

CHAPTER 1

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Journalism is the activity or profession of collecting, researching, writing and summarizing news and information for dissemination or broadcast to a larger audience. As such, it is of singular importance to all societies. It is of special importance to democracies and other forms of government where an informed citizenry is crucial in making policy and in influencing and electing government officials. In its purest form, journalism is characterized by a straightforward presentation of the facts with no or minimal interpretation. Verification and accuracy of the subject material is stressed. Objectivity and avoidance of overt bias are important for competent classical journalism.

As might be expected in such an important endeavour, different genres of journalism have developed. Among these are advocacy journalism, (AJ) activist journalism, blogging, and watchdog journalism, to name a few.

Advocacy means to speak up or to fight for a cause. The word is derived from the Latin word "advocare" which means coming to the aid of some one.

Advocacy journalism (AJ) is that genre of journalism that intentionally provides information with a non-objective point of view. Almost always, this genre is used in social, political and geopolitical spheres. Although some may consider it is a form of propaganda, this is not true, because, advocacy journalism is intended to represent the facts clearly, although definitely from a particular point of view.

In the past, criticism, opinion and advocacy were generally restricted to the editorial page of the newspapers and print media. Today, the mainstream media, alternative media; corporate blogs, special interest magazines and niche websites increasingly practice advocacy journalism without relegating this content to the editorial page.

As Advocacy Journalism (AJ) is primarily connected to the principle of social development and social change adopted by International Social Development Organizations and Civil Society Groups, this type of journalism produces stories on social issues like climate change, gender inequality, poverty, education, health, agriculture and exploitation, among others. In AJ, the role of the journalist is crucial in shaping public opinion as well as policy and governance around the world. Their works reflect the essence of being watchdogs of society. Many journalists believe that it is no longer enough to simply observe what is going on around us and after words report in a somewhat robotic fashion, which is generally expected of them to do.

Waisbord Silvio recognized in his works that this type of journalistic reportage is about identifying a problem in a community, coming up with a solution to that problem, establishing strong support for that solution and providing an effective implementation plan, and is often associated with civil society movements and social causes. It may be said that this type of journalism although not a new practice is still young in terms of its academic representations in forms and substance.

The presence and existence of AJ as a type of journalism has various manifestations in the media industry. Suffice it to say that it exists for a reason and a purpose. But available literature shows that little is known of the scope and extent of its structure, constructs and applicability in concepts and form. Therefore, this study that looks into the connection of the actual practice of Advocacy Journalism and its reporting technique may contribute something in understanding the nature and scope of Advocacy Journalism as a branch of journalism. By choosing selected human development issues that serves as the focal point for analysis, may be able to identify the concepts of advocacy journalism and its applications in practice. For this, the researcher has chosen the social development issues, such as, political news, news on local governance, news on corruption, news on health, education and agricultural news covered by the leading Bengali dailies of Barak Valley. This research utilized survey method along with content analysis on which the researcher had tried to establish the expressions and patterns of journalistic works of the selected human development issues in the context of Advocacy Journalism by the leading local dailies of Barak Valley of the state of Assam.

1.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ADVOCACY

Advocacy is the promotion of a position on an issue or cause in a single-minded manner, or tackling an issue by highlighting one's own position in relation to it. It is therefore easy to see how the idea of advocacy journalism as the subjective coverage of an issue came about. Advocacy, although promoting a certain position, does so with the aim of achieving certain goals, usually influencing public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions that directly affect people's lives.

In many cases the aim is to provide a voice for those without one and to highlight certain issues to create social change and bring about improvement to people's lives.

Advocacy objective is what you want to change, who will make the change, by how much and when. Key players are the people who have to be persuaded for the campaign to be successful. These key players can be divided into primary and secondary audiences. The primary audience includes decision makers with the authority to influence the outcome of objective directly. These are the individuals who must actively approve the policy change. These decision makers are the primary target of an advocacy strategy.

The secondary audience comprises: individuals and groups that can be influence the decision-makers (or primary audience). The opinions and actions of these influential people are important in achieving the advocacy objective in so far as they affect the opinions and actions of the decisions makers.

Advocacy differs from mediation and negotiation. Mediation and negotiation process aim to reach a mutually acceptable outcome between parties. Advocacy is concerned with genuine major needs, and aims to protect the interests and welfare of the client.

1.3 DEFINITION OF JOURNALISM

The media are seen as the 'watchdog' of society, informing the public of wrongdoings and significant facts, operating in the public interest to inform and educate the public without bias or outside influence. Being the watchdog of society in today's context, however, has seen the media become obsessed with scandal, sensationalist coverage and the reporting of stories without substance or context. The commercial pressure being put on journalist's means, many don't have the time or the freedom to pursue a story beyond graphic images and meaningless statistics. At a time where war, violence, conflict and struggle are the biggest news stories, journalists are forced to compete with other publications, broadcasters and journalists to get the story first - regardless of the impact the story may have on its audience.

Nevertheless, there are still many journalists who undertake stories and pursue issues using the principles of good journalism. But what does it mean to be a good journalist? Good journalists abide by the values of good journalism:

- Fairness
- Balanced reporting
- Accuracy
- Operating in the public's interest.

Some would argue that seeking the truth is another value of good journalism and should be high on the priority list of good journalists; but truth itself is very subjective and it is difficult for journalists (or anyone working in the media) to know what the truth is. It is more important to provide balanced and fair coverage of an issue, providing the audience with an understanding of all perspectives, allowing them to make up their own mind about the 'truth' behind the story.

1.4 JOURNALISM - TRADE OR PROFESSION

The key question in journalism education to this day is whether journalism should be regarded as a trade or a profession. The main distinction between the two is the implicit standing afforded to journalists and the educational background expected from them. A trade is defined as the habitual practice of an occupation. Regarding journalism as a trade would require only vocational teaching needed "to perpetuate practice" (Gaunt 1992), and on the job training without prior study would suffice.

If journalism demands to be a profession, then it would need at least a defined educational pathway to underpin this claim, however, as indicated above, journalists come to their jobs from a great variety of educational backgrounds, and most of them receive in-house training by the media organization they join. This has led to the debate about journalism education having been "framed as scholars versus practitioners" and has caused mistrust between academy and industry that shows few signs of easing. According to Deuze (2006) "journalism education must negotiate rather essentialist self-perception of both industry and academy". Deuze also correctly points out that this dichotomy between theory and practice "adds a level of complexity to our understanding of journalism (and its education)."

This dichotomy is also perceived as one of the key questions in journalism education in tertiary institutions with discussions centering on the weighting of subjects either towards the scholarly or the practical. Yes third debate masks another, wider issue. While looking at the theoretical subjects that are part of journalism studies, the entrenched ideological positions of journalism education become apparent. To most in the western world, journalism-and hence journalism education-is inextricably linked to the political form of democracy. The importance of this link is one of the as yet rarely debated key questions of journalism education. So far journalism education has been seen as the -exclusive domain of democracies, but geopolitical changes and transitions in media systems will force journalism scholars and educators alike to address this hallowed view.

In India, it is contended that newspaper journalism is a profession with its own techniques, traditions and sense of fellowship. Rau (1968) contends that journalism is a profession with its own sense of fellowship as a profession. The main idea behind acknowledging journalism as a profession is the pursuance of a task of high social responsibility. This is well perceived by Azmi (1977) who contends that journalism is a profession and it has a body of knowledge imparted in training institutions affiliated to universities and exercises self-regulation to some extent. Karnani (1977) submits that there is no doubts about its status. But whether it even become a profession in the real sense of law and medicine, as journalists are employees and cannot be regarded as independent practitioners. Eapen (1969) had perceived that journalism was on the way to professionalism due to education in journalism which started much earlier in 1930, organization of occupational associations at the national level (the first being IFWJ in 1950), the formation of Press Council of India for self-regulation in 1966.

Journalism as a craft, a profession, or even a trade or business, is over two centuries old. There are a number of competing visions at the core of journalism's self-definition. It is a craft, a profession, a set of practices a collective of individuals, an industry an institution, a business or a mindset? In that it is probably the bit of all these things, there is a need to better figure out how they work off of and sometimes against each other. This is critical, for even basic questions about journalistic tools have really never been addressed and journalism's tools have not been equally valued. It was made possible by the coming together of a number of technologies as well as several social, political and economic developments. As a profession, it is markedly different from other established professions like medicine, law, engineering, management or teaching. While the established professions require some specialized educational qualification and training to be recruited to them, journalism does not make any such requirement essential. There is no bar to anyone entering the profession; no matter what one's educational qualification is; besides there is a distinction of journalistic profession from other profession with the vital aspects like freedom of speech and expression whereas the legal medical practitioners have no such constitutional right and also its industrial aspect. Porter (1969) argues that by the conventional definition of the word 'profession' the occupation of journalists is not a profession at all, as there is no formal training required to either to secure a job or to fit it well.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF ADVOCACY JOURNALISM

According to the International Encyclopedia of Communication (2008), advocacy journalism is a term that describes the use of journalism techniques to promote a specific political or social cause.

For sociosphere.com (2012), advocacy journalism is an evidence-based reporting with a stand point. Advocacy journalism has also been described as a genre of journalism that intentionally and transparently adopts a non-objective viewpoint, usually for some social or political purpose. Because it is intended to be factual, it is distinguished from propaganda. It is also distinct from instances of media biases and failures of objectivity in media outlets, which attempts to be or which present themselves as objective or neutral.

