

CHAPTER – III

ABERRATIONS OF CONTEMPORARY JOURNALISM

The Press is the voice of an effective minority and that voice can change the 'public mind' in any direction it wants. So long as there is no effective force to counter this effective minority, the press gets an upper hand in moulding the public mind. So the aberration in the field of journalism affects the society directly.

In Kerala some newspapers have the support of political parties, religious groups and communities. Impartial stand is rare. Some other papers have business establishments and major commercial ventures. There are some papers having foreign aid though it is illegal. Party papers get financial support from the party fund. Even though there are some discrepancies, the Keralaite society had some important credits to its account. Social growth, life expectancy, literacy rate, education, family planning, computer literacy women's empowerment, media literacy, cleanliness etc are remarkable in the state. Communal harmony in the state is another important factor to its credit.

There are some bad tendencies also. Peasant suicides, family suicides and family murders are common in the state. A number of people in Kerala started many investment schemes and they included illegal money lending 'blade' companies, fake chitties and kurries, teak plantations, goat- farms, mangium cultivations, flat-construction, tourist-resorts etc; which were backed by advertisements which kept appearing in the press. Through such organized racketeering, they cheated thousands of people. The role of the press in promoting and propagating these criminals and criminal activities can not be overlooked.

Investigative journalism is a relatively new area in Malayalam press. On a specific issue papers conduct investigation and bring out facts. Many a time, crime-centred issues are discussed and often the investigators meet some people and their opinions are collected either personally or telephonically. Mixing the opinions, incidents and facts, they serve tasty items for the people to read and make profits.

Authenticity in reporting must be ensured. Today, owing to commercialisation of reporting, one doubts the authenticity of reports. Today the reporters are much concerned about the readability of their items. In order to make it readable, they sensationalise the issues with colour and concoction. Readability is ensured by such gimmicks, but it affects the credibility of the media. There was a time when people believed the press, but today the public trust is affected to some extent. People say that anything will be written provided the reporters are humoured. It may be an exaggerated version, of what is taking place in news reporting, yet, behind this exaggerated version, certainly there is an element of truth.

Journalism is now becoming an unwarranted interference into other people's private life today. Here the right of privacy is violated. This is a bad tendency. Keralalite society is conservative in nature to a large extent. But the media is not trying to show the changes in the world. The media should bring home to its readers, the changes taken place in all the walks of life in the recent decades and centuries.

Almost all the newspapers in Kerala are urban centered. These papers have editions in different towns. The news flow from villages is considerably low. This is another limitation of our newspapers.

Article 1. Major News Papers in Kerala

(i) Malayala Manorama

Kerala's largest circulated daily is Malayala Manorama. The first joint stock company in Kerala was also The Malayala Manorama company Ltd., established in 1888. On March 22, 1890 the first edition of the Malayala Manorama came out from Kottayam. The founder editor was Kandathil Varghese Mappillai. Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran, the king of Travancore gave the paper its name- Malayala Manorama. From 1901, the paper came out twice in a week and from 1918 it was published thrice in a week. In the year 1928 onwards it is functioning as a daily paper. Travancore Diwan Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer banned the publication of the paper on 9th September 1938. The editor Mammen Mappillai was jailed. After independence on 20th November 1947 the publication of the newspaper was revised.

Malayala Manorama weekly, Bhashaposhni, Vanitha, Balarama, Arogyam, Kalikudukka, Balarama Digest, Thozhil veedhy, Fast track, Karshaka shree, Vidhyadeepthi, The Week, Manoram Year Books etc are the main publications of the company. Manorama daily has 16 editions. It is the first vernacular daily which employed the technology of facsimile page transmission from one edition to another (1986). Son of Mammen Mappillai K.M. Mathew was the chief editor of Malayala Manorama for about four decades. This veteran journalist who died recently was the man who led the professional team of Manorama to present age. Now his son Mammen Mathew is the chief editor.

(ii) Mathrubhumi

The Mathrubhumi is the second largest circulated daily in Malayalam. It was started from Kozhikode on 18th March 1923. This is a paper originated as a part of our national struggle for freedom. It

was started with a capital of one lakh rupees, collected through 20,000 shares. The value of one share was Rs.5/- K.P. Kesava Menon was the founder editor of Mathrubhumi. K.Madhavan Nair, K. Kelappan, Kurur Neelakandan Namboothiripad were the forefathers of The Mathrubhumi. The paper strongly supported the National Movement, Vaikom Satyagraha, Gurvayoor Satyagraha etc. On 6th April, 1930 Mathrubhumi became a daily newspaper. In 1942 the Madras Government banned the publication of the Mathrubhumi. On 18th January, 1932 Mathrubhumi Weekly was started. Grihalakshmi, Chithrabumi, Balabhumi, Mathrubhumi Arogya Masika, Thozhil Vartha, Mathrubhumi Sports Masika, Yathra and Year Book are the major publications of the Mathrubhumi. Mathubhumi is the first newspaper in Kerala which employed colour printing in Kerala. Now the paper has 14 local editions. M.P. Virendra Kumar Ex. M.P., Socialist Philosopher, Politician and writer is the chairman and managing director of the Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Company. M. Keseva Menon is the editor of Mathrubhumi daily. When Gandhiji visited the Mathrubhumi head office in 1934, he remarked; "Mathrubhumi has a unique position among India's newspapers".

(iii) Deshabhimani

Deshabhimani is the organ of Indian Communist party Kerala State Committee. Started 6th September 1942 from Kozhikode. The founder editor was M.S. Devadas. In the year 1946 Deshabhimani become a daily newspaper. In 1948, The Prakasham Govt. of Madras abolished the publication of the daily. In 1951 it was re-started and still continuing. In 1964 the Communist Party divided and Deshabhimani become the asset of CPI (M). In 1969 Deshabhimani weekly started. Chintha, Thathamma etc are other Deshabhimani publications. Deshabhimani is the first daily which introduced offset printing in Kerala in 1979. Now the daily has 7 editions. V.V.

Dakshina Moorthy is the Chief Editor. The paper helps the party to propagate Marxist ideals in the state.

(iv) Kerala Kaumudi

Kerala Kaumudi is another important newspaper in the state. It was started as a weekly from Kollam as Muloor S. Padmanabha Paniker its editor under the guidance of C.V. Kunjiraman. After one year C.V. Kunjuraman resigned his teacher's profession and became full time editor. After him, his son K. Sukumaran B.A. become editor (1940). In the year 1951 Kalakaumudi weekly is started. A mid day paper called 'Flash', magazines called Fire, Ayurarogyam, Vellinakshatram, Muhoortham, Snehitha, Katha etc. are other Kaumudi group publications. The 99 year old newspaper has 9 editions. M.S. Mani is the editor in chief of Kaumudi Publications. Kaumudi helped the upliftment of the downtrodden group of people of the society in Kerala.

