

## **E-Journalism in Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

*Before entrance in new millennium an unbelievable change has taken place in the field of technology i.e. information technology and this is now known as information and communication technology. And presently around the world are starting to realize that the power of information technology can help them escape poverty. In view of new concept of integration of new technology in our daily life we are trying to help out people through enhance their skills and capacities in the field of information and communication technology. During early 90s very few Pakistanis were aware about the information technology but now every one uses it in their daily lives. In this information and communication technology no one can survive with out the usage of IT. In this new age of information technology every organization uses IT. Tele banking. ATMs and online banking are becoming increasingly popular in the country. With the increase in customers at banks, such facilities improve the quality of services and provides to the clients. Big shopping malls have CCTV cameras, from which crimes are decreased. In media organization use of IT is necessary. Now in the field of journalism new style of journalism is introduced called, cyber journalism, data base journalism, Internet journalism and gives much more names. The aim of this paper is to know about the new journalism, which is emerged with the advent of Information Technology. In west this type of journalism is very popular but what status of e journalism in Pakistan prospects and problems to know the current position and future of it.*

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology of this study is document study.

### **History of Computer Technology**

A complete history of computing would include a multitude of diverse devices such as the ancient Chinese abacus, the Jacquard loom (1805) and Charles Babbage's "analytical engine" (1834). It would also include discussion of mechanical, analog and digital computing architectures. As late as the 1960s, mechanical devices, such as the Marchant calculator, still found widespread application in science and engineering. During the early days of electronic computing devices, there was much discussion about the relative merits of analog vs. digital computers. In fact, as late as the 1960s, analog computers were routinely used to solve systems of finite difference equations arising in oil reservoir modeling. In the end, digital computing devices proved to have the power, economics and scalability necessary to deal with large scale computations. Digital computers now dominate the computing world in all areas ranging from the hand calculator to the supercomputer and are pervasive throughout society. Therefore, this brief sketch of the development of scientific computing is limited to the area of digital, electronic computers.

The evolution of digital computing is often divided into generations. Each generation is characterized by dramatic improvements over the previous generation in the technology used to build computers, the internal organization of computer systems, and programming languages. Although not usually associated with computer generations, there has been a steady improvement in algorithms, including algorithms used in computational science. The following history has been organized using these widely recognized generations as mileposts.

- The Mechanical Era (1623-1945)
- First Generation Electronic Computers (1937-1953)
- Second Generation (1954-1962)
- Third Generation (1963-1972)
- Fourth Generation (1972-1984)
- Fifth Generation (1984-1990)
- Sixth Generation (1990 -)

### **Information Technology in Pakistan**

We may find the theoretical foundation of information technology /computer in 300 BC, but the practical implementation of the modern computing era started when Alan Turing named the machine as a computer in 1940 which rapidly grew and the field when into the research of intelligent machines: resultantly in 1945 two years before the independence of Pakistan the first neural network machine was created and was named as perception Mark1. The computer came into Pakistan in mid 60s when second generation computer was installed at Karachi. Presently, there are over 1800 mainframe and minicomputers, about the half of which are in the government sector .The growth in the no of computers during the last ten years was over 35%. This has been possible due the government, liberal import policy and reduction/removal of duties.

It is estimated that there are roughly 450,000 new computers every year in Pakistan while this seems a pitifully the small numbers, it represents a three fold increase compared to 1996-1997/analyst predicts that this number will increase 4/5 times in the next years.

### ***EVOLUTION OF INTERNET JOURNALISM***

1995: the Year the web Exploded in 1995, electronic delivery came to age. At of 1993, 20 newspapers worldwide - and a few magazines an newsletters – were published electronically, mostly on online services such as prodigy and CompuServe. During 1994, the number of online newspaper reached 78.

The next year, however, online publishing exploded – largely because the worldwide web exploded. While the birth of the web occurred in late 1990, it was three year latter that the Mosaic browser software – developed by Marc Andreessen, who latter want on to start a company called Netscape (sound familiar?) became available, and use of the web took off. While some tech-savvy computer owners had figured out ways to access and view the web, it was not until early 1995 that doing so became relatively effortless. As more potential readers gained access to the web, more published were determined to reach them.

According to Tomorrow's News Tonight, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, the number of newspapers publishing electronically soared from 78 in 1994 to 511 in mid – 1995, of those, 471 were publishing on the web, and the other 40 were publishing on, committed to publishing an, commercial online services connected to it. As the calendar changed from 1995 to 1996, the number of online newspapers exceed 1,000.

