Innovation in creation and delivery of news content: A Case study of India Today news channel

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Abstract:

The development of news media industry is based on social, cultural, political and economic principles. News content like other products and services demand uniqueness in presentation and style of delivery. Due to its unique character, news and information creates challenge to sell news and thus innovation in news content become imperative for all media practitioners.

Innovation is about change and creativity. To encourage innovation in an organization creative ideas must be recognized and must receive support in form of funding and competing resources from the management. The idea must overcome potential obstacles such as technology challenges, competitive pressures, and a variety of other obstacles. It would not be a stretch to say that when it comes to organizations, creativity without innovation is of significantly diminished value.

In this research paper researcher will study innovative practices adopted by news channel in content creation and delivery. For the purpose of study 'India Today' news channel has been selected as a case study and has been analysed for its innovative content creation and presentation.

The researcher has analysed various programme formats, number of news based programme broadcast on channel, number of programmes produced on important beats, special series/campaigns launched by channel. The study has been conducted in the months of June-August 2015.

The study will bring in light various innovative programmes broadcast on India Today news channel, different formats used to present content, technological advancements used to present content.

Keywords: Creativity, Content, India Today, Innovation, News channel, Presentation

1. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The dictionary meaning of innovation is the introduction of something new; a new idea, method or device. Innovation is always induced with economic motive and it is for commercial purpose.At places, terms innovation and creativity are used interchangeably.

1.1 Innovation & Creativity
The word innovation is derived from the latin word 'innovare', meaning 'to make something new'.Innovation is built of creative ideas and as the basic elements. Organizational innovation is the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization. Drucker (1985) defines systematic innovation as "the purposeful and organized search for changes".

Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbeck (1973) defines creativity as "any idea, practice or material artefact perceived to be new by the relevant unit of adoption.

Van de Ven (1986) innovation is the development and implementation of new ideas by people who over time engage in transactions with other within as institutional order.Kanter (1983) the process of bringing any new, problem solving idea into use… Innovation is the generation, acceptance, and implementation of news idea, processes, product or services.

Innovationis about "a process of developing and implementing a new idea" (Van de Ven & Angle, 1989, p. 12).They go on to write that "innovation refers to the processofbringinganynewproblemsolvingideaintouse...itisthegeneration, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products,orservices" (p. 20).This process can take place in many different domains; itcan be technical, to be sure, but also organizational (e.g., process improvements) or even social (e.g., quality circles) (Kanter,1983).

Creativity on the other hand is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other (Rogers, 1954).

Sternberg and Lubart (1999) define creativity as "the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e., original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e., useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)".

Creativity is a phenomenon that is initiated and exhibited at the individual level. Variables such as personality (Feist,1999), motivation (Collins & Amabile,1999), and expertise (Weisberg, 1999) are related to creativity at the individual level. Certainly environmental factors at the group and organizational levels, including organizational culture and climate, influence these variables and therefore impact individuals' behavior, but the focus of creativity is primarily on the individual.

A product or service is creative 'to the extent that (a) it is both novel and appropriate, useful, correct or valuable response to the task at hand and (b) the task is heuristic rather than algorithmic. (Amabile, 1996).

Amabile et al. (1996) differentiates between creativity and innovation as follows: "Like other researchers, we define creativity as the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain. We define innovation as the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization" (p. 2). "Thus, no innovation is possible without the creative processes that mark the front end of the process: identifying important problems and opportunities, gathering information, generating new ideas, and exploring the validity of those ideas" (Amabile, 2004, p. 1).

Creativity and innovation are closely related constructs that share significant overlap in characteristics (Angle, 1989). However, in essence, creativity is the generation of novel and useful ideas, primarily at the individual level (Amabile et al., 1996). Innovation is the process by which these ideas are captured, filtered, funded, developed, modified, clarified, and eventually commercialized and/or implemented. It is creativity that fuels the innovation pipeline.

1.2 Process and Types of Innovation:
Innovation process can be distinguished intro three phases: invention, innovation and imitation.
According to degree of novelty, innovation can be classified into (i) new-radical innovation, which represent the implementation of not yet existing ideas or technologies (ii) adaptive –or incremental innovation, when an existing product or service is improved with regard to its functionality or it is marketed in a different form or as novelty in other context (iii) imitation – when products or services

that already exist in the market are imitated in their function, look or production by other firms (Tidd, et all, 2005).

