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Status of Advocacy Journalism in Political Communication in Odisha: An Overview

Bhagaban Sahu

Ph. D. Scholar

PG. Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication

Berhampur University, Bhanja Bihar (Odisha)

&

Dr. Bharati Bala Patnaik

Head, PG Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Fakir Mohan University, Balasore (Odisha)

Abstract: Advocacy journalism plays a crucial role in political communication by sensitizing the mass on various socio-political issues. It is a unique genre of journalism that challenges traditional principles of journalism. Advocacy journalism gives enormous scope for subjective interpretation of news and information with a non-objective approach to create agenda in the public sphere and influence the political discourse. This research paper makes an attempt to find out practice of advocacy journalism by the newspapers in Odisha in the process of political communication. The study has been conducted among the leading daily newspapers of Odisha, an eastern state of India. For research, both survey and content analysis methods have been adopted to gather data regarding the coverage and reportage of advocacy journalism by the newspapers for political communication. The study revealed that the newspapers gave least importance to advocacy journalism for political communication. The coverage of issues based on techniques of advocacy journalism was not quite encouraging. The study also found that the majority of respondents felt that the newspapers should play an active role in the process of political communication using techniques of advocacy journalism.

Key Words: Advocacy Journalism, Political Communication, Press, Content Analysis

Introduction:

Advocacy journalism is different from traditional journalism. It is a unique genre of journalism which gives scope for intentional subjective interpretation of news and information. It presents information with a non-objective approach. This genre of journalism is being increasingly adopted in political communication. Even though, the critics of advocacy journalism describe the advocacy journalism a form of propaganda, but it is far from the truth. In advocacy journalism, the facts and figures are presented clearly and accurately with a particular point of view and without manipulation.

Supporting a cause or proposal is called advocacy. The term “advocacy” has come from the Latin word “Advocare” that means coming to the help of someone.

In the early days of journalism, criticism, opinion and analysis were primarily restricted to the editorial page of a newspaper. There used to be an unbreakable wall between the editorial and news sections of a newspaper organization. The scenario has been changed. At present, both the mainstream as well as alternative media practice advocacy journalism without pushing the content to the editorial page.

Advocacy journalism plays a crucial role in political communication by sensitizing the mass on various socio-political issues, such as poverty, health, climate change, education, farmers suicide, land and forest rights among others. The journalist plays a vital role in advocacy journalism for mobilizing and shaping public opinion on the government and politics. Their roles reflect the importance of being watchdogs of the society. Several media persons perceive that it is no longer enough to simply observe what is going on around us and afterwards report in a somewhat robotic fashion, which generally expected of them to do. McLaughlin, E. & Fennel, J. (2000).

Waisbord Silvio (2009) showcased in his research on advocacy journalism that this type of journalistic reportage is not just about discovering an issue in a community, but to recommend a solution to that issue, provide reliable support for that solution and suggesting a strong implementation plan, and is generally linked with civil society movements and social causes. It can be explained that type of journalism although is not a new practice is still young in terms of its academic representation in forms and substance.

Lippman (1922), in his agenda setting theory of communication, has stressed that media is accountable for creating “pictures in our heads”. Cohen (1963) also broadened the concept of agenda setting by arguing that the media may not always succeed in telling the public what to think, but media are generally successful in telling mass what to think about.

Lang and Lang (1966) stated that media play a key role in drawing attention of the people to certain issues. The agenda setting explains a very commanding impact of the media, the capability to inform the public that issues are vital, those issues or problems that the media select to publicize eventually are the issues and problems we think and discuss about.

Jeffrey, Robin (2000) stated that in Odisha, newspapers and politics have always maintained a close relationship since the beginning of the journalism in the State. Press has been an integral part in political communication in Odisha. The origins of the newspapers in Odisha can be linked with some influence of political process. The journalism has influenced the politics and political communication in several ways. There have been a number of examples where the course of politics has been changed due to the involvement of press in Odisha. Chatterjee, Mrinal (2007).

The current study makes an attempt to explore different dimensions of advocacy journalism in the areas of political communication in Odisha.

Review of Literature : For any research work, review of literature is highly essential because it guides the researchers in the right direction of the study. So far as the current study is concerned, the researcher has made sincere efforts to review as many as relevant references as possible.