Kirkman (2011) while delivery a remark at the “Advocacy Journalism in the Digital Age Conference” (2011) held at the America University School of Communication and the Ford Foundation said that when media barrage us with fearsome and unintelligible images of catastrophe, making audiences feel helpless and hopeless, advocacy journalism can provide the context and analysis and evidence and testimony that frame and drive public debate. Kirkman (2011), further remarks that the job of advocacy journalists is to make people interested in what is in their interest.

Free Merriam Webster Dictionary on Face book refers to advocacy journalism as the journalism and advocates a course or expresses view point ([www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/...](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/)). It is also seen as journalism in which the writer or the publication expresses a subjective view or promotes a certain cause (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language 2009).

The Handbook for Citizen Journalists defines advocacy journalism as a genre of journalism that adopts a viewpoint for the sake of advocating on behalf of a social, political, business or religious purpose. It is journalism with an intentional and transparent bias.

Chrunik (2011) provides some warning to writers and readers regarding advocacy journalism: "There can be negative consequences to advocacy journalism; like any form of journalism, when it is not done responsibly. Becoming involved with a cause blurs the lines of a journalist's duties and responsibilities. The public might have a difficult time accepting and trusting that journalists are both promoters and truth-tellers. And there are many ways a journalist can abuse his or her power if he or she feels the ends justify the means." Advocacy journalism tends to persuade, through fact-telling. It rejects the notion of objectivity, instead, exposing bias to the reader and expressing explicit opinions on the subject matter. The general goal is to present facts in such a compelling, well-researched manner that even a skeptical reader or one who does not share the writer's opinions will be swayed to some degree, or at least better informed about the issue at hand. A synthesis of these different perspectives of advocacy journalism would enable us to have more vivid and broad-based definition of what advocacy journalism entails. Among other things, it will furnish us with the defining characteristics with which we may attempt our definition of advocacy journalism. First, it applies journalism techniques. Second, it is evidence-based reporting. Third, it has a standpoint. Fourth, it promotes a specific cause. Based on this backdrop, we may define advocacy journalism as an evidence-based genre of journalism, which identifies social issues, takes a stand on the identified issues and which promotes these issues with the objective of shaping public perception and building up social understanding. The foregoing is in tandem with the position of Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956), where they state that the media (journalists) have worked hard at discovering the truth and mobilizing the society towards worthy causes by presenting evidence and opinion as the basis for decision.

It is therefore logical to encapsulate here that advocacy journalism aims at discovering the truth and mobilizing the society towards worthy causes by presenting evidence and opinion as the basis for making decision. Advocacy journalism is practiced by a broad range of mainstream media outlets and alternative media and special interest publications and programmes. Advocacy Journalism, in all its ramifications is a weapon of change. It goes without saying that journalists are critical elements to the survival and continuous sustenance of modern societies. This also makes them true watchdog of the society.

As watchdogs keep away unwanted people from the residences of their masters by barking and exposing strange and suspicious movements, watchdogs alert their owners of impending danger; raise their consciousness and heighten their surveillance mechanism. Journalists are expected to alert the societies in which they function of impending dangers by pointing to violations and anomalies in the social order (Iwokwagh, 2012). Journalists have greater responsibilities of maintaining social order, even above the capacity of the government.

TABLE 1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF ADVOCACY

Sl. No.	Conventional Journalism	Advocacy Journalism
1	Fact-based	Fact-based
2	Provides all sides of the story	Supports one side of the issue
3	Subscribes to objectivity	Does not subscribe to “classic objectivity”
4	Criticism is left to commentary	Criticism is not confined to commentary or opinion
5	No editorializing in news body	Subtle or obvious editorializing in news

TABLE 1.2 ELEMENTS OF ADVOCACY

Sl. No.	Elements	Explanation
1	Tone of voice	Voice tone indicates position for or against
2	Choice of news angles	News angle is used to support the point of view of the advocate
3	Choice of images	Photographic techniques are used to convey the opinion
4	Leading Questions	Questions are used to support advocate’s point of view
5	Use of buzz words	Words that convey images are used (terrorists)

TABLE 1.3 TECHNIQUES OF ADVOCACY

Sl. No.	Technique	Explanation
1	Declare Position	Acknowledge your perspective up front
2	No propaganda	Be truthful, accurate, and credible. Don't spread propaganda, don't take quotes or facts out of context, "don't fabricate or falsify", and "don't fudge or suppress vital facts or present half-truths"
3	Limit the opponent	Don't give your opponents equal time, but don't ignore them either.
4	Challenge	Explore arguments that challenge your perspective, ask critical questions of people who agree with you.
5	Embarrass	Report embarrassing facts that support the opposition
6	Simplify	Articulate complex issues clearly and carefully
7	Abide by the basics	Be fair and thorough
8	Use the neutral other	Make use of neutral source to establish facts

1.6 STYLE OF WRITING AND DELIBERATE USE OF LANGUAGE IN ADVOCACY JOURNALISM

Du Preez (2008) describes the writing style of advocacy journalism is “very different” from the “habit of churning out a *quick and dirty* article” on an issue. She says that the publication goes to great lengths to get the correct facts, to explore the issues fully and to explain in great detail all aspects of a particular story, even though the “articles may or may not be newsworthy.” Du Preez adds that stories are published with a clear intention to inform, warn, advocate, advise and guide readers about matters that may have an impact on them. She describes their coverage should be intentional, “to bring attention to the issue; to embarrass those responsible; to warn the public; and to encourage the regulator/ lawmakers to take action.”

The writing style of advocacy news story should be clear and calculated, so that it can encourage readers, who are in effect to take action against if their rights are being infringed.

The journalists should devote more time in researching the issues thoroughly and presenting them because people may make fruitful decisions based on what they read. The choice of language in headlines, sub-heads, captions and the text should be taken consciously and decisions should be “carefully considered” for maximum effect.

1.7 ADVOCACY JOURNALISM DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Advocacy journalism is not just the single-minded pursuit of a cause.
- Advocacy consists of organized efforts and actions based on the reality of "what is." These organized actions seek to highlight critical issues that have been ignored and submerged, to influence public attitudes, and to enact and implement laws and public policies so that visions of "what should be" in a just, decent society become a reality. Human right-political, economic, and social - is an over reaching framework for these visions. Advocacy organizations draw their strength from and are accountable to people - their members, constituents, and/or members of affected groups.
- Although advocacy in many cases is undertaken to bring about change for the better of society or a group within society, advocacy journalism is different in that it approaches an issue or cause not just from one particular point of view (with a single aim and perspective in mind), but will look at an issue from all viewpoints in order to bring about understanding and provide information.
- Advocacy journalism is not about public relations; it is not about communicating with the public in order to influence and change their opinions and attitudes in the interest of promoting a person or organization.

- Although advocacy journalism does aim to bring about change and challenge attitudes and opinions, it does not do so with the interests of one person or organization in mind. Advocacy journalists work in the interest of a community on issues which require change. They do not take up a cause with the aim of promoting an issue for the benefit of anyone, but rather highlight a cause with the aim of promoting change.
- Advocacy journalism is not social marketing; it does not apply marketing principles to social issues in order to bring about change.
- Although advocacy journalism is undertaken with the aim of bringing about social or policy change, it does not use principles of marketing in order to bring about that change.
- Advocacy journalists do not promote ideas or services in order to satisfy individuals or the objectives of organizations. Advocacy journalism is not about satisfying the needs of individuals for their own benefit; it is undertaken in order to create a broader (and even deeper) understanding of an issue for the greater good of a community or sector of the community which requires change.
- Advocacy journalism is not development communications; it does not apply marketing principles in order to improve social and economic situations in developing countries.
- Advocacy journalism uses the principles of good journalism in order to create awareness of an issue influencing a community. Its overall aim is to create debate and discussion which facilitate positive outcomes. Advocacy journalists should not be driven by the principles of marketing which include:
 - a) Promoting a product / organization / individual
 - b) Getting the product to serve the customer
 - c) Setting a price that serves the customer
 - d) Communication with the customer with the aim of self-promotion

1.8 OTHER TERMS FOR ADVOCACY JOURNALISM

Advocacy journalism has a number of different names which are perhaps better known to working journalists and the public. Many of these incorporate the various principles of advocacy journalism and together provide a better understanding of what it is.

1.8.1 Public Journalism

Public journalism focuses on an issue long enough for there to be public attention drawn to it, leading to public debate and hopefully some kind of solution or positive change. Public journalism has a number of elements, all of which apply to advocacy journalism. These include:

- Undertaking public journalism with the desire of rebuilding a communities sense of itself. Newspaper readership is unlikely to turn upward as long as the sense of community continues downward. This is a strong motivation for undertaking advocacy journalism. If the community or audience feel that the journalist are showing an interest in the issues which effect the community and are working towards rebuilding community structures, they will not only begin to have a positive vision of themselves, but will also look to the newspaper, publication or broadcast (thus increasing readership or viewership) in order to keep informed of the changes taking place.
- Providing sustained focus on an issue, rather than the traditional method of journalism which covers an event and then moves into the next one. Instead of flitting from event to event, a news medium should stay with a problem or issue - even at the risk of redundancy - until it has focused community attention on all its aspects and citizens can deliberate rationally about it.
- Undertaking a type of journalism which goes against the event-focused traditions of the mainstream press, devoting instead time and effort into explaining the systems and influences affecting the communities' lives.