We can identify five main forms of innovation: (a) product innovations; (b) market innovations; (c) process innovations; (d) structural innovations; and (e) social innovations (Wahren, 2004). The first two forms are externally oriented, while the other three primarily refer to the internal organization of a firm. Of course, these forms are all related to each other: product and market innovations cannot be realized without process innovations; process innovations on the other hand require the development of structural innovations, while social innovations – by improving working conditions – might have external effects such as an improved customer orientation or a higher flexibility.

The formulation of an innovation policy includes specifying ultimate objectives, translated into direct objectives, These objectives are specified on the basis of the identified problems from a policy point of view that are not solved by companies. In general, determining innovation policy objectives involves a complex political process (Borrás and Edquist, 2013). The choice of policy instruments is also part of the formulation of the innovation policy. These instruments are used as tools to influence innovation processes and are not intended to influence the ultimate objectives in an immediate sense. The instruments are selected to achieve the direct innovation objectives which are derived from the ultimate objectives. In general, the instruments can be grouped into three categories (Bemelmans-Videc, Rist and Vedung, 2003).
1. Regulatory instruments;
2. Economic and financial instruments;
3. Soft instruments.

1.3 Innovation in news media industry:
The development of the news media landscape is not only exclusively based on economic principles but also on social, cultural, political and democratic principles. Many companies operating in the media industry provide news and information. However, 'news and information is not only a market-based good. It is also a public good and fundamental to ensuring that the information needs of communities are met in democratic societies' (Plessing, 2014: 9). Due to the unique character of news and information, it is generally a challenge to sell news and information as a profitable business activity.

Due to innovations, the nature of media products is changing. Not only is the nature of the products changing, but also the processes of media production, distribution, ownership and financing are changing as well. Even our ideas of media are changing. All these changes are related to innovation, because innovation is about change.

The search for creativity in media industry can be restricted to creativity in relation to the media product or content. But creativity plays even more central role in media industry, since creativity lies in the heart of content, generation of which is sectors' fundamental activity (Wetlaufer, 2000; Towse 2000). In the words of Scase (2002), without their employees coming up with ideas that can be turned into commercial, saleable commodities (media firms) are dead.
In terms of content, we are looking at creativity rather than innovation, in that first stage in content development involves coming up with new idea for a news story, a book, a documentary, a screenplay. The need of creativity extends further than developing the original idea: decisions concerning how to package and market that product on typography, cover design, advertising involve creativity too. (Kung, 2008)

1.4 Innovative Media Content:
Lobigs and Sigert, (2008) mentioned about IPR and innovation in media content. They said that the protection and appropriation problems that affect innovation competition in mass media content markets appear in three different levels of innovative content creation by mass media firms:

Level of copyright protected works – All mass media products that are distributed to consumers classify as original expressions and are thus to be categorized as such copyright protected works.

Level of topical journalistic information – It goes without saying that journalistic value creation results from investigation and selection of new topical information. Thus journalistic mass media clearly face a kind of innovation competition at this level of innovative content creation too. However lack of legal protection lead to the danger of extensive free rider behaviour among producers of journalistic information: instead of investigating information on their own, which is rather expensive, they might prefer just to crib from others, which is rather cheap.

Level of media formats – Media formats imply the overarching invariant pattern of form and content of a periodically or serially distributed media product. If one takes a look at the markets for TV formats or magazines, it is immediately apparent that media formats are non-excludable in as much as successful formats can be imitated parasitically by competitors and by media firms. Media policy and law have so far tended to refuse to grant IPR to media formats.

Media Product is a combination of 'content' tied to a physical carrier. Content is a bundle of informing, entertaining and educating characteristics. (Vogel, 1986; Schweizer, 2003). Content, carrier and the way they are linked to each other may vary and constitute product architecture (Henderson/Clarke, 1990).
A product innovation developed and launched by a media firm will in the following be named a 'media innovation' (Habann, 2008)

The relationship between organizational culture and performance has been extensively investigated for non-media companies, for specific media departments or functions, but not for media companies in general (Wurff and Leanders, 2008).
Wurff and Leenders (2008) in their study stated that innovative performance depends primarily on practices, including innovative practices, creative practices and entertainment practices. The study also reveals that content performance is higher in organizations where audience is perceived to be critical and respectable, where news programmes are valued and where professionals are committed and respondents are involved in information and creative process. Performance of a news organization encompasses four dimensions: innovative performance, content performance, work climate and business performance.

