Lord Lytton, is the case of the bilingual Amrita Bazar Patrika. It was being published in Bengali and English when it suddenly converted itself into an exclusively English daily in order to escape the harsh conditions of the Act.
Leading members of the elite in society enthusiastically contributed their views to Indian-owned English newspapers. This in turn generated tremendous support for the nationalist movement. While the government clamped restrictions on the English and Vernacular Press, those papers which were owned by Anglo-Indians were exempted since they were not too critical of the British government.

The struggle for freedom gained momentum in the last few years of the nineteenth century, and this to a large extent was one of the views which appeared in English language newspapers. M.K. Gandhi, who had regularly published *Indian Opinion* when he was in South Africa, continued to bring out the paper even after returning to India. In addition, he started its sister publication, *Haritjan*. Gandhiji exhorted the press in general to support the struggle for freedom and to continue to appear even in the form of handwritten pamphlets in case the printing equipment was confiscated. The English press responded to the call to fight for a free India. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, the *Press (Emergency Powers) Act*, 1931 was enforced. In spite of the constraints, the English papers continued to criticize the British government fearlessly.

Several newspapers which started with the singular purpose of giving a boost to the nation's struggle for freedom have survived to this day. To name just a handful of such papers, we have the examples of centenarians like *The Times of India* of Bombay (1838), *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta (1868), *The Statesman* of Calcutta (1875), *The Hindu* of Madras (1878), *The Tribune* of Chandigarh (1881). The year mentioned within brackets indicated the year of first publication.

*The Pioneer* of Allahabad, *Madras Mail* of Madras and the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore were very much in the forefront, providing quality news reports. One must make mention here of Annie Besant's *New India*, which carried some fiery editorials in its time.

In general, all the English newspapers used forceful language and served to direct and organize the energies of the people who then moved nearer to their aim of self governance.

The Indian-owned newspapers were cheaper than the British-owned ones. Naturally, this fact benefitted the former category in terms of increased sales.

The single-minded manner in which the English newspapers rallied around to free the nation from the imperialist hold is a lesson in itself. Never since, has any other goal enthused the entire English press enough to raise the profession to the height of a mission.
1.3.3 Post-Independence Role

The role of the English press in the 1950s was necessarily shaped in response to the immediate needs of development and modernization. In a newly democratized country, the Indian press had the responsibility of educating the masses about the intricacies of the functioning of the administrative, legal and other departments of the government. All this the press had to do in addition to the task of promoting communal harmony in the wake of the country’s partition into Pakistan and India.

The notable feature of the newspapers at this time were:

- a marked increase in circulation,
- greater collection of advertisement revenue,
- modern equipment and expanded facilities of reporting from distant locations, and
- the appearance of features and columns with by-lines.

As the government emphasized planned economy, the volume of economic news that the English papers carried, multiplied. The press stressed the importance of economic progress and interpreted the government’s goals for the people.

For the most part, news agencies were the source of news. According to one estimate, as much as 22 per cent of all non-advertising space in English language newspapers was devoted to foreign news which was obtained from the wire news services.

When India was at war with Pakistan (in 1965 and 1971) and China (in October, 1962), the English press did a commendable job of defending the country’s sovereignty. The population ‘boom’ was another area that the mass media had to address head on. The English Press was not lagging on this front either. It was imperative, to contain the growth in population then, as it continues to be now, some three decades later.

The imposition of Emergency in 1975 by the government headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi marked the beginning of the hard times. There were severe restrictions on the freedom of the press. The English Press was muzzled, especially the outspoken journalists and the papers they wrote for, during the two years of the Emergency.

The freedom of the press has been debated quite vigorously in recent times. The second Press Commission has discussed it in detail in its report. The issue has invariably been the imposition of government regulations versus self-regulation by the press.

Chain Publications, quite familiar on the Indian Press scene, have come to stay. By the 1980s, “chain” newspapers were a trademark of those publishers who notched remarkable circulation figures for their groups of papers and periodicals. The idea was to use the profits of any publication for the numerical expansion of the group. The general trend has been to view journalism as a profit making industry. There is an urgent need to change this attitude.

In the early years of the 1990s, the government’s economic measures of liberalization and integration of the country in the global economy are issues that have been receiving ample coverage in our English dailies. Besides, the disturbing trend of religious intolerance is constantly commented upon, in our English newspapers.
3) Which areas of concern have been receiving the attention of the English newspapers in recent times?