- Avoiding the extremes usually found so attractive by the main stream media and rather focusing more attention on the middle ground of issues and problems influencing a community or audience. When covering political campaigns or events, public and advocacy journalism aims to provide an insight into-the effect that political strategies may have on communities, rather than seeing them in terms of their value for the politicians. Advocacy and public journalists should not treat an election or political campaign as 'a sporting event where points are allotted to the politician with the best moves, but rather evaluate each move in relation to its effect on the community or audience.
- Journalists undertaking public journalism have in some cases expressed their own views while focusing on an issue. The key is to not only providing their own view, but to cover the issue in such a way that helps community members to understand the views of all those' involved. Advocacy and public journalism is about providing the bigger picture.

1.8.2 Civic Journalism

Civic journalism believes that the media have an obligation to society which goes beyond simply reporting the news. While much civic journalism takes place in traditional newsrooms, it is a type of journalism which aims at listening to community and audience members and their views on their problems, thereby trying to highlight solutions that community members may have to problems. The focus is on problem solving and covering issues within a community in such a manner that solutions (usually initiated through public debate) are achieved.

1.8.3 Environmental Journalism

Although environmental journalism focuses on environmental reporting and issues, it has a number of principles and values which it shares with advocacy journalism. Environmental journalism can be defined as using journalism and the media to advocate-for the health and safety of the planet.

Environmental journalism is undertaken in order to achieve change within the environmental sector, but it also plays a number of other roles which advocacy journalists can use as a guide to their own practice.

These include:

- Agenda-setting being able to place issues affecting communities or audiences on the agenda of those who are able to influence change.
- Playing the watchdog by monitoring, for example, government policy and programmes, environmental (and advocacy) journalists are able to act as a watchdog on behalf of the public's interest over those who influence their daily lives.
- Celebrating success and achievement within communities rather than simply focusing on the negative aspects of a story (as is typical within the mainstream media), environmental journalism, through the principles of good journalism, reports on those who triumph over a problem or find a solution to an issue. In the same way, because advocacy journalism is a sustained focus on an issue over a period of time, advocacy journalists are able to profile the individual or communities achievements within the context of the struggle for change.

1.9 PRINCIPLES OF ADVOCACY JOURNALISM

- **Continuity:** Advocacy journalism is more than doing a feature on an issue. It requires journalists to cover an issue affecting their community or audience which requires change. Change and solutions to the issue are brought about through a focused campaign by the media which looks at the issue from all angles, highlighting different interpretations and player's perspectives. Such focus over a long period of time may even start to feel redundant for the journalists themselves, but affected community members appreciate that the continued attention to such an extent that they begin to feel positive about themselves and increase readership / viewership / listenership of the media.

- **Issue-focused:** Traditional journalism tends to focus on events as one-off opportunities for news stories. Event-focused reporting is narrow in time as well as shallow in content and context. It looks only at an event and not at the underlying issues which need addressing. Another of the main principles of advocacy journalism is that it is issue-focused rather than event-focused. By focusing on the issue, advocacy journalists are better able to create an understanding of the issue from the perspective of all those involved, as well as look towards the end goal of achieving change.
- **Seeing the middle ground:** Advocacy journalism is not about seeing two opposite sides of a story, because it avoids focusing on extremes. Instead it goes into a story in-depth, reporting on all sides and looking at every angle. Traditional journalism has the notion that there are two sides to every story and that journalistic integrity and objectivity come from allowing both sides equal opportunity to discuss their position on the event being covered. Advocacy journalism, by covering an issue (as opposed to an event), recognizes there are always more than two sides to a story and that it is the journalists' duty to investigate and report on the grey area between the black and white (of traditional journalism) in order to portray all sides of an issue.
- **Research:** In-depth research is required to not only have an understanding of the issues, players, policy etc., but to be able to adequately explain the issue to community members in order to create awareness and foster an environment for debate and problem solving. In order to be able to explain the issues from all perspectives to other players involved, it is imperative that advocacy journalists first understand the issues, players, participants and even possible solutions before undertaking a story. Although time consuming, it is vital to the end goal of creating debate around an issue, which will only be useful if all participants are adequately informed on all aspects relating to it.

- **Encouraging debate:** By reporting on issues in a responsible, accurate and in-depth manner, advocacy journalism can create and encourage public debate and deliberation. Rather than perpetuating problems and reporting on issues of agitation (as opposed to resolving them), advocacy journalists should be reporting to communities about issues which affect them in such a manner that democratic and open debate is encouraged, The way issues are resolved in a democracy is through some version of deliberation, formal or informal, so those interested in public (and advocacy) journalism are learning to understand, value and encourage it through the way we report upon issues.

1.10 THE ROLE OF ADVOCACY JOURNALISM IN SOCIETY

- **Information:** Advocacy journalists aim to inform their community or audience about the issues affecting it. This means informing them in such a way that informed debate can be facilitated in order to solve problems. In order to inform community members adequately, advocacy journalists have to understand and communicate the underlying and often invisible systems behind the issue.
- **Alternative to the mainstream:** The mainstream media cannot always be trusted by their audience and the community they serve, often because of their commercial interests. We have all heard stories about newspapers or magazines wanting to run a controversial story but being unable to because of pressure from advertisers, funders or owners. This pressure, along with the mainstream media's claims of objectivity, means that audiences are becoming less trusting of what they read and see. In some countries, journalists have grown so close to their government and corporate sources that their reporting resembles a conversation among powerful 'insiders' more than an effort to watch over government and business on behalf of citizens. This is less true of advocacy media and journalists who openly pursue an issue and who are more honest with their audience, bringing back an element of trust.

In addition, the fact that community members are offered an alternative to mainstream media provides them with more information and a different type of coverage. Media consumers are often overwhelmed by the amount of information in the mainstream media; information which in many cases simply assaults the senses but does little else. Advocacy journalism goes beyond providing a surface layer of information, allowing audiences to debate and address issues being raised.

- **Focus on audience:** Many of the issues and causes pursued by advocacy media are those which affect their audience and immediate community. Advocacy journalists have to have an ear to the ground at all times in order to have a sense of the issues being raised within their community so as to be able to address them. Advocacy journalism does not play to an individual's needs or service one sector of the community; instead it digs deeper into the needs of its audience and the issues affecting the daily lives of its community. Advocacy journalism highlights those issues in order to stimulate debate and ultimately bring about change for the better.
- **Aim for change:** The end-goal of most advocacy journalism is to bring about some kind of change for the better, whether social, policy, economic etc. This is perhaps the most important role of advocacy journalism. By first highlighting the issue at hand, and then creating an awareness of it with major players (community members, policymakers, government members, and civil society), the media is able to facilitate dialogue and debate in order to bring about positive change. Journalists should not simply report on the news; advocacy journalists have an obligation towards improving the communities capacity to act on the news, of caring for the quality of public dialogue, of helping people engage in a search for solutions, of showing the community how to grapple with - not only read about - its problems'. Change within the mindset of community members is one of the roles of advocacy journalism, as is change in the situation or environment of that community for the better. Another is policy change which positively affects community members. An example of this is when the media in India played an important role in changing government policy which may have damaged the Taj Mahal.

In Kerala also, the media were instrumental in drawing public attention to a proposed hydroelectric plant which resulted in public pressure on the government to reconsider the project and change its policy.

- **Celebrate:** Not all news is good news, but sometimes good news is good for news. Advocacy journalists are distinct from the mainstream traditional journalists in their willingness to cover the positive outcomes and changes which have occurred. Community members who have followed a particular issue through a publication or broadcaster will continue to follow its progress in the hope of a positive outcome. They will continue to follow other stories after that knowing that positive news does get reported.

1.11 LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

Lobbying comes from the verb “to lobby” which means an attempt by citizens to influence public officials at a high level. Lobbying is one of the most common methods used by citizens to influence public policy. It is used to put pressure on politicians and government officials to take up the interest of the people and to support their cause. In most democracies lobbying is recognized as a legitimate way for citizens to have their voice heard. However, critics of lobbying say that wealthy people and business are better able to spend time on and pay for various lobbying activities and therefore gain greater influence with public officials than other citizens.

Lobbying is often used in conjunction with advocacy. Lobbying describes the process of winning allies and influencing decision makers. There are many ways to lobby people. The most common is to meet with the key individuals to discuss your interests and to see whether they are in support. Lobbying can also be done through information events to which many people are invited to learn more about your campaign. These events can be fun and entertaining. To be an effective lobbyist, it is essential that one should be well informed about particular issue and clear about what one wants to see change.

