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**FREE MARKET MEDIA, DEMOCRACY AND
PARTISANSHIP:
A CASE STUDY OF KOLKATA'S NEWSPAPERS'
COVERAGE OF ANTI-INDUSTRIALISATION PROTESTS**

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**Free Market Media, Democracy and Partisanship:
A Case Study of Kolkata's Newspapers' Coverage of Anti-industrialisation Protests**

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ABSTRACT

The dominant model of the media is that of market-driven media. The dependence on advertising revenues is supposed to ensure financial and therefore political independence. Such market-driven media, however, are inadequate in fulfilling the goal of democracy because they show less interest in reporting the causes of the poor and other disadvantaged groups. An alternative model proposed is that of a partisan media system in a pluralistic market, affording a diversity of political views including those of marginalised groups. Although conceptually different, the partisan and the commercial models of the news media are known to co-exist in many societies. Under such conditions, the news media's partisan interests, the goal of making profits and the norms of professional journalism, traditionally associated with the commercial model, intersect. This thesis studies how the intersection of the partisan and commercial models of the news media alters the partisan media system's ability to represent a diversity of views in a pluralistic setting. Pluralistic market conditions are essential for the partisan model to fulfil its democratic potential but tend to be less common in highly concentrated media markets in advanced, industrial settings. Hence the thesis looks at news coverage of anti-industrialisation protests in the eastern Indian city of Kolkata, a city that has pluralistic market conditions for the media. Drawing on the theoretical approach of political economy of communication and qualitative thematic analysis of newspaper articles and qualitative interviews with journalists and senior editorial staff, this thesis found that the differences of the partisan system blur in a pluralistic setting even though the goal of profits does not neutralise diversely-owned, commercially-run dailies' partisan interests. Rather professional journalistic norms such as news values, the need to convey information and the watchdog role defeat their partisan interests and thus blur the differences of the partisan system. "Hybrid" forms of professional journalism in a partisan system thus combine the contradictory goals of advocacy and conveying information and remain central to the partisan model's ability to represent differences or "external pluralism" when partisan and commercial models co-exist. This thesis proposes the conceptual framework of "hybrid" partisan model to account for the changes of the partisan system when norms of professional journalism intersect with and affect commercially-run entities' partisan interests.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Anandabazar Patrika	ABP
The Times of India	TOI
Dainik Statesman	DS
Ganashakti	GS
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	CPIM

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

How the media can best fulfil the function of democracy and serve the needs of the people in a society has been a subject of public debate for ages. In a democracy the news media are expected to disseminate information, scrutinise those in power and represent and advocate the interests of different social groups (McNair, 2009). The news media must be the space for deliberation of ideas. The normative function of the press is to make the powerful accountable to the public by conveying information and by monitoring diverse sources of power. Finally, another key function of the media is to represent different social groups, by making their voices heard in the public sphere and their demands and views conveyed to the authorities (Cook, 2005; Curran, 2005). To fulfil such a role, the news media sometimes act as partisan players and advocate specific causes rather than mere conveyors of information in a neutral fashion (McQuail, 1992). The key assumption is that when multiple media players champion different partisan causes in the interest of diverse sections of society, there is a healthy diversity of views in the media system.

1.1. Research Background, Rationale And Objective

The model of partisan media draws normative support from the values of freedom and diversity (McQuail, 1992). A partisan media system assumes a plurality of voices and multiple channels of communication. It is the plurality and attendant multiplicity that is good for democracy (Baker, 2006; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; McChesney, 2008; McQuail, 1992). The assumption is as follows: when there are partisan media players in a competing market, they ideologically contest each other. This leads to a diversity of views in the media system on pertinent political and economic matters. At the start of the print era, political advocacy was the principal function of the press. Newspapers were either established or supported by political parties and they advanced political causes (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). Traditionally in Europe, media players were linked to major political parties (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). In its strongest form each media outlet represented the views of a particular party in the public sphere, which led to political diversity in the media system. But a one-to-one relationship

between media and politics where the media system would be a direct reflection of the political system is less common in the present day (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). Unlike traditional European media systems, the partisan systems in contemporary societies do not reflect left-right political cleavages. The partisan news media advocate different political causes and economic interests, which may not necessarily reflect traditional left-right political divisions (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009).

Political economy of communication (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009) argues in favour of the advocacy-based, partisan role of the media. The partisan model that existed in countries such as the United States and Britain in the 19th century prior to the era of the advertising revenue-based, commercialised press is seen as ideal for political diversity and democracy. This is because the model of partisan press accommodated diverse social groups such as the working class, trade unions and the Socialists who owned their own newspapers and catered to specific political constituencies (Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2008). This is said to be less possible in non-partisan, market-driven press (McChesney, 2008).

The rise of mass markets and advertising revenues in the late 19th century in parts of Western Europe and North America encouraged changes in the role of the press from political advocacy to the function of conveying neutral information (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2008; Waisbord, 2000). To reach out to large sections of the audiences across multiple constituencies, it seemed economically pragmatic to convey neutral information rather than partisan views. The development of mass markets and the news media's profit-based, commercial interests, therefore, traditionally were seen as processes that challenged their partisan ties (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). But the partisan tradition continues in many societies despite the news media's shift to the advertising revenue-based, commercial model in most parts of the world (Allern & Blach-Orsten, 2011; McCargo, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009). The popularity of *Fox News* over the last decade speaks of the resurgence of partisan journalism even in countries like the United States where market-dominated news media were driven by the values of non-partisan, objective journalism for much of the 20th century (Waisbord, 2009).

On one hand, when multiple partisan players pursue different political interests in competing market conditions, the partisan model promises plurality and a diversity of voices (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; McQuail, 1992). On the other hand, when news media are run as commercial entities, they seek profits, which defeat their partisan interests and encourage

them to act as non-partisan players (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). However, if politically partisan and commercial models of news media co-exist, would their intersection influence the partisan system's response to political diversity? None of the existing studies (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2008; McChesney, 2008) adequately respond to the subject of the democratic potential of the partisan model when it co-exists with the commercial model.

Hallin and Mancini (2012) observe that when partisan news media in different settings function as commercial entities they adopt characteristics such as the predominance of profit-based logic and professional values of "impartial" journalism that are usually associated with the market-driven, liberal model. But it is less clear how the co-existence of profit-driven strategies, the norms of providing impartial information and the news media's partisan political interests would influence the partisan system's ability to reflect a diversity of views. The goal of profits discourages partisan ties and encourages them to act as non-partisan players (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). This potentially affects the workings of the partisan model and its ability to represent plurality and a diversity of voices. Theories of political economy (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; 2011) caution that the partisan model's ability to represent political diversity on key economic issues is challenged in highly commercialised and capitalist media settings that have concentrated media markets with less dispersed media power. This thesis addresses this theoretical gap by investigating how the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of the news media determines the partisan system's democratic potential in a society that has plurality and a recent history of the corporate capitalist, market-driven model. When they co-exist, the partisan and commercial models are expected to influence each other. On one hand, the partisan system fosters differences of views in the media system when commercially-run news media are driven by different partisan interests. Such differences of views in the media system are less likely when commercially-run news entities function as non-partisan actors and see themselves as fulfilling the role of imparting neutral information. On the other hand, the workings of the partisan model potentially alter due to the intersection of commercially-run news media's partisan interests, the goal of profits and professional values. Thus there remain differences in the workings of both partisan and commercial models as they co-exist and influence each other. This interaction remains at the heart of the interplay of the partisan and commercial models.

1.2. Introduction Of Research

1.2.1. Co-existence Of Partisan And Commercial Models — Theoretical Significance

Political-economic theories say that the principal weakness of the market-driven media in a democracy is their “dual-product status”— the news is sold to the audience and the audience is sold to advertisers (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Media markets cannot be responsive to all sections of the audience because they have unique dual-product status (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Advertisers are interested only in a particular segment of the audience because of the concern for profit. Therefore, it is argued that market-driven news media remain less receptive to the causes and movements of disadvantaged social groups because of their dependence on the advertising revenue-based model (Cottle, 2008; Gitlin, 1980; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008). This forms the fundamental political economic critique of market-driven journalism (Curran, 2011; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009). When market-driven news media are oriented along partisan lines, however, there are differences and diversity in the media system in their attitudes to the movements of disadvantaged groups. There are both support for and opposition towards protests of disadvantaged social groups because of different political interests of multiple partisan media players. Drawing from observations of American news media’s coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests, previous studies observe that while right-leaning media opposed the protests, the so-called elite liberal media represented the movements in a sympathetic fashion (DiMaggio & Street, 2011; Gitlin, 2013). Thus the political cleavages of the media system were reflected through differences in market-driven media’s attitude to the movements (DiMaggio & Street, 2011; Gitlin, 2013). Such differences in the media system in the attitude towards protests are less likely when commercially-run players impart neutral information as non-partisan entities.

Political-economic theories critique that market-driven news media disadvantage the interests of marginalised social groups because of their reliance on the advertisement revenue-based economic model (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008). But traditional political-economic explanations (Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2005; 2008; Mosco, 2009) pay less attention to the fact that the routines of professional news production also encourage market-driven news media to represent social movements in a sympathetic fashion (Cottle, 2008; Hackett & Carroll, 2005). Thus this theoretical tradition reiterates the democratic potential of the advocacy and causes of multiple partisan players in competing

markets (Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008). Marxist analysis that inspires the theoretical tradition of political economy of communication tends to underplay the influence of journalistic professionalism in media production, dismissing the notions of impartial work practices as limited, societal and subservient to the dominant ideology of capitalism (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 1982; 2006).

Professional journalism in this theorisation refers to the values of conveying objective information through the “gatekeeper model” (Waisbord, 2009) — or the processes of separating facts from opinions through the strategies of news production (Becker & Vald, 2009). In traditional liberal theories, professional journalism is seen as among the conditions that make the market-driven model accountable to the public along with the self-correcting mechanisms of the marketplace (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 1982; 2006; Curran, 2002; Hackett, 2005). But political-economic theories argue that objective information and professional norms such as news values inherently cater to elite interests and marginalise groups and movements that challenge powerful interests (McChesney, 2015). Therefore, professional journalism is not seen as desirable for democracy in political economic views (Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; 2015). The model of partisan media, on the other hand, is upheld because it is driven by advocacy and causes rather than the goal of imparting so-called value-free information through the norms of professional journalism (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; 2015; Waisbord, 2009).

However, even though partisan and commercial models are differentiated on the basis of their advocacy-based causes and the role of conveying neutral information (McChesney, 2008; Curran, 2007; Hallin & Mancini, 2004), the norms of professional journalism prevail when both partisan and commercial models co-exist. The macro factors such as the profit orientations of commercially-run news media, market structures and advertisers are known to intersect with micro-level of influences such as individual journalists’ professional roles and routines of professional news making (Hackett, 2006). Shoemaker and Reese’s (1996; 2012) “Hierarchy of Influences” model suggest that macro and micro level factors intersect to influence news production. It is argued that news values and editorial integrity tend to encourage a shift in market-driven news media’s attitude to movements (Hackett & Carroll, 2006). Thus this thesis studies how the norms of professional journalism intersect with macro factors such as commercially-run players’ partisan interests when partisan and commercial models co-exist.

1.2.2. Partisan And Commercial Models In A Pluralistic Setting

As discussed earlier, Baker (2006) and Curran (2011) warn that partisan system has beneficial results only in competitive markets. “A beneficial rather than a perverse contribution of such partisanship is, however, plausible only against a background of a relatively fair distribution of media power... Media partisanship combined with media concentration can lead to authoritarian results” (Baker, 2006, p. 18). A concentrated market “creates the possibility of an individual decision maker exercising enormous, unequal and hence undemocratic, largely unchecked, potentially irresponsible power” (Baker, 2006, p. 16). Thus concentrated ownership counters the possibility of a fair political debate: “this (partisanship) can have negative results when there is a high degree of media concentration and the media are lopsidedly partisan in one direction” (Curran, 2011, p. 18). This justifies the reason to study the subject of the democratic potential of the partisan model in a market that has plurality with the presence of multiple players. Concentrated markets are known to be a feature of capitalist media that have been common in markets of highly industrial countries (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005). Therefore, I study the interplay of the partisan and commercial models in a setting that has plurality and less concentrated media markets with a fairly recent history of corporate capitalist economy and market-driven news media. Such a market supports additional features such as diverse ownership models (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Compaine, 2000) and the tradition of advocacy journalism (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). These features, theoretically, are pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models.

1.2.2.1. Partisan Causes Versus Commercial Interests In Diverse Ownership Models

Diverse ownership models such as a party press and individually-owned, commercial dailies are seen as the feature of media markets that have plurality and do not have a long history of capitalist media. The political-economic accounts of capitalist media (Baker, 2006; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001) tell us that competing market conditions and the diversity of ownership are less likely under the conditions of capitalism. As capitalism expanded in highly industrial

economies such as Britain and the United States, their media markets witnessed structural changes with concentration, loss of competition, the rise of large corporate conglomerates and consolidated media empires that ran as profit-seeking enterprises (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Picard, 2005). In political-economic critiques the diversity of voices is seen to be challenged by the fact that the news media function primarily as profit-seeking, economic enterprises within a capitalist economy (McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005). The increasing size of large media conglomerates corresponds to a decline in their political participation (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009). This counters the political diversity of the media system. However, when commercially-run news media are owned by diverse players such as individuals, families or political parties rather than just large corporate businesses, they are expected to put less emphasis on the market-based criteria of efficiency and profit-maximisation unlike the news media of large corporate-run entities (Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005). McChesney (2008; 2015), therefore, argues that leftist political parties must own party-owned news media to contribute to political debate and diversity in the American corporate media system. Diverse ownership models such as party ownerships are less common in advanced industrial economies (Hallin & Mancini, 2008; McChesney, 2008). Thus this thesis intends to study how the presence of diverse ownership models such as political party- or individually-owned media contributes to political diversity in the media system.

1.2.2.2. Impact Of Advocacy Journalism

It has been observed that the absence of advertising revenues and the press' dependence on other revenue sources such as party coffers encouraged the tradition of partisan press and advocacy journalism in many societies (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). The newspapers' economic dependence on non-commercial sources such as the government and political parties acted as barriers in the development of non-partisan, market-driven news media in such societies (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Thus the tradition of advocacy journalism persisted even after the press shifted to the commercial model (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Advocacy journalism is perceived as different from the professional value of conveying neutral information (McNair, 2009) and the "gatekeeper" model of professional journalism that refers to the values of objectivity, fairness and public service (Waisbord, 2013). Political-economic studies observe

that objectivity inherently protects elite interests (Curran, 2007; Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2008; 2015), while the tradition of advocacy journalism is said to raise support for powerless social groups, especially those denied a powerful spokesperson (Waisbord, 2009). Thus individual journalists' advocacy-based roles and support for diverse social groups remains pertinent in a discussion of the co-existence of the partisan and commercial models and the democratic potential of the partisan system. However, scholars observe that when partisan press in different societies shift to the commercial model, there emerge support for professional journalistic values such as the norms of "impartial" journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). This thesis studies how the intersection of journalists' advocacy-based roles and shared professional values impacts the news coverage and political diversity of the partisan system.

1.3. Justification Of Case Study

Would the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of news media influence the partisan system's ability to represent a diversity of views? This is the nub of the thesis, research into which was conducted in a setting that has plurality with a relatively recent history of the market model. Diverse ownership models (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008) and the tradition of advocacy journalism (Waisbord, 2000; 2009), which are seen as the additional features of such a society, are pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models.

1.3.1. Partisanship And Fragmented Market In Kolkata's Newspapers

Kolkata, the capital of the East Indian state of West Bengal and one of the country's four major cities, is well suited for an investigation of the interplay of partisan and commercial models. The leading commercially-run dailies in Kolkata, being polarised along partisan lines, represent different political and economic interests (Waisbord, 2000). The political milieu of West Bengal was exceptional in the Indian context because a Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM) state government remained in power in West Bengal for more than three decades from 1977 to 2011 (Banerjee, 2007; Basu, 2007). When the CPIM-led left

party coalition came to power in West Bengal, pro- and anti-left cleavages came to be reflected in Kolkata's press (R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012; A. Mukherjee, personal communication, 2011). The presence of stable political (pro- and anti-left) constituencies in the state (Banerjee, 2007; Basu, 2007) encouraged the political divisiveness and diversity of Kolkata's press. Initially, after coming to power in 1977, the CPIM-led government introduced progressive land reforms in the interest of the rural poor. But from the 1980s onwards, the CPIM party warmed up to pro-capital policies (Banerjee, 2007; Basu, 2007). When the CPIM-led state government, returned to power in West Bengal for a seventh consecutive term in 2006, initiated plans for corporate industrialisation in agricultural land, it led to peasants' protests in the rural areas of Singur and Nandigram (Chatterjee, 2008; Nielsen, 2009). Different sections of Kolkata's mainstream press supported and opposed the state government because of their different political and economic interests (Waisbord, 2000).

Kolkata's newspaper landscape had a fairly recent history of the market model. Advertising emerged as the major source of revenue of the media in India in the mid-1970s even though newspapers were run as commercial entities after India's independence from British rule in 1947 (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). Kolkata lagged the rest of the country in corporate capitalist industrial development and in capitalist investment in the industrial sector (Nielsen, 2010). The strengthening of commercial forces in media markets in advanced industrialised countries typically meant monopolies, concentration and signs of conglomeration (McChesney, 2008), while Kolkata's newspaper market had multiple players, owned by different entities and not just corporate-run big groups. The ownership of Indian newspapers remains diverse compared with markets of many advanced industrial countries (Jeffrey, 2000; Thakurta, 2012). The fragmented market has been described as fragmented perhaps due to the diversity of regions and languages (Thakurta, 2012). The newspaper market in West Bengal is competitive with 705 newspapers (of which 489 are in vernacular Bengali) published in the entire state, including 32 dailies in English, Bengali and other regional languages coming out of the capital Kolkata alone (WBUJ Report, 2010). The multiple dailies cater to different sections of the audience across the city of Kolkata and the districts. The major Bengali and English dailies of Kolkata were owned by large and medium-sized companies (WBUJ Report, 2010) and catered to specific segments of the audience. Kolkata's newspaper market did not witness the takeover of small and medium-sized dailies by the largest-selling national English daily *The Times of India (TOI)*, which

started a Kolkata-based edition in late 1990s and market leader of Bengali dailies *Anandabazar Patrika (ABP)* (Paul, 2012). Both newspapers were part of diversified media conglomerates (Thakurta, 2012).

Table 1.1 shows the circulation split of Kolkata's leading Bengali and English daily newspapers across the urban centre (Kolkata) and the districts in the state of West Bengal. Even though newspapers like the *ABP* held a major share of the circulation in Kolkata, newspapers like *Bartaman* and *Aajkal* and CPIM's commercially-run party paper *Ganashakti (GS)* had sizeable readership in the districts in 2013 (ABC Report, 2013). Thus the fragmentation of the newspaper market emerges from the differences of the readership in urban area and the districts.

TABLE 1.1

Circulation of Kolkata's Leading Newspapers in July-December 2013

Circulation split (copies) in city and districts		
Newspapers	Kolkata	Rest of West Bengal
<i>Aajkal</i>	65,942	111,596
<i>Anandabazar Patrika (ABP)</i>	655,929	474,880
<i>Bartaman</i>	215,231	338,227
<i>Dainik Statesman (DS)</i>	3824	3903
<i>Ganashakti (GS)</i>	11,141	88,655
<i>Sangbad Pratidin</i>	124,061	161,385
<i>The Telegraph (English)</i>	328,548	51,688
<i>The Times of India (TOI) (English)</i>	302,962	13,472

1.3.2. Justification Of A Case Study of Anti-Industrialisation Protests

The relationship between the partisan media model and diversity of voices is addressed through a case study of Kolkata's commercially-run, partisan newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests. When the CPIM-led state government of West Bengal initiated corporate industrialisation policies by acquisition of agricultural land, it led to massive peasant protests in the rural areas of Singur and Nandigram (Chatterjee, 2008; Patnaik, 2007). Nielsen (2009) says that many activists and economists perceived the protests of Singur as "a new wave of emergent grassroots resistance to neoliberal development and the general ills of global capitalism" (pp. 148-149). The anti-industrialisation protests in this case study were led by farmers to protect their interests against the prospect of corporate industrialisation projects (Nielsen, 2009). The protesting farmers remained disadvantaged in relation to the corporate capitalist industrial groups and the interests of a neoliberal economy (Chatterjee, 2008; Patnaik, 2007). The commercially-run newspapers are expected to ignore the interests and movements of disadvantaged groups (Cottle, 2008; Gitlin, 1980; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008) such as the peasant protests of opposing neoliberal reforms. This thesis addresses the subject of whether market-driven dailies' partisan interests provoke differences in the media system including sympathetic representation of the anti-industrialisation protests that remained disadvantaged in relation to corporate investors.

Anti-industrialisation protests have been described as one of the recent movements that the world witnessed from the late 1990s onwards against neoliberal economic policies (Boykoff, 2006; Porta & Diani, 2006; Nielsen, 2009). From the late-1990s there emerged resistances against international organisations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) — institutions that structurally favoured corporate policies over demands of non-elite citizens and were seen as symbolic of global neoliberal economic policies (Boykoff, 2006). Marxist geographer David Harvey in his seminal book *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005) describes neoliberalism as the most recent phase in the history of capitalism: Neoliberalism is a political-economic configuration that upholds the principles of strong private property rights, free markets and free trade through minimum state intervention — except when the state is needed to guarantee unrestricted functioning of markets through appropriate police, military, defence and legal structures. In many developing economies such as China and India neoliberal reforms

entailed the process of corporate industrial development that prioritises the interests of the elite, adding to the deprivation of the poor (Patnaik, 2007).

1.3.2.1. Media And Anti-Industrialisation Protests — Theoretical Significance

The study of commercially-run newspapers' relationship to anti-industrialisation protests is not just timely; it is also significant theoretically in the general scholarship of media and movements. The study of market-driven news media's responses to recent movements such as those opposing neoliberal economic reforms is theoretically interesting because the media coverage of many of these movements has been nuanced and complex (Cottle, 2008; Gitlin, 2013; Mayher & McDonald, 2007). The market-driven news media in many instances avoided the tendency of blatantly supporting neoliberal initiatives and represented oppositional movements in a sympathetic fashion (Mayher & McDonald, 2007; Waisbord & Peruzzotti, 2009). In post-apartheid South Africa, for instance, the corporate-owned print media's responses to neoliberal initiatives were far from uniform with apparent attempts to provide both sides of the argument through an almost equal number of articles for and against privatisation (Mayher & McDonald, 2007). But the news coverage also subtly upheld the necessity of privatisation by limiting the possibilities of opposing views (Mayher & McDonald, 2007).

The market-driven news media are encouraged to take critical views of neoliberal policies because of newsgathering strategies such as news values (Zhao, 2008). China's state-controlled, market-dominated news media, for instance, emerged as a platform for a vibrant debate and oppositional views of state-led neoliberal economic policies because of the perceived newsworthiness of a chain of events that provoked criticisms of government policies (Zhao, 2008). The market-driven news media's attitudes to recent movements are known to have become more complex than the traditional frames of misrepresentation because of the growing influence of a number of conditions in the news production (Cottle, 2008). The conditions include journalistic roles (editorial integrity), broad political changes (or when larger social forces are at play), radical tactics used by movements, technological factors, the role and influence of transnational advocacy groups and communication networks (namely the Internet), the changing nature of movements (movements moving from political margins to the mainstream) and the involvement of the middle class (as in the case of the

Occupy Wall Street protests of 2011) (Cottle, 2008; Castells, 2009; Gitlin, 2013; McChesney, 2008). In the case of environmental protests against a proposed corporate industrial project in an Argentine city, the mainstream news media took up the cause of movements and acted as cheerleaders because of the news media's political affinities and journalistic routines (Waisbord & Peruzzotti, 2009).

1.4. Research Questions And Theoretical Overview

This thesis studies how the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of the news media determines the partisan system's democratic potential in a setting that has a recent history of the market-driven model. I study this subject through a case study of the coverage of anti-industrialisation protests by commercially-run, partisan newspapers in the East Indian city of Kolkata. Kolkata's newspaper landscape has plurality with the presence of multiple commercially-run partisan players and a relatively recent history of the market model. This thesis raises the following questions:

1.4.1. Research Questions

RQ. How does the interplay of partisan political and commercial interests affect the media's democratic role?

RQ1. How do partisan political interests relate to the diversity and differences in commercially-run newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests?

RQ2. How do commercial interests affect the selected dailies' partisan interests in different ownership models?

RQ3. How do individual journalists' advocacy-based roles relate to their shared professional values and impact their attitude to protests?

1.4.2. Definition Of Key Concepts

Partisan Press

The term “partisanship” in this thesis does not suggest commercially-run newspapers’ direct links with political parties; nor does it refer to non-commercial news media’s representation of political groups and parties. This thesis draws from Wasibord’s (2000; 2009) theoretical model of partisan press of “non-Western” societies: It has been observed that partisan publications in non-Western settings such as the countries of Latin America “defend political or economic interests” even though they do not necessarily represent the interests party organisations (Waisbord, 2000, p. 21). The news media in most societies no longer maintain direct links with political parties (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). A one-to-one relationship between the media and politics where each media reflects the views of each major political party is also less common in the present day (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). Thus it can be said that the traditional form of partisanship no longer exists in contemporary media systems. However, when it comes to the news media’s different political and economic interests “then partisanship has not disappeared” (Waisbord, 2000; p. 21). The partisan press system was originally conceptualised based on understandings of traditional European systems: The “media tended to have stable relationships with... (different political) groups and/or stable ideological identities” in countries of Western Europe (Hallin & Mancini, 2012, p. 293). Thus newspapers traditionally represented stable political conflicts (based on leftist and rightist ideological cleavages) of the mass party systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). But the partisan media model in most countries outside of Europe does not represent such traditional left-right political cleavages (Waisbord, 2009). This is because mass political parties (similar to those present in Europe) that represented leftist and rightist ideological views and engaged in stable political conflicts traditionally remained absent in most parts of the world (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Waisbord, 2000). However, the partisan system promises plurality when multiple media players champion different political and economic interests in competing conditions.

Commercial Interests

Media ownership remains central to the analysis of commercial interests in this thesis. Political-economic studies say that when the news media are part of large corporations their business agenda intrudes into the editorial due to aggravated concerns of making profits

(Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Herman & Chomsky, 1994; McChesney, 2004). Such possibilities are argued to be less in a party press, which is expected to be driven more by political causes and agenda, rather than just the goal of making profits (McChesney, 2008; 2015). It has also been argued that the news media's need to reach out to large sections of the audience for the purpose of making profits precede over other socio-political interests such as partisan ties (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). The increasing size of the news corporations thus contradicts their level of political participation (McManus, 2009). This thesis thus starts on the premise that the news media that are part of large conglomerates would be driven more by profit-making concern rather than partisan causes as opposed to those commercially-run dailies that are owned by individuals or political parties. Whereas, the goal of the party or proprietors' personal political leanings are expected to have a sway over a party press or individually-owned dailies even if they are run commercially.

Professional Journalism

By the term journalistic professionalism or professional roles, I refer to individual journalists' commitment and agreement on the necessity of certain journalistic values that are seen as desirable (Waisbord, 2013). Scholars refer to the ability of journalism to exert control over its field of activity against external interests (Schudson, 2001; Waisbord, 2013). This explains the presence of certain common values that tend to unite the profession across global settings (Deuze, 2005). But traditionally professional journalism translated to the "gatekeeper" model of news production and referred to the values of objectivity, fairness and public service (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2013).

1.4.3. Theoretical Framework — Justification Of Political Economy Of Communication

This thesis addresses the subject of the democratic potential of the partisan model of news media when it co-exists with the commercial model. There remain certain fundamental weaknesses in how democracy is conceptualised in the liberal pluralist theoretical tradition (Curran, 2002) and in Hallin and Mancini's (2004) structural functionalist studies of media systems. The theoretical tradition of political economy (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2002; 2007; 2011; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008; 2011; McManus, 2009; Mosco, 2009; Picard, 2000)

critiques the weaknesses of these approaches and offers a comprehensive framework for evaluating the normative role of the news media in a democracy. Thus the political economy approach determines the theoretical framework of this thesis.

The liberal pluralist theoretical tradition supports the ideas of individual freedom and sovereignty but pays less attention to the concept of equality, which is a central tenet of democracy (Lee, 2001). Thus the press in this theory is conceptualised as a “marketplace” of ideas (Cook, 2005). The concept of “marketplace” of ideas (Cook, 2005) has some limitations as some voices are ignored as compared to others. Traditional liberal theories ignore the goal of social democracy and the fact that the press must equally uphold the interests of all social groups rather than just the elite (Curran, 2002). Liberal theories also focus only on political democracy and argue that the normative function of the press in a society is to check the excesses of the political power and thus ensure public accountability (Curran, 2002; Murdock & Golding, 2005). But liberal theory’s unidirectional focus on political power makes one ignore the fact that in a society power also rests with the corporate capitalist elite (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 1982). If the news media focus only on the excesses of political power and remain indifferent to capitalist power, they end up ignoring issues of unholy state-corporate alliances (Curran, 2002; Murdock & Golding, 2005). The freedom from the government and links with big businesses also translate to the news media’s pro-corporate bias (Curran, 2002; McChesney, 2008) and their indifference to the misuse of corporate power (Murdock & Golding, 2005). This further encourages the news media’s elite bias (McChesney, 2008).

While Hallin and Mancini’s (2004) study of comparative media systems is regarded as a seminal work on partisan media, their approach also remains inadequate in assessing the democratic potential of the market-driven, liberal and partisan political models. In Hallin and Mancini’s original study (2004) the market-driven, liberal model is associated with market-dominated media, profit-based principles, information-oriented journalism and journalistic professionalism (Albuquerque, 2012; Hallin & Mancini, 2004) rather than other forces such as political patronage-based social relationships (clientilism) (Hardy, 2008). Hallin and Mancini’s study (2004) implies that a/the high degree of differentiation between the news media and politics leads to the media’s independence from interference by other forces in reporting matters of public interest. But it has been argued that the news-media’s dependence on the market model and independence from social relationships such as political ties do not necessarily ensure their freedom to report matters of public interest without interference from

other forces (Curran, 2011). For instance, American market-oriented news media are known to reflect deeply nationalistic, pro-state tendencies when it comes to reporting matters such as a country's foreign policy (Curran, 2011) despite their freedom from the state.

The political economy approach offers a useful theoretical lens to assess the democratic potential of each model. The strength of the political-economic approach lies in the fact that it links media and communications institutions to the overall workings of the economic and political systems and the exercise of social power. The approach relates media content to ownership and market structures, commercial and technological factors, labour practices and government policies (McChesney, 2008). The news media are conceptualised as key aspects of the political and economic systems (McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005).

The research questions as conceptualised assumes that media content is shaped by macro factors such as newspapers' partisan interests and the process of commercialisation, which is related to the profit-oriented logic of corporate commercial entities. The first and second research questions have been raised with the political-economic assumption that media content relates to macro factors such as the partisan and commercial interests of the news media (McChesney, 2008). The macro conditions of news production such as market-based criteria of profit, partisan interests are assumed to be connected to ownership and the news content. The third research question studies the democratic potential of advocacy journalism in a partisan milieu and its interplay with other professional values. The fourth research question explores whether unionisation in the media contributes to the democratic process by countering the impact of economic rationality of a milieu.

1.5. Research Plan And Structure

1.5.1. Semi-structured, In-depth Interviews And Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis of newspaper articles and qualitative interviews are the qualitative research methods used to address the research questions. The aim of thematic analysis in this thesis is to represent the similarities and differences of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which helps understand the differences in commercially-run, partisan newspapers' attitude to the

anti-industrialisation protests. The themes were identified from the data set of 200 newspaper articles through a grounded theory approach and analysed for the thematic network analysis. Qualitative interviews serve the purpose of studying how commercially-run newspapers' partisan and profit-based strategies influenced the news production process and the key editorial decisions. Through qualitative interviews I studied how journalists' negotiated with advocacy-based roles and other values of professional journalism. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with journalists and senior editorial management staff such as those holding the designations of resident editor and news editor for an understanding of newspapers' partisan political interests. The method of thematic analysis, qualitative interviews, the sampling of newspaper articles and the sample of the interviewees are elaborated in Chapter 4. I rely on primary research to develop an understanding of the history of Kolkata's press and the nature of the market of the newspaper industry considering that existing literature has been inadequate in these areas. The newspapers' partisan and commercial interests are the key variable on the basis of which the following dailies have been selected for comparison.

The Times of India (TOI): *TOI's* Kolkata edition formed a part of the national media conglomerate, Bennett Coleman & Company Ltd. (BCCL), which was controlled by the Jain family (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010; Thakurta, 2012). The *TOI* was driven primarily by economic priorities in favour of corporate capitalist interests and showed support for the administration's economic policies in West Bengal 2006 (S. Roy, personal communication, 2011; S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

Anandabazar Patrika (ABP): The flagship daily of a regional media conglomerate, *ABP* is the largest-selling newspaper in the Bengali language market (RNI Report, 2006-07; ABC Report, 2013). Being part of a family-run media conglomerate, the *ABP* was driven by economic priorities in favour of corporate capitalist interests and showed support for the administration's economic policies in 2006 (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

Bartaman: *Bartaman* is the second largest selling Bengali daily in the state that catered primarily to the readership in the districts (RNI Report, 2006-07; ABC Report, 2013).

Bartaman is part of an individually-owned, medium-sized newspaper company (WBUJ Report, 2010) and identified as an anti-establishment or anti-government daily (P. Ghosal, personal communication, 2012; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2012).

Dainik Statesman (DS): The Bengali daily *DS*, started in the early 2000s, is owned by the managing editor and functioned as the sister concern of a reputed English daily. *DS* positioned itself as anti-CPIM in 2006 (A. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012; S. Saha, personal communication, 2012).

Ganashakti (GS): The party press *GS* is part of the national communication network of a national left party of India, Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM) (Ghatak & Thakurta, 2012). *GS*, a Bengali language newspaper, was the organ of the CPIM's state committee in West Bengal and was run commercially. Table 1.2 shows the intersection of partisan and commercial interests in the selected dailies.

TABLE 1.2

Co-existence of Partisan and Commercial Models

Partisan interests	Support for economic policies	Anti-government/ Anti-CPIM	Propaganda of CPIM		
Commercial model	Part of family-run media conglomerates	Individual owners	Commercially-run party press		
Newspapers	<i>ABP</i> <i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>	<i>GS</i>	

1.5.2. A Study of Newspapers And Movements In The Age Of Internet

The low digital penetration of the Internet in India — 10 per cent as opposed to an average of 40 per cent in aspiring countries (Gnanasambandam et al., 2012) — justifies the relevance of traditional media such as newspapers in this research of the interplay of the partisan and commercial models. In contrast to the survival crisis of newspapers in advanced industrialised countries, Indian newspapers have experienced steady growth in circulation and readership, thanks to rising literacy levels, comparatively lower levels of digital penetration and fragmentation of the media market through regional diversity (Thakurta, 2012). According to a report jointly conducted by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and professional firm KPMG, the overall print market size of India is expected to grow at 10 per cent as per records of 2011, primarily through advertising-generated revenue. According to the FICCI-KPMG report, India had 77,600 newspapers in multiple languages as at 2010. The Indian print media also expect increased capital infusion, competition and growth in the years ahead (FICCI-KPMG Report, 2011).

1.5.3. Chapter Outlines

The background, rationale and objective of this subject have been discussed in this chapter. Chapter 2 discusses through a literature review why political-economic theories differentiate between the partisan and commercial models. I argue that the interplay of both models needs to be revisited in relation to the rules of professional journalism. Chapter 3 analyses the relevance of Kolkata's press in the study of the partisan and commercial models. The Chapter focuses on the tradition of partisan press and the recent history of the market model of Kolkata's press. The qualitative methods of thematic analysis of newspaper articles and qualitative interviews are discussed in Chapter 4. The research questions are addressed in Chapters 5. In Chapter 6 I discuss the key findings of this thesis in the light of existing literature and conclude the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

PARTISAN AND COMMERCIAL MODELS OF MEDIA: DICHOTOMY AND CO-EXISTENCE

The market-driven model of news media is critiqued from a political-economic perspective for ignoring the causes and interests of disadvantaged social groups (Gitlin, 1980; Cottle, 2008; McChesney, 2008; Kumar, 2004). It is argued that advertisers are commonly interested only in a particular segment of the public for reasons of profit, which disadvantages the cause of marginalised groups (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Political-economic theories reiterate the democratic potential of partisan media in competing market conditions (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2011). The assumption is that: in a competing media market that has multiple players and a plurality of voices, partisan media players ideologically contest each other and present a diversity of political views including the causes and movements of disadvantaged social groups in the media system (Baker, 2006; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; McChesney, 2008; McQuail, 1992). The partisan model is associated with advocacy, causes and political diversity, while the market-driven model is linked to the goal of profit and the norms of professional journalism (Albuquerque, 2012; Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2012; Schudson, 2002). Thus the theories of political economy differentiate between the partisan and market-driven models on the basis of the news media's profit-based goal and the norms of professional journalism (McChesney, 2008; Curran, 2007; 2011).

