



## Sports journalism and Indian women journalists

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### Abstract

Sports journalism is the writing of reports on sporting topics and games. It is an essential element of any news media organization with various sports events across the world, there is continuous rise in the requirement of Sport Journalists. To become a successful sports journalist one needs to have the acumen of reporting, editing and working under pressure. In addition to the norms of basic journalism, one needs to be extremely passionate about sports to succeed in the field of sports journalism. Sport journalism is a highly specialized field which requires special type of training. India being a cricket crazy nation, there are many successful popular faces whom we can associate with the field of Cricket. Harsha Bhogle to Boria Majumdar all have become famous being associated with the game of cricket. At the same time, there are requirements of sports reporter for other sporting events. We find most of the English dailies in India devote four pages only on sports. Sports pages are most popular amongst students, youth and in turn popular amongst advertisers.

**Key words:** Sports Journalism, media, women.

### 1. Introduction

Sports journalism is a form of journalism that reports on sports topics and events. Sports journalists write reports on amateur and professional sports. While the sports department within some newspapers has been mockingly called the toy department, because sports journalists do not concern themselves with the 'serious' topics covered by the news desk, sports coverage has grown in importance as sport has grown in wealth, power and influence.

However, Indian sports journalism is of recent growth. It developed in a very perceptible manner in the early years of independence. The first remarkable event in the history of sports journalism in India was the introduction of a sports page by a leading English daily of Bombay in the late thirties.

#### 1.1 The importance of Sports Journalism

Sports journalism is the writing of reports on sporting topics and games. It is an essential element of any news media organization with various sports events across the world, there is continuous rise in the requirement of Sport Journalists. To become a successful sports journalist one needs to have the acumen of reporting, editing and working under pressure. In addition to the norms of basic journalism, one needs to be extremely passionate about sports to succeed in the field of sports journalism. Sport journalism is a highly specialized field which requires special type of training. India being a cricket crazy nation, there are many successful popular faces whom we can associate with the field of Cricket. Harsha Bhogle to Boria Majumdar all have become famous being associated with the game of cricket. At the same time, there are requirements of sports reporter for other sporting events. We find most of the English dailies in India devote four pages only on sports. Sports pages are most popular amongst students, youth and in turn popular amongst advertisers.

#### 1.2 Sports journalism now

Today, Sports Illustrated is branching out with an issue for youth. Its content is designed to encourage involvement in sports, provide information about reducing injuries, and highlighting major names like Michael Johnson and others. The editors know the youth are influenced by what they include in each issue. In response, they often include ads by stars that encourage youth to avoid drugs and alcohol. It is one of the few magazines geared towards youth.

Newspapers provided sports journalism from the first days of publishing. The coverage was basic and sparse. Writers often did not know much about the sports themselves. Occasionally, a sportswriter would actually have a working knowledge of the game.

Times changed when accuracy and details became more important than yellow journalism. This was when the

focus was on the sensational bits of news and facts often went unverified, if they were facts at all. As credible papers debuted, sportswriters needed more knowledge of the sport they covered. Now, many companies and stations want actual experience from their writers. This makes former athletes more valuable and offers them a chance to stay "in the game" instead of disappearing from sight.

The Internet, radio shows and television offer sports journalism. The depth of coverage is intense and high point players garner attention and fame. The stories by sportswriters cover more than scores and highlights; they also cover future plays, fears of coaches, personal snapshots of players, typical road life adventures, issues with recruiting and trades.

It is not just the fans who pay attention to the sportswriters. Coaches from around the country, scouts and even advertisers watch and listen. Nike, Spalding and other big names use the information provided by the sportswriters when looking for the next big idea. They want to see who will be the next star. The whole wants to know too, and sportswriters have plenty of answers.

### **1.3 Growth of Indian Sports Journalism**

Indian sports journalism is of recent growth. In the main it developed in a very perceptible manner in the early years of independence. Prior to that there were practically no regular sports pages in many newspapers. The first remarkable event in the history of sports journalism in India was the introduction of a sports page by a leading English daily of Bombay in the late thirties. This bold and 'revolutionary' step was resented by some readers who had no interest in sports but the majority of the readers liked it. Its sports page became so popular that other newspapers followed suit. Today there are sports columns in all daily newspapers. Yet a distressing feature of Indian sports journalism is that there are not enough good magazines on sports especially in Indian languages. A couple of English magazines are catering to the needs of sports lovers but there is woeful lack of informative and educative journals in Indian languages.

