**M.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, DECEMBER – 2019**

**First Year JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

**Introduction To Communication & History of Journalism**

**ASSIGNMENT-2**

**Question 1**

Discuss the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to Indian Journalism

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**Introduction**

Mahathma Gandhiji, the father of our nation was widely accepted as a very good writer. A number of books and other publications bears the authorship of M. K. Gandhi. Majority of them were not written in a book form. They were collections of his articles and speeches on truth and ahimsa, swadeshi and charkha or of his addresses to women, students and princes.

In the midst of his manifold activities, Gandhiji worked as a journalist and edited four well known journals. The Indian Opinion in South Africa, and the Young India, Navajivan and the Harijan in India.

**Gandhiji as a Journalist Abroad**

At the age of nineteen Gandhiji went to London and for the first time read a newspaper. In London his first naive attempt as a writer was a booklet, ‘London Guide’ written for Indian students. It contained helpful details about London. Next came two pamphlets: “An Appeal to Every Briton’ and ‘The Indian Franchise’. Later he contributed articles to ‘Vegetarian’ the Journal of the Vegetarian Society of England. During his three year stay in London, he contributed nine articles in that journal on diet, customs, festivals etc. of India. This gave him an opportunity to become a freelance journalist. On June 4, 1903, Gandhiji with the help of Indians started publication of his first newspaper, Indian Opinion at Natal, South Africa.

**Gandhiji’s Contribution to the Indian Journalism**

The first opportunity for Gandhi to run magazines in India arrived in 1919 when Umar Sobani and Shankarlal Banker, two young supporters of Home Rule League that fought for bringing self-rule in India, [offered](https://books.google.co.in/books?id=j9kwDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT525&lpg=PT525&dq=Omar+Sobani+and+Shankarlal+Banker&source=bl&ots=6nSW3618j4&sig=ACfU3U3CDM5NSYu2-iQSDPKYyFOxkpJNnA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj6qIOitO7kAhVA73MBHeexAjoQ6AEwBHoECAgQAQ#v=onepage&q=Omar%20Sobani%20and%20Shankarlal%20Banker&f=false) him the editorship of their weekly Young India. From October 8, 1919, the *Young India* started publishing under the editorialship of Gandhiji in English as a weekly publication. Gandhi wrote various quotations in this journal that inspired many. He used Young India to spread his unique ideology and thoughts regarding the use of [nonviolence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonviolence) in organising movements and to urge readers to consider, organise, and plan for India's eventual independence from Britain..

In the meantime, Indulal Yajnik, a passionate young leader and associate of Sobani and Banker offered editorship of his Gujarati monthly Navjivan and Satya to Gandhi. He accepted it readily and dropped Satya (truth) from the name, most probably because it was indicative of a merger of two different magazines Navjivan and Satya. The first issue of *Navjivan* with Gandhi as the editor came out on 7 September 1919. His widely known autobiography An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth was first serialised in Navjivan as a history of the satyagraha movement in South Africa.

Both Young India and Navjivan had to be closed down due to Gandhi’s arrest and the crackdown on the satyagraha movement in 1931. Young India continued to come out in cyclostyled version of 3 pages and even regained its regular form before finally closing down in 1932. Navjivan had its last regular issue on 10 January 1932 followed by a couple of two-page issues before its final closure.

In 1933 Gandhiji started publishing a weekly newspaper, [Harijan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harijan" \o "Harijan), in English. Harijan, which means "People of God", and was also Gandhi's term for the [untouchable caste](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Untouchable_caste) - lasted until 1948. During this time Gandhi also published Harijan Bandu in [Gujarati](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gujarati_language), and Harijan Sevak in [Hindi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindi). All three papers focused on India's and the world's social and economic problems. The journal was reprinted in USA by the India Home Rule League of America.

At a later stage, the Harijan was devoted to the cause of the villages and constructive work in rural areas.  
Gandhiji was always willing to help young journalists in guiding them in their work. As a young journalist I had the rare privilege of his guidance.

**Conclusion**

According to Gandhiji, the sole aim of journalism is service.  
Through his journals the Mahatma had not only propagated his views but laid down a unique standard in journalism.

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