But despite being perceived as theoretically different the partisan and commercial models of the news media co-exist in many societies (Allern & Blach-Orsten, 2011; McCargo, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Previous studies observe that when partisan news media run as commercial entities in different settings they adopt characteristics such as profit-based logic and the values of professional journalism including the necessity of conveying impartial information despite the centrality of their partisan interests (Albuquerque, 2012; Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Thus there remains support for the norms of professional journalism when the partisan and commercial models co-exist. While the partisan model has traditionally been linked to advocacy and causes, it has also been observed that news media abandon their partisan alliances and follow the norms of professional news making when society is organised in a manner independent of those alliances and interests (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Porto, 2003). This thesis thus suggests

that the interplay of the partisan and commercial models and the partisan model's ability to represent diversity needs to be revisited in relation to the norms of professional journalism. The presence of additional conditions such as diverse ownership models of the news media such as a party press and individually-owned dailies and the tradition of advocacy journalism are pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models in a setting that has a recent history of market-driven news media.

2.1. Differences Between Market-Driven And Partisan Models

According to a school of liberal theories, the shift to the commercial model was thought to have ended the newspapers' function of political advocacy as partisan actors. Scholars of different theoretical approaches such as liberal theories and political economy of communication observe that in the middle of the 19th century a mass circulation, "commercialised" press appeared in the United States and Europe that aimed to reach out to larger sections of the audience than what was targeted by political newspapers of the previous era (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). Drawing from the experiences of the development of the Anglo-American market-driven press, liberal theory sees "independent journalism" as a product of the market that triumphed over the press' "partisan ties" (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009, p. 21). Liberal theories argue that the news media must act as "value-free" institutions and convey neutral, non-partisan information under conditions of free markets and freedom from state control to fulfil the function of democracy (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Curran, 2002). The commercially-driven liberal model is seen as being most capable of displaying democratic principles of independence and autonomy, being driven more by market-driven, profit-based principles rather than political patronage (clientelism) (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Curran, 2002; 2007; Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 1982;).

The liberal views of democracy are challenged by political-economic theories, which are inspired by Marxist principles (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). The commercial model is criticised for its inherent elite bias and lack of interest in reporting the causes and movements of disadvantaged groups (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008). Advocacy-based, partisan journalism is upheld by political-economic views because this model promises plurality of voices and a diversity of views unlike the profit-centric, commercial model's pro-elite bias and the tendency to ignore the marginalised (Baker, 2006;

Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; 2015). The assumption is as follows: when multiple partisan players champion different partisan causes in competing conditions, then the partisan model would be superior to the neutral, non-partisan model for bringing forth diverse political views, including fair representation of movements of disadvantaged social groups, in the media system.

Even though the partisan and commercial models of the news media are perceived as theoretically incompatible they co-exist in many societies (Allern & Blach-Orsten, 2011; McCargo, 2012; Waisbord, 2000). Hallin and Mancini (2012) observe that when partisan news media in different societies function as commercial entities they adopt characteristics such as the goal of profit and the professional values of impartial journalism that are traditionally associated with the market model (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). It has been observed that commercially-run, partisan players renounce their political interests when the society is organised at the time of movements (Porto, 2003). But it is less clear in existing literature how partisan interests of commercially-run news media intersect with the norms of professional journalism. The lack of attention is because the partisan model in political-economic views is associated only with advocacy and causes rather than professional journalism (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008; 2015). The theoretical approach of political economy also ignores the impact of professional journalism in news production (McChesney, 2008). The norms of professional journalism are also not seen as desirable for democracy in this view (Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; 2015). However, where both partisan and commercial models co-exist there would be differences in the workings of both market-driven and partisan models and the partisan model's ability to reflect diversity in the attitude towards movements.

2.2. Flaws Of The Free Market Model In Democratic Functioning — Lack Of Plurality And Diversity

The theoretical view of political economy of communication argues that the market-driven model fails to represent the interest of all citizens democratically and thus falls short of fulfilling the news media's normative role in a democracy (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). This theoretical approach reiterates the democratic potential of the partisan model and sees it as more conducive for plurality and a diversity of views than the market-driven model of news

media (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2011). The partisan and commercial models are differentiated on the basis of advocacy and the norms of professional journalism.

The market model applies an economic perspective to mass media, treating it akin to a commercial product (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Therefore, it is believed that in competing conditions businesses pursuing profits would best address people's needs; this rationale of "free markets" influences the functioning of the mass media in liberal democracies like the United States (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). The view of free market model of the news media was embraced by the new world order that emerged at the end of the Second World War (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). The theories of political economy of communication critique the free market model of media (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Media markets cannot be responsive to all sections of the audience because of their unique dual-product status (catering to both readers and advertisers) (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Advertisers are typically interested only in a particular segment of the public for reasons of profit. Advertisers' need for lucrative markets cannot fulfil the needs of all social groups. Thus scholars say that market-driven news media ignore the voices and causes of disadvantaged social groups because of their dual-product status (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009). It is argued that corporate-owned news media show less interest in covering the struggles and movements of disadvantaged social groups (Kumar, 2004; Martin, 2008; McChesney, 2008) because of their need to cater to the preferences of the advertisers. "Today much of journalism is increasingly directed at the middle class and the upper class while the working class and the poor have been written off altogether" (McChesney, 2008, p. 47). This forms the mainstay of political-economic critiques of the free market model of media (Curran, 2011; Kumar, 2004; McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009).

It has been argued that it is not desirable for plurality and diversity of views when the news media seek profits as business enterprises. The sole focus of pursuing profits may not be problematic for businesses but the news media, it is argued, are meant to function as the society's primary source of information and act as "resources for citizens with important informational, educational, and integrative functions" (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 26). Baker (2007) argues : "[M]edia products have a more educational, electorally relevant, or significant cultural content.... These should be distributed on a more egalitarian basis" (p. 31). Subjecting ideas, culture and journalism to the principle of markets is also problematic because it becomes rational for media firms to produce exactly what the market shows a preference for and what everyone else produces (McChesney, 2008).

McManus (2009) says that 18th century thinkers such as Adam Smith envisioned robust competition among multiple market players while theorising the economic principle of free markets. But media markets in absence of government regulation (supporting diversity) tends to end up as highly uncompetitive, which is problematic for the news media's democratic goal:

...media and other businesses attempt to buy out, merge, or partner with competitors to the extent government anti-trust regulators permit. They also try to erect barriers to market entry by forming chains, as in newspapers and broadcast networks, or large conglomerates that can bring the resources of many industries down on any new competitor (McManus, 2009, p. 224).

A concentrated market “creates the possibility of an individual decision maker exercising enormous, unequal and hence undemocratic, largely unchecked, potentially irresponsible power” (Baker, 2007, p. 16). Thus concentrated media markets counter the possibility of fair political debate. Media markets tend to become uncompetitive and under free market conditions (McChesney, 2008). This challenges the market-driven model's ability to represent a diversity of views in the media system.

2.2.1. Significance Of Professional Journalism In Free Market Model

As discussed above the free market model has been criticised by political-economic scholars for its inability to fulfil news media's democratic role (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008). But Curran (2002) observes that scholars of other theoretical approaches such as liberal theories of the press hold the position that market-driven news media structurally remain capable of fulfilling the function of democracy when their profit-seeking agenda remains insulated from their public interest goal through the practice of professional journalism. It is argued that commercially-run news media, when free from the direct control of the state and guided by competing market condition, can be held accountable to the audiences through self-correcting mechanisms of the marketplace, legal protection ensured by the state and shared journalistic professional values (Curran, 2002; Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 1982; Hackett, 2005).

In the early 20th-century American writers such as Walter Lippman argued that the “development of a vigorous market purportedly breaks the hold of the politicians over

journalism, while the emergence of professional ethical code insulates journalism from the corruptions of the market” (Kaplan, 2010, p. 27). Historically, political advocacy was the principal function of newspapers in most societies (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). But at the start of the 20th century “journalism in the West was ready to begin a professionalization project” by establishing institutions such as press clubs and journalism schools and the formation of code of ethics (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009), p. 21). Objectivity emerged as the cornerstone of the ideal form of professional journalism that replaced the model of advocacy-based partisan journalism in the 20th century (Deuze, 2005).

Since mass markets developed in industrial economies such as the United States in the middle of the 19th century and newspapers started functioning as commercial entities, their public interest goal came into conflict with proprietors’ business interests and desire for maximum returns to investment (McManus, 2009). But the concerns of “[c]ommercialism ebbed over much of the 20th century as codes of ethics were adopted and the education levels and professional aspirations of journalists rose” (McManus, 2009, p. 219). It is argued that professionalism was encouraged by media owners to make their product (news) credible and this enhanced their commercial prospects (McChesney, 2008). The “[c]oncerns of individual bias and commercial ownership, for example, are rendered more manageable and defused by invoking the buffering power of professionalism said to distance the product from these threats” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2012; p. 10). Thus, it can be said that journalistic professionalism aims to give legitimacy to the principle of free market media. “...the rise of professionalism proved that the market could coexist peacefully with other social structures, where other value systems and logics of social action prevailed” (Hallin, 2008, pp. 45-46).

Journalistic professionalism refers to the ethos, ideologies and values that determine ideal professional behaviour and legitimise the need of journalism’s freedom from government regulations (Curran et al., 1982). Deuze (2005) summarises a set of values that are associated with professional journalism in an ideal form in liberal theories: public service (journalists’ goal of fulfilling public service by imparting impartial information and acting as watchdogs), objectivity, autonomy (journalists’ freedom to report without interference), immediacy, and ethics. Thus professionalism, on one level, is an individual value or trait that determines the extent to which one belongs to a professional group by adhering to shared norms. At the same time the concept also refers to a set of procedures on how to report an event. In this sense professionalism remains a routine level phenomenon (Shoemaker & Reese, 2012).

2.2.2. Commercialisation Of Journalism — Intrusion of Business Into News

Extant literature (Davies, 2008; Donsbach, 2010; McChesney, 2008 ; 2015; McManus, 2009; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012; Weaver, 2009) concludes that commercially-run news entities' aggravated concern for profits and the need to reach out to the widest possible audience affects the norms of professional journalism. The weakening of professional journalistic values primarily translates to the editorial's lack of insulation from the business and the loss of professional autonomy (Beam, Weaver and Brownlee, 2009; Weaver, 2009). The editorial's growing lack of independence results due to commercially-run news entities' increased profit-driven goal (Beam, Weaver and Brownlee, 2009; Weaver, 2009). "Since the mid-1980s the corporations that produce news in the United States have begun to treat it less as a public trust and more as a commodity, simply a product for sale" (McManus, 2009, p. 219). The phenomenon of treating news as a commodity has been described as a process of "economic rationalisation" (McManus, 2009). It has been argued that the "economic rationalisation" of journalism emerged as a worrying trend since the closing decades of last century with changes in ownership patterns, growing concentration of the markets and conglomeration of the news media (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009).

The news media became a part of large corporate conglomerates as capitalism expanded in highly industrial economies such as Britain and the United States in the early 20th century (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008). The structure of the newspaper industry shifted from family-owned, privately-held enterprises to chain ownerships (newspaper chains like Gannett owned a hundred newspapers) (Compaine, 2000). Newspapers became a part of consolidated media empires as newspaper firms integrated with other media like television stations, cable operations and production companies; the news media also emerged as the arm of diversified businesses as non-media companies owned newspapers and other media (Picard, 2005). These developments of media markets coincided with changes in newsroom management with owners exercising greater economies of scale over more newsrooms, cutbacks in budgets for journalism and downsizing of journalistic labour (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009). McChesney (2008) observes that the autonomy of news divisions seemed non-sensical to large corporations and business conglomerates that invested heavily to purchase news firms and needed significant returns to satisfy investors. Thus media conglomerates expected all employees including journalists to directly enhance bottom-line profit (McChesney, 2008).

The blurring of the sacred church-state wall between business and editorial due to commercial news entities' heightened concern for bottom-line profits are described as the features of the commercialisation of journalism (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009). These processes have proven to be adverse for ethical journalistic standards and professional autonomy of journalists (Beam, Weaver & Brownlee, 2009; Weaver, 2009). The “dynamic tension between the norms of socially responsible journalism and those of basic market economics” (McManus, 2009, p. 223) remains central to the critique of commercialisation of journalism and news work. The increasing loss of journalistic autonomy and the public interest goal of journalism are perceived as the result of the “new periods of growth” of capitalism, aided by technological innovation (Mosco, 2009, p. 57). The compromise with editorial integrity in commercial news production process is seen as an outcome of the global expansion of markets in political-economic studies (Mosco, 2009).

Interestingly, scholars of other theoretical approaches such as sociological studies of newswork (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012) reach similar conclusions as political-economic studies — that the news media's aggravated profit-driven goal counters the public interest of goal of journalism and professional ethics. However, sociological studies of news work refrain from criticising the principle of the free market model of the news media. Sociological studies approach the news media as any other large scale institutions, which are subjected to the internal division of labour, role differentiation and organisational policies and practices (Curran et al., 1982). Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argue that the news media's editorial autonomy tends to be compromised when they are a part of large businesses because large media corporations have the propensity of exerting their power for political and economic advantages and thus they take fewer risks:

For most organizations the primary goal is economic, to make a profit... (However,) [o]ther trends have also contributed to enhancing the economic objective. For one, media corporations have gotten larger. These larger firms take fewer risks than smaller ones, which includes exerting their power where possible to obtain economic and political advantage... From all accounts the profit motive has become more important... rendering economic constraints into dictates and weakening the insulation of the news department from the larger firm (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, pp. 139-140).

Scholars of the political-economic approach argue that the news media's necessity to function as profit-making components of large conglomerates results in an elite bias, challenges the scope of investigative reporting and leads to a predominance of public relations-fed messages (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Davies, 2008; Herman & Chomsky, 1994; McChesney, 2008). These processes are seen as less than desirable for political diversity and for news that would cater to the interest of diverse social groups (McChesney, 2008).

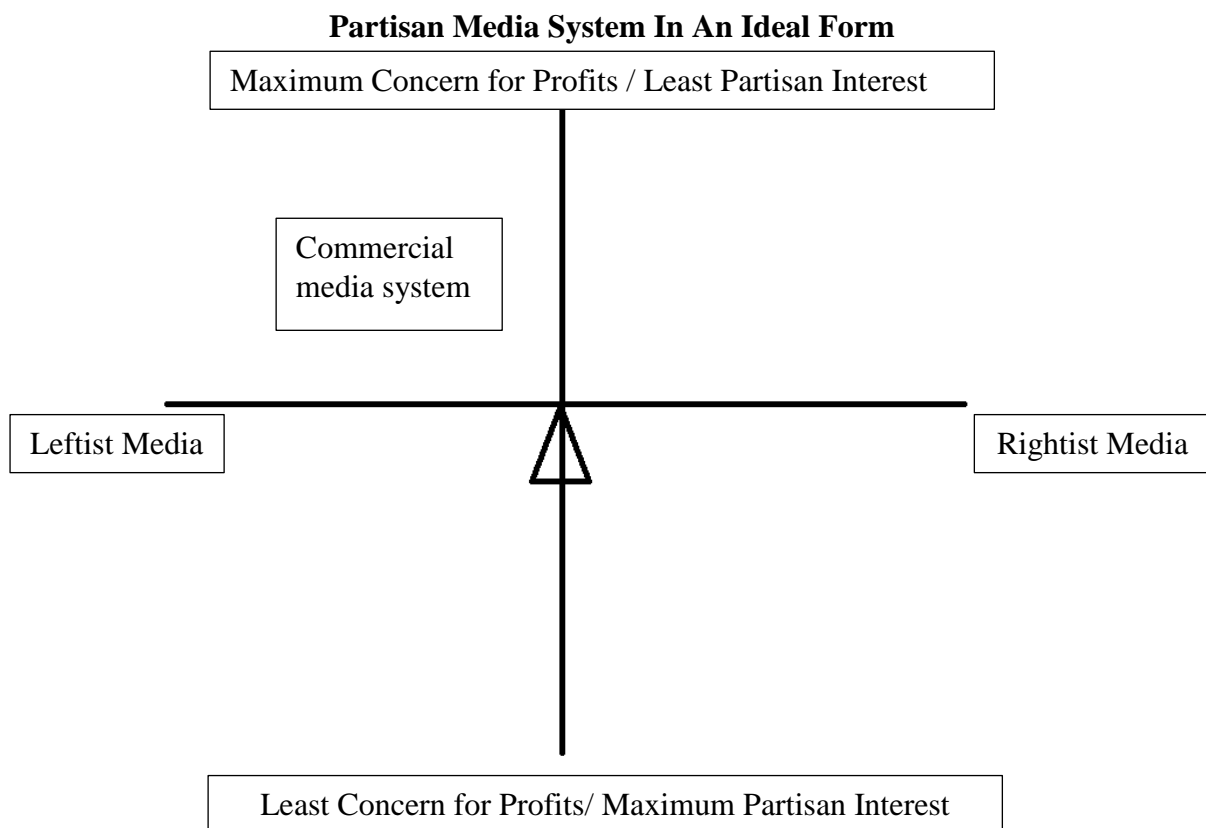
2.3. Theoretical Significance Of Partisan Model — Plurality And Democracy

The theorists of the political-economic approach (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2005; 2008; 2015) argue that the partisan press model in pluralistic conditions is better positioned than the market driven model to represent the interests of diverse social and political groups in a media system and fulfil the goal of democracy. Plurality of voices and a diversity of views are linked to the partisan model when multiple partisan players champion their causes in competing market conditions (Baker, 2006; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; McChesney, 2008; McQuail, 1992). Acting as watchdogs, partisan media players in competing conditions are expected to present an inclusive worldview with a fair representation of all social groups, including those socially and economically marginalised. McChesney (2008; 2015) observes that in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries labour unions and political groups had their own publications; some of these groups had extensive media outlets and a strong subscriber base. This led to political diversity in the media system. Traditionally in Europe media players were linked each to a major political party, thus leading to external pluralism in the media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). In Denmark in the early 20th century, for instance, each town had four newspapers that represented a major political party (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). In the strongest form of partisan system, each media outlet represented the views of a particular party in the public sphere (Hallin & Mancini, 2008), which led to political diversity in the media system. The media system reflected the cleavages of the political system through one-to-one links.

Figure 2.1 below shows that a partisan media system in an ideal form accommodates media players with leftist and rightist political views. The news media champion opposing political views and thus they belong to different ends of the political spectrum. It is economically pragmatic for commercially-run entities to play non-partisan actors in the

media system to reach out to large sections of the audiences (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). Thus commercial entities' increasing concern for profits counters their partisan role. But in an ideal partisan system, as shown in Figure 2.1, multiple media players with different partisan interests aim to energise their publics in specific constituencies to causes and contribute to democratic participation rather than just pursue profits (McChesney, 2004). Thus they perform the function of advocacy instead of conveying neutral information. Thus there remains external pluralism in the media system with an equal balance of leftist and rightist views in the media system.

FIGURE 2.1



Hallin and Mancini (2008; 2012) in their study of media systems observe that a direct one-to-one connection between different political parties and the news media has become less common. In the present day partisan media represent different political or economic tendencies and support or oppose policies of specific administrations (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Recent studies of media and movements observe that partisan divisions of the media

system are reflected through differences in market-driven media's attitude to the movements (DiMaggio & Street, 2011; Gitlin, 2013). In the United States, for instance, where there has been a resurgence of political polarisation in the news media over the last decade, the Occupy Wall Street protests of 2011 were slammed by a section of the right-wing media in the United States like *FOX*, but perceived as newsworthy and represented sympathetically by other news outlets (DiMaggio & Street, 2011; Gitlin, 2013). Thus there remained both sympathetic representation and oppositional attitude towards movements in the media system because of market-driven news media's different partisan tendencies.

2.3.1. Partisan Media Versus Professional Journalism

In political-economic views, partisan journalism, linked to advocacy and causes, is seen as a superior alternative to professional journalism in representing the views of diverse social groups, traditionally ignored by commercial news entities (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2005; 2008; 2015). Objectivity, which remains the ideological corner stone of professional journalism, has been criticised in political-economic studies for its lack of ideological contestation (Curran, 2007; 2011; Deuze, 2005; McChesney, 2005; 2008; 2015). But partisan journalism "offers a way in which reality can be interpreted from the viewpoint of different social and political groups, in place of bland 'spot' reporting of events and topics that are presented in a disconnected and decontextualised way" (Curran, 2007, p. 37).

2.3.1.1. Limitations Of Professional Journalism In Democratic Process

Lack of ideological contestation and political engagement

Advocacy journalism, an integral feature of the partisan model of news media, is seen as capable of representing the views of diverse social groups. On the other hand, the norms of objectivity result in a form of news that remains bereft of active political engagement and marginalise dissenting views (Curran, 2007; Gitlin, 1980; Hallin; 1984; McChesney, 2008; 2015). As discussed earlier, traditionally, in liberal views professional journalism refers primarily to the values of objectivity, impartiality and fairness (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott, 2006; Waisbord, 2013). Objective journalism fails to offer an open, pluralistic

platform to a variety of speakers because the news media do not expand their coverage to offer a platform to the civil society's diverse opinions but merely publicise "the policies and pronouncements of 'important' legitimate speakers of formal political institutions" (Kaplan, 2010, p. 35). The anti-partisan, political reforms of the Progressive era in the United States in the early 20th century is said to have encouraged the emergence of objectivity as a professional value, which is also described as an exceptional American ethic (Kaplan, 2010). While publishers of the partisan press of the previous era affirmed the right to political speech, American press in early the 20th century shunned particular political causes and promised to emerge as the channel for a variety of speakers through the values of impartiality and neutrality towards all social groups (Kaplan, 2010). But there remain limitations in objectivity's contribution to the democratic process because of the manner in which professional codes evolved (McChesney, 2008). The rise of professional journalism in the Anglo-American context coincided with changes in the media system such as conditions of monopoly in the wire services and in the new medium of broadcasting in the early 20th century (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). Thus editorial autonomy always remained relative in the face of the growing commercial interests of corporate media owners (McChesney, 2008). Kaplan (2010) observes:

This new twentieth-century journalistic regime was upheld by the dominant alignments of political culture and public authority and reinforced by technocratic occupational ideals, an increasingly monopolistic market structure, and corporate ownership of the press... objectivity as a public philosophy offered only limited resources and rationale for the press to pursue its democratic mission in the face of other competing voices and concentrations of power (p. 35).

Lack of challenge to the status quo

Previous studies say that commercially-run news media uphold the political and economic status quo because of journalists' reliance on a professional routine like the reliance on official, elite sources (Bennett, 2010; Hallin, 1984). The commercially-run news media's propensity to protect the status quo is especially evident when it comes to reporting extraordinary events such as war and demonstrations (Murray, Parry, Robinson & Goddard, 2008; Gitlin, 1984; Hallin, 1980). Murray et al. (2008) observe that during unusual times

such as wars commercially-run news entities “serve the military rather well” due to several factors including professional routines such as the reliance on official sources and news values, “rooted in dramatic episodic coverage”, “publicizing official frames of (a) conflict and either ignoring or discrediting challengers” (p. 9).

Professional routines such as journalists’ reliance on elite sources have been described as among the features that limit the democratic functioning of commercially-run news media. Bennett (2010) observes that it is only elite sources of government institutions that end up as journalists’ primary source of information in media systems in different countries (Bennett, 2010). For instance, leading newspapers such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and other mainstream news media narrated primarily the Bush administration’s version of the presence of “weapons of mass destruction” in their coverage of the 2004-Iraq war even though this version was contradicted by the United Nations (Bennett, 2010). A professional routine such as journalists’ reliance on sources for accessing information counters the democratic process when commercial news media report news from only the perspective of the governmental and other elite power-holders. This creates a journalistic regime where the government’s pronouncements are not only reported but their decisions are also respected — “not probed, much less challenged” (Kaplan, 2010, p. 35). The (elite official) sources thus restrict journalists’ ability to act as the government watchdog, seen as the normative role of the news media in a democracy (checking the excess of power and ensuring public accountability) (Curran, 2002). McChesney (2015) observes that commercially-run news entities systematically disadvantage movements that challenge powerful economic policies because of their reliance on professional routines such as news values (the element of novelty).

Through their “Hierarchy of Influences” model, Shoemaker and Reese (1996; 2012) explain how professional journalistic roles and routines intersect with macro factors such as the interests of owners and advertisers and market structures to influence news production. Shoemaker and Reese’s (2012) model calls attention to a broad range of pressure — five layers of influences — on the news content, varying from the macro to the micro. This includes the influences of 1. Social systems or the ideological value system of journalists and audiences; 2. Social institutions including extra-media factors such as sources, advertisers, market structures, government and technological interferences; 3. Media organisations’ imperatives such as profit orientation of private media companies combined with ownership’s interests; 4. Routine Practices (newsroom routines); and 5. Individuals (journalists’

occupational and professional roles) (Shoemaker & Reese, 2012). Unlike political economic studies (Herman & Chomsky, 1994; McChesney, 2008; 2015), Shoemaker and Reese (1996; 2012) acknowledge the role of professional journalistic norms in news production. However, it is suggested that the democratic potential of the norms of professional journalism needs to be addressed in relation to organisational, commercial and market-related factors on different levels. Thus limitations of professional journalism along with arguments of political economy explain why movements that challenge the political and economic status quo and dissenting views tend to be misrepresented in commercially-run news media (Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984).

2.3.1.2. Democratic Potential Of Advocacy Journalism

Political-economic theories (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008), inspired by Marxist principles, thus lend ideological support to partisan journalism (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). In classical Marxist views it is deemed desirable for the goal of social democracy if journalists act as “principled partisans” and question the establishment from the margins rather than remaining merely the “intrepid” professional reporter (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). In the early 19th century in most Western countries a partisan news culture was the norm in which newspapers represented public opinion and emerged as platforms of political combat. The word “journalism”, French in origin, referred to journalism of opinion at the time (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). “Though never made fully respectable, partisan journalism gradually acquired a positive justification. As democratic government became the norm, the spectacle of political combat came to be seen as healthy... political dispute served to promote a general social good” (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009, p. 19). The partisan press system of the previous era has been upheld for its effectiveness in offering space to multiple social groups like socialists, feminists, trade unionists and radicals (McChesney, 2008), groups traditionally ignored by the corporate-owned media. Waisbord (2009) observes that partisan press and advocacy journalism in the United States was historically related to 19th century movements that promoted women’s and workers’ rights and abolitionism. This explains why political-economic theories, a dominant academic practice in Britain and North America (Hallin, 2000), upholds partisan journalism and the advocacy tradition of press. Advocacy-based partisan journalism thus remains opposed to the professional model, seen as a process that

coincided with the rise of the commercial press in North American and North European media systems (McChesney, 2008). Scholars of media systems traditionally argued that societies, which are marked by a low degree of “differentiation” between media and politics, tend to be characterised by low levels of professional journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In their seminal study of media systems, Hallin and Mancini (2004; 2012) observe that the partisan polarized pluralist model of southern Europe has “a high degree of political parallelism between the political system and the media system” and low level of journalistic professionalism (Albuquerque, 2012, p. 74). Hallin and Mancini’s (2004) characterisations of partisan (Polarized Pluralist) and market-driven, liberal media systems were based on Durkheimian ideas of “modernisation” that spoke of the functional differentiation between institutions such as the media and politics in increasingly complex modernising, capitalist societies (Hardy, 2008).

2.4. Intersection Of Partisan And Commercial Models — Impact

The news media’s growing commercial interests were seen as among the processes that marked an end to the partisan press. From the middle of 19th century in countries of Western Europe and North America a commercialised, mass press emerged that relied on advertising revenues and aimed reaching out to larger audiences than those of the political newspapers of the previous era (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). This encouraged possibilities of changes in the role of the press from political advocacy to the function of conveying neutral information (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2008; Waisbord, 2000). In the early 20th century corporate-owned media conglomerates obliterated competition and diversity by ousting small, diversely-owned, partisan players off the market in countries such as Britain and the United States. The smaller, diversely-owned media groups practiced partisan journalism and represented the interest of diverse social groups and political parties (Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2008). The increasing size of corporate-run media conglomerates corresponded to a decline in their level of political participation (McManus, 2009). This defeats the prospect of participatory democracy (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009). Scholars of different theoretical approaches such as political economy of communication and structural functionalist studies of media systems (Curran, 2011; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2012; McChesney, 2008) thus argue that the

shift to the market-driven model reduces the news media's necessity to act as partisan players.

But despite being perceived theoretically as incompatible (Curran, 2011; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2012; McChesney, 2008; Schiller, 1979) the partisan and market-driven models co-exist in many societies. The partisan tradition has survived in many societies despite the news media's shift to the advertising revenue-based, commercial model (Allern & Blach-Orsten, 2011; McCargo, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009). In recent revision of their works, Hallin and Mancini (2012), addressing criticisms of their previous study (Albuquerque, 2012; McCargo, 2012), acknowledge the "centrality" of the news media's partisan role in most settings across the world. Hallin and Mancini (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) in an earlier study argued that since the 1980s the values associated with the liberal model namely ideas associating press freedom and market freedom and practices such as the commercialisation of the media have spread around the world, because of economic globalisation (Albuquerque, 2012). This encouraged the partisan model in multiple settings to resemble like the market-driven, liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

Scholars observe that the advocacy-based, partisan tradition prevails in the mainstream media in most societies outside of North America because the conditions that are necessary for the development of non-partisan model, namely strong commercial forces, advertising revenues and mass markets, remained absent for much of recent history (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). The nature of media partisanship evolved in many non-Western societies from 1950s onwards with the media's growing commercial interests. Waisbord (2000) observes that the partisan press in most Latin American countries no longer act as the instruments of political parties or groups but rather function commercially. Yet they remain partisan in how they represent different political or economic interests (Waisbord, 2000). As commercial forces strengthened over the last few decades in the media in many non-western settings, partisan newspapers championed the political and economic interests of specific administrations or had shifting political alliances rather than maintaining fixed political identities (Waisbord, 2000). "If the partisan press is defined as publications intended to act as instruments for political parties, then the evolution and consolidation of the big press from the 1950s onward attests to the gradual demise of partisanship. If partisan press means publications that defend political or economic interests (not necessarily represented by party organizations), then partisanship has not disappeared" (Waisbord, 2000, p. 21).

2.4.1. Partisan And Commercial Models, Diversity — Role of Professional Journalism

On one hand, when multiple partisan players pursue different political interests in competing market conditions, the partisan model promises plurality and a diversity of voices. On the other hand, when news media are run as commercial entities, they usually seek profits rather than pursue partisan political interests. The goal of profits can neutralise their partisan interests and encourage them to act as non-partisan players (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009). This would affect the partisan model's ability to reflect diversity and differences in the media system. How the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests determines the partisan system's democratic potential, however, has received inadequate attention. Hallin and Mancini (2012) reiterate that despite the "centrality" of their partisan interests the commercial model encourages partisan actors of different settings to adopt characteristics such as the predominance of profit-based logic and the professional values of "impartial" journalism that are usually associated with the market-driven, liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). But there remains a lack of research into how the co-existence of profit-driven strategies, the norms of "professional journalism" and the news media's partisan political interests would influence the partisan system's ability to reflect differences when commercially-run news media are driven by partisan interests in fairly competitive conditions. It is this gap in literature that this thesis intends to address.

Theories of political economy of communication indicate that there remain limits in the partisan media model's ability to represent diversity in a highly commercialised media system that lacks plurality and competition (Curran, 2011). Pluralistic market conditions are viewed as a precondition for the partisan model's ability to represent political diversity in political economic views (Curran, 2011; Baker, 2006). The dominance of partisan views in concentrated markets is likely to challenge the scope of diversity of views. According to Curran (2011, p.18), "this (partisanship) can have negative results when there is a high degree of media concentration and the media are lopsidedly partisan in one direction." Mainstream newspapers in Britain disagree on issues such as women's rights, union protection and war because of their different political leanings (Curran, 2011). But British mainstream newspapers, irrespective of their partisan interests and disagreement and differences on other things, agree on right wing neoliberal economic policies (Curran, 2011). Political-economic

scholars argue that such a political consensus prevails in a highly capitalist partisan media system because of the corporate capitalist structural organisation of the news media, the corporate-run news media's alignment to a global neoliberal economy and the changes of ownership patterns (Curran, 2011; McChesney, 2015).

Referring to past studies (Porto, 2003; Douai, 2009) of partisan media, it can be said that market-based explanations may not always explain fully the partisan model's ability to represent diversity and differences. Previous studies observe that multiple partisan players reflect consensus on core economic and ideological issues even in a media market such as Brazil, which has a relatively recent history of the commercial model (Porto, 2003; Waisbord, 2000). In a study of mainstream Brazilian television networks' coverage of the Landless Movement (MST), Porto (2003) shows that partisan media outlets framed the movement differently. The mainstream media of Brazil are known for their political role (Porto, 2003). There remained commonalities in multiple partisan players' news coverage of the movement; the Brazilian television network, *SBT*, associated the MST movement with violence, danger and conflict, focussing on a dramatic frame. On the other hand, another dominant network *TV Globo* presented a moral critique of the movement, stressing on its irresponsibility and irrationality (Porto, 2003). A previous study shows that there also exists political consensus in Morocco's partisan media landscape much like the Brazilian case (Douai, 2009). But the Moroccan media market with a frail economic base (Douai, 2009) remained different from the vibrant and competitive Brazilian media landscape (Porto, 2003). The Moroccan newspapers belonged to opposing political camps, representing the secular left and the Islamists (Douai, 2009). But despite their ideological divides the Moroccan partisan papers, *Al Ahdath al-Maghribiya* ('*The Moroccan Events*') and *Attajdid* ('*The Renewal*'), reflected consensus on the nation's "red line" issues such as press freedom, territorial integrity and the legitimacy of the monarchy (Douai, 2009). This indicates that the capacity of the partisan model to represent diversity of views remains challenged in different media markets such as those of Brazil, Morocco and Britain. Thus market-based explanations may not always explain fully the diversity and differences or the lack of them in the partisan model.

2.4.1.1. “Hybrid Forms” Of Professional Journalism In A Partisan System

Recent studies (Hallin & Mancini, 2012) emphasise that one must distinguish between “external pluralism or the tendency of different media to express different partisan tendencies, from the political activity of media, the tendency of media to intervene in political debate, to engage in advocacy, or to try to influence political events...” (Hallin & Mancini, 2012, p. 295). When partisan and commercial models co-exist there remains support for certain norms of professional journalism. Shoemaker and Reese’s (1996; 2012) “Hierarchy of Influences” model suggests that micro-factors such as individual journalists’ professional roles and newsroom routines intersect with macro factors such as ownership and other media organisational imperatives and extra-media influences including market and commercial interests to influence the news production. Professional journalistic norms thus can be seen as significant in news production. This remains pertinent to the democratic process in a partisan system when both models co-exist.

The partisan and commercial models are seen as differing in support for advocacy and professional journalism (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008). Professional journalism has been criticised for its inherent elite bias and for the tendency to support the political and economic status quo (Shoemaker & Reese 2012). Political-economic studies (McChesney, 2008; 2015; Curran, 2007; 2011), on the other hand, reiterate the democratic potential of the partisan model, which is seen as being driven primarily by advocacy of media players. It is argued that the partisan model supports differences of views and ideological contestation in pluralistic market conditions (Baker, 2006). Goddard, Robinson and Parry (2008), for instance, observe that there remained a diversity of opinions and views in mainstream British newspapers’ attitude to the 2003-Iraq war: These differences of views were influenced to a degree by the newspapers’ long-standing political allegiances (Goddard et al., 2008). However, even though partisan and commercial models are seen to differ there remain support for certain norms of professional journalism when both models co-exist. It has been observed that when partisan news media in different settings start functioning as commercial entities they show allegiance to professional values including forms of “impartial” journalism, usually associated with the market-driven, liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Thus it is argued that “professionalism” tends to exist in “partial” and “hybrid” forms in different media settings (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Hallin, 2008). This can be seen as pertinent to the democratic process of the partisan media system.

