

GLOBAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING SCIENCE AND RESEARCHES

A CASE STUDY TO ANALYSE THE ROLE OF MEDIA AS PRESSURE GROUP IN SOLVING CRIMINAL CASES

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ABSTRACT

Media is a very significant part of our society and it is mainly used to make a path and relationship between behavior of institutions of justice system and public perception of them. Despite it media have some influence shipping attitude towards crime and the justice system. Social media such as Face book, snap chat, Twitter are transformed way to gain information and apprehend the experience crime and victimization. This paper seeks to study media's role in framing and dominating public opinion along with knowledge of investigative journalism and its prominent role in helping the peoples to form their opinion about various issues which are in news. Using one case study the paper looks at the way media help to mould popular opinion of the masses and thus, bring about a justified closure to controversial issues.

Keywords: *Handwriting, Writing Instruments, Natural Variations Pen.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Public knowledge of crime and justice is largely derived from the media. It has always been considered the watchdog of the society. It is very important to have a free and fair media in every form of government. The different types of media (television, radio, etc.) have helped the masses to be more educated and aware of their surroundings. Investigative journalism is types of journalism that is much into practice, these days. Although the main areas of investigative journalism mainly revolve around the areas of scandals, crime, politics, corruption, etc. many a times, it has been seen that due to the interference of the media, certain cases have got solves into the limelight which in turn attracts the attention of the masses. Media applies several tactics (debates, discussions, talk shows etc.) to help bring these critical issues into the public sphere thus helping people to get their rights. The role of media is discussed with the help of one case study.

II. METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Review Study of “Miscarriage Of Justice” in the Jessica Lal Murder Case through case study method.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- ❖ Barak,G., et al (2001). *Class, Race, Gender, and Crime: Social Realities of Justice in*

America studied the impact of class, race, and gender on criminological theory and all phases of the administration of criminal justice, including its workers and represent the main sites of inequality, power and privilege in the US, which consciously or unconsciously shape people's understandings of who is a criminal and how society should deal with them.

- ❖ Carli, V. (2008). “The Media, Crime Prevention and Urban Safety: A Brief Discussion on

Media Influence and Areas for Further Exploration”. He explained the influence of media in preventing crime in Urban safety and further areas.

- ❖ Derek, F. (2005). A Watchdog's Guide to Investigative Reporting: A Simple Introduction to Principles and Practice in Investigative Reporting.
- ❖ Roberts, J. and A. Doob. 1986. "Public Estimates of Recidivism Rates: Consequences of a Criminal Stereotype." *Canadian Journal of Criminology* 28:229-241. They studied public estimation regarding the tendencies of criminals to reoffend rates which leads to the consequences of a criminal stereotype. They further explained the role of media in upholding this stereotypic nature.

Objectives

- To study media's role in shaping and influencing public opinion.
- To understand the role of media interference with the help of case study.
- To know importance of investigative journalism

Case study

Case Name: Jessica Lal murder case

Victim: Jessica Lal (Delhi model)

Accused: Siddhartha Vishisht, better known as Manu Sharma, the son of Venod Sharma, a prominent Congress leader in Haryana

Crime: Murder (300 IPC 1860)

Murder on: 29 April 1999

Case closed: 21 Feb. 2006

Case reopened: 20 Dec. 2006

IV. WHAT HAPPENED?

Manu Sharma, in an inebriated state, had asked for a drink from Lal which she refused as the bar was already closed. Lal kept refusing Sharma even after he offered money to her in exchange for a drink. This enraged Sharma who took out his pistol and shot twice at Lal on point blank range, thus killing her on the spot.

In the ongoing legal procedure, about three hundred witnesses were interrogated in a lower court in Delhi. However, as the legal procedure carried on, all the witnesses turned hostile and there were lack of proper evidences to nail down Sharma as Lal's killer. Thus, due to lack of evidences, the case had to be shut and the court acquitted the prime nine suspects, including Sharma, on 21st February, 2006.

V. MEDIA INTERFERENCE IN THIS CASE

The acquittal of Sharma and the other accused in the case, led to a widespread public uproar which was initiated by the media. News channel NDTV is credited with forming a strong public opinion against Sharma and others who were allowed to roam scot-free after committing such a serious crime. In the initial stages of police interrogation of Sharma, he admits to have shot at Lal. This tape was never produced at the court at the time of the proceedings which led to Sharma denying that he had shot at Lal. However, it was acquired and aired by NDTV which bared the truth. This led to public outcry who demanded that justice has been denied. A widespread media campaign followed which grabbed the attention of the masses throughout India. The final verdict, which was passed on the Jessica Lal

murder case, was a shining example of media interference. NDTV channel received thousands of text messages from various people urging that immediate action be taken against Sharma and the other accused. People were losing faith in the Indian judiciary and the media had thrown light on this very fact. The media, along with Sabrina Lal (Jessica's sister) successfully organized a candle light vigil in front of India Gate in New Delhi. These groups consisted of students, retired IAS and Army officers and MNC executives. On 9th September, 2006; newsmagazine Tehelka organized a sting operation on the witnesses of the case in which they revealed that Venod Sharma had bribed them hefty amounts of money in order to stay mum about the truth in court. This sting operation was aired by news channel STAR News. The immense public support and the growing pressure from media led the Delhi High Court to take notice and the case was reopened after an appeal by the Delhi Police. Manu Sharma was finally pronounced guilty of killing Jessica Lal and he was given life sentence on 20th December, 2006. The efforts of the media helped the case to be reopened and justice was finally delivered.

VI. CONCLUSION

Public knowledge of crime and justice is largely derived from the media. Society is fascinated with crime and justice. From films, books, newspapers, magazines, television broadcasts, to everyday conversations, we are constantly engaging in crime "talk". The mass media play an important role in the construction of criminality and the criminal justice system. The public's perception of victims, criminals, deviants, and law enforcement officials is largely determined by their portrayal in the mass media. Research indicates that the majority of public knowledge about crime and justice is derived from the media (Roberts and Doob, 1990; Surette, 1998). The media influence the reality. For some people the reality as presented by the media is the only reality they know (Splichal in '94; Barak in '01). The positive influence of the media in the mediation between the police and the public comes with the development of the society. The state has given great powers to the police whose abuse can be controlled by the public only through the media. This conclusion applies to the media as the mediator as well as pressure group.

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