4) What were the characteristics of English newspapers immediately after Independence?

5) In a democracy, what part should the newspapers play for keeping it alive?

Activity 2

Select issues of any three English newspapers on a given day. Compare the items on the front page of these three papers. You may choose any other page instead, say the sports page. Just make sure that there are common stories. Now, compare the headlines of three news items in one newspaper with the headlines of the same stories in the other two newspapers. Reading of the Entire story is necessary in fruitfully pursuing this activity. Weigh the words in every headline on the basis of what each word implies. Then decide if the headline is 'pro-event' or 'anti-event'. Enter your decision on the headline for or against the event in this table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item-1</th>
<th>Pro or Anti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item-2</td>
<td>Pro or Anti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item-3</td>
<td>Pro or Anti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newspaper-I

Newspaper-II

Newspaper-III

From your observations, do these newspapers appear to be holding the same views regarding each event?

1.4 A QUALITATIVE APPRAISAL OF OUR ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

Having completed your activity, you may be wondering over your findings! Can we really say that a newspaper is 'neutral' in its reporting, which means that the newspaper is neither for, nor against any event, that it is simply indifferent to the happening? To answer this question one would have to first be aware of the extent to which ownership influences the newspaper's style of reporting. But before we study the ownership factor, let us quickly assess the general nature of our English newspapers.

There are quite a handful of English papers which are truly national in character: they carry news of national importance to households spread across the country. There are some others which devote greater space to regional and local matters and which mainly circulate in their respective regions. The Times of India, Indian Express, The Hindu are national multi-edition newspapers that are published from various cities situated in different parts of the country. In comparison with other English newspapers on the national scale, circulations of these three newspapers are appreciably higher.
Deccan Chronicle of Hyderabad, M.P. Chronicle of Bhopal, The Tribune of Chandigarh, The Hitavada of Nagpur and Deccan Herald of Bangalore are some examples of regional newspapers in English.

UNESCO has underlined the importance of newspapers as educators by stating that in this audio-visual age, the daily paper still remains the primary means of educating the citizen.

Newspapers have long been viewed as economic enterprises with good monetary returns. Besides circulation revenue, advertising revenue is important in meeting the cost of production and in making profits. Managerial skills are required to run the newspaper concerns efficiently, just as in any other business.

As for content, newspapers have contributed a great deal towards making the people more politically conscious. Further, no newspaper can claim to be neutral or apolitical. In comments on various issues on the editorial page, the biases and prejudices are all too evident. But even in respect of reporting events in the news columns, there is a discernible tendency to support or reject one side of the argument or the other in any news item. In the words they use and in what they say by using these selected words, newspapers all the while tend to support this, or the other stance. Some newspapers do it in a subtle way whereas others are blatant. Was this your conclusion too after you completed your activity 2?

The general trend which is apparent is one of increasing sophistication in the packaging and presentation of news. The news is segregated on the basis of the topic referred to. It is then printed on separate pages such as foreign, national, regional, local, sports, economy, edit page, etc. Neat and attractive get-up of the newspaper has been made possible by modern printing technology.

1.4.1 Ownership—The Phenomenon of Newspaper Chains

There are different types of ownership of newspapers. These may be classified as newspapers owned by individuals, societies and associations, firms or partnerships, joint stock companies, government (central/state), cooperative societies, educational institutions, international organizations, political parties, companies—public and private, etc. Common Ownership Units are among the more prominent types of ownership. The Office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) defines the Common Ownership Unit (COU) as a newspaper establishment owning two or more news-interest newspapers of which at least one is a daily.

Leading examples of common ownership Units are Bennett Coleman and Co. Ltd., Indian Express (Pvt.) Ltd., Ananda Bazar Patrika (Pvt.) Ltd., Hindustan Times & Allied Publications (Public Ltd.), Statesman (Public Ltd.), Kasturi & Sons (Public Ltd.), Only the English dailies which these COUs publish are mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bennett Coleman &amp; Co.</th>
<th>Times of India, Economic Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian Express (Pvt.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Indian Express, Financial Express</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananda Bazar Patrika</td>
<td>Ananda Bazar Patrika, Telegraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindustan Times &amp; Allied Publications</td>
<td>The Hindustan Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statesman Ltd.</td>
<td>Statesman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasturi &amp; Sons</td>
<td>The Hindu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A 'Big unit' is defined by the RNI as a news-interest newspaper of a COU with a circulation of more than 50,000 copies.