1.12 ADVOCACY JOURNALISM AND THE PRINCIPLE OF MEDIA AND MORALITY

Advocacy Journalism (AJ) as a social development-oriented type of journalism is deeply entrenched in the principle of media and morality. It is mainly through AJ practice that media plays a central role in recognizing the rights of social development stakeholders through the politics of recognition (Waisbord, 2009, Fraser 1997) which shows in their political stands. This practice of making known the socio-political stance in their works was asserted by some media academics including Roger Silverstone, Silvio Waisbord and Seyla Benhabib. Such leaning towards making political statements in the works of media academics contributed to the theoretical basis of AJ as a branch of journalism and concepts of media and morality. Roger Silverstone in his book *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis* underscored the necessity of media morality in a more and more globalized context. His book is an indirect call to AJ practice, providing the impetus for journalists to look into their conscience and morality as they report on local and global events and its impact on humanity. Silverstone talked about a crisis in the world of communication that is characterized by moral, ethical and political grounds. This mediated environment is so polluted that it is "threatening our capacity to sustain a level of humanity. It is only by attending to its possibilities that we will be able to reverse what otherwise will be a downward spiral towards increasing global incomprehension and inhumanity" (Silverstone).

It is in this same vein that the socio-political and socio-economic conditions in human life are addressed and presented in AJ. Silverstone evoked a global space he called a media polis that is shared and shareable, singular and plural, mediated and immediate where there are endless possibilities for media space in the formation of social, civic and moral space a media polis where media can be a designated place for civility, humanity and responsibility. Instead of the usual apathy, practitioners should claim the critical role of media in this "formation of social, civic and moral space" which translates into practice of media fairness and integrity. The new moral agenda according to Silverstone creates a space for media hospitality, responsibility; obligation and judgment that requires attention to media justice (Silverstone, 2008).

This refers to a media space that is not selective and exclusive but inclusive and accommodating which in a sense is media democratization in action (Waisbord, 2009). This concept of responsibility and obligation of media practitioners is also embodied in Waisbord's concept of AJ where he claimed that journalists pursuing AJ are most possibly motivated by a certain sense of duty to humanity and society, sometimes going beyond what is called for in a story and beyond personal interests and gratification (Waisbord, 2008). In the same breadth, it is the multiple roles of media as an actor, spectator and narrator that accomplishes history and makes the polis a productive place to organize memories (Silverstone, 2007, citing Kristeva, 2001). It might be noted that taking a political stand is also crucial in order to successfully assume all these multiple roles. For there can be no genuine media justice without publicizing certain political stands. An equal, just, humane and democratic society is most often ensured with political statements that facilitate the attainment of these goals.

Concept of "civic imagination" as a thinking mode was brought up by Silverstone when he cited Seyla Benhabib in her recent study of Arendt's political thinking called civic imagination. Quoting Benhabib:

"The process of self-representation and articulation in public is still the only means through which the civic imagination can be cultivated. The process of articulating good reasons in public forces one to think from the standpoint of others ... the ability of individuals and groups to take the standpoint of others into account is a crucial virtue in a civic polity. The public sphere is like the pupil in the eye of the body politic; when its vision is murky, clouded, or hindered, the sense of direction of the polity is also impaired (Silverstone, 2007).

This capacity for social empathy (Waisbord, 2009) is also expressed in AJ since it represents advocacy efforts to promote social change by understanding and addressing various social issues such as environment, health, gender issues, agriculture, education etc. with the intent to contribute to the resolution of these identified social problems. Furthermore, civic imagination is a term described as directly linked to a human quality which opens the doors to understanding and in turn, the capacity to make judgments in and through the public world.

AJ practitioners may take this up as a personal crusade or they may have been encouraged by their media outfit, or influenced by the agenda of non-profit civic society movements or social development organizations. Whatever it is that prodded them to engage in AJ practice, the idea is to contribute to the betterment of society by taking the posture of "being a part of that society".

With the professionalization of media programmes of civil society movements and engaging media practitioners into their agenda, remarkable changes have taken place in the overall media landscape of the global south. More and more social mobilizations are taking place to tap media to address various social concerns such as health, domestic violence, environment, immigration, poverty and so on and being reported in both mainstream and alternative media (Waisbord, 2008). However, Waisbord noted that AJ practice may not be as extensive as it should be practiced in the media industry. He also noted some misunderstandings on the characteristics of AJ within the industry which resulted to a deficient quality of news coverage of social problems. He linked this deficiency to a key failure of the press in supporting democratic goal (Waisbord, 2009). He substantiated his claim with the following assertion:

First, the press does not expand the boundaries of public debate concerning social problems. By turning away from covering a wide variety of problems, the press excludes citizens and issues from the process of critical reflexivity. In doing so, the press perpetuates a process of social exclusion by relegating only the concerns of majority.

Second, the absence of coverage of social inequities reflects the disinterest of the press to foster empathy and solidarity in democratic life. Studies have documented that social problems that affect the poor are typically absent in the news (Waisbord, 2009). To achieve this, collaboration between the press and society must be strengthened. This is made possible if the press effectively functions as a platform for the expression of citizens' interests (Waisbord, 2009).

Yet AJ is also considered as a follower of established journalistic routines and norms such as the preference for the official, dramatic, conflict-laden, sensationalist and celebrity/event triggered coverage. As such, standard media logic is still very much present in AJ stories.

But AJ attempts to introduce breakthroughs and cuts a creative edge to the stories (Waisbord, 2009). AJ presumes that media as a whole will always chase special interest stories and therefore, it is important to find opportunities in shaping media content. Through AJ, civic entities can influence news making for the benefit of society's greater good including programs for the disadvantaged sector such as food banks for the poor and projects for the disabled. In terms of media forms, the journalistic qualities of AJ reports are quite similar to the style and form used in typical media reports. Moreover, these works are considered as AJ primarily because of the theme and emphasis of the stories and not the form on which it was written. Media content may vary and change depending on the relations between news organizations and external factors. The challenge lies on how to recognize prospects, identify strategies and opportunities for content diversification. Opportunities for a good coverage may be reporting the human side of certain stories such as scientific breakthroughs, judicial decisions or finding fresh angles in high profile speeches, congressional debates or commemorations (Waisbord, 2009). To sustain the efforts of civil society groups in bringing the media into the fold of social causes, they provide trainings to familiarize journalists with social and civic issues and bring journalists in contact with social development experts and other information sources.

There are local situations that are more favourable to the practice of civic advocacy journalism than others such as in localities where international development organizations and civil society groups are already active. The presence of these groups may be quite limited or even restricted in other geographical areas and this situation may not favour AJ practice. Finally, AJ is focused on societal reforms and engages collaboration with civil society groups but it is not similar or can be equated to critical and activism-oriented media movement within the dominant media. AJ is not premised on a radical critique of the dominant media nor is it antagonistic with other industry groups and practitioners.

1.13 ADVOCACY JOURNALISM AS A PROFESSIONAL CONCERN

The notion of advocacy itself as a feature of news reporting is not new. Dearing and Rogers (1996) refer to a broader conception of 'media advocacy', whereby the mass media is strategically used for advancing a public policy initiative. Successful media advocacy essentially puts a specific problem, framed in a certain way, on the media agenda. Advocacy journalism however focuses on the more individual level of reporting by journalists or an organization instead of mass media in its entirety. Additionally, it can be seen as going a step further in that advocacy journalism is concerned with effecting tangible changes upon society, and not merely ensuring that an issue is placed on the media agenda. Advocacy journalism as a manner of reporting relates, firstly, to the covering of issues which may not be considered 'hard' news although it may negatively affect many people, and secondly covering such issues in a manner intended specifically to result in change. It can be thought of as a relatively recent style of reporting in modern journalism; however, the notion of journalism concerned with effecting change in society can in fact *be traced back to the press of the early 19th century in England and America*. In these countries, a liberal press had emerged, free to a large extent from the government taxes and censure that had influenced the manner in which stories were reported on in the preceding century. This liberal press saw as their main responsibility the informing of the public, often through advocating explicitly for changes and reforms, in the pursuit of bringing about a rational, liberal society (Ward, 2004). Key to this role of informing the public was the papers' "political criticism and weighty opinion". A paper that was neutral or uninterested in politics did not advance the liberal cause (Ward, 2004.). Media systems during this period were therefore geared toward producing news that, in large part, was public- affairs oriented and took clear stances (Curran, 2000). However, with the advent of changes in technology and the production of news as a mass-produced commodity, the role of the press in society changed, with the chief aim of news organizations becoming the dissemination of news for profit. The purpose of news thus changed from advocating changes in society to concerns of providing "more newspapers for more readers" (Ward, 2004).

1.14 ADVOCACY JOURNALISM REJECTS OBJECTIVITY

Promoters of objectivity in journalism may not see AJ as objective enough to fulfill the basic requisites of journalism practice. To some extent, AJ is subjective reporting or in journalistic parlance, biased reporting, biased towards reporting of social issues as manifested in the subjective choice of topic, story angle, story thread and use of sources. In Stephen Ward's "marketplace of ideas", identified three major complaints about objectivity in media. First, objectivity is too big an ideal for journalism and hence is a myth, second, objectivity even if possible is undesirable because it forces journalists to use restricted formats, it encourages superficial writing of "official" facts, it fails to provide readers with analysis and interpretation, objectivity ignores other functions of the press such as commenting, complaining and acting as a public watchdog, finally, objectivity restricts a free press. A democracy is better served by a non-objective press where views compete in a market place of ideas.

1.15 NEED OF ADVOCACY MEDIA

Advocacy journalism attempts to address various social issues and topics which cannot be solved with traditional methods. Advocacy journalists find a story, engage in the story, and want their audience to act. What they report among other topics are ideas from social classes, environmentalism, poverty, civil rights, health awareness etc.