2.4.1.1.1. Role Of Objectivity And Advocacy Journalism

Advocacy journalism promises ideological contestation and active political engagement, which are not supported by the norms of objectivity (Curran, 2011). However, even though objective journalism has been criticised for its inherent elite bias and for shunning active political engagement, journalists' support for objectivity is also known to lead to unintended consequences in times of political crisis, provoking critical coverage of otherwise marginalised groups and issues (Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984). When leaders disagree on issues journalists consider important, the news media report the disagreements between and conflicts among them (Gans, 2010). In such times of political debates and contention in a society, objective journalism, otherwise accused for its lack of political engagement, leads to "active" reporting (Gans, 2010). Referring to American news media's coverage of the Vietnam war, Hallin (1984), for instance, observes that as "the opposition to the war expanded, moving from the political fringes of the society into its mainstream — into the electoral and legislative arenas, which lie within the sphere of legitimate controversy", "the normal procedures of objective journalism produced increasing coverage of oppositional viewpoints" (Hallin, 1984, p. 22). The scope of dissenting views in the news increases when movements enter the political mainstream from the margins and are endorsed by the legitimate political authority (Hallin, 1984; Gitlin, 1980). In a partisan system one expects oppositional views and dissenting voices to be represented by a section of the media even before dissenting views enter the domain of "legitimate controversy". But the question remains as to whether dissenting views would continue to remain out of bounds to a section of the media that remain opposed to such views due to their partisan interests.

The support for the objectivity norm varies in different social settings (Donsbach, 2010). For instance, Donsbach (2010) observes that German journalists perceive the goal of "championing particular values and ideas" as an important aspect of their work as a journalist (p. 41). Professionalism in this sense translates to the ability of journalism to exert control over its field of practice vis-a-vis external interests" (Waisbord, 2013, p. 5). This view of "professionalism" differs from the so-called Western values of objectivity, fairness and public service (Waisbord, 2013). Journalists in different global settings show allegiance to shared professional journalistic values (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Weaver, 2009) even

though the “professional” journalistic practice does not necessarily translate to adherence to the norms of objectivity (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2009).

2.4.1.1.2. Support For News Values

In the “gatekeeper” model of professional news production, journalists — as Donsbach (2010) notes in reference to scholars — “select the news according to professional standards such as news values”. On the other hand, political journalists or advocates in a partisan system are said to select news “according to its (the newspaper’s) instrumentality for the (deprived) social groups he or she supports” (Donsbach, 2010, p. 40). But professional routines such as news values can be expected to impact news production when partisan and commercial models co-exist. Professional routines such as news values are a way for commercially-run news media to predict what the audience finds “appealing and important” and cater to the perceived preference of the audience (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012). Journalists’ perceived newsworthiness relies on factors such as an event’s prominence/ importance, human interest potential, the ability to provoke conflict and controversy, unusual characteristics, timeliness and proximity (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012). The commercially-run news media are known to take a favourable view of movements because of the strategies of news production such as news values (Hackett & Carroll, 2006).

2.4.1.1.3. Watchdog Role Of The Press

The watchdog role of the press remains related to the Anglo-American tradition of professional journalism. But the model of watchdog journalism was transported to other parts of the world such as the countries of South America (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Waisbord, 2000). Deuze (2005) describes journalists’ watchdog function as an ideal type of professional role — this includes the role of “news hounds” and “active collectors and disseminators of information” (Deuze, 2005). The watchdog role is seen as essential to hold those in power as accountable to the public and thus fulfil the goal of public service. “In the Americas, a partisan form of journalism had taken root along with national liberation movements in the nineteenth century, but in the period following World War II, especially after the 1970s,

another model of investigative journalism imported from the United States supplemented — and in some cases replaced — the partisan model” (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009).

While the partisan and commercial models are seen to differ in their function of advocacy and the goal of conveying objective information, previous studies also observe that partisan media abandon their political alliances, when society is organised and active and when partisan coverage may result in the loss of audiences and advertisers (Porto, 2003). Porto (2003) observes that when opposition parties and social movements led campaigns to overthrow the military dictatorship of Brazil in 1984, the main television network *TV Globo*, which supported the regime because of an informal alliance and ignored the campaign, was eventually forced to change its attitude due to the pressure of a popular movement. Brazilian news media are known to be politically active (Porto, 2003). Referring to a case study of mainstream German newspapers’ coverage of wars in Iraq, Kosovo and Afghanistan, Bennett (2010) observes that the dailies of the country despite their differing political alliances quoted primarily official sources of the government and reflected the version of the government while covering the wars. Thus commercially-run news media’s support for professional routines such as the reliance on official sources of information can be said to affect the partisan model’s ability to present diverse voices (Bennett, 2010). Thus the relationship between the partisan model and the differences and diversity of the media system needs to be revisited in the light of professional journalistic norms.

When it comes to commercially-run news entities’ coverage of movements, Hackett and Carroll (2006), drawing from Shoemaker and Reese’s (1996) “Hierarchy of Influences” model, summarise a number of factors that encourage a sympathetic shift in commercially-run news media’s coverage of movements: News values (including the human interest, spectacle), editorial integrity (concepts of balance and fairness) (influences of journalistic routines), legitimisation/ commercial needs of media corporations, influence of alternative media, political mobilisation of large subordinate groups, market competition (consumer choice) and strategic communication efforts by advocacy groups. Thus micro factors such as professional values and routines (editorial integrity and news values) can be said to intersect with organisational (legitimisation/ commercial needs of the media) and macro factors (market competition). This thesis thus makes the proposition that professional journalistic norms would influence macro factors and influence the workings of the partisan system. This thesis raises the following research question and makes the following proposition on the basis of this discussion:

RQ1. How do partisan political interests relate to the diversity and differences in commercially-run newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests?

P1. Professional journalistic norms would influence the overall level of political diversity and differences in a media system when commercially-run newspapers are driven by partisan political interests.

2.5. Variations In A Pluralistic Setting

Theories of political economy caution that the partisan model's ability to represent diversity on key economic issues remains challenged in a highly commercialised and capitalist media setting because of the lack of plurality of the markets and less dispersed media power (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; 2011). This justifies the reason to study the interplay of the partisan and commercial models and the partisan model's democratic potential in a setting that has plurality and recent history of market-driven news media. When the media landscape has a relatively recent history of the market model, it supports additional conditions such as the presence of diverse ownership models including a party press and individually-owned dailies in a market and the tradition of advocacy-based, partisan journalism. These conditions are theoretically pertinent to the interplay of partisan and commercial interests. Existing studies of media ownership observe that profit-maximising strategies are strongly more pronounced in news media owned by media conglomerates than in a party press and individually-owned dailies (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Murdoch & Golding, 2005). Scholars observe that advocacy journalism raises support for diverse social groups, especially those perceived as "powerless" (Waisbord, 2000; 2009).

2.5.1. Impact Of Diverse Ownership Models

The political-economic analyses of media ownership observe that the presence of diverse ownership models such as political party- and individual-owned news media are less common when the media markets are highly commercialised and have a long history of the market model (McChesney, 2008; Picard, 2000). Drawing from previous studies of media ownership, it can be said that the political party- or individually-owned media would put less

emphasis on profit-maximising strategies and market-based criteria when compared with media conglomerates (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Murdock & Golding, 2005; McChesney, 2008; 2015). Thus the presence of diverse ownership models remains pertinent in the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests and in the partisan model's ability to reflect political diversity in the media system.

2.5.1.1. Impact Of Bottom-line Profit In Corporate Media Conglomerates

In political-economic views, the diversity of voices is challenged mainly by the fact that the news media function primarily as profit-seeking, economic enterprises within a capitalist economy (Mosco, 2009). Profit rather than public interest is said to take precedence when the news media are run by corporate owners and act as “significant economic actors in their own right”, being part of large diversified businesses (Murdock & Golding, 2005, p. 62). When the news media are treated solely as economic enterprises, the market-based criteria of profit-maximisation triumph over other socio-political interests such as their partisan ties (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; McChesney, 2008). The necessity to pursue profit-based goal corresponds with the decline in the level of their political participation (McManus, 2009). The “increasing size and public acceptance of media conglomerates like Disney, General Electric and Bertelsmann” and “the decline of political participation” have been described as contradictory trends of the global media landscape (McManus, 2009). Referring to the case of Polish news media, Dobek-Ostrowska (2012) observe that tabloids and entertainment-based news media, owned nationally or by foreign companies, produce politically neutral content to retain large sections of the audience in contrast to their earlier political roles. But other media in Poland maintain political ties through relationship with the ruling bloc (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012). The interests of making profits thus goes against corporate-run news media's interest to maintain political ties.

Previous studies also observe that aggravated concerns of making profits affects the public interest goal of journalism especially in the case of media conglomerates (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Picard, 2000; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012). There remain possibilities of the influence of the “corporate parent” in the editorial and conflict of interests between the editorial and other business interests of the corporate parents (Compaine, 2000). It has been observed that corporate parents are more likely to promote

their businesses through the editorial or minimise critical reporting about their corporations and stakeholders (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012). There remains the concern of corporate censorship, a form of control that is imposed from within the media favouring organisational (profit-centric) interests over journalistic and public interest principles (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). “As public companies themselves, the news media are under the same kind of pressure to create ‘shareholder value,’ by reducing costs and increasing earnings, as are other public companies. And they face numerous conflicts of interest as they grow larger and more diversified” (McChesney, 2008, p. 52). These concerns are less relevant in other non-corporate ownership models such as a party press or individually- and family-owned newspaper companies.

Newspapers in many advanced industrialised countries switched from family-owned firms to publicly owned companies in the last century (Compaine, 2000). The advantages of privately held (especially family-owned) newspapers are thus glorified over public-listed companies — it is said that private ownership extracts newspapers from the constant growth demands placed on a publicly traded company (Picard & Weezel, 2008). Tift and Jones (1999) argue that family owners are known to put commitment to journalistic integrity over the rationale of profit. For instance, the Sulzberger family, the proprietors of *The New York Times*, published the Pentagon Papers ignoring the advice of the Wall Street. It is argued that such exemplary journalistic integrity tends to be less probable in corporate businesses in absence of the conviction and journalistic integrity of family owners (Tift & Jones, 1999). Thus family ownership remains pertinent in the subject of the news media’s ability to represent political diversity. There would be interesting variations in newspapers’ interest in pursuing profits when family-owned models co-exist with corporate ownership as in the case of Indian newspapers (Jeffrey, 2000). Family businesses are still a reality in India despite the corporate ownership model of the big press: The Jain family, for instance, controls *Bennett Coleman & Company Ltd. (BCCL)*, which publishes the country’s leading English daily *The Times of India (TOI)* (Prasad, 2008; Thakurta, 2012). This further complicates the interplay of the news media’s partisan and profit-based interests in news media owned by family-run media conglomerates.

2.5.1.2. Less Concern Of Profit In Party Press And Individually-Owned Dailies

Previous studies of media ownership observe that the profit-seeking impulses of corporate-run news media, which function as economic entities within large media conglomerates, are not desirable for political diversity and plurality of views (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Murdock & Golding, 2005). But the literature of non-corporate, commercially-run news media such as party press and individually-owned, commercially-run newspapers tends to be inadequate in political-economic studies of media ownership as this theoretical approach draws primarily from the observations of highly capitalist media in Britain and the United States (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Hallin, 2000; McChesney, 2008; Murdock & Golding, 2005). Studies of media systems observe that traditional party ownership of the press has increasingly become uncommon (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). It is noted that in the post-Soviet era Russian media system, the new regional or local press that was formerly party-owned tend to be either highly commercialised or driven by informal state-business alliances (Vartanova, 2012).

It is not unusual for commercially-run news media to pursue the goal of profits (McManus, 2009). But when the news media are owned by corporate parents there remains the possibility of the intrusion of news entities' commercial interests including the dictates of advertisers into the editorial (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, McManus, 2009). The news is treated "less as a public trust and more as a commodity, simply a product for sale" (McManus, 2009, p. 219). These processes are seen as especially adverse to political diversity in the media system including the news of disadvantaged social groups (McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009). But commercially-run news media that are owned by individual proprietors or social groups such as political parties may not be driven by aggravated goal of profit since the interests of individual proprietors and the party would neutralise the goal of profits to an extent. It has been argued that individual proprietors' ideological values also influence the news media's partisan ties in many societies. The partisan news media in many non-Western societies in Asia and Latin American countries represent the views of individual publishers and journalists that are allied to specific political interests or to the government (Chakravarty & Roy, 2013; Waisbord, 2009). In McChesney's (2008; 2015) political-economic arguments, party ownership is seen as conducive for a pluralistic media environment that supports the interests of diverse social groups. McChesney (2008; 2015), referring to the partisan Socialist newspapers and labour press and their vast

readership in the United States in early 20th century, argues that leftist parties and groups in the United States ought to have their own media to serve their political constituencies and thus overcome the democratic deficits of the corporate media system.

One could argue drawing from sociological studies by Chatterjee (2008) that the impact of market-based criteria and the logic of profit would be different in non-corporate forms of capital. Chatterjee (2008) in his sociological analysis of peasant societies in India observes that the non-corporate form of capital, though not opposed to the logic of profit, is defined primarily by the logic of protecting the livelihood of those living in the units. The capital that tends to influence peasant societies has been described as non-corporate capital in contrast to the conditions of corporate capital (Chatterjee, 2008). Chakravartty and Roy (2013), in their comparative study of television news systems across Indian states, observe that “non-corporate” forms of capital tend to dominate contemporary Indian news media as opposed to the predominance of transnational corporate capital in Euro-American media systems. Drawing from McChesney’s (2008; 2015) arguments, it can be said that the presence of multiple media players, owned by diverse groups such as a political party and individuals, would be desirable for political diversity. The variation of profit-based logic and partisan causes in different ownership models thus remains pertinent in a discussion of political diversity in the media system. Based on the above discussion, this thesis raises the following research question and makes the following proposition:

RQ2. How do commercial interests affect the selected dailies’ partisan interests in different ownership models?

P2. Commercial interests would counter the partisan interests of corporate-run dailies; but would not counter the partisan interests of the individually-owned dailies and party press.

2.5.2. Impact Of Advocacy Journalism And Professional Values In A Partisan Setting

In a pluralistic partisan setting, journalists are influenced by the role of advocacy rather than the norms of objective journalism. Yet shared professional norms also influence journalists’ roles even though there remain less support for objective journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009). The co-existence of advocacy journalism and

professional norms thus potentially impacts news coverage in a partisan setting. Waisbord (2000; 2009) observes that the tradition of advocacy journalism prevails in societies where mass markets and advertising revenues remained absent in the press for much of history. The newspapers historically depended on the finances from the government or political parties in absence of mass markets of the media, which continued to support the tradition of advocacy-based, partisan journalism. However, Hallin and Mancini (2012) observe that shared professional journalistic values such as the norms of “impartial journalism” that are traditionally associated with the market-driven model of news media influence journalists increasingly find support in multiple global settings in different forms despite the centrality of commercially-run news media’s partisan interests. But previous studies of journalistic professionalism (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Weaver, 2009; Waisbord, 2009) have not adequately addressed the subject of how the intersection of advocacy journalism and shared professional norms impact news coverage.

The defence of partisan press and partisan journalism in the scholarship of political economy of communication remains linked to the criticism of the Anglo-American tradition of objective journalism (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008; 2015). It is argued that objective journalism shuns “ideological approaches” to news and remains bereft of lively political debates and conflicts (McChesney, 2008). The norms of objectivity in Anglo-American journalism explain why the news of the poor and the working class are less reported by corporate-run news media (McChesney, 2008). The outcome is “noncontroversial consumer news that delights the advertising community”, a process that upholds “the logic of a commercialized and depoliticized society” (McChesney, 2008, p. 389). Brewin (2013) observes that in the post-World War era, objectivity emerged as “a heroic narrative” in American journalism; the notion of objectivity asserted journalists’ independence from political partisanship and suggested the development of a professional ethos (p. 213). But this view was subject to the criticism of critical scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s (Brewin, 2013).

The rise of objectivity as a professional value of Anglo-American journalism coincided with the strengthening of the corporate capitalist ownership model and changes in the market with reduced competition and power in the hands of a few corporate owners (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Kaplan, 2010; McChesney, 2008). McChesney (2008) argues that so-called objective journalism in actuality serves the purpose of legitimising the ideological values of the corporate capitalist owners in the favour of the elite against the

interests of the poor. The “savvy” American publishers needed their journalism to appear “neutral and unbiased” (McChesney, 2008) Thus objective journalism fulfilled the aim of consolidating the power of corporate proprietors and advertisers (McChesney, 2008). Scholars observe that in the hyper-commercialised political climate of late 20th and early 21st centuries it is seen as beneficial for political participation if journalists take up a more activist role on behalf of democracy (Brewin, 2013). This explains political-economic scholars’ normative support for advocacy journalism (Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008). Theoretically, advocacy-based journalism is seen as more suited than objective journalism to encourage conflict between different social groups. It encourages “advocate-journalists” to speak on behalf of diverse social groups, typically those seen as lacking powerful spokespersons to argue on their behalf (Waisbord, 2009). Thus in a partisan setting advocate-journalists are expected to show support for protests, led by disadvantaged social groups.

Advocacy journalism theoretically remains opposed to the principles of “professional journalism”, the “gatekeeper model” that in traditional liberal views is guided by the ideals of objectivity, fairness and public service (Waisbord, 2009). Conveying neutral information and political advocacy are also seen as the contradictory goals of journalism (McNair, 2009). Scholars, however, also observe that “professionalism” tends to exist in “partial” and “hybrid” forms in different media settings even though the presence of professional journalistic values does not necessarily translate to objective journalism (Hallin, 2008; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2009). Individual journalists in different global settings are known to show allegiance to shared professional norms despite their role of advocacy. Deuze (2005), referring to Weaver’s (1998) cross-country survey and the interviews of journalists, says that journalists across multiple settings tend to have a common identity by virtue of being in the profession. Deuze (2005) describes the following as some of the shared values that are universally perceived as important by journalists and that tend to unite the profession: public service (being watchdogs of the government, newshounds, active collectors and disseminators of information), objectivity (being neutral, impartial and credible), autonomy, immediacy and ethical standards. In recent studies the concept of professionalism, therefore, has been reconceptualised as the ability of journalism to exert control over its field of practice vis-a-vis external interests” rather than referring specifically to the so-called Western values of objectivity, fairness and public service (Waisbord, 2013, p. 5). But previous studies of journalistic professionalism have not addressed the subject of how the co-existence of advocacy journalism and shared professional

identity of journalists impact the news coverage of movements (Donsbach, 2010; Deuze, 2005; Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2009; Weaver, 2009).

Advocacy journalism, as discussed earlier, encourages advocate-journalists to support social groups who are perceived to be lacking a powerful spokesperson (Waisbord, 2009). On the other hand, shared professional norms and routines such as journalists' reliance on official sources of the government and the dependence on news values contribute to the marginalising of dissenting views and thus disadvantage the cause of movements (Bennett, 2010; Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984; McChesney, 2015). However, shared professional values of journalists such as editorial integrity that refers to balance and fairness are also known to influence corporate-run news media's attitude to movements (Hackett & Carroll 2006). Thus the co-existence of individual journalists' advocacy-based roles and shared professional values can potentially impact their attitude and news coverage of the protests of disadvantaged groups. This thesis raises the following research question and makes the following proposition based on the above discussion:

RQ3. How do individual journalists' role of advocacy relate to their shared professional values and impact their attitude to protests?

P3. The less prevalence of objectivity would lead to advocacy-based support for anti-industrialisation protests. The tension between the norm of advocacy-based, partisan journalism and shared professional values would also impact individual journalists' support for the anti-industrialisation protests.

In this chapter I discussed how theoretical traditions such as political economy of communication differentiate between the partisan and commercial models of news media on the basis of the tradition of advocacy and professional journalism. Additional conditions such as the presence of diverse ownership models and the tradition of advocacy journalism would also cause variations in the intersection of the partisan and commercial models. I argued that the interplay of the partisan and commercial models and the partisan model's ability to represent differences should be revisited in the light of the norms of professional journalism. Based on the above discussion, this thesis raises and makes the following research questions and propositions respectively:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ. How does the interplay of partisan political and commercial interests affect the media's democratic role?

RQ1. How do partisan political interests relate to the diversity and differences in commercially-run newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests?

RQ2. How do commercial interests affect the selected dailies' partisan interests in different ownership models?

RQ3. How do individual journalists' role of advocacy relate to their shared professional values and impact their attitude to protests?

PROPOSITIONS

P1. Professional journalistic norms would influence the overall level of political diversity and differences in a media system when commercially-run newspapers are driven by partisan political interests.

P2. The impact of commercial interests would vary across different ownership models. This would lead to the differences in their attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests. Commercial interests would counter the partisan interests of corporate-run dailies; but would not counter the partisan interests of the individually-owned dailies and party press.

P3. The less prevalence of objectivity would lead to advocacy-based support for anti-industrialisation protests. The tension between the norm of advocacy-based, partisan journalism and shared professional values would also impact individual journalists' attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests.

CHAPTER THREE

KOLKATA'S PRESS: A BACKGROUND

In this chapter I justify why Kolkata's press is ideal to study the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of the news media. As compared with some of the other Indian states, Kolkata witnessed limited corporate capitalist economic development. This chapter suggests that the late development of the market model supported the tradition of partisan press in Kolkata, one of India's four major cities and the capital of the eastern state of West Bengal. The commercially-run mainstream newspapers of Kolkata are defined by their partisan interests. The fragmented nature of the newspaper market emerges from the differences of the readership and the diversity of languages and it also supports the presence of diverse ownership models such as commercially-run party press and individually-owned dailies along with family-run media conglomerates. Diverse ownership models are pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of the news media.

3.1. Recent History Of The Market Model And Partisan Press In Kolkata

3.1.1. Weak Transition To Commercial Model And Tradition Of Partisan Press

The press in India originated in Kolkata as part of elite culture and the nationalist movement against British colonial rule. The newspapers were not dependent on mass market and acted as the ideological instruments of the elite, being dependent on philanthropic business sources (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). In the pre-Independence era Kolkata's press strongly advocated political causes and reflected the dominant political currents within the nationalist movement. These political tendencies persisted even in the immediate aftermath of India's Independence from British rule in 1947. In the pre-Independence era and in the immediate aftermath of Independence, Kolkata's then-leading (and now-defunct) newspaper group, *Amritabazar Patrika* (that published the Bengali daily *Jugantar* and English *Amritabazar Patrika*) adhered to the principles of the Congress party (Dasgupta, 1984). *Anandabazar Patrika (ABP)*, the other prominent Bengali daily, expressed sentiments of Bengali nationalism (sentiments of

Bengali nationalism diverged from the Congress party's nationalist vision on some key issues) (Dasgupta, 1984). The newspapers thus represented different political currents within the Indian nationalist movement and represented the interests of the different factions of the Congress party. At the other end of the spectrum the leading English language daily *The Statesman* (one of India's oldest English language dailies) advocated British colonial interests. The Communist Party of India (CPI) also ran weeklies like *Laangol* and *Swadhinota* that helped the party consolidate a strong support base in Bengal in the post-Independence era (Ghatak & Thakurta, 2012).

In the post-Independence period the newspapers started to operate as commercial institutions and unlike earlier the sole purpose of the press was not extending the nationalist cause (Dasgupta, 1984). But the shift to the commercial model was not successful because mass market was yet to be developed (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The leading newspapers maintained political interests through informal links with political parties. For instance, a member of the Ghosh family, the owners of the *Amritabazar Patrika* group, represented the Congress party in the parliament as political leaders (Dasgupta, 1984). The bulk of funding continued to come from philanthropic business sources or public donations (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). There remained influences of the newly-formed government in the form of revenue support (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The mainstream commercially-run newspapers occasionally accommodated leftist sentiments and reported the news of radical mass movements because of the presence of middle class proprietors (Dasgupta, 1984). Kolkata's newspapers historically were owned by the educated middle-class elite (for whom the newspapers were the primary business asset) unlike India's other newspaper proprietors who primarily ran business groups with assets in non-media interests (Dasgupta, 1984). Even though leading commercially-run newspapers such as *ABP* and *Jugantar* traditionally remained opposed to left politics, they favourably reported the Communist party-led mass movements, which championed the rights and rehabilitation of refugees (from erstwhile east Pakistan and present day Bangladesh) between late 1940s and 1960s (Dasgupta, 1984).

Even though mass markets were not fully developed with advertising revenues remaining lacking, Kolkata's newspapers encouraged pro-capital economic priorities from the late 1950s onwards (Dasgupta, 1984; Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The commercially-run newspapers supported pro-business, right wing tendencies within the Congress party because of their growing commercial ambition (Dasgupta, 1984). From the 1950s onwards, Kolkata's reputed English newspaper *The Statesman*, formerly British-owned and later controlled by

prominent industrial groups, expressed affinity towards political groups because of their economic policies (Dasgupta, 1984). In the 1960s *The Statesman* showed commitment towards the principles of free enterprise and Commonwealth ties, which were similar to the philosophy of a conservative political party of the era, known as the Swatantra party (S. Datta-Ray, personal communication, 2012). In the late 1960s when a representative of the prominent industrial group Tata assumed chairmanship in *The Statesman*, he completely altered the newspaper's ownership structure and appointed as managing director CR Irani, who was then the general secretary of the West Bengal unit of Swatantra party (S. Datta-Ray, personal communication, 2012). The commercial ambitions of mainstream newspapers thus also altered the nature of mainstream newspapers' political causes.

3.1.2. Rise Of The Market-Driven Model And Political Divisiveness

Kolkata's press largely remained wedded to the politics of the Congress party and ideologically opposed the politics of the left after it started to function as commercial institutions from the 1950s (Dasgupta, 1984). But the left-aligned space expanded after the CPIM-led left front coalition acquired power in the state government in 1977 (A. Mukherjee, personal communication, 2011; Banerjee, 2007; 2011; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012;). The left front government, led by the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM), remained in power in West Bengal for more than three decades from 1977 to 2011 (Banerjee, 2007; Basu, 2007). Politics in West Bengal emerged as a space for partisan manipulation, thanks to the CPIM's strategy of using the administration to consolidate its party base in the countryside, of allowing its party bosses in the districts and villages to control daily administration and state institutions and its hegemonic grip at every level of civil society (Banerjee, 2007; 2011). Kolkata's newspaper landscape saw the launch of Bengali dailies such as *Bartaman* and *Aajkal* in the early 1980s, both medium-sized companies and run by former journalists (A. Mukherjee, personal communication, 2011; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012; WBUJ Report, 2010). This period coincided with the flourish of India's regional language press and the growth of advertising revenues (Jeffrey, 2000). Advertising became the major source of revenue; this ended the leading newspapers' dependence on funding from state sources (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). After the end of Emergency rule (when democratic and civil liberties were withheld for a few years) in

India in the mid-1970s, the Indian language press flourished along with the publishing business. This was also aided by a rise in literacy and the spread of technology (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The increase in the circulation of newspapers in the 1980s led to the increased economic and political influence of regional proprietors (Jeffrey, 2000).

After its launch in the 1980s, *Aajkal* showed stable support towards the ruling left (A. Dasgupta, personal communication, 2011; A. Mukherjee, personal communication, 2011; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012), while *Bartaman* was defined primarily by anti-establishment or anti-government character (P. Ghosal, personal communication, 2012; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012). *Bartaman*'s anti-government stance translated to uncompromising criticism of the CPIM as the party held power in the state government for over three decades (P. Ghosal, personal communication, 2012; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012). The CPIM's mouthpiece *Ganashakti (GS)* also became a daily and switched to an advertising revenue-driven model in the 1980s (A. Dutta, personal communication, 2012). *Bartaman* targeted potential readership in the districts outside of capital city Kolkata, neglected till the early 1980s by big vernacular players like *ABP* (P. Ghosal, personal communication, 2012; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012). The sustained reportage of CPIM's misrule earned the newspaper a loyal readership in the districts (P. Ghosal, personal communication, 2012; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012).

The left front coalition, after being elected to the government in West Bengal in 1977, pursued progressive leftist economic change through land reform (redistribution of land) and sharecropper registration and encouraged empowerment of the rural poor through the creation of institutions like local councils (panchayats) (Basu, 2007). Such measures earned the government a solid support base in the countryside (Basu, 2007). But the party became a part of the Indian state's neoliberal agenda since the 1980s and 1990s (Menon & Nigam, 2007). The policies of the CPIM-led government remained indistinguishable from any other political parties and the party clearly fell in line with the neoliberal reforms initiated in India since the 1990s (Menon & Nigam, 2007). There was a long period of political stability in West Bengal after the CPIM came to power in 1977. The attitude of major print media like *ABP* gradually shifted in favour of the left as the left front government was seen as being preferred by the middle class, promised stability and started to become lenient to pro-capital policies (Menon & Nigam, 2007). When the state government initiated corporate industrial reforms in 2006, *ABP*, which traditionally opposed left politics in Bengal, became an ally of the government

(Menon & Nigam, 2007). The political polarisation of West Bengal and the presence of stable political constituencies in the state encouraged the partisan stance of the newspapers. The CPIM-led state government's policies of corporate industrialisation in agricultural land led to peasants' protests in the rural areas of Singur and Nandigram in 2006 (Chatterjee, 2008; Nielsen, 2009). Different sections of Kolkata's mainstream press supported and opposed the state government because of their different political and economic interests. However, Kolkata's mainstream newspapers did not maintain fixed political identities. The Bengali daily *Sangbad Pratidin*, launched in early 1990s, for instance, maintained a pro-left stance because of the owner's affinity to a chief minister of the CPIM (S. Maitra, personal communication, 2012). But the newspaper's political loyalties shifted after a change of regime in 2011 (S. Maitra, personal communication, 2012).

3.2. Diversity Of Kolkata's Press — Fragmented Market, Multiple Players And Diverse Ownership Models

Limited Corporate Capitalist Economic Development In Kolkata

The economic regime in post-Independent India was marked by “a protectionist regime” that discouraged the entry of foreign capital and allowed the leading role of the state in sectors such as heavy industry, infrastructure and telecommunications (Chatterjee, 2008, p. 56). The priorities were poverty alleviation and state-directed economic development in the ideals of so-called Nehruvian socialism. In the early 1990s, priorities shifted to the imperatives of market, liberalisation and withdrawal of the role of the state in the economy (Nielsen, 2010). The changes in Indian economy from the 1990s onwards translated to the “dismantling of the licence regime, greater entry of foreign capital and foreign consumer goods; and the opening up of sectors such as telecommunications, transport, infrastructure, mining, banking, insurance, etc, to private capital”, “many more entrants into the capitalist class” and ascendancy of the relative power of the corporate capitalist class over that of other social groups such as the landed elite (Chatterjee, 2008, p. 56). But the process of capitalist development of Kolkata's industrial sector was delayed, compared with the rest of the country and especially with India's southern states (Nielsen, 2010). The left-leaning labour militancy was often held responsible for the flight of capital from the state and the lack of industrial development (CG, 2006). But the limited growth of Kolkata's corporate industrial

sector may also be attributable to deep-rooted reasons such as the migration of British-owned companies from the city in the post-Independence era, New Delhi's freight equalisation policy and social policies of the leftist state government (inadequate skill development of manpower) (CG, 2006).

Fragmented Market — Multiple Players, Diversity of Languages and Readership

In contrast to the survival crisis of the print media in advanced industrialised countries, newspapers in India experienced a steady growth in circulation and readership, thanks to rising literacy levels, comparatively lower levels of digital penetration and fragmentation of the media market through regional diversity (Thakurta, 2012). The Indian print media is a profitable sector that is dependent primarily on advertising-generated revenues (FICCI-KPMG Report, 2011). The prominent players in the print media are owned by different entities; most newspapers are owned by families and individuals (RNI Report, 2006-07). The print sector has been described as a highly fragmented industry comprising of 77,600 newspaper types in multiple languages and as of 2010, there were 613 pending newspaper requests for registration (FICCI-KPMG Report, 2011). According to the website *The Hoot* (a website reputed in the country as a watchdog of Indian media), over 82,000 publications were registered with Registrar of Newspapers of India (RNI) as of March 31 2011 (Thakurta, 2012b).

The newspaper market in West Bengal is fairly competitive with about 705 newspapers (reported in 2010) (of which 489 are in vernacular Bengali) published in the entire state, including 32 dailies in English, Bengali and other regional languages coming out of the capital Kolkata alone (WBUJ Report, 2010). A number of tabloids, weeklies and evening newspapers (in vernacular and other regional languages) are published in addition from the city. Kolkata also had a Chinese newspaper published till the mid-2000s (WBUJ Report, 2010). *ABP*, *Bartaman*, *Sangbad Pratidin*, *Aajkal*, *GS* and *DS* are some of the prominent Bengali dailies published from Kolkata. These dailies are owned by large and medium-sized companies (WBUJ Report, 2010) and cater to specific segments of the audience.

Presence of Diverse Ownership Models — Individuals, Family Owners and Party Press

The diversity of newspaper ownership in India results from the diversity of languages to a large extent (Jeffrey, 2000; Thakurta, 2012). In comparison to highly capitalist media markets in many advanced industrialised countries, the ownership pattern of Indian newspapers is seen as fairly diverse though forms of conglomeration have become visible since the last decade (Thakurta, 2012). In the first one or two decades after India's Independence in 1947, it proved difficult to run successful newspapers in more than one language (Jeffrey, 2000; Thakurta, 2012). The multiple language newspapers of the country were owned by different groups and individuals, which led to a diversity of owners (Jeffrey, 2000; Thakurta, 2012). Thus Kolkata's newspaper landscape accommodates diverse ownership models such as individually-owned, commercially-run dailies and a party press. The CPIM's mouthpiece *GS* became a daily and switched to the advertising revenue-based model in the 1980s (A. Dutta, personal communication, 2012) and forms part of the CPIM's national publicity network that consists of print, electronic and online media and publishing houses (Ghatak & Thakurta, 2012). The CPIM, one of India's national parties, traditionally had a stronghold in states such as West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. Bengali newspapers such as *Bartaman* and *Aajkal* are run as medium-sized companies (WBUJ Report, 2010) and owned by individual proprietors (A. Dasgupta, personal communication, 2011; A. Mukherjee, personal communication, 2011; R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011; 2012).

The large media conglomerates in Kolkata's newspaper market, such as *ABP*, did not buy out smaller players (Paul, 2012). The *ABP* group, a family-owned, diversified media conglomerate, diversified into multiple media sectors of publishing, broadcasting, mobile and Internet and started to operate as a regional media conglomerate from the late 1990s (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). In the mid-2000s, the *ABP* group drew foreign investment through a partnership with Star TV that ended in 2012 (Barman & Bhat, 2012). But the *ABP* did not buy out individually-owned, medium-sized newspapers such as *Bartaman* because they were not perceived as a threat to *ABP* (B. Chatterjee, personal communication, 2012). The owners of *Bartaman* towards the end of the last decade expressed an interest to sell the newspaper to the *ABP* group but later on withdrew the offer for emotional reasons (Paul, 2012).

In the late 1990s Kolkata's newspaper market saw the foray of big corporate-run national players such as *The Times of India (TOI)* and the *Hindustan Times (HT)* — both belonging to family-owned companies that diversified into multiple media sectors and

emerged as large media conglomerates (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). At its entry into the Kolkata's market in the late 1990s, the *TOI* expressed an interest in acquiring the renowned English language daily *The Statesman* but was unable to work out a deal (R. Jain, personal communication, 2012). Prior to launching the Bengali daily, *Ei Samay*, in Kolkata in 2012, *BCCL*, the parent company of the *TOI*, made a failed offer to buy out *Bartaman* (Paul, 2012).

Indian newspapers remain one of the most profitable sectors of Indian media (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The growing newspaper market and the steady source of advertising revenues also allow multiple players to survive in niche markets (B. Chatterjee, personal communication, 2012). The Bengali daily *Dainik Statesman (DS)*, launched in 2004, for instance was seen by the owner as a window to draw advertising revenues for the parent company — the cost of production of Bengali dailies (that tend to be thinner with lesser number of pages than English newspapers) remains much lower than that of the English newspapers (R. Jain, personal communication, 2012). Even though there remains evidence of dominance of single players in specific media markets, multiple players cater to audiences in specific language and regional markets (B. Chatterjee, personal communication, 2012; P. Dasgupta, personal communication, 2012; Thakurta, 2012). While market leader *ABP* holds a major share of the circulation of Bengali language dailies in Kolkata, other newspapers like *Bartaman* and *Aajkal* and party paper *GS* have a sizeable readership in the districts (ABC Report, 2013). Table 3.2 shows that the key readership of *Bartaman*, *Aajkal* and *GS* remained in the districts in 2013. Thus multiple Kolkata-based, Bengali language daily newspapers cater to specific segments of the readership across the entire state (ABC Report, 2013). The key readership of English language dailies remains concentrated in the urban area of Kolkata (ABC Report, 2013). The market fragmentation thus arises from the differences of language and also by the split of the readership in the city and in the districts (ABC Report, 2013). Table 3.1 shows the differences of the readership of Kolkata's newspapers in the city and the districts.