(v) Deepika

The first Malayalam Daily which still continuing its publication is Deepika. It was started on 15th April 1887 from Mannanam near Kottayam. Nidhirikkal Mani Kathanar, Fr. Jerard, C. Kurian, etc., are the forefathers of Nazarani Deepika. It was started as a bi-weekly. On 3rd January 1927 it became a daily paper. From 1st August 1939 it was published from Kottayam and renamed as Deepika. It was the paper which started first internet edition in Kerala. (September, 1997) Deepika's evening edition 'Rashtra Deepika' was started on 6th April 1992 from Thrissur. It is the largest circulated evening paper in Kerala. Karshakan, Sthreedhanam, Rashtra Deepika Cinema, Kuttikalude Deepika, Business Deepika, Children's Digest are other periodicals from the publishing house. Deepika, the age old news paper is owned by Rastra Deepika Co. Ltd. under the guidance of Catholic Church in Kerala. It has five editions in the State. Chief Editor of the paper is Alexander Paikada.

(vi) Madhyamam

Madhyamam daily was started on 1st June 1987 from Kozhikode. It was a daily which could attain considerable circulation within a short span of time. It is the organ of Jama at-e- Islami Hind and owned by Ideal Publications Trust. Madhyamam weekly was also published since 1998. Madhyamam daily has eight editions in India and seven editions from various gulf countries. It is the first international Indian newspaper. O. Abdurahman is the editor of Madhyamam Daily. It is a newspaper which gave importance to value based journalism and fought fearlessly against social evils in the last two decades.

(vii) Mangalam

Mangalam was started as a weekly from Kottayam by M.C. Varghese in 1969. The daily started on 15th March 1989. Kanyaka, Bala Mangalam, Arogya Mangalam, Cinema Mangalam, Jyothisha Bhooshanam are other Mangalam Publications. Today Mangalam is a daily having five editions. Biju Varghese son of the founder editor M.C.Varghese is the present editor of the paper. Mangalam is supporting the common people in social issues. It helped helpless poor patients by collecting donations from the readers. It organized social dowry- less weddings. Another important thing is Mangalam weekly propagate the reading habit among common people. The price of Mangalam Daily is Rs. 3/- per copy while that of all other dailies is Rs.4/-

(viii) Chandrika

Chandrika is the organ of Indian Union Muslim League. It was started as a weekly from Thalassery in 1934. In the year 1938, it became daily newspaper. During February 1946, the head office is shifted to Kozhikode. Chandrika Weekly, Mahila Chandrika, Balachandrika are other publications of the media house. Chandrika daily is owned by the Muslim Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.

Kozhikode. The paper has six editions. Ahemedkutty Unnikulam is the editor in charge of the daily.

(ix) Janmabhumi

It is the organ of Bharathiya Janatha Party. The paper was started from Ernakulam on 14th November 1977. Prof. M.P. Manmadhan, veteran Gandhian and Sarvodaya leader was the first editor. Today the paper has five editions. Leela Menon, famous lady journalist is the editor and P. Balakrishnan is the Managing editor. Hari S. Kartha is the chief editor.

(x) Janayugam

Janayugam is the organ of the Communist Party of India. The paper was established in 1953. It has four editions. Veliyam Bhargavan, the state secretary of the CPI is the chief editor. M.P. Achuthan is the editor of the paper. The circulation of the paper is very low when compared to that of Deshabhimani.

Article 2. Print Media in Kerala with Special Reference to Newspapers: Case Study

It is a fact that almost all Keralites start their day with reading a newspaper. The high rate of literacy, road structure, public awareness etc. are the cause of this kind of newspaper circulation. The main papers have editions in almost all district headquarters. This type of a decentralisation is the peculiarity of Kerala compared to other states in India.

Within a district, major papers have different local pages. It helps them to give pure local news items. Small, small news items are included in these local pages. Obituary notes, wedding news etc are given with prominence. This has informative value in the special social set up of Kerala. This type of journalism is directly related to the circulation hike. Anything is news in the local page. The common readers are also happy in this approach. Major papers have local

editions for 2-3 taluks. To get attention some papers give local news items in the front page only for that region. These approaches have positive and negative impacts. It will give importance to the local developmental issues. It will help the local bodies in planning and administration. The negative impact is that it will not successfully reflect the state as a whole. The reader gets only a partial view.

The issues which our newspapers discuss today are varied and various. Specialisation of various subjects and issues is the characteristic nature of today's Malayalam journalism. It also has a reader friendly approach generally. Specialised columns and pages are quite common. The dissemination of knowledge, familiarity with literary works educating children, creating health awareness providing, entertainment etc. take place as a result of regular newspaper reading. The technological advancement in the Keralaite journalistic field and the Professionalism of our journalists is equal to that of any developed country. But in case of social commitment the major papers are going backward, when compared to their own past decades. Ethical base is overruled by business interests. News is sensationalised. The culture and purity of the life of people is gradually polluted. An editor's pen is like a doctor's surgical blade. Here the surgery is on the society's diseases. The healthy society is the necessity of our age. The concept of development of our news papers is also not correct. In developmental issues, they are with the upper class. They are not propagating the need based development. Our papers spreading the consumer culture in the society.

(i) Reports and Findings of the Survey

The researcher conducted the survey on three planes. The first one is among 40 journalists from various parts of the state. The second is among 100 villagers of the Ramangalam village of

Muvattupuzha Taluk in Ernakulam district. The third is among 100 readers within the Kochi city limit. For journalists an interview guide is used. (given in the Appendix-3) For readers an interview schedule is used. (Appendix-2)

Generally speaking, the majority of people expect qualitative change both in our newspapers and in the journalistic field as a whole. Some pointed out the qualitative change in almost all other fields of life such as housing, education and health care measures. They even wish for new newspapers and media institutions. The media persons and journalists admit the fact that news paper is a commercialised product today. Many of them are deeply worried about that. Some are guilty of taking the professional approach ignoring the role of social commitment. Almost all assert that the credibility of our newspapers is on the decline. Many branches of journalism including literary journalism are fully ignored today.

The readers in the village are found to rely on newspapers for getting information. The people in the city are more bothered about the commercialisation of newspapers than the readers in the village. It is because of that they know the 'hidden agenda' of newspaper institutions better than their village counterparts. The readers in the village are more interested in value- based journalism. The influence of the paper as social crusader or as an advocate of justice is more in the village community. The study shows another thing: The villagers focus on print media for knowledge dissemination and information gathering. In town there are many type of media for this. The above said differences are slight. It is because , as a whole Kerala is like a big city. In the state as a whole a special kind of 'Rurban' culture (Rural+Urban) is existing. Sociologically , we can see many new tendencies in this state. Sensationalising news items is a common phenomena in the state. The village community is disliking it than the

readers in the city. Most of the media persons agreeing the fact that they are sensationalise many news items for attracting the readers. Some frankly agree that the management is pressing them to add spice to the news stories. The readers in the village are more concerned about the harm of sensationalisation.

