CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY
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The study is qualitative in nature. It is a combination of both descriptive and exploratory research that analyses media, literacy, and social dynamics in India. Relying on the dialectical phenomenology as a research method, the study analyses the complex nature of media literacy discourse and its impact on different conditions of the society. It reflects on media literacy as a phenomenon from the percipient’s observation, a common practice in the phenomenological tradition. With such an idea in mind, the researcher attempts to visibilise the contradictory nature of media literacy discourse and its impact on the socio cultural planes.

Phenomenology as a research method is primarily concerned with developing concepts from our everyday experience which we often ignore. As an epistemological tool, phenomenology constructs/deconstructs concepts from everyday experience. Everyday experiences in a mediated society, more or less, are shaped by media that makes it worth for a phenomenological study of media practices and its resultant impact on social practice. Keeping the following set of objectives in view, the researcher initially recontextualises the existing literacy theory to arrive at a conclusion on the dialectical/contradictory dimensions of media literacy discourse, and its effects on social dynamics in India. While analysing the methodology, it gives a clear insight into the field of literacy study and its theoretical contradictions further leading to social contradictions under perceptible social conditions.

3.1. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to explore the contradictory dimensions of media literacy discourse and social dynamics in India. The general objective of the study is to reconceptualise media literacy and explore its discourse and impact on social dynamics. As a corollary, the specific objectives of the study are to:
1. Ascertain how media literacy can bring social transformation and reshape the society.

2. Examine the role of media literacy in dialogue and resolution of social impasse or fixity.

3. Find out whether, the media literates are a threat to the existing intellectuals close to the centre of power and their intellectual discourses.

4. Analyse whether media literacy can transfer the power from state to civil society.

3.2. Research Questions

The research questions are:

1. Will media literacy make inclusion of non-elitist sections of the society into the mainstream media discourse?

2. What discursive elements contribute to the need for media literacy in a country like India?

3. What type of social dynamics has necessitated media literacy to become important when the digital divide is clearly pronounced in India?

4. What measures are needed to make media literacy discourse academically and professionally acceptable?

5. What social and ethical platforms media literacy can create in India for knowledge democratisation?

3.3. Recontextualising Media Literacy

Contextualisation is essential in research practice to get a clear picture of the research problem. To a reasonable degree, ‘[de]contextualisation’ (Denny, 1991) is related to “literacy practice” which is more or less the subject matter of the present study. It is an attempt on the part of the researcher to recontextualise media literacy based on the existing literacy theories and their practice. In so doing, the study attempts to give new insights into the problem
of literacy discourse and its resulting impact on social dynamics. A few of them are structuralism, post-structuralism, phenomenology, post-phenomenology, and deconstruction. As observed, in the course of their development, these theoretical movements have refined and adjusted themselves to the changing circumstances or contexts where they have been practiced.

A conscious practice of such theories has not only changed the way we look into different phenomena that surround us, but also, it significantly affects our mode of thinking and living in this world. A critical consciousness on such theories affects the overall social existence and human conduct. For instance, a gradual shift from a structural mode of thinking and living to a post-structural practice, has affected the knowledge structure, and in turn, latter affecting the social, cultural and political condition of the state. Such an epistemological shift has also affected the method of learning and acquiring knowledge.

Therefore, as an existential practice, literacy/media literacy in today’s context demands a post-structural understanding. Keeping this aspect in context, the researcher starts with a contention that a postmodern-condition\(^1\) demands a postmodern approach to research. As believed by Mansy\(^2\) (2009), the researcher also believes in the Deleuzean\(^3\) principle of ‘becoming’ rather than simply a ‘being’. Literacy, as construed, is a continuous process of becoming/change, or it is a condition for creating differences\(^4\) in the existing condition of the being. Because, for Deleuze, as opined by Colebrook (2002) “Life begins with pure difference or becoming, or tendencies to differ” (Colebrook, 2002, p.126), essentially a post-structural or postmodern way of experiencing one’s life or phenomena or existence. As Rob Shields (1998) opines, “the person of this everyday life \([l’veu\text{ }\text{homme quotidien}]\) is both the subject and object of becoming” (Shield, 1998, p. 71) or change. Literacy is a way of experiencing one’s life or it is a mode of living which has become, by necessity, a post modern phenomenon. In this context, the study argues for a post-structural and post-phenomenological\(^5\) understanding that is essential in literacy practice and analysing its impact on social dynamics. More or less such
a way of doing research relies on a post-positivistic tradition. The aim of such an approach in research is to deconstruct the existing literacy theory and practice, and reflect upon its impact on the socio-political condition of the society we live in. The researcher believes in change, and also, it believes in ‘understanding’ as ‘becoming’. The researcher is writing this thesis essentially from a Deleuzean sense, with the ‘hope of becoming’. It has been noticed, that a gradual suspension of disciplinary borders in the academics and practical world, recommends the need for an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach to research. It is argued here that the understanding and selection of the method to some extent speak for the content that is generated through the study. The methodology to some extent characterizes the research problem that has been taken into consideration for analysis. Such an idea of doing research establishes a dialectical relationship between research, literacy and subjectivity that opens up new areas in research practice. Here it is termed as ‘research literacy’.

The idea of recontextualising media literacy expands the horizon of literacy studies as a result of its implicit relations with literature, culture and philosophy. It also points to the fact that as researchers, gradually, one develops/has been developed into new subject—for conducting research or reading—both out of necessity and choice. And if not, then the entire research project and its endeavour to pursue new knowledge are left out of context or it can be said that it is of no use value. It would not be unfair to say that literacy, in this context, ‘research literacy’, constitutes new subjectivity which is contextual in nature as it requires different approaches to the understanding of research problems. Therefore it leads us to a valid argument that the studies on literacy and its application have wider contexts. For instance, the concept of both literacy and research can be considered as translation practices that transform both the researcher and the research problem by stimulating new codes of representation or language within the researcher and the research problem. Hence literacy practice is concerned more with the development a new code of representation within individuals. In this context, we should not
restrict ‘representation’ to the simple act of communication; it also includes ‘experiencing’ the space in a larger context. The individual performance on a larger scale constructs the representational space within which we make our existence. In this context, deconstruction as a post-structural practice seems to articulate new codes for representing the self. If we could relate life and living with the practice of reading and writing or representation with the help of deconstruction, then a radical change in our social existence seems inevitable. Many a time, such a post-structural approach to life and living becomes essential considering the dominance and suppression one has to go through in the contemporary society. Though, rethinking media literacy from a revolutionary perspective seems essential, the negative aspects as a result of such radical thinking on the counts of its tendency to take the society to a state of anarchy can be very dangerous.

Research or literacy as a performative act,—relying on deconstruction as a post-structural practice—recontextualizes both the research problem and the researcher, withdrawing them from one context and replacing in another context. It brings change both in the subjective condition of the researcher and objective condition of the research problem. In this context, it would be pertinent here to add that neither the problem of literacy nor the human subject who deals with such a problem would remain the same after one understands the problem. From a phenomenological perspective literacy deals with the understanding of the research problem or giving it a place within the human subject or mind. It may also be considered as accommodating the problem. Such an understanding of literacy can be fruitful in conflict resolution and problem solving which is essential in multicultural societies.