Language-wise, with reference to circulation of English dailies, the RNI has given the percentage share of newspapers brought out by different units as in 1989. Given below is a list of some of the big units with their percentage share in the circulation of English dailies indicated alongside:
The second Press Commission has, in its report of 1982, strongly recommended the delinking of the press from its connections with other industries. In the context of industrialists venturing into printing of newspapers with a profit motive, some members of the commission pointed out the need to have journalists and their newspapers independent of any influence from the barons of industry. With this in mind, it was suggested that either the owners of newspapers who were involved with other business and industries, delink themselves from the latter, or else severe their connections with the press.

The Commission also took a serious view of the lack of 'diffusion' in the presentation of news. In a marketplace of ideas where every possible point of view must be projected, it is in the best interests of the readers to free the press "from the steamrolling of the commercial process so that it may mean maximum amount of freedom of expression for the maximum number of people". It is precisely because of the close hold the press barons have on a majority of daily newspapers that the content of newspapers they own, subserves their other monetary interests. The content would in that sense reflect less of fairness, accuracy, objectivity, balance and truthfulness in the interpretation and presentation of news to the readers. The majority of newspapers are owned by Joint Stock Companies and provide views and analyses which benefit their other economic ventures. Thus, commercial interests operate and extend into the areas of newspaper content.
1.4.2 Content of English Newspapers

English newspapers address key issues of the day, some in a particularly outspoken fashion. In the scramble to boost both the readership and circulation the common strategy that have evolved is to fulfil a variety of needs of readers. Specialized writing on subjects such as culture and arts, tourism, women, children, health, science and technology, law, architecture, education, sports, the media, political analysis, etc., is the order of the day. Entire pages or sections of pages are devoted to these topics. Some newspapers bring out supplements on different days of the week on some of these subjects. Now, there are papers exclusively concerned with finance. Financial Express and Economic Times are examples of this type.

Despite the fact that there is a greater variety in the contents of newspapers today, politics and politicians still seem to receive too much attention. Besides, in some newspapers, there is a tendency to sensationalize negative events. For instance, occurrences of dowry death and rape receive prominent mention. There is a lack of adequate effort on the part of newspapers to provide any constructive solution(s) to the many social problems that are plaguing our society.

By and large, however, it can be said that the English newspapers measure well against the time-tested standards of objectivity, credibility, balance and accuracy.

The style of writing in English newspapers has changed over the years. We do not have any more long verbation reports of speeches. News reports are short and the writing is lively. The days of long editorials are also over. There is more and more stress on interpretative and investigative reporting. Analytical writings on many important issues are now available. A wide variety of features which are readable, educative and entertaining are being published by most English newspapers. The English newspapers are also discharging their responsibility of giving a boost to the government’s schemes to bring about planned economic development.

The contribution of the English newspapers in adding to the general awareness of the population has been considerable. For instance, the importance of exercising one’s right to vote has been realized by a large section of our literate population. In general, the newspaper-reading population has become quite aware of their rights and responsibilities.

One can see that the English newspapers are full of lively, interesting stories. They contain something of special interest for every reader. While every edition of the newspaper provides varied fare, the Sunday issues carry exclusive supplements devoted to reviews of books, the arts, the media, etc. Sunday newspapers are popular with the readers as much for their reading material as for their classified advertisements whether for accommodation, employment or matrimonials.

1.4.3 Presentation of Content in English Newspapers

Much research has gone into studying the most effective types of presentation that makes for easy-on-the-eye reading. Designing a newspaper has risen to the status of a fine art. Specialists are recruited by the newspaper organization to design the pages, to suggest appropriate make-up and to make the pages more appealing in appearance. Newspaper designing has come a long way from the days when scanty or no particular attention was paid just by clubbing the news items into distinct categories.

Every newspaper has a distinct personality of its own that sets it apart from other papers. It is important for the paper to retain its identity while at the same time come out with a fresh look everyday. Typography is an important factor in determining the appearance of the newspaper. Careful selection of the types for headlines and text is essential. Appropriate use of photographs, line drawings, graphs and other illustrations enlivens the text attention of the reader. Pocket cartoons are popular with the readers. For example, R.K. Laxman’s ‘You Said It’ in The Times of India delights readers daily.

The front page is the most important in a newspaper. Items of greatest importance appear on this page. When an important news item is received, it has to be
accommodated on the front page and as a consequence some of the items have to be shifted to an inside page. For this reason, the front page is one of the last to be made up. The design of the front page is important because it must be attractive enough to induce people to buy it off the news stands.