TABLE 3.1**Circulation Split (Copies) of Bengali and English Newspapers in
Kolkata and Districts in July-December 2013**

Newspapers	Kolkata	Rest of West Bengal
<i>Aajkal</i>	65,942	111,596
<i>Anandabazar Patrika</i> (<i>ABP</i>)	655,929	474,880
<i>Bartaman</i>	215,231	338,227
<i>Dainik Statesman (DS)</i>	3824	3903
<i>Ganashakti (GS)</i>	11,141	88,655
<i>Sangbad Pratidin</i>	124,061	161,385
<i>The Telegraph</i> (<i>English</i>)	328,548	51,688
<i>The Times of India</i> (<i>TOI</i>) (<i>English</i>)	302,962	13,472

Table 3.2 shows the circulation of the major mainstream newspapers of Kolkata in 2006-07. This period coincided with the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur and Nandigram. The Bengali daily *ABP*, which was part of a family-run media conglomerate, held a major share of the total circulation (RNI Report, 2006-07).

Table 3.2**Circulation of Kolkata's Newspapers in 2006-07**

Bengali dailies	Circulation (copies)
<i>ABP</i>	1,287,058
<i>Bartaman</i>	433,194
<i>GS</i>	183,468
<i>Aajkal</i>	138,436
<i>Sangbad Pratidin</i>	295,187
English dailies	Circulation (copies)
<i>The Telegraph</i>	450,416
<i>TOI</i>	315,797

Family businesses continue to be a reality in Indian newspapers even though they have become less common in highly capitalist media markets (Prasad, 2008; Thakurta, 2012). The Jain family controls BCCL; national English dailies like *The Indian Express* and *HT* are owned by the Goenka and Birla families respectively (Prasad, 2008; Thakurta, 2012). The *ABP* is owned by the Sarkar family in Kolkata, Hyderabad-based Telugu daily *Eenadu*, run by Ramoji Rao, and Hindi language daily *Dainik Bhaskar*, belonging to the Agarwals expanded into large empires owning multiple editions and also multiple media. Despite the presence of the owning families, the shares of large companies like BCCL are held by multiple shareholders including subsidiary companies and joint ventures (Thakurta, 2012c). The subsidiary companies that hold shares in *BCCL* have interests in private treaties and real estate businesses (Thakurta, 2012c). The trends of integration are also visible in the industry — most of the family-owned media conglomerates moved beyond print to invest in radio, television and the Internet (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010; Thakurta, 2012). For instance, media groups like *The Times Group*, *HT Media* and *Jagran Prakashan* diversified from print into multiple sectors like television, films, radio, outdoor, mobile and Internet (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). The *ABP* group, being owned by the Sarkar family, operates as a diversified media company that owns news channels in multiple languages apart from other media assets.

3.3. Partisan Press Model In Kolkata

As discussed earlier partisan press in this thesis partisan press refers to the news media's different political and economic interests (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). In an ideal form of partisan media system, each media outlet represented the views of a particular party in the public sphere (Hallin & Mancini, 2008), which led to political diversity in the media system. In Denmark in the early 20th century, for instance, each town had four newspapers that represented a major political party (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). Scholars of media systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2008; 2012) observe that a direct one-to-one connection between different political parties and the news media tends to be less common in partisan systems in the present day. Unlike traditional European media systems, the partisan systems in contemporary societies do not reflect left-right political cleavages (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009). The partisan news media rather advocate different political causes and economic interests, which may not necessarily reflect traditional left-right political divisions (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Thus partisan media represent different political or economic tendencies and support or oppose policies of specific administrations (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). While a partisan media system in an ideal form accommodated leftist, rightist and centrist players, in Kolkata's partisan system multiple commercially-run newspapers supported and opposed policies of the government, which led to possibilities of differences on views on a given issue in the media system.

Commercial Model In Kolkata's Press

Media ownership is seen as indicator of the commercial model in this thesis. In political-economic critiques the diversity of voices in the media system is seen to be challenged by the fact that the news media function primarily as profit-seeking, economic enterprises within a capitalist economy (McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005). It has been argued that the rise of corporate media conglomerates corresponded with a decline in the news media's political participation in a society (McManus, 2009). But when commercially-run news media are owned by diverse players such as individuals, families or political parties rather than just large corporate businesses, they are expected to put less emphasis on the market-based criteria of efficiency and profit-maximisation unlike the news media of large

corporate-run entities (Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005). Table (3.3.) below shows the intersection of the partisan and commercial models in Kolkata’s press.

TABLE 3.3.

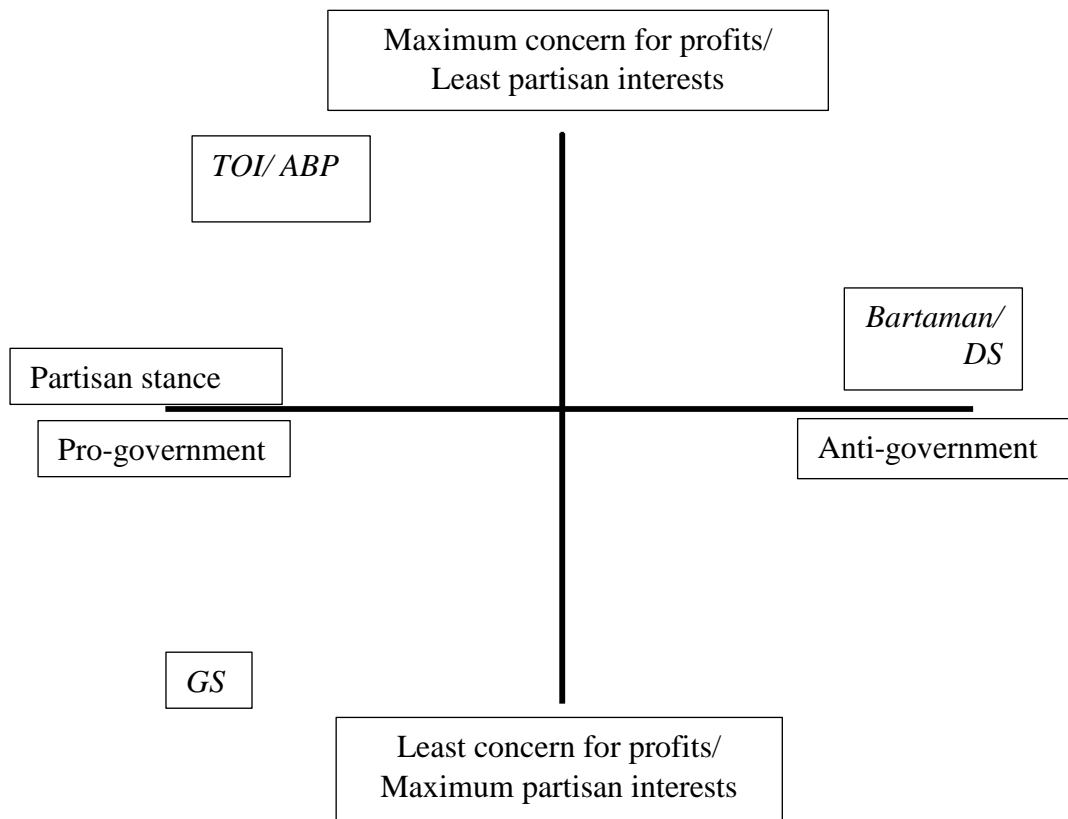
Co-existence of Partisan and Commercial Models

Partisan interests	Support for economic policies		Anti-government/ Propaganda of CPIM Anti-CPIM		
Commercial model	Part of family-run media conglomerates		Individual owners	Commercially-run party press	
Newspapers	<i>ABP</i>	<i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>	<i>GS</i>

Figure 3.1 below shows the co-existence of the partisan and commercial models in Kolkata’s press. As discussed earlier the political-economic critique of media ownership remains central to the understanding of commercial model in this thesis. The selected dailies occupy different positions in the media system based on the variations in their need to make profits versus their partisan interests. Being part of family-run media conglomerates, the *ABP* and *TOI* are expected to show more concern for making profits as compared to their partisan interests. On the other hand, the left party press, *GS*, is expected to give more importance in championing the cause of the party when compared with the need to make profits. The individually-owned, commercially-run dailies, *Bartaman* and *DS*, are expected to pursue profits as well as champion partisan causes. But their concern for profits would be less than that of dailies, run by media conglomerates, such as the *ABP* and *TOI* and more than that of party press *GS*. Despite the variations in selected dailies’ need to make profits versus their partisan interests, there still remain possibilities of a diversity of views as the commercially-run dailies remain in different ends of the political spectrum.

FIGURE 3.1

Co-Existence of Partisan and Commercial Models in Kolkata's Press



CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

The primary research methods of this thesis are thematic analysis and in-depth interviews. This chapter justifies the relevance of the qualitative thematic analysis of newspaper articles in comparing the news coverage of the selected dailies over other methods such as content analysis and framing. In-depth interviews have been chosen over quantitative methods such as survey to understand questions involving the following: the news production process, the impact of partisan and commercial interests in the news coverage and the role of journalistic professional values.

4.1. Significance Of Qualitative Research Methods In Theories of Political Economy

The choice of a specific methodology depends on the theoretical purpose and the area of enquiry (Jensen, 1991). In this case, the use of the qualitative research method is justified by the theoretical approach of political economy. Scholars describe qualitative research as “interdisciplinary, interpretive, political and theoretical” that helps “understand communication as a social and cultural practice” (Brennen, 2013, p. 6). Qualitative methodology became common in mass communication research when the scholarship of media studies moved away from its sole preoccupation with media effects research and began to draw from alternative theoretical perspectives such as political economy and critical studies from 1960s onwards (Brennen, 2013). Qualitative methods are best suited for research when communication is envisioned “as a cultural practice, through which issues of power, class and social identity could be negotiated” (Brennen, 2013, p. 6). This explains the preference for qualitative research methods in studying political economy.

On the other hand, quantitative methodology, which dominated early mass communication research, draws from scientific models of communication and aims to measure the effects of different types of communication on various groups in society through research techniques such as sampling, measurement and instrumentation (Brennen, 2013). This research evaluated the social implications of propaganda or the effects of the “agencies of mass persuasion” such as film, radio, and newspapers in American society and was often

backed by powerful institutions (Schiller, 1992). The theoretical approach of political economy criticises the capitalist control of material production (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009) and thereby critiques and contributes media effects research (Schiller, 1992). Quantitative research methods tend to be inadequate when it comes to answering “central questions regarding the role of “communication as the social production of meaning” (Brennen, 2013, p. 6). Quantitative methods focus on the “concrete, delimited *products* of the media’s meaning production” (Jensen, 1991, p. 4). Thus media contents are seen to result in “relatively unique, indivisible *experience*” through “a set of stimuli which can be manipulated *experiment*, thus producing variable effects that can be *measured*” (Jensen, 1991, p. 4).

The word “qualitative”, however, emphasises the qualities of entities and processes and meanings that cannot be experimentally examined or quantified (Kohlbacher, 2006). This research investigates the partisan model’s relationship to a diversity of voices in commercially-run, news media’s representation of movements in a milieu that is relatively less commercialised. The diversity of voices can be understood best through a qualitative approach that describes the range of debates in the milieu in the representation of a movement. Qualitative research is useful in a study of partisan media more than quantitative methods because “qualitative approaches examine meaning production as a process which is contextualized and inextricably integrated with wider social and cultural practices” (Jensen, 1991, p. 4). The socio-political context addresses issues such as the media’s relationship to political and commercial interests and the influence of social relationships, which are pertinent in understanding the partisan model in a milieu that is less commercialised. “...qualitative analysis focuses on the occurrence of its analytical objects in a particular context, as opposed to the recurrence of formally similar elements in different contexts” (Jensen, 1991, p. 4). By addressing the research problem through a qualitative methodology, this thesis seeks to expound on the socio-political context and the social practices of the partisan milieu.

4.2. Data Collection Methods — Thematic Analysis Of Newspaper Articles And Qualitative Interviews

4.2.1. Definition and Justification Of Thematic Analysis As A Methodology

This thesis studies the relationship between the partisan media model and a diversity of views as reflected in commercially-run, partisan newspapers' attitude to anti-industrialisation protests. Thus this thesis addresses the issue of whether there remains diversity of views in the media system in commercially-run, partisan newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests when the partisan and commercial models co-exist. The news coverage of the anti-industrialisation protests is studied through thematic analysis of newspaper articles. Thematic analysis primarily serves the purpose of comparing multiple commercially-run, partisan dailies' representation of the anti-industrialisation protests. Scholars (Braun & Clarke, 2006) observe that thematic analysis is a useful qualitative method in highlighting the similarities and differences of a large data set.

Research methods such as framing, widely used in both qualitative and quantitative studies of media and social movements since the 1980s (Oliver & Johnston, 2005), tend to be inadequate when it comes to comparing important features of the data set. Boykoff (2006), for instance, explores mainstream American newspapers' and television networks' representation of Global Justice Movements through predominant frames such as Violence, Disruption, Freak, Ignorance and the Amalgam of Grievances that are arrived through quantitative content analysis. But these predominant frames recurred across all the selected dailies and television networks of this study, which suggest that the mass media did not reflect different ideological positions in their attitude to the movements. Thus Boykoff (2006) observes: "Now that these analytical frames have been identified, comparative research can begin" (p. 228).

A network of themes representing the coverage of the protests in each newspaper is useful for a comparative analysis. "Thematic analyses seek to unearth the themes salient in a text at different levels, and thematic networks aim to facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes" (Stirling, 2001, p. 387). Themes are patterns that capture something about the data in relation to the research questions and represent patterned responses or meanings from within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Frame theory may be inadequate in another

way. Scholars observe that frame theory focuses primarily on the ways in which movement activists construct their “self-presentations” to draw support from other groups in social movements (Oliver & Johnston, 2005). The media frames of collective action thus entail a contest between challengers promoting an “injustice” frame and authorities promoting a “law and order” frame (Boykoff, 2006). But common media frames such as the violence and disruption (of civic life and law and order) that usually refer to the representations of protests in mass media (Boykoff, 2006) fail to address the complexity and specificity of this research.

Quantitative methods such as content analysis, while enabling researchers to count and measure the “patterns” and “wholes” of the texts, fails to describe fully the “latent contents and contexts” of the data (Kohlbacher, 2006). Thus quantitative studies of framing refer only to the recurrence of the frames rather than what this implies. Boykoff’s (2006) content analysis of American newspapers and television’s coverage of the Global Justice Movements, for instance, observes that the “Violence Frame is the most dominant of the five, as it appears in 59% of all mass-media accounts” (Boykoff, 2006, p. 224). But an analysis of the latent context and structures of the text, which are absent because of the research method, is essential for an understanding of the specific socio-political context (Kohlbacher, 2006). Compared with quantitative methods such as content analysis, thematic analysis is able to illuminate a broad range of things about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis helps identify, analyse and report themes or patterns within the data in rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis thus illuminates “unanticipated insights” and offers a “thick description” of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The “thick description of the data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006) allows thematic analysis to overcome the risk of tokenism or oversimplification of the predominant media frames.

4.2.1.1. Method Of Thematic Analysis

In this thesis each selected daily’s representation of the anti-industrialisation protests is analysed through a network of themes. The method adopts Stirling’s (2001) method of thematic network analysis in which salient themes are identified at different levels of the text (Stirling, 2001). Each daily’s attitude towards the protests is represented through a cluster of themes that bring out a range of latent meanings inherent in the text and are also related to each other. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative analytical method though it is

rarely acknowledged (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis involves core “generic” skills that define major qualitative methods and analytical traditions such as grounded theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Grounded theory, which is commonly understood to refer to theory that is grounded in data or developed directly from the data, recognises that “theory is grounded in the relationships between data and the categories into which they are coded” (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002, p. 218).

Data analysis serves three purposes: management, reduction and conceptual development of data (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). It helps make sense and meaning of qualitative data. Analysis can be described as the process of labelling and breaking down raw data to identify patterns, themes, concepts and propositions (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). The process entails coding or reconstituting pieces of data that have similar properties or links with themes or concepts (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006). Coding, which refers to identifying key points of the data that have common properties, is an essential aspect of data analysis. It involves three stages: “noticing relevant phenomena, collecting examples of those phenomena, and analysing them in order to find commonalities, patterns and structures” (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006, p. 478).

The data is analysed to identify “lowest-order premises” out of the text, which are referred to as “basic themes” (Stirling, 2001). A number of basic themes are combined to represent an abstract principle called “organising theme” (Stirling, 2001). A cluster of organising themes are combined to represent an over-arching idea or the “principal metaphors” of the text (Stirling, 2001). The basic, organising and global themes are represented as “web-like” maps or network of themes (Stirling, 2001) for a comprehensive analysis and description of each partisan daily’s representation of the protests. The network of themes represent the different levels of data.

In this study, the newspaper articles were thematically analysed through both inductive and analytic processes. As part of the inductive approach, the themes are seen as being linked to the data and identified inductively from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It has been observed that “the analytic process involves a progression from description, where the data have simply been organised to show patterns in semantic content, and summarised, to interpretation, where there is an attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns and their broader meanings and implications... often in relation to previous literature” (Braun & Clarke, p. 13). Many of the themes were found to be similar to existing literary concepts and

thus connection was established between the two. Thus in this case existing literature also informed data analysis. The analysis through this approach begins with open coding or “unrestricted” coding in which chunks of text that suggest a category are marked after reading the text carefully (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). The importance of open coding lies in the fact that chunks of data are identified as categories based on their “coherent meaning”, (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002, p. 219). Open coding helps “open up the inquiry” so that the meaning of the data can be considered on an equal basis (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002, p. 219).

4.2.1.2. Sample And Method

Background Of Case Study

In 2006 the CPIM-led left front government, having returned to parliamentary power in West Bengal with an overwhelming majority for a seventh consecutive term, introduced the policy of corporate industrialisation in agricultural land (Menon & Nigam, 2007; Nielsen, 2009). The state government’s policy of agricultural land acquisition for the project of a small car factory of one of the country’s leading industrial groups, Tata Motors, in the rural area of Singur, located close to Kolkata in the district of Hoogly, led to peasant protests in 2006 (Nielsen, 2009). Close on the heels of the Singur movement, there emerged similar protests in the rural area of Nandigram in the district of East Midnapore in early 2007 in response to rumours of land acquisition for a proposed chemical hub and industries, which was scheduled to be set up by a consortium led by an Indonesian industrial group. Though further plans of agricultural land acquisition were withheld by the state government after the protests in Nandigram, these protests eventually turned into a political turf war between the protestors and the cadres of the ruling party (Patnaik, 2007). Both movements drew the support of a wide range of political parties belonging to a wide spectrum of the opposition, leftist intellectuals, ultra-left groups and activists from India and abroad (Menon & Nigam, 2007). These protests have been characterised by eminent economists and activists as the “new wave of emergent grassroots resistance to neoliberal development and the general ills of global capitalism” (Nielsen, 2009, pp. 148-149). The public outrage, related to these protests, acted as a catalyst to the left front’s eventual loss of power in 2011 after 34 years of uninterrupted rule (Banerjee, 2011).

Sample

The newspaper articles were accessed through archival resources at the National Library in Kolkata. The articles of *ABP* and *TOI* were accessed through online archives on the respective websites. I read 750 articles including news reports, editorials and post-editorial columns spanning from May 25 2006 to November 15 2007. These articles were related to the proposed small car factory of Tata Motors of Singur and the project of chemical hub and industries, referred to as Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Singur and Nandigram and the protests opposing land acquisition related to these projects. I omitted articles that described the activities and events of main political parties such as the ruling CPIM, Congress and the Trinamul Congress (TMC). Following the sampling method in previous qualitative research of media and movements (Richards, 2007), I identified several initial codes after reading the articles for a second time: Examples of the initial codes include the state government's plans of industrialisation; the government's perspectives on industrialisation; the government and CPIM's version of protests; plans of agricultural land acquisition; objection to the acquisition of agricultural land; problems faced by protesters; violent action by the police on protestors; criticisms of the CPIM and government in relation to protests.

Codes are "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 18). Stirling (2001) notes that there are numerous ways of developing a coding framework but codes could be determined "on the basis of the theoretical interests guiding the research questions, on the basis of salient issues that arise in the text itself, or on the basis of both" (p. 390). The articles were read a few times before they were coded. I manually coded by writing notes on the text and coded for as many possible patterns and themes as possible. I stopped the process of coding after new patterns stopped emerging from the data. The coding framework was developed by identifying "passages, quotations, single words" and other expressions from chunks of text (Stirling, 2001, p. 390). On the basis of the initial codes described above, I shortlisted 200 newspaper articles for final coding. The shortlisted newspaper articles followed the below time frame.

TABLE 4.1

Time Frame for Study of News Coverage

Singur Protests	1st phase: May 24 - 30 2006: Farmers' demonstrations against government's plans of land acquisition. September – December 2006: Activists' meeting, farmers' agitation, police violence.
Nandigram Agitations	2nd phase: Jan 6 – 10 2007: Farmers' protests in response to rumours of land acquisition in Nandigram for proposed chemical hub and industries. March 15 - 21 2007: Political turf war, police atrocities against protesting farmers. November 10 – 15 2007: violence against protesting farmers.

4.2.1.2.1. Identifying And Developing Themes

Basic Themes

The themes were identified from the data set of the newspaper articles through a grounded theory approach. The key points of the data that had common properties were identified through data analysis. The codes or pieces of data that have similar properties were reconstituted to link with themes or concepts (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006). Thematic categories were identified on the basis of their “coherent meanings” through “open coding” of the text (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002). The “lowest-order premises”, identified from data set of newspaper articles, are referred to as “basic themes” (Stirling, 2001). The basic themes such as *Spontaneous*, *Reasonable*, *Displacement*, *Children of mother earth*, *Human Suffering* and *Police Atrocities* were identified, for instance, from the newspaper articles of *Bartaman* and *DS*, which remained opposed to the state government. On the other hand, basic themes such as *Insignificant*, *Farmers want industry*, *Protecting the interest of farmers*, *Change in the plight of farmers*, *Outsiders*, *Political Consensus*, *Opposed to people* and *Lack of an Alternative to land acquisition* were identified from the newspaper articles of the CPIM's party paper *GS*, and the *ABP* and *TOI*. These themes reflect the newspapers' attitude towards the protests. Table 4.2 below shows how codes with similar properties were identified from the text and combined to form basic themes such as *Displacement*.

TABLE 4.2

BASIC THEME DISPLACEMENT

<i>Basic theme: Displacement</i>	Codes
“Keeping common people completely in dark the government is about to displace them from agricultural land and homestead.... Where would we go away from our land and home? What would we eat?” (“Land given to (private) promoters (for real estate) in the name of industry”, 2006, p. 1).	<i>threat to food security; loss of socio-cultural identity; loss of livelihood; loss of fertile land; threat of unemployment</i>

The basic themes such as *Spontaneous* and *Outsiders* that were identified from the newspaper articles reflect the selected dailies’ partisan interests. The ruling CPIM’s traditional support base remained in rural areas among farmers and other agricultural workers (Basu, 2007). The basic theme, *Outsiders*, expresses the state government’s version that local farmers of Singur supported the ruling left party’s initiative of acquiring land, while the CPIM’s political opposition organised the protests. The basic theme, *Spontaneous*, on the other hand, challenges the state government’s version as it emphasises that the protests were led by farmers rather than by the political opposition and that the protesting farmers had genuine dissent against the CPIM.

Organising Themes

While basic themes such as *Spontaneous* were “lowest-order” premises that were identified from the text, a number of basic themes were combined to represent an abstract principle called “organising theme” (Stirling, 2001). Organising themes are described as a “signification” that summarises “the principal assumptions of a group of Basic Themes” (Stirling, 2001, p. 389). The following basic themes, *Spontaneous* and *Reasonable*, for instance, were combined to form the organising theme, *Fair*. When compared with basic themes such as *Spontaneous* and *Reasonable*, the organising theme, *Fair*, combines multiple ideas and represents the anti-government newspapers’ version that the anti-industrialisation protests represented local farmers’ spontaneous dissent against the government and that they had a reasonable cause. Thus the protests were fair or justified. The basic themes, *Human Suffering* and *Police Atrocities*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*. The organising theme, *Seeking Justice* reflects multiple ideas and suggests that

protesters were subjected to suffering due to land acquisition and the police-led violence and thus they sought justice.

The literature of media representation of social movements remains central to how some of the organising themes such as *Seeking Justice* were developed (Boykoff, 2006; Gamson, 1992). When it comes to sympathetic media representation of movements, the concept of “injustice” remains central to the perceived cause of the protesters. The media frames of collective action entail a contest between movement activists promoting the “injustice” frame, while authorities promoting the “law and order” frame (Boykoff, 2006). The organising theme, “*Seeking Justice*,” draws from movements’ sense of being the victims of injustice, which remains a central aspect of all movements (Gamson, 1992).

...students of social movements with different orientations emphasize a strong injustice component in the political consciousness that supports collective action. ... (they) argue that ‘a movement is inconceivable apart from a vital sense that some established practice or mode of thought is wrong and ought to be replaced... (Gamson, 1992, p. 31).

The organising theme, “*Seeking Justice*”, also allows the selected dailies to implicate the state government for causing injustice to farmers. This is because media coverage “frequently gives people to get angry at somebody”, “far from serving the social control need of authorities” (Gamson, 1992, p. 34). The organising theme, “*Seeking Justice*”, thus suggests that the protesters were represented as those seeking justice because they had been subjected to sufferings (due to the government’s policy) and to police atrocities (due to an ineffective administration). These ideas were expressed by the basic themes, *Human Sufferings* and *Police Atrocities*, which were combined to form the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*. Table 4.3 shows that the basic themes, identified from the news coverage, led to the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*.

TABLE 4.3

ORGANISING THEME SEEKING JUSTICE

Seeking Justice (organising theme)	<p>Basic themes</p> <p>Human Sufferings</p> <p>“People are bursting in sadness and anger having lost their loved ones... The relatives of the missing people asked... Did you see him/ her? H/She was with you... Miss Kabita cried and said, we were all in the movement. The police started firing teargas and bullets. I lost consciousness... Our house was burnt” (Mallik, 2007, p. 1).</p> <hr/> <p>Police Atrocities</p> <p>“The attitude of (chief minister) Mr Buddha’s government and the CPIM in the land-grab expedition reeked of violence. The extreme indifference towards counter views, the attack on democratic protests with the police and the cadre are different faces of violence...” (Sanyal, 2007, p. 6).</p>
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The organising theme, *Politicised*, shows that anti-government dailies such as *Bartaman* and *DS* challenged the state government’s strategy to “depoliticise the issue” of land acquisition for industry (Nielsen, 2009). The organising theme, *Politicised*, emphasises that land acquisition for industrialisation was politically significant because it displaced the protesting farmers from their land and livelihood. The farmers had an emotional connect to land and agriculture. Patnaik (2007) observes that in many developing economies such as China and India neoliberal reforms entailed the process of corporate industrial development that prioritises the interests of the elite, adding to the deprivation of the poor (Patnaik, 2007). Thus the loss of land has a larger political significance because industrial projects in agricultural land trigger “destructive effects upon the surrounding population, including especially on the peasantry that faces dispossession” (Patnaik, 2007, p. 1894). The organising theme, *Politicised*, was formed by combining basic themes such as *Displacement* and *Children of mother earth*. Table 4.4 shows how these basic themes, identified from the news coverage, led to the organising theme, *Politicised*.

TABLE 4.4

ORGANISING THEME POLITICISED

Organising theme	Examples of Basic themes	Codes
Politicised	Displacement “... Singur meets the big city’s daily needs of vegetables... so many farmers, land labourers depend on this. To serve whose interest has this divine order of sacrifice of such a land been given?” (Hossain, 2006, p. 6).	<i>threat to food security; loss of socio-cultural identity; loss of livelihood; loss of fertile land; threat of unemployment</i>
	Children of mother earth ‘To all of them land is like a mother. That’s why they think that giving away land for industry is akin to killing one’s own mother... Land is our mother. We have to protect the mother who looks after her children...’ (Saha, 2006a, p. 1).	<i>emotional connect to land; land belonged to farmers for generations; strong resolve to protect land</i>

On the other hand, the organising theme, *Omission*, shows that commercially-run newspapers, the *ABP*, *TOI* and the party press *GS* excluded the news of the protests by reporting that there were no oppositional protests against the proposed corporate industrial projects. I referred to the concept of “exclusion”, developed by Da Silva and Rothman (2011), to conceptualise the organising theme, “*Omission*”. In their study of local Brazilian press’ coverage of protests against people’s displacement due to a hydroelectric dam in the south-eastern region of Minas Gerais, Da Silva and Rothman (2011) observed that media representations either “include” or “exclude” social actors:

Exclusions can be characterised by ‘concealment’, when the social actors are not cited, although it is known who they are; or ‘suppression’, when they are completely excluded through the omission of any signs of actions, activities or categories (of people) (p. 739).

In this case study the anti-industrialisation protests challenged the government’s economic policy of acquiring agricultural land for corporate industrial projects. Da Silva and Rothman (2011) say that “when social movements oppose state policy, the media are prone to excluding or labelling them” (p. 736). The organising theme, *Omission*, shows that a section of the selected dailies, the *ABP*, *TOI* and party press *GS*, “omitted” or excluded the

news of the protesting farmers as they emphasised that there were no protests or there were merely just insignificant incidents because farmers wanted industrialisation (and thus supported the government policy by selling their lands in exchange of monetary compensation) for a positive change in their lifestyles and that the state government protected the interest of the farmers. The following basic themes such as *Insignificant*, *Farmers want industry*, *Protecting the interest of farmers* and *Change in the plight of farmers* express these ideas and were combined to the organising theme, “*Omission*”. Table 4.5 shows that the basic themes, identified from the news coverage, led to the organising theme, *Omission*.

TABLE 4.5
ORGANISING THEME OMISSION

Organising theme	Basic themes (Examples)	Codes
Omission (of news of protests)	<p>Protests As Insignificant “In fact, the administration is not too concerned about the day’s ‘opposition and clash’.... He (a senior member of the ministry) said, ‘There would be some reaction during the handover of so much land’” (“The administration progresses with work in Singur by managing dissent”, 2006, p. 1).</p>	<p><i>government facing minor obstacles in acquiring land; such events not unusual during social change; happened in the past</i></p>
	<p>Farmers want industry “Singur’s BDO (block development office) workers didn’t even imagine that so many would come to collect compensation cheques... The Trinamul (TMC) leader would get a rude shock’ (“Strike faces stumbling block at the heart of Singur, 60 farmers sell land”, 2006, p. 1).</p>	<p><i>farmers selling land, collecting compensation; farmers’ consent to land acquisition and industry; lack of profit in agriculture, farmers’ interest in industrial labour; political opposition preventing farmers from selling their lands</i></p>
	<p>Protecting the interest of farmers “Exactly when Mamata Banerjee (the CPIM’s main political opposition and TMC party leader) led the opposition in Singur, (chief minister) Mr. Buddha met with the head of Tata group to ensure alternative livelihood for farmers losing land’ (Ghosal, 2006a, p. 1).</p>	<p><i>government will protect agriculture; provide alternative livelihood to farmers; employment opportunities</i></p>

Change in the plight of farmers

“Yesterday he was a land-loser.
Today he is a bike-owner...
Especially those who are buying
motorbikes now. Their pockets are
full, thanks to the land acquisition in
Singur” (Chakraborty & Banerjee,
2006, p. 2, p. 2).

*positive changes in lifestyles of
farmers; better civic facilities,
social condition; better
economic condition*

The organising theme, *Depoliticised*, was formed by combining the basic themes, *Outsiders*, and *Political Consensus*, that were identified in the articles of the *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS*. The organising theme, *Depoliticised*, represents a higher level concept, when compared with basic themes identified from the text. The concept *Depoliticised*, is developed from Nielsen’s (2009) analysis of the left front government’s strategy to challenge the protests of Singur. According to the state government’s version, the protests were not a significant political issue. This is because the protests were seen as being organised not by local farmers, who were the CPIM’s traditional support base. The left front said that city-based intellectuals and the CPIM’s political opposition, those “outsiders” to agricultural land, led the movement. The basic theme, *Outsiders*, expresses the state government’s version that the protesters were linked to the CPIM’s political opposition and not with local farmers. Nielsen (2009) observes that the protests of Singur drew the support of the ruling left front government’s main political opposition, the Trinamul Congress party (TMC) right from the infancy. While the opposition party supported the farmers in their protests against the government’s policy, the TMC did not oppose “the idea of generating social development through capitalist industrial growth” (Nielsen, 2010, p. 149). The left front emphasised on this point to challenge the political opposition that was seen as being linked to the protests: That the CPIM’s political opposition that organised anti-industrialisation protests agreed on the necessity of corporate industrialisation, yet they opposed the CPIM’s industrialisation initiatives for narrow political gains (Nielsen, 2009). The inter-basic themes, *Outsiders* (the protests as being linked to the opposition) and *Political Consensus* (of the opposition on the necessity of industrialisation), express these ideas. Tables 4.6. shows that the inter-related basic themes, *Outsiders* and *Political Consensus*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Depoliticised*.

TABLE 4.6

ORGANISING THEME DEPOLITICISED

Organising theme:	Basic themes
Political Consensus	Outsiders
	<p>“According to him (land and land reforms minister Rezzak Mollah), ‘...Outsiders would create obstacles even if local people don’t object’” (“Singur farmers will not be allowed to construct houses if they oppose”, 2006, p. 1).</p>
	Political Consensus
	<p>“Not a single person could be found who said that industrialisation should not happen. In fact even the apparently united opposition and political leaders of different colours didn’t utter these words. But the political opposition organised four strikes on the Singur issue...” (Saha, 2007, p. 6).</p>

The basic themes in this thesis aim to express the commercially-run dailies’ partisan interests. As discussed earlier common media frames such as violence and disruption (of civic life and law and order) or the “deviance frame (in which the media routinely represent movement activists as deviant or unrepresentative of the values, opinions, passions and practices of the larger society) do not fully capture the ideas of the newspaper articles in this case study (Boykoff, 2006; Gitlin, 1980). For instance, the violence and disruption (of civic life and law and order) frames are typically used by the media to disparage movements (Boykoff, 2006). But in this case study the theme of law and order, as expressed by the basic theme *Police Atrocities*, shows the selected dailies’ strategy to implicate the state government rather than the protesters. Therefore, I referred to sociological studies of social movements and neoliberal development to formulate organising themes such as *Anti-Development* (Escobar, 2012; Nielsen, 2009; Porta & Diani, 2006).

The Tata motor car factory project in Singur’s agricultural land was taken up as part of a government-initiated drive to “re-industrialise” West Bengal, which lagged behind industrial development as compared with the rest of India (Nielsen, 2009). The Tata factory was expected to change the face of Bengal’s economy and “set in motion the . . . wheels of industrial progress in the state” (Nielsen, 2009, p. 456). The selected dailies, based on their partisan interests, supported and opposed the government’s policy. The basic theme, *Opposed to People*, expresses the state government’s version that the opposition-backed protesters

affected the collective interest of the state and its people by disrupting industrialisation. The basic theme, *Lack of an alternative*, narrates the state government's critique that while the protesters opposed industrialisation they failed to offer an alternative model of development. Escobar (2012) says that United States at the end of the Second World War generated a consensus on the necessity of high levels of industrialisation, urbanisation, better living standards and mass adoption of modern education that was projected as the only path of development in less economically accomplished parts of the world (Escobar, 2012). Porta and Diani (2006) observe that the phrase "TINA (There Is No Alternative)" express an ideology that development would not be possible without a market economy and neoliberal reforms. The organising theme, "Anti-development", formed by combining the basic themes *Opposed to People* and *Lack of an alternative*, and conceptualised from Escobar (2012) and Porta and Diani's (2006) critique of neoliberal economic development, express these ideas.

Global Themes

A set of organising themes, in the next stage, were combined to form a global theme — global themes help understand "what the texts as a whole are about within the context of a given analysis" (Stirling, 2001, p. 389). A cluster of organising themes, when combined, represent an over-arching idea or the "principal metaphors" of the text, referred to as the global theme (Stirling, 2001). Global themes can also be described as "a summary of the main themes and a revealing interpretation of the texts" (Stirling, 2001, p. 389). To express the attitude of *DS* towards the anti-industrialisation protests, for instance, I referred to the global theme "legitimate". A global theme represents as "an argument, or a position or an assertion" (Stirling, 2001, p. 389). The three organising themes — *Fair*, *Politicised* and *Seeking Justice* — were combined to form the global theme, *Legitimate*. The global theme, *Legitimate*, suggests that anti-industrialisation protests were fair and just, politically significant and represented protesting farmers' demand for justice.

The global theme, *Legitimate*, has been conceptualised, based on discussions of the "legitimising" media frame in previous studies of media and movements (Gitlin, 1980; Harlow & Johnson, 2011). Gitlin (1980) distinguishes between media representations of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" forms of protest. The "illegitimate" frame highlights movements' deviant behaviour and marginalises the protests, obfuscates the underlying causes of movements and thus "discredits" them (Gitlin, 1980; Harlow & Johnson, 2011).

The “legitimising frame”, on the other hand, fosters support for protests and gives credibility by focusing on movements’ ideals and actions (as represented in this thesis by the organising themes, *Fair* and *Politicised*) and by assigning blame and emphasising moral outrage (as represented by the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*) (Harlow & Johnson, 2011).