A journalist enters the profession for various reasons. According to Harcup (2004), the journalists have their own compelling convictions about what they do and their own reasons and contentions for seeking a career in any field of journalism they work in. It will be perhaps a thrilling profession as well, yet it would be challenging to see a media person who gets into job for the monetary gains. To be sure, most journalists and also students of journalism are motivated by a vision, by an inspiration to make the world we live in a better place. The test is that numerous professional media persons are observing that established press of today ironically no longer bears the cost of this open door, so what are the other options? One such option is advocacy journalism.

A book titled "Spin Works: A Media Guidebook for Communicating & Values and Shaping Opinion" authored by Robert Bray in 2000 has formally acknowledged the role of advocacy journalism. The book contains strategies and tactics marketed to NGO and social development organizations in engaging the press as a sounding board of advocating social issues and concerns. The publication gives enough indication that coverage of social development issues with advocacy approach has been active at that time. However, it is hard to trace exact beginning and history of this type of journalism due to lack of written materials that could document its history in terms of scope and application.

Significance of the Study : The current study is a first of its kind in Odisha. There are enough studies in the field of media in Odisha, but they are mostly historical, narrative, legalistic or rhetoric. Not a single study has been done so far regarding the practice of advocacy journalism in the context of political communication in Odisha. The current study has made an attempt to determine the status of advocacy journalism by the newspapers in Odisha. The study assumes vital importance not only from the academic point of view but also assessing the political issues covered by the leading dailies of the valley through advocacy journalism.

Research Question : The main question that the current study seeks to answer is: to what extent the press in Odisha, particularly the leading Odia daily newspapers adopt the principles of advocacy journalism in the process of political communication.

Objectives and Scope : The broad objective of the study is primarily to find out the relevance and significance of advocacy journalism in field of political communication in Odisha and come up with a new paradigm for the press to set standards for effective political communication through advocacy journalism. The study also seeks to reveal the adoption of advocacy journalism techniques by the selected Odia dailies in wider issue-based political communication in Odisha and to find out the people's knowledge about advocacy journalism and political communication.

Scope: Scope of the study is limited to the selected pages of the Bhubaneswar edition of the three dailies – *The Sambad*, *The Samaj* and *The Dharitri*. The present study takes account broader political issues, which have greater impact on the people. The scope of the study does not include supplements of the above mentioned newspapers. The people's perception of advocacy journalism and political communication by print media like *The Sambad*, *The Samaj* and *The Dharitri* has been analyzed by collecting their valued opinions

through a survey for the purpose with representative sampling from the selected geographical regions of the state of Odisha.

Research Methodology : Research methodology is a pre-requisite in any scientific study. For the current study, survey method and content analysis have been adopted to present an empirical perspective of advocacy journalism by the leading Odia dailies of Odisha.

Content Analysis: Content analysis is the scientific study of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meaning, contexts and intention contained in the messages. For the study, content analysis on three major Odia dailies – the Samaj, the Sambad and the Dharitri has been done for the months of April, May and June 2014.

Survey Method: The survey was conducted among the media persons, academicians, students, social workers and common people with the help of questionnaires prepared by researcher exclusively for the study. This method was utilized to collect the data from the field.

Research Sample: The researcher has collected the name and addresses of 3000 newspaper readers of three leading Odia dailies from newspaper agents and from these readers the researcher has selected 700 readers as the sample of the study by the purposive sampling method. The researcher has distributed 700 questionnaires to the respondents but the researcher got back 450 questionnaires.

Sample Method: In view of the objectives of the study the researcher adopted purposive sampling method to collect data pertaining to the study.

Reason for Purposive Sampling: The purposive sampling falls under the category of non-probability sampling. This sampling is also known as judgmental sampling. The researcher purposely chooses this sampling method because the researcher, the characteristics required for the sample members are thought to be relevant to the research topic and are easily available to researcher.

Research Setting: The research setting of the study is the three districts, viz, Ganjam, Khordha and Cuttack. The three local newspapers namely- Sambad, Samaj and Dharitri constitute the universe of the study.

Data Analysis and Findings

The study presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from ground level and content analysis.

A. Respondents' Knowledge about Advocacy Journalism and Political Communication

Tables 1: Knowledge about Advocacy Journalism and Political Communication

Sl. No	Know about Advocacy Journalism	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	110	24.44
2	No	246	54.67
3	Some Extent	94	20.89
	Total	450	100

The above data indicate that out of 450 respondents, 110 (24.44%) respondents have knowledge about the advocacy journalism and political communication by the media. They are aware of prevalence of advocacy journalism as one of the genres of journalism. 246 (54.67%) respondents have no idea about advocacy journalism and 94 (20.89%) respondents have knowledge about advocacy journalism to some extent.

