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# **‘Preparation of mainstream news media to respond the challenges created by social media in Bangladesh’**

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Date of Submission: 24. 12. 20

December 12, 2020

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**Subject: Application for submission of my dissertation for approval**

Dear Sir,

I am pleased to state that I have completed my project which is titled **‘Preparation of mainstream news media to respond the challenges created by social media in Bangladesh’** as partial fulfilment of my BSS (Hons.) in Journalism and Mass Communication. I have tried my level best to work sincerely to cover all aspects regarding the matter which I have been assigned.

I believe that this dissertation has enriched both my knowledge and experience. I hope you will assess my report considering the limitations of the study. I shall be highly grateful if you kindly accept my project. Your kind approval is solicited.

Sincerely yours,

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# Certificate of Approval



I am pleased to certify that the project report on 'Preparation of mainstream news media to respond the challenges created by social media in Bangladesh' completed by Md. Asif Hossain Siam, ID: 171-24-611 of the Department of journalism and Mass Communication has been approved for presentation and defense. Under my supervision Md. Asif Hossain Siam has worked with this project. He completed the work during the Fall-2020 semester. I am pleased to clarify that the data, the findings presented in the report are the authentic work of Md. Asif Hossain Siam.

Md. Asif Hossain Siam bears a very good moral character and a very pleasing personality. It has indeed a great pleasure working with him. I wish him all success in life.

Academic Supervisor

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# Acknowledgement

At the beginning, I should thanks to the Almighty Allah for empowering me to finish my final project safe and soundly. At this point, I want to offer my heartiest thanks to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Shafiul Islam for his extreme support, motivation and appreciation all through my examination and the exploration. I could not have finished the work in due time without the astounding help I got from my exploration director who was with me from the earliest starting point of this work. Also I need to appreciate all of the teachers of Department of Journalism and Mass Communication for their extraordinary support in this project and inconceivable motivation to complete my exploration work.

I need to thank my loving guardians and my companions for their gigantic motivation and supports. Without their psychological help I could not achieve the goal of my work. Finally, I need to thanks to the respondents of this investigation who had given data for this project time to time.

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# Abstract

The study titled '**Preparation of mainstream news media to respond the challenges created by social media in Bangladesh**' was designed to know the solutions for sustaining the mainstream news media during digital age. People are now become habituate to get the news instantly and losing the habit to read the full news. Today's story become dead to them. In fact, they want to give opinion in every matters. The traditional media is not the place to fulfill these demands. As a result, many reputed news institutions have been vanished into the thin air and some have compromised with subsidies. The study shows that the news institutions are trying to use the digital platform as a supporting role. They are improving the digital skills and tools. The print media is acting like an electronic media also. Similarly, the electronic media has the print version. Even, some news media has become bilingual to grab the both audience. Some institutions have applied different marketing strategies, some are presenting the news program as an entertaining program. Though some faced with bitter experience but did not pause to step ahead.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction of the study

### 1.1 Introduction

People used to be entertained and got news from mainstream news media in past days but the life style of people is changed. They are now habituated in social media. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are the example of social media which free of cost to use and can be got the information at any time. In fact, the mainstream media are covering the news after observing the public interest to a certain issue. To deal with the current generation, mainstream news media is playing several marketing strategies to keep remain their existence. Generally, mainstream news media use to publish and telecast the information. They started their journey in 1818 by weekly publishing in Bangladesh. With the uprising of the reader's demands, they started daily publishing in 1936. But during twenty-first century, the digital era has created a vast change to turn into instant dissemination service. So they have created the online news portal despite being publishing or broadcasting media and have engaged in social media too. News media institutions are agreeing in field study that people are attracting more to online platform for getting news instead of purchasing a newspaper or catch the prime time of broadcasting channel. Even nowadays the social media is setting the agenda up of people like, killing the dogs in Dhaka city and harassing a woman for smoking in Rajshahi. Mainstream news media are covering these issues after observing a huge public interest in social media. Even, they have started the online platform for keeping up with this generation to get survived.

### 1.2 Objectives of the study:

The entire study has been directed to dig up the following objectives.

- i. To understand the challenges of traditional news media by social media
- ii. To understand the preparation or activities for facing the future