On the other hand, the other global theme, *Discredited*, reflects the party press, *GS* and the *ABP* and *TOI*’s opposition towards the protests. A cluster of organising themes, *Omission*, *Depoliticised* and *Anti-development*, were combined to form the global theme, *Discredited*. Nilesen (2009) refers to the “strategy of discreditation” to describe how the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur were represented in the narratives of the left front government. The left front discredited the movement by emphasising that it was engineered by the CPIM’s political enemies to disrupt development in the state. The sociological concept of the “strategy of discreditation” (Nielsen, 2009) inspires the idea of the global theme, *Discredited*. “It (the left front) also sought to depoliticise the issue by maintaining that land acquisition for industrialisation was essentially not a political matter but one of providing employment to thousands through rapid industrialisation. It accordingly pursued what sociologist T.K. Oomen has called a strategy of discreditation” (Nielsen, 2009, p. 456).

The basic, organising and global themes are represented as “web-like” maps or network of themes (Stirling, 2001) for a comprehensive analysis and description of each partisan daily’s representation of the protests. The groupings of global themes constitute thematic networks on the subject of anti-industrialisation protests. Thus a diverse set of ideas remains inherent in each thematic category (organising and global themes) and consequently in the thematic networks (groups of global themes), which explain the strength of thematic analysis as a methodology.

Role As A Single Researcher

The method of thematic analysis presupposes a rather “active role” of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While a single researcher or more than one researcher can conduct thematic analysis, the researcher is expected to make her epistemological and other assumptions explicit for a “theoretically and methodologically sound” process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). But a single researcher’s subjectivity and values remain inherent to the qualitative method like thematic analysis. Unlike quantitative research methods, a qualitative enquiry like thematic analysis would not exclude the influence of the researcher’s subjective values.

Rather the researchers' subjectivity is perceived as essential to the research process (Brennen, 2013). This is because theoretical approaches such as Critical Theories that often draw upon qualitative methods to answer their research questions "believe in multiple interpretations" of truth and "envision many constructed and competing notions of reality" (Brennen, 2013, p. 10). Thus the researcher's subjective values and ethical considerations remain pertinent to the research process. On the other hand, quantitative methods such as content analysis emphasise the role of multiple researchers and on inter-coder reliability because researchers are seen as neutral observers who are expected to "test, verify, falsify or reject their research hypotheses" (Brennen, 2013, p. 9). Quantitative methodology is inspired by positivist and post-positivist views that believe in a singular understanding of truth and in the notion of a unified reality (Brennen, 2013). This explains why quantitative methods focus on the role of researchers as neutral observers. But the researcher's subjective interpretation of realities remains central to qualitative research, which justifies the role of a single researcher in a quantitative study.

4.2.2. Significance Of Qualitative Interviews As A Methodology

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews complemented thematic analysis in this thesis. Qualitative interviews serve the purpose of studying how commercially-run newspapers' partisan and profit-based strategies influenced the news production process and the key editorial decisions in the selected dailies. Qualitative interviews were also preferred over other methods such as survey to study how journalists' negotiate with advocacy-based roles and other values of professional journalism while reporting social movements. Interviews were also used to address the impact of journalists' unionisation in their professional autonomy. Interviews enable the researcher to learn things that cannot otherwise be observed directly (Lindolf, 1995). The qualitative interview is significant in the research of communication and other disciplines of social sciences because this methodology encourages social actors to offer explanations of their behaviour (Lindolf, 1995). Qualitative, in-depth interviews enable informal interaction between the researcher and her subjects. The researcher has the scope to develop a relationship with the participants over a period of time. The face-to-face nature of the communication and the open-ended questions allow respondents to share their views on the subject of the research and also cover relevant issues that may not have been covered by the questionnaire. Thus in-depth interviews helped overcome the tendency "to unilaterally define problems, to determine methods of inquiry, and

to interpret findings” (Taylor & Trujillo, 2001, p. 171). Respondent interview has also been used as an effective stand-alone procedure rather than integrating with other data-gathering techniques (Lindolf, 1995). “... the respondent interview elicits open-ended responses to a series of directive questions” (Lindolf, 1995, p. 171).

Sample Of Interviewees

I conducted 38 in-depth interviews with journalists, the senior editorial staff in decision-making positions and former journalists. This sample included 30 journalists and senior editorial management staff who worked with the selected dailies at the time of the anti-industrialisation protests in Singur and Nandigram in 2006 and 2007. The rest of the interviewees were senior former journalists, print and television journalists and senior editorial staff who worked with Kolkata’s different news media outlets, trade union members and advertising and marketing directors of Kolkata’s newspapers. The print and television journalists’ who worked with Kolkata’s different news media were interviewed for an overall understanding of the nature of journalistic professionalism in Kolkata. Their responses were compared with those of the journalists of the selected dailies to understand the general influence of advocacy journalism in the society versus the commitment to professional values. The former journalists and advertising and marketing directors were interviewed for a knowledge of the background of Kolkata’s press including the history, partisan tradition and the nature of the market. The literature of Kolkata’s press remains inadequate. The interviewees have been identified and the purpose of the interviews are stated in the form of a table, attached as an appendix (Appendix A).

Journalists And Senior Editorial Management

I interviewed journalists, senior editorial staff and editors to understand how the selected dailies’ political interests, business interests, owners’ and management policies, advertisers’ interests and journalistic roles impacted the news production process. I interviewed primarily journalists who reported the anti-industrialisation protests in Singur and Nandigram for the selected dailies for an understanding of the news coverage. The names of the journalists were identified through by-line of the news reports. The journalists interviewed held designations such as reporter, senior reporter, special correspondent and staff correspondent as full-time

staff with the newspapers. Their years of experience varied from 7 to 30 years. The same journalists were interviewed for an understanding of the news coverage and their professional roles. Journalists and senior editorial management staff were interviewed for an understanding of the news production process and the impact of ownership. The managing editor with *The Statesman*, the editor with *DS*, chief of news bureau, political editor and the resident editor with the Kolkata edition of *TOI*, chief reporter and news editor with *ABP* and the news editor and associate news editor with *GS* represented the senior editorial staff in the sample of interviewees. The journalists who worked with the selected dailies during the protests in 2006 and 2007 were interviewed for an understanding of the news coverage of the protests, processes of news production in the selected dailies and also their professional roles. In addition to the interviewees who worked with the selected dailies, I also interviewed three journalists with leading Kolkata-based newspapers such as *The Telegraph* and *Hindustan Times* and television journalists with prominent news channels in Kolkata for an overall understanding of journalists' professional roles in Kolkata.

In addition to the working journalists I also interviewed two senior former journalists who worked with *The Statesman* newspaper in the 1960s, the proprietor-editor and a veteran senior journalist with Bengali newspaper *Aajkal* and the former and current advertising and marketing directors with *ABP* and *Aajkal*. These interviews were conducted for an understanding of the history of Kolkata's press and the newspaper market. Existing literature on the history and the market of Kolkata's newspapers was not adequate, so primary data was essential for background information. Different questionnaires were used to interview the different groups of interviewees in the sample set.

Understanding Journalistic Professionalism — Questions

I interviewed journalists with the selected dailies to understand the newspapers' partisan interests, the influences on the news production process and professional journalistic roles. As discussed earlier print and television journalists of other media houses were also interviewed for an overall understanding of the nature of journalistic professionalism in Kolkata. I conducted informal, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with both journalists of the selected dailies and other media houses. The questions were open-ended in nature. There were different interview questions for journalists with the selected dailies and those who worked with other publications and the television channels. The journalists with the selected

dailies were asked questions on the news production process, the influence of the proprietor, the editor and the marketing team in the editorial and their professional journalistic roles. But journalists of other publications and television channels were questioned specifically on professional roles and values. The first few questions of the interview for both groups (journalists with the selected dailies and those with other publications and media houses) dealt with the interviewees' personal, educational and professional backgrounds. The initial round of personal and professional questions gave the researcher the opportunity to develop an informal, personal rapport with the interviewees, which was essential to raise questions on desired professional values and the news production process. Then the interviewees were asked to elaborate on the values that were seen as desirable for the best practice of journalism in Kolkata. They were also asked if they had the freedom to report subjects of their choice to understand the nature of professional autonomy. The final questions addressed the issues of the selected dailies' editorial policy on the issue of the anti-industrialisation protests, the reasons why such an editorial policy was adopted, the extent to which they agreed professionally and ideologically with the editorial policy and the impact of the editorial policy in their news coverage of the protests. The senior editorial management was also asked the same questions on editorial policy and professional practice as well as questions on the selected dailies' business and commercial motivations.

The interview questions for understanding journalistic professionalism were developed based on research by Beam, Weaver and Brownlee (2009), Deuze (2005) and Weaver (2009). The subject of journalistic professionalism was approached in relation to the ideas of objectivity (being neutral, impartial and credible), autonomy (autonomy in newsrooms in editorial matters, immediacy and ethical standards), public service (being watchdogs of the government, newshounds, active collectors and disseminators of information), immediacy and ethical standards (Deuze, 2005). The values associated with the ideal type of professional roles such as public service (watchdog role, active collectors and disseminators of information), objectivity (impartiality, neutrality), autonomy (freedom and independence of reporting) and immediacy (speed in reporting and publishing news) have been identified by Deuze (2005). The interview questions aimed to understand the extent to which these values were seen desirable by Kolkata's journalists and the impact of these values in the news coverage of the protests. Please see *Appendix B* for some sample questions. I also interviewed advertising and marketing directors and former journalists for an

understanding of the background of Kolkata's press. The interview questions in these cases were specific to Kolkata's political and social history and the nature of the newspaper market.

Analysis of Qualitative Interviews

The transcripts of the qualitative interviews were analysed through a grounded theory approach as well as on the basis of themes, which were identified from previous studies of professional journalism (Beam, et al., 2009; Deuze, 2005; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012; Weaver, 2009). Grounded theory, as described above, refers to theory that is grounded in data or developed directly from the data. Linkages were established between the data and the categories into which they are coded (Lindolf & Taylor, 2002, p. 218). The process entailed coding or reconstituting pieces of data that have similar properties or links with themes or concepts (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006). The data was coded by "noticing relevant phenomena, collecting examples of those phenomena, and analysing them in order to find commonalities, patterns and structures" (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006, p. 478).

The interview transcripts were organised into different subjects such as the editorial policy, the influences on news production and journalistic professionalism. Different coding frameworks were developed for each subject. The following themes were developed, drawing from previous studies of professionalism values: Conveying information, credibility, activist role, and the government watchdog role (Beam et al.; Deuze, 2005). The theme of activism journalism was developed, based on Waisbord's (2009) conceptualisation that refers to activist-journalists' necessity to argue on behalf of those perceived as lacking a powerless spokesperson. The transcripts were read several times to identify categories and patterns. These themes were used to analyse the portions of text, categorised under the subject of professional roles. The chunks of the data that suggested a category were marked and the categories were constantly compared with each other. Significant relationship was established between the raw data or interview transcripts and the theoretical concepts, which in this case were based on the studies of professional journalism (Hayhow & Stewart, 2006). The following codes, for instance, were identified from the interview transcripts — *journalists getting involved with their subjects or protesters, journalists' need to take a stand on an issue, the journalists' personal concern for their subjects*. The following examples of the text illustrate how some of the above-mentioned codes, identified from the interview transcripts, were linked to the theoretical concept of activism journalism:

I believe in involving myself with the news and the issue... My concern is for people who are suffering (S. Mitra, personal communication, 2012).

I narrated the farmers' version. If you think this means talking on the behalf of farmers then I did that... If you see people's suffering at a place again and again, then it's only natural to get involved (T. Mallik, personal communication, 2012).

The following codes, identified from the text, for instance, were combined and linked to the theoretical concept of disseminating information — *importance of reportage irrespective of the dailies' partisan stance; suppression of information as not desirable.*

Whether or not we play up an issue depends on whether it is important to us. But the reportage and information would always be there... (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

We will not suppress news. We have covered the news of Mamata Banerjee (the leader of the CPIM's main political opposition party that supported the protests) even though we were against the protests (H. Banerjee, personal communication).

The interview transcripts, which were organised under the subjects of the editorial policy and the influences on news production, were also analysed through a grounded theory approach. The codes such as *industrialisation happening for the first time in Bengal, change in the policy of the left party in Bengal, the image of the police beating the protesters*, identified from the text, for instance, were linked to theoretical concepts such as the unusual phenomenon, novelty of the phenomenon and drama or spectacle. These theoretical concepts contribute to the professional routine of news values. The following examples illustrate some of the above-mentioned codes that were linked to the theoretical concept of news values.

There was an upbeat feeling about industry coming to Bengal and (chief minister) Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee doing what the Communists didn't do (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The drama was high in Nandigram... there were spontaneous outbursts, people digging up roads and there was violence on protesters (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

The typologies of existing literature could not adequately address all the patterns and themes that emerged from the data. The codes such as *ideological values of the proprietor*, *the importance of economic policy versus party politics*, *the tendency to not publish information that was against the editorial policy* led to sub-themes such as the role of partisan interests in news coverage. These sub-themes contributed to the understanding of the influences on news production.

We were not so much into supporting the left or anti-left. We were supporting a certain industrial policy. Since the left executed the industrial policy, we supported the left. Our editor says... he believes in the American neoliberal policy (P. Acharya, personal communication, 2012).

It was the policy of the newspaper to support industrialisation... Our editor declared our policy during our celebration of 75 years... The target was not to focus on whatever was perceived as against industry (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

4.3. Determining Partisan And Commercial Interests Of Selected Dailies

Drawing from Waisbord's (2000) analysis, the concept of partisan press in this thesis refers to "publications that defend political or economic interests (not necessarily represented by party organizations)" (Waisbord, 2000, p. 21). Scholars observe (Hallin & Mancini, 2008; 2012) that traditional partisan systems of Northern Europe where each media outlet reflected the views of a major political party is less common in most parts of the world. Thus Waisbord's (2000) theoretical framework remains useful in this thesis to conceptualise the model of partisan press in this thesis. The dailies have been selected for comparison on the basis of this theoretical framework. The news media's ownership models were a criteria to compare their commercial interests. The newspapers' partisan and commercial interests are the key variables on the basis of which the following dailies were selected for comparison.

TABLE 4.7

Co-existence of Partisan and Commercial Models

Partisan interests	Support for economic policies	Anti-government/ Anti-CPIM	Propaganda of CPIM
Commercial model	Part of family-run media conglomerates	Individual owners	Commercially-run party press
Newspapers	<i>ABP</i> <i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i> <i>GS</i>

To understand the newspapers' ownership models and information of owners, I relied on existing literature, annual reports published by the Registrar of Newspapers of India (RNI) (titled as *Press in India*) of the years 2006-07 and a report published by the Wage Board Committee, West Bengal Union of Journalists of Kolkata (WBUJ) in 2010. The WBUJ report shared details of the organisation structure of large, medium and small sized newspapers in Kolkata as part of the documents submitted to the Supreme Court of India in their legal fight for structured pay. I also referred to the website *The Hoot*, known to be a watchdog and resource point for information of the Indian media for details of the ownership structure. The findings in the next chapter answer the four research questions. The selected dailies are differentiated by their partisan interests. Therefore the newspapers have not been analysed collectively because collective analysis of the selected dailies defeats the central purpose of this study, which is to determine the diversity and differences of the partisan system. The newspapers are discussed as separate case studies under each partisan and commercial model, as identified in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS

This thesis studies investigates the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests through a case study of newspapers' coverage of anti-industrialisation protests in the East Indian city of Kolkata. The newspaper landscape of Kolkata has multiple commercially-run, partisan players and a relatively recent history of corporate capitalist economy and market-driven news media, providing a backdrop to address the question.

Overall, this study found the following. First, there remained differences between commercially-run and partisan newspapers' responses to the anti-industrialisation protests. The *ABP* and *TOI*, like the ruling Left party's mouthpiece *GS*, opposed the protests because of their support for the state government's economic policy. *Bartaman* and *DS*, which were driven by anti-government sentiments, advocated the interests of anti-industrialisation protests. Second, a section of commercially-run newspapers, the *ABP* and *TOI*'s, attitude to the protests shifted from indifference to support. This blurred the differences between the commercially-run newspapers, which had different partisan interests. Third, professional journalistic norms such as news values, the necessity to convey information and commercial or credibility reasons caused a shift in the *ABP* and *TOI*'s partisan interests and changed their attitude to the protests. Fourth, partisan interests overrode the goal of bottom-line profit of a daily such as the *ABP* even though it was owned by a family-run, media conglomerate. Fifth, partisan interests also beat the goal of profit of individually-owned, commercial dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) and the commercially-run, party press (*GS*). But the partisan interests of the selected dailies failed to lead to permanent differences in the partisan system. Sixth, individual journalists remained committed to shared professional values such as the necessity to convey information despite their advocacy-based roles. Both advocacy and the necessity to share information increased support for the anti-industrialisation protests in Kolkata's media system.

Research Questions And Their Findings

This thesis raised the following research question (RQ1.) to investigate how the partisan interests of commercially-run newspapers led to differences in the news coverage and proposed that there would be an influence of the norms of professional news production. This thesis made the proposition (P1) that norms of professional journalism would influence the differences of the partisan system.

RQ1. How do partisan political interests relate to the diversity and differences in the coverage of anti-industrialisation protests?

P1. Support for Professional Journalism in Commercially-run, Partisan Dailies, Professional Journalism Influences Differences of Partisan System

5.1. Partisan Interests And Professional Journalistic Norms In A Partisan System

There remain differences in the portrayal of movements in the media system with both sympathetic representation and opposition by different sections of the news media because of their partisan political interests (Gitlin, 2013). But commercially-run news media will abandon their partisan alliances and interests when society is organised in a manner independent of those alliances and interests (Porto, 2003). This thesis made a proposition that the norms of professional journalism would influence the partisan interests of commercially-run newspapers and influence the diversity. The findings of this thesis confirm this. This study found that while there remained differences in Kolkata's partisan setting in commercially-run newspapers' attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests, these differences were blurred as one section of the commercially-run dailies' attitude to the protests changed because of professional journalistic norms.

5.1.1. Themes Of Support And Opposition To Anti-Industrialisation Protests

The anti-government and anti-CPIM dailies, *Bartaman* and *DS*, championed the cause of the anti-industrialisation protests. On the other hand, *ABP* and *TOI*, which were supportive of the

state government's pro-capital economic priorities, and the left party daily *GS* opposed the anti-industrialisation protests. Thus there remained differences in Kolkata's commercially-run newspapers' responses towards the protests. A list of themes, as identified from the news coverage, is discussed below for a comprehensive understanding of the newspapers' attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests in Singur and Nandigram. As discussed earlier in Chapter 4, the themes of the newspaper articles, identified through a qualitative thematic analysis, reflect the similarities and differences of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes of the newspaper articles represent the differences in commercially-run, partisan newspapers' attitudes towards the anti-industrialisation protests.

5.1.1.1. Themes Of Opposition To Anti-Industrialisation Protests In ABP, TOI And GS

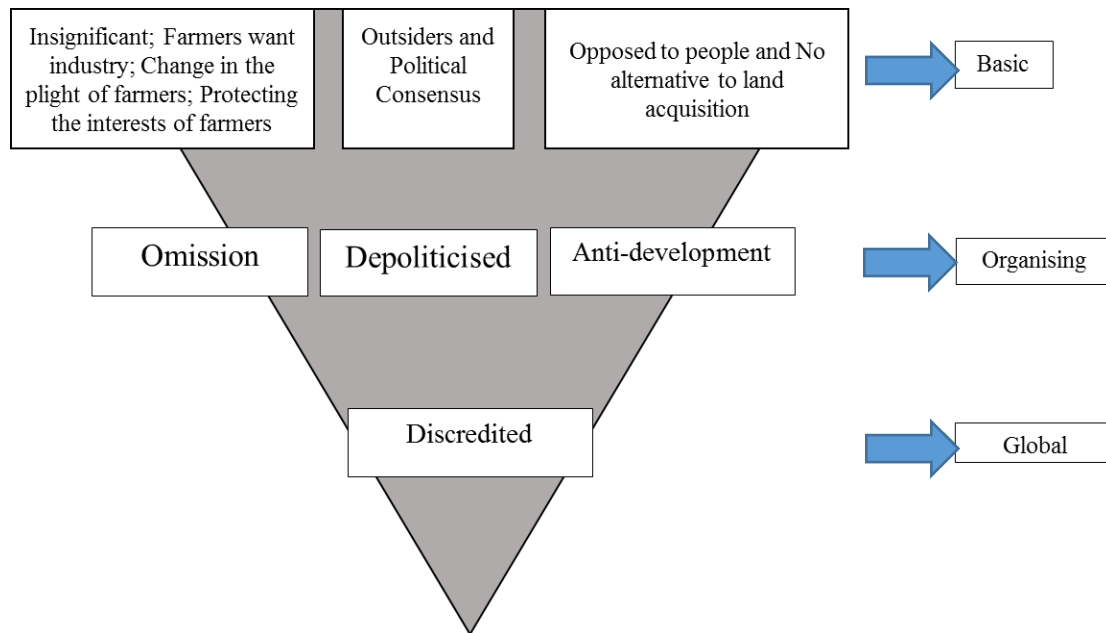
A. Protests As Discredited (global theme)

Figure 5.1 shows the oppositional attitude of the *ABP*, *TOI* and the CPIM's party press *GS* towards the protests through basic themes or "lowest-order premises", identified from the data (Stirling, 2001). The inter-related basic themes, *Insignificant*, *Farmers want industry*, *Protecting the interest of farmers* and *Change in the plight of farmers* show the omission of the news of the protests in the *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS*. These dailies narrated the state government's version as they represented the protests as insignificant incidents. The news reports said that farmers wanted industrialisation for a positive change in their lifestyles and that the state government protected the interest of the farmers. The organising theme (or a higher-order "abstract principle"), *Omission*, was formed by combining basic themes such as *Insignificant*, *Farmers want industry*, *Protecting the interest of farmers* and *Change in the plight of farmers*. The organising theme, *Omission*, suggests that these dailies adopted the strategy of omission towards the news of the protests. The protesters were also represented as outsiders who were linked to the CPIM's political opposition and that they agreed on the necessity of industrialisation. The basic themes, *Outsiders* and *Political Consensus*, which express these ideas, were combined to form the organising theme, *Depoliticised*. The dailies thus depoliticised and diluted the political significance of the protests through the organising theme, *Depoliticised*. The news reports also said that the protesters did not represent the real interest of the peasants and failed to show an alternative vision of development. These ideas were expressed through the basic themes, *Opposed to people* and *Lack of an Alternative to*

land acquisition, which were combined to form the organising theme, *Anti-development*. The global theme, *Discredited*, combined the inter-related ideas of the organising themes, *Omission*, *Depoliticised* and *Anti-development*.

FIGURE 5.1

Opposition To Protests In *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS*



I. Omission (organising theme)

i. Insignificant (basic theme)

The news coverage of the *ABP* and *TOI* in 2006 focused primarily on the state government’s plans of corporate industrialisation and dismissed the importance of the protests by narrating primarily the state government’s version. In a page-one news report published on May 27 2006, the *ABP*, for instance, quoted the chief minister to report an incident of Singur’s farmers expressing displeasure before Tata officials:

Chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya said, ‘There is no problem (in Singur)... The CPIM leaders said that henceforth they would be careful that nothing ‘untoward’ happens when investors visit again’ (“Basu openly expresses displeasure on Singur incident”, 2006, p. 1).

The *ABP* also reiterated that such “events” of a small section of people’s dissatisfaction or anxiety tend to be common at the time of social transition (“An unnecessary controversy”, 2006). The editorial, “*An Unnecessary Controversy*”, published on May 29 2006 in the *ABP*, said that at a time, when a well-defined policy has been adopted by the government on the issue of agricultural land acquisition for the sake of industry, the industrialisation process met with an “unnecessary obstacle” (“An unnecessary controversy”, 2006).

The processes of drawing investment and industrialisation just gathered speed in this state. In such a time this controversy definitely gives a wrong signal (“An unnecessary controversy”, 2006, p. 4).

Following the state government’s version the *ABP* refused to acknowledge the incident of Singur’s farmers demonstrating as protests. A news report published in the *TOI* on June 4 2006, “Farmers seethe at Salim land deal”, observed that the CPIM leaders took extra care to avoid an repetition of the Singur “fracas” when officials of Indonesia-based Salim group inspected land in Nandigram and narrated the CPIM’s campaigning plans to convince farmers in giving away their lands for industry (Moitra, 2006). A CPIM legislator was quoted as saying:

These are nothing new. Government faced similar problems while acquiring land for the Haldia Petrochemicals project in the 90s (Moitra, 2006, p. 3).

There was no significant shift in the *ABP*’s strategy of representing the dissenting farmers (described as spontaneous protests in anti-government dailies such as *Bartaman* and *DS*) till December 2006 when the state government amidst huge opposition took possession of the designated land in Singur for Tata Motors’ car factory. A news report in the *ABP*, published on December 3 2006, quoted the state government’s version to describe the events:

In fact, the administration is not too concerned about the day’s ‘opposition and clash’.... He (a senior member of the ministry) said, ‘There would be some reaction during the handover of so much land’ (“The administration progresses with work in Singur by managing dissent’, 2006, p. 1).

The *TOI*’s news coverage focused on the chief minister’s reformist policies, the left party’s policies of economic reforms and the fact that the present administration was about to welcome corporate investment, something that previous leftist governments failed to achieve

(“Industry, not land reforms, is revolution for Left”, 2006). Thus less importance was given to the news of the dissent against land acquisition for corporate industrialisation as compared to the shift in the state government’s economic policy.

ii. Farmers want industry (basic theme)

GS countered the criticism that the left front government forcibly acquired Singur’s agricultural land by reporting that farmers spontaneously sold their land. Thus the state government’s policy of acquisition of agricultural land for industry enlisted the wholehearted support of the farmers. The *ABP* and *TOI* also represented the state government’s version that farmers in Singur spontaneously gave away land in exchange of compensation money because they supported the state government’s corporate industrialisation policy. The news reports of farmers spontaneously giving away land suggested that there were no significant protests in Singur. For instance, the news report “*Tata factory will happen in Singur, CM remains firm*”, published on October 10 2006 in *GS*, said that farmers of Singur spontaneously collected monetary compensation by selling their land:

(On the day of a strike called by the opposition against the state government’s policy of acquiring land in Singur), the cheques (compensation) were distributed as usual. Local villagers submitted their consent to selling land at the block office (p. 1 and 2).

The *ABP* on October 10 2006 said that a strike called by the CPIM’s political opposition, the TMC party, to protest the state government’s land acquisition policy did not have success with Singur’s local farmers.

Singur’s BDO (block development office) workers didn’t even imagine that so many would come to collect compensation cheques on the very day of the strike... The Trinamul (TMC) leader would get a rude shock (“Strike faces stumbling block at the heart of Singur, 60 farmers sell land”, 2006, p. 1 and p. 7).

The fact that farmers sold their land in exchange of monetary compensation shows their support for the government’s policy of proposing industry in agricultural land and thus suggests that there were no protests. The *TOI*, in the news report, “Villagers dropped from Tata land list”, published on May 29 2006, said that “farmers in general have welcomed the

project”; it is only “the marginal ones” who are sceptical (Banerjee, 2006a, p. 2). a *TOI*-news report (published on November 14 2006) described Singur’s farmers as following:

Our protagonists are the farmers who have been on a land-selling spree for Tatas’ small car project (Chakraborty & Banerjee, 2006, p. 1).

It was argued that future generations of farmers were unwilling to continue with agriculture because it was no longer a profitable venture. The editorials said that the farmers’ livelihood was threatened in near future because agriculture was endangered. In an October 11 2006-news report, *GS* said:

For instance, Khaserbheri’s Nirmal Kole (a farmer’s son) dropped in at the camp. Nirmal is a 12th standard student. His father has sold two bighas of land. Naturally it was very difficult to survive with earnings from the land (“Industrial board’s camp started in Singur with goal of job creation”, 2006, p. 1 and 7).

Thus farmers wanted to sell their lands and showed support to the government instead of leading protests. A news report titled “*Alternative livelihood for those who lose land*”, published in the *ABP* on September 11 2006, said that a report submitted to New Delhi’s central government by economist Montek Singh Ahluwalia justifies Indian state governments’ (the West Bengal government’s) decision to acquire agricultural land for industry.

(Ahluwalia) said that if farmers’ livelihoods don’t change with time they would become poorer. The number of marginal farmers would increase. There are discussions of taking farmers to different professions to increase their earnings... (Ghosal, 2006, p. 1).

iii. Protecting the interest of farmers (basic theme)

The news reports of the *ABP*, *TOI* and party press *GS* said that the state government pledged to protect the needs of farmers. Thus there remained no valid cause of protests. Since the CPIM came to power in the state government in 1977 its support base remained with the rural poor for whom agriculture was the main source of livelihood. The policy of acquisition of agricultural land thus marked a departure from the traditional left position. The party faced a

dilemma as it attempted to promote industry in agricultural land and at the same time wanted to retain the following of its traditional support base among the rural poor including agricultural labourers. Thus *GS*, as a party mouthpiece of the CPIM, sought to assure farmers, the party's traditional support base, that the needs of agriculture and farmers' interests would be protected despite the plans of industrialisation.

The news report, "Promise of more employment for the poor" in English translation, published in *GS* on May 29 2006, quoted the chief minister as saying that the goal of agriculture would not be sacrificed and balance must be sought between the needs of land, agriculture, industry and industrialisation:

We must strike a balance between the needs of land-agriculture-industry-industrialisation ("Promise of more employment for the poor", 2006).

The news reports stressed that industrialisation in agricultural land would not affect food security and the interests of farmers ("State would release a statement on development policy", 2006). The *ABP* and *TOI* reported that the state government went to great length to protect the interest of agriculture and thus defended the government's position. The news reports said that the state government was not oblivious to the interests of the farmers and the needs of agriculture. The *TOI*, for instance, stressed that "the CM (chief minister) allayed fears of a food crisis because of conversion of farmland for industrial use" ("Industry, not land reforms, is revolution for Left", 2006). Thus the cause and anxieties of the protesters on the issue of losing agricultural land for industry was unfounded since the state government ensured that the acquisition of agricultural land would not affect food security or the agriculture-industry balance.

It was also reiterated that the state government would take the "ethical responsibility" to ensure alternative livelihood for farmers ("Industrialisation essential for the progress of history: chief minister", 2006). A news report, "*Decision to pay more than 52 per cent of market price for compensation*", published in the *ABP* on September 26 2006 praised the state government's pro-active role in protecting the needs of farmers, while hinting at the unproductive actions of the CPIM's political opposition that was linked to the protests.:

Exactly when Mamata Banerjee (the CPIM's main political opposition and TMC party leader) led the opposition in Singur, (chief minister) Mr. Buddha met with the head of Tata group to ensure alternative livelihood for farmers losing land (Ghosal, 2006a, p. 1).

To counter the claims that the compensation money was not adequate for farmers, the *GS* emphasised that the compensation package offered to farmers in West Bengal had no match in the entire country (“Industrialisation essential for the progress of history: chief minister”, 2006). The *ABP*-report said that apart from offering very generous monetary compensation the state government would ensure farmers’ alternative livelihood:

After the meeting, Mr. Buddha (chief minister) said, ‘We are trying to assure a job for at least one person in each family that loses land...’ (Ghosal, 2006a, p. 1).

While the left front government was criticised by protesters for acquiring fertile, multi-crop agricultural land for industries, the news reports of the *ABP* and *TOI* said that the state government took the initiative to leave out as much as possible multi-crop, fertile land from the designated area. The *TOI* in a news report published on October 6 2006 quoted state government sources:

The government, represented by Bhattacharjee and industries minister Nirupam Sen, went to great length to explain that the state was not insensitive to the plight of farmers and that the original land acquisition plan was changed to leave out the most fertile plots and in the process 165 acre was not acquired (Banerjee, 2006, p. 1).

iii. Change in the plight of farmers (basic theme)

The news reports said that there were positive changes in farmers’ social and economic conditions because of the proposed industrial project in their agricultural land. Thus there remained no valid cause of the protests and farmers’ anxieties were unfounded. The *ABP* and *TOI* reported that that Singur would emerge as an industrial hub. The proposed car factory would create employment opportunities and usher in economic and social development. The news reports described how major international investors and automobile companies lined up to invest in Bengal after Singur’s Tata Motors car factory (Chakraborty, 2006). The *TOI* in a May 29 2006-report quoted the CPIM leaders to reiterate that “People at large want the project because that will help Singur turn into a second Haldia (an industrial hub of Bengal)” (Banerjee, 2006a, p. 3). Chakraborty (2006) in a December 8 2006-report in the *TOI* said that the “wheels of fortune have started rolling around the Singur small car factory” (p. 1). A

news report published in the *TOI* on November 14 2006 highlighted the positive changes in the lifestyles of farmers who received monetary compensation by selling their lands:

Yesterday he was a land-loser. Today he is a bike-owner... Especially those who are buying motorbikes now. Their pockets are full, thanks to the land acquisition in Singur. This is the farmers' maiden venture towards what economists term as 'demonstrative consumption' (Chakraborty & Banerjee, 2006, p. 2).

GS projected industrialisation as a process that would benefit and serve the interest of the poor and common people in a state where unemployment of the youth remained a challenge and a pertinent political issue. A news report of October 10 2006, said that the economic condition of Singur would improve with the car factory with increased employment opportunities:

There would be direct employment of nearly 2,000 people. And indirect employment opportunities for another 8000.... There would be economic discipline at the local level ("State had to compete to bring in the Tatas", 2006, p. 2).

Newspapers such as *Bartaman* argued on behalf of the protesting farmers that the Tata car factory in Singur would create employment opportunities for only the urban, educated and thus the local population would be deprived. Besides, landless labourers would lose their livelihoods. *GS* countered these criticisms by suggesting that there would be ample opportunities in specialised areas that were suited to the local population. A news report, published on October 11 2006, said:

From tilling the land to welding, plumbing, there would be opportunities for different kinds of work. Apart from members of the families that lost land, landless labourers, bargadars and local women would get these opportunities... ("Industrial board's camp started in Singur with goal of job creation", 2006, p. 1 and 7).

The *ABP* in a news report, published on December 4 2006, quoted the chief minister on how women in the area would find employment.

Explaining in detail the compensation given for acquired land, the chief minister said,... There are women's groups that would provide uniform and

food in the factory... The condition of Singur would change. There would be employment for thousands' ("Chief minister Buddha wants to discuss with Singur with the opposition," 2006, p. 1).

The *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS* focused on the activities of corporate social responsibility of Tata Motors in Singur would develop the area. *GS* reported extensively that Tata Motors conducted vocational training of Singur's farmers, encouraged their professional skill development and worked towards the overall development of the area by providing civic services such as building roads and through the supply of electricity. A news report, published in the *ABP* on September 26 2006, said:

Apart from promising jobs, Ratan Tata has assured the chief minister that he would also develop shops and markets in the area adjoining the small car factory... Ratan Tata told Buddha that wherever they made factories in the country they fulfilled the goal of corporate social responsibility... The group intends to start development projects in Singur as well (Ghosal, 2006b, p. 1).

II. Depoliticised (organising theme)

i. Outsiders (basic theme)

According to the CPIM, the protests of Singur were triggered by "outsiders" or those backed by the political opposition of the CPIM. Following the state government's version, the *ABP* and *TOI* too associated the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur with the political opposition of the CPIM and not with the local farmers. The tendency of linking the protests to the CPIM's political opposition, described by the ruling party and the state government as "outsiders" to Singur, diminished the political significance of the protests. The protests of Singur were associated primarily with the leader of the opposition party, TMC, Mamata Banerjee, who was accused of reviving her political fortunes through the cause of the protests. A news report, "*Tatas to go ahead with small car plant*", published in the *TOI* on November 26 2006, described the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur as the "Trinamul Congress' (TMC party, the CPIM's political opposition) mass agitation against the small car project". Narrating the state government's version, the news report, "Govt gives ground on Singur", published in the *TOI* on October 6 2006, for instance, said that while local farmers

in Singur happily sold their land and collected compensation, the CPIM's political opposition organised protests:

While Trinamul leaders cry themselves hoarse in Kolkata against acquisition, many of the farmers are quietly collecting their cheques (Banerjee, 2006, p. 1).

Thus local farmers, the traditional support base of the CPIM, had no involvement in the protests. The CPIM's main political opposition, TMC, was accused of instigating the protests for their political gains. The news series in *GS*, "*Trinamul's miscreant activities in Singur*", focused on how the TMC disrupted the CPIM's industrialisation programme in the name of protests and caused disturbance. In an October 11 2006 report, the *GS* quoted a district-based CPIM leader to suggest that the political opposition's movement lacked Singur's farmers' support:

... more and more people are coming forward, being frustrated by the TMC's movement... ("Industrial board's camp started in Singur with goal of job creation", 2006, p. 7).