ShilpiJha in her study in 2014 stated that "In a news channel, two different markets are need to be addressed, Audience and Advertisers. While audiences are interested in content, advertisers are vying at the demographic profilesof the consuming contentaudiences. Thus, market differentiation challenges fornews channels will involve providing differentiated content to audiences and providing differentiated audience segments to their advertisers. This will divide market differentiation challenges for news channels into two broad categories:
1. Content Differentiation
2.Audience Differentiation
News channels can bring about content differentiation to their audiences either through researching and creating new types of content or innovating new formats of presenting that content to give a

refreshing feeling to their audiences. Market differentiation can also be   brought   about   by   a new technology which may provide sufficient value for differentiation in themarket.

The use of technologies like OB vans for live coverage of news from the location and technologies like creating multi window chats allows News channels to bring in various view points to the newsroom at one point of time. Pioneer channels like AajTak earned a lot of market differentiation points with their viewers which help them establish a distinct identity with them.   Newer presentation strategies like video wall, 3D graphics, animated graphics, mobile studio, a in-studio set-up where anchors walk while presenting the content are the techniques different channels have tried at various times to attract audiences (Jha, 2014).

Attempts are also being made to involve the audiences in content creation.News channels these days have a host of call-in shows, studio discussions where audience are invited to ask questions from the expert and on-ground discussions with the audiences where they are supposed to take an active part (Jha, 2014).

Lack of innovation in news is leading towards increase in decision making powers of sales and marketing teams of news channels in the matters of content. Thus the innovation which should ideally be seen in content creation and presentation is reflecting in the areas of their sales and promotions; as almost similar content by competitors now needs to be sold by various sales and marketing teams using innovative techniques and aligning with different brands, to uniquely to serve the interest of both the parties. Even media planners and advertisers agree with this changing trend.

2. Research Methodology

As evident after reviewing work of other authors and researchers we can conclude that innovation in media industry is derived from two factors: Content Innovation and Technology innovation.

In this study researcher has analysed all the programmes of English news channel 'India Today' to ascertain innovative practices adopted by the channel.
For the purpose of the study, researcher has done qualitative and quantitative content analysis of programmesbroadcast on news channel. Analysis will done on the basis of the format of content delivery, area/beat covered, and presentation style.

2.1 Parameters for quantitative analysis:
a. Daily Broadcasting hours:
b. News Bulletin:
c. Programmes:

Programmes are further categorized:
- a.   News Based Programmes - A news based programme is the one which is based on current news and events. The news based programme is different from a news bulletin, it includes news analysis, discussions, audience participation, interviews etc. Now a days news channels not only broadcast news bulletins but also broadcast variety of programmes. Such programmes gives insight into a news story, gives details of related issues, provides feedback of viewers and generate public opinion on a particular issue, analyse issues of national and social interest.

   b. Other programmes – The programmes related to sports, health, entertainment etc are considered in other programmes.

2.2 Parameeters for area/beat covered –

For the purpose of the study programmes based on news from the following areas have been covered -

   a. Political – The programmes based on national or international political news, elections, and political leaders.
   b. Social – The programmes which inform and educate viewers on social issues like girl education, environment protection, and other relevant issues.
   c. Economical or financial – The programmes which cover stock market news, financial tips and provide investment guidance.
   d. Technological – The programmes which are based on new technological developments and latest gadgets etc.
   e. Others – This includes programmes related to health, entertainment, sports, bollywood, etc

2.3 Parameters for analysing format of the programmes:

The format of a news programme refers to the style of content delivery in the programme. Broadly based on the format of content delivery programmes can be categorised into following segments:

1. Interview based programmes – In such type of programmes reporter/journalist interviews newsmakers, celebrities, political leaders, and other importance people in news.

2. Panel Discussion/Debates – In these programmes a panel of 3-5 people is made who discuss important issues of national importance, give their views or analyse a news story.

3. Audience Based programmes – In these programmes audience/viewers ask questions from the politicians, celebrities and other important people in news. The main aim of the programme is to ensure audience participation, address their queries, record their reaction and opinion.

4. Overview – These are type of a news reel wherein all major news stories of the week are mentioned in brief to provide overview of the major developments of the week. These are weekly programmes.

5. Conclave/Special Series/Campaigns – These are the programmes which are launched by a news channel to draw attention of public and government. They pick up a topic and organize discussion on the same, they invite experts encourage audience to ask questions.