The outcome of the study, as hoped, would result in a change in the condition of ‘media literacy’ as a research problem, and also, it would create new subjectivities as a result of new modes of ‘thinking’ and ‘practicing’ literacy, as human thinking is closely connected with literacy practices and vice-versa. As a literate practice, through research, the problem is
accommodated within the self; giving the self a new condition. Along with, it also transfers the research problem to a new location which is always a translational activity both from an ontological and epistemological point of view. It must be mentioned here that translation practice and its application has wider possibilities. It has been mentioned somewhere else that literacy/media literacy is a translational activity. Originally coined by Bhabha (1994) from a translation studies perspective when he says “transnational is Translational”, the researcher connects the practice of literacy with the creation of transnational identity and argues that it requires new categories of literacy practice to be transnational or to claim such a transnational identity. Even, to some extent, to be a nationalist within a specific geopolitical location demands the translation/transformation of the subject to make it ready to be accommodated within that specific location that becomes possible only as a result of literacy practice. This justifies the fact that the context and practice of literacy may not be confined to a narrow understanding rather its locations and relations needs to be further explored and understood.

The ever changing condition of literacy and its practice have consequences on human ‘identity’ that does not limit itself to a particular location. But it is continuously in a state of ‘flux’ (Sutherland, 2013) as a result of new ways of our engagement through new literacy practices and new media usage. Literacy practice and identity formation, both progress dialectically, one drawing upon the other. It has already been explicated by Frau Meigs (2013), as ‘Transliteracy’, that constitutes the ways of our engagement both in the real and virtual space resulting often in new identity formations such as virtual-identity, liquid-identity (Bauman, 2006), digital-identity, second-life, virtual-reality (Castells, 2010). Such changed circumstances of both identity creation and literacy practice are reciprocal to each other. But here the researcher is seeing transliteracy from a translation studies perspective and considers that literacy is a translational practice. The purpose of such a reflection on literacy is just to give an indication of the many dimensions to which the studies on literacy can be put into context.
A close observation of the contemporary socio-cultural conditions reveals that they do not confine them to particularities or definiteness in terms of their organisation and change. As a result, they demand a combination of theoretical and methodological approaches for analysis and reflection. In its own right, media literacy is postmodern in character that necessarily demands a postmodern approach to research as a result of its association with many other related events and phenomena which are directly or indirectly affected by the existing conditions of literacy/media literacy, and its impact on the socio-cultural practices. The researcher argues that our method of thinking has become poststructural\(^\text{14}\) that does not limit itself to the conventional narratives of understanding and reflection. It not only brings a radical change in the thought process but also brings change in praxis.

The researcher has taken four components into consideration for arriving at specific objectives of the study. The components of the study are ‘dialectics’, ‘discourse’, ‘media literacy’ and ‘social dynamics’. An attempt here has been made for a dialectical critique of the condition of literacy/media literacy which we consider a ‘discourse’. Accordingly, the thesis has been divided into six chapters. The first two chapters, as have been reflected, give us an idea about the condition of literacy, its definitions and previous works that have been carried out on media literacy, whereas, the third chapter (the current chapter) broods over dialectic as a discourse and its relationship with literacy/media literacy. The fourth chapter relates literacy practice with social dynamics in India and the fifth chapter is a discussion inter-relating the four components of the study such as Dialectics, Media Literacy, Discourse, and Social Dynamics. Though not in a true sense, in sixth chapter the researcher has tried to conclude the study keeping in view the objectives which were set for the study.

The study is a dialectical analysis of media literacy practices and its impact on social dynamics in India. However, the main objective of this chapter is to reflect on the points of intersection among the three components,
i.e. Dialectics, Discourse and Media literacy. The approach is deconstructive in nature that reflects the dialectical dimensions of media literacy and its impact on socio-cultural space. Here the argument is in favour of dialectic as it is a deconstructive technique though it has not received its due credit in the deconstructionist circle. Deconstruction as a technique has its root in Heidegger’s *Being and Time* where he discusses the notion of ‘critical dismantling’. Later, deconstruction as a technique has been popularised by Jacques Derrida in his works on *Speech and Phenomena, Of Grammatology* and *Writing and Difference* (1978).

### 3.4. Media Literacy: As a Force of Production

Before embarking on the task of conceptual clarifications it is imperative here to mention that “media literacy” is a force of production of ‘meaning’, ‘identity’ or ‘existence’, where all the above three components overlap. As a force of production in line with the idea of Raymond Williams\(^\text{15}\) (1980), as he describes it in *Culture and Materialism*, “means of communication as means of production”, media literacy is confined to a bipolar ‘material-ideal’ stance as has already been reflected in the introductory chapter. What the researcher considers here is that media literacy is a social and cultural construct that involves the conditioning of individuals which further conditions the society in a—dialectical—self-other relationship, where the concept of power, ideology and hegemony are being produced, negotiated, and reformulated in a constantly evolving manner. Of course, literacy from a post-structural perspective counters the hegemonic intentions of the text in a larger context. From an ideological perspective, media literacy as it has been promoted is a condition for—what Louis Althusser\(^\text{16}\) (2008)—terms as the “reproduction of the productive forces” or “reproduction of the relations of production” to ensure subjection to the ruling ideology. In a sense, it is the condition of media literacy that determines the relations of production in a mediated society, and ultimately the social and cultural space within which one creates one’s existence or where
we coexist. In such situations, control over the communicative practices determines the social order or social relations of production facilitated by a particular kind of literacy discourse which can be either liberating or dominant in nature.

Media literacy works as a means for the production of one’s own existence or condition of life. In such cases the individual becomes the medium of its own ‘self’ or ‘existence’. If considered from McLuhan’s point of view when he declares Medium is the Message, then ‘we’ become the ‘message’ of our own ‘self’. It would be more appropriate to quote one line here from Rene Descartes, when he writes, “I think therefore I am”. In a sense, Descartes had given priority to idea over matter or the subject over the object, and can be considered as one among the idealist philosophers. So, ‘I’ is the product of my own thinking or understanding. Then ‘we’ become the products of our own thoughts. It substantiates to the intricate relationship between literacy, thinking and ‘Being’ from a Heideggerian sense. It can also be reversed: “our thoughts are the product of what we are”. Keeping these arguments in view, the researcher denies a complete separation of subject from object—a positivistic discourse/violence— that has been the dominant discourse in literacy practice since a long period of time. Rather, the researcher contends that the production of the self and the society are always dependent on the practices of literacy and more so on media literacy in a mediated society. At certain points media literacy becomes a condition for production of meaning in a larger context that does not restrict the concept of meaning as embedded in literal texts, but also, deals with the relationship we establish with the socio-cultural space. Literacy/media literacy thus becomes an activity of establishing relationships/texts—its origin from ‘textus’, means to weave—for the production of being and also the production of society in a larger context for experiencing or creating a condition for a meaningful life.