The approach of readers to advertisements is interesting. Some consider it as a necessary part of newspapers. At the same time some others are fully dislike the advertisements. The people in the town are more listening the advertisements mainly the classified advertisements. The media persons are agreeing the pressure put on them from the advertisement section. In many papers the advertisement section got more importance than editorial section. The common readers are almost ignorant about many type of cheating behind advertising.

The readers in the village are more concerned about the deviation of newspapers from principles and journalistic ethics. The rate of credibility of newspapers among the villagers is high. In the urban centre the readers giving more importance to the entertainment angle than the news angle of newspaper as a product. Though many of the media persons responded in the survey have firm stand on principles and ethics, even when they have their limitations. The will of the management is imposed on them. Some of the respondents are not ready to agree this openly.

Giving over importance to politics by newspapers is recognised by both readers in the village and in the town as such. Almost 65-68% of news items in the newspapers is politically originated or related. Though the state is politically conscious, many of the respondents consider the stand of the print media as not desirable. In village, the number of readers is high for political news items than in towns. A considerable percentage of readers both in the town and in the village

dislike the superficial statements of politicians. Some readers are more interested on sports, agricultural, educational, commercial, and health affairs, even in fashion, sex, crime stories than political matters. Some like issue- based journalism. They consider the media as a crusader for social justice.

(ii) Data Analysis

The available data, derived from the field study and interviews, show that Kerala's journalistic field facing certain aberrations. This is affecting the reader community both in village and in town.

Table – 1

Reach and advertisement response of each news paper in the village and in the town: (in percentage)

Name of the paper	In Village	In Town
Malayala Manorama	34	36
Mathrubhumi	26	24
Both Manorama and Mathrubhumi	89	96
Other papers total	11	4
Papers of Political parties	9	3
Only one English paper	1	2

Source: Personal study

The study shows that the media field in Kerala is mainly controlled by two newspapers – Malayala Manorama and Mathrubhumi. Both in town and in village their circulation rate is high. The advertisement response of these papers is also high. All other papers have only 4-11% of the field share for circulation and space marketing. The purchasing power of the readers of these minor newspapers is low than that of the two major papers. So the major

papers can easily control the media field both by editorial wise and advertisement wise.

The percentage of the papers which are organs of political parties is also low. Those who have strong political stand, usually read more than one paper. They also consider the major papers as more credible. The persons reading only English paper in Keralite society is 1-2%. This also shows that the influence of English dailies is low among common people. The influence of these papers is double in the town than in the village.

Table – 2
Approach to the newspaper as a...

	Commer- cial product	Social product	For informative value	For entertain- ment value	Not respon- ding/ ignorant
In Village	24	36	15	10	15
In town	32	25	9	23	11
Among Media persons	41	20	13	2	6

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

18% of media persons have professional approach to news papers. Today almost all newspapers are commercialised products. But the study shows that many of the readers do not realize this. In town the entertainment value of newspapers is high. So major papers give supplements and feature pages regularly with the main issue. These metro pages are not common. They are only for the city limit. Malayala Manorama gives their 'Metro' supplement on 5 days in a week. Mathrubhumi give their 'Nagaram' pages for 6 days in a week. All other newspapers give four page supplements once in a week.

Another noted thing is that the media persons' attitude towards their product. 41% consider newspaper as a commercialised product,

while 18 % consider professional approach is best for journalistic work. Only 20% agree the social value of print media. The new generation among the journalists is ignoring the social aspects of the media.

Table – 3

Which type of reporting does the reader expect:

	Factual	Sensational	Exaggerated	Not responding/ ignorant
In Village	66	25	6	3
In town	54	31	9	6
Opinion of media persons	58	26	14	2

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

This shows that vast majority of readers like factual reports. Though the sensational treatment of news suddenly attracts the attention of readers, it will destroy the credibility of the paper. The village readers more liking factual approach than the readers in the town. 58% of respondents who are media persons are also in partisan with factual approach.

In the next table we can see the opinion of readers on sensationalism of 5 major dailies in Kerala.

Table – 4

Is Factual or Sensational?

Name of the newspaper	Opinion of village readers		Opinion of Urban readers	
	Factual	Sensational	Factual	Sensational
Malayala Manorama	42	58	39	61
Mathrubhumi	64	36	62	38
Deshabhimani	46	54	42	58
Kerala Kaumudi	37	63	36	64
Mangalam	31	69	33	67

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

This shows that Mathrubhumi is the most credible newspaper in Malayalam. Malayala Manorama is the largest circulated daily in the state. But in case of credibility it is far behind both in the minds of rural and urban readers. Another noted thing is that though Deshabhimani is a party paper it is credible to an extent among its readers. Table 3 and 4 jointly shows the need of our newspapers to be more factual.

Table – 5

Do the papers giving over importance to advertisements?

Respondents	Definitely	Yes	No	Not responding/ ignorant
In the village	32	55	8	5
In the town	38	41	19	2
Media persons	36	59	4	1

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

The study shows us that most of the readers realize the over importance given to advertisements by newspapers. The readers in the village more dislike the advertisements. The urban readers consider the advertisement as the news they can use (The informative value of advertisements). So there, the ill- will on advertisements is slightly low. The media persons know the real situations than the common readers. So 95% of journalists are against to the over- importance to advertisements.

Table – 6

Do the dailies deviating from principles and journalistic ethics?

Respondents	Quite common	Yes	No	Not responding/ ignorant
In the village	29	39	26	6
In the town	34	47	31	8
Media persons	36	45	15	4

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

81% of Media persons agree the fact that our newspapers are deviating from ethical principles. The readers in the village give newspapers, a sanctity. In Town, the readers realize most of the media are not giving importance to ethical code of conduct. The power of newspapers to guide the society and control the rulers is decreasing day by day. It is mainly due to the aberrations of the media from age old journalistic values.

Table – 7
Sectorial interest of the readers

Respondents	Political items	Commercial	Sports	Educational	Health	Fashion	Sex/ Crime	Agricultural
In the village	24	14	10	17	6	3	10	16
In the town	19	27	9	21	8	5	7	4

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

In our news papers around 65-68% of news items are political news or political articles. From the study we can easily understand that political items got attention of 19-24% of readers. Though educational and commercial columns got attention of a good section of readers, the papers ignore them. The general readers are decreasing in number. Most of the readers have specialised interest on certain areas. Major newspapers realized this and they started specialised feature columns for different sectors.

Table – 8
Do the papers giving over importance to politics:

Respondents	Definitely	Yes	No	Not responding/ ignorant
In the village	31	21	42	6
In the town	36	30	30	4
Media persons	49	33	18	-

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

This shows that the readers in the village are more interested in reading political news items and features than the urban readers. The media persons also have the opinion that the importance given to politics is high.

During election times the priority given to political items go beyond all limits. Even peripheral statements of politicians are also reported. It is quite common that different newspapers give different versions of political stands and strategies according to their political vested interests.