Advocacy journalism works as a catalyst for social change through coverage of injustices and the inclusion of the voice of those who often find their voices marginalized. Can we trust media with a vested interest? .No, but no single source should ever be trusted completely. Vested interests are going to work harder at unearthing evidence for their cause or constituency for which the mass media wouldn't bother digging. Who will break the unpopular stories in which everyone has a vested interest? For which we need advocacy paper who would talk about the problem besides their personal interest.

1.16 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study deals with a new area under the communication and journalism in Barak Valley. The present study is an attempt to analyze the extent to which the leading dailies of Barak Valley is playing the advocacy role with regard to social and political issues/ events of this Valley and to examine how it affects the socio-political life of the people of this valley.

The journalism in Barak Valley had been growing since the colonial era but no serious effort has been made till today to analyze the status of advocacy journalism in Barak Valley. So there is a greater need how the leading dailies of Barak Valley influence the emergence of a relatively recent form of journalistic reporting namely that of advocacy journalism (AJ). This thesis has attempted to assess whether any advocacy journalism is practice in the leading dailies of Barak valley by accessing or evaluating the reporting style through content analysis along with survey method.

The present study is of equal importance for mass communication, academicians, media industry, media management, social work and other allied social science disciplines.

1.17 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An allied review of literature is indispensable in any research, because, it directs the path to the researcher and gives proper direction to him at the primary level of research. Researcher gets the knowledge about previous researches which may be inform of thesis, books, research papers, articles and committee report etc. Previous works provide base for new study, these woks helps researcher to know the delimitation of previous study. Every so often researcher gets proper direction from the suggestions of previous researcher .The knowledge acquired from previous researches assist in locating sources and locating system. However, it is very difficult to get access to all published and unpublished literature on any concerned subject. Hence efforts have been made to review as many pertinent references as possible.

In the 1990s, there was no coined terminology to identify this type of media involvement, some years later, a book entitled "Spin Works: A Media Guidebook for Communicating & Values and Shaping Opinions" by Robert Bray published in 2000. It is a book of strategies and tactics marketed to NGO and social development organizations in engaging the press as a sounding board for advocating social issues and concerns. With this publication, one might infer that journalistic reportage on social development issues is already an active genre at that time. Yet, one cannot really, pinpoint the beginnings and history of this type of journalism because of the lack of written materials that essay its history in terms of scope and application.

Around the world the major goals have achieved through advocacy journalism. The mobilization of people living with HIV/AIDS across the globe is perhaps one of the best illustrations of this process. The news media pay serious attention to these issues including policies, treatment cost and prevention programmes. Robins (2004), Stein (2002), Traquina (2004).

Advocacy reporters of environmental movements opposing whale-hunting, nuclear plants, and deforestation (Anderson 2003), and the Treatment Action Campaign and the Sexual Rights Campaign in South Africa (Msimang"2003). While aiming to promote social changes, advocacy journalism strictly adheres to standard reporting practices and codes; it follows conventional news routines and norms to raise media attention (Gillett. 2003).

Advocacy journalism is being used to this very day for a number of worthy causes. Advocacy Journalism brings together thought in social activism, public policy and journalism, to help define the opportunities and challenges created by social situations. Advocacy journalism is also being used to present the theory of global warming and to inform the public.

Advocacy Journalism has been utilized for decades, especially during the 1960's advocacy Journalism attempts to address various social issues and topics which cannot be solved with a traditional method. What they report, among other topics, are ideas from social classes, environmentalism, poverty, health awareness and civil rights etc. The ideas they promote represent an abstract value which have huge repercussions when they impact society. Social media is driven by constituents and advocates. It raises public awareness and social change. Mc. Gregor (2000).

The end-goal of most advocacy journalism is to bring about some kind of change for the better, whether social, policy, economic etc. This is perhaps the most important role of advocacy journalism. By first highlighting the issue at hand, and then creating an awareness of it with major players (community members, policy makers, government members, and civil society), the media is able to facilitate dialogue and debate in order to bring about positive change. Journalists should not simply report on the news; advocacy journalists have an obligation towards 'improving the communities capacity to act on the news, of caring for the quality of public dialogue, of helping people engage in a search for solutions, of showing the community how to grapple with - not only read about - its problems.

Change within the mindset of community members is one of the roles of advocacy journalism, as is change in the situation or environment of that community for the better. Another is policy change which positively affects community members. An example of this is when the media in India played an important role in changing government policy which may have damaged the Taj Mahal. In Kerala, the media were instrumental in drawing public attention to a proposed hydroelectric plant, which resulted in public pressure on the government to reconsider the project and change its policy. K.V.Mathur (1996)

Dal Lake is presently one of the most burning environmental issues in Indian-administered Kashmir. The lake is dying an untimely death due to increasing pollution, while its open area has reduced tremendously over the years. In order to save the lake from further deterioration, there is a dire need to generate awareness among masses regarding its conservation. Here comes into picture role of media which can inform people about various measures regarding Dal Lake conservation. One of the finest examples of media's role in generating environmental awareness is the regional English newspaper 'Greater Kashmir' Save Dal Campaign. The study was carried out to explore the position of the Save Dal Campaign in broader picture of Advocacy Journalism. It was observed that 'Greater Kashmir' has strongly highlighted the cause of Dal Lake, which is evident from the amount and consistency of coverage it has given to the issue. The publication has also been trying its best to generate awareness among masses about the issue, which can be gauged from the number and frequency of reader's responses to the campaign. Rama Vajpayee (2002)

Joan Vennochi, a political columnist for the Boston Globe, is among the 22 Pulitzer Prize winning alumni discussed one of the conference topics - The Rules of Engagement: "Advocacy and Emotion in Journalism and the Press". What role should emotion in a columnist's work? A columnist basically does advocacy journalism because he is writing his own opinion and obviously trying, to some degree, to influence the way other people think.

The best columns bring together emotion and fact. Emotion by itself can be just empty rhetoric- it can be fun to read, it can get people angry, it can inspire people, but if it turns out that the basis and the premise of your argument is pure emotion and you're short on facts, it turns on you in the end. Advocacy journalism and U.S. media bias In the United State, the practice' of Advocacy Journalism by the mainstream domestic media outlets has raised questions relating to the possibility of systemic media bias in place of traditional reportage. In 2005, for' instance, the board of PBS debated Advocacy journalism with regard to its programs, and subsequently reduced time and funding for the left-wing programme with Bill Moyers, and expanded a show hosted by right-wing host Tucker Carlson. The Rather gate scandal at CBS news, which resulted in the resignation of Dan Rather, serves as an example of Advocacy Journalism with identifiable media bias.

American media professor from Washington's American University, W. Joseph Campbell, in an article written by Campbell titled "Advocacy Journalism Revisited" Campbell speaks of The New York Journal's finest hour in relation to reactive journalism. In 1897, reporter Karl Decker helped a Cuban teenager serving a 15 month sentence in a Havana jail as a political prisoner, escape from her cell. Evangelina Betancourt Cisneros was the daughter of a Cuban Well-established American media professor from Washington's rebel leader who was incarcerated. Suspicious of how her father would be created in prison, she decided not to leave him and it wasn't until an altercation between Cisneros and a prison guard erupted that she was separated from her father and moved to a more abrasive jail. Cisneros was imprisoned without trial on charges of conspiring against the Spanish military, which at the time was attempting to put down a rebellion across Cuba. After some time covering the incident, Decker infiltrated a secret Cuban network in Havana that smuggled weapons and medicine into Cuba.

With the support of the US diplomatic sector, Decker managed to break Cisneros out of jail and carry her aboard a steamer to New York City. Campbell addressed this story as a romantic anecdote of the origins of advocacy journalism. Campbell's article tells a tale that Hearst's new paper was more than about spreading news; it was about righting wrongs J-Lo and Matt Damon (1996).

Journalists and civic organizations actively collaborate in advocacy journalism. Across the South, a myriad of journalist's organizations actively try to increase the volume of reporting and widening news perspectives on social issues. In contrast to traditional institutions that bring together publishers and/or journalists that are interested in promoting "press issues" (e.g., freedom of expression, protection of reporters, press laws), this new breed of advocacy organizations are primarily interested in promoting news coverage of issues related to social change. Examples include African journalists who promote HIV / AIDS issues, such as Nigeria's Journalists Against AIDS and Tanzania's AGAAT (Falobi & Banigbetan, 2000), and women's rights, including Kenya-based FEMNET, Media Women's Associations in Tanzania, Uganda and other East African countries, and South Africa's Gender and Media Network. Others aim to stir up interest in a variety of social and political issues such as Nairobi-based MESH, and the Media Institute of Southern Africa. In Latin America, journalists have formed associations to promote reporting of children's issues (e.g., Brazil-based Agencia Not'cias deDireitos da Infancia), women's issues (e.g., Mexico's Communication e Information de la Mujer), environment (e.g., Red de Communication Ambiental de America Latina y el Caribe) and social issues in general (Argentina's Red de Periodismo Social, Ecuador's Agencia Latino Americana delInformation). These organizations feed information to newsrooms, provide logistical support to facilitate coverage, bring journalists together through virtual networks, form alliances with news organizations, organize training workshops, produce articles and series for publication, and so on.