But it should also be noted here as Marx writes, “A definite form of production [in this case the condition of media literacy, i.e. the way media
literacy is appreciated, promoted and practiced) determines definite forms of consumption, distribution and exchange as well as definite relations between these different elements" (cited in Lukacs, [1968/1993], p.13). In this context, it is related with the forms of consumption, distribution and exchange of media and media texts that affect the condition of human subject and the general condition of the society where we live in. As a force of production, media literacy either produces a revolutionary society or a society where the subjects are oppressed depending upon its condition and discourse. It also indicates the relationship of media literacy with the production or consumption of space because everything has a spatial dimension starting from 'signs' to 'objects' including media messages. Such a condition of literacy ultimately determines the other spatial components such as culture, nationality, gender, ethnicity, religion, and politics like many other social and cultural categories. Nationality as an imaginary construct is also a spatial practice. We construct national space through our own imagination. In this context, through literacy, we first imagine the space and then transform them into a real construct. Similarly, gender is spatial because it is constructed through the movement of one's body or performance. Prior to the act of performance the performer imagines the space and through performance it constructs the performative space, and lives within that performative space in a Heideggerian sense of 'Dasein'\textsuperscript{17} -- i.e., being there. Such a condition of literacy resists the separation of the subject from the object leading to a concrete understanding which is the primary focus of the current study. Similarly, ethnicity is also a performance with its own spatial categories as it is expressed with the help of signs, symbols, foods and rituals. Just like ethnicity, religion is also spatial. We practice religion through performing religious rituals. Hence the spaces around us are constructed more through literate practices in different contexts that make the condition of literacy diverse. Literacy from different contexts produces different forms of life. The study attempts to reflect the relationship media literacy as a force of production establishes with the particular and general. In a sense, it is an analysis of the impact of media literacy on individual subjectivities and its
effect on collective consciousness or collective identity which is further reflected in the form of social ontology.

Out of the four components of the study, ‘dialectics’ and ‘discourse’ are considered here as epistemological tools to investigate the ontological dimensions of the other two components, i.e. ‘media literacy’ and ‘social dynamics’. The study accepts here and questions media literacy as an epistemological condition for a social ontology in India because of some of the ideological factors associated with conceptualizing and promoting media literacy discourse, as it has been noticed that the discourse on media literacy has been more structural and functional in approach than revolutionary. A detailed analysis has been made in the following pages of the study with respect to ideological analysis and its relation to media literacy from an Althusserian perspective. Looking at media literacy often from its different contradictory dimensions, the study has attempted a dialectic critique of evolving media and social dynamics, which is beyond the conventional understanding of the idea of ‘media and text’, and their impact on social, cultural and political practice.

3.5. Media Literacy: As a Discourse

‘Discourse’, now a day is a popular term widely used in media, journalism and academics. Its application seems to have wider contexts than how it has been practiced. It has already been argued quite a number of times that media literacy as a discourse constructs meaning. Not only media literacy constructs meaning, but also, it constructs texts as the vehicles for the dissemination of meanings. Thus a complete separation of meaning from text seems impossible, so as the separation of subject and object in dialectical thinking. The only difference between ‘text’ and ‘meaning’ as it seems is the degree of their ‘textuality’ or ‘objectness’. ‘Text’ is more textual in nature, whereas, ‘meaning’ in relatively less textual, as it cannot completely devoid itself of any textual content. Both meaning and text are constructed by a multiple number of
discourses. On the one hand texts are constructed by a discourse which is material in form, such as writing and reading; on the other hand, meanings are constructed by a discourse which is immaterial in condition. Literacy practice establishes a dialogue/discourse between meaning and text. Sometimes with the help of literacy, a text is deconstructed and meaning is generated out of such an event. At some other, meaning is carefully constructed or textualised for its dissemination to the wider audience or readers. This makes literacy practice a combination of both material and ideological discourses. If we consider the role of modern media technology in constructing text, such as a news story or a film, then the literacy praxis becomes even more complex. This in turn makes the discourse of literacy practice more complex as a result of mediated structure/discourse in constituting the text. It demands deconstruction or understanding of the complex narratives and interplay of material and latent forces that constructs the text.

The origin of the term discourse has been traced back to French theorist Michel Foucault, in his work *Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*. But discourse as a condition for the constitution text both in material and ideological senses is also found in the philosophical writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Kant, on their discourses on truth, experience and knowledge, to Hegel’s and Marx’s discourses respectively on consciousness and social structure. If discourse is seen from varied perspectives, then it distorts the conventional understanding of both the concept of ‘discourse’ and ‘text’ which in turn becomes post-structural. A phenomenological reflection on discourse enlarges its territory to a wide range of subjects and disciplines which is beyond a usual understanding of the term and its relationships. Among the phenomenologist, Husserl and Heidegger seem to have provided insights respectively on the discourse of ‘Language’ and ‘Being’, whereas, a dialectician like Lefebvre throws light on the discourse of space and the underlying forces behind the social production of space. In linguistics, discourse as a concept is prevalent in the works of early structuralists like Ferdinand De Saussure and Levi Strauss, and then to the post-structuralist
thinkers like Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. But the relationship among language, literacy, society, philosophy, and culture is so intricate that it is nearly impossible to give clear and specific determination as to the concept of discourse and its authority, so as to the concept of the discourse of literacy/media literacy. This not only makes the concept of literacy discourse a complex phenomenon but also it makes the practice of literacy a complex event.

As has already been mentioned, media literacy can be analysed from a contradictory position where the structuralist discourse on literacy contradicts with post-structuralist discourse. From a structuralist perspective media literacy can be perceived as an ideology that maintains the dominant order or structure. But from a post-structuralist perspective it works against ideological interpellations and stereotypes in reading and understanding media texts. In this context it is pertinent here to mention Stuart Hall’s (1973) analysis of media text and its reading from three perspectives what he has termed as dominant reading, oppositional reading, and negotiated reading. Dominant reading in this context is structural in character, whereas, an oppositional reading is post-structural. The negotiated reading negotiates the meaning between authorial intention and reader’s own understanding. The principle developed by Hall can be applied in a larger socio cultural context if we do not restrict the practice reading, writing and text to a literal understanding.

As we are discussing on literacy practice and its impact on social dynamics it is imperative here to analyse and reflect upon how media literacy as a discourse comes into existence and how it dialectically constitute the discourse of the society and the social space within which we create our existence from a larger context. It has been argued throughout the study that media literacy is concerned more with the process of understanding. Through literacy one constructs ‘texts’ and arrogates them with meaning. Hence understanding the text, in a sense, becomes a discourse in its own right. It is the discourse of understanding that constitutes the text. As it has already been
argued, ‘understanding is becoming’. Understanding literacy from different perspectives brings change in social and media practice that in turn brings a change in the overall social structure where an individual either accepts the social norms or replace them with alternatives.