Table – 9
About organs of political parties:

Respondents	Useful to pol. idea dissemination	For healthy democracy	Useless	Ignorant/ Not responding
In the village	43	46	7	4
In the town	49	39	9	3
Media persons	42	54	-	4

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal Study

Though most of the political party newspapers are small in case of the circulation figures, people accept and like the existence of them. The village readers slightly more interested in them than the urban readers. 96% of media persons opined that these papers are useful for idea dissemination and for the existence of healthy democracy. Generally, common people like the plurality of ideas. The organs of political parties help for the dissemination of various outlooks and ideas. The only drawback of these papers is that most of them fully concentrate on politics. The lack of managerial and marketing excellence is another drawback of these papers.

Table – 10
How much time do you read?

Respondents	15 minutes	Half an hour	One hour	Above one hour
In the village	18	36	34	12
In the town	29	41	22	8
Media persons	6	28	48	18

(All digits are in percentage) *Source: Personal Study*
[The time figures given by the respondents are that of an ordinary day]

The readers in the village take more time than their urban counterparts. An average of 30 - 40% of readers take half an hour for newspaper reading both in town and in village. Naturally, Sundays and holidays give more time to common readers for reading. The dailies gave Sunday issues and supplements in these days. The dailies giving Sunday issues and supplements in these days. The time for reading is lower than that for viewing / listening other media. This is a new trend in Kerala. The entertainment value of print media is comparatively less. This is the main cause of the above said tendency. For journalists, newspaper reading is a part of their profession. 48% of them spend an average of one hour for daily newspaper reading. In many papers, the journalists have the duty to compare the news items in various newspapers. This also makes the journalist's job more hazardous and responsible.

Table – 11
Do you read the editorial?

Respondents	Regularly	Occasionally	No
In village	16	18	66
In town	14	15	71
Media persons	42	39	19

(All Digits are in percentage). *Source: Personal study.*

Editorial is considered as the opinion of the newspaper. It is the letter to the reader from the editor. But the study reveals that the common readers are not attracted by the editorial column. Many of the media persons read editorial regularly. The editorial has power to change the society in desirable directions. This will express the real problems of the society in front of the public as well as the rulers. The readers of editorials are slightly more in village than in town. Though newspaper is actually a commercialised product today, people do not consider it so. They consider journals and journalists as their crusaders for truth. This is the reason which the editorial get importance in the society though it has low readability.

Ours is a democratic country. There are difference of opinion is common in a country like India. So, different opinions must be expressed by the newspapers. Different dailies give us different opinions in each morning. Though some of them are contradictory in nature, it will help our national ideals, like Democracy, Secularism, Political sovereignty, Socialism etc.

Table - 12
Gifts Vs Gifted Journalism

Respondents	Gifts and incentives	Not necessary	Not responding
In village	64	33	3
In town	76	18	6
Media persons	17	81	2

(All digits are in percentage)

Source: Personal study.

Today, newspapers, magazine, T.V. channels are all wooing readers and viewers with incentives and gifts. Many of the common readers like this. But the media doing this for the hike of circulation figure or viewership. Actually, this is degrading the real 'dharma' of mass media. This is equal to propagating indirect commercialisation.

The media persons do not so much like this approach. Most of them consider this as unethical. These are all part of ‘competition’ surrounding us everywhere. There is every change of the reader getting caught up with the gifts, losing sight of the contents in the newspaper.

(iii) Some Other Notable Information from the Case Study

1. Kerala’s publications are in three types of crisis:

(a) Credibility crisis (b) Quality Crisis and (c) Affinity crisis.

As a result, the most friendly reader of a publication is not fully believing it even though he is reading it.

Journalistic ethics is gradually forgetting. The ethical values of the society are also vanishing. Mainly these are three parts for newspaper ethics: To inform, to motivate, to entertain. These three duties of the media are equally important. But today the entertainment value is increasing day by day. The motivating part is almost ignored.

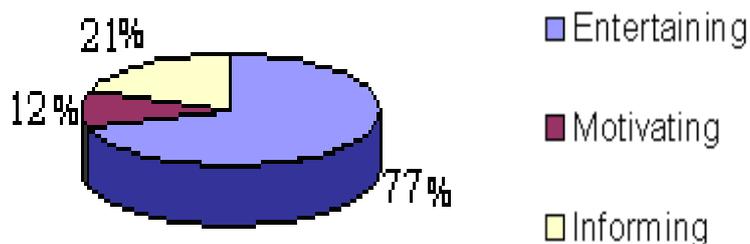


Diagram 3(i)
Source: Personal study

77% of matter space is utilised for entertainment portion in an average newspaper. 21% is for informing and only 12% is for motivating. Entertainment part is now going to trivialization and even to vulgarization. Once upon a time, the Keralite media made knowledge more democratic and social in the past. It leads the people in social changing movements. But today it was only part of history. In the past, Keralite media was secular. Now it is changing. Keralite

society was developed hand in hand with free, independent and transparent media.

2. Another thing observed in the case study is that the media making confusions. There is plurality in the media field. The same news is reporting in different media in different manner. Truth is ignored in between this confusion. The main aim of media is prevailing truth. It is for the sake of the society. Communication is a two way process. It is not a monologue. But, it is a dialogue. Unfortunately, the communication process in the state is becoming a one-way-process in the state, gradually. Unnecessary competition is the cause of it.

3. The language of our news papers is becoming rigid. It loses its soul. It is not easy to understand for a common reader in first reading. Language dead when a society loses its soul. The language of newspapers must be direct, soft and vivid. In Ramayana, 'Hanuman' great disciple of Lord Rama uses such language. It was appreciated by Rama. Language is the greatest boon given to man by God. A newspaper house is considered as the study room of the language of the masses. Journalism and literary works are also related each other. So the importance of news paper language is very high. Events must be explained in truthful and apt words. But today many journalists make their language unnecessarily ornamental. News items must be creative and factual. Ethical codes must be obeyed. Then the language must also be suitable for such communication.

4. One can easily see the commonness of features in Malayalam news papers. A good feature will make the reader intimate to the media. It will purify the emotions and evolve the thought process and influence the hearts of people. The factual approach must be accepted here also. The language must be simple. Vivid ideas are important than peripheral overflow of words. In many news papers in Kerala, the journalists use complicated language for features.

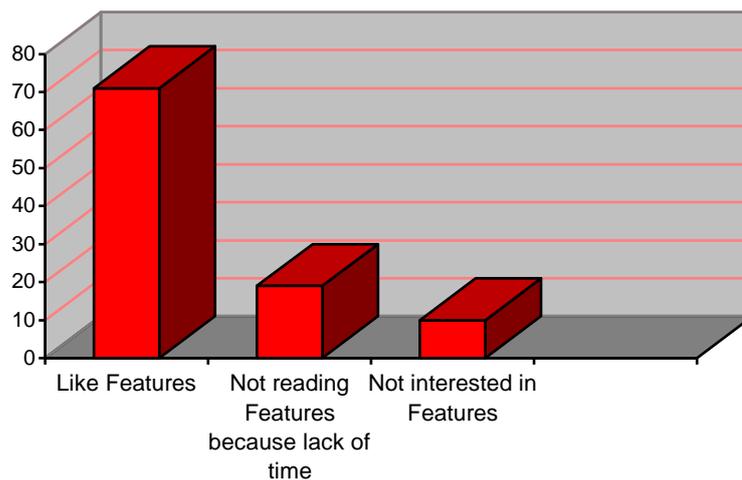


Diagram 3(ii)
Source: Personal study

71% of respondents participated in the survey likes features. They are regular readers of features. 19% of them do not read features because of lack of time. Only 10% does not read features. They are only interested in hard news. It is a fact that news paper reading easier and more user friendly because of features. Some features and human interest stories have social service value. It reveals the problems and necessities of the society.