### **1.3 Literature review**

The study titled “In the age of social media” by Jennifer Alejandro has showed the effectiveness of social media during performing as a communication and news breaking tool. Here, the comparison of old days and present days of news preparation is shown. The author named the social media as a third hand of news reporters which helps to gather the information instantly. Another article named “Social media and the public interest: Governance of news platforms in the realm of individual and algorithmic gatekeepers” by Philip M. Napoli identifies the basic contours of the realm of social media to shape the public interest. Though the previous research has developed a term called ‘Twitter Journalism’ where the engagement in Twitter of traditional media is exclaimed. The mainstream media discovers that spreading their news through Twitter is a more effective way in journalism. The audience can easily get the news and give their feedback. This two-way of communication set-up inspires the audience engagement. But during this co-operative period of emergence the journalism, a term called fake news was created as the curse of digital era. From the journal named ‘Social Media and fake News in the 2016 Election’, jointly journal by Hunt Allcott and Mathew Gentzkow, we can understand the affectation of fake news. Here, the authors have showed that the vote of USA election in 2016 was damaged approximately 0.02 percentage points. This suggests that the fake news can change the database of the election. Social media use to spread the information without checking any verification but the professional news media cannot. They need to avoid such fake news tendency according to the responsibility of the society. While maintaining this responsibility, the journalist suffer in survival crisis according to the news report of BBC News Bangla in 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2019. They investigated the economic crisis of journalism because of the insufficient advertisements. The ad firms are now interested to invest in social media and online platform. Professor Kaberi Gayen, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism in Dhaka University, has stated in the report that advertisement



market in Bangladesh is very small and the news media are suffering in there is the bitter truth. But the 'Journalism in the age of social media' has given some recommendations to solve this problem. It has identified the people who can be shaped vastly. Since, the audiences become technology oriented, so the journalists need to be more expertise in digital platform. They need to be skilled in different digital platform like, video and photo editing. In fact, the author has suggest to change the set-up of newsroom with the more updated technology. The social media updated themselves in every moment. If the journalists want to compete against the social media, they will have to do the same. But Jennifer Alejandro thinks that journalist cannot keep up rhythm with these backdated management.

## **Chapter Two**

# **Methodology of the study**

In this chapter, I have discussed the research methodology, area of study, introduction of samples and sampling technique.

**2.1 Key Informant Interview:** Seven different news media were interviewed. The institutions have been selected in a categorical form like three print media, three electronic media and an online news media. All of the respondents are playing important role of their own institutions.

**2.2 Literature review:** Information from previous thesis, journals and articles from newspaper have been gathered to develop the study.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Findings of the study**

In this chapter, the findings have been discussed on the basis of the Key Informant Interview (KII). The findings have been presented against the objective of the study.

### **3.1 Challenges for mainstream media**

The audience of social media share and receive the news instantly. This tendency harms the familiar idea to broadcast the news at night or deliver the daily newspaper at morning. So the mainstream media is underestimated by the people.

#### **3.1.1 Challenges in information gathering**

A large number of people engage in social media. They use to upload the incidents and issues what they see and happens to them. This process makes informed others instantly. Many of the times, mainstream media are informed by the social media about an incident which is holding them back compared to social media. For example, a navy officer was humiliated by one of a Member of Parliament in 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2020. One of an eyewitness captured the moment by mobile and upload it on social media. The incident become the issue overnight. Peoples showed their interest which imposed the mainstream media to cover the issue.

#### **3.1.2 Challenges in content preparation**

Social media users upload what they see and what they want according to their choice. They have no bound to show ethics and responsibility. They spread out a bias information or rumors because of the lacking of media using literacy. But the mainstream media verify the authentication of the information after getting it from social media or a stringer. They gather the details of the story and make it presentable. The whole processing requires some time. Over there, people are discussing that issue and keep searching in social media to know the follow

up information. At the result, the responsibility to avoid fake news, rumors and biasness is making backdated the mainstream media against social media. In addition, they are making news reports with little study and research because of the time limitation.

**3.1.2.1 Case Study:** Sports journalism was supposed to be suffered in existence crisis during COVID-19. But they appeared in different image by covering the histories of sports like, the incredible catches in cricket, behind the scene of a football match etc. But they again return to their regular surface news format after the sports come into normal condition. Though the disappearance of those informative features is making the knowledge gap of sports but the reporters are busy to cover the present events. This vacuumed space can be fulfilled with rumors by social media.

### **3.1.3 Challenges in audience creation**

The information disseminating glamor is attracting the people to social media. They do not need to wait for so long to know about their surroundings. Even they can play the active role by informing what they want in social media and can give the opinion. On the contrary, the traditional media does not publish any writing of stranger for maintaining the professionalism. They only allow the trustworthy staffs in their platform after cross checking the facts.

### **3.1.4 Challenges in revenue earning**

The study already has showed the interest of people to social media is much higher than the mainstream media. So the advertisement market is giving precedence the social platforms as a customer. This tendency has reduced the advertising rate and the profits for the mainstream. They are got payed a lot less amount for each advertisement. It has created the economic crisis in news media sector. Many media institutions are closing down some parts or the whole and many are running with subsidies.

**3.1.4.1 Case Study:** The Daily Ittefaq is the newspaper that has been witnessed with political history of Bangladesh since 1953. Some legendary touches like Bangabondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Mawlana Bhashani and Tofazzal Hossain Manik Miah were involved with this national daily. Yet, it is suffering in survival crisis at present. During KII, the respondents have blamed the lacking of making survey on audience interest, marketing research and upgradation the design of pages. Even they start to work at the end of half a day and create stories after evening when the stories are might be dead already. The office does not provide the facility to cover the stories immediately and the staffs are also not habituated with this processing. All of these backdated habits are imposing them to accept the subsidies.