Literacy as a process of understanding brings change within the subject, and the objects it creates. Media literacy as a discourse is always contextual as it understands/constructs the text from a particular context. The condition of literacy varies from one individual to others and from one location to others. Literacy becomes an ideology when it controls the understanding of the subject, limiting it to a particular location/structure and not allowing the subject to move and participate in the play of meanings. It confines the subject to an imaginary construct/structure. Then it produces stereotypical versions of knowledge and world views that construct standardised objects. Such a process of standardisation has been criticised by Frankfurt scholars and later by the post-structural thinkers like Foucault and Derrida. The location of the reader constructs the context of literacy practice and the subject position of the reader or vice-versa. We interpret the text from a specific location that constitutes the subject position of the reader or interpreter of the text which in turn dialectically determines the condition of literacy. Ultimately the context of the literacy practice becomes the condition of literacy. The relationship between literacy and text is dialectical and also, for that matter, the relationship between literacy and individual. Lefebvre’s conception about the production of man as he has described it in *Dialectical Materialism* (1940) somehow fits well to this context of analysis. Subjects are also constituted as a result of the discourses prior to them. Media literacy as a text is constituted as a result of the historical processes of the growth of both the subject and object and their dialectical interplay. Prior to such an activity the interpreter or reader is constituted as a result of historic discourses. They determine the narratives of the processes of understanding of the specific subject. Subsequently it is the very process of understanding that constitutes the objects or the objective world we encounter in everyday lives as subjects. The constitution of the object or phenomena
varies because of a difference in the discourse of understanding among various subjects which can be termed as literacy/media literacy. To conclude, from a phenomenological perspective, literacy as an existential practice can be considered as a discourse as Martin Heidegger defines discourse as an “existential-ontological foundation of language” (Heidegger, 1996[1953], p. 150). If not in an exact sense, Heidegger’s conceptualisation of discourse is an indication of the intricate relationship between literacy, discourse, language and the constitution of the text-- ‘Being’ in an ontological sense. As such, as it has been argued and emphasised by the researcher, the foundation of media literacy lies on the very processes of understanding or as Heidegger has termed it ‘intelligibility’ or more specifically, “Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility” (Ibid.).

3.5.1. A Structuralist Discourse

Structuralism as an intellectual revolution is concerned more with the construction of meaning, and texts in which meanings are embedded. From a structuralist’s perspective, it has been argued here that media literacy is a socio-cultural construct that comes into existence through social interactions and cultural participation. In a mediated society, the condition of literacy is more dependent on mediated interaction. The argument over literacy/media literacy as a condition for creating meaning, our social existence and human identity through structural imposition/interpellation, leads us to explicate media literacy from a structuralist perspective. It requires an understanding of the semiotic phenomena or the process of signification, because, literacy/media literacy is most often considered as signifying practices.

Such a structural condition for the construction of meaning and its implications over many other socio-cultural events are related with structuralist philosophy in the works of Ferdinand De Saussure in his work “Course in General Linguistics”. Later on, it has been applied by Claude Levi Strauss in analysing kinship and family structure. From a linguistic or literary perspective,
as Graham Allen opines, “Structural analysis tends to disperse with the question of meaning of texts in favour of an assessment of the text’s relation to the system out of which it is presumed to have been produced” (Allen, 2000, p. 77). Then, media literacy from a structuralist’s perspective makes a contextual/intertextual analysis of the condition of text, or it deconstructs the text and its historical processes of evolution. But the difficulty in clearly determining the processes as ‘construction’ or ‘deconstruction’ makes both ‘structuralism’ and ‘post-structuralism’ themselves as indeterminate categories. Further, the resulting impact of such indeterminacy as to the definite location of ‘structuralism’ and ‘post-structuralism’ as forces of intellectual tradition is visible in the overlapping socio-cultural categories of modernism and post-modernism. The contrast or polarities between such binary opposing categories does not end here, but its impact is also visible in the condition of human identity which is unstable in nature that does not have a fixed location. Similarly, the social, cultural and political affairs of the state and civil society do not have any clear agenda or location for their continuance.

From a structuralist perspective, media literacy as a condition of thinking, phenomenologically deals with the perception of structures which has been criticised by poststructuralist philosophers such as Derrida, who terms it as western ‘logocentrism’ or an over reliance on ‘the metaphysics of presence’. Hence, one needs to understand the concept of perception from a broader context, to judge its impact on literacy practice. The impact of structuralism paralyses the perceptive abilities of man by not letting him move out of the structural-perceptual field created by stereotypical and biased representation. In such a condition, media literacy becomes an ideology from an Althusserian sense. As Terrance Hawkes opines “Structuralism is fundamentally a way of thinking about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perception and description of structures” (Hawkes 1977, 2003, p. 06) which is based on western logocentrism. However, media literacy from a post-structuralist perspective relieves the human thought from such a structural dominance and
makes it indeterminate. Media literacy from a post-structuralist perspective counters the western dominance of presence.

3.5.2. A Post-structuralist Discourse

From a post-structuralist framework media literacy is revolutionary in character that questions the dominant narratives of understanding and thought. As James Williams rightly points out, poststructuralism or poststructuralist thought “highlights new relations between thought and its contexts. It explains the relation between thought and society, life and often unconscious conditions” (Williams, 2005, p. 155). Media literacy from a post-structuralist perspective is a critique of the history or historical condition it creates as a result of literate practice. It deconstructs the condition that facilitates the thought to attain a particular position, which becomes psychological in character. Further, as a cultural category, media literacy creates counter cultural practices that challenges cultural imperialism and dominance of a single culture over the others, whereas, as a social category, media literacy from a post-structural perspective resist the dominant social order through the articulation of what Castells (2010) terms ‘resistance identity’.

Media literacy from a poststructuralist position accepts and promotes difference/change in conditions of existence of the being in a socio-cultural context. In a more simple term, media literacy in a post-structural sense resists the structuralist dominance in articulation of meaning or identity. As Allen asserts, “The poststructuralism of Barthes, Kristeva and Derrida moves away from structuralism, with its belief in the possibility of a totalizing or scientific methodology, by privileging and promoting notions of difference” (Allen, 2000, p. 76). Media literacy from a poststructuralist perspective rejects the concept of method in acquiring knowledge and identity. It is historical, as Williams (2005) opines, “Poststructuralism is a heavily historical movement reacting to a long series of philosophical ideas. It is also a revolutionary way of thinking about history” (Williams, 2005, p. 7).
3.6. Dialectic: As a Discourse

Dialectic as a discourse is related with the movement of our thought that in turn directs our actions, and vice-versa. From this context, dialectic subscribes both to the Hegelian idealism and Marxist materialism. As a discursive practice, dialectic is both capable of uniting the self and the other, and also capable of disintegrating the other from the self. Dialectical condition can be considered as a force/discourse for the construction of meaning and also deconstruction of meaning. A dialectical attitude often leads the subject to a contradictory position, where a conflict takes place between idea and matter which is considered to be the source of all forms of knowledge. It makes ‘dialectic’ as a concept contradictory in itself. Even, the same type of contradiction lies in the constitution of both the subject and the object, which, in a larger context determines the discourse of the society, including media as an important constituent of the society.

A structuralist dialectic more often deals with the construction of texts or the social conditions, whereas, a post-structuralist dialectic/discourse deconstructs the existing social condition and explores the ways and means through which it comes into existence. As a poststructuralist discourse, dialectic questions the processes of understanding and thought. A Hegelian dialectic gives priority to consciousness over matter, whereas, a Marxist dialectic gives priority to matter over idea. But in an actual sense, both idea and matter dialectically constitute each other through a continuous process of change or movement. Even media literacy as a condition is both material and ideological in character which is not free from a dialectical process of evolution as it has evolved over a long period of history.