An *ABP*-news report, narrating the state government's version, reported on December 3 2006 that Singur's local farmers had very little involvement in the protest activities:

Initially they (the government) thought that local villagers put up the resistance. But the administration came to know later on that those who encouraged the resistance were from outside. The outsiders were made to cause the disturbance... It was clear from the chief minister's speech that local people did not show much support to the resistance ("The administration progresses with work in Singur by managing dissent", 2006, p. 1).

The *ABP* quoted the CPIM leadership to describe how Singur's local farmers partnered with the state government to prevent "outsiders" from causing disturbance, in a news report, published on December 4 2006:

Mr. Biman (the CPIM party secretary) said that villagers would maintain close vigil at night from now on so that outsiders are unable to enter Singur throughout the day and create trouble ("Buddha wants to discuss Singur with the opposition", 2006, p. 1).

The *GS* reported in January 2007 that political parties of different ideologies (right wing parties and non-parliamentary left parties with radical leftist views) united against the CPIM to terrorise Nandigram's farmers. It was suggested that the "disturbance" in Singur and Nandigram was instigated by urban "outsiders".

... Naxalite outsiders... Together they (the BJP [right wing Bharatiya Janata party], the TMC, the [radical Islamic] Jamat Ulema Hind party, [radical leftist] Naxalites) dug up roads, destroyed bridges... terrorising villagers... the 'city guys' gave them the ideas... ("Despite the terror Nandigram wants industry", 2007, p. 1 and 7).

The movement was thus linked to the political opposition who were "outsiders" and did not represent the interests of Singur's farmers.

ii. Political Consensus (basic theme)

The CPIM's political opposition that was seen as being linked to the protests was accused of disrupting the state government's initiatives of industrialising the state even when they ideologically did not oppose corporate industrialisation or capitalist development. Thus the protests had the short-sighted agenda of opposing only the CPIM. An editorial in *GS*, for instance, criticised the political opposition's (who were linked to the protests) agenda of opposing the CPIM by saying that those opposing or disrupting the government's industrialisation efforts did not dare to oppose industrialisation in principle.

Not a single person could be found who said that industrialisation should not happen. In fact even the apparently united opposition and political leaders of different colours didn't utter these words. But the political opposition organised four strikes on the Singur issue... (Saha, 2007, p. 6).

The *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS* said that in the current political climate it was not desirable for any political party to be seen as "anti-industry". In a September 11 2006-report, the *ABP* said that while the TMC party organised anti-industrialisation protests in Singur the party leader (Mamata Banerjee) at the same time "did not leave any stone unturned to project themselves (her party) as 'industry-friendly'" ("Tata factory can happen in Dankuni, Mamata makes alternative proposal", 2006, p. 1). The news reports of the *ABP* and *TOI* emphasised that the oppositional protests were not against corporate industrialisation or against the Tatas per se

but they were against the ruling CPIM (“Despite being [opposition leader] Mamata’s ally Congress is not against the Tatas”, 2006; “Please make the Tatas stay, Congress sends letter to Buddha”, 2006). The news reports stressed that the Tatas had extensive political support in the state in comparison to Singur’s anti-industrialisation protests. In a news report published on September 28 2006, the *ABP* said:

They (the Congress leaders) are with the TMC in the protests. But Priya Dasmunshi and Subrata Mukherjee (Congress leaders) made it clear that they are not against industrialisation. And they are definitely not against the Tatas... (“Despite being Mamata’s ally Congress is not against the Tatas”, 2006, p. 1).

A report published in the *TOI* on October 6 2006 said:

It augurs well for West Bengal that over the past five days, top political leaders of all hues have begun yielding ground on land acquisition at Singur’ (Banerjee, 2006, p. 1).

II. Anti-development (organising theme)

i. Opposed to people (basic theme)

The news reports of *GS* accused the opposition-backed protests of disrupting the process of industrialisation and development. Thus the protests were portrayed as being opposed to the collective interests of the people. A column, “No logic and information, the opposition of violence”, published in *GS* on March 18 2007, said:

They are simply raising the slogan of ‘We will not give (land)’ to prevent the progress and development of West Bengal... This (self-destructive) route would cause them huge losses. But more than that it would cause huge loss of West Bengal (Chakraborty, 2007, p. 6).

The *ABP* and the *TOI* quoted senior state government officials and CPIM leaders to reiterate that it would be a great loss for Bengal if Tata Motors withdrew from Singur because of the opposition. In a December 5 2006-report, the *TOI* quoted the chief minister to describe how the Tata’s car factory project would improve Singur’s economic condition:

The Tata project will change the state's economy. The project, if shelved, will send a wrong message to the country and abroad (“CM ready to talk”, 2006, p. 1).

In a December 5 2006-report, the *ABP* warned that state governments from many other Indian states had extended invitation to Tata Motors to make the car factory in their land:

Sitaram Yechury (senior CPIM leader) said in Delhi that it would be a great loss for the people of West Bengal if the Tatas leave Bengal for another state (“Mulaylam [chief minister of a north Indian state] too wants to give land, sends letter to the Tatas”, 2006, p. 1).

ii. Lack of an alternative (basic theme)

GS criticised the protests on the ground that they had no ideology. It was argued that there was no alternative to industrialisation for which agricultural land must be acquired. The *TOI* quoted the CPIM patriarch Jyoti Basu to emphasise “the ‘compulsion’ of acquiring land for industry (“CM ready to talk”, 2006).

We are being forced to acquire land for industry to give due stress to industry and agriculture (“CM ready to talk”, 2006, p. 3).

The CPIM’s political opposition that was linked to the protests failed to offer an alternative political vision. A January 2007-editorial in the *GS* said:

It is clear from the political opposition’s anti-industrialisation drive that their leadership has no clue of why are they opposing... what would be the model of development (if they are against industry) (Chakraborty, 2007, p. 6).

The protesters, linked to the political opposition, were criticised for failing to offer constructive criticism of the state government’s economic policy. In a September 27 2006-report, the *ABP* quoted state government officials and senior CPIM leaders to describe how the political opposition disrupted development projects in the past as well:

Party (CPIM) general secretary Biman Basu said, ‘Earlier they (the TMC) opposed IT and highway projects. Now they are against manufacturing

industries (“Cheque distribution complete under close supervision; discontent in Singur on police crackdown”, 2006, p. 1 and p. 7).

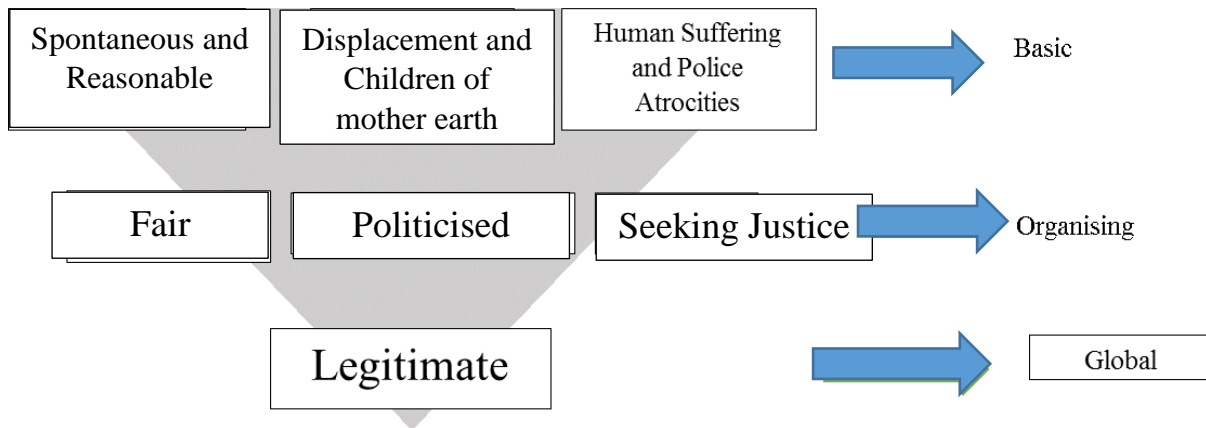
5.1.1.2. Themes Of Support To Anti-industrialisation Protests In Bartaman And DS

B. Protests As Legitimate (global theme)

While the *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS* opposed the protests, *Bartaman* and *DS* championed the cause of Singur and Nandigram’s protesters against state government’s policy of industrialisation. Figure 5.2 below shows the themes of support to the anti-industrialisation protests in *Bartaman* and *DS*. The basic themes, *Spontaneous*, *Reasonable*, *Displacement*, *Children of mother earth*, *Human Suffering* and *Police Atrocities* were identified from the news coverage of *Bartaman* and *DS*. The protests were represented as local farmers’ spontaneous dissent against the CPIM’s industrialisation policies and as those with reasonable demands. The basic themes, *Spontaneous* and *Reasonable*, explains these ideas and were combined to form the organising theme, *Fair*. The news reports also said that the protesters were displaced from their land and livelihoods and that they had a strong connect to their agricultural land, which was similar to the bond between a mother and child. These ideas were expressed by the basic themes, *Displacement* and *Children of mother earth*. The organising theme, *Politicised*, formed by combining these basic themes suggest that the protesters’ cause of protecting land was seen as politically significant by *Bartaman* and *DS*. The basic themes, *Human Suffering* and *Police Atrocities*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*. This suggests that being victims of the state government’s policies and police atrocities the protesters sought justice. The global theme, *Legitimate*, is formed by combining the three organising themes and it highlights the central idea that *Bartaman* and *DS* legitimised the protesters’ cause and challenged the state government’s strategy of discrediting the protests.

FIGURE. 5.2

Themes of Support to Protests in *Bartaman* and *GS*



I. Fair (organising theme)

i. Spontaneous (basic theme)

The state government primarily described the protests as the political opposition’s short-sighted attack against the CPIM. *Bartaman* and *DS* countered the state government’s version by representing the protests of Singur and Nandigram as local farmers’ spontaneous opposition against the proposed car factory of Tata Motors and Indonesia-based Salim group’s chemical hubs and industries in agricultural land. The word “spontaneous opposition” recurred in news reports and editorials (“State government uncomfortable due to spontaneous opposition”, 2006; “The CPIM waiting for the tension to subside”, 2007). The *DS*-news report, “Tata representatives face the opposition of farmers”, published on May 25 2006, for instance, quoted a state government minister as saying that Singur’s protest was “spontaneous” and not “politically motivated”. In a first-person account, “*Bajmelia, Beraberi (localities in Singur) bursting in anger, unhappiness and anxiety*”, in *DS* on September 23 2006, Ghosh (2006) said that protesting farmers were instigated by others and they spontaneously expressed dissent:

...he (local villager) gathered a group of 20 men and women within a second... Some said, let them come to take away our land. We would drive them away... It didn’t seem like that they were being taught to say these

words. It was the normal voice of ordinary farmers. Excited and angry.
Overwhelmed by discontent and emotions (p. 1).

Describing the protests of Nandigram as “spontaneous”, a *Bartaman*-editorial said on January 7 2007:

...a few hours’ spontaneous movement.... The way they separated Nandigram from the rest of the world by digging up roads, destroying bridges... that can only be compared with the freedom movement (“The CPIM waiting for the tension to subside”, 2007, p. 6).

The news reports that local women and children participated in large numbers in the protests, A news report in *DS*, “No-cooking day observed in Singur homes” (dated October 3 2006), described how village women and farmers’ wives abstained from household activities such as cooking and mobilised with traditional weapons to counter the police. Samir Saha’s page-one report in *DS*, “Women farmers start fasting in Singur”, on December 7 2006, quoted women as saying.

Khara said,... We would die in any case if our land is taken away. It’s better we die fasting for land (Saha, 2006a, p. 1).

The news reports said that the CPIM’s traditional support base of agricultural labourers turned against the party and joined the movement to protect land. This further shows the spontaneous dissent against the state government’s policy. A news report, “Party workers quitting the CPIM for their land being taken away forcibly”, published in *Bartaman* on September 30 2006, said:

Mr Keshta (retired teacher and long-time CPIM supporter) (said)... I joined the party (the CPIM) for an ideology. But I wouldn’t support the party anymore since it has decided to take away land from farmers (“Party workers quitting the CPIM for their land being taken away forcibly”, 2006, p. 3).

ii. Reasonable (basic theme)

Bartaman and *DS* portrayed the protesting farmers as having genuine grievance as opposed to being emotional or irrational. A news report, published in *Bartaman* on December 7 2006, said that unwilling farmers who did not want to part with their land would incur heavy economic losses if their land is forcibly acquired by the state government for the Tata factory:

Asim Das of Khaser Bheri and some other farmers who didn't give land claimed, we were getting ready to farm potatoes. We didn't give land. The seeds of potatoes and fertilisers are lying in farmers' houses. Who knows what would happen to that now? ("Angry farmers hoisting black flags at home", 2006).

Bartaman and *DS* also said that contrary to the CPIM and the state government's claims a large corporate industrial project such as the Tata car factory would offer employment opportunities to only the educated urban population. Thus farmers would lose respectable means of earning if their land is taken away. A news report, published in the *DS* on November 30 2006, said:

The CPIM leaders claim that industry would happen. West Bengal's economy would develop. Lakhs would get employment.... But poor farmers don't know what would happen to them... People in the area refuse to let their women work as domestic workers in the industrial, residential area ("Land given to (private) promoters (for real estate) in the name of industry", 2006).

The news reports rebutted the state government's claims that Singur's local farmers willingly gave away land and wanted industry because agriculture was no longer seen as a profitable venture. A December 4 2006-news report in *DS*, titled "Women farmers start fasting in Singur", said that farmers' earnings from multi-crop land was enough for living (Saha, 2006a).

Is this only emotion? Are they being emotional in joining the movement...? Is it only emotions that's making them fast? Definitely not... Geeta Debi replies... we manage pretty well with the earnings from land.... We are not in the movement to save land just for the sake of emotions (Saha, 2006a, p. 1).

II. Politicised (organising theme)

i. Displacement (basic theme)

The CPIM-led state government defended its plans of acquiring agricultural land in Singur and Nandigram for Tata Motor's car factory and Indonesia-based Salim group's chemical hubs and industries for the reason that industrialisation would generate employment for the poor. But *Bartaman* and *DS* countered that the CPIM's industrialisation policy affected the interest of poor farmers as they faced the threat of losing their livelihood, being displaced from their land. Thus the anti-government newspapers, *Bartaman* and *DS*, defended and gave legitimacy to their cause by representing the protesting farmers as a vulnerable population that would be displaced from their lands and thus were affected by the state government's economic policy. A news report, "Farmers won't give land in Singur at any cost", published in *Bartaman* on May 29 2006, quoted dissenting farmers to report their anxieties:

The government wouldn't be able to pay us the rate of a land that yields crops thrice a year. Poor farmers would die without food if they give away land... The biggest wholesale market of potatoes happens to be in this area... Sixty per cent of the designated land is multi-crop... Nearly 300 private houses would be destroyed. Farmers ask, where would the families live if their houses are destroyed ("Farmers won't give land in Singur at any cost", 2006, p. 1).

Referring to the upcoming chemical hubs and proposed special economic zone in Nandigram's acquired land, a news report published in *DS* on November 30 2006, said that it was not clear to the farmers how the industrial projects would benefit them as they faced the risk of losing their land and livelihood.

Keeping common people completely in dark the government is about to displace them from agricultural land and homestead... Farmers in the area have one question: How would Salim's project benefit us? Where would we go away from our land and home? What would we eat? ("Land given to (private) promoters (for real estate) in the name of industry", 2006).

Both newspapers opposed the acquisition of multi-harvest, fertile land and argued that industry can instead happen in infertile, barren land. A news report, "Who gave the leaders the absolute right to displace farmers from their land", published in *Bartaman* on May 31

2006, reiterated the importance of agricultural economy by describing Singur as capital city Kolkata's "kitchen garden".

... Singur meets the big city's daily needs of vegetables... so many farmers, land labourers depend on this. To serve whose interest has this divine order of sacrifice of such a land been given? (Hossain, 2006, p. 6).

A post-editorial, published, on December 5 2006, in *Bartaman* titled "A request to the police: Please don't beat up Singur's farmers", said:

Children would lose their schools, playground... which has immense value according to the World Bank. They would lose all ties if their society crumbles... Would development be possible by making these people ruined? (Sanyal, 2006, p. 6).

The news reports reiterated that while the rich would get richer the poor such as the protesting farmers would lose everything including their livelihood and societal ties, being displaced from their agricultural land. A column, titled "Encyclopaedia Singurika", published on December 1 2006 in *DS*, for instance, sarcastically described how the middle class would get affluent by causing deprivation to Singur's farmers:

Singur has now become Seattle... What a factory!... I can see that there are golf courses for officers... But I heard thousands of people sail away from Singur (Debi, 2006, p. 1).

The news reports, columns and post-editorial columns in *Bartaman* and *DS* raised issues such as unemployment and food security that would be caused due to the policies of the CPIM. This could be understood from the example of the following post-editorial column in *DS*, titled "Shameless deception of citizens in Singur: Land grabbed and given for free to the Tatas", published on October 12 2006:

Many people in Singur would face socio-economic insecurity... Forceful land acquisition would lead to 1. Landlessness 2. Insecurity 3. Unemployment 4. Food scarcity 5. Health hazard 6. Social insecurity 7. Loss of social and psychological identity (Bandopadhyay, 2006, p. 6).

The CPIM was also described as a hypocritical, treacherous party that was Communist only in name and sacrificed the interests of the poor to cater to the interests of big

corporate investors. The betrayal of the CPIM was seen as the source of the protesting farmers' anxieties and insecurities in a post-editorial column in *Bartaman* titled "Singur emerging as a symbol of peasant rebellion", published on December 5 2006:

The same leftists... once raised slogans like 'the one who has the sickle owns the land'... now they have crossed the bridge to join the camp of the 'big bourgeoisie'. They are telling the farmers, 'Throw away your sickle. The days of sickle are over. The land is no longer yours'... (Dhar, 2006, p. 6).

The following codes that recurred in the news coverage --- *threat to food security, loss of socio-cultural identity, loss of livelihood, loss of fertile land and threat of unemployment* --- led to the basic theme, *Displacement*.

ii. Children of mother earth (basic theme)

The protests of Singur and Nandigram were represented in *Bartaman* and *DS* as the farmers' struggle to protect the honour of mother earth. The news reports reiterated that agricultural land was no less than a mother to farmers who saw themselves as the children of the earth. Thus the news reports emphasised farmers' emotional connect to land. Through the imagery of the painful separation of a mother from her children, the news reports reiterated the psychological and emotional trauma and insecurity of the protesting farmers. In the news report, "Who gave the leaders the absolute right to displace farmers from their land", published in *Bartaman* on May 31 2006, Hossain (2006) quoted a famous Bengali poet to suggest that it was unfortunate that the ones who are like the children of the mother earth had no real control over their land. Thus the farmers' emotional connect to agriculture was reiterated. A news report published in the *DS* on December 4 2006 said:

To all of them land is like a mother. That's why they think that giving away land for industry is akin to killing one's own mother... Land is our mother. We have to protect the mother who looks after her children... (Saha, 2006a, p. 1).

The news report, "No festivities in Singur to protest land acquisition", published in *Bartaman* on September 1 2006, quoted villagers as saying:

Land is our mother. We cannot take part in festivities after losing a mother
(“No festivities in Singur to protest land acquisition”, 2006, p. 1).

The news reports also reiterated that the land that the state government threatened to acquire forcibly belonged to the farmers for generations. Thus no monetary compensation was enough for farmers in exchange of their land. The news report, “*Who are the outsiders?*”, published in the *DS* on September 29 2006 said:

Nabaumar Bag... A son of the land, son of farmers. My land yields gold....
Why would I give away land? He informed, ‘If the government wants to acquire the land we would give it away for free. We wouldn’t accept a penny. Then? All of us would consume poison. We would commit suicide (Ghosh, 2006a, p. 1).

The farmers’ emotional connect to the land was reiterated through phrases like “*to save the honour of a mother*” that recurred in the news reports. It was also suggested that the land felt a great pain as it was being forcibly separated from farmers. A news report in *DS*, “Fencing work is over”, published on December 5 2006, said:

Thousands of fencing rods pierced through the heart of the land where paddy and cauliflower had grown (Saha, 2006c, p. 1).

The news reports thus reiterated farmers’ strong resolve and determination in not parting with land. The news report, titled “The face of Singur hardens”, published in the *DS* on November 30 2006, said:

... The people who refused to give away land were burning inside. They have the responsibility to protect the land that belonged to their fathers and grandfathers. The land that provides for their meals... (Saha, 2006b, p. 1).

A news report in *Bartaman* on November 26 2006 said:

The farmers clearly said, we would lie in the land, but would not give our land till our last breadth (Mukhopadhyay, 2006, p. 1).

III. Seeking Justice (organising theme)

i. Human Sufferings (basic themes)

Bartaman and *DS* focused on the loss, suffering and anxieties of the protesting farmers as they faced the prospect of the loss of land. The state government's model of corporate industrial development was described as an unfair process that left out the poor farmers. A post-editorial column in *Bartaman*, published on December 5 2006, asked:

Would development be possible by ruining these people? (Sanyal, 2006, p. 6).

The news reports focused on how the protesting farmers and innocent villagers suffered due to the power excesses of the CPIM cadre and the police. The news reports and editorials also described in detail how protesting farmers in Nandigram, who dug up roads in January 2007 in a desperate attempt to prevent the state government from taking possession of their land, were subjected to suffering and loss ("The CPIM waiting for the tension to subside", 2006; Sanyal, 2007). Referring to the police atrocities in Singur, Saha (2006d) in a December 3 2006 news report in *DS*, "Police Terror in Villages, Sticks and Teargas" in *DS* said that innocent villagers remained powerless and helpless before an inhuman and powerful police force:

Men had no option but to be the silent witness to the police setting fire on haystack and firing before an octogenarian woman (Saha, 2006d, p. 1).

In a December 2 2006 report in *Bartaman*, Mallik (2006) wrote:

Farmers fought back... But before the huge police battalion farmers practically became helpless... (Mallik, 2006, p. 1).

In a March 16 2007 report, Mallik (2007) said that hundreds of innocent villagers in Nandigram who fought to save their lands lost their loved ones to "police carnage":

People are bursting in sadness and anger having lost their loved ones... The relatives of the missing people asked... Did you see him/ her? H/She was with you.... Miss Kabita cried and said, we were all in the movement. The police started firing teargas and bullets. I lost consciousness... Our house was burnt (Mallik, 2007, p. 1).

ii. Police Atrocities (basic theme)

Bartaman and *DS* reiterated the nexus between the police and the ruling party and the administration who worked together to unleash violence on protesting farmers. It was described how the CPIM cadre donned police uniforms and worked in tandem with the police to unleash violence on the protesters (Das, 2007b; Mallik, 2006). The news reports described that the CPIM party cadre violently attacked innocent villagers for the political recapture of Nandigram. Das (2007c) in a January 7 2007 report, “CPIM desperate to capture Nandigram” in *Bartaman*, said that the “CPIM dropped bombs to recapture Nandigram” (p. 1). An editorial in *Bartaman* on January 8 2007 said:

The CPIM criminals have come out against local villagers in Nandigram in the most brutal fashion.... Bullets fired like rain... some died... others went missing (“CPIM leadership supported party criminals from behind”, p. 6).

The state government and the ruling party’s lack of democracy and the poor governance of the administration were criticised. A column by Hiren Sanyal in *Bartaman*, “*The violence in Singur and Nandigram was pre-meditated*”, described the lack of democracy in the state under the CPIM’s rule:

The attitude of (chief minister) Mr Buddha’s government and the CPIM in the land-grab expedition reeked of violence. The extreme indifference towards counter views, the attack on democratic protests with the police and the cadre are different faces of violence... (Sanyal, 2007, p. 6).

Thus the protesting farmers were seen as victims of the injustice due to the government’s economic policies, administrative failure and atrocities of the police and ruling party cadre. Thus they were seen as seeking justice from the government. The basic themes, *Human Sufferings* and *Police Atrocities*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*.

Table 5.1 below shows the differences in the commercially-run dailies' responses to the protests. The global themes, *Legitimate* (as identified from the news coverage of *Bartaman* and *DS*) and *Discredited* (as identified in the *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS*), express the differences in the media system in commercially-run, partisan newspapers' attitude towards the protests. The findings thus suggest that there remained differences in the partisan system in the newspapers' attitude to anti-industrialisation protests.

TABLE 5.1.

Differences in Responses to Anti-Industrialisation Protests in 2006

Partisan interests	Support for government's economic policies		Anti-CPIM sentiment		Propaganda of CPIM
Newspapers	<i>ABP</i>	<i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>	<i>GS</i>
Global and organising themes	Discredited (Omission; Depoliticised; Anti-development)	Discredited (Omission; Depoliticised; Anti-development)	Legitimate (Fair; Politicised; Seeking Justice)	Legitimate (Fair; Politicised; Seeking Justice)	Discredited (Omission; Depoliticised; Anti-development)

Table 5.2 shows the differences in Kolkata's partisan press system in the initial phase of the anti-industrialisation protests in May 2006. *Bartaman* and *DS* were defined by the anti-government attitude, which determined their support for the protests. On the other hand, the *ABP* and *TOI*, adopted anti-protest attitude because of their political and economic interests and support for the administration's economic policies. These newspapers, being driven corporate policies, supported the state government's economic policies in favour of corporate industrialisation. Thus pro- and anti-government cleavages provoked differences in commercially-run newspapers' responses towards the protests.

TABLE 5.2

Differences in Partisan System On Protests (Initial Phase)

	<i>ABP</i>	<i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>	<i>GS</i>
Pro-protest	✘	✘	✓	✓	✘
Anti-protest	✓	✓	✘	✘	✓

✓ Yes
✘ No

5.1.1.3. Shift In The ABP And TOI's Attitude To Protests From Opposition To Support

5.1.1.3.1. Change Of Themes — From Discredited To Legitimate

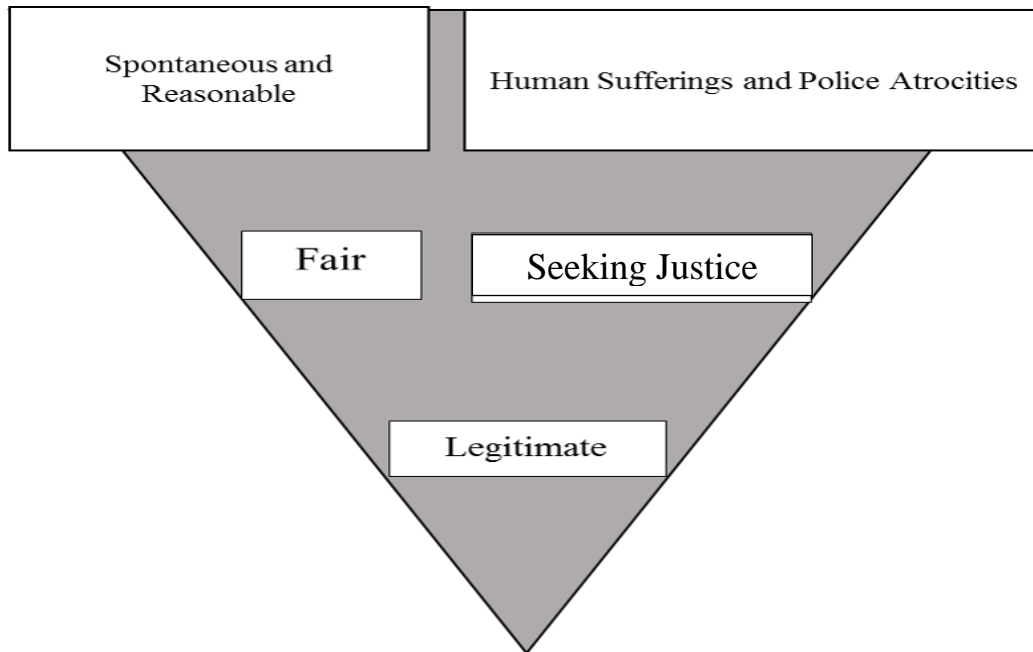
C. Legitimate (global theme)

This research found that there was a shift in the *ABP* and the *TOI*'s attitudes as the protests in Singur gathered momentum and fresh protests started in Nandigram from January 2007 onwards. The basic themes such as *Spontaneous*, *Reasonable*, *Human Sufferings* and *Police Atrocities*, as shown in Figure 5.3, were identified in the news reports of the *ABP* and *TOI* in the later phase of the time frame.

FIGURE 5.3

Shift from Support to Opposition to Protests in *ABP* and *TOI*

(January to March 2007 onwards)



I. Fair (organising theme)

i. Spontaneous (basic theme)

The news reports acknowledged the protests as an expression of spontaneous resistance by the farmers. The Nandigram agitation that started immediately after the Singur events in January 2007 in anticipation of land acquisition, was seen by the *ABP* and *TOI* as being linked to ordinary villagers rather than the CPIM's political opposition. In a January 9 2007-report, the *ABP*, for instance, quoted a CPIM leader as saying:

Mr. Subhash (CPIM leader said), 'Those involved in the trouble (in Nandigram) are not criminals or outsiders. They are local farmers. If they are called outsiders then Che Guevara was also an outsider' ('Supporters deserted the party, the CPIM had no clue', 2006, p. 1).

The tendency to describe the protests as being led by local farmers rather than the political opposition or the "outsiders" shows a shift from its previous stance. The news

reports stressed that the CPIM's peasant-based supporters opposed the party as their land was taken away by the party for industrialisation ("Supporters deserted the party, the CPIM had no clue", 2006). This suggests the involvement of local farmers in the movement.

ii. Reasonable

The *ABP* and the *TOI* in the later phase of the time frame said that the protesting farmers had genuine demands and causes and thus they had legitimate causes for being part of the protests. The news report, titled "*Nandigram's history of broken promises*", published in the *TOI* on January 5 2007, said that farmers who lost land in the past were denied compensation despite promises of the state government (Mitra, 2007). The protesting farmers of Nandigram were described as being content with the earnings from their land.

They (Nandigram villagers) would rather stick to their home and hearth than be ejected for the planned chemical hub which may promise a bounty, but deliver little. Villagers pointed out that they were happy with what they earned from their land and were definitely not ready to give it up for a meagre compensation package (Mitra, 2007, p. 2).

The basic themes, *Spontaneous* and *Reasonable*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Fair*.

II. Seeking Justice (organising theme)

i. Human Sufferings

A post-editorial, "*Is the arrogance of power behind this terrible result?*", published in the *ABP* on March 17 2007, for instance, said that many would be left out of West Bengal's dream of development because of the state government's administrative failure and the CPIM's excess of power.

A developed West Bengal beckons us. But only those who lost their loved ones would not be a part of this new morning...? (Basu Roychoudhury, 2007, p. 4).

The *ABP* and *TOI* reported the sufferings and persecution of the protesting farmers of Nandigram by the police and CPIM's cadre. The newspapers also described in first-person accounts how Nandigram's protesting villagers were terrorised by the violence, unleashed by the CPIM cadre and the police. In a *TOI*-report, "*The dying can wait, say cops*", published on March 15 2007, Niyogi (2007a) said:

Are they not human? Krishnapada Pahar kept murmuring... One victim arrived with a bullet through his eye. Another had intestines bubbling out of his stomach... the policemen emerged after a satisfied lunch... What is the big hurry?... The badly injured will anyway be dead by then' (p. 3).

ii. Police Atrocities

The news reports reiterated the link between the police and the CPIM cadre in unleashing terror on common farmers who struggled to protect their land. The *TOI* in a news report, published on March 16 2007, said:

A senior state police officer hinted at the bonhomie between the district police and local CPM leaders... ("Bullets leave trail of queries", 2007, p. 1).

The reports highlighted the administration's indifferent attitude towards common people's sufferings and the state government's failure to tackle the protests. The failure of the administration and government was highlighted by narrating the sufferings of protesting farmers in the hands of the CPIM cadre. The basic themes, *Human Sufferings* and *Police Atrocities*, suggest that the protesters were associated with sufferings and anxieties and were seen as being victimised and tortured by the ruling party's cadre and the police. The basic themes, *Human Sufferings* and *Police Atrocities*, were combined to form the organising theme, *Seeking Justice*. The *ABP* and *TOI* thus gave legitimacy to the cause of the protesters in the later part of the time frame by representing the protests as fair and as seeking justice. The organising themes, *Fair* and *Seeking Justice*, were combined to form the global theme, *Legitimate*.

5.1.1.3.2. Change Of Sources

The *ABP* and *TOI* relied heavily on sources of the state government to report the news of corporate industrialisation and anti-industrialisation protests. The representation of the state government and the ruling party's version was disproportionately more in the news reports of 2006 as compared with the version of other contending parties such as the CPIM's political opposition. But both newspapers' tendency of quoting only the sources of the state government started to change from January 2007 onwards. From March 2007 onwards the newspapers cited both state government and the political opposition's version in most of the news reports. Only a small percentage of the articles quoted only the state government's version. Table 5.3 shows that in 2006, 56 and 60 per cent of the articles (20 and 18 out of a total of 35 and 30 articles in the *ABP* and *TOI*) cited only sources of the state government and the ruling party respectively. In January 2007, the state government or the CPIM's sources were only quoted by the *ABP* and *TOI* in 44 per cent of the articles in both newspapers (7 and 8 out of 16 and 18 articles respectively). But most news reports in 2007 reported the version of both the state government and/ or ruling party as compared with the tendency of reporting only the government in 2006. In March 2007, 85 and 80 per cent of articles (12 and 17 out of 14 and 23 news reports respectively in the *ABP* and *TOI*) quoted both the state government and the political opposition. This shows the shift in the attitude of the *ABP* and *TOI* towards the state government.

TABLE 5.3

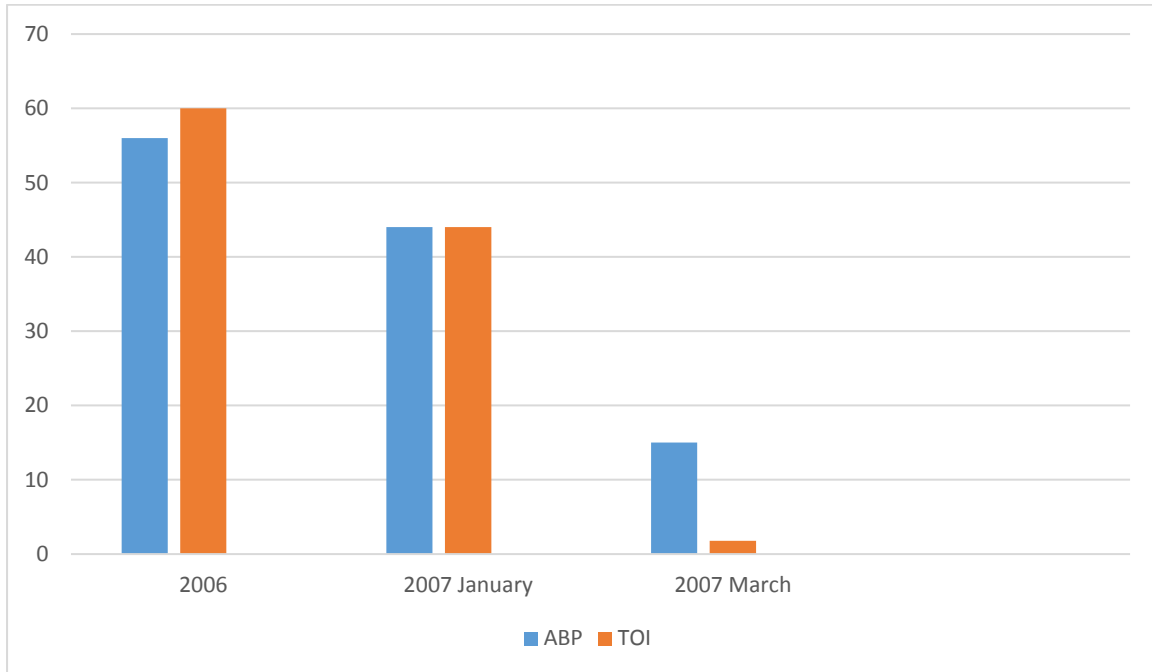
SOURCES IN NEWS REPORTS OF THE *ABP* AND *TOI* IN 2006 AND 2007

	Articles in 2006	Articles in January 2007	Articles in March 2007
Articles in which only the government and the ruling party were quoted	<i>ABP</i> 20 out of 35 (56 per cent)	<i>ABP</i> 7 out of 16 (44 per cent)	<i>ABP</i> 2 out of 14 (15 per cent)
	<i>TOI</i> 18 out of 30 (60 per cent)	<i>TOI</i> 8 out of 18 (44 per cent)	<i>TOI</i> 2 out of 23 (8 per cent)
Articles in which both sides (the government and the political opposition) were quoted	<i>ABP</i> 11 of 35 (30 per cent) (other sources such as New Delhi-based central government and economists were cited in the rest)	<i>ABP</i> 7 out of 16 (44 per cent) (industry sources and none quoted in rest)	<i>ABP</i> 12 out of 14 (85 per cent)
	<i>TOI</i> 12 out of 30 (40 per cent)	<i>TOI</i> 10 out of 18 (56 per cent)	<i>TOI</i> 17 out of 23 (80 per cent) (other sources quoted in the rest)

Figure 5.4 shows the shift in the *ABP* and *TOI*'s tendency to cite the sources of the state government in 2006 and 2007. The reliance on the perspectives of the political opposition, linked to the protesters, raised the possibility of alternative views in the coverage of the anti-industrialisation protests.

