

EDUCATIONAL JOURNALISM

Sunil Behari Mohanty

Lecturer, Dept. of Education, Bhadrak College, Bhadrak, Balasore, Orissa

Educational journalism is one of the important areas in the field of communication technology. It covers writings in educational journals and educational writings in general journals and newspapers. These writings play a vital role in improving the quality of education in particular and the level of development of a nation in general. Education is an important factor that contributes to the development of a nation. Educational journalism helps in focusing various problems faced through which these problems could be solved. It also makes educationists and people interested in education aware of commendable works being done in the field of education. The educationists come to know about the achievements of their colleagues. Such knowledge inspires them to take up innovative measures to improve quality of their own programmes including quality of instruction. Educational journalism makes public the results of various experiments. This induces more research in the field of education. The writings also help authors in getting self-education. They get themselves educated at the time of first writing of the draft. This gets further modified and the process also continues even after publication of the manuscript. Thus, educational journalism is an important aspect of the educational process. The more the educationists are interested in educational journalism the greater is the quality of education. There are mainly two categories of personnel involved in educational journalism—authors and editors.

There is dearth of manuscripts of quality. Many practitioners do not have mastery over the English language in which most of the educational journals of the country are published. There are also practitioners who have mastery over the language, but they are not interested in writing. Again, writing is a skill that is different from the skill of teaching. Writing again changes its style according to the target audience for which a journal or a newspaper is meant. Nowhere in our educational system, we have given scope for a novice lecturer or teacher to get this type of education. Thus, mass communication techniques are unknown to many educationists. There has not been much attempt to orient practitioners in such techniques. However, a few educationists get some orientation at the time of writing for their research reports. But for a majority of such people writing for research is the final writing and such writings never see the limelight of print. Of course, this is not applicable for the researchers at the Centre of Advanced Study in Education, M. S. University of Baroda, where the researchers get enough scope to develop themselves as budding educational journalists. Besides getting ideas from talks, seminars, conferences and publications, the researchers at the Centre get motivated because of the journalistic atmosphere that prevails there. Of course, there is necessity of conscious effort in this regard, which can accentuate the efforts made by the National Council of Educational Research and Training and All India Federation of Educational Associations. The education of prospective authors and reeducation of authors should be taken up so that less burden can be found in the field of editing the manuscripts.

Editing of manuscripts is a tough job. It requires an editor who has not only mastery over the language in which the manuscript is written but also adequate knowledge about the field to which the manuscript is related. There are only a few editors who go through manuscripts meticulously. A majority of them do not reply to the query of authors. Their inertia at times lead to republication of an article in the same journal. In 1979, the author sent a manuscript to a journal. There was no reply from the editor in spite of the reply-paid envelopes sent to him. The author took it for granted that the journal has ceased its publication. Two years later, the author came across the said journal. He sent the manuscript, and it was published. A few months after that, when he was going through old copies of the said journal in a

university library in connection with his research work, he found his article published in 1980. Most of the authors are not consulted by the editors. The author had an interesting experience with a journal being published by a national body. The author's article on a single teacher school in Britain got published in the said journal with some photographs from British Council, which did not fall in tune with the spirit of the manuscript that portrayed a different picture of the school. The author had photographs of the said school, but the editor never bothered to write to him. Thus, lack of quality in manuscripts alone cannot be only due to non-availability of standard authors but also due to incompetence of editors. Lack of education of editors sometimes result in change in the thrusting of manuscripts without the knowledge of authors. Of course, these types of editors have mastery over the language and only lack of knowledge about the content sometimes puts them into trouble. Besides, there are a number of editors who do not go through manuscripts and publish them as they are written lest they make content mistakes. Therefore, one needs to develop a strong base for educational journalism that can educate editors about various problems of education.

Educational journalism is thus a neglected area in our country. Whatever talent is available in this field is due to self-initiative. To start with, various journals may have conferences with their authors and appropriate bodies may help them in organising such conferences. The journals published by the government departments may take up leading role in the matter. Besides the bodies such as the National Council of Educational Research and Training, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration and the Centre of Advanced Study in Education may organise programmes for orienting authors and editors of English and Hindi journals and State Councils of Educational Research and Training/State Institutes of Education and Boards of Secondary Education may take up the task pertaining to journals published in various regional languages. There is also the necessity for orienting educational administrators and teachers working at school and college for the purpose. Such orientation programmes need to be taken up quickly so that the good deeds in the field of education can be brought to audience suggestions can be made available for solving various educational problems.

Such an attempt is intimately connected with the achievement of universal primary education and universal literacy, which are essential for better and speedier development of the nation