5. Our media prevails a distorted type of value consciousness in the society. Visual media also make the speed of this distortion in an increased rate. Both media growth and social development are complimentary. Information technology and development of communication grow in direct proportion. But the condition in Kerala is not so. The number of suicides, rate of liquor consumption, crimes, sexual atrocities, murders, divorces and the pathetic condition of poor elder citizens are notable in Kerala. Here the media help to consumerism and consumeritic culture. Media become pamphlets of publicity. Traditional values ignored. The basic values like Truth, Love, Concern about others, Care of nature.....etc. are ignored. Most

of the media consider these values as immaterial. Value based approach and interventions are the urgent need of Kerala today.

6. Freedom of journalism envisages some problems in the state indirectly. Press freedom is the freedom of the people. In Kerala some try to control the media by calling the journalists as 'media syndicate'. There is no such syndicate in the state. Controlling or try to control media is not good in any conditions. People can control the media according to its credibility. Every person can choose their newspaper according to their will. This is an indirect type of media control. Media can criticise people. At the same time common people have the right to criticise media also. Responsible journalism must be the net result of all these exercises. Some times, even judiciary is giving guidelines to media. This type of control is not good for the society in long run. Justice Liberhan Commission Report insists that media persons must be controlled by giving licence. This licence must be issued and cancelled through Press Council of India. It is not desirable. The duty of a journalist is not like that of an engineer, doctor or an advocate. Journalistic work is the world of deep thinking and writing. It must not be controlled. But at the same time the journalists must think about why such suggestions arise in the society. Commercial concerns must not rule the media field. Capital forces could not control the journalistic field while it keeps the service oriented face.

7. In some situations the media helping antisocial elements not knowing it. The live telecast and speedy reporting help even terrorists and antisocial. This is an age of speedy information transmission. While reporting or live telecasting such crucial events media must hide some events purposefully. Also, the media must fight against corruption. Almost all institutions, including police and legal field is in corruption. So the journalists should fight against this using tooth and nail.

8. Another notable thing which we got from this study is that, the circulation of newspapers is increasing even though here is the presence of visual media. The circulation of newspapers is increasing though we have many news and entertainment channels. In 2008, in the world scenario, the circulation of news papers grew 1.3%. According to World Newspaper Congress and World Editors Guild this growth is 5%. The Dy. Executive of this organization Timothy Balsing said that world's largest newspaper market is India. 107 million is the sale of newspapers per day.¹

The growth rate of almost all major dailies is increasing in Kerala. The number of readers is growing. The growth rate of Malayala Manorama is 3.38% and that of Mathrubhumi is 4.13%. The rate of growth of Deshabhimani, which is the highest rate in Malayalam is 21.96%. (Indian Readership Survey- 2009, R2)

Article 3. Findings of the Study

Reading newspapers is an essential thing in the daily life of almost all Keralaites. Kerala has the largest number of newspapers. The study shows that we need a new kind of enlightened approach in journalism today, through which we can liberate the country from the evil forces of criminality, corruption and violence that are all-pervasive. The Constitutional vision of a great new India of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity can be made a living reality only through an enlightened approach in journalism based on the moral and spiritual values. This enlightened approach must be based on vision and values inspired by the light of truth. What we need today more than ideologies, is today an inspiring vision that can unite us in a great mission. Vision has greater power to motivate people and to bring out the best in them.

Journalists must become the men of character, conviction, courage, creativity and commitment which are the essential qualities of good leadership. This type of enlightened approach is an essential pre-requisite for enlightened media.

In rare occasions the freedom of the press is using in a negative way. It must not be allowed or appreciated. This is the misuse of the fourth estate. It will finally kill independent thinking of the society. By giving false information or exaggerated information, the media is becoming suicidal in its approach.

The media in the state is not giving enough attention to the problems of woman, downtrodden groups and minorities. This state must be changed. Upliftment of Dalits and other minority groups is the duty of journals and journalists. It is an urgent need for healthy society.

Now the professional journalism in the state almost ignoring the social value of the press. Professionalism has many good qualities. But it is a limitation. This limitation must be eradicated. Purity of fearless press is a need for the health of democracy. Newspaper is a product which is changing its quality every day. It is a new product in each day. So there is a chance for sensationalism in this era of commercialisation and utter competition. In the fight between ethics and economics, ethics must be win at every time. Opinion creation and service mentality must be continued without any obstructions.

As a business which had discursive production nature , over commercialisation is a danger. Unfortunately, an advertisement culture is prevailed fully in the field. Also news stories are articulated artificially in the papers to make the opponent backward in the competition.

We see that the media field in the state is controlled by advertisement interests. This is not a good tendency. This ad-culture destroys the humanitarian face of the newspaper. Social responsibilities are also forgotten. The media, especially the print media seems to have failed to perform their duties and to achieve their objectives. The Media doesn't give priority to the needs of the common public. The objectives of the paper are not set by the public but by the media owners themselves. Technological growth is used only as a weapon in this large scale competition. This competition must be qualitative; not based merely on commercial interests.

Journals and journalists must follow some ethics. Decision making done by the media has a direct bearing on the society. So the search for truth and holding firmly on truth (Satyagraha) is one of the primary duties of the newspapers. It is a conscientisation process. In this process, Gandhiji's example should guide modern journalists. He gave prime importance to journalistic ethics (Dharma) in his writings and journals.

Many of the journalists ignore the importance of the social impact of journalism. The approach of the media persons towards their product is important. Newspaper is not a commercial or professional product. It is a social product. So we can not avoid the social aspect and the social value of it.

Now-a-days, the reporting in the Malayalam dailies is given to gross exaggerations. This is not good. The reports must be factual and free from errors. The sensational approach to news must be avoided. Then only the papers could sustain their credibility. The advertorials in the papers must be avoided or limited to a minimum. When they publish that it must be pointed as they are advertorials, not news.

It is good for the media to have a common code of conduct. It must be constituted by the media houses jointly with the organizations of journalists. Now the media does not give adequate importance to ethical values. The media should return to the age old journalistic values and avoid all kind of aberrations.

Giving undue importance to political items is not good. Today's reader wants to be informed on a variety of subjects from the newspaper. Educational and commercial columns seem to attract the interest of the readers more than political items. Most of the readers have specialised and sectorial interest. So the media must cater to the needs of all kinds of people. Peripheral statements of politicians must be avoided. The political vested interests of the newspapers must not be transferred indirectly to the readers. But at the same time the plurality of ideas must be welcomed. The organs of political parties must become more professional. They have to show managerial excellence.