FIGURE 5.4

Percent Of Articles Citing Only State Government In 2006 And 2007



5.1.2. Impact Of Professional Norms: Less Differences In Attitude To Protests

The partisan interests of commercially-run newspapers determined the news coverage and encouraged differences in Kolkata’s newspaper landscape even though there remained support for the norms of professional journalistic norms. But professional routines such as news values had a different impact as the anti-industrialisation protests gathered momentum from early 2007 onwards. This research found professional norms—such as news values, the necessity to convey information, commercial or credibility reasons and the necessity to criticise the government—caused a shift in the *ABP* and the *TOI*’s attitudes as the protests in Singur gathered momentum and fresh protests started in Nandigram from January 2007 onwards. The nature of partisanship became skewed in favour of the protests with the shift in the attitude of the *ABP* and *TOI*.

5.1.2.1. Role Of Partisan Interests: Support And Opposition to Protests

The *ABP* advocated on behalf of the state government and sought to mould public opinion in favour of corporate industrialisation. The idea was to influence the government indirectly in adopting the economic policies preferred by the newspaper. Thus *ABP* deliberately neglected the government watchdog role because the state government was perceived to be doing “good work”. There was a conscious decision to support corporate industrial projects such as the proposed small car factory of Tata Motors in Singur by not reporting or publishing any events that were perceived as oppositional to the state government in 2006. A chief reporter with the *ABP* said:

The target was (not to) give importance to whatever (news) was perceived to be against industry (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists lauded the effort of the ruling CPIM — perceived as being liberal and modern in outlook than other left parties — in ushering in big capital in the state after years of traditional left policies, which were blamed for driving away big investors. A news editor with the *ABP* said:

It was a genuine, honest initiative on the part of the chief minister. We saw its value of it and lauded his efforts (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

Even though the *TOI* that had an all-India presence sought to maintain a distance from local politics, there still remained support for the administration’s economic policies. The *TOI*’s supported the state government’s economic policies and initially remained oppositional towards the protests because “(corporate-owned national newspapers such as the *TOI*)... are definitely for huge investment” (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012). The newspaper’s editorial policy favoured Tata Motors, which allied with the state government for the car factory project in Singur. The newspaper supported the state government because of its link with a corporate industrial group such as Tata Motors. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

TOI’s editorial policy was to be in favour of the Tata entirely (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

Bartaman and *DS* supported the anti-industrialisation protests as they remained opposed to the state government and the ruling party. *Bartaman*’s saw itself as an anti-

establishment newspaper and connected with a loyal readership in the districts. But the newspaper's anti-establishment attitude translated to sustained opposition to the ruling CPIM because the party remained in power in the state for three decades since 1977. The *TOI*'s resident editor, while commenting on Kolkata's newspaper landscape, described *Bartaman*'s role as the following:

The Congress (the main political opposition of the ruling left party CPIM in Bengal since it acquired power in 1977) was often accused of reaching an understanding with the left... At the time *Bartaman* opposed the CPIM-led state government and did what many political parties of the opposition failed to do (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

Bartaman connected with its key readership in the districts as it routinely reported the ruling party's power excesses, championed common people's interests and duly reported their civic problems since its launch in 1984. A senior editor with *Bartaman*, describing the newspaper's editorial policy on the anti-industrialisation protests, said:

We had the pulse of people's discontent and unhappiness even before the agitations started in Singur. We knew this would turn into massive protests (R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011).

The Bengali daily *DS* was launched in 2004 a few years prior to the protests of Singur and Nandigram and catered to the anti-CPIM political constituencies. *DS* saw a potential readership in the anti-left political constituencies in the districts in 2006 and very soon it became as a "mass paper". The editor with *DS* said that the newspaper's policy was to oppose the CPIM in particular and thus it championed the cause of the protesting farmers.

We aggressively took up the Singur issue... The policy of *DS* was to oppose the CPIM in particular (A. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

DS perceived itself as an "activist" newspaper at the time of the anti-industrialisation protests and emerged as a space for dissenting views against the CPIM. The editor said:

We have always given space to columns by leftist intellectuals (activists and intellectuals of non-parliamentary left parties that criticised the CPIM) even though our paper (*DS*) does not necessarily endorse their views (M. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

Thus both *Bartaman* and *DS* were driven by their partisan role of opposing the state government and the ruling party as they showed support for the protesting farmers.

5.12.2. Impact Of Professional Journalism

The commercially-run dailies, despite being driven primarily by their partisan interests, showed support for professional journalistic norms such as news values. Professional norms such as news values contributed to their partisan interests and encouraged the selected dailies' supportive and oppositional stance towards the protesters. However, professional routines such as news values and the need to provide information encouraged a shift in the attitude of the *ABP* and *TOI* as the protests gained momentum in Singur and Nandigram from January 2007 onwards.

Role of News Values In Different Phase Of The Protests

The *TOI* extensively reported the state government's plans of corporate industrialisation because the issue had news values as compared with the protests. West Bengal historically lagged behind the rest of India in industrialisation. The then-administration led by the CPIM-led left front coalition welcomed corporate capitalist investment in the state's key industrial sector that the Communists historically failed to do. The *TOI*'s chief of news bureau said:

There was an upbeat feeling about industry coming to Bengal and (chief minister) Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee doing what the Communists didn't do (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The CPIM, which perhaps because it had been in power in the state for more than three decades since 1977, was accused of failing to demarcate a boundary between the roles of the government and the party. But for the first time in the CPIM's long history in West Bengal the bosses of the ruling party did not directly interfere with administrative matters as the chief minister planned to execute the government's plans of industrialisation. The affairs of the ruling party and that of the state government remained separate under the chief minister's leadership. A senior correspondent with the *ABP* said:

Jyoti Basu (former left front chief minister and senior CPIM leader) had given a public statement (and) criticised the state government. The administration did not inform the CPIM peasant committee that Tata officials would inspect land in Singur. The peasant committee leader was sleeping at home when Tata officials visited Singur... This means the administration was acting independently of the party... this was interesting, something that almost never happens in the state (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

Bartaman and *DS* reported in detail the news of the growing unity of CPIM's political opposition, the rift within the left front coalition partners on the issue of corporate industrialisation in Singur and the fact that the CPIM affected the interests of its traditional rural support base. Bengal's local political landscape lacked a formidable political opposition that failed to emerge as a viable alternative against the CPIM. Thus news reports of the political opposition's unity against the CPIM had news values in Bengal's political context. The events of farmers protesting with brooms and sticks or switching off power or Singur's women abstaining from cooking also had an element of "spectacle", which the anti-government *Bartaman* and *DS* highlighted. Thus professional routine such as news values helped advance the partisan interests of the selected dailies.

But news values had a different outcome in case of the *ABP* and *TOI* in the later phase of the anti-industrialisation protests. While initially journalists failed to fathom the "newsworthiness" of the protests, they could not be ignored as the protests gathered momentum with growing support and the rise in public sympathy. In May 2006 the protests of Singur were said to lack public support and were seen as unorganised. Protests and demonstrations had been a permanent feature of the state's political landscape over more than three decades of left rule. A correspondent with *ABP*, explaining why the protests of Singur, were initially not considered as newsworthy, said:

Initially the protests were insignificant and unorganised. We thought that such incidents of dissent are common in case of any big project (S. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

But it eventually became clear to journalists that the resistance had the support of a large section of common people and farmers. The rise in the resistance suggested that this was not like any other ordinary protest or demonstration. The *TOI*'s chief of news bureau said:

When we started to attend to this (ground realities) then we realised that despite police presence and other things the momentum of the movement is increasing every day. It is not ending... that means there must be something (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The events of West Bengal's Singur and Nandigram acquired national importance as the left front seemed to be losing its support base in a state where it had been in power for over three decades. A senior journalist with the *ABP* said:

There were similar incidents --- protests surrounding land acquisition in other states in the past. What was the larger issue? We need to consider the national ramification and see if this is an isolated phenomenon or does it have a pan-Indian significance. But when they become a national issue we would cover them (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

There was a perceived shift in public mood towards the protesters, which made them politically significant and newsworthy. The *TOI*'s chief of news bureau said:

Middle classes changed and so did the media. We cannot resist or suppress this movement anymore (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP* downplayed newsworthy incidents such as the growing opposition against the left front in relation to the protests through much of 2006. But the televised images of police atrocities on the protesting farmers raised the public sympathy on protesters. The *ABP*'s chief reporter said:

In case of Singur our coverage clearly trespassed news values... we did not carry the news even though we had the information... There were sudden outbursts and a repercussion (in Nandigram)... There was people's interest and sympathy because of the police-led violence... The drama was more in the Nandigram incidents (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

The televised images of the police-led violence contributed to the perceived shift in the public mood in favour of the protesters. The *ABP*'s news editor said:

A particular image (telecast by) Kolkata TV (a 24-hour Bengali television news channel started in 2006) — that of the police beating up locals in Singur on someone's terrace — gave fillip to the movement. That image continued to

play for 24 hours and created pressure on us. It created the anti-CPM mood (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

The news editor said that the *ABP* was forced to “react” to television news as the protests gained public sympathy, something that the newspaper traditionally did not practice.

...we didn't cover that (rift within left front coalition partners on the issue of land acquisition) news... there was nothing new that had not happened in the past. But that became a news because of television. (But) in certain cases we had to react to television news (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

Necessity To Convey Information

Even though the *ABP* had a well-defined editorial policy of supporting the state government's industrialisation policy and opposing the protests, it almost always published important information. Important incidents and events, which were perceived to affecting the newspaper's policy, were often carried as smaller items in the inside pages, while the issues that it supported were played up. A correspondent with the *ABP* said:

Whether or not we play up an issue depends on whether it is important. But the reportage and information would always be there... (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

We report every news but the difference is how the news is presented (S. Niyogi, personal communication, 2012).

The party press *GS*, for instance, routinely reported dissenting views of the protesters and the political opposition to counter the criticisms of the CPIM. In some cases the *GS* reported the demands and grievances of the political opposition in relation to the CPIM's land acquisition policy to make a mockery of them. The *ABP* and *TOI*'s news coverage did not remain fixed and shifted in favour of the protesters because of the newspapers' necessity to share information with the key readership. The newly-launched 24-hour Bengali television news channels such as Kolkata TV gave live coverage of local news. This created a pressure

on the newspapers. Thus newspapers could not afford to ignore newsworthy events for the sake of credibility even it were against their policies. The *TOI*'s resident editor said:

This is not a period when there is no television... If a newspaper doesn't publish news you will not read it anymore... Credibility issue, that's the main branding (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

Even though commercially-run newspapers had a well-defined editorial policy that reflected their political and economic interests, they had to report issues that raised obvious questions. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

We were trying to answer the obvious questions like who are the people attending the protest meetings (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

The incidents of police atrocities created a pressure on journalists to publish the information of protests. A *TOI*-correspondent said:

... when the violence and the resistance increased then I cannot ignore. That meant that there may have been a large section of people who did not want industry... There were genuine reasons of resistance. We represented why people resisted... But still our stand was that Tata should stay here and industry should happen (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

Commercial And Credibility Reasons

The *TOI* was expected strike a chord with key readership since it was primarily a national brand and ventured in Kolkata's newspaper market only in the late 1990s. The *TOI* reported the news of protests and the anxieties and sufferings of farmers because of the readership's perceived preference of "human interest stories". A *TOI*-correspondent said:

The focus is on what people want to know. Traditional reporting patterns have changed. Human stories are of prime importance (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

The news of the police-led violence on protesting farmers was seen as essential because of the element of human interest and human sufferings. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

The contention was between two powerful forces, but there were common people in this. Their stories were written about... The focus was more on human interest stories. What happens when someone gives away land with a dream for inadequate compensation that would not last a lifetime (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

Even though the *ABP* saw itself as a political actor in the state and aimed to mould public opinion in favour of large corporate industrial projects, it was still essential for it to be accepted by the readership as a credible newspaper. Thus the *ABP* did not ignore the news of the protests as they gained momentum. The news editor said:

We are a newspaper, we have to reflect people's mood. Otherwise we would be accused of being a *Ganashakti* (the CPIM's party mouthpiece) (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

A commercially-run newspaper could not afford to champion an editorial policy at the cost of issues that were perceived as important by the readership. The *TOI*'s resident editor said:

But you have to strike a balance. This can't be a propaganda newspaper (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

Necessity To Criticise The Government

Bartaman and *DS* were driven by their partisan role of opposing the state government and the ruling party as they showed support for the protesting farmers. *Bartaman*, however, perceived itself to be fulfilling the professional government watchdog role as it led sustained opposition against the state government's economic policies. The newspaper's policy was to remain critical of the government, irrespective of whichever political formation was in power. On the other hand, while the *ABP* and *TOI* reported extensively on the power excesses of the ruling party and the police on protesters in the later phase of the protests in 2007, they neglected the government watchdog role in the initial phase because of their partisan interests. But the government's perceived excess of power on common people triggered the government watchdog role. The *TOI*'s resident editor said:

... (when) they (the government) become anti-people, then we are critical (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

The newspapers supported the state government's economic policy primarily because of their business interests. But in the absence of a steady relationship, the political alliance shifted when the government was perceived as repressive and as incapable of effectively addressing the opposition against corporate industrial projects. A political editor with the *TOI* said:

(A) corporate organisation's editorial line is dependent on business interests and their political leaning shifts very fast... (N. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

The *TOI*'s chief of news bureau said:

It (the situation) was going out of hand... The first criticism on the government of Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee government was that he can't manage... (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The events of Nandigram also emerged as a "law and order" issue with reported incidents of police and the CPIM party cadre's atrocities on common people. This in particular called for the criticism of the state government. Correspondents with the *ABP* said:

It (the protests of Nandigram) was a police story, that's why it was carried on page one... the overall issue (was) governance. It was playing on the audience's fear due to administrative failure (P. Acharya, personal communication, 2012).

Nandigram events started with law and order problems. So we criticised the CPM's policy (S. Bhattacharya, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP* and the *TOI*'s supported the state government's economic policy and not the government *per se*. Therefore, there was a shift in the dailies' attitude to the state government when its economic policies and the plans of corporate industrialisation were jeopardised due to the political opposition. This was seen as the failure of the CPIM's policies. The *TOI*'s bureau chief said:

A government that can't deliver. A government that could not bring in the Tatas... that is where the critique came from (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP*'s bureau chief said:

We play the anti-government role when there is a lack of action on the part of the government to draw investment... Our policy would change when the government starts drawing investment (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

There remained public interest issues such as the government's administrative failure, the police-led violence on common people and financial corruption in which commercially-run dailies pledged to criticise the government despite their partisan support for certain economic policies. A correspondent with the *ABP* said:

I would not be especially critical of the government unless it is a house (the newspaper's) policy... But I would expose if there is a government scam. That is the skill of a journalist' (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

5.1.3. Lack Of Differences In A Partisan System

With the change in *ABP* and *TOI*'s attitude from indifference to sympathy, there was increased support for the anti-industrialisation protests in Kolkata's partisan newspaper landscape. There were less differences with most of the selected dailies, except left party press *GS*, supporting the protests. There was no significant shift in *Bartaman*, *DS* and party press *GS*' attitude towards the anti-industrialisation protests. Table 5.4 shows the commonalities in *Bartaman*, *DS*, *ABP* and *TOI*'s attitude to the protests through common organising themes such as *Fair* and *Seeking Justice*. The global theme, *Legitimate*, recurred in all dailies except *GS*. These themes, recurring in all the dailies except *GS*, show the increased support for the protests in the partisan system in the later phase of the time frame.

TABLE 5.4
INCREASED SUPPORT FOR FOR PROTESTS
(January-March 2007 onwards)

Partisan interests	Pro-capital policies		Anti-CPIM sentiment		Propaganda of CPIM
	Newspapers	<i>ABP</i>	<i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>
Global and organising themes	Legitimate (Fair; Seeking Justice)	Legitimate (Fair; Seeking Justice)	Legitimate (Fair; Politicised; Seeking Justice)	Legitimate (Fair; Politicised; Seeking Justice)	Discredited (Omission; Depoliticised; Anti- development)

Table 5.5. shows that all the selected dailies except *GS* were anti-government in their political stance in later phase of the protests. Thus the partisanship was skewed against the government.

TABLE 5.5.
ANTI-GOVERNMENT POLITICAL STANCE OF MOST DAILIES

	<i>ABP</i>	<i>TOI</i>	<i>Bartaman</i>	<i>DS</i>	<i>GS</i>
Pro- government	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Anti- government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
✓	Yes				
✗	No				

5.2. Differences In Partisan and Commercial Interests In Ownership Models

Research question RQ2 investigates how the commercial interests influenced the partisan causes of the selected dailies across different ownership models, making a proposition that the difference between corporate ownership as against party press and individual ownership (P2).

RQ2. How do commercial interests affect the selected dailies' partisan interests in different ownership models?

P2. Concerns of Bottom-line Profit Counter Partisan Interests in Corporate Ownership but not Partisan Interests of Party Press and Individually-owned Dailies

The presence of diverse ownership models such as a party press (*GS*) and individually-owned, commercially-run newspapers (*Bartaman* and the *DS*) remains pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models in a pluralistic setting. Drawing from previous studies of media ownership (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001) this thesis made the proposition that the goal of bottom-line profit would counter the partisan interests of dailies owned by corporate media conglomerates, while profit-based strategies would not affect the partisan interests of a party press and individually-owned, commercially-run dailies. The findings do not confirm the proposition. This study found instead that partisan interests beat the profit-based strategies of the *ABP*, which was part of a family-run media conglomerate, because of the influence of the family owner. The goal of bottom-line profit did not affect the partisan interests of the individually-owned, commercially-run dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) and the party press (*GS*) because of the strong influence of the proprietor and the left party. CPIM. Most of the selected dailies, despite being owned diversely, advanced their partisan causes through the news coverage rather than pursuing profits. The impact of profit-maximising strategies thus remained less not only in the news coverage of the commercially-run, party press (*GS*) and individually-owned dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) but also in a daily such as the *ABP* that was part of a family-run media conglomerate. Table 5.6 shows that the selected dailies except the *TOI*, which were owned by different ownership models, had a stronger impact of their partisan interests in the editorial as compared with

profits. The goal of bottom-line profit did not reduce most of the selected dailies' partisan interests. But their partisan interests did not translate to differences of views in the partisan system in their responses to the protests.

TABLE 5.6.

Differences of Commercial Interests in Ownership Models

<i>Ownership models</i>	<i>Newspapers, part of family-run media conglomerate (TOI and ABP)</i>	<i>Individually-owned newspaper companies (Bartaman and DS)</i>	<i>Ruling left party-owned press (GS)</i>		
Partisan interests	Support for government's economic policies	Support for government's economic policies	Anti-government Anti-CPIM Pro-CPIM		
Commercial interests					
Intrusion of profit goal into editorial	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Attitude to protests	Opposition to Support	Opposition to Support	Support	Support	Opposition
Yes	✓				
No	✗				

5.2.1. Profit Goal Versus Partisan Political Interests In Media Conglomerates

Both *ABP* and *TOI* are part of family-run corporate media conglomerates. But the role of bottom-line profit intruded the editorial decisions only in the case of *TOI*. Partisan political interests had the significant role in *ABP*'s key editorial decisions. The *TOI*'s editorial was driven primarily by advertising-driven, profit-maximising strategies. The newspaper did not aim to champion its partisan interests in favour of an economic policy. The *ABP*, on the other hand, saw itself as a significant political actor was driven by the agenda of shaping public opinion in favour of the state government's economic policies, rather than only making profits.

Role of Profit-Maximising Strategies In TOI, Limited Political Role

Being a corporate-run newspaper, the *TOI* supported the state government's alliance with a big investor like Tata Motors and encouraged the economic policy of corporate industrialisation. The editorial policy favoured corporate industrialisation but the *TOI* was not driven by the goal of moulding public opinion on behalf of the state government or promote industrialisation in Bengal. The *TOI*'s editorial decisions in particular kept in mind the needs of advertisers. In India English newspapers are much more dependent on advertising revenues than vernacular dailies. Circulation makes up just 5 to 15% of the revenue of English newspapers but 35-40% of vernacular dailies (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010). Being a national English daily with editions across multiple centres, the *TOI* had greater access to national advertisers. The *TOI* has been infamous in India for initiating profit-maximising practices that are even unethical, such as running advertisements, disguised as news. BCCL, the parent of the *TOI*, buys stakes in small to medium companies. It has been observed that the business practice of buying stocks prevents the negative news coverage of companies in which the parent company invests (Kohli-Khandekar, 2010).

The advertising and marketing divisions frequently interfered in the editorial of the *TOI*, especially during the news coverage of Singur's agitation against Tata small car factory. The issue was seen as "sensitive" because it involved a large investor like Tata Motors that was also an important national advertiser. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

TOI is driven primarily by the business division Times Response (the advertising and marketing department)... If an advertisement is stopped because of a story the executives of Times Response complain (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

The New Delhi-based executive editor closely intervened in the editorial decisions of the Kolkata edition at the time of the anti-industrialisation protests in Singur since the issue involved a prominent national industrial conglomerate like Tata Motors. The *TOI*'s bureau chief said:

One had to be careful on stories concerning the Tatas... to what extent could we could implicate Tata in certain incident (S. Roy, personal communication, 2012).

Reports that deserved to be carried on the page one were downplayed, depending on the preferences of advertisers. Confrontations were common in news rooms between journalists and their immediate superiors on the issue of publishing "sensitive news". It depended a lot on senior editors such as the bureau chief or the resident editor on the extent to which sensitive news that potentially affected advertisers could be published. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

The instruction comes from the higher up... (if), for instance, a hard-hitting story was to be held over... or published after a few days... A lot depends on the advertising and business divisions that interact with editors (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

The *TOI* aimed to increase its share in the total advertising pie of Kolkata's print media. Being a national daily, the *TOI* had less interest in promoting the state government's economic policy or championing the cause of industrialisation in a state that was deprived of investment in the industrial sector. The newspaper was primarily interested in its relationship with a large corporate investor such as Tata Motors for securing advertisements. The *TOI* intended to expand its readership base and increase its share of advertising in Kolkata rather than mould public opinion in favour of corporate industrial development. The resident editor said:

This can't be a propaganda newspaper. We cannot say that land acquisition must happen, or that it mustn't happen (S. Sen, personal communication, 2012).

The *TOI* entered the Kolkata market in the late 1990s. As a new entrant, and unlike the more established daily such as the *ABP*, the *TOI*'s editorial policy was shaped to cater to what the key readership preferred. Thus the business and marketing departments closely intervened in the editorial policy. The *TOI*'s news coverage was determined by profit-maximising, circulation-boosting strategies including the feedback of readership surveys. The advertising and marketing departments intruded into the editorial. The *TOI*'s primary goal was to cater to the perceived preferences of the urban middle-class readership and boost circulation and maximise profits. Thus profit-maximising, readership-driven strategies and surveys of what the urban, middle class readership's preferences influenced the editorial strategy of the *TOI*. A correspondent said:

We keep in mind the urban readership. We are not to promote any industrialisation policy... There are broad strategies like urban readership and the youth — *TOI* is a young newspaper (S. Niyogi, personal communication, 2012).

The *TOI*'s advertising and marketing departments regularly conducted readership surveys to determine the key readership's preferences. The perceived preferences of the key readership determined the key editorial decisions. In the initial phase of the anti-industrialisation protests the *TOI* neglected its government watchdog role and remained uncritical of the state government's economic policies because the feedback of readership surveys suggested that readers do not necessarily prefer anti-government news. A correspondent said:

The *TOI*'s audience research and readership surveys... don't suggest that readers prefer anti-establishment stories in particular (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

Limited Impact Of Bottom-line Profit, Strong Partisan Interests In ABP

This research shows that the impact of readership- or circulation-driven, profit-maximising strategies remained less in the *ABP* when compared with its political interests in Bengal even though it was also part of a media conglomerate. The key editorial decisions were influenced by the newspaper's partisan interests in the state. Instead of catering to the perceived preferences of the target readership and meeting the demands of advertisers, *ABP* saw itself as a political actor and sought to sway public opinion in favour of the state government's economic policies. The *ABP* was not opposed to profits but the profit-based, advertising revenue-driven criteria did not intrude into the editorial decisions and prevail over its partisan interests of supporting a large corporate industrial project such as the proposed small car factory project of the Tatas in Singur. The *ABP*'s chief reporter said:

We didn't care about the Tata industry (car factory) just for the sake of advertisements. (Advertisements) did not directly determine (our editorial) policy... (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

Being an established player in Kolkata's newspaper market the *ABP* enjoyed the power and influence necessary to campaign for public support in favour of the corporate industrial projects in agricultural land. The *ABP* saw itself as an important political actor and aimed "to pressurise the government" in adopting economic policies, favoured by the newspaper. The chief reporter said:

We don't write what the public wants. People read what we write (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

Limited Impact of Profit in the Editorial, Role of Ideological Values of a Family Owner in ABP

Scholars credit family owners of placing commitments to journalistic integrity before the rationale of profits (Tiffit & Jones, 1999). The findings of this thesis partially support this observation. Profit-based strategies did not intrude key editorial decisions and affect the *ABP*'s partisan political interests because of the proprietor-editor's personal ideological inclination. The *ABP*'s partisan interests reflected the family owner's personal ideological values. The newspaper supported the state government's economic policy and aimed to mould public opinion in favour of corporate industrialisation because of the family owner-

editor's personal ideological preferences. The *ABP*'s editorial was insulated from the direct pressure of advertising or business divisions because of the presence of "a Bengali owner". The chief reporter said:

...(the pressure of advertisers is less because of a Bengali owner (D. Ghosh Thakur, personal communication, 2012).

The chief of news bureau said:

We don't care about advertisements in the way the *TOI* does for instance (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP* group, a regional media conglomerate that published the flagship Bengali daily, was owned by the Sarkar family. The *ABP* was one of Kolkata's oldest and reputed Bengali newspapers and the flagship daily of the media group. The eldest son of the family, Aweek Sarkar, owned and edited the newspaper since the death of his father in the 1980s. The proprietor-editor's personal ideological preferences for the principles of free economy, unbridled market forces, policies of liberalisation, Western liberalism, Bengali cultural ethos and cosmopolitanism were common knowledge in Kolkata's journalistic circuit, as understood through interviews. The editorial decision of encouraging corporate industrial projects in agricultural land in West Bengal's Singur and Nandigram in 2006 and 2007 reflected the newspaper's ideological allegiance to pro-corporate, capitalist economic policies. The proprietor-editor's personal ideological values shaped the editorial policy and the decision to champion the cause of corporate industrial development in the state and mould public opinion. The *ABP* reflected the proprietor-editor Sarkar's personal vision when it perceived itself as a key political actor of the state. The newspaper's partisan political role was related to the proprietor-editor's personal values. A senior correspondent said:

Our editor... believes in the American neoliberal policy. We are fixed in our support to that policy. We will support whoever (whichever political party) fits within that policy and oppose whoever does not fit within that policy (P. Acharya, personal communication, 2012).

The chief of news bureau said:

During 75 years' celebration (of the newspaper) (in the 1990s) our editor said that we are too big to be influenced by party politics. Policies should move us. We are a bourgeoisie paper (H. Banerjee, personal communication, 2012).

Thus the editorial decisions reflected the newspaper's political interests, based on the owner's ideological values. Proprietor Sarkar also edited the group's flagship daily *ABP* and other publications that were owned by the media group. Sarkar regularly attended editorial meetings and was closely involved in the editorial process. Senior journalist Prasun Acharya said that he was appreciated and "congratulated" personally by Sarkar when he reported anti-industrialisation peasant uprisings in Nandigram in January 2007 (P. Acharya, personal communication, 2012). That was the first time the newspaper acknowledged the protests as a spontaneous uprising of farmers in contrast to its previous attitude of indifference towards protestors in Singur in 2006.

5.2.2. Profit Goal Versus Partisan Political Interests in Individually-Owned Dailies

This research found that individually-owned, commercially-run dailies such as *Bartaman* and *DS* were influenced more by their partisan interests of opposing the CPIM rather than the profit. The editorial decisions reflected these dailies' partisan interests and was not influenced by advertising and marketing divisions. The goal of profit and marketing-driven decisions remained less pronounced in both *Bartaman* and *DS* because of the ideological values of the proprietor-editor and editor respectively.

Strong Partisan Interests, Less Intrusion Of Profit In The Editorial In Bartaman

This research shows that *Bartaman* supported the anti-industrialisation protests because of its partisan interests and its role as an anti-establishment newspaper. The editorial policy was influenced more by its anti-establishment role rather than profit-maximising strategies, as decided by advertising and marketing departments. *Bartaman*'s government watchdog role determined its response to the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur and Nandigram. Being a commercially-run newspaper, *Bartaman* was not opposed to making profits. But the editorial policy of supporting the anti-industrialisation protests primarily reflected its partisan interests. The newspaper was influenced less by profit-based strategies or by the preferences of the advertisers because of the strong impact of the journalistic values of proprietor-editor Barun Sengupta. A former journalist, Sengupta believed in liberal view of journalism and held the position that the press must act as the government watchdog. Sengupta was reputed in Kolkata's journalism for his spirited anti-government reportage at the time of Emergency

rule when democratic rights and civil liberties were briefly suspended in India in the mid-1970s. Sengupta was briefly incarcerated during India's Emergency rule because of his anti-government news reports. Sengupta's personal ideological and journalistic values shaped *Bartaman's* editorial policy. The proprietor-editor's vision inspired individual journalists of the newspaper to narrate issues that were pertinent in the lives of common people and champion the cause of the protesting farmers, who were seen as being persecuted by the state government's economic policies. A correspondent said:

He (Barun Sengupta) taught us that the role of a newspaper is to argue on behalf of the persecuted... (to) take the side of those who are persecuted. Therefore common people's issues came up... They (farmers) respect their land like one's own offspring (T. Mallik, personal communication, 2012).

In Kolkata's newspaper landscape *Bartaman* was reputed for its anti-establishment role. This translated to sustained opposition to the CPIM because the left party was in power for over three decades. Even though proprietor-editor Sengupta encouraged journalists to remain antagonistic to the government and not just against the CPIM, the newspaper became a natural ally of the CPIM's political opposition when the left party was in power. The anti-CPIM political party TMC (a break-away faction that split from the Congress party in late 1990s in West Bengal), which emerged as the state's main political opposition during the anti-industrialisation protests of 2006 and 2007, and the party's maverick, popular leader Mamata Banerjee, were supported by *Bartaman* because of the newspaper's solidarity with the political opposition of the CPIM. This political stand reflected Sengupta's ideological vision. Therefore, the newspaper consciously sided with the protesting farmers in Singur and Nandigram and offered them a platform against the state government's pro-corporate policies. The newspaper's anti-establishment character and critical voice against the CPIM earned it a stable readership in the districts where the corruption and power excesses of the party apparatus were especially rampant. The newspaper had a stable readership in the Hoogly district. Singur, one of the sites of the protests, was located in the Hoogly district. *Bartaman's* editorial policy of opposing the state government's industrialisation policy was no secret to readers and journalists.

The advertising and marketing departments remained separate from the editorial in *Bartaman*. The editorial policy reflected Sengupta's ideological vision rather than the preferences of the advertisers. The advertisers' preferences or profit-based strategies did not

direct the newspaper's editorial stand or daily editorial decisions. *Bartaman* was started by Sengupta with a modest bank loan in 1984. The newspaper's economic model — its district-based readership and lack of dependence on the advertisements of big corporate investors — allowed it to be critical of the state government's policy of corporate industrialisation. *Bartaman* did not function as a corporate group or diversify into multiple media sectors because of the proprietor-editor's personal preference. Sengupta preferred his newspaper to function as a profitable medium-sized company. Thus *Bartaman* criticised big corporate investors such as Tata Motors and opposed the state government's alliance with corporate industrial groups. A senior editor said:

It (being anti-establishment during the protests) meant antagonising big businesses... *Bartaman* never received the amount of advertisements that *ABP* got from Tata. *Bartaman* took the risk for the interest of its key readership (R. Sengupta, personal communication, 2011).

Sengupta held the view that medium and small scale industries were essential for the state's industrial development and for employment generation of the poor. Such views were routinely reported in his personal columns and defined *Bartaman*'s ideological position on the issue of corporate industrialisation.

Strong Partisan Interests And Limited Intrusion Of Profits In Editorial In DS

Being a commercially-run newspaper, *DS* was not opposed to profits or boosting circulation. But the newspaper was not driven primarily by advertising-driven, profit-maximising strategies. The editorial policy of the *DS* was influenced by its anti-CPIM political stand, which reflected editor Manas Ghosh's personal sentiments. *DS* was launched in 2004 when *The Statesman* was in the midst of survival crisis. Thus *DS* had a frail economic base when compared with other selected dailies. There remained less opportunity for *The Statesman* to diversify into multiple media sectors or function as a corporate group. The advertising and marketing departments in the *DS* were not influential.

The Bengali daily was influenced by partisan anti-CPIM interests after it was launched, which made it into a "mass paper". The partisan stance of opposing the ruling party reflected the ideological values of editor Manas Ghosh. Proprietor Jain remained distant from the daily functioning of the Bengali daily. The editorial policy reflected editor Manas

Ghosh's personal values rather than circulation-driven, profit-maximising strategies. The proprietor and managing editor said:

The existing editorial policy binds only (the English) *The Statesman*. *DS* is a separate company... yes of course it subscribes to the core values of *The Statesman* (R. Jain, personal communication, 2012).

Editor Manas Ghosh worked with the English newspaper *The Statesman* before becoming the editor of its sister concern *DS*. Having worked as a journalist in West Bengal for many decades, Ghosh had the first-hand experience of witnessing the misrule and power excesses of the ruling party. Ghosh also ideologically detested the CPIM's hypocrisy and its alienation from the people of basic classes such as peasants and workers whose interests the party claimed to champion. The CPIM was perceived as hypocritical especially when compared with smaller, non-parliamentary left parties and Marxist ideologues. Thus the news coverage focused especially on the hypocritical, anti-poor policies and so-called fascist attitude of the CPIM. The editor of *DS* said:

We reported incidents when TMC supporters attacked the CPIM cadre. But we did not follow the CPIM's statements because it is a bourgeoisie party (M. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

It was also alleged that the newspaper and the editor wanted to win favours of the TMC party, the CPIM's main political opposition. Thus the newspaper at different points supported political parties such as the TMC. But the political identity of the newspaper did not remain fixed.

5.2.3. Profit Goal Versus Partisan Political Interests In A Party Press

GS was a commercially-run party mouthpiece of the CPIM. *GS* formed a part of the national communication network of the CPIM, which was a national political party with political stronghold in West Bengal and Kerala. *GS* shifted to the advertising revenue-based model in the early 1980s a few years after the CPIM-led left front coalition came to power in the state government of West Bengal. This research shows that even though *GS* shifted to an advertising revenue-based model and focused on expanding the readership base since the 1980s, it did not pursue profits in the same way as other market-driven newspapers. Thus the

editorial policy primarily reflected the official position of the CPIM rather than the interests of the advertisers. The advertising revenue- and circulation-driven strategies remained did not intrude into the editorial in the left party press. *GS* switched to the commercial model because of an accepted party policy. Thus the commercial imperatives of *GS* continued to be checked by a dominant party line. This explains the fact that *GS* fulfilled the traditional function of the party mouthpiece and championed the state government's economic policy of corporate industrialisation. Thus the party press discredited and opposed the anti-industrialisation protests. The news editor said:

The main target of a newspaper is to... increase its sale... The target of readers and advertisers should be the same... Our target is not that. Our primary purpose is to serve a political purpose... At the same we need to sustain ourselves (A. Dutta, personal communication, 2013).

After *GS* shifted to the advertising revenue-driven commercial model, the newspaper introduced popular content such as sports news. The concept of popular content had been uncommon in a Communist party paper in West Bengal till the 1980s but *GS* wanted to expand and consolidate its readership base among general readers beyond party workers and supporters in pro-CPIM constituencies. But the advertising revenue-based, commercial model and the need to cater to readers as a “complete”, commercial newspaper failed to create enough opportunity for *GS* to digress from the official position of the CPIM and present to readers dissenting views that could be perceived by journalists as independent. Though there remained an internal tension within the party paper on the necessity to report independent news *GS* showed allegiance to the party. The switch to the advertising revenue-based, commercial model and the need to cater to readers as a “complete”, commercially-run newspaper did not create possibilities of digression from the official stand of the party. The party press did not have an independent line, which could influence the CPIM. The switch to the commercial model was also an accepted party policy; therefore, commercial imperatives of *GS* continued to be checked by a dominant party line. The commercially-run, mainstream news media of West Bengal had been traditionally anti-left and there were oppositional views against the CPIM in the milieu. Thus *GS* felt the necessity to defend the party position even though it identified as a commercially-run daily and wanted to present to its readership complete information rather than just party news.

