ABSTRACT

Print media in Manipur was introduced in 1930 with the release of ‘Yakairol’, a monthly magazine. Low literacy rate, miniscule readership, financial constraints and lack of organizational skills were the major challenges of print media in Manipur in the past. At present, due to the rise in the literacy rate and living standards of the people, print media in the state has improved.

Some important deficiencies that have been observed in the studies done by past researchers are lack of emphasis on newspaper reading habit of the readers in the state and their views on the present status of Manipuri press. The past researches also lack focus on the working condition of the newspaper staff at present and the other challenges faced by newspaper proprietors in the state.

Therefore, the main tasks of the present study are concerned with identifying a reasonably representative sampling staff of newspaper firms, proprietors of newspapers and newspaper readers in all the nine districts of the state so as to assess their views on the present status of press in the state. The analysis has been done on 1078 newspaper readers, 20 newspaper proprietors, 50 print media journalists and 50 printing staff members under cluster and purposive sampling schemes.

A descriptive survey design has been used for this particular study and paper questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Chi-square test was used for data analysis. The statistical test was performed at 0.05 level of significance.

The research study has revealed that shortage of well trained print media journalists, financial constraints and undue interference from both the state government and non-state actors are some of the major challenges faced by print media in the state at present. The study has also found that despite these challenges faced by the press in Manipur, certain positive changes can be seen in terms of reporting, printing, designs, circulation and distribution system. Positive changes can also be seen in the coverage of subjects by the local press and the contribution of the press to socio-economic progress of the state.