CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Newspaper industry in Manipur represents small scale newspaper industry as most of newspapers are having less than 25,000 circulations in a publication day. Out of the total newspapers few have approved more than 25,000 circulations per publication day and rests of the newspapers have circulation less than 25,000 per publication. Newspapers of Manipur have been considered as a democratic instrument that reiterates opinions of the people of the state. Maximum of the newspapers are run by owners. Some are with owner-editors pattern of management. Language wise Manipuri and English are dominating and most of the publications are in broadsheet format. Offset printing technology is used for printing and colored pages with varied page numbers appeared in their copies. Maximum of the newspapers are available online. Additional Sunday supplementary have become a new trend of media industry in Manipur.

People

The present study has compiled opinions of two important stakeholders-Journalists and newspaper readers. With the objective of analyzing their point of view on conflict and its impact on performance of newspapers, significant similarities and differences have been interpreted.

In case of journalist respondents universe presents some unique characteristics. By number youth and post youth journalist are in majority. Most of journalists are male and married. Most of journalists are belonging to Hindu community.

In case of readers respondents the universe is dominated by youth, male and unmarried. Most of the readers belonged to urban area and Hindu community.

Socio-economic background

Majority of the journalists belonged to the middle income groups and are graduate. Majority of the journalists are from rural area.
As far the readers are concerned, majority of them belonged to middle income group and they are post graduate.

**Media uses**

Both journalists and readers have been accessing different media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet etc.

Majority of the journalists read newspapers daily. Majority of them read newspapers for 1-2hr and preferred both Manipuri and English for reading newspaper. Majority of them subscribed only one newspaper. They preferred to read all the items of news but as a single choice crime and politics are most liked by them. Majority of them read magazines on weekly basis and listen to radio for less than one hour. Majority of the journalists have listened to one radio channel. They access internet daily. They read newspapers to get information of the world as the first preference.

As readers are concerned, majority of them read newspapers daily and preferred both Manipuri and English language for reading newspapers. Majority of them read magazines, listen to radio, have cable TV service and access to internet daily. Readers read newspapers to get information of the world as first preference.

6.1 **THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The findings are divided into three parts. **Part I** based on the findings of the opinion of the journalists, **Part II** based on the findings of the opinion of the readers and **Part III** based on the findings of the opinion differences of the journalists and readers on some issues. The findings of the study are as follows:-

**Part-I (Based on Opinion of Journalists)**

1) The universe of the study in case of journalists is dominated by youth (39.65 percent) and post youth, 36-45 ages, (36.20 percent) age group.

2) The universe is dominated by male journalists and women representation in working journalists is very low (8.6 percent).
3) Majority of journalists are married and they have specific social or family responsibility.

4) Majority of print media journalists came from the urban background and thus it can be further assumed that they are familiar to the urban issues and topography by background.

5) Most of the journalists are well educated and hence it can be said that they have sufficient academic background to understand the pros and cons of the profession.

6) Finding says that by religious background most of the journalists are Hindu followed by Sanamahi or Meeteis. Other religious groups are either in minority or they have no representation.

7) Most of journalists represent middle income groups. So universe is dominated by middle class representation.

8) Reading newspapers daily is a common habit of journalists. So, it can be said that they have a regular look on their published work.

9) Majority of the journalists prefer to read English newspapers along with Manipuri newspapers. As a single language, journalists preferred English than the local language for reading newspapers.

10) Majority of the journalists subscribe to newspapers at their home.

11) Majority of the journalist prefers to read all items of newspapers but as a single choice news on crime and politics are preferred most by journalists.

12) Majority of the journalists read magazines weekly.

13) Out of total respondents, 82.75 percent listen to radio and 17.24 do not listen to radio. It shows that journalists are interested in listening to radio.

14) Majority of the journalists have one TV set at their home.

15) Majority of the journalists accessed to internet with 87.93 percent. It shows that majority of the journalists use internet daily.
16) Majority of the journalists consider local newspapers as that of national newspapers. It indicates that they are satisfied with their performance.

17) Majority of the journalists are fully satisfied with the information given by them.

18) Newspapers in Manipur have earned a positive reputation and their readers have faith on them.

19) The newspapers are credible in the eyes of the majority of journalists.

20) Journalists agreed that newspapers published from Manipur always prevails the truth.