2.4 Parameters for analysing presentation style –

To analyse the presentation style of a news programme graphics and animations used to present news or a programme are analysed. Like, Ticker, phono plate, split window, logo, chroma effect etc.

Following are the commonly used Graphics in news presentation –

S. No	Graphics	Definition
1.	Aston Or Lower Thirds	Aston is a piece of equipment that is used to make lower thirds, hence the use of its name when referring to on-screen text in the bottom third of the viewable screen. [One-tier lower thirds: Usually used to identify a story that is being shown, or to show a presenter's name. Two-tier lower thirds: Used most often to identify a person on screen. Often, the person's name will appear on the first line, with his or her place of residence or a description below it. Two-tier lower thirds may also be used as "locators" to identify where a story is taking place. Three-tier lower thirds: These lower thirds add more information. Commonly, the first tier is used to tell when the video was shot, if it was not shot the day the newscast is airing.]
2.	Ticker	A telegraphic or electronic machine that prints out data on a strip of paper, especially stock market information or news reports. Just in Ticker Design: It is generally inserted in first/second/third line of the Lower Thirds. It is used for the updates on any special issue that is being broadcasted at that point of time. It is also used to highlight statements given by guests (in studio or outside). Headline Ticker: It is used to show headlines.
3.	Bug	A Bug is a watermark-like station logo; the graphic also shows the name of the current program; DOG watermarking also helps minimize off-the-air copyright infringement; LIVE BUG (displayed during LIVE programs);
4.	Chroma	Changing background by the use of green cloth behind the anchors/artists
5.	Channel Id	Station identification (ident, network ID or channel ID) is the practice of radio or television stations or networks identifying themselves on-air, typically by means of a call sign or brand name (sometimes known, particularly in the United States, as a "sounder" or "stinger", more generally as a station or network ID)
6.	Channel Packaging	It is complete introductory (or propagandist) kind of material, which presents Channel logo, punch line, theme line. This package contains music, SFX and Graphics, and Voice-over to tell the listeners about channel name and punch line etc.
7.	2 Window, 3 Window, 2 Window With One Floating Window 2 Window With One Stretched Window 4 Window	SPLIT SCREEN: When we split a screen into 2 or more windows we call it split screen. Other formats simply means that screen is split into more parts, as per requirements. For example prime time show splits windows till 4 screens, or use box visuals for every guest (4-8 or more boxes).
8.	Channel Logo	It generally appears at the top right corner of the screen.
9.	Time Check	When the full screen shows the time, it is called time-check.
10.	Time Plate	It shows current time.
11.	Breaking News Full	When full screen shows that it is a Breaking News, then this format is

	Screen	used.
12.	Phono Plate	It is used when a reporter/guest is connected through phone line. It is mostly placed in lower third or split window.
13.	Set	This refers Anchor's set or general set of the studio.
14.	Graphics Plate	This plate is used to give extra info on the program (either data or statements). During prime time show, this can be used as third window to show extra info.
15.	Full Screen Graphics	When the graphics (animated or simple text related) are shown in the full screen.
16.	Sponsor Window	This window gives info about the sponsor of the program. It is also called promo, but in Promo or Promotion channel provides another space such as Jacket (it is also used for advertisement. during a program) and sponsor logo as well.
17.	Loop Background	In a show when background of anchor is showing moving graphics then it is referred as loop background.
18.	End Tail Window	Credits may come at the beginning of a program (*opening* or *head credits*) or the end (*closing* or *tail credits*). A pre-credits sequence starts a film or TV program before the title appears.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

India Today is a 24-hour English language television news channel was launched in 2003 and carries news, current affairs and business programming in India. The channel is owned by TV Today Network Ltd. which is a part of Living Media. The channel was formerly known as Headlines Today and was rebrandedas India Todayin May 2015 after the flagship English and Hindi language news magazine of the India Today Group.

T.V. Today Network Limited is a Public Company incorporated on 28 December 1999. TV Today Network is promoted by the media baron AroonPurie, better known as the owner of Living Media, the publisher of India Today and a host of other publications bearing the suffix 'Today'. TV Today is in the business of TV Broadcasting and Radio Broadcasting. The company owns four TV channels -AAJ TAK, INDIA TODAY, TEZ and DILLI AAJ TAK.

The content analysis was dome for three months from June to August 2015. All the programmes were watched and analysed for the purpose of the study.