Dialectical ideas are mostly found in the works of G.W. Hegel and Karl Marx. Both Hegel and Marx consider dialectic as a force of movement or method. As Henri Lefebvre (1940, 2009) opines: “The dialectic is a ‘method of exposition’, a word to which Marx gives a very powerful meaning. The
exposition is nothing less than the complete reconstitution of the concrete in its
inner movement, not a mere juxtaposing or external organisation of the results
of the analysis” (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 74). The researcher’s emphasis on
dialectics here is mainly to shed light on the ‘process of understanding’, and as
Lefebvre argues, on the ‘reconstitution of the self’ which is crucial for attaining
literacy or becoming a media literate.

Literacy is all about understanding the structure and processes of
constructing ‘texts’ that also includes the constitution of the ‘self’ both in its
abstract and material senses. Thus we can equate dialectic with literacy and
literacy with dialectic, as in one point, both becomes a discourse. While
constituting themselves, they also constitute the other. Along with Lefebvre
([1940], 2009), the researcher considers media literacy as a “method of
exposition” that constitutes the ‘being’ both in its ‘concrete’ and ‘abstract’
senses. If we rely on both Hegelian and Marxian notions of dialectic, then, the
‘text’ becomes both material and ideal. From a Hegelian sense—just like a part
constituting the whole— media literacy as a category while constituting itself
also constitutes the larger social and cultural space within which it is practiced.
At the same time, we cannot free the concept of literacy/media literacy from
the clutches of Marxist’s materialism. Or, it can be said that this is the place
where theory meets practice often resulting in a new condition of the ‘being’. It
dialectically reconditions the condition of ‘literacy practice’ and the ‘social
condition’ in which it operates. They coexist and reside in unity with each
other.

Dialectic as a method of understanding or discourse is pervasive in
Hegel’s mature philosophy and later in the Marxists’ analysis of social
structure. Understanding to us is a movement of our thought that constitutes the
content we generate, either through consuming media/space or creating
media/space. Such an activity has larger implications on the concept of
formation of culture and construction of identity. What we consider here is that
literacy/media literacy is intimately connected with the human understanding
of its surroundings, thus expanding the notion of ‘text’ that includes both the experiential and symbolic space we encounter in our everyday life. Understanding is ‘being there’, i.e. to experience the spaces—in this case media literacy—through an interaction or practice that forms our culture and identity.

The Marxist dialectic, which is founded on historical materialism, however, contradicts with Hegel’s idealism that considers ‘idea’, rather than ‘matter’, as the primary force of production and change. As Lefebvre ([1940], 2009) argues, “The materialist dialectic accords the primacy explicitly to the content. The primacy of the content over the form is, however, only one definition of materialism. Materialism asserts essentially that being (discovered and experienced as content without our aspiring to define it a priori and exhaust it) determines thought” (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 90), whereas, idealism gives priority to thought over the being. Such a philosophical contradiction between idealism and materialism has been long standing since the time of Plato and Aristotle through Hegel and Marx and many others in the contemporary philosophical traditions. A similar kind of contradiction arises when we attempt to analyze the relationship between literacy/media literacy and socio-cultural patterning within a specific region or country, which is becoming more complex and chaotic as a result of its increasing interaction within itself and with the rest of the world. It is further exacerbated by the proliferation of new media technologies and their applications in general practices. In order to avoid such a methodological dilemma or contradiction that arises out of idealism and materialism, the researcher has partly relied so far, on so called Hegel’s idealism and partly on Marxist’s materialism so that the dialectical essence of the study can be kept intact where the “method becomes the content of the study” and vice-versa.

The usual formulation of Marx’s method dialectical materialism stresses on the anti idealistic aspect of his work. This emphasis made sense in light of the philosophical developments in Marx’s time. However, given developments
in social sciences, a stress on the anti positivistic, phenomenological aspect of his work makes more sense today. Dialectical phenomenology provides a comprehensive analysis of this aspect of Marx’s theorizing (Bologh 1979)\textsuperscript{23}. Relying on the anti-positivistic phenomenological approach, which treats both subjective-conditions and object-formations as unitary and inseparable, unlike the positivistic approach as put forward by Marx, the study here considers media literacy as a force of social formation reflected in the form of culture, politics, power, ideology, and hegemony like many other social categories in India. Such an approach is essentially deconstructive\textsuperscript{24} and post-structural in character that questions, as argued by Saul Newman (2005), the “rationalist epistemologies, positivist convictions and categorical imperatives of the Enlightenment” (Newman, 2005, p. 4). It not only brings a radical transformation in research practices which is beyond the limits of disciplinary borders, but also, its application and praxis bring radical transformation in politics, public discourse and in the condition of public sphere. Accordingly, we have drawn out some of the discursive elements that contribute to the social fabrics in India as a result of media literacy discourse.

Dialectical phenomenology, as a theory of movement or theory of knowledge has been practiced by many philosophers in history. It is said that the ancient philosophers were spontaneous dialecticians. Dialectical ideas were particularly developed by Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c.540-580 B.C) who was the father of the very first form of dialectical thinking— naïve materialist dialectics… The world Heraclitus declared, “[W]as created by none of the gods or man, but was, is and will be eternally living fire, regularly becoming ignited and regularly becoming extinguished”\textsuperscript{25}. The statement of Heraclitus has been described by Lenin as a “very good exposition of the principles of dialectical materialism”\textsuperscript{26}. On the course of its development, dialectical phenomenology has remained as a principle of ‘contradiction’, ‘existence of opposites’, or ‘struggle of opposites’, which are the source of development of objects. Even dialectic as a discourse is itself contradictory in nature. In dialectical thinking, the contradiction lies between ‘idealism’ and ‘materialism’.
The materialistic dialectic reached its zenith in the atomistic theory of ancient Greek philosopher Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.). The highly materialistic stance in the philosophy of Democritus was opposed by objective idealism of Plato (427-347 B.C.), who declared the entire visible (objective, material) world to be untrue and counter posed it to the world of ideas. The struggle between the supporters of Democritus and the followers of Plato reflected the struggle between materialism in Greek philosophy\textsuperscript{27}. Even today, it continues to trouble the thoughts and experiences of contemporary philosophers. The contradiction between Idealism and Materialism was further raised by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), with his objection to idealism, reasserting the objective existence of the material world. His assertion that all objects of nature are in constant motion reducing them to three main ones—coming into being, destruction and change\textsuperscript{28}, however, resembles with Popper’s idea of Hegel’s notion of dialectic in a triadic principle of “thesis, antithesis, synthesis”\textsuperscript{29}, where Popper intends it to be more definite in character than Acton’s courting of dialectic as “oppositions, conflicts, tensions, and refutations”\textsuperscript{30}. Dialectic as an epistemological tool/condition has continuously evolved through discourses and counter discourses among the philosophers of the past centuries. As Afanasyev (2006) opines:

Hegel formulated the fundamental laws of dialectics, governing the development of ideas, thoughts. He demonstrated that development proceeds not in a closed circle, but progressively from the lower forms to the higher, that in the process quantitative changes pass into qualitative changes, that internal contradictions are the source of development. Hegel also defined the basic concepts (categories) of dialectics and showed that they are interconnected and mutually convertible. (Afanasyev, 2006, p. 35)