### **Electronic Newspaper s**

In the late 1990s newspapers began offering their content on the Internet in record numbers. By the end of the decade, more than 1,000 North American newspapers offered online versions, most available to Internet users free of charge. Electronic newspapers spared publishers one of their highest expenses—newsprint—and many brought publishers additional advertising revenue. The New York Times on the Web, an exert of which is shown here, offers readers the same content as its print publication as well as stories and features available only in its online version.

### ***NEWS ON INTERNET***

Publishers of newspapers, magazine and other print products have been fascinated with the idea of delivering information electronically. In contrast to conventional printing on paper, delivery by computer and other means seemed to offer several benefits both the producer and consumer.

First, the ever-escalating costs of paper and postage (or newspaper delivery) could be eliminated. Over the years, those costs head forced publication to greatly increase there prices and even helped force some publication (Most Notably Life and Look) out of existence.

Second, information be disseminated to readers much more quickly than it could in printed publication. The bulk of information in a daily newspaper is at least 12 hour old; articles in a monthly magazine are often written three or for months before they are published.

Until recently, however, electronic delivery often has received only a lukewarm reception from readers. The earliest attempt at delivering news over computers came in the early 1980s with a technology known as videotext. For a monthly fee and possibly a hefty charge for equipment-subscribers could read their daily newspapers on their television sets or computer screens. But the low - quality images and slow scrolling made online reading anything but fun-and delivery of the actual newspaper was usually cheaper. Videotext died a relatively rapid death. Teletext, a similar technology that was delivered by broadcast signal to televisions, fared no better.

During the next decade, publications turned to several other means of delivering information electronically. Some hooked up with online services such as CompuServe and America Online. Other experimented with fax editions and computer bulletin boards. A range of media companies tried their hands at producing CD-ROMs, delivering information by satellite and e-mail, N11 services (using three-digit phone number like 911) and a number of other methods.

### **DATABASE JOURNALISM**

The techno journalist will sometimes flit from database to database with the flick of a finger, probing electronically into the most labyrinthine passageways of government and industry. Adroit in navigating such mazes, the journalist will gain access to astonishing sources of detailed information that corporate and government authorities may find embarrassing. New efforts to restrict First Amendment freedom will inevitably result. Will the journalist risk being co-opted by information elite? In an age when access to information is a path to power, journalists might be tempted to forget that their job is to serve the public. Techno journalists will have to mediate between these elites and the rest of society. They will have master the techniques of the new media elite in order to challenge it effectively when necessary. Yet the journalist will have developed unofficial information sources as will.

Database journalism sounds futuristic, but it is not. Already, much of today's journalism involves culling vast databanks. The school of journalism to the University of Western Ontario has studied more than 1000 publicly accessible databases now in North America. "Journalists have used databanks for years," comments Professor Henry Overduin. "What is new and novel about Newsdat [a University of Western Ontario project] is that it represents the first systematic attempt to use information stored in databanks as a prime source of news. Database journalism says a great deal about where our reporting is headed. With tremendous amounts of information being generated by government, emphasis may shift from gathering data to analyzing, by computer; information collected by other.<sup>3</sup> Computer use may even affect writing styles. One videotext page producer observed: "There is a tendency for messages to be tighter, more condensed and less redundant."

### **Electronic Journalism in Pakistan**

Electronic journalism is old phenomena in western countries but a new term for most Pakistanis, even for the majority of those half a million who use the magic tool of Internet. In west lot of news papers and magazines published their web edition for readers and these web-based newspapers gained much popularity than old ones. In Pakistan With very few web-based newspapers, news portals and news agencies, Pakistan has yet to take benefit from the information explosion and the advent of Cyber journalism in the world.

Cyber journalism, internet journalism, online journalism, dot journalism, database journalism or E-journalism, what ever name you give to this new form of news collection and dissemination, is still something alien to most Pakistanis as a majority can't even read or write English, the language, considered to be the passport for the information super highway. Online journalism means the writing of stories specifically for the Web instead of newspaper, radio, television or magazine. It can include the use of text, photos, graphics, hypertext, audio and video to tell stories.

However, non-interactive internet editions of the traditional print newspapers are also considered part of online E-journalism. The major benefits of the online journalism as compared to the traditional newspapers are- interactivity, frequent updating of the news stories with backgrounders and the use of multi-media to make the news items more comprehensive. You can find the video, audio and graphic contents on the internet based newspaper or website to understand the issue in a comprehensive manner. In Pakistan's case, barring some news portals and websites, most of the news sites available in cyber space are static. Pakistani web portal providing no instant opportunity to the reader to respond to some story or matter. In UAE Gulf News and khaleej Times involve reader to comment on any issue or on burring matter but in Pakistan Newspapers like