21) Journalists have faith in objective approach of Manipur’s newspapers on covering conflict.

22) Majority of the journalists approve that insurgency related news are very common in newspapers of Manipur.

23) Among insurgency news, news happening in Manipur is covered with extra attention. It shows highness value of local incidents for newspaper of Manipur.

24) In the opinion of journalists suffering of common people with insurgency is of highest news value. Killing of insurgents and security forces get comparatively low importance.

25) In the opinion of majority of journalists all newspapers of the state covered human rights violation incidents as it happens without any bias.

26) Majority of the journalists do not consider impact of any threat from the state government on newspapers in Manipur.

27) In the opinion of journalists newspapers conduct their own investigation and in case of encounter stories chances of pseudo journalism are minimal.

28) All journalists are interested in reading the editorial page.
29) Journalists of the state read the editorial write ups sincerely and they have marked it as objective in their approach selection and presentation of contents.

30) Majority of journalists face interruption and threats on duty. Both state and non-state players are involved in threatening and thus it can be concluded that in conflict situations journalists face threats from all players.

31) Majority of journalists take self-precautions on risk advisories. It includes visit and report from sensitive place, moving during odd hours and covering of government programme and public gatherings.

32) In opinion of journalists there is moderate risk in outdoor reporting at government offices at Imphal.

33) Journalists have said that there is no risk for the journalists reporting at military or security forces camps in Manipur.

34) In their opinion journalists are in moderate risk while reporting at public places at Imphal.

35) Journalists have moderate risk reporting at outskirts of Imphal or Urban Imphal.

36) The content selection and advisory treatment of the newspapers is from all the sources such as government, non-state organizations, and security forces.

37) Journalists deal insurgents’ threat by open and democratic protest like observing black day, general strike, press conference, sit in protest, rally etc.

38) Journalists deal security forces or state threat or unnecessary directives by raising public protest.

39) Journalists expressed that militants’ armed strike on the building or office or property of the newspaper organization are common form of attack in Manipur.

40) In the opinion of the journalists, militants do not imposed threats to the advertiser and business associates of the newspapers houses of Manipur.
41) Majority of the journalists have not expressed their opinion regarding affective ness of newspaper’s performance due to insurgent threats.

42) Majority of the journalists do not want to express their views regarding the cause of non performance on economic and business front of the media houses in Manipur.

43) The conflict situation of the state does not have negative effects on the growth of newspaper.

44) The credibility level of the newspapers in conflict zone is high.

45) The newspapers of Manipur are very much satisfied by their readers according to journalists’ perspective.

46) Media profession is at moderate risk due to conflict in the state of Manipur.

47) Majority of the journalists do not want to express the rate of reputation of media profession in conflict zone of Manipur.

48) Journalists in conflict zone have creativity in their profession.

49) The value of media profession is high in the society where conflict exits.

Part-II (Based on Opinion of Readers)

50) The universe is dominated by youth readers of age group (16-25) yrs with 42.64 percent.

51) The study shows that male population is dominating the scene of newspaper readers in the state of Manipur.

52) Majority of the readers are unmarried with 38.76 percent.

53) The study shows that maximum of the newspapers readers are from urban area with a percent of 76.74 percent.

54) The study shows that maximum of the respondents are postgraduates. It shows that people who read newspapers are highly educated.
The study is dominated by Hindu readers followed by Muslim, Sanamahi and Christian.

The finding of the study reveals that majority of the readers belonged to middle income group.

Majority of the readers read newspapers regularly with 67.05 percent. It indicates that people of the state read are very interested in reading newspapers.

Majority of the respondent read Manipuri and English newspapers and very few read Meitei Mayek newspapers. It shows that both Manipuri and English newspapers are very popular in Manipur.

Majority of the respondents subscribe to newspapers with 82.17 percent. It shows that people of the state have great interest in reading newspapers.

The finding of the study shows that majority of the respondents read magazines (84.11 percent). It indicates that they have the habit of reading magazines.

Majority of the respondents listen to radio with 94.1 percent. The finding shows that radio is very popular in Manipur.

Majority of the respondents have only one TV set with 59.29 percent.

Majority of the respondents have cable TV service at their home with 54.26 percent followed by satellite TV and DTH. It shows that cable TV is very popular in Manipur.

Majority of the respondents have access to internet with 65.5 percent. It indicates that readers also read news through internet.