Out of 450 respondents, 246 (54.67%) respondents feel that advocacy journalism is important component for a newspaper(after going through the definition of advocacy journalism), only 50 (11.11 %) respondents clearly feel that advocacy journalism is not an important factor for a newspaper, 34 (7.55%) respondents feels that advocacy journalism is some extent important for a newspaper, 62 (13.78 %) respondents were silent, and rest 58 (12.89 %) respondents responded don't know as they seemed confused.

Table 2: Do Local Dailies Maintain Advocacy Technique?

Sl. No	Do Local Dailies Maintain Advocacy Technique?	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	58	12.89
2	No	228	50.67
3	Some Extent	48	10.67
4	Silent	64	14.22
5	Don't Know	52	11.55
	Total	450	100

The above data shows that out of 450 respondents, 58 (12.89%) respondents consider that three local dailies of Odisha maintain advocacy journalism techniques, 228 (50.67) respondents clearly feels that the local dailies of Odisha don't maintain advocacy journalism techniques, 48 (10.67%) respondents feels that the local dailies of

Odisha Some Extent maintain advocacy journalism techniques, 64 (14.22%) respondents were silent, and rest 52 (11.55%) respondents responded don't know as they seemed confused. From above data, the scholars don't get a clear picture from the respondents that whether the three local dailies of Odisha maintain advocacy journalism techniques or not.

B: Views of Respondents on Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in Newspapers in of Odisha

Table 3: Do Newspapers Adopt Techniques of Advocacy Journalism in Coverage of Political Issues of Odisha?

Sl. No	Reaction of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	72	16
2	No	156	34.67
3	Some Extent	118	26.22
4	Silent	66	14.67
5	Don't Know	38	8.44
	Total	450	100

The above data shows that out of 450 respondents, 72 (16%) respondents feel the local newspapers in Odisha adopt advocacy journalism techniques while covering the issues of politics. As many as 156 (34.67%) respondents categorically opined that advocacy journalism techniques are not being adopted by local newspapers while covering political issues and 118 (26.22%) respondents feel that the newspapers adopt advocacy journalism techniques to some extent for coverage of political issues. Around 14.67% (66) respondents did not answer the question and remained silence. As many as 38 (8.44%) respondents don't know about use of advocacy journalism techniques by newspapers for coverage of political issue.

Out of 450 respondents, 106 (23.55%) respondents feel that the newspapers accurately highlight the problems related to political issues of Odisha, 248 (55.11%) respondents view that newspapers don't accurately highlight the problems related to political issues of Odisha, and 96 (21.34%) respondents opine that newspapers highlight the problems related to political issues of Odisha accurately to some extent. Hence, the study shows that the three dailies don't satisfactorily highlight the problem related to political issues of Odisha.

The findings also revealed that 87 (19.3 %) respondents agree that the coverage of politics in newspapers better serve the purpose of political communication. As many as 76 (17%) respondents viewed that coverage of politics in newspapers does not better serve the purpose of political communication. 217 (48.2%) respondents feel that coverage of politics in newspapers better serves the purpose of political communication. While 47 (10.4%) respondents remained silence when the asked the question during the survey and 23 (5.1%) respondents have no idea whether coverage of politics in newspaper better serve the purpose of political communication.

Table 4: Do Journalists of Local Dailies Play a Key Role in the Process of Political Communication?

Sl. No	Reaction of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	110	24.44
2	No	109	24.22
3	Some Extent	144	32
4	Silent	63	14
5	Don't Know	24	5.34
	Total	450	100

The above table points out that out of 450 respondents, 110 (24.44%) respondents said that the journalists of local newspapers in Odisha play an active role in the process of political communication and 109 (24.22%) respondents said that the journalists don't play an active role in the sphere of political communication. As many as 144 (32%) respondents said that the journalists of local newspapers play an active role in the process of political communication to some extent. While 63 (14%) respondents remained silence when asked about the journalists' role in the process of political communication in Odisha and 24 (5.34%) respondents don't know whether journalists play an active role in the process of political communication.