Henri Lefebvre’s (1940, 2009) *Dialectical Materialism*, gives a good account of the synthesis\textsuperscript{31} between materialism and idealism. Dialectical method is pervasive in Hegel’s mature philosophy as reflected in ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’, it gives a good exposition of “the process or movement of thinking”\textsuperscript{32}. As Stephen Kipfer (2009) asserts, Lefebvre ([1940], 2009), emphasizing on
Hegel’s *Science of Logic*, opines that Hegel’s contribution to dialectic stands in contrast to traditional formal logic, which “seeks to determine the workings of the intellect independently of the experimental, and hence particular and contingent, content of every concrete assertion” (Kipfer, 2009, xvii). Lefebvre argues, as opined by Kipfer, that Hegel’s dialectical logic was not intended to “abolish formal logic but [to] transcend it” by searching for a “consciousness of an infinitely rich unity of thought and reality, of form and content” (Kipfer, 2009, xvi-xvii). To Lefebvre, “Movement is thus a transcending. Every reality and thought must be surmounted in a higher determination which contains them as a content, as an aspect, antecedent or element that is as a moment in the Hegelian or dialectical sense of that word” (Lefebvre, [1940] 2009, p. 24). Lefebvre argues that Hegel avoids the one sided treatments of the relationship between form and content, incorporating both in “an immense epic of mind,” where each moment of reality and thought is sublated—abolished, preserved and transformed—in a dialectical movement of becoming which has been branded as the western dominance of ‘identity’ or ‘unity’ most often criticised by the post-structural and postmodern thinkers. But it suffices our claim to the idea of media literacy as understanding or becoming as we also argue that media literacy is always incomplete and transient or it is a temporal condition.

To strengthen our proposition, ‘method becomes the content of the study’ or as we have argued ‘understanding is becoming’, we rely upon Hegel’s dialectical Logic as opined by Lefebvre, meant to be both a “method of analysis” and “recreation of the movement of the real, through a movement of the thought” (Kipfer, 2009, xvii). In that sense literacy as a research practice demands our understanding of the research methods to reflect upon the research problem before its transformation to an organized work or a thesis. We also argue in line with the above principle where we conceive media literacy as a method of analysis which constitutes of our awareness and understanding of numerous socio-cultural and linguistic theories. However, Lefebvre is also sceptical about Hegel’s project as he opines “Instead of
expressing and reflecting the movement of the content, the dialectic produces
this movement” (Kipfer, 2009, xvii), thus functioning less as a method of
analysis than as a way to “construct” the content synthetically and
systematically, which yields closure not dialectical openness. However, here
we argue that dialectical openness can only be preserved by the Derridean
principle of “difference” or “delay” or “resistance”, and contradict the
totalitarian conception of media literacy.

4.5. Dialectical Phenomenology: A Synthesis

What is phenomenology is often a phenomenological question. Even thinking
and writing about phenomenology itself become a new phenomenon. The
etymological meaning of phenomenology is the science of phenomena. It
studies the relationship of the being to itself and other species. A
phenomenological reflection makes it possible for the realisation of the event
and its coming into being or existence. Phenomenology studies the narratives
of existence of social and cultural phenomena. Hence, the context of applying
phenomenology as a method of exposition is limitless. As Martin Heidegger
(1996) opines:

Phenomenology is the way of access to, and the demonstrative manner of
determination of, what is to become the theme of ontology. Ontology is
possible only as phenomenology. The phenomenological concept of
phenomenon, as self-showing, means the being of beings—its meanings,
modifications, and derivatives. The self showing is nothing arbitrary, nor
is it something like an appearing. The being of beings can list of all be
something “behind which” something else stands, something that “does
not appear.” (Heidegger, 1996, p. 31)

A synthesis of dialectical phenomenology gives equal priority to idealism and
materialism. Such dialectic treats the objects or phenomena as both as material
and spiritual. As Afanasyev concludes:

All objects or phenomena are either material or ideal, spiritual. The
material phenomena include everything that exists objectively, i.e.,
outside of men’s consciousness and independently of it (objects and
processes on Earth and countless bodies in the Universe, etc.). On the
other hand, all that exists in the consciousness of man, all that comes within the sphere of his mental activity (thoughts and sensations, emotions, etc.), is related to the sphere of the ideal, the spiritual. (Afanasyev, 2006, p. 9)

Further, dialectical phenomenology always takes an approach which in itself is post-structural as it deals with the separation of the subject and object. It does not give either the subject or the object an isolated existence from each other. In a simple term, it prescribes for a unity of the subject and object, unlike the positive philosophy which prescribes for a complete separation of the subject and object to arrive at either knowledge of the objects and subjects. Dialectical phenomenology establishes the relationship between subject and object to arrive at meaning. As Roslyn Wallach Bologh (1979) asserts:

Dialectical phenomenology as a method deals with the separation of subject and object. Instead of assuming that an object’s meaning or sense is inherent or given with the object, phenomenology claims that we can know the meaning or sense of an object only in its relation to a knowing subject. The meaning is grounded in or internal to the relation of subject and object. It is not internal to the object, nor is it internal to the subject. This approach is in its nature dialectical (Bologh, 1979, p. 2)

Media literacy is considered here neither as an absolute idea, nor absolutely as a material force of production. Dialectical phenomenology in this context creates a synthesis of both material and ideological forces through the unity of the subject and object to give the being—media literacy—a new form of life. Media literacy as a new form of life establishes the relation between subject and the object instead of treating them both in separation which is anti-positivistic in character. Dialectical phenomenology’s insistence to bring back the lost unity between the subject and object is considered as a new form of life, and even the construction knowledge is premised on such a form of life where the subject and object are seen to reside in nearly perfect unity with each other. As Bologh (1979) further notes:

The unity of the subject and object is possible through a form of life. It is a purposive activity, and a productive relationship between the subject and the object. Dialectical phenomenology inquires into the form of life in
which an object of knowledge is embedded, its active relation to a subject. From this form of life or relation, the object derives its sense. Dialectical phenomenology treats the object as grounded in the form of life and, therefore, as a social object rather than an object given with nature. In other words, it treats an object as a thing-for-a-subject rather than a thing-in-itself (Bologh, 1979, p. 2-3).

From a dialectical phenomenological perspective, media literacy is considered as a condition for attaining the unity of subject and object. Then literacy becomes an objective condition of study which only can be studied from a subjective condition of media literacy. This in turn denies the separation of subject and object for knowing either the object or the subject. As Bologh (1979) has opined, rather “it treats the activity as the condition for the knowledge of the object” (Bologh, 1979, p. 4).

Martin Jay (1996) has indicated for a synthesis between the subject and object but in a different note. As Jay opines: “Instead of formal logic, which perpetuated the false dualism of form and content, Adorno suggested a more dynamic alternative that referred back to Hegel. “logic”, he wrote, “is not Being, but a process that cannot be simply reduced to the pole of ‘subjectivity’ or ‘objectivity’” (Jay, 1996, p. 69). Again Jay concludes that, “In Reason and Revolution, Marcuse has accepted the identity of subject and object that has been the centre of Hegel’s thinking” (Jay, 1996, p. 73). Man, as Marcuse has asserted must objectify himself...he must become the object as well as the subject (Jay, 1996). This however, strengthens the dialectical existence of man both as subject and object, a new form of life.