Majority of the respondents read newspapers to get information of the world as first preference, to get local information as second preference, to get information of the surroundings as third preference, to educate as fourth preference and as useful intellectual piece as last preference.
66) In the opinion of the readers the standard of the local newspapers are not good as that of other national newspapers. It shows that local newspapers need to maintain its standard as that of other national newspapers.

67) Readers are partially satisfied with the news and information given by the local newspapers of Manipur. It shows that media need to fulfill readers’ requirement.

68) In the opinion of the readers the credibility level of the local newspapers is very low.

69) In the opinion of readers, local newspapers prevail truth depending on circumstances.

70) Majority of the respondents respond that the local newspapers of Manipur have high level of political objectivity which is much needed in conflict situation.

71) Readers read insurgency related news item very often with 32.56 percent. It shows that insurgency related news items are very common in the local newspapers of Manipur.

72) In the opinion of the readers, local newspapers of Manipur give more coverage to Manipuri related insurgency, followed by Naga insurgency, Kuki and others.

73) Readers expressed that all kinds of insurgency related news item such as insurgents’ gun down by security forces, insurgents kill security forces, insurgents attack on public and public places and insurgents surrender are placed prominently in the local newspapers of Manipur.

74) In the opinion of the readers, local newspapers of Manipur covered human rights violation incidents without any bias.
The study found that the newspapers of Manipur are not running under the state government threats. However, a good number of respondents accept the threats from government which is a negative factor for growth and maintaining objectivity of newspapers.

Majority of the respondents responded that newspapers covered story of encounter based on the investigation done by reporters. It shows that readers recognized reporters’ efforts to cover encounter story.

All the respondents read editorial page which shows that readers’ great interest in reading editorial page.

Majority of the respondents read editorial write ups with 71.77 which shows that editorial write up is an important element of a newspaper.

The study found that majority of the respondents responded that local newspapers present the editorial opinion objectively (56.59 percent).

In the opinion of the readers, editorial presents things on factual ground.

The study found that the local newspaper of the state is not a pro-state newspaper. It indicates that the newspapers of Manipur are running independently.

The finding of the study shows that local newspapers are not pro-militant newspapers. It reveals that the newspapers of Manipur are not pro-militant but an independent newspaper.

Majority of the respondents expressed that local newspapers are publishing under conflict generated threats. It shows that newspaper got threats from both state and non-state actors.

In the opinion of the readers, the efficiency and truthfulness of the newspapers are affected by conflict related issues. It shows that conflict creates a negative effect on the growth and development of newspaper.
85) Majority of the respondents responded that militant threat would not be able to deliver the truth of the newspapers. It shows that militant have imposed threats on media which affect its functionality.

86) In the opinion of the readers, militant threat or pressure to the newspapers would not be able to report things objectively which is a key element of a newspaper.

87) The study found that the militant’s threat or pressure on the newspapers would not be able to cover everything. It reveals that conflict have negative impact on the effectiveness of the newspaper and media profession as a whole.

Part-III (Based on Differences of Opinion of Journalists and Readers)

88) Journalists are satisfied with their profession whereas readers do not. It shows need of improvement in the quality of local newspapers and showing limitations of small and medium scale newspapers in competitive industrial environment and resourcefulness.

89) Journalists are fully satisfied with the local newspapers with 57.14 percent and readers with 13.95 percent. 27.59 percent of the journalists respond that they are not satisfied whereas readers do not satisfied with 32.17 percent.

90) The study has marked a huge difference between credibility perception of journalists and readers for local newspapers (67.24 percent and 32.95 percent respectively). So it can be said only one third readers accept that newspapers are credible.

91) It is observed from the findings that journalists and readers have a great opinion differences regarding prevailing truth of the newspapers (56.9 percent and 16.28 percent respectively). It shows that journalists need to work more in prevailing truth of the newspapers so that readers feel more credible.

92) The study shows the difference of opinions among the journalists and readers regarding the perception of high level of objectivity of the newspapers (67.25 percent and 49.61 percent respectively). Thus, it can be stated that journalists feel high level of objectivity of the newspapers than the readers.
Both journalists and readers read insurgency related news items regularly with 24.13 percent and 20.54 percent respectively and very often (25.87 and 32.56 percent respectively). It is found that journalists are more concerned about insurgency related news than the readers.