3.1 Broadcasting Hours
India Today is a 24 hours news channel broadcasting news and programmes full day. In 24 hours some hours are dedicated to news bulletin and remaining to programmes.

News Bulletin	10 hours daily
Programmes	14 hours daily

3.2 Number of programmes:

Total Number of Programmes aired during a week	13
News Based programmes	5
Other Programmes	8

3.3 Beats/Areas covered by the programmes:

Beat/Area	No. of Programmes
Political	5
Social	2
Economical	1
Technological	0
Others (Sports, entertainment, environment)	5
Total	13

3.4 Format of the programmes:

Format	No. of programmes
Interview Based programmes	2
Panel Discussion/Debates	5
Audience Based	2
Overview	3
Conclave/Special Series/Campaigns	1

3.5 Presentation Style of programmes

India Today channel worked on their presentation style and has come up with new and unique presentation. The screen has been divided into 4 segments giving four different news at the same time.

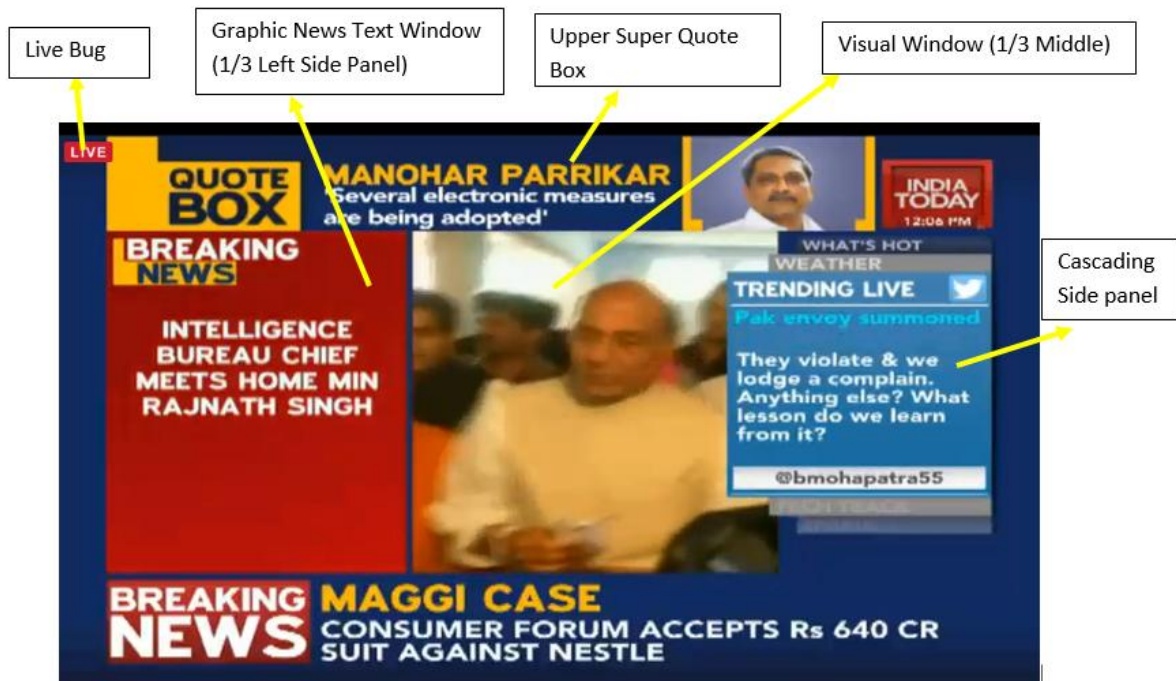Following are the graphics which are now used by India Today channel-

Figure 1- Screenshot to show various graphics used in India Today Channel

Figure 2Screenshot to show various graphics used in India Today channel.

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Figure 3 Screenshot to show presentation of headlines graphics used in India Today channel.

3.6Programmes Broadcast on news channel

3.6.1To the Point by Karan Thapar – The show stared in April 2014, when the veteran journalist moved from CNNIBN to India Today group. He is well known for his intriguing and attacking tone and considered one of the dreaded journalist. In the show Karan Thapar picks up the important topic and giver insight into the subject. The overview is presented along with discussion.

3.6.2 Up South–This programmes is brainchild of T S Sudhir is Editor (South) with the India Today Television, leading the news operations of the group in south India. The only news show on Indian national television that brings to the viewers the most exhaustive coverage of news in south India. 'Up South' is another name for fearless journalism from every part of south India. On the show, Sudhir interviews the newsmakers of the day and presents investigative reports along with colour stories that showcase the flavours from different parts of south India.