An average reader of a newspaper spends just half an hour for reading. So the papers must be more display-oriented and user-friendly in its nature. This reader friendly approach will help them to achieve a higher circulation.

Giving gifts and offering schemes to readers is not a good tendency. It will loose the seriousness of the media. It is not good because it will propagate indirect commercialisation. All kinds of gambling must avoidable in the newspaper industry.

The media must concentrate on human rights. In today's society human rights are violated even in homely atmosphere. Terrorist activities are growing in the society with rapid speed. Here the media has vital role to play. Conscientise the society against social evils like liquor consumption, dowry system and eradicate corruption

is another role of media. Environmental degradation is one of the major problems of our times. The media must give awareness against this and become a crusader of care for nature.

Article 4. Opinion of Media Experts

We have seen that technology and editorial go hand in hand now-a-days. Even in these days the opinions and ideas are govern the media field as in any other walk of life. An idea is a new combination of old elements. "Idea is that which exists in the mind, potentially or actually, as a product of mental activity such as a thought or knowledge." Thomas Jefferson once remarked, "Where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe."

In this study, I propose to discuss various ideas of some media experts and scholars who have opened their heart. According to famous editor Sir Harold Ivans, the main duty of newspapers is to expose painful truths if they would do good to the society. The truth must be shouted out continuously. Then only the wounds of the society cab be cured. Today the journalists shut their eyes to the needs of rural India. It is just like the Americans ignoring the Latin America. Rural reporting in India must be emphasized.² He continued: Journalism is a kind of power manipulation. So at every time it meets with resistances. The editor of Times, Lord North Cliff remarked, news is that which others want to hide. Today adventurous journalism is at the lowest ebb. Advertisement interests are high. The circulation of journals and dailies are increasing. But at the same time, they can not reach the hearts of media. This is what the exact position which Pandit Jawaharilal Nehru said to Jim Rose, who was the first director of International Press Institute. "I can't reach people through newspapers."

Shri M.P. Veerendra Kumar, Managing Director of the Mathrubhumi said: Everything in this universe is interrelated. This is the governing principle of the universe. To sustain this law is one of the duties of (dharma) journalism. Mass communication is a multifaceted activity. Each journalist has social responsibility and functional duty to be fulfilled. Today's journalism had many aberrations though it has many merits to its credit.

According to Hon. Justice K.T. Thomas, the media are deviating from truth, due to selfish motives. It is neither good nor wise. Some of the media persons exaggerate news items. Journalism must not violate the principles of human rights. Even cases and judicial activities are exaggerating with a view to sensationalise this. Some judges are also influenced by the reports in the media today.

“No newspaper is neutral. It is not easy to become so. Society is with full of diversities. Here newspapers could not stand alienated” N. Ram (The Hindu) opined. Ours is a society which is politicized too much. This is because the media taking partisan approach. In India some professional journalists are found to take a non -secular stand. In Kerala, almost all newspapers are secular in nature. Web journalism has limitless scope in Kerala. It is not fully utilized. The globalisation of the media must be resisted. When technology become more advanced the monopoly of the developed countries will end.

Dr. Sebastian Paul, media expert, remarked that the change in media field in one and a half decades of globalization is marvelous. The corporate giants are coming to the media field. At the same time citizen journalists are coming forward by decreasing the importance of professional journalists. There is no doubt in the case of the importance and influence of the media. Art. 19(1) A of The constitution ensures the freedom of speech and expression. The

ownership of all information is belonging to the society. Keralite Society is influenced integrally by the media. But we can not say that all cultural heritage of human society is due to the help of media. It is because, the printed paper itself had only 400 years of history. In history, the influence of media is not fully negative. But in a democratic society, the role of media is that of opposition parties. Media influence and create attitudes and opinions. The media influence become negative when the media become commercialized. Even advertisements are a method of influence.

The nature of media changing according to the change of technology. In America, The Christian Science Monitor, put an end to its print edition and fully changed into online. Then also the influence of media continues. The influence of media is not fully direct in its nature. It is a gradual process. In man there are some evil nature also. This is seen in every human activity including in the media.

Search, Analyse, comment, interpret..... etc. are the main functions of today's media. In the past, many newspapers are only reporting news items. Today they are giving all kind of interpretations – said, C. Uthama Kurup, former Associate Editor of Mathrubhumi daily. “See anything and everything as what they are. Pacting values in our thought, word and action. Love without any motives or achievements”. Editorial column must guide the newspaper. Newspaper is not only a business; it is a movement. We must not editorialise other columns – he who was the leader writer of the national daily for four decades remarked. In the editorial we should take concrete stands. The language of the editorial must be simple, correct and direct. Some time it may differ from the language of news columns. Good and apt quotations will make the column glittering. The newspaper must help the reader in indiscriminate reading. Each word in the editorial is directly committed to the policy of the

newspaper. Gandhiji's dailies are not published news items in the sense of the term of today. They are not accepted advertisements. They gave opinions, essays on certain topics and information. They are transforming principles. But today, a large scale daily could not stand only with subscription rate. Advertisement revenue is also important. Then the advertisers will surely influence the paper. Compromise is necessary. No one can publish a large scale daily without advertisements in a fully Gandhian way – the veteran Gandhian expressed his vision.

According to Shri. K. Ramakrishnan, grandson of Swadeshbhimani K. Ramakrishna Pillai, the primary duty of newspapers is to inform the people. Opinion creation is another important responsibility. Creating better citizens and changing the society in a better direction are also important. The policy of the paper is related mainly on the directions given by the editor. Press freedom is of two types.: (i) Freedom given to the editor by the media owner. (ii) The freedom given to the press by the authorities for its functioning.

Shri K.M. Roy, famous journalist said: The right to information act (2005) gives the journalists enormous freedom. The adventurous journalism is based on the skills of enthusiastic journalists of new generation. The media field is changed very much technologically. Media become a field of large capital. To start a medium size Malayalam newspaper needs 15-20 crores of rupees today. The attitude of common people towards newspaper is changed. The aesthetic sense of readers is changed. So the papers are become colourful in almost all pages. The economic burden of the papers makes free journalism almost impossible. Three type of editors are came in new generation: (i) Professional editors (2) Proprietor editors (3) Editor Proprietors

Indian Media is in 'Paid news Syndromme'. The term paid news syndromme is that, it which accepts money for news. It is harm to the democratic structure of the country – Justice G.N. Ray, Chairman of the Indian Press Council said. Money power is affecting even elections. The media is also becoming corrupted by accepting money. Some papers glorify the candidates by accepting money. The space was selling. This is the space of the common people who are suffering in poverty and deceases. There are so many petitions against such newspapers in the hands of Press Council – He revealed.