Journalists found more news on Manipuri related insurgency than the readers. It shows that different types of insurgency groups are operating in the State of Manipur.

The study found that all the news are prominently placed in the newspapers from both the opinions of the journalists and readers with 36.21 percent and 44.96 percent respectively. It can be said that readers are more satisfied with the space and attention of insurgent related news item than the journalists.

The study found that journalists are more satisfied with the coverage of human rights violation incidents than the readers (68.97 percent and 38.37 percent respectively). Readers found that newspapers covered human rights violation incidents in suppressed and unnecessary way. It can be concluded that in all the aspects readers are not satisfied with the coverage of human rights violation incidents of the newspapers.

The study reveals that the newspapers of the state are not running under State government threats as both the journalists and readers have responded (77.59 percent and 68.22 percent respectively).

The study found that journalists are doing their own investigation in filing stories of encounters rather than any other sources whereas readers found more stories of encounter based on the information given by security forces.

The study indicates that editorial opinions are objective as responded both by journalists and readers (74.14 percent and 56.59 percent respectively). Readers found more editorial opinions on pro-state and pro-militancy than the journalists. Thus, it can be said that editorial opinion of the newspapers are objectively presented.
The finding reveals that journalists found more editorial page presenting things on factual things and balance between non state and state related matters than the readers.

6.2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Conflict is the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interest. It is a concept which explains many aspects of the social life such as social disagreement, conflicts of interest, and fight between individuals, groups or organizations. In political terms, ‘conflict’ can be refers to wars, revolutions or other struggles, which may involve the use of force as in the term armed conflict. An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility which concerns government and or territory where the used of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of the state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) outlines that an international armed conflict involves the armed forces of at least two sovereign states in the conduct of armed hostilities whereas an internal armed conflict is a confrontation within the territory of one state between the regular armed forces and identifiable armed groups, or between armed groups. There is no disagreement of opinion while terming a war or a war like situation between two nations as an international armed conflict. However, as far as internal armed conflict is concerned, even defining the same is not free from conflicting interpretations. One group like to term a secessionist armed struggle as internal armed conflict, the activists of the movement are appreciated as a force to be reckoned, with and their activity is justified as martyrs’ duty for a genuine cause of self determination as envisaged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. On the contrary, the other group who does not subscribe the former school of thought would definitely have termed it a law and order problem created by insurgents and sometimes by terrorists. Global and local perspectives on the same situation of armed conflict and its potential movers do have drastic differences. Different perceptions are developed many a time and situations of armed conflict are often interpreted as per convenience by different groups to serve their specific interests. The other types of conflicts exist are such as
wars of national liberation or armed attacks in which people struggle to exercise their right to self-determination.

History has shown that the media can incite people towards violence. Several studies confirmed that the impact of media on conflict is greater than the impact of the media on conflict prevention and peace building. It appears that the increasing on going conflict has led greater pressure and restrictions on the media. Some journalists were forced to retired from the profession. There were killed because of their work as journalists. They either died in the line of duty were deliberately targeted for assassination because of their reporting or their affiliation with news organizations. Journalists undergo trials and tribulations in countries like Pakistan, Myanmar (Burma), China, Russia, Iran, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Colombia, Ukraine, Malaysia etc. Dozens of journalists from Myanmar (Burma), China, and Russia etc. have to live to fight back against their oppressive rulers. Several journalists have been jailed for their free expressions but those who are willing to work inside their countries must contend with the bulk of regulations and censorship imposed in the name of national security. Despite of all harsh regulations and censorship imposed many journalists manage to bring to light the dismal state of affairs in their respective countries. Editors were killed by unidentified gunmen and sometimes journalists were banned from exercising their profession by underground elements that even went up to the elements of closing down newspaper office. Journalists in the state or country where many different underground outfits are operating and ethnically very sensitive are working.