Today the sports have got a partner of advancement. Many sports became popular but the society is going away from sports & playgrounds. Except some players, other players are brought by forcing them. There are many reasons behind this. Excessive awareness of parents towards their word's future, the political interference which has grown like a cancer in sport & the importance given to specific sports by media. For the promotion and spread of various games along with players, sports unions, sports teachers, govt. system & moreover media - Doordarshan, Akashwani, Internet & Newspapers play a vital role.

### **1.4 Indian Women Journalist**

Journalism became a profession, women were restricted by custom from access to journalism occupations, and faced significant discrimination within the profession. Nevertheless, women operated as editors, reporters, sports analysts and journalists even before the 1890s.

Homai Vyrawalla (9 December 1913 – 15 January 2012), commonly known by her pseudonym "Dalda 13", was India's first woman photojournalist. First active in the late 1930s, she retired in the early 1970s. In 2011, she was awarded Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award of the Republic of India. She photographed some of the most influential Indian politicians including, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Indira Gandhi.

### **1.5 Indian Women Sports Journalist**

Kadambari Murali Wade (born 9 August 1975) the former sports journalist and former Editor-in-Chief of Sports Illustrated India, is the only woman to have held that post at the Hindustan Times. She joined SI India in November 2010, to direct the revamp of the monthly magazine beginning with its January 2011 issue. Her articles largely focus on cricket. She is the youngest national editor of a major news outlet. The first ever winner of the Sports Journalists Federation of India's Cricket Writer of the Year award in 2006, in August 2007 She also broke the story of the formation of the Indian cricket board's (BCCI) plans to create what would later be called the Indian Premier League (IPL) for cricket.

Wade also wrote occasionally for the sports section, but became a full-time sports journalist only when she moved first to the Asian Age (mid-1998-1999) and then the Indian Express (1999 to early 2001). In April 2001, she moved to the Hindustan Times to set up the Sunday team's section on sport. Subsequently, as part of the HT sports desk, she was an investigative sports reporter, and then as a writer, while covering cricket in eight countries.

For forty-five days in Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi-Islamabad and Peshawar during India's tour of Pakistan in 2004 saw her become a contributing author to a book on that tour. Her writing from this tour is also part of the course-work for Delhi University's first-year 'Fluency in English' curriculum.

### 1.6 The First Woman Journalist in Hindi

Hemant Kumari Dev was the first woman journalist in Hindi with her active participation in journalism was Born in 1868, the editor of journal for women- Sugrihini which was published from Allahabad. She insisted upon a message in the opening lines of her editorial in the first issue of her journal Sugrihini,

### 1.7 Future Scope for Women in Journalism Profession

A very dominant part of this stream has been women in this profession. There was a belief that male members would overpower this profession. But, with the passage of time, the thoughts of the people have changed and this profession gave space for women journalists. L. K. Advani, former Deputy Prime Minister of India, stated in National Conference on Women and Media (2000) that women are coming into media and journalism in larger numbers. There is immense potential for the combination of media and voluntary sector as a force for bringing about the empowerment of women. There are chances that this would bring women's power and media power together as a formidable weapon.

Women has to constantly excel in every field of journalism women's role in media, specifically in journalism, it provided that the future is bright for women in this field. But, time and again women have to prove their worth in every sphere of life, so, in this profession. There are many qualities that women ingrain in them from birth, and many she accepts from the environment. Hence, given the chance and congenial environment, women have flourishing future in this field.

### 1.8 Women Journalists - The Challenging Profession

To reach unto managerial position, the general assumption according to societal trend seems to be that it is difficult for women due to their so-called inherent inability and the traditional upbringing at home. No specific reason has been set as why women cannot choose journalism as career. Just as, there is no reason why women cannot choose any discipline or area as career. Women are not handicapped by birth nor have they been found intellectually unfit. They are however, burdened with certain disadvantages as a result of the responsibilities Firstly, they normally do not drink. Secondly, they are more in touch with the realities of life, women are better judges, they have more taste, and they are more human.

Their outlook is really wider than that of men. Women journalists have proved a every bit as resourceful and enterprising in their work as their male colleagues, and they have gone places winning laurels on the way by way of awards, fellowships abroad and prestigious assignments.

### 1.9 Popular and talented Indian women journalists in the field of electronic media

In the advanced world conditions, women are choosing challenging careers and achieving great successes. Successful and talented Indian women journalists working in electronic media. the popular women journalist's educational qualifications, journalism career achievements along with the details of awards won by them. At present days media is the much popular field among all in which women too executing their talent equally with men. Media field needs knowledge, boldness; aggression and challenging nature but women the 'beauties with brains' are achieving great success by working as journalists.