The study also pointed out that 79 (17.56 %) respondents said the coverage of political issues in Odia newspapers creates agenda in public sphere and 248 (55.11%) respondents said that the coverage of political issues in Odia newspapers does not create agenda in public sphere. As many as 123 (27.33%) respondents said the coverage of political issues in Odia newspapers creates agenda in public sphere to some extent. It is thus clear that a majority of respondents feel that paid news syndrome prevails in local dailies in Odisha.

Opinions of Experts on Advocacy Journalism and Political Communication in Local Newspapers in Odisha

Experts' opinions have been regarded vital in this study to find out the practice of advocacy journalism in the process of political communication in Odisha. Views of 15 experts from different fields have been taken into consideration for the current study. The findings have been analyzed in the below:

Out of 15 experts, 11 (73.33%) experts said that advocacy journalism is relevant for political communication in Odisha and 3 (20%) experts feel that it is relevant to some extent. Just one (6.67%) expert said that the advocacy journalism is not relevant for political communication in Odisha. Hence, it is clear that most of the experts believe that advocacy journalism is relevant for political communication in Odisha.

As many as 3 (20%) experts feel that the local dailies in Odisha follow advocacy journalism techniques for coverage of news and 12 (80%) experts consider that the local dailies in Odisha do not follow the advocacy journalism techniques in coverage of news.

Content Analysis of Three Leading Odia Dailies – Sambad, Sambad and Dharitri

Content analysis has been done for the three leading Odia dailies – the Sambad, the Sambad and the Dharitri – to find out the adoption of advocacy journalism techniques in their coverage on a range of issues from the prospective of political communication.

Content Analysis of the Samaj

The study has focused on the content analysis of the Samaj for the months of April, May and June 2014. The pages selected for the analysis are front page, third page, fourth page, fifth page and eighth page because these pages carry the state and local specific issues.

Table 5: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in April 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (Sq. Cm.)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	27,628	760	2.75%
2	Third Page	29,937	707	2.36%
3	Fourth Page	31,346	731	2.33%
4	Fifth Page	35,636	783	2.19%
5	Eighth Page	45,597	1,263	2.76%

In the month of April, the Samaj had allotted 760 (2.75%) square centimeter space out of 27,628 in the front page, 707 (2.36%) square centimeter out of 29,937 square centimeter in the third page, 731 (2.33%) square centimeter out of 31,346 square centimeter in the fourth page, 783 (2.19%) square centimeter out of 35,636 square centimeter in the fifth page and 1,263 (2.76%) out of 45,597 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 6: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in May 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	25,921	716	2.76%
2	Third Page	28,771	1,100	3.82%
3	Fourth Page	32,115	1,241	3.86%
4	Fifth Page	34,435	1,129	3.27%
5	Eighth Page	43,493	1487	3.41%

In the month of May, the Samaj had allotted 716 (2.76%) square centimeter space out of 25,921 in the front page, 1,100 (3.82%) square centimeter out of 28,771 square centimeter in the third page, 1,241 (3.86%) square centimeter out of 32,115 square centimeter in the fourth page, 1,129 (3.27%) square centimeter out of 34,435 square centimeter in the fifth page and 1487 (3.41%) out of 43,493 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 7: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in June 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	24,327	1,040	4.27%
2	Third Page	26,780	1,247	4.65%
3	Fourth Page	32,459	1,325	4.08%
4	Fifth Page	32,029	1,195	3.73%
5	Eighth Page	42,458	980	2.30%

In the month of June, the Samaj had allotted 1,040 (4.27%) square centimeter space out of 24,327 in the front page, 1,247 (4.65%) square centimeter out of 26,780 square centimeter in the third page, 1,325 (4.08%) square centimeter out of 32,459 square centimeter in the fourth page, 1,195 (3.73%) square centimeter out of 32,029 square centimeter in the fifth page and 980 (2.30%) out of 42,458 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Content Analysis of the Sambad

The content analysis of the Sambad for the months of April, May and June 2014 was done. The pages selected for the analysis are front page, third page, fourth page, fifth page and eighth page because these pages carry the state and local specific issues.