Reporters San Frontiers, non-profit organization work to defend journalists and media outlets by condemning attacks on press freedom worldwide, the set of indicators for measuring the press freedom includes: death of journalists (while performing their work), arrests and detention of journalists (including trials for different charges), attacks on journalists and harassment of journalists (all types of violence on journalists regardless of source and character), existence of legal limitation on press freedom (anti, defamation laws restricting access to information and restricting the publishing of certain information), censorship and banning of media and pressure on media, interference in, and obstruction of media activities (financial restriction on publishing and broadcast resources, liability and damage charges, interference in editorial policy).
According to London-based International News Safety Institute (INSI), 134 journalists and media staff support were killed while on reporting assignments in 2013. Syria is the first rank, Iraq the second, Philippines the third, India as fourth and Pakistan on the fifth in the list of countries as most dangerous for journalists in 2013. Most of those killed were targeted deliberately. Of these, 65 died covering armed conflicts—primarily in Syria, where 20 were killed, and Iraq, where the death total was 16—while 51 were killed in peacetime covering issues like crime and corruption, and 18 died in accidents. After Syria and Iraq cited by the Institute as the most dangerous countries for journalists last year, came Philippines with 14 deaths, India with 13 and Pakistan with 9.

Incidents of violence against and restrictions on journalists in several parts of India have been increasing over the past few years. They confronted hostility and intimidation from the army, the police, anti-social elements and militants, communal organizations in several parts of India particularly in Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Assam, Orissa, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Since 1992, 32 journalists were killed in India with motive confirmed and 22 journalists with motive unconfirmed. As North East India is concerned since 1987, 23 editors, correspondents and reporters were killed in Assam. The largest state in India’s North East is also the most dangerous. Next in terms of professional hazards is Manipur, where seven journalists have been murdered till now.

The media of Manipur has been working with integrity to fulfill its responsibility of being watchdog of the society. There are threats to press freedom in the state from both the state and non-state actors as they try to control the flow of information or misinformation to the masses. Underground insurgent groups operating in the state, which earlier relied on pamphlets and word-of-mouth as the major means of spreading their ideas and diktats, are now turning to newspapers and news channels to carry their statement and propaganda to a large audience. These groups have resorted to issuing press-releases through e-mail. These releases are often followed by phone-calls of ‘appeal’ for verbatim publication. Factionalism among the groups has further compounded the problem. The state military too takes the media on guided tours of areas “cleared of insurgents”, press briefings, display of arms captured during operations, and surrender ceremonies, while also relentlessly bombarding the press with their media releases about their “civic action programmes”. Failure to adhere to the new rule of propaganda warfare has led to frequent
harassment of media persons, in the form of killings, bombings, life attempts, assault and arrest.

From 1993 till date, as many as seven journalists have been shot dead in Manipur. There has been numerous life attempts, bombings etc. and almost every day there are threats over the phone, and pressure from the underground outfits in Manipur. In most cases, media persons respond with dharnas, suspension of publications, blank editorials, rallies and demands to the government for safe atmosphere to work. Each time, the threat is withdrawn but the working conditions for journalists remain the same as most outfits believe it is their right and duty to pressurize newspapers into carrying their press releases the way they want them.

Thangjam Dwijamani @ Nanao, correspondent of Guwahati-based channel Prime Time was killed on December 23, 2012 in police firing during an indefinite general strike imposed by various organizations protesting against the alleged molestation of a film actress by a self-styled Lt. Col of the underground NSCN-IM at the musical event in Chandel district of Manipur on December 18, 2012. It may be pointed out that the cause of the gunning down of Editor of a local daily, Manipur News, Thounajam Brajamani who had expressed some views against ‘some armed persons’ in August 2000 at Imphal is still unknown to the public. Whether his ‘elimination’ was connected with the personal enmity or for a cause is still known. Brajamani who had founded the once-popular daily was shot by two unidentified gunmen at a place between Meino Leirak and Keishampat Thiym leirak in the heart of high-security Imphal town on 20 August 2000 at around 10.30 pm while he was going to print his paper. No organization or individual has so far claimed responsibility for the killing of the veteran journalist. However, in case of the case of the Editor of a local journal Shan in Hmar dialect, H.A. Lalrohlu, who was shot dead on 10 October 1999 at New Saikot in Manipur’s Churachandpur district, the motive behind the crime was very clear. Hmar Revolutionary Front (HRF) in statement on 14 October disclosed that its men had killed Lalrohlu and three others for ‘working against the interest of the HRF’, an underground group whose aim is what they termed to ‘protect’ the Hmar community from the ‘aggressive’ nature of the Kuki, Mizos and other larger communities. The state too has squeezed the media. During the 1950s, the government actions such as seizing papers, imposing fines, closure of printing presses
and imprisonment of editors were common place following anti criticism of the government. During the 1970s, when underground movements began to spread, the seizure of press material and arrests of journalists were routine. Two editors-Salam Bharatbushan of Hueiyen Lanpao and Meinam Mithai were even booked under the National security Act and imprisoned for six months. In April 2000, N. Biren formerly the editor of Naharolgi Thoudang was arrested by the state police for publishing a speech by activist Th. Iboyaima, on charges of it being ‘seditious’ and ‘anti-national’.