3.6.3. Kouching with Koel - On the Couch WithKoel is a super slick, uber conversational half an hour interview-based show on India Today Television. The show features the guest, Koel the interviewer and the couch. The couch becomes the trademark of the show and is visually dramatic. Koel's line of questioning is always about what components make up the person, what makes them tick, how they think, what has been their state of mind in the different stages of their lives, how they have got where they are and how does that make them feel. The line of questioning never has an interrogatory feel. No matter how controversial the question, it finds an empathetic angle, and therefore is phrased as such and asked with compassion and understanding.

3.6.4 Newsroom –Rahul Kanwal is the face that launches a million debates every single evening on India Today Television. From the biggest political talking point to the issue that threatens to create a social divide, he will bring you all the perspectives - all sides of the story. Newsroom is the show that picks up the biggest story of the day and discusses it threadbare.The newsroom is where the news is. Rahul Kanwal goes where the news goes in search of answers, to the thick of the action. From ground zero to TV screen. Newsroom wraps up the most compelling news from across India and the world in 60 minutes.

3.6.5Good News Today - This weekend show brings you clutter breaking stories from India and across the globe. Stories that will touch your heart and put a smile on viewer's face. Stories of courage and hope that showcase the triumph of the human spirit become part of Good News Today.

3.6.6Nothing but the truth – It is an interview based programme wherein renowned journalist Karan Thaparintrigues people in power.

3.6.7 Top India –It is an early morning show which wraps up previous day top news.

3.6.8 God is Good – A spiritual programme broadcast every morning about inner peace.

3.6.9Mens Health Womens Health – A health show giving tips of eating habits, daily exercise and suggesting do's and don'ts to attain a healthy lifestyle.

3.6.10Entertainment Quarter (EQ) - It is a daily dose of entertainment news from across the country. It equips the viewer with the knowledge of what's happening in the entertainment world.The show broadcast news of the day from Hollywood, Bollywood and the world of lifestyle.

3.6.11Policy Bazaar - This program compares pure protection plans, child plans, investment plans, health insurance or medi-claim plans, car insurance, travel insurance as well as home insurance.

3.6.12Sports Today - The typical sports programme in India is mostly about a single sport mostly cricket. But Sports Today is about all sports news. The look and feel of the programme is vibrant and sporty; the anchors are young and direct. Sports news from around the world is packaged into a half-hour show, giving the viewers updates on cricket, tennis, football and a host of other sports.

3.7.13 – India Today Conclave – KalliPurie is the Chief Creative Officer of the India Today Group and holds the additional responsibility of Chief Operating Officer and the Director of India Today Conclave.The show is a special annual series in which prominent people from all segments of life are invited to discuss issues of relevance and prominence.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The India Today channel broadcasts bulletin for 12 hours in a day and equal hours are dedicated to programmes. These programmes or shows cover all important beats. Refer Chart 1.

4.2 The popular programme format used on the channel is Panel Discussion or Debate wherein experts are invited for discussion. Out of 13 programmes 5 are based on this format.

4.3 India Today channel has worked on their look and feel. They have turned their channel into a 'newsplex' by splitting the screen into four parts that play four different things at the same time.