The Sunday papers carry additional pages that come as colour supplements. Colour photographs, advertisements, illustrations and comic strips are all presented in a very appealing fashion.

### 1.4.4 Recommendations of the Second Press Commission

In this sub-section, we shall mention those recommendations of the Commission which have a bearing on the English press. In sub-section 1.4.1 on 'ownership' we had mentioned the recommendations of the Commission to delink the press from industry and its call for greater diffusion of ideas in our society. The Commission made it clear that it views journalism not merely as an industry but as a public service and profession. It observed that public interest should be the criterion to regulate the news and views of the newspaper and not ownership, as is usually the case.

The Second Press Commission desired that a National Development Commission (NDC) be constituted to promote the entire Indian press rather than just individual papers in select languages. Further, the NDC was to set up advisory councils for each language with more than one body for languages like Hindi, English and Urdu since they are multi-state languages. The NDC was to extend its assistance especially to small and medium newspapers for the development of printing and other technologies suitable for them. Besides, it was to help provide common distribution arrangements for newspapers that are published in hilly and remote areas.

One of the major recommendations of the second Press Commission was to specify a price-page schedule and a news-to-advertisement ratio. The latter was fixed at 60:40 for big papers, 50:50 for medium and 40:60 for small newspapers. This was suggested in order to help 'promote competition and prevent monopoly of a few newspapers'. The Commission, viewing display advertising as a wasteful expenditure, called for curtailment of such advertising.

While commending the increase in investigative reporting, the Commission pointed out the lack of follow-up of such reports.

The NDC was to extend financial assistance to small and medium newspapers. Besides, the NDC would appoint an autonomous corporation to oversee the fair and equitable distribution of both government and foreign advertisements.

You will read other recommendations of the Commission in Unit 3, Block 5, Course 1.

### Check Your Progress 3

Note:

i) Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Name any three national English newspapers.

   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................

2) What would be the characteristics of a good regional newspaper?

   ........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................
3) Name any five regional newspapers in English.

4) Why is the sectional format important in a newspaper?

5) Name the Common Ownership Unit with the largest share of circulation of English dailies. Which are the newspapers of the COU that contribute to this status in circulation?

6) By what standards would one measure the content of a newspaper as worthy?

1.5 SOME VALUABLE FACTS ABOUT OUR ENGLISH PRESS

The Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) gave its first estimate about the press in India in 1957. The total number of newspapers and periodicals in all languages in December 1957, was 6903 with a total circulation of 112.60 lakhs. By comparison, in 1989, the English press alone boasted of 4727 newspapers with a combined circulation of 86,75,000 copies. The increase in circulation has been tremendous and indicates several positive factors such as the development of reading habits, increase in purchasing power of the people, priority given to English newspapers, the credibility of the English press, etc.

1.5.1 Classification of Newspapers

Newspapers are classified on the basis of their circulation into Big, Medium and Small newspapers. A newspaper with a total circulation of up to 25,000 copies on any publishing day is called a 'small newspaper'. A newspaper with a total circulation of 25,001 to 75,000 copies on a publishing day is considered as 'medium newspaper'. A total circulation of 75,001 to 99,999 copies on any publishing day entitles a newspaper to be called a 'big newspaper'. Newspapers with a circulation of one lakh and more are also deemed 'big newspapers'. There are ten English dailies with circulations above one lakh each.

Here are some examples of 'Big Newspapers' along with their circulations for the year 1989. Please note that the figures pertain only to the newspaper's edition from the place of publication.

The circulation figures of the newspapers given here do not include a paper's other editions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>A publishing day's circulation in 1989</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times of India, Bombay</td>
<td>312612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Express, Bombay</td>
<td>115776</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial Express of New Delhi and Bombay have together a circulation of 32,663 copies. The paper is thus a ‘medium newspaper’. An example of a ‘small newspaper’ is Business Standard of Calcutta with a circulation of 23,827 copies.

1.5.2 Circulation of English Newspapers

In number and circulation, the English press currently occupies the second position, next only to the Hindi press. The precise number of English newspapers as given by the RNI in its annual publication “Press in India (1990)”, is 4727 in the year 1989.