**i) Mini Menon:** The executive editor with Bloomberg UTV, Mini Menon was a Femina Miss India winner back in 1996. Unlike the other beauty contest winners, she didn't go to work in films, rather chose to be a part of the financial and business bulletin. Mini is special in compare with other Miss India winners as majority of them chosen movies, fashion and modeling as their career but Mini has chosen the challenging journalism as her career. Mini's journalism career has started with TV I then shifted to Star TV Network. She worked as the host for Indian Business Week program. She even participated in various programs in Doordarshan and ANI media houses. Mini has done graduation in History and holds a Masters degree in communication.

**ii) Nidhi Razdan:** she is a NDTV 24\*7 journalist and anchors various shows on the television channel. Nidhi has joined as a news anchor in NDTV in the year 1999 and soon got promoted as senior journalist. She showcased her talent by covering national political issues. Nidhi has won the Ramnath Goenka award for the talent shown in journalism. She got award for covering news from Jammu and Kashmir and North-East states. She evn won the Jammu Kashmir state award. After attaining graduation

**iii) Shereen Bhan :** The face is familiar if you have seen shows like 'Young Turk' and 'India Business Hour'. Currently, the Delhi Bureau Chief and Executive Editor of CNBC-TV18.

**iv) Sagarika Ghose :** she is working as the Deputy Editor in CNN. She has started her career as a journalist in Outlook, The Indian Express and Times of India and next joined in CNN. On showing talent in journalism she got FICCI award in 2006

and GR 8-ITA award in 2009. Sagarika is the first woman to participate as an anchor in BBC popular show Question time India.

**v) Shaili Chopra:** A familiar face on TV, she is Senior Editor and Lead Female Anchor of the Economic Times business news channel. To her credit is the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Business Journalism and she has also covered the Mumbai terror attacks live from outside the Taj Mahal Hotel.

**vi) Nisha Pillai:** Born in Kolkata, Nisha Pillai works with BBC and has managed to climb her way to be one of the main anchors with the channel. Her major accomplishments include live coverage of the 9/11 attacks and the fall of Baghdad.

**vii) Harishree Mehta:** works with Times Now on their business and stock segment. She is a qualified chartered accountant who is known to have an appreciable knowledge of the stock markets.

**viii) Sagarika Ghose:** With an experience of more than two decades behind her, Sagarika has worked for 'Outlook', 'Times of India' and 'The Indian Express'. Currently, she is serving as the deputy editor of CNN IBN.

**ix) Nidhi Razdan :** She has a face to die for, and that coupled with her velvet voice and excellent journalism skills, makes Nidhi Razdan one of the most watched journalists in India. Owing to her commendable work on various events, she received the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism.

**x) Barkha Dutt :** Her coverage of the Kargil war in 1999 sky-rocketed her career. One of the most well-known journalists in India, she has been loyal to NDTV where she has been given opportunities to cover events in conflicting places like Kashmir, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

#### 1.10 Sports Journalists:

- **Mayanti Langer:** Mayanti Langer is a TV Sports journalist and has acted as the host for lots of popular sporting events. She is an Indian sports journalist with ESPN. She has hosted many tournaments which includes 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup. She has anchored the 2010 FIFA World cup and 2010 Commonwealth games.
- **Kadambari Murali:** She is another successful women sports journalist from India. She became a full-time sports journalist with the Asian Age (mid-1998-1999) and then moved to Indian Express and subsequently took care of Sports desk of Hindustan Times.
- **Mallika Bajaj:** She is another name in the list of successful women journalist who has worked with BBC, ABC Australia, Hindustan Times, MINT, News X, etc.

The above mentioned women journalist are fulfilling their job tasks perfectly and are standing as an inspiration for lots of young girls wishing to join in the challenge career of journalism. In Indian male dominated society women journalists are performing well and achieving great success in the filed of journalism The realm of media and news has becoming a piping hot industry as a career option. Not only is the whole nation glued to the television for their daily dose of events around the world, there is also a huge touch of glamour keeping many hooked. Therefore, the hotness quotient only adds to the interest.

## 2. Conclusion

Though the field of sports journalism is dominated with male journalists still there are few women from India who have made their mark in the field of sports journalism. With the glamour and money associated with sports events, there are more and more people who are inclined towards professional training to become a sports reporter or a sports anchor. Passion, discipline and respect for deadline are the key requirements for one to become a sports journalist.

Tackling the challenges of global and national women has equipped her to handle the role of pen and women journalists have not been far behind for keeping themselves updated about their abilities and making themselves fit enough for any challenges.

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