'The Nation' have tried to engage the readers through inviting their votes for a particular issue of international or domestic significance. Otherwise, the newspapers or portals don't provide much to engage Internet users especially the youth, and nowadays other news portal and news sites of newspapers involved readers and viewers. Similarly, the online journalism has yet to attain the status of a serious form of medium. It can be done by coming up with exclusive stories and rare information like [www.Tehleka.com](http://www.Tehleka.com), website in India did some times ago. The internet edition of Al-Jazeera TV, BBC and CNN, Gulf news, khaleej Times and in Pakistan GEO TV receive a big number (readers/visitors) daily due to newsworthy content. In this era when America entangles in Afghanistan from years Pakistan play a vital role in war against terrorism with America. Now there is no place for breaking news in Pakistan because here now media is free and every media work with full zeal so in cyber journalism Pakistani news portals and websites can also win the confidence of readers by posting exclusive stories instead of splashing lifted material from other websites or print media. Making online journalism popular in Pakistan has also become an uphill task due to the fact that more than 60% of country's citizens are making un-productive use of the Internet by visiting only entertainment especially the porno sites.

Everyone knows that in Pakistan, a vast majority uses Internet for the pornographic material, which is otherwise banned in the country. We also know that in our villages, a vast majority cannot understand English. Then what was the purpose of extending IT facilities to remote areas in the name of education? What will those high schoolers in the remote areas and even for that matter in the Urdu-medium section of the cities, gain? What happens is that they get slow and steady washing of brains. This is how the new civilization is made acceptable to our youth in the name of education. What VCRs and satellite receivers could not accomplish, because they were entertainment media, is now getting promoted in the name of education. On the other hand, in universities where you need Internet, the connections being few in number are so heavily loaded that the researchers are unable to conduct their activities. Yet the places with immature minds are infested with so many of the IT facilities that the morals take hardly a night to alter.

Last year, government blocked hundreds of such sites. But it is not humanly possible to block millions of sites containing such material. The online websites and portals can attract Internet users only by putting interesting and valuable material instead of flooding their sites with blogs and personal views. Another reason for less popularity of online journalism is low rate of computer literacy and an equally dismal tele-density in the country. ISPs started to provide services in Pakistan in the year 1996. Today, the ISP market in Pakistan is booming, and new ISPs are being set up at a regular interval. About 150 ISPs are presently working in the country. However, the number of Internet users and the resultant visitors to the web-based newspapers and portals can increase only after the increase in the number of telephones. As far as computer illiteracy is concerned, Pakistani universities produced master of computers and introduced IT related subjects but few of them are aware in good manner about their subjects, lot of students have a degrees but having no professional and practical experience. We can say that people are not familiar with the use of computers. Now there is increasing trend to be equipped with the computer knowledge.

People are now days aware about usage of social sites like face book, twiter, LinkedIn and other sites. Mostly student and common people having access to social sites and do comments on social sites, in Pakistan face book is too much popular and all kind of information Pakistani people share on this social site, this is also the kind of news disseminating. No doubt, the online or E-journalism, which took birth about a decade back, took the information world with a storm, yet it has also led to some ethical problems. The breaking news about a scandal in India by [Tehleka.com](http://Tehleka.com) and the showing of execution of hostages in Iraq by the resistance groups have raised a number of questions about how to regulate this emerging form of media. So it is necessary to come up with the code of ethics for the internet journalism before it is too late. Similarly, the showing of execution of hostages does promote the cause of Iraqis. Yet it also leads to panic and harassment among the general public especially among those related to the victims. So there is need of striking a balance between the right to expression and the ethical values of the society while giving news items on the websites.

### ***Conclusion***

To compete with the growing e journalism in the world Pakistan needs to educate train and bring its work force to the international educational institutes. Because Pakistan is lack behind in this new field of journalism. The discussion concludes that electronic journalism is fast growing phenomena and it wills coup print and electronic media in coming years. Electronic journalism is our future. Government and the national press should take active steps for the promotion of online E-journalism.

I believe that the traditional newspapers will stay; yet it is necessary to take benefit from new forms of media. From the regime of General Musharf media is free and Pakistan playing good role with collaboration of America in war against terrorism. Now in era of Pakistan Peoples Party (Asif Ali Zardari Regime media channels are playing good role and criticized government policies and few channels are become trend setters they change the mind of viewers, the case of Sialkot and Shoaib Malik and marriage of Sania mirza are good examples of it. We can conclude that Future of Pakistani media ,web portals, online news sites online magazines ,newspapers is very bright because in 10 year Peemra gives hundred of licensees of TV and to radio channels, many of them are working and soon more channels will be arrived in this venture, in electronic journalism hundreds of websites are working now It becomes more necessary at times when media can make or break a nation.

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