The media in Manipur has been working in an environment of threats and intimidation from different sections. On various occasions the media has to suspend publication of newspapers following threats. Recently circulation of Imphal based newspapers of the state was severely affected for some days in early September 2013 as hawkers’ suspended service following a renewed threat from militant organization. Editors, reporters and management staff of some leading dailies came out on the streets in the city to sell newspapers.

The circulation level of the newspapers in Manipur is not being affected by the conflict between the state and non state actors. Instead it enhances increasing the number of circulation. As the literacy rate is increasing and people are more concerned about the happenings, so people prefer to read more newspapers.

The life of journalists in armed conflict seems to be very dangerous. In the state of Manipur the risk level of media profession is high. The journalists of the state get different kind of pressure and threats from both the state and non state actors of the state. They got telephonic threats, bomb gift at the office building or at the residences of the journalists, kidnapped the journalists, detention on the way coming back from the office by security forces, harassment etc. There have been many incidents of banning of local newspaper and local cable network by different militant outfits, state administration and civil society organizations. Besides, the Government of Manipur has imposed restrictions on the media on different occasions regarding publication of news related with the insurgencies. The government is trying to curtail freedom of press by issuing “do’s and don’ts for the press” as directed by the government of India. In a bid to curb the “oxygen of publicity” of the militants, the state
administration has issued official orders as well as to ban publications of news and photograph emanating from armed outfits. Journalists have been booked on the flimsy ground of either having nexus with the militants or publishing seditious news reports and comments All Manipur Working Journalists Union (AMWJU) too have code of ethics in conflict zones.

The newspapers readers of the state have different opinions regarding the objectivity, credibility of the local newspapers. They felt that because of threats and pressure being imposed on media by both the state and non-state actors in the conflict areas have affect the functionality and objectivity of the press in Manipur have been affected. According to the audience perspectives, the newspapers of Manipur are neither a pro-state nor a pro-militant newspaper, it is an independent body, but they are publishing their newspapers under conflict generated threats. The conflict related issues are affecting the efficiency and truthfulness and objectivity of the newspapers. If the readers are not satisfied with the standard of the local newspapers, the question of survival of newspapers arise. Removal of conflict in the state will allow the media persons to work in an environment free from threats, pressure etc. Because of the pressure they could not performed their duty objectively and the freedom of press have been exploited. At the same time journalists need to maintain the code of ethics. However, press in Manipur is very vibrant and courageous in performing their journalistic duties. To avoid pro-active tagging from either side they work with the principles of journalism. In this regard Press Council of India guidelines, guidelines framed by All Manipur Working Journalists Union, Editors’ Guild (Manipur) guidelines are mainly followed. Newspaper organizations have also framed guideline for job performance that helps respective journalists in performing their duties.

It was found in the study that specific guidelines are framed by representative organizations that are based on principle of ‘accountability and objectivity’. Newspapers are expected to be accountable in coverage of conflict. They have been suggested to strictly follow ‘authentication labels’ in case of third party information. Most of the guidelines are restrictive in nature and changes of disputes and remedial measures have also been included. Guidelines draw distinctive line between do’s and don’ts and accepted by all media organization so are effectively implemented. Media has placed itself as open platform to all stakeholders and thus unless a leading,
harmful and anti-people information appears they do not exercise their right to censor ‘denial of publications’.

When a media house is operating in conflict situation its credibility and objectivity is critically observed by readers. Readers need fair and truthful coverage of conflict issues. Manipur, that has been under conflict situation since many decades do not provide ideal situation to run a newspaper with journalistic standards and objectivity. A paramount of pressure always come from state and non-state players which put newspapers in environment of uncertainty, insecurity and pseudo journalism. Fortunately newspapers have maintained their standard that is clearly reflected in the readers’ opinion. Readers have shown their faith in Manipur’s press that works as lifeline and inspiration to operate with journalistic principles.