Table 8: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in April 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	22,421	613	2.73%
2	Third Page	24,734	535	2.16%
3	Fourth Page	29,348	940	3.20%
4	Fifth Page	32,633	759	2.32%
5	Eighth Page	45,595	1,500	3.28%

In the month of April, the Sambad had allotted 613 (2.73%) square centimeter space out of 22,421 in the front page, 535 (2.16%) square centimeter out of 24,734 square centimeter in the third page, 940 (3.20%) square centimeter out of 29,348 square centimeter in the fourth page, 759 (2.32%) square centimeter out of 32,633 square centimeter in the fifth page and 1,500 (3.28%) out of 45,595 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 9: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in May 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	24,445	858	3.50%
2	Third Page	27,764	885	3.18%
3	Fourth Page	31983	1,236	3.86%
4	Fifth Page	32,432	895	2.75%
5	Eighth Page	42,411	1,284	3.02%

In the month of May, the Sambad had allotted 858 (3.50%) square centimeter space out of 24,445 in the front page, 885 (3.18%) square centimeter out of 27,764 square centimeter in the third page, 1,236 (3.86%) square centimeter out of 31983 square centimeter in the fourth page, 895 (2.75%) square centimeter out of 32,432 square centimeter in the fifth page and 1,284 (3.02%) out of 42,411 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 10: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in June 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	23,881	906	3.79%
2	Third Page	25,775	1,066	4.13%
3	Fourth Page	31,656	1224	3.86%
4	Fifth Page	31,124	915	2.93%
5	Eighth Page	40,760	1,264	3.10%

In the month of June, the Sambad had allotted 906 (3.79%) square centimeter space out of 23,881 in the front page, 1,066 (4.13%) square centimeter out of 25,775 square centimeter in the third page, 1224 (3.86%) square centimeter out of 31,656 square centimeter in the fourth page, 915 (2.93%) square centimeter out of 31,124 square centimeter in the fifth page and 1,264 (3.10%) out of 40,760 square centimeter in the eighth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Content Analysis of the Dharitri

The content analysis of the Dharitri for the months of April, May and June 2014 was done. The pages selected for the analysis are front page, third page, seventh page, eighth page and ninth page because these pages carry the state and local specific issues.

Table 11: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in April 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	21085	859	4.07%
2	Third Page	22,257	638	2.86%
3	Seventh Page	29850	1,033	3.46%
4	Eighth Page	30265	762	2.51%
5	Ninth Page	36,753	1,183	3.21%

In the month of April, the Dharitri had allotted 859 (4.07%) square centimeter space out of 21085 in the front page, 638 (2.86%) square centimeter out of 22,257 square centimeter in the third page, 1,033 (3.46%) square centimeter out of 29850 square centimeter in the seventh page, 762 (2.51%) square centimeter out of 30265 square centimeter in the eighth page and 1,183 (3.21%) out of 36,753 square centimeter in the ninth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 12: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in May 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	21386	770	3.60%
2	Third Page	25670	788	3.06%
3	Seventh Page	30138	1,164	3.86%
4	Eighth Page	31,227	931	2.98%
5	Ninth Page	41,094	1,403	3.41%

In the month of May, the Dharitri had allotted 770 (3.60%) square centimeter space out of 21386 in the front page, 788 (3.06%) square centimeter out of 25670 square centimeter in the third page, 1,164 (3.86%) square centimeter out of 30138 square centimeter in the seventh page, 931 (2.98%) square centimeter out of 31,227 square centimeter in the eighth page and 1,403 (3.41%) out of 41,094 square centimeter in the ninth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Table 13: Use of Advocacy Journalism Techniques for Coverage of Political Issues in April 2014

Sl. No	Pages	News Hole in Square Centimeter (sq cm)	News Space Given for Advocacy Journalism for Political Issues (Sq. Cm.)	Percentage
1	Front Page	23,482	769	3.27%
2	Third Page	24756	936	3.78%
3	Seventh Page	29,828	1,008	3.37%
4	Eighth Page	30,718	922	3%
5	Ninth Page	38910	1,365	3.50%

In the month of June, the Dharitri had allotted 769 (3.27%) square centimeter space out of 23,482 in the front page, 936 (3.78%) square centimeter out of 24756 square centimeter in the third page, 1,008 (3.37%) square centimeter out of 29,828 square centimeter in the seventh page, 922 (3%) square centimeter out of 30,718 square centimeter in the eighth page and 1,365 (3.50%) out of 38910 square centimeter in the ninth page for the coverage of political issues based on the techniques of advocacy journalism.

