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

**First Year JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

**Reporting and Editing**

**ASSIGNMENT-1**

**Question 1**

Explain News Values.

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**Introduction**

News is what people want to hear or need to know.  News can inform, educate or even entertain. Hard news  deals  with  serious  topics  and  events.  By contrast, soft news usually tries to entertain or advise.Though it is difficult to define it, many leading journalists offered some useful definitions for the term. Charles A Dana, former Editor, The New York Sun  said If a dog bites a man, that’s not news. But if a man bites a dog, that is news. Lester Markel, former Sunday Editor of The New York Times said What you see is news, what you know is background, what you feel is opinion. According to the former Times and Sunday Times Editor, Harold Evans, a news story should be:

* about necessary information and unusual events
* based on observable facts
* an unbiased account
* free from the reporter’s opinion

**News Values**

Information arrives in the newsroom minute by minute. It comes from a wide range of sources by way of press releases, phone calls, social media, meetings, research and so on. Limited by time and space, a news editor cannot report all this material. So, they must be selective, filter out information that lacks newsworthiness and retain stories that most interest their audience.

The news values are a broadly agreed set of criteria that enables journalists to spot a newsworthy story.  They provide journalists with a useful tool to quickly sort, process and select news from a vast amount of available information.

All lists of news values have their roots in one particular piece of academic research. In 1965, two media researchers set out to discover how “events” become news.  **Johan Galtung** and **Mari Holmboe Ruge** framed a ground-breaking list of news values which identified newsworthy stories.

The major news values are:

1. **Timeliess**

News gets out of date quickly. If it happened recently, it is timely. Timeliness or immediacy attracts readers’ attention. What is regarded as “recent” depends upon the publication cycle of the news medium itself. On a television news channel news events that happened during the past half hour are timely. These may include a multiple car crash or a serious fire. In the monthly parish magazine events that took place over the past 30 days are timely.

1. **Prominence**

Well-known people (politicians, celebrities, actors, musicians, athletes) and places can make the news even when their actions are trivial. Because of their media prominence, people feel a personal connection with them.

Theresa May dances with school children in South Africa (Image: USA Today)

1. **Proximity or closeness to home**

Events occurring in the newspaper circulation or broadcast area are more likely to be newsworthy. An Indian press will ignore 2,000 job losses in JApan.  However, a mere 20 redundancies in Hyderabad may well feature on the front page of the local newspaper.

A newsworthy story can be close to home either geographically or psychologically. Six people killed in an air-crash in Tokyo on a New Year’s Eve will hardly a world news. However, when a prominent Indian businessman and his family of four were among the victims in the seaplane the Indian media will provide a front page coverage for the news.

1. Conflict

Conflict and disagreement add excitement to a story.  News about people or organisations at odds with each other arouse curiosity. People want to know what lies behind the conflict.

1. **Unexpected**

Something out of the ordinary has more news value than an everyday event.   For example, A Catering College in Ooty prepared a Christmas cake of 100 feet in December last year.

### Currency

Currency implies that the time for a topic has arrived. This includes events which are already popular or trends which are currently in the news and being talked about.  For instance, the growing public awareness of plastic pollution has opened the door to new ideas for recycling plastic.

### Human interest

People are interested in people.  Certain events stir our emotions.  A baby rescued from the rubble after an earthquake, a dying child receiving a donated organ and families reuniting after fifty years, all make good stories.

1. **Impact**

The events which affect many people will make better story. For instance, everyday issues such as health, welfare, transport or national security have a big impact and generate much public interest.

**Conclusion**

The news values sometimes called news criteria are a great tool for anyone who needs to decide what and when to publish.There are a number of news values that journalists need to consider in order to make coverage choices, and any organization that produces content can apply them as a starting point and rule of thumb when assessing contributed content.

**References**