Aside from editorial politics, advocates-journalists frequently confront the disinterest of their news organizations. They have meager resources and space for their work. Also, they often clash against editors who are reluctant to publish "depressing" and "soft" stories that show interest only in sensationalistic coverage of social issues, and fail to ensure minimal resources to gather information (Panos, 2007)

Mark Waisbord (2003) provided a nice example of award-winning bias in his analysis of an episode of the US radio show. 'This American Life, which won the prestigious Peabody Award 'for distinguished achievement in aleuronic journalism'. The episode described a horrific massacre in 1982 by Guatemalan government force of 200 people, almost the entire village of Dos Erres. The episode was courageous and impressive in many ways. Falobi O & Banigbetan K. (2000)

Mass advocacy is the strategic use of the mass media as resource advance a social or public policy initiative. In Canada for example, the 'Manitoba public insurance campaign' illustrates how media advocacy was used to fight alcohol and tobacco related health issues. Hajime, S. (2003)

Today, examples of advocacy journalism are ubiquitous. One of the clearest examples of this can be found in the published materials from major American political parties, where information is discussed from the particular parties' point of view and bias, with the intent of influencing public opinion. Certain type of investigative reporting can be considered as advocacy journalism. Current events, especially those that are potentially divisive also provide an abundance of subject material for advocacy journalism. Presently or recently popular topics such as the use of hydraulic fracturing in hydrocarbon exploration, the causes of global climate change and the direction of public policy with regard to a potential Ebola epidemic are all examples of good advocacy journalism. Deuze M. (2005)

According to Canadian journalist Sue Careless, advocacy journalism 'openly speaks for or pleads on behalf of another, giving the other a face and a voice' (Careless, 2000). This is what Clooney (British actor/Director) achieves in his film "openly and shamelessly" taking sides with the victims of genocide. The documentary is a personal story of his visit with his son to Darfur. Together they engage their audience in a 'personal point of view' that by its very nature is more 'persuasive' than traditional TV news storytelling techniques where 'subjects and subject matter are mediated by the impersonal director, who hides behind the voice of commentary' .This major difference in style does not detach the film from journalism - on the contrary. Whilst the motivation for the work is advocacy and the directors' desire to inspire change, the documentary remains fundamentally anchored within the sphere of professional television journalism.

Indeed there has been an explosion of advocacy documentary - making in recent years such as "An Inconvenient Truth, The End of the Line and The Killing Fields" but these films must be distinguished from pure activism through their use of professional storytelling and maintenance of professional journalistic standards Chanan (2007)

Jensen (1995) contrasts the styles of two global journalists as examples. Freelance journalist John Pilger (Australian-born, living in Britain) is presented as an exemplar of advocacy journalism, while 'New York Times' reporter John Burns represents objective journalism. Both have reported for global media on Iraq. Both describe themselves as independent journalists and reject affiliations with any political groups.

Pilger is, however, openly critical of US and UK policies towards Iraq, including unambiguous denunciations of the self-interested motivations and criminal consequences of state policies. His reporting leads him not only to describe these policies but to offer an analysis that directly challenges the framework of the powerful. Burns, in contrast ... tends to accept the framework of the powers promoting these policies, and his criticism tends to question their strategy and tactics, not their basic motivations.

Advocacy journalism is the same as investigative journalism and muckraking, where these serve the public interest and the public's right to know. Investigative reports often focus on criminal or unethical activity, or aim to advance a generally accepted public interest, such as government accountability; alleviation of human suffering, etc. It might be argued that the journalist is assuming a point of view that public action is warranted to change the situation being described. The most famous example of this was Edward R. Murrow's 'See it owe' series of reports on Sen ... Joseph McCarthy (2000)

The recent growth of advocacy journalism has been significant. Unlike the "journalist" model which expresses the political interests of journalists, the advocacy model represents efforts that promote social change. Through advocacy journalism, groups that traditionally have had limited access to the news media aim to raise awareness and provide information, and affect public opinion and policy debates, advocacy journalism is driven by the notion that the news media should be a tool of social change. Because the press contributes to both raising awareness among the public and setting policy priorities and agendas, aim to shape news coverage.

They approach journalism as another mobilization strategy to affect the definition of "public problems" (Gusfield, 1981; Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988). Advocacy is the product of a growing consciousness amongst readers about the importance of the media in the construction of public problems, and the need to approach the press as a tactically. Advocacy journalism is associated with the recent professionalization of media tactics of social movements and interest groups. Until recently, it has been limited to liberal democracies in the North where assorted social movements and interest groups have consciously tried to affect news coverage on health issues, tobacco control (Petruschuk, 2001), environmental policies (Vliegthart, Oegema, & Klandermans, 2005), and policies against domestic violence (Berns 2005). Lately, similar movements have also gained strength across the global South. From environmental to land rights movements, there is no shortage of organizations that have utilized advocacy journalism to promote their goals. Morgan (2007)

Fairly instance of advocacy journalism, can be seen in CNN's sterling coverage of five-year-old Iraqi burns victim, Yusuf. While playing outside his Baghdad home on January 15, 2007, an unsuspecting had poured gasoline over the entire body of Yusuf and was set on fire by masked men before fleeing. For the next nine months, the boy's father had attempted to seek specialist medical attention in Iraq for his son's scarring but to no avail. In August later that year, CNN foreign correspondent Arwa Damon submitted a report on Yusuf's story on which, when aired, created a consequential tidal wave of support from its viewers. Subsequently, the story was relayed on CNN.com and it became one of the most popular non-breaking news stories in the network's history. More than \$300,000 was raised by viewers and placed into a fund established by CNN in conjunction with the Children's Bums Foundation; and the story's conclusion saw Yusuf fly to the US for treatment. But like the story of Cisneros and Yusuf, there are dozens or individuals needing to be fought for, numerous causes to advocate, and infinite civil wrongs to attempt to right. Norman Solomon (2006).

Another example of advocacy journalism is CNN's passionate news anchor Anderson Cooper. Deborah White (2007) describes him as embodying a "new style of advocacy journalism": "His electrifying coverage of post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans lifted him to national prominence" in the US. In a New Zealand television context, TV3's John Campbell represents a particular brand of advocacy journalism. He espouses views nightly on Campbell Live. Cullinan, K. (2003).

1.17.1 Advocacy Organization and the Media

Through advocacy journalism (AJ) the agenda and programmes of social development movements, civil society groups, international development organizations and non-government organizations are promoted and advanced.

Many efforts made by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society movements and social development organizations (government or non-government) in tapping the mainstream or alternative media to promote their social development agenda. This practice has become a serious pre-occupation of these groups and organizations such that full-blown coordinated efforts to involve the media in the information-dissemination process of their programmes and projects continue to be carried out in grander and bigger scales. Some of these organizations like the Asian Development Bank, international funding NGOs like the Ford Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as well as social development movements like Amnesty International or World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) amongst many others.

Advocacy organizations are absolutely in the media field now, because they are using the tool of media creation to learn and tell stories, and to make those stories available to a wide audience. These organizations and countless others like them-small and large, local and international part of the media ecosystem. With just a little extra effort, they could be part of the journalistic ecosystem too, in way that goes far beyond their traditional roles. Some of them are discussed below:

1. The National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NCAS) emerged as a result of the collective vision and commitment of social activists who felt the need for a resource centre to facilitate advocacy for issues of public concern, specifically the rights of marginalized people. NCAS is a social change resource centre that aims at creating enabling conditions for people's empowerment at the grass-roots and facilitating efforts for human rights, social justice and transparent, participatory and accountable governance

Though the focus of its activities is in India and the rest of South Asia, NCAS is emerging as a premier centre for people centered advocacy throughout the Global South NCAS works as a collective activist's researchers, public interest lawyers, journalists and subject experts. It has pioneered the concept and praxis of "People Centered Advocacy." It attempts to support and strengthen people centered advocacy through capacity development programmes, research documentation media advocacy and support to various people's campaigns. As part of its capacity development programmes, NCAS has initiated an Advocacy Internship Programme since July 1999.

Vision

NCAS believes in:

- A society without poverty, injustice and discrimination,
- Where every person and community can realize Human Rights to live with dignity,
- Working towards a people centered participatory, transparent, accountable and just governance.

Mission

NCAS is an Advocacy Resource Centre that seeks to:

- Strengthen capacities and struggles of marginalized communities to claim Human Rights and Social Justice.
- Promote people's access, influence and participation in institutions of democracy.