Media is an objective reality but the assessment of media performance, despite well-defined parameters, can always border on either individual or collective subjectivity. Media literacy therefore is amenable to phenomenological enquiry of subject-object identity. As such, the method of phenomenology is applied to the research study. Besides, there can be no doubt to the phenomenological dimensions of social dynamics leading to the aptness of the method adopted.
Chapter End Notes:

1. Lyotard (1979) explains such a state of condition as ‘incredulity towards meta-narratives’. Postmodernism is often related with post-structuralism that questions the dominant narratives of existence. In the context of the present study, the researcher does not restrict “existence” to the mere possibility of the material ‘Being’, rather it deals with a colossal of events that even includes the construction and deconstruction of meaning. The central concern here is to enquire about media literacy as an act of constructing and deconstructing meaning. Objects, events and people in today’s context do not have any distinct identity; they are all intermeshed, as in one object/subject we find the presence of the elements belonging to many other subjects/objects. Frederic Jameson explains such a state of condition of the art as pastiche. In the post-world, we have lost the sense of an authentic ‘being’ with a unique sense of ‘identity’ or we can call it as the loss of the distinct narrative of existence. As Saul Newman (2005) suggests “the postmodern condition is associated with the abandonment of the notion of the universal rational subject who could act as an autonomous and self willed agent...Moreover, the subject is shown to be affected, and indeed constituted, by conditions that are often outside his control; there can be no strict separation between the subject and the objective world” (Newman, 2005, p. 04). Under such circumstances, the dominant narratives of knowledge have been replaced by various alternatives. However we call it: Post-modernism, Post-structuralism, Post-humanism, Post-feminism, Post-positivism among others, they all demand new narratives of ‘research’ and ‘understanding’. Here, in this case, the researcher is speaking about the socio-cultural phenomena that also include the phenomenon of the production of knowledge and media literacy as a means of production of knowledge. For that matter it is argued here that the process of production of knowledge through research demands a distinct category of literacy practice. In this context an argument can be made that there is no particular method for conducting research in a particular area since all the entities have lost their particularities. Then using the term ‘particular’ here even seems absurd. Such an idea, to the researcher, is obsolete as everything has lost their particularities or definiteness of existence. As Williams concludes, “post-structuralism denies any founding value in common sense. It also denies any theoretical boundaries for pragmatism in terms of its actors and goals...the subject—the human subject, for example—doesn’t count as a secure foundation” (p, 162). So the method of the present study is neither commonsensical in character nor the human subject. The state of ‘being’ or conducting research is a fleeting experience of ‘here and there’ or from a Derridean sense; it is in the moments of ‘undecidability’. In the postmodern world, there is no particular location of the ‘being’ or ‘existence’ or for that matter the way of conducting a research. The existence/condition of the ‘being”—the way of conducting research—is ‘there’ at the same time in ‘many other’ locations. What Homi K. Bhabha
(1994) terms as “here and there” or the state of “in-betweenness” or a “third-space” in the context of identity. Here we are talking of an alternative space in line with Bhabha for conducting research. Hence we have to borrow different concepts from different locations to create a viable method of research. We need to articulate new spaces or discourses for reading or research. Its desirability happens to be the result of dissolution of disciplinary borders among different disciplines and entities. In so doing, the researcher is questioning the concept of method or structure, and at the same time constructing alternatives for studying the problem that have been undertaken for analysis and reflection.

2. From a Multi Literacy Theory perspective, Mansy (2001, 2009) considers “literacies as a social construct”. Literacy has multiple meanings that are conveyed through words, gestures, attitudes and ways of speaking, writing and valuing. Literacy constitutes ways of becoming (Mansy, 2009, p. 14). In the context of the present study the researcher has considered media literacy as a variable of social change or becoming.

3. Deleuze gives an interesting explanation of the term ‘becoming’ with some radical ideas when he compares it with ‘difference’ or ‘to differ’. To him, reality is only a difference of the perceptual fields which is a contravention to realism or the principle of realist reading. Even a post-phenomenological understanding from the stand point of Morley Ponty as suggested by Ihde (1993) relies on perceptual difference. This however contradicts to the practice of a realist/structuralist reading and opens the text for reading from different subject positions. In so doing, a post-structural reading often rejects fixity of meaning in the text. It also rejects the practice of reading from a fixed position and mobilizes the meaning of text often leading to the reader towards a condition of what Derrida—as mentioned by Prafulla Kar—has termed as “aporia” or “undecidability” (Kar, 1997, p. 217). Post-structuralism as a condition also deviates from the principle of constructing texts through a standardized ‘method’ or ‘structure’, which is essentially deconstructive in nature. Here we are talking of the dialectic of research/reading and becoming. Reading and becoming are two mutually inclusive phenomena and they are dialectically constituted. The practice of reading or doing research determines the condition of the being and vice-versa. It has also been argued here that if there are multiple perspectives of reading, then there is multiple literacies and for that matter multiple identities. Then such a way of conceptualizing media literacy and its practice promotes pluralism of thoughts and constitute a multi cultural society. Colebrook (2002) argues that, “Delueze’s insistence on becoming is typical of the post-structuralist trend in late twentieth-century thought” most notably in the works Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. However, Deleuze, in his own terms differs from his contemporaries on their viewpoints regarding the western dominance of ‘identity’ and ‘unity’, based on the Hegelian principle of ‘absolute spirit’ or consciousness. As opined by Williams (2005), Deleuze’s insistence on difference is based on “radical
structuralism or post-structuralism as a creative practice that is always geared to the mutation of actual situations in their relation to ideal structures” (p. 70). Then media literacy from a post structuralist point of view is an escape from that ideality creating alternatives or articulating change in the practice of reading, i.e., reading our life or praxis.

4. Accepting differences in life is post-structural in nature. As Williams (2005) writes “Post-structuralism is constantly revived through openness to the new (to pure difference). It is opposed to any absolute certainty, but can only work through this opposition in repeated critical and creative practices” (Williams, 2005, p. 6). As James Williams has understood, “poststructuralists trace the effects of a limit defined as difference” (Williams, 2005, p. 3). In Williams’ point of view, “difference” “is not understood in the structuralist sense of difference between identifiable things, but in the sense of open variations” (Williams, 2005, p. 3).

5. Post-phenomenology, as we understand, criticizes the phenomenological assertion of truth and claim for certainty. It rejects totality and universality of truth as claimed by phenomenological traditions. As Williams (2005) has observed, Poststructuralists, working with phenomenology, “able to work against [that] power, not with the aim of having done with it, but in order to bring wider interactions to our attention” (p. 09). In that sense poststructuralism does not reject phenomenological methods but they are rejected as the only way to truth and essence. As Williams has further observed “poststructuralism does not simply reject things, it works within them to undo their exclusive claims to truth and purity” (p. 08). In a sense it is same as deconstruction that criticizes the method itself or we can call it a ‘meta critic’ or criticism of the self. In this sense, our analysis of media literacy theory and practice is essentially post-phenomenological that belies on a method that criticizes itself.