On the last count there were 197 dailies and 15 tri/bi weeklies, the remaining being periodicals. In this unit, we are concerned only with daily and tri/bi weekly newspapers. Delhi is the place from where the largest number of English newspapers are published. The following table gives us the state-wise ranking for these 197 dailies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of publication (States of India)</th>
<th>Number of English newspapers published</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1989, the total circulation of all daily newspapers in English reached 37,12,000 copies. This number was second to the circulation figure for Hindi newspapers. Maharashtra accounted for the largest share of circulation of English newspapers with 27,73,000 copies. Delhi was next with 20,06,000 copies followed by West Bengal with a circulation of 11,18,000 copies. Among the English dailies, 20 were big, 41 medium and 29 small. As mentioned earlier, ten dailies had each a circulation of more than 1,00,000 copies.

The Times of India, Bombay, took the credit for being the largest circulated daily in English. It commanded a circulation of 3,12,612 copies. Established in 1838, The Times of India, Bombay, is the oldest existing English daily.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) An example of a big newspaper on the national level is............................
2) Deccan Herald is a regional newspaper published from............................
3) The Indian state with the largest share of circulation of English newspapers is............................
4) The largest number of English newspapers are published from............................
5) The Tribune is published from............................
1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have studied the origin and growth of the English Press in India. English newspapers began as a means of conveying European news to the Britishers living in India. Eventually, English newspapers became a tool in the hands of Indian nationalists working towards independence. One cannot discount the importance of English newspapers in the present day India. They are instrumental in conveying to the people political, social, economic and other news. We have discussed the role of the English newspapers in the years immediately after Independence in 1947, when restoration of communal harmony was high on the country’s agenda. The government’s Plans for the economic development received much needed support from the English press, by way of interpretative and analytical writings on the goals of development, industrialisation and modernization. The English press never failed in addressing itself to issues that dominated the decades from the 1950s to the 1980s such as the education of the masses regarding the working of a democratic system and the dangers of uncontrolled increase in population. It played a valuable role in creating a sense of solidarity among people in times of war and explaining to them in peace time the governments complex economic reforms.

We have studied the ownership pattern of English newspapers and noted the observations of the second Press Commission with regard to the ‘chain’ newspapers. We have also noted the changing trends in content and presentation of news in our English newspapers. Finally, we have also looked at the latest circulations of our English newspapers.

1.7 FURTHER READING


Press in India (1990), Thirty-fourth annual report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, New Delhi, pp 183-85.


1.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) The thorough approach of English newspapers in their reporting, their high credibility, the wide readership of English newspapers among government personnel, have all enhanced their popularity.

2) It had been decided in the Constitution that the government would discontinue the recognition of English as an official language from 1965. Since this decision was never implemented, English newspapers had all the advantage to grow apart from the popularity of the English language itself, in the educational and administrative systems.
Check Your Progress 2

1) James Augustus Hickey started the first English newspaper in India in 1780 and called it the Bengal Gazette. He later changed its name to Oriental Calcutta General Advertiser.

2) Gangadhar Bhattacharya was the first Indian to own an English newspaper. He called his paper Bengal Gazette and started it in 1816.

3) The economic reforms of liberalisation and the tragedy of communal violence are topics that have received much attention in our English newspapers in the last few years.

4) There was a marked increase in their circulation, greater collection of advertisement revenue, use of advanced printing technology, appearance of varied features and columns with by-lines for the first time.

5) Newspapers carry the responsibility of keeping democracy alive. They educate the people about the procedures of electing a governing body, about the government's goals and the ways in which the people can help to achieve these goals. Moreover, giving all shades of opinion a chance to be heard in the 'marketplace of ideas', does prove to be beneficial to democracy.

Check Your Progress 3

1) The Times of India, Indian Express and The Hindu are three national English newspapers. They are national in character as they carry news of national relevance. Also, they command good readership and circulation in different parts of the country.

2) A newspaper which reports regional matters, highlights local people and their ways of life, is a regional newspaper.


4) Almost all English newspapers segregate the news and publish it under separate sections such as foreign, local, sports, business, opinion, etc. This helps to direct the attention of the reader to all important news of a particular kind on one page itself. This is a neat presentation or packaging of news.

5) Bennett Coleman & Co. with 18.8% of circulation of English dailies, shared by its newspapers The Times of India and Economic Times.

6) Balance, Accuracy, Objectivity, Credibility are time-tested standards by which to measure the worth of any newspaper's content.

Check Your Progress 4

1) The Hindu/The Times of India/Indian Express

2) Bangalore

3) Maharashtra

4) Delhi

5) Chandigarh