2. In India, The Deccan Development Society (DDS) is a grassroots organization working with women's sanghams (self-help groups) in about 75 villages in the Medak District of Andhra Pradesh, India. The 5,000 women members of the Society are mostly Dalit, the lowest group in the Indian social hierarchy. As part of a broader strategy in pursuit of "autonomous communities", the women of DDS established the DDS Community Media Trust, including a video production unit and Sangham Radio, the first rural community radio in India and the first women's radio in South Asia. Rampal K.R (2000).
3. The Jagaran Media Center in Nepal, (JMC) is a Dalit caste run media house and NGO, focusing most of its activities on Dalit journalism and human rights training. The Dalit they represent are the untouchables and down trodden of Nepal, constituting 20 to 25% of the population. They are the lowest caste of Nepali society, and are often denied basic human rights like access to land, food, water, shelter, education, honest jobs and wages, information, and security. Ultimately, the JMC aims to be a media hub for the Dalit cause in Nepal, and be the destination for Dalit news that generally gets ignored in most other media. The aim is to firmly establish the project, grow it organically and sustainably into other districts across the country, and partner with an international organization for support. Berman, Dave (2000).
4. The Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC), is a national network that combines a programme of advocacy in ICT policy areas such as right to information, community broadcasting and e-governance, with practical support for rural knowledge centre's and community radio station, Afaque Shamsi (2006).
5. The Human Rights Watch, whose mission is "Defending Human Rights Worldwide" an advocacy organization that does good reporting on the issues it cares about, its report on Saudi Arabian domestic workers, is an exhaustively researched document on some troubling practices. Abdullah, N.R.W. (2008)

6. The Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) has a core programme activity on "gender and ICT policy advocacy" with a focus on equitable access to ICTs and engendering ICT policy making. Their priorities include not only a focus on existing ICT policies such as the Rural Communications Development Fund (a levy applied to telecom providers to support areas that are underserved by markets) but also engaging in policy development processes such as the review of the National ICT Policy. WOUGNET participates actively in government-organized stakeholder consultations on ICT policy, it contributes its own studies and report, and it respond to draft policy proposals.
7. In Australia, The Eastern Media Advocacy Project (EMAP) situated within a not-for-profit regional level health promotion agency, developed its strategies in accordance with the Vic Health primary prevention of violence against women framework and an ecological understanding of violence against women in Australia. (Vic Health, 2011). Their work has also been informed by a University of Melbourne longitudinal study titled 'Victorian print media coverage of violence against Women'. This study and associated Vic Health publications examined coverage of violence against women and trends in the portrayal of violence against women in news and print media. Politoff & Morgan (2010)
8. In 2008 the UN Division for the Advancement of Women stated, Media representations significantly influence societal perceptions of acceptable behaviour and attitudes. Training journalists and other media personnel on women's human rights and root causes of VAW (violence against women) may influence the way in which the issue is reported and thereby influence societal attitudes. Since then, there have been a number of media advocacy projects designed to achieve this goal. Take back the News (2001-2009) is one example of a media advocacy project that was implemented to confront the misrepresentation and under-representation of sexual assault in mainstream media. Its aims were to improve both the quantity and quality of media coverage of sexual assault and to raise awareness about sexual assault in order to foster greater dialogue and greater public responsibility. The project provided survivors of sexual assault with an outlet to publish their stories in their own words.

Other core strategies included training local community activists to review and respond to media representation of sexual assault and distribution of resources to support media advocacy within print newspaper and related events. Gentile, Mary C (2010)

1.17.2 Youth Advocacy and Technology Case Studies

Youth can use technology in a variety of ways to become more involved in advocacy. The following are three case studies which used Advocacy Techniques of Journalism:

Case Study I

In the US, Paola's younger brother was recently hit and killed by a car while playing near his house in San Diego, California. The apartment complex where he lived had no sidewalk and nearly no grass. The road running in front of their apartment is busy and the speed limit is 55 MPH. As part of Paola's grieving process, she called her friend Laura. As Laura heard about Paola's living situation, she was incensed. After their conversation, Laura posted an entry on her blog about it, which appeared on her 'Myspace profile'. Several of Laura's friends made comments on her page regarding the situation, so Laura started a group, "Citizens for Safe Streets," within Myspace. One of the group members heard a podcast regarding the need for safer, slower streets near residential areas, which he subsequently posted on the group page. After listening to this podcast several group members demanded that the group take some kind of action. One member took the initiative to post Frogger, a game that can be downloaded to a personal cell phone; however, the cost of downloading the game was a call to a city council member to talk to them about the problem in Paola's neighborhood. Once they could enter in a city council member's name and details from the conversation, they could download the game (which incidentally is about crossing a street safely). After the city council had received over 50 calls, Laura thought it would be a good time to organize a rally. She uploaded a video news clip from Paola's brother's funeral and asked each group member to download it to their cell phones and then forward it with a message about attending the rally at the city council office as a text Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 15 (2010) 575-591 2010 International Communication Association 585 to three contacts. Laura also contacted the local news stations and asked them to attend. Over 400 people attended the rally.

While there, they signed a petition asking the city council to allocate funds to lower the speed limit put in speed bumps, and build a sidewalk in Paola's neighborhood. One member of the rally sent constant Twitters to a group blog from his cell phone to inform interested parties about what was going on at the rally. Many people commented on the blog in support of the rally. At a designated time the leaders were able to meet with the city council members. When the leaders showed the council members the petition, the support on the blog, and the reporters outside, the council members agreed to reduce the speed limit, put in speed bumps, and build a sidewalk in Paola's neighborhood. Tencati, Kole (2002).

Case Study II

In the US, high school students Jake Beech and Graham Horn from Bexley High School in Ohio found a way to make a political difference. They felt strongly about supporting then Senator Obama in his campaign for the presidency. They created a grassroots movement dubbed "everyone counts." The idea was to motivate everyone, whether they could vote or not, make a \$1 contribution to Barack Obama's campaign. They asked for people to send a picture of themselves with their one dollar contribution to be posted on their website www.everyonecounts.org to spread the word about this campaign. Jake and Graham created a Facebook group under the heading "political organizations heading" (<http://hs.facebook.com/group.php?gid=22511340530>). The page states their purpose as follows: "Ohio high school students are finding a way to be part of the change we have been waiting for. Although not all of us can vote, we have a voice, and we are uniting to use our collective voice in support of Barack Obama." They knew that they could advocate for a cause they believed in using a medium with which they were familiar. Their group has 199 members. On the wall of their group several of their peers affirmed what a good idea this was and how they were planning to contribute. Martin, Ribisl (2008).

Case Study III

In the US, the 2009 Utah Legislative session included a bill (House Bill 444) which aimed to eliminate 4 million from the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program fund. After hearing about the issues at hand, a young adult named Peter Mossman started Project 1200 in February 2009 (Mossman, personal communication, April 17, 2009). About three-fourths of the group members are high school students, with the rest being junior high students and adults. The name of the group came from the fact that 1200 people die every day due to tobacco. Peter started Project 1200 as a way to get youth involved in the advocacy process and have a group they could be affiliated with as they went to Capitol Hill to lobby. Project 1200 utilized technology in various ways. Project 1200 used several features of Face book to assist their advocacy work. Peter created a Facebook group. On his own Face book page he put Project 1200 as his status. He invited his friends to join the group, encouraged them to tell their friends; "the word of mouth spread it." The Facebook page explained the cause in more detail. They used an events page and include the meeting time, location and to contact Peter if they have any questions. Project 1200 joined forces with the Utah Phoenix Alliance, a statewide anti-tobacco Association group for youth advocacy. The Phoenix Alliance sends text message and e-mails to their entire youth group about an event and inviting them to come. Project 1200 used text messaging to contact legislators. The representative, who sponsored the bill to increase the tobacco tax, told Project 1200 that the best way to get a hold of him was through text messaging. On their Face book page they posted all the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of the legislators who they were targeting. Then they would tell their youth group members to "send a message to your representative." Group member would also do a cell phone blitz sending text messages every 5 minutes to legislators. The efforts of Peter Mossman and project 1200 had a significant impact. On the last day of the legislative when the committee was voting on the bill to reduce tobacco funding, the representative who was the appropriations co chair said that "due to the many, many, many, many, many e-mails we received we have decided to strike down our own bill." Though Project 1200 started to preserve tobacco prevention and control funding, the group expanded to focus on bills aimed at increasing the tobacco tax, smoking in cars with children, and Internet tobacco sales. Jefferson, & Houston, (2010)

1.18 RESEARCH QUESTION

The main question that this study wants to answer is: To what extent the print media particularly the leading Bengali Dailies of Barak Valley involve in serving or promoting advocacy journalism on social (local governance, corruption, health, education and agriculture) and political issues/events of Barak Valley.

1.19 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify readers knowledge about advocacy journalism.
- To find out the status of advocacy journalism in Barak Valley.
- To evaluate reader's acceptability in advocacy journalism on social and political events / issues.
- To examine the role of advocacy journalism in changing the socio-political scenario of the society.

1.20 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a pre-requisite in any scientific inquiry. It is a way or an approach to look at the problem and /or universe that one wants to in an organized manner. Methodology includes methods and techniques which are the procedure of research for collecting data. According to Madan (1972), "methodology" may be used to refer to theoretical discussions of the nature of social science and the consequent implications for the conduct of social research .In other words 'methodology' may be used to designate analytical studies of problems. Some of these problems could be "what are the meaning, nature and scope of, say objectivity, experiment, prediction, laws or explanation in social science? Or Is sociology, or social anthropology, a natural science of society or is it a kind of historiography?" (Ibid).Fine examples of such discussions could be Weber (1949), Kaufman (1944) etc.

Methodology may also be “often used in a narrower sense to refer the methods, techniques or tools employed for collection and processing of data. Verbal or mechanical procedure or both may be involved in the process of data collection and analysis.” (Ibid). “Methodology is sometimes used to designate the concepts and procedures employed in the analysis of data, however collected to arrive at conclusions. It may added, however, that the separation of the methods for the processing of data from the techniques for their collection is often neither possible nor, indeed, desirable.” (Ibid). Every method has its own merits and demerits .Some methods appears to be relevant or more relevant for certain research works than others do and vice versa; while some research works tends to require relatively more diversified, integrated and interdisciplinary approach(es)-also meaning the use of more methods and techniques than other research areas. Every scientific research is a task of ‘horses and courses’ as some would use it where appropriate approaches are selected for investigation of specific research problem (Denscombe 1999).