Newspapers from Manipur cover insurgency related news with great commitment and brevity. Encounters, gun downs, killings, human rights violation, threats, blast and all such news are reported with self investigation. When such incidents take place in state adequate coverage is given to them. Such news has high demand too. Thus, newspapers follow the taste of public. Other insurgency news are also covered which make readers to understand conflict situation across the country and the world.

One very remarkable observation of this work can be mentioned as nature of functionality and its challenges. Manipur press represents small scale and medium scale newspaper industry that search its survival with readers’ satisfaction. Apart from, it is not very lucrative profession so only committed people come to this profession. Media in Manipur work under heavy pressure from both state and insurgent groups. But, despite of all odds and threats media try to present a holistic view of insurgency related news. Since insurgency in the state prevailed with political reasons so newspapers have adopted policy of ‘no influence’. In the policy of no influence they avoid propaganda items as much as possible and present their critical views when people’s loss is reported.

Press in Manipur always faces threats and pressure from conflict players. Unfortunately adequate security rarely assigned to them so they work in situation of great danger to their life and property. Reporting conflict has become a challenging responsibility for press in Manipur. Committed to cover conflict issues, press has
adopted self regulatory measures and security advisory to perform their duties with safety and journalistic objectivity. It was found that journalists take extra precautions while moving in conflict areas.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, it is found that journalists faced various problems from both actors of the state. As to protect the safety and security of the journalists in armed conflict situation of Manipur, the following measures have been suggested:

a) Both the state as well as non-state actors needs to understand and respect humanitarian law, human rights and the code of ethics for the journalists to perform their duty properly in conflict zones.

b) Further studies are required in this field to explore more information regarding mass media in conflict zones.

c) Security should be provided for journalists working in conflict zones particularly in Manipur.

d) Financial assistance or some sort of financial security should be given to the journalists who are victims of conflict reporting, dear and near ones who died on the line of duty.

e) More financial assistance should be given to all the veteran journalists in conflict zones.

f) Journalists should understand the code of ethics and the law and order situation of the state while writing news stories. All the journalists should undergo a basic training on conflict reporting just to have a balance reporting without any bias.

g) More women journalists should be encouraged to work in this field and it need to provide maternity leave and other facilities.
h) Remuneration of the journalists need to be check and it need to increase. Special perks and attention should be provided for journalists working in conflict zones.

i) Journalists should act a mediator between the state and non-state in combating conflict and bringing peace in the state. The people from different works of life need to take part in bringing peace in the state.

j) A policy should be framed for the betterment of the working journalists in conflict zones.

k) An authority should be there to solve all the problems and difficulties of the journalists.

l) The findings of the study will help in framing strategy to bring peace and to maintain freedom of press in conflict zones.

m) Both the state and non state players should provide a non disturbance environment so that journalists can practice their profession objectively.

n) The journalists should try to satisfy their readers regarding the quality, content and credibility of the newspapers. The media houses need to conduct research upon the feedback of the newspapers’ quality, objectivity, agendas, content etc.

o) Press Council of India and other statutory media organizations or bodies need to have a close eye upon the functioning of mass media particularly in conflict zones. They need to response or take up required action on the complaints of the journalists being affected by conflict.

p) Existence of media is indispensable to strengthen democracy. A free and objective media can be developed providing economic security to the journalists. Manipur media persons require better salaries and funds for their personal betterment. They should be given adequate facilities of health, loans and other financial support that can be fulfilled by establishing a fund or autonomous welfare trust. State can play a vital role in this regard.
Conflict with political motives is a major part of Manipur’s going conflict due to intensity of happenings other minor conflicts such as ethnic and communal often neglected. Manipur’s press need to give more attention on these issues also.

Humanitarian approach should be prevailed in coverage of conflict.

More research studies should be conducted on scope and need of peace journalism in Manipur.

There is a scope for study of interaction and correlation of conflict factors, journalistic background and coverage of conflict.

It was found that effective media presence is concentrated in Imphal area only. Press and journalists are facing greater difficulties and threats in other and remote part of the state. They should be given a free and fearless environment for their job.

Most of Manipur’s press in falling under small scale and medium newspapers so state dependency is a major factor for their survival. In case of conflict of interests often they victimized by delaying their payments, cancellation of advertisements etc. Here, an objective and neutral policy should be implemented for timely release of their dues and incentives.

Editor’s Guild and other media organizations have framed very strict and candid policy for journalistic work. It must be adhered without any fail.