Conclusion

Press is the fourth pillar of democracy. It is the voice of the people. In the process of political communication, the role of press assumes greater significance. Using advocacy journalistic techniques, newspapers are supposed to play a decisive role for the betterment of society by highlighting issues affecting to the people. But in many cases, it is seen that the newspapers are deviated from their pivotal role in the political communication and are indulged in favoring the people in power with its biased reporting. In order to set a new paradigm for the press, the current research adopted the survey as well as content analysis methodology considering the nature

of the research design. The study was conducted on 450 general respondents from urban, semi urban and rural areas of the three districts of Odisha along with 15 experts from different fields.

The study pointed out that a vast majority of the respondents do not have knowledge of advocacy journalism and they are ignorant that this genre of journalism is prevalent in the local media industry. The experts had a better understanding of advocacy journalism and their significance in the sphere of political communication. However, after going through the meaning of advocacy journalism, around 55 per cent of general respondents considered that the advocacy journalism is relevant in the political-context in Odisha. Out of 450 general respondents who are readers of the Odia dailies, around 51 per cent of respondents felt that the local dailies of Odisha don't adopt advocacy journalism techniques. The experts also believed that the local dailies of the State don't follow the approaches of advocacy journalism. The study also revealed that majority of general respondents and experts are not satisfied with the coverage of issues pertaining to political communication by the newspapers in Odisha. The study found out that the newspapers fail to create agenda in the public sphere and the local journalists don't play active role in creating social and political awareness among the mass through their coverage of issues.

From the analysis, it was found that the three leading Odia dailies the Sambad, the Samaj and the Dharitri had given less space for coverage of political issues using the techniques of advocacy journalism.

No doubt, the front page is the most important page of a newspaper. It is generally presumed that the front page functions as a way to attract attention of the readers and sets agenda before the readers. The analysis of three newspapers showed that these newspapers don't give enough space on the front page for advocacy journalism while covering crucial issues pertaining to political communication.

The Samaj provided 2.75% space for advocacy journalism for the coverage of political issues on the front page for the month of April 2014, 2.76% space for month of May 2014 and 4.27% for the month of June 2014. The Sambad provided just 2.73% space for advocacy journalism for the coverage of political issues on the front page for the month of April 2014, 3.50% space for month of May 2014 and 3.79% for the month of June 2014. The Dharitri provided just 4.07% space for advocacy journalism for the coverage of political issues on the front page for the month of April 2014, 3.60% space for month of May 2014 and 3.27% for the month of June 2014.

Corporate ownership within the industry incapacitates the ability to provide the community with the essential information and journalism to support a democracy.

There are several factors responsible for the least priority being given to advocacy journalism by the newspapers in Odisha. One of the major factors is the political patronization of the newspapers. The newspapers tend to favor the political party or the leader who patronize them. The influence of political leaders on the operations of newspapers is destroying the credibility of journalism, reducing the newspapers mere their spokespersons. Besides, the prevalence of paid news syndrome is another reason for the negligence of advocacy journalism by the Odia newspapers. Lack of skilled and well trained journalists at the grassroots level also make the problem more complex in the newspaper industry in Odisha. Even though, the Odia newspapers give importance to coverage of corruption and local governance issues, but their coverage hardly puts an impact on the people. It is mainly due to lack of advocacy approach by the newspapers.

Most of the stories that are being covered in the Odia newspapers have not focused a strong viewpoint and criticism and buzz words are mostly missing in the news stories. The writing style is also not so attractive to create an appeal to the readers.

Suggestions

- Training is necessary for journalists, especially the journalists at the grassroots level to understand the significance of advocacy journalism in the process of political communication. For this, short term courses at the recognized educational institutions should be conducted for the working journalists.
- Massive awareness drive is needed among the journalists and readers regarding the essence of advocacy journalism in the changing socio-political scenario in Odisha.
- An attitudinal change is required on the part of the newspaper organizations and journalists towards advocacy journalism. The newspapers should consider that it is their responsibility and obligation to bring change in the society through advocacy journalism.
- In the changing political scenario, the traditional style of reporting has lost its relevance to a large extent. The journalists should take a stand on an issue with accurate information and without emotional bias. Their objective should be galvanizing the readers to take action on issues.
- The media owners should refrain from controlling the editorial decisions. The journalists should get freedom in selecting angle of the story.

- Efforts should be given on relationship building, which is the foundation to success of any newspaper doing advocacy. The newspapers should collaborate with NGOs and other non-profit entities for the betterment of the society and people through advocacy journalism.
- Management of the local newspapers in Odisha assesses the newsworthiness of issues based on the philosophy and interests of the organization, and this practice should be stopped, if not, it should be minimized.

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