In this section, researcher has explained choice of methodology for this study, which is a survey method along with content analysis. This thesis offers an empirical perspective of advocacy journalism (AJ) by the leading Bengali Dailies of Barak Valley, on the ground through the selection of reports on the human development events / issues like- political events, local governance, corruption, health, education and agricultural news.

This thesis depicts Advocacy journalism practice through a qualitative researcher’s lens. The study was conducted by survey method along with analyzing the content of three leading Bengali dailies, namely, Dainik Jugasankha, Dainik Samayik Prasanga and Dainik Prantojyoti for a period of twelve months from January 2012 to December 2012 to ascertain their level of coverage and reportage on selected social and political events.

The content was analyzed for 1st Week of the months of January, May and September. For the months of February, June, and October, the study was done for the 2nd week of the month. 3rd Week of the months of March, July, and November were studied and 4th week of the months of April, August, and December.

To get a proper representative picture about the objectives of this study content analysis of 252 issues has been done along with survey which was done among 435 (Four hundred thirty five) samples of the population. For the propose study the population of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi districts has been taken as the population of this research.

1.21 AREA OF THE STUDY

The study has been conducted in Barak Valley of Assam. The Barak Valley which derive its name from the river 'Barak' situated in the southern part of Assam consists of three districts; namely Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi, covering an area of 6922 sq.km. The valley is bounded by Bangladesh in the West, Meghalaya in the North, Manipur in the East and Mizoram and Tripura in the South.

The Barak Valley is now full-fledged region having all the avenues for further prosperity. Facilities for education from primary to university level are available here. Central University, National Institute of Technology, Medical College and Hospital, Research Centre, Agricultural Training Institute, etc. serve the needs of this region in different spheres. Moreover, one airport is also there to connect this remote region with the rest of the country. The 'Cachar Paper Mill' located at Panchgram of this valley is the biggest paper mill in Asia. Radio and TV Centers are also functioning here since long time. Silchar which is the headquarter of Cachar district is a developed city in the Barak Valley The valley is rich in resources and one of the country's most thickly populated areas.

1.22 CONTENT ANALYSIS

It is described as the scientific study of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meaning, contexts and intention contained in the messages. The term content analysis is 75 years old and Webster's Dictionary of English language listed in since 1961. However, the method achieved greater popularity among social science scholars as well as method of communication research (Dominick 1994).

This completely scientific method was first generated at the time of World War II. 'Content' denotes what is contained in a message. Broadly content analysis may be seen as a method where the content of the messages forms the basis for drawing inferences and inclusions about the content (Nachmias and Nachmias 1976). Further content analysis falls in the inference of observation and document analysis. It is defined as a method of observation in the sense that instead of asking people to respond to questions, it takes the communication that people have produced and asks. Qualitative methods were applied for research to fulfill the study needs.

1.23 REASON FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

As a social science method, content analysis is an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent (Krippendorff, 2004). These empirical enquiries have become the backbone of communication research. Content analysis is a research method that may be used to examine any piece of writing or occurrence of recorded communication and as such, content analysis is used in a large number of fields, ranging from marketing and media studies, to literature and rhetoric, ethnography and cultural studies, gender and age issues, sociology and political science, psychology and cognitive science as well as other fields of inquiry. Some of the early recorded content analysis studies in media include: 1) The 1929 US economic crisis with its ensuing social and political problems where many Americans believed that mass media was partially to blame for the breakdown of cultural values; 2) the onset of the new media and how it has affected other media types such as radio and television and 3) how the new media is linked to the political challenge in a democracy.

Content analysis is also able to predict or infer phenomena that cannot be directly observed but is enough just with interpreting written text (Klippendorff). The scope of content analysis as a social science method was further explained by B. Devi Prasad in his paper *Content Analysis: A Method in Social Science Research* (Prasad, 2008) where he underscored the importance of content analysis in advertisements in newspapers and magazines to draw useful inferences on national culture as well as media preferences of advertisers (Prasad, citing Auter and Moore, 1993; Wang, 1996). To Prasad, various media forms offer a rich source of materials for content analysis where scholars have examined changes in social roles and behavioural patterns to understand and characterize various social phenomena by analyzing its contents and messages (Prasad). The method itself has not one single established formula but the important benchmark is to be able to come-up with meaningful patterns that could substantiate one's findings and conclusions according to set objectives. For as long as the basic framework is there which consists of the following: a body of text on which to begin an analytical effort, a research question that the analyst seeks to answer, and a context within which to make sense of the body.

1.24 SURVEY METHOD

The survey was conducted in the three districts of Barak Valley namely, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi with the help of questionnaires prepared by researcher exclusively for the study. This method was utilized to collect the data from the field.

1.25 RESEARCH SAMPLE

The researcher has collected the name and addresses of three thousand newspaper readers of three leading Bengali dailies from the newspaper agents and from these readers the researcher has selected 450 readers as the sample of the study by the purposive sampling method. The researcher has distributed 450 questionnaires to the respondents but the researcher get back 435 questionnaires. Of the 435 samples along with 15 media personalities (who have more than 10 years of experience in the field of print media) has also been included in the study from the three districts of Assam.

1.26 SAMPLING METHOD

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

1.26.1 Reason for Purposive Sampling

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

1.27 RESEARCH SETTING

The research setting of the study is the Barak Valley of Assam which consists of three districts, viz, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi. The three local newspapers namely - Dainik Jugasankha, Dainik Samyik Prasanga and Dainik Prantojyoti constitute the universe of the study.

1.28 UNITS OF THE STUDY

The units selected for the study were socio-political events reported, readers, and some media personalities.

1.29 INSTRUMENT

The instruments were questionnaires which were used for the collection of data from the field.

1.30 TIME FRAME

The time frame used for the content analysis and for the collection data from the respondents encompasses the period from January 2012 to December 2012.

1.31 DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed using SPSS tool – a comprehensive and flexible statistical analysis and data management solution. The cross-tabulation data pertaining to the study was first analyzed with the help of SPSS software and later on organized accordingly using the MS Excel tool. All the figures which include the pie and bar diagram was made in MS Excel.

In sum, journalism is the practice of investigation and reporting of events, issues and trends to a broad audience, but advocacy journalism stands for a type of journalism which works as a catalyst for social change through coverage of injustices and the inclusion of the voice of those who often find their voices marginalized.

The presence and existence of AJ as a type of journalism has various manifestations in the media industry. Suffice it to say that it exists for a reason and a purpose. But available literature shows that little is known of the scope and extent of its structure, constructs and applicability in concepts and form. Therefore, this study that looks into the connection of the actual practice of advocacy Journalism and its reporting technique may contribute something in understanding the nature and scope of advocacy Journalism as a branch of journalism. This research utilized survey method along with content analysis. The method utilized for this study is purposive sampling method and the data are collected with the help of questionnaires.

The present study is of equal importance for academicians, media industry, media management, social work and other allied social science disciplines

1.32 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study tentatively consists of five chapters as given below:

CHAPTER 1: FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This chapter provides brief information about the topic (statement of the problem), scope and significance of the study, brief description and definition of advocacy journalism, characteristics, elements and techniques of advocacy journalism, advocacy journalism and the principles of media and morality, information about media advocacy and requirement of advocacy media, review of literature, research question, research objectives and methodology.

CHAPTER 2: THE PRESS IN BARAK VALLEY

This chapter described the origin, growth and present scenario of Barak Valley's press along with physiography, topography, climatic condition, soil, rivers, forests, population, literacy etc. of the valley.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF ADVOCACY JOURNALISM

This chapter includes origin and growth of advocacy journalism

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of data which has been collected from the fields, analysis of contents of news paper and also contain findings of the study through the representation of tables, figures, pie-chart, bar diagram etc.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This Chapter contains the overall summary of the findings of the study, conclusions and suggestion of the study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This chapter includes the bibliography of the study.

1.33 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Journalism: Journalism is the practice of investigation and reporting of events, issues and trends to a broad audience. Though there are many variations of journalism, the ideal is to inform the intended audience. Along with covering organizations and institutions such as government and business, journalism also covers cultural aspects of society such as arts and entertainment.

Advocacy Journalism: Advocacy journalism is that type of journalism which works as a catalyst for social change through coverage of injustices and the inclusion of the voice of those who often find their voices marginalized.

Media Advocacy: Media advocacy is a political process by an individual or a large group which normally aims to influence public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions; it may be motivated from moral, ethical or faith principles or simply to protect an asset of interest.

Mainstream Media: Mainstream media are commercial, publicly supported, or government-owned.

Alternative Media: Alternative media are media (newspapers, radio; television, magazines, movies, Internet, etc.) which provide alternative information to the mainstreams media in a given context. Alternative media often aim to challenge existing powers, to represent marginalized groups, and to foster horizontal linkages among communities of interest.

Civil Society Groups: Civil Society Groups are mostly non-profit, voluntary organizations that tackle social issues and social problems as professional work.

Corruption: Corruption is the misuse of entrusted power (by heritage, education, marriage, election, appointment or whatever else) for private gain.

Local Governance: Local governance may be described as government by popularly elected bodies charged with administrative and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular district or place and vested with powers to make by-laws for their guidance.