Shri. B.R.P Bhaskar, media expert, said that the social changing power of our media decreased when the circulation of the papers increased. Economic growth slowly decreased the influence of the paper. Opinion power is also decreased. The newspaper market in Kerala is almost saturated. Television got more attention than newspapers. The papers are localising news to resist this. Major papers are adopting the methods of the tabloids. In this competition the newspaper must sustain its credibility. Kerala going to a situation of having only two major newspapers. Many local newspapers are closed. Scholars like Prof. Robin Jeffry narrated this as a dangerous condition. Finally it may lead to a position which is having only one newspaper.

Famous Malayalam novelist Zakaria is criticizing the approach of Malayalam media towards religions. Newspapers are selling religious feeling. This is like selling RDX. It is a marketing technique. Magical remedies, festivals, unknown yogas, human godsetc are playing their own roles in this situation. The influence if religions are in two ways. (i) Advertisements wise and (ii) Circulation wise. By this approach the newspapers are destroying their own space of existence. Some newspapers having reliability, heritage and glorious track record are now turning to this dangerous way.

Shri. C. Gouridasan Nair, Special Correspondent, 'The Hindu' viewing the changing media culture in the state as a part of the modernization of the Keralite life. The minds of media men must also change according to this. The opinion of journalists will influence reporting style. Media must concentrate on issues like women's empowerment, environmental issues, prohibition and human rights. The media study and the training of journalists must be changed.

Jayant Mammen Mathew, Deputy Editor, Malayala Manorama visualize the future of newspapers in Cyber-space. But even in this age the newspapers will exist. It is because the readers like the style and language of the newspapers. Internet users are also using the sites of newspapers. Newspaper reports must be factual and evaluatory. The papers must take a place in the hearts of people. This intimacy and the unpredictable approach in presenting news items will help the media in existence. With this the aberrations of journalism must also be eradicated.

P. Sainath, reporter The Hindu protest against the conventional approach of our media. It does not giving reports about poverty or agricultural destruction. The reports are based on urban centres. The media taking partisan approach to upper class people in the society. The role of newspaper as a common platform is destroying due to the intervention of corporate giants. During the freedom struggle, our great national leaders are also editors. Gandhiji, Tilak and Nehru gave their great role as editors. This 'radical journalism' resisted the 'British raj'. The content of the papers in 1920's and 30's limited. But they had great ideological stand behind them. Profit making and advertisement culture do not go hand in hand with social aspects. Today most of the papers have specialised reporters for fashion, glamour, commercial activities. etc. But no paper has a 'poverty reporter' or an 'unemployment correspondent'. Grass root level political activities are

fully ignored in our newspapers. The media must concentrate on villages.

“A politician is seeing vote once in five years. But a newspaper seeking vote in every morning. If a subscriber dislikes the paper he will change into another paper” - Shri. Thomas Jacob, editorial director, Malayala Manorama says: Even then, the media taking the role of opposition. Corruption of public persons is revealed by the media. The people give importance to what the media says. Media must become a corrective force in this context. But unfortunately, we are now seeing some kind of aberrations in the media field also. This must be eradicated. The initiative of media men is needed for this.

‘Malayala Manorama’ Chief Editor Shri. K.M. Mathew (who died recently) opined that in our state there are many reader groups are formed. The interests of these groups must be catered. Gandhian values are important not only in the journalistic field, but in every field of life. Many Gandhian goals are achieved by us now. For example, racial discrimination is eradicated from the society to a large extent.

We can not compare Gandhiji’s journals to the dailies of today. Gandhiji’s publications are aimed only a group of intellectuals in the society. But the situation today is changed. People are subscribing newspapers to know things. This information must be given with maximum speed. The language of Media should be more simple. Our paper Manorama is publishing in a language which is understandable to a ninth standard school student in first reading.

Gandhiji considered newspaper as an integral product. It was a part of his life. He had sacrificial approach. But today such editors are rare in our society. Newspapers are large scale commercial ventures also. The angle of news presentation in our newspapers is

changed. Gandhiji gave vision and opinions through his papers. Today news is distributing. The papers are changed in perspective wise.

In case of advertisements, no newspaper can avoid it fully today. But the advertisements must be given with some restrictions. Avoid advertisement with bad taste is the duty of good journals. By doing so the editor is fulfilling his duty to the readers. Self restrictions is good for the society in case of advertisements. Reader could also control advertisements indirectly by avoiding newspapers having bad advertisements. Some reader dislike the huge volume of advertisements in the newspaper. Here also the readers could take the above said fact of avoiding the newspapers.

Gandhiji's journals had naturalness, straight forwardness, and simplicity. Today no newspaper can attain this credit. Gandhiji's truthful approach and clarity of thought is extraordinary – Shri Paul Manalil, assistant editor of Malayala Manorama said. We lost even the simplicity of language. Even English and Sanskrit words are common in the newspapers.

Adv. P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, B.J.P. leader says that the link between political activity and journalism must be re-established. Journalism is an extension of public activity. The persons without commitment should not come to this field. Media is now peeping into the private life of the public figures. It is not good. At the same time corruption must be revealed and punished. The over importance given to politics is a fact. Media is now viewing the power politics. It ignores people's politics. People's politics is dharmic rajniti (people's welfare oriented moral politics). The major changes in the world are not led by majority of people. A creative minority can change the world. Thinkers like Arnold Toynbee emphasis on this. Journalists must include in a small creative minority who will make changes in the

society. The journalistic approach is important than the net result of it, like Mahatma Gandhi rightly pointed out that there is no way to peace but peace is the way.

Famous journalist Kuldip Nayyar curses the commercialisation of media by saying that the field is now giving importance not to journalism but to packages. Money is offered to give news. Political parties giving money to attain space in newspapers. A commission formed by the Press council is looking to the matter. The Election Commission also takes the matter seriously. Now-a-days the journalists are not raising their sound for the downtrodden people in the society. No change is happening due to this. Where ever the press rises its sound against atrocities, there happened changes. Human rights are violated because of this utmost poverty. Violation of human right is not only the matter of some organizations. It is an issue which must be taken by the media. The family of the media person is the entire world. If one journalist could not show this much commitment to the world he must go to any other profession. But there are some rays of light in journalism even now. He responded.

Media activity is not for praising people. In India, though it is a democratic country, only 15 families are deciding the future of the politics. The people are electing them who are decided by these families. Here lies the importance of the media. Shri. M.D. Nalappad, famous media observer said. China and Korea are becoming more advanced to India financially. The police Act is based on the British Act of 1861. This has certain limitations. Media must have revealed all these things for the sake of the society.