4.4 India Today Conclave, Good News Today, Up-South are some innovative programmes on the channel.

4.5 India Today is the only English news channel to broadcast a programme on entertainment news.

4.6 A programme on spirituality is also broadcast on the channel – God is Good.

4.7 At present there is no programme on technological developments but the channel was earlier broadcasting a programme called Gadgets and Gizmos.
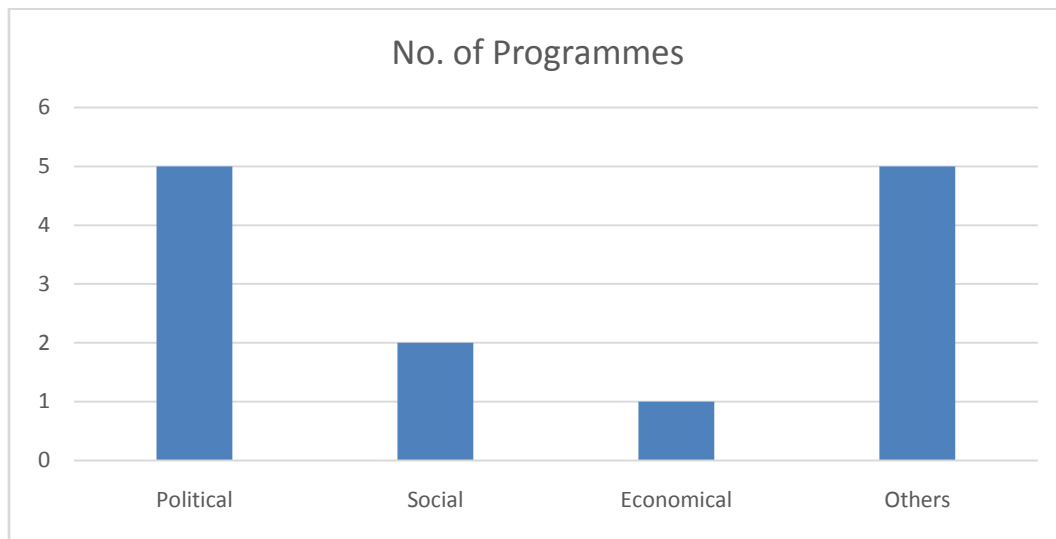
Chart 1. Number of programmes and beats covered.
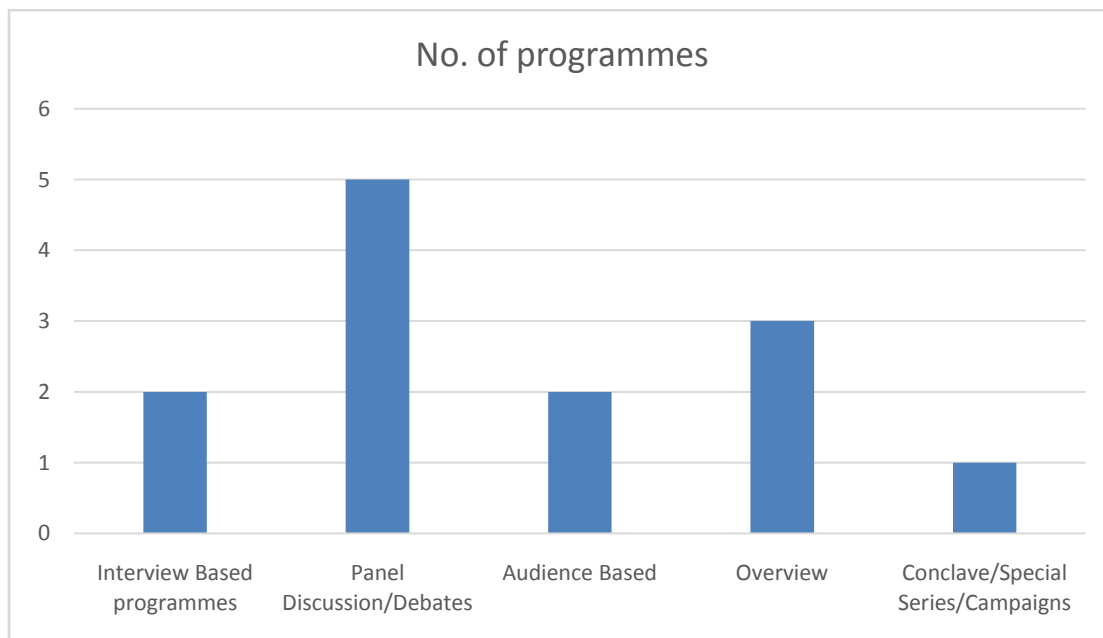
Chart 2. Number of programme formats used.

5. Conclusions

It would not be a stretch to say that when it comes to organizations, creativity without innovation is of significantly diminished value. Innovation brings in news opportunities and positive work flow in an organization.

As analysed India Today channel broadcast programmes and bulletin both. Programmes are broadcast on all issues and even entertainment news is covered in their programme EQ.

By rebranding their channel they have proved importance of change and creativity. India Today has worked extensively to repackage their channel. Their content creation and delivery has changed to a great extent. KalliPuriewas the brainchild behind this change. The channel has added differentiated content, format and look and feel to the channel.

According to a news report on Bestmedia Info "India Today Television is all set to bring back many things such as international news, art, humour and fashion. The channel is also planning to launch a host of new weekend programming which will come from special interest magazines of the India Today stable including Robb Report, Auto Build, etc. India Today Television will soon kick off a show hosted by author ChetanBhagat to deal with a young and aspiring India."

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