6. By transdisciplinarity, the study refer to the transformation of disciplines as a result of their cross fertilization with various other disciplines. In research practice, transdisciplinary study depends on theoretical baggage from various other disciplines to sustain its credential in a fast changing academic environment. Media literacy in today’s context is transdisciplinary as we notice a lot of changes have taken place in the field of literacy studies. It also opens up a new area of literacy practice in the field of research/ literacy in research. A transdisciplinary approach enables the researcher to perceive the research problem from different subject positions that is equivalent to the practice of reading.

7. We argue here that research is also a reading practice which is beyond the conventional understanding of the concept of ‘reading’. In the context of literacy practices, research aptitude is a set of skills that can be termed literacy in research. But here in our case, we are talking about reading from a phenomenological sense or what we call it as the phenomenological reading of
the research problems. In this case, it is about ‘dialectical dimensions of media literacy discourse’—the contradictory discourses on the practices of reading and its impact on the condition of meaning, being or existence. In a sense, we equate ‘research’ with ‘reading’ that is possible with the help of theoretical understanding. We argue that research is ‘becoming’ as well as the ‘being’. It establishes the relationship between research, literacy and ‘text’. The relation between the work we produce and the condition we achieve during the process of research.

8. In this context, the researcher has used the word “use value” from a historical perspective to beat the alienated subject, or to relieve the subject from its alienated condition and states of the researcher that happens to be the case in quantitative research. In another way, ‘contextualization’ here is seen as the revision of history that makes the subject or researcher conscious of its closeness or difference to the research problem. It strengthens the idea of being a literate that relies on the principle of a historical understanding of events in the process of unfolding.

9. In the context of our study we are considering both on the symbolic and the experiential spaces. In a mediated society we are virtually living in a symbolic world and for that matter have a symbolic existence.

10. As written by Henri Lefebvre (1991), representational spaces are “space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’, but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as few writers and philosophers....Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of nonverbal symbols and signs” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39)

11. We are arguing for research as a literate practice thus expanding the context of practicing literacy and creating texts and objects or subjects. For instance through research as a literate practice we create concrete knowledge and bring changes in the condition of the problem of research. Not only it brings changes in the condition of the research problem, it also brings change in the condition of the research method.

12. The concept of nation and identity connected to it, now a day, is not restricted to the traditional notion of nationhood and its appropriation as a result of a change in the physical location of the being. New literacy practices especially the usage of new media has altered the concept of nation and nationality affecting the transnational identity.

13. Frau-Meigs (2013) describes ‘transliteracy’ as a means to comprehend the multi-media dimensions and trans-domain requirements for digitally sustainable “information cultures”.

14. A post-structural idea always questions the structure. Nietzsche has been credited with the emergence of post-structural thought that questions the concept of method. As Christopher Norris argues poststructuralist thought from a Nietzschean perspective “questions the very concepts of method and ‘structure’ in the name of demystifying rhetoric” (Norris, 2002, p. 76). The
approach of research in the current circumstance is premised on such an idea where the researcher questions the validity of the concept of "method" not only as a way of doing research but also as a means of construction knowledge and meaning.

15. Here the research considers literacy as a means of production or a productive force, because of its intimate relationship with communication practices. As Raymond Williams opines, "Means of communication are themselves means of production" (Williams, 1980, p. 50). Williams also argues that "from the simplest physical forms of language to the most advanced forms of communication technology, are themselves always socially and materially produced, and of course reproduced" (Williams, 1980, p. 50). In this case we are seeing media literacy as in line with Williams, as '[new] forces or [new] relations of production' (Williams, 1980, p. 63) which are produced socially and materially and argue that literacy is a social category essential for social participation. But the condition and practice of literacy is contextual as it can be either suppressive or revolutionary. From a dominant ideological perspective literacy can be a tool of social and cultural dominance or an agent of colonization, but literacy as a radical practice can be a force of liberation from the socio-cultural dominance and it can be tool for decolonizing the mind.

16. In this context we are situating media literacy in a structural-functionalist frame where we are anticipating the possibilities of literacy/media literacy being promoted as a functional category rather than a radical or revolutionary practice. If so, then there is always the possibility of an ideological interpellation through the promotion of literacy/media literacy. The underlying purpose of such a reflection is to liberate the discourses on media literacy from ideological underpinnings that suppresses individual liberty and freedom.

17. From a Heideggerian sense, 'Dasein' is the condition of the being where there is nearly an absolute unity of the subject and object. It refers to the degree of intimacy or closeness of the subject with its object. As Heidegger has rightly pointed out, "the fundamental existential which constitute the being of the there [i.e, Dasein], the disclosedness of being-in-the-world, are attunement and understanding. Understanding harbors in itself the possibility of interpretation, that is, the appropriation of what is understood" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 150). Form a broader perspective, such an idea 'being-in-the-world' or 'Dasein' is related to literacy practices and discourse that constitute the 'self' or 'understanding' or 'identity'. In this context, it is argued here that literacy as a performatve condition or discourse articulates both abstract and concrete space. Each and every performatve act demands new literacy practices which are contextual in nature.

18. A proper explication is made in Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (1996). As Eldred (2001) asserts, social ontology, tries to study the social relations. The study focuses partly on the ontological status, i.e. the impact of literacy
practices on the material conditions of society starting from the condition of knowledge to the condition of public sphere, and civil society.

19. Althusser (2008) considers ideology as a mechanism that creates a condition for further production. Here it has been analyzed, whether media literacy as it has been promoted, in any sense, reproduces the condition essential for further production. By production, it has been considered the production of social, cultural and political space within which we make our existence or we live in. Sometimes, such an ideologization takes place from the individual level leading further to a collective ideologization. Althusserian critic of Ideology and ISAs.

20. Literacy studies have given much emphasis on the concept of ‘literacy’ and its relation with the constitution of ‘text’. Instead of asking what is media? / We should ask what is not a medium.

21. We argue here that media literacy has a spatial dimension as it is related to understanding texts in a wider context. We are arguing media literacy and its necessity for acquisition of knowledge spatial from a Kantian concept of space.

22. Hegel has been branded as an idealist, but we consider Hegel as a materialist and assume so because Hegel opines that mind is the matter which has the highest degree of consciousness. We are considering Hegel as a materialist here just for an understanding and to avoid a stereotypical notion about Hegelian philosophy.


24. Deconstruction is a “poststructuralist strategy for textual analysis, which was developed by Jacques Derrida. Practitioners meant to dismantle the rhetorical structures within a text to demonstrate how key concepts within it depend on their unstated oppositional relation to absent signifiers”. (Chandler, 2007, p. 247.) As Christopher Norris argues, “Deconstruction can be seen in part as a vigilant reaction against this tendency in structuralist thought to tame and domesticate its own best insights. Some of Jacques Derrida’s most powerful essays are devoted to the task of dismantling a concept of ‘structure’ that serves to immobilize the play of meaning in a text and reduce it to a manageable compass” (Norris, 2002, p. 2).


26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 23-24

28. Ibid., p. 24-25


References:


5. Ibid.


12. Ibid.


16. Ibid.


19. Ibid.


23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
26. Ibid.