But Shri. B.S. Biminith media observer and writer is responding against internet. Though in internet the information flow is two way, it is not fully reliable. Blogs are giving amateur journalism. If we accept

the news fully from the internet we have to accept the news of evening papers which are called Penny Press. Professional journalism has so many plus points to its credit. E-Papers and internet editions are attain their reliability from their own mother media houses. For example the internet edition of 'New York Times' (www.nytimes.com) and 'Washington Post' (www.washingtonpost.com) is always renewing their internet editions. But people rely on them because of the credibility of their print edition. This concept of the unreliability of internet is called web.2.0 ('web to zero') concept in communication studies.³

Shri. N.N. Satyavrathan, famous journalist and former course director, Kerala Press Academy, says that the journalists must keep commitment to ethics. He insisted on the responsibility of journalists towards society. It is an age of professionalism. The role of media played in the present society is also changed. The media become more intimate to the ambitions of the society than the pre-independence period. Before independence the interests were in tune with national interests and goals. Some thinkers like Late E.M.S Nampoothirippad are not accepting this argument. The media now not trying to increase the standard of thinking of its readers. It concentrate only on peripheral emotions and feelings. Both this are two concepts Shri. Satyavrathan said.

(The above given responses are collected by the researcher through interviews with the help of a questionnaire. The responses are extensive in nature. There are limitations to include all the ideas in this study. The duplication of ideas are avoided to maximum extent. Though we are giving an interview schedule, most of the respondents are giving ideas beyond that. That is also another limitation of this attempt. Journalism is not a topic which have hard and fast rules

which are accepted by all. So the difference of ideas is common, inevitable and unavoidable)

Article 5. Remedial Measures

In search of an answer for the above questions, many views expressed by wise people given in the previous article will be helpful to an extent. But in history, bright model of Mahatma Gandhi stands unique in the field of journalism. The researcher thinks that the values he had given to life are more relevant today than ever. His journalistic approach is peculiar in nature. In the coming chapters we will discuss it elaborately.

Mahatma Gandhi is considered as the greatest visionary and social reformer of modern times. He had a wholistic vision of life and he was aware of the problems of day to day life. In fact, his wholistic vision has great significance in the vulnerable situation which we face today. Gandhiji was a man of Truth which he considered as God. Today in every field of life we lost truthfulness. Journalistic field is also not an exemption. News items which are not true is increasing in our dailies. Both newspaper owners and journalists loosing credibility. A person who reads only one newspaper can not easily find out truth from the overflow of news items.

Today we are hearing about the intervention of foreign news papers. Our Swadeshi newspaper organizations and editors fearing this intervention. Gandhi prophetically visualized this and look a stand against all kind of foreign interventions. He was a man of swadeshi.

Gandhi taught us that ordinary men can do extraordinary things. He was not a professional journalist. But he practiced journalism successfully for decades. He gave solutions to the

problems which modern media facing today. These Gandhian solutions are not applied widely in our society. Now a days media is more aggressive than that of the time of Gandhiji. The competition is utmost. Even now the solutions put forward by Gandhiji is relevant.

Gandhiji believed that good qualities will bring all good in life. Journalism today need a qualitative change. Gandhiji gave us a guideline by giving his example. 'The papers must give news, free interchange of independent views, free ventilation of peoples grievances in the public press, free speech and free writing ...etc.'⁴ Gandhiji had foreseen the power of media. Against the British Press Act, he wrote, "If Public feeling is against the govt., it can find expression only through the medium of newspapers. By suppressing the expressions, one cannot change the feeling. To keep the Press Act alive is to behave like the meteorologist who after smashing his barometer, would know the state of atmospheric pressure. By putting it on the statute-book, the Govt. has damaged the machine which indicates the direction and the state of the current of popular feeling, and consequently it can longer keep itself informed about the exact state of public feeling. The only course for the Govt. therefore is to repeal the Press Act and it is the duty of the public to strive for its repeal."⁵

Gandhiji never considered his publications as a tool for profit making. He vividly explains it in the conditions of Navajivan. He gave two important conditions. 1. Not to accept advertisements for money in Navajivan. 2. Not to publish Navajivan at loss.⁶

Gandhiji had clear vision about freedom of the press also. He considered this freedom as the soul of the press. He warned about the misuse of press freedom also. "Do not write things which are illegal. Also the newspapers must avoid writing things which are painful to

innocent people. Do not use violent language. If any paper use such language, the people must boycott such papers. The press must not write which increase bitterness".⁷

Gandhiji was against the violent attack of news papers against social issues. Using the freedom of the press, the minimum power of the media must be utilized. Full civil liberty is the right of the society. " So long as the press is not used to promote violence directly or indirectly. This includes freedom of the press and freedom to receive newspapers which do not promote violence".⁸ Gandhiji gave 4 more conditions to press freedom. The important condition among them is the press should stand for truth and non violence. "I (Gandhi) read the public press shows that there is often a departure from truth and non violence. How this evil can be remedied, I do not know. The press managed or owned by congressmen might be amenable to moral control".

He was also had an ardent stand for purity of journalism. He was fully against obscene journalism. When Gandhiji got a petition against Marati journal, 'Chand' which wrote an article which was obscene, Gandhiji responded, "The papers must not propagate lust or vice. If it does so, we should never buy nor even read such obscene literature. The Government should constitute a committee to check the publications. The committee should then prepare lists of books and journals which adjudged best and those adjudged obscene and it should popularise the good books and boycott the obscene ones. Such a committee can only be successful if its members are willing to devote themselves whole heartedly to the service of literature."⁹

Gandhiji considered freedom of the press as the valuable property of the society. "Newspapers would have no value if their editors did not have the right to express their views freely. We want the

removal of all restrictions imposed by the Government on newspapers; should we then, tolerate people imposing restrictions by means of threats? We may try to change people's views and their attitudes by love, by persuasion and by example. Threats will not succeed".¹⁰

Gandhi believed that papers are representatives of public opinion. So the press must be independent and fearless. At the same time journals and journalist must follow certain ethical codes. Gandhiji explained this at a prayer meeting speech (Bombay) on September 27, 1944; "Journalism, like every institution, had its own code of ethics and he was not there to pass judgement. All he could say was that he himself had, perhaps, followed a different code of ethics even in the field of journalism. If the public strongly disapproved anything or practice the press would not repeat them. It was intolerable that any one should try to pry into and give publicity to private correspondence without authority.

Today we know that 'the media is the message'. It is an age of 'infotainment'. In this age of 'free market', society is fast changing. Even today Gandhi's concepts are relevant and must be hotly debated. Today scholars look for patterns in media effects, predictable results and statistical evidence to see how media affects us. Also we must take the case of the freedom of the press as an example. There is no doubt that it is the litmus test of democracy. At the same time, there is no end of misuse of the freedom of the press in a democracy. Both are facts of the same truth. "As Mahatma Gandhi used to say, if you did not have the freedom to go wrong, then you have no freedom. The freedom of the Press like motherhood and grassroots democracy can not be questioned".¹¹

In the following chapters we shall try to critically examine the identified Gandhian solutions to modern journalistic aberrations.

Such an approach is relevant even in this time of citizen journalism. Gandhi considered journalism as service. Today journalism is becoming a big business. The credibility of journals are loosing. The persuasive power of the media is decreasing even when the circulation is increasing. During our freedom struggle, the media had goal and role. They had social educating function to fulfill. Here in this study I am making an attempt to evaluate Gandhi's approach in today's perspective for journalism with a human touch is needed more now than ever before.

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