## **3.2 Preparation for the future survival**

Social media creates the effective way of communication between the news institutions and their audience. Mainstream media has felt that they will have to make some plan to act with the new generation. Otherwise, the print media and the broadcasting media will be the history to the future generation. To manage the challenges by social media, mainstream media has been changing the marketing plan according to the audience interest.

### **3.2.1 Preparation for content dissemination**

To deliver the news instantly needs the action to gather information as fast as possible. This necessity has forced them to use different tools to get the instant information such as social media and stringer. Some institutions has provided emergency vehicles to visit the story area as fast as possible and some has recruited a lots of correspondents. A little few has set up branches in different districts to make the standard news.

The necessity to collect news quickly has created tendency of fake news. It will be unsuitable behavior of mainstream media to avoid gatekeeping before spreading a news alike social media. They had to make strict the recruitment policy for the sake of working with the

trustworthy and skilled staffs though they cross check the facts of all information from the authentic sources. Even they set up a special desk to maintain the authenticity of news has collected from the correspondents of outside Dhaka.

### **3.2.2 Preparation for audience evaluation**

Audience can easily drop their feedback in comment box of the specific news through social media. The mainstream media can understand the public interest on that certain topic and evaluate themselves. During the KII, all of the respondents has mentioned it as a helpful tactic to get news ideas and information. Some institutions make particular news on the audience comments and some use to publish it shortly at their Editorial page. They cover news according to their audience interest to grab them forever. Some make informative news stories in legal issues and logical issues as their individual identity.

Yet, some of the respondents gave different answers despite accepting the effectiveness of evaluation the audience feedback. Some has said that they are not economically capable right now to give special effort on audience feedback. Some said, the audience feedback does not effect on their works. Because they consider it as a destruction of their creativity and mindfulness. They hope to install their choices on audience and create social responsibility. A little few thinks of experience is enough to understand the audience.

### **3.2.3 Preparation for revenue earning**

All we know that the news institutions of Bangladesh were established to perform responsibility towards the society but many of them are expecting profits to ensure the surviving according to the KII. In that case, the mainstream media has engaged themselves in social media. They have applied different marketing strategies like, broadcasting entertaining programs to attract more audience and collect more advertisement. They are increasing the digitally skilled human resources to gather more authentic stories in a short time period. Even

the print media are presenting the news in video format and organizing talk shows in both live and recorded version. They all can be found out in online platform like Facebook, You Tube and Websites.

But different scenario has been shown during KII that some mainstream media has less audience than any non-professional online news media. They are still struggling in crisis by maintaining the own traditional marketing style. A little few respondents has given affirmative statement during KII to run their news institutions with subsidies. Finally, a blame is found up that keeping up this traditional image is destroying the revenue of those institutions. But they feel no worry about the future crisis. They believe, the audience treat them as the most authentic news source.

# Chapter Four

## Conclusion

### 4.1 Analysis and Discussions

Most of the mainstream media are trying to survive by creating many marketing strategies. But they believe, they have some unsolved limitations against social media. Social media can update and develop itself in every glance. On the other hand, mainstream media needs uncounded investment if they follow this path. This study was designed to find the solutions of this unsolved problems.

The traditional media can use many digital tools and software to keep up the pace with the digital era. Print media can create video content, broadcast live news and talk shows in video and audio format through social media. This strategy will engage the audience more effectively. Besides, they can briefly publish the audience opinion in Editorial page. Electronic media can take audience opinion in their discussion programs which inspires the audience to stay with them. In addition, creating the online platform is the compulsory decision for all news media. They can create audience survey and publish the writings of audience. If the news programs will be presented like an entertaining one, audience will be attractive much more.

Though some news institutions are planning the market strategy to benefit from small quantity of audience. On the contrary, the long experienced news institutions are suffering for their own experience. Because those ideas become old to the present generation. They could not keep pace with the digital audience.



## 4.2 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to find out the preparations for mainstream media to survive against social media. I inspired to do the study after observing that people are very interested to be the audience of social media which reducing the revenue earning of mainstream media. Besides, a huge number of people believe that mainstream media is going to be vanished by the appearance of social media.

But based on the study, the assertion of vanishing the mainstream media is false. Mainstream media is going to change the styles of their appearance. The print media will act like the electronic media and the electronic one will act like the similar. Alongside, the both will engage in online platform for the digital audience. They have taken it affirmatively as a challenge and also believe that it will develop the journalistic process. The digital style of information gathering and dissemination system will help the news institution to increase the circumference to cover the news stories.

The verity in samples has helped me to understand the scenario in different perspectives. The satisfactory finding of this study is, most of the institutions has disagree to compromise with social responsibility. They are determined to do the creative and mindful works with upgraded marketing strategy. This study will help the mainstream media to understand the current situation and the effective solutions.

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