There exists alternative flow of information because of *GS*... The left parties are bashed by all media... *GS* is the only newspaper that defends the left position and not just a left government (D. Chakrabarty, personal communication, 2013).

The CPIM maintained a strong hold in West Bengal and the political parties of the opposition traditionally remained weak in the state. This also explains the strong impact of the CPIM's official position in the editorial policy of the *GS*.

5.3. Co-existence Of Partisan Journalism And Professional Values — Impact In News Coverage Of Protests

Research question RQ3 investigates how advocacy-based roles of individual journalists intersected with their shared professional values to impact their attitude to the protests. This thesis made the proposition (P3) that journalists' advocacy-based roles would intersect with their shared professional values to influence their support towards protests.

RQ3. How do individual journalists' role of advocacy relate to their shared professional values and impact their attitude to protests?

P3. Journalists' Advocacy-based Roles and Shared Professional Values Influence Support for Protests

The long absence of advertising revenues and mass markets encouraged the tradition of advocacy journalism in many societies even after their news media started to function commercially (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Scholars observe that advocacy journalism leads to the support of powerless social groups, especially those denied a powerful spokesperson (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). Thus advocacy journalism remains pertinent in the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests. However, scholars observe that journalists in different global settings also show allegiance to certain shared journalistic values (Weaver, 2009) despite the centrality of the news media's partisan causes (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). This thesis thus made the proposition that journalists' advocacy-based roles would intersect with their shared professional values to impact their support for protests. The findings of this thesis confirm the proposition.

This study found that journalists of Kolkata's partisan setting were driven by advocacy-based roles because of which they supported the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur and Nandigram. Yet the weak practice of non-partisan, objective journalism did not mean that journalists were immune to shared professional values such as the necessity to provide information. The shared professional roles such as the necessity to provide information also encouraged journalists to report favourably of the anti-industrialisation protests. The *ABP* and *TOI* shifted their attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests from indifference to sympathy because of individual journalists' professional value of conveying information. Both advocacy journalism and the professional necessity to disseminate information contributed to the growing support of protests in the partisan system.

Impact Of Activist Tendencies

Journalists took the side of the protesting farmers who faced injustice done by the state government. Taking the side of the poor and persecuted was seen as a professional duty. The district-based reporters sympathised and became a part of the movement as they reported the protests over many days and watched the sufferings, anxieties and the struggle of the farmers from close quarters. They also helped the key leadership of the protests evade arrest by the police. A correspondent with *Bartaman* said:

It is to send a message of sympathy to our readers. I am unable to do anything for you, but I am sympathetic... I am fighting on your behalf (T. Mallik, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists closely witnessed how the cadre of the ruling party along with the administrative forces unleashed violence on the protesting farmers of Nandigram. Having witnessed the violence of the ruling party on the farmers from close quarters it was difficult to remain neutral and take a balanced view of both the CPIM and the protesters. Individual journalists' advocacy-based support thus encouraged the partisan sentiments of *Bartaman* and *DS*. The commercially-run newspapers such as *DS* also identified itself as an "activist newspaper" also because of individual journalists' advocacy-based roles while reporting the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur. There remained less support for objectivity and journalists were driven by primarily by activist causes even though this did not translate to showing support for political parties. Advocacy or activism was rather driven by the goal of

doing something good for fighting for a cause that was perceived as just. A correspondent with the *ABP* said:

We can't be a fence-sitter. There is no objectivity... Our job is to create public opinion. Otherwise one would be a stenographer (K. Basu, personal communication, 2012).

A correspondent with *DS* said:

I believe in activism journalism. I practise professional journalism for earning a livelihood. But writing four columns and filling up pages can't be everything. I believe in involving myself with the news and the issue (S. Mitra, personal interview, 2012).

The activist-journalists believed that when the poor are persecuted by a powerful force then journalists cannot afford to remain neutral.

There cannot be balanced journalism. I had to take a stand on behalf of the (protesting) farmers... It was newspapers' role to stand by the farmers. I did my duty as a journalist (A. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

Professional Journalistic Roles — Conveying Information

The research found that despite their activist tendencies Kolkata's journalists abided by shared professional values such as the need to convey information and expose the misuse of power of the state government. The *ABP* and *TOI* initially remained opposed to the anti-industrialisation protests because of their pro-capital economic policies and partisan support for the state government's alliance with a big corporate investor like Tata Motors. But the professional values of conveying information and the need to act as the government watchdog encouraged journalists to report the news of the protests. This eventually raised the support for protesters in Kolkata's newspaper landscape. Journalists reported newsworthy events such as the huge turn-out at the rallies of the protesting farmers and the growing dissent against the CPIM on the issue of the protests even though such news affected the newspapers' partisan policy of supporting the state government and the corporate industrial projects in agricultural land. A correspondent with the *TOI* said:

It is not my job as a reporter (to criticise the government). But I would report any incident that could be said to be critical of the government's industrialisation policies (S. Niyogi, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP* and *TOI* eventually accommodated the dissenting views of corporate industrialisation because of individual journalists' necessity to share information. Journalists could not afford to "miss news" and ignore information of protests that were seen as newsworthy. Even though sensitive information was downplayed, it was reiterated that complete suppression of facts or total censorship of information was not to be tolerated by professional journalists. It was possible to get sensitive news published by backing them with fool-proof information. It was reiterated that professional journalists never distorted news or suppressed information. The commercially-run newspapers stayed away from blatant censorship of news because of their necessity to be credible to readers. Journalists wanted to report the "facts" or the important news, related to the protests, even though their newspapers remained opposed to the protesters. When a young female protester was raped and murdered in Singur's agricultural land at the time of protests, both *ABP* and *TOI* deliberated on ignoring this news. But eventually this news could not be ignored because of its news value and the issue of the newspapers' credibility to readers. A correspondent with the *ABP* said:

We cover all incidents but all newspapers have a policy... (P. Acharya, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists considered it essential to acquire information irrespective of whether such information suited the newspaper's editorial policy.

I tried to gather the main facts as a reporter. Whether I could report it or not would be decided later. I presented the incident in a neutral manner to my chief reporter. Then we decided if we could carry the story or how much information we could reveal (C. Mandal, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists could not afford to ignore important news at a time when readers already had access to important news related to the protests through other sources of information such as 24-hour local television. It was reiterated in interviews that in the late 1970s commercially-run newspapers such as the *ABP* ended up ignoring the news of police brutality and forced eviction of poor refugees from Bangladesh who settled in a southern island of West Bengal, known as Marichjhapi, because there was no television at the time. The incident happened in 1979 within the first few years of the left front government's coming to

power in West Bengal when journalists had less access to information. Journalists who worked with the left party paper *GS* felt the necessity to share dissenting views against the CPIM's policy of agricultural land acquisition because of their professional values. Thus individual journalists' professional need to share information countered the official position of the CPIM within the party press *GS* where journalists doubled as party members. For instance, there were debates and differences of opinion on the necessity of industrial projects in agricultural land within the CPIM between the ministers of land and land reforms and commerce and industry. Not all the issues raised in these debates followed the official position of the CPIM. But *GS* felt compelled to present some of these dissenting views. It was considered essential to have access to information related to the protests of Singur and Nandigram even though *GS* opposed the cause of the protesters. Thus journalists communicated regularly with the grass root workers of the CPIM's main political opposition.

It (*GS*) feels the need to present a reflection of incidents and what is happening even if that is a bare minimum reflection... it was compelled to be accommodative and accept certain things to an extent (Sarkar, personal communication, 2013)

Impact Of Government Watchdog Role

The necessity to be critical of the government was also perceived as a key professional role. Journalists considered it essential to act as the government watchdog, which encouraged them to be critical of the administrative- and police-led violence on protesters. Journalists reiterated that they did not share personal antipathy against the ruling party but considered it their professional duty to criticise the government. Many of them witnessed the ruling party's power excesses for decades and had first-hand accounts of the impact of the state government's policies on the less privileged population in rural areas. They witnessed the dissent of farmers against the state government's policies. The chief reporter with *DS* said:

I have never consciously been anti-Communist... (But) newspapers have a role in keeping a check on the government.... I happened to witness the misrule of the CPIM government since 1980 when I started working as a journalist (A. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

A correspondent with *DS* said:

Media is the fourth pillar of democracy... it is my duty to criticise the government in power, highlight the mistakes (S. Mitra, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists said that the role of the press was to keep the power of the government in check. Journalists wanted to fulfil the professional duties of being the government watchdog rather than oppose particular political parties or share the newspapers' partisan political interests. A journalist with *DS* said:

Misrule is misrule. There is no need to specify this as CPIM's misrule. Whoever stays in power... the state power has a certain character... (S. Mitra, personal communication, 2012).

Journalists said that they considered it to be an essential professional value to criticise the government irrespective of whichever political formation was in power. The chief reporter with *DS* said:

I didn't share *DS*' pathological anger against the CPIM... (A. Ghosh, personal communication, 2012).

The *ABP* and *TOI*'s attitude towards the left front state government shifted from being an ally in its industrialisation plan to its critic because journalists did not ignore the news of the state government's power excesses on common people. The government sacrificed the interests of common people and the public in the interest of large scale corporate groups, which made individual journalists critical of the state government. The *ABP* and *TOI* felt the necessity to criticise the poor governance, administrative failure and democratic lapses of the government.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The key question that this thesis probed was how the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests determines the partisan system's democratic potential when both models co-exist in a pluralistic setting. The partisan media system supports plurality and a diversity of views when each partisan media player champions a particular political view in competing market conditions (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007). The partisan political model is associated with advocacy-based journalism and partisan causes (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; Schudson, 2002). On the other hand, the market-driven, commercial model is linked to the profit-based interests of non-partisan, commercial actors and the professional practice of journalism and is criticised for its lack of plurality and for ignoring the interests of disadvantaged social groups (Albuquerque, 2012; Curran, 2007; 2011; Deuze, 2005; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; 2012; McChesney, 2008; 2015; Mosco, 2009; Salcetti, 1995).

Even though theoretically they are perceived as different the partisan and commercial models co-exist in many societies (Allern & Blach-Orsten, 2011; Waisbord, 2000). When partisan and commercial models co-exist, partisan news media adopt characteristics such as profit-based logic and professional values such as "impartial" journalism that are usually associated with the market-driven, liberal model despite the centrality of their partisan interests (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). When multiple partisan players advocate different political interests in competing market conditions, the partisan model promises plurality and diversity. But when news media are run as commercial entities, they seek profits and are driven by the norms of professional journalism rather than advocacy-based causes. The goal of bottom-line profit neutralises their partisan interests and affects partisan ties (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; McChesney, 2008). Thus the intersection of the news media's profit-based goal, professional values and partisan interests potentially alter the partisan model's ability to reflect a diversity of views.

Political-economic studies (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; 2011) observe that the partisan model's ability to represent diversity on key economic issues remain challenged in concentrated markets in highly commercialised and capitalist media settings. A pluralistic

media landscape in a setting with recent history of the market-driven model supports additional conditions such as diverse ownership models including a party press and individually-owned dailies and the tradition of advocacy-based, partisan journalism (Waisbord, 2000; 2009). These conditions are pertinent to the interplay of the partisan and commercial models of the news media. Diverse ownership models such as a party press have been less common in the highly capitalist media markets of advanced industrial economies and are seen as a scope for political diversity in the media system (McChesney, 2008; 2015) since they are expected to champion political causes rather than profit-driven goal.

I studied the interplay of the news media's partisan and commercial interests and the impact of this interplay through a case study of the coverage of anti-industrialisation protests by commercially-run, partisan newspapers in the East Indian city of Kolkata. The newspaper landscape of Kolkata accommodated multiple commercially-run players with different partisan interests in a fragmented market. This research found that there were differences in the partisan media system in commercially-run newspapers' attitude to anti-industrialisation protests. But the differences of the media system were blurred as a section of the commercially-run dailies changed their partisan alliances and their attitude to the protests due to norms of professional journalistic norms. The goal of profits did not neutralise most of the diversely-owned, commercially-run dailies' partisan causes. Journalists' advocacy-based roles and shared professional values contributed to the growing support for the protests in the media landscape and affected the differences of the partisan system.

This thesis argues that when partisan and commercial models of the news media co-exist the practice of professional journalism determines the partisan system's ability to reflect diversity of views. Thus the differences of views on any given issue in the partisan media system blur in pluralistic conditions even when motivations of profits do not defeat diversely-owned, commercially-run dailies' partisan causes. Political-economic studies (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2011) perceive pluralistic markets as the only precondition for the partisan model's ability to represent political diversity in the media system. It is also argued that commercially-run news entities' increasing size and the need to pursue profits leads to a decline in their political participation (McManus, 2009). But the findings of this thesis suggest that the norms of professional journalism determine the partisan model's ability to represent "external pluralism" in the media system rather than commercially-run entities' motivations of making profits (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). "Hybrid" forms of journalistic professionalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009) combines advocacy-

based roles and shared professional journalistic values. But the support for “hybrid” forms of journalistic professionalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009) does not support political diversity.

Theoretically (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; 2015; McQuail, 1992), the partisan system is conceptualised as a static model that leads to steady differences in the media system in competing market conditions through advocacy-based roles of the news media. Drawing from Hallin and Mancini’s (2012) coinage, I propose a new conceptual framework, the model of “hybrid” partisanship, which accounts for the changes in the partisan system due to the intersection of partisan interests of commercially-run news media and “hybrid” forms of professional journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009). The model of “hybrid” partisanship thus explains the consequences in the media system when both partisan and commercial models of news media co-exist.

6.1. Summary Of Findings And Discussion

6.1.1. Differences Of A Partisan System And Role Of Professional Journalism

This thesis investigated how commercially-run newspapers’ partisan interests related to diversity and differences in the media system in their coverage of anti-industrialisation protests in a pluralistic setting. This research found broad differences in Kolkata’s partisan media system in commercially-run, partisan newspapers’ attitude to the anti-industrialisation protests. But the differences in the partisan media system were blurred as a section of commercially-run newspapers shifted their attitudes in favour of the protests because of the norms of professional journalism. While political economy scholars (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2011) perceive pluralistic markets as the only precondition for the partisan system’s ability to reflect political diversity, this thesis found that the norms of professional journalism were more influential in the partisan system’s ability to represent a diversity of views. Previous studies of media systems observed commercially-run news media driven by political roles and advocacy do not necessarily foster external pluralism in the media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). This thesis contributes to the theoretical discussion of partisan media by suggesting that professional journalistic norms influence the partisan model’s ability to represent differences and diversity and external pluralism in the milieu.

The politically partisan media and market-driven models are seen as inherently different from each other in existing theories such as political economy of communication on the basis of the news media's advocacy-based, partisan roles versus the function of imparting non-partisan information (Albuquerque, 2012; Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; Curran, 2002; 2007; Hallin & Mancini, 2012; McChesney, 2008; 2015). Thus in political-economic theories the partisan system is essentially perceived as a static model that remains opposed to the norms of professional journalism and is influenced only by the advocacy-based causes of partisan players (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008; 2015). This contributes to its democratic potential in political-economic views. However, scholars (Hallin & Mancini, 2012) studying media systems of different societies observe that when partisan media function commercially, they imbibe characteristics of professional journalism such as the values of impartial journalism that are usually associated with the non-partisan market-driven model despite the centrality of their partisan interests. The findings of this thesis suggest that the intersection of commercially-run news media's partisan interests and the norms of professional journalism affects the partisan system's ability to represent diversity when commercial and partisan models of the news media co-exist. I propose the conceptual framework of "hybrid" partisan model, drawing from Hallin and Mancini's (2012), coinage to account for the changes in the media system when partisan interests of commercially-run players intersect with norms of professional journalism.

In Kolkata's newspaper landscape *Bartaman* and *DS*, despite being run commercially, advocated the interests of anti-industrialisation protests because of their political opposition to the state government. At the other end of Kolkata's political spectrum, the ruling left party's mouthpiece, *GS*, which was also run commercially, performed the traditional function of party propaganda and opposed the protests because these protests challenged the state government's policies of corporate industrialisation in agricultural land. *ABP* and *TOI*, on the other hand, had unsteady political interests and supported the state government because of their economic interests and opposed the protests. Thus there existed differences in commercially-run newspapers' attitude to the protests.

Previous research of media and movements (DiMaggio & Street, 2011; Gitlin, 2013) observe that partisan cleavages of the media system were reflected through differences in corporate-run news media's attitude to movements, with one section of media representing the movements in a sympathetic fashion. This thesis partially supports the observation that commercially-run news media's partisan interests lead to differences of views in the media

system; it found that the differences of the partisan setting were blurred as a section of the commercially-run newspapers, the *ABP* and the *TOI*, renounced their partisan alliances with the state government and changed their attitudes in favour of the anti-industrialisation protests because of the norms of professional journalism such as news values, reasons of credibility, the need to provide information and the government watchdog role. This gives support to the observation that commercially-run media abandon their political alliances when the society is organised and active in a manner independent of their partisan alliances (Porto, 2003). This thesis suggests that the differences or external pluralism in the partisan system do not remain fixed when commercially-run news media are driven by different partisan political and economic interests. When commercially-run, partisan media renounce their political alliances (Porto, 2003) because of the impact of the norms of professional journalism, it also alters the differences of the partisan system. This thesis thus suggests that the norms of professional journalism determine the partisan model's ability to represent "external pluralism" or a diversity of views in the media system.

Scholars taking a political-economic approach warn that partisan system has beneficial results only in competitive markets (Baker, 2006; Curran, 2011). A concentrated market "creates the possibility of an individual decision maker exercising enormous, unequal and hence undemocratic, largely unchecked, potentially irresponsible power" (Baker, 2006, p. 16). This has the potential to skew the partisanship in one direction. However, the findings of this thesis show that the partisanship became skewed in one direction not because of concentrated market but only after a section of the commercially-run newspapers, the *ABP* and the *TOI*, ended their partisan alliance with the state government and changed their attitudes in favour of the anti-industrialisation protests. This raised support for the protests in the partisan system, with most of the selected dailies opposing the state government. Thus the precondition of pluralistic market fails to fully explain the changes and the blurring differences of the partisan system.

It has been argued that political consensus prevails in a partisan system in a highly commercialised setting because of the corporate capitalist structural organisation of the news media, the corporate-run news media's alignment to a global neoliberal economy and the changes of ownership patterns (Curran, 2011). But existing studies also observe that political consensus tends to prevail in the partisan model on core economic or ideological issues in different market conditions such as those of Brazil, Morocco and Britain (Douai, 2009; Curran, 2011; Porto, 2003). Moroccan media, for instance, has a frail economic base and a

less commercialised market (Douai, 2009) when compared with the competitive Brazilian media landscape (Porto, 2003) or highly commercialised British press (Curran, 2011). This thesis complicates this discussion as the findings suggest that the differences of the partisan system were eventually blurred and the partisanship became skewed in one direction in the fragmented market of Kolkata that had a recent history of the market model and had plurality with multiple commercially-run players championing different partisan views. This thesis thus suggests that the changes of the partisan system remain relevant in a discussion of the partisan model's relationship to diversity and argues that the "external pluralism" in a partisan system does not remain fixed when the norms of professional news making intersect with different political and economic interests of commercially-run partisan news media (Waisbord, 2000; 2009; Porto, 2003).

This thesis proposes a new conceptual framework to account for the changes in the partisan system in societies where partisan and commercial models co-exist, drawing from Hallin and Mancini's (2012) coinage of the "hybrid" forms of professional journalism. The "hybrid" partisan model accounts for the changes of the partisan system that occur due to the intersection of "hybrid" forms of professional journalistic practices and different political and economic interests of commercially-run, partisan players. The findings confirm that professionalism exists in "hybrid" and "partial forms" in different partisan settings even though "hybrid" forms do not necessarily translate to the prevalence of objectivity (Hallin & Mancini, 2012; Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2013). The nature of professional journalism of Kolkata's partisan milieu is described as "hybrid" because of the co-existence of commercially-run news media's advocacy-based roles and well-defined partisan interests and the norms of professional news making. The norms of professional journalism such as the need to convey information and news values affected the commercially-run players' partisan interests. This thesis argues that partisan media system should not necessarily be associated with differences and diversity even in competing market conditions. The conceptual framework of "hybrid" partisan model challenges the theoretical dichotomy between the partisan and commercial models based on the roles of advocacy and conveying neutral information as it argues that a hybrid partisan model does not lead to permanent external pluralism in the media system because of the intersection of the norms of professional journalism and partisan interests of commercially-run players.

6.1.1.1. Conceptualising Hybrid Partisan Model

The intersection of commercially-run news media's partisan interests and "hybrid" forms of professional journalism remain central to the theoretical concept of "hybrid" partisan model. Scholars observe that there remain support for certain norms of professional journalism in media systems in different settings where commercially-run news media are defined primarily by the centrality of their partisan interests (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Thus professional journalistic norms, in "hybrid" and partial forms, co-exist with commercially-run news media's partisan interests (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Even though professional journalism was originally intended to act as a shield against the market and to protect news from the commercial interests of the news media, extant literature discusses how professional journalistic norms such as objectivity, news values and the reliance on (elite official government) sources of information result in news coverage that lacks ideological contestation and protects the political and economic status quo (Bennett, 2010; Donsbach, 2010; Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984; Kaplan, 2010; McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009; Shoemaker & Reese, 2012). Thus political-economic studies reiterate the democratic potential of advocacy journalism and the partisan model and suggest that partisan journalism remains more effective than professional journalism (traditionally associated with objectivity and public service) in representing diverse political views and the interests of marginalised groups (Curran, 2007; 2011; McChesney, 2008). However, previous studies also argue that the norms of professional journalism, criticised for contributing to the marginalisation of dissenting groups and views in commercially-run news media, tend to have democratic outcome in times of political crisis (Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984).

This thesis supports this theory only partially. It found that as anti-industrialisation protests gathered momentum, a section of commercially-run newspapers, the *ABP* and *TOI*, took a sympathetic view of the protesters because of professional journalistic norms. These selected dailies abandoned their partisan alliance with the state government as they accommodated dissenting views of the protesters. Professional norms such as news values, the necessity to convey information and the watchdog role encouraged a shift in their attitude towards the protesters and the state government. But this minimised the differences of the partisan system as the partisanship became skewed in one direction in favour of the protests and against the state government. The findings of this thesis thus suggest that professional journalistic norms affect the partisan media's system's ability to reflect a diversity of views

and thus oppose its democratic potential democratic potential. While professional norms such as news values opposed partisan alliances at the protests gathered momentum, they initially played quite a different role. At the initial phase of the protests, different sections of the selected dailies (the pro-government *ABP*, *TOI* and *GS* and the anti-government *Bartaman* and *DS*) opposed and supported the protests because of their partisan interests (support for the state government's economic policy and opposition to the government) as well as for professional norms such as news values. Thus professional journalistic norms did not challenge commercially-run dailies' partisan interests at the initial phase and encouraged the political status quo (the differences of the views in the partisan system). As the protests gathered momentum, the same professional norms such as news values (which earlier protected the status quo and upheld the differences of the partisan system) encouraged the *ABP* and *TOI* to report dissenting views against the state government and thus challenge the status quo as a result of the perceived shift in the public mood. As professional journalistic norms challenged the political status quo at the peak of the protests, the partisanship became skewed in one direction. Thus professional journalistic norms influenced commercially-run dailies' partisan interests and challenged the democratic potential of the partisan system. Shoemaker and Reese's (2012) "Hierarchy of Influences" model suggests that different factors such as newsroom routines, individual journalists' professional norms, ownership and market structures, commercial and technological interests and ideological values influence news content through five layers both at the macro (social systems, institutions and organisational influences) and micro (individual) levels. The findings of this thesis imply that at the time of political crisis micro factors such as professional journalistic routines prevail over macro factors such as commercially-run news media's political ties. Referring to Shoemaker and Reese's (2012) "Hierarchy of Influences" model, the commercially-run news media's partisan interests can be described as an expression of organisational interests as well as an impact at the level of "social institutions" (that is the influence of political interests that remain external to the media organisations) (Shoemaker & Reese, 2012).

6.1.1.1.1. Co-existence of Professional Journalistic Norms and Partisan Interests

News Values Supporting Partisan Interests

This thesis found that there remained support for professional journalistic norms such as news values in Kolkata's newspaper landscape despite the "centrality" of commercially-run newspapers' partisan interests. Professional norms such as news values initially did not contradict the *ABP* and *TOI*'s partisan interests of supporting the state government's economic policies at the initial phase. Therefore, it can be said that professional norms such as news values initially "worked out to satisfy the organization's needs" (Shoemaker & Reese, 2012, p. 10) (commercially-run players' partisan interests). This led to the marginalisation of dissenting farmers in the *ABP* and *TOI*, but supported differences of views, on the whole in the media system, on the issue of anti-industrialisation protests. Initially newspapers such as the *TOI* reported the state government's plans of corporate industrialisation because the plans of big corporate industrial projects such as the proposed small car factory of Tata Motors in West Bengal's agricultural land were perceived as more newsworthy than the oppositional protests in a state that was perceived as being deprived of corporate industrial development. West Bengal lagged behind other Indian states such as Maharashtra and Karnataka in drawing corporate investment in key industrial sectors (Nielsen, 2010). The then-administration led by the CPIM-led left front coalition welcomed corporate capitalist investment in the state's key industrial sector that the Communists historically failed to do. Thus the CPIM-led government and the administration's initiatives of corporate industrialisation held more news values to the *ABP* and the *TOI* because of the importance of the state government's plans in the local political landscape. Banerjee (2007; 2011) observes that the CPIM has been accused of using the administration to consolidate its party base in the countryside, of allowing its party bosses in the districts and villages to control daily administration and state institutions and for its hegemonic grip at every level of civil society. The perceived distance between the party and the government on the issue of corporate industrialisation was perceived as "unusual" in the context of the state's local politics and, therefore, considered as newsworthy by commercially-run dailies such as the *ABP*. Protests, rallies and meetings on any issue were seen as an ordinary feature of Bengal's politics. Thus the anti-industrialisation protests initially held no special significance to commercially-run newspapers such as the *ABP* that traditionally opposed left politics but supported the then Left front coalition's economic policies. The prominence or importance of

an event and the unusual are among the factors that constitute “news values” and typically help journalists predict what the audience would find interesting (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

There also remained support for professional journalistic routines such as news values in other commercially-run dailies such as *Bartaman* and *DS*. These newspapers reported in great detail the news of the growing unity of CPIM’s political opposition and the rift within the left front coalition partners on the issue of acquiring agricultural land for corporate industrial projects in Singur. Bengal’s local political landscape was said to lack a formidable political opposition that could emerge as a viable alternative in the early decades of the party’s rule (Mayers, 1998). Thus the CPIM ended up having hegemonic control in West Bengal’s political map, civil society and every aspect of public life (Banerjee, 2007; 2011). The Congress party, which was the CPIM’s main political opposition in Bengal somewhat compromised in its agenda of challenging the CPIM at state levels after it faced competition in India’s national politics since 1989 and needed alliances for power-sharing at the central government (Mayers, 1998). Thus events such as the CPIM’s political opposition’s growing unity on the issue of agricultural land acquisition were perceived as newsworthy by *Bartaman* and *DS*, which also contributed to their anti-government stance. The news of farmers protesting with brooms and sticks or switching off power or Singur’s women abstaining from cooking as a show of protests also held news values (for the element of “spectacle” in such protest events) to commercially-run dailies such as *Bartaman* that catered primarily to the district readership. This would qualify as “newsworthy” events, perceived as interesting to *Bartaman* and *DS*’ key readership. Thus in this case professional journalistic routines such as news values encouraged commercially-run dailies such as *Bartaman* and *DS*’ anti-government partisan stance. This thesis suggests that professional journalistic norms such as news values encouraged journalists to support commercially-run news media’s partisan interests or organisational interests. This contributed to initial differences in the partisan system.

Centrality Of Partisan Interests Despite Professional Norms

Even though the *ABP*, *TOI*, *Bartaman* and *TOI* showed support for professional journalistic norms such as news values at the initial phase, it can be said that commercially-run newspapers’ partisan interests remained central to the media system at the initial phase of the protests. The *ABP* and the *TOI* reported primarily state government sources while reporting

corporate industrialisation in the initial phase of the protests and thus discredited the cause of the protests. Journalists' reliance on sources of the government has been described in previous studies as a key professional routine, which leads to news that supports the political and economic status quo (Bennett, 2010; Hallin, 1984; Gitlin, 1980; Murray et al., 2008). Journalists' necessity to report the sources of the government has been argued to be one of the factors that contribute to commercially-run news media's misrepresentation or indifference towards dissenting activities that challenge the political and economic status quo (Bennett, 2010; Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984). Murray et al. (2008), while discussing commercially-run news media's coverage of war and anti-war protests, say that professional routines such as the reliance on official sources and news values publicise "official frames of (a) conflict", and thus ignore or discredit challengers (p. 9).

In this study the professional routine of the excessive reliance on official sources advanced the *ABP* and *TOI*'s partisan interests in favour of the state government's economic policy. Hallin (1984) and Gitlin (1980) observe that during American news media's coverage of the Vietnam War in the 1960s protest activities such as anti-war demonstrations in the United States were not endorsed by official sources in the government and the official political opposition and thus initially were not perceived as newsworthy by journalists. Here, however, the *ABP* and *TOI* reported primarily the version of the state government even at a time when the cause of anti-industrialisation protests was endorsed by the state's official political opposition such as the TMC party. Nielsen (2009; 2010) observed that the cause of the protesting farmers of Singur was championed by the state's official political opposition such as the TMC party right from the beginning. At the other end of the spectrum *Bartaman* and *DS* extensively reported the voices of the protesting farmers and emerged as a platform of activists and intellectuals who opposed the CPIM's policy of acquiring agricultural land for corporate industrial projects. This shows the centrality of commercially-run newspapers' partisan interests in Kolkata's newspaper landscape.

6.1.1.1.2. Countering Partisan Interests And Minimising Differences Of A Partisan System

Conveying Information Versus Partisan Journalism

While professional journalistic norms such as news values initially advanced commercially-run dailies' partisan interests, the same professional norms worked against a section of the

dailies' partisan interests as the protests gathered momentum. This thesis found that the *ABP* and *TOI*, showed increased support for professional values such as the necessity to convey information as the industrialisation protests gathered momentum. The necessity to convey information created scope for dissenting views against the state government's economic policies and encouraged sympathetic representation of the protests in the *ABP* and *TOI*. It has been argued in previous studies of professionalism that the tradition of objective journalism centres on journalists' role of imparting "neutral", impartial information (Donsbach, 2010). But objective journalism, criticised for shunning active political engagement, becomes "active" when there arises differences of views among the contending elite (Gans, 2010; Hallin, 1984). It has been argued that objective journalism expands the limits of dissenting views in the news coverage at the time of political crisis (Gitlin (1980; Hallin, 1984). This thesis supports past studies of journalistic professionalism. As the anti-industrialisation protests of Singur and Nandigram gained momentum along with a perceived shift in public mood in favour of the protesters, commercially-run newspapers such as the *ABP* and *TOI* showed greater inclination to convey information of the protesters. The necessity to convey information thus increased possibilities of favourable news of the protesters in the *ABP* and *TOI*. While earlier these newspapers reported primarily the sources of the state government, they narrated the version of both contending parties such as the state government and the political opposition as the protests gathered momentum.

The goal of conveying information has been described as an ideal type of professional journalistic role (Donsbach, 2010). The findings of this thesis suggest that commercially-run newspapers' partisan interests do not necessarily contradict professional values such as that of conveying impartial journalism. This confirms previous studies of professional journalism, which argue that professional values of impartial journalism co-exist with commercially-run news media's partisan interests (Donsbach, 2010; Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Deuze (2005) observes, referring to scholars, that the "subjectivity" tradition of partisan journalism does not necessarily contradict objectivity as "both values can be considered as constitutive elements of a professional identity of journalists" (p. 448). The findings of this thesis support this theory since the *ABP* and *TOI* did not remain completely opposed to the professional value of conveying information despite their partisan support for the state government's economic policy. It is also significant that the commercially-run, party press, *GS*, also showed support for standard journalistic routines such as the need to convey information as it reported how the CPIM's party workers were victimised by the political opposition and a section of

farmers' interest in giving away land and countered the dissenting views against the left front government's economic policy. In this case the goal of conveying information supported its partisan interests. This thesis suggests that commercially-run, partisan newspapers tend to be influenced by professional values such as the necessity to convey impartial information in specific phases of a political event and during political crisis.

News Values Opposing Partisan Interests

As the protests gathered momentum, the *ABP* and *TOI* reported the news of the protesters and dissenting views, which by then had become newsworthy events. Professional routines such as news values are known to systematically disadvantage the cause of movements that challenge powerful economic policies, as McChesney (2015) observes in reference to the coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests. But at the time organised social action news values tend to increase the possibilities of sympathetic representation of oppositional movements in commercially-run news media (Hackett & Carroll, 2006). The findings of this thesis support this observation as the *ABP* and *TOI* reported in great detail the sufferings and anxieties of protesters as they gained momentum. Political events such as the opposition's growing unity against the CPIM's policy and the increasing rift within the left front on the issue of land acquisition were also perceived as newsworthy by the selected dailies in contrast to their previous stance in relation to the state government. Thus news values challenged the *ABP* and *TOI*'s partisan interests of supporting the state government's economic policy. These newspapers reported the views of the political opposition and the protesting farmers, highlighting especially the sufferings and anxieties of protesting farmers. This also remained related to commercial and credibility reasons and commercially-run news media's need to convey information to the public.

Government Watchdog Role

As the protests gained momentum, the *ABP* and *TOI* became critical of the state government because of the professional value of the watchdog role. This also affected their partisan alliance with the state government. As discussed earlier professional journalism in traditional liberal theories reiterate the watchdog role of the press (Curran, 2002). The democratic potential of watchdog journalism is reiterated as it encourages journalists (as "watchdogs",

“news hounds” and “active collectors and disseminators of information” [Deuze, 2005]) to expose issues such as the moral lapses of politicians (Matheson, 2010) or the excesses of political power (Curran, 2002). However, it has been observed that the traditional ideal of the “autonomous” investigative journalism has lost some of its significance in the democratic process “in a world where the media are themselves so powerful that they, in some estimations, form the stage on which much politics is carried out” (Matheson, 2010, p. 83) and there remain “unholy” state-corporate and media alliances (Curran, 2002). In Latin American countries, for instance, investigative or “watchdog journalism” did not simply reflect the changes in the democratic process or press freedom, but was driven by a mix of political, economic and professional reasons (Waisbord, 2000; Matheson, 2010). Vartanova (2012) observed that in post-Soviet Russian media system investigative journalism or the watchdog role encourages journalists to expose only the misdeeds of the Soviet era, while the power excesses of the present era are often ignored. Thus there remains limits in the democratic process of watchdog journalism. This thesis supports this theory as the *ABP* and *TOI* were influenced by the government watchdog role only during a specific period of political crisis. The *ABP* and *TOI* initially neglected the government watchdog role because of their partisan interests in favour of the state government’s economic policy. But as the anti-industrialisation protests gained momentum these dailies were influenced by the watchdog role. This also affected the democratic process as the partisanship became skewed against the government.

This thesis found that the government watchdog role was a key professional value in Kolkata’s newspaper landscape despite commercially-run players’ well-defined partisan interests. Shoemaker and Reese (2012) observe that the dominant ideology of the social order shape the value systems of individual journalists. It can be said that there remained ideological support for the government watchdog role in Kolkata’s newspaper landscape. *Bartaman*, for instance, was driven by the professional goal of exposing the ruling left party’s misrule in the districts and the ruling party’s injustice on farmers whose agricultural land was being acquired for corporate industrial projects. In case of *Bartaman* and *DS*, the partisan anti-government stance was thus fuelled by the professional role of being the government watchdog. Sonwalkar (2002) observes that in the Indian context the strength of the ideas of free press and freedom of expression and belief in the country’s democratic institutions encouraged journalists’ necessity to be critical of the government. The role of the press and journalists turned exceptionally adversarial in the 1970s, especially during the brief period of

Emergency rule when democratic freedoms and civil rights were withheld with imposition of heavy censorship, arrest of journalists and dissolving of the press council. This period witnessed spirited struggle by sections of the press and journalists (Sonwalkar, 2002). The *ABP* and *TOI* took an adversarial attitude to the government in the later phase of the protests, driven by the professional necessity of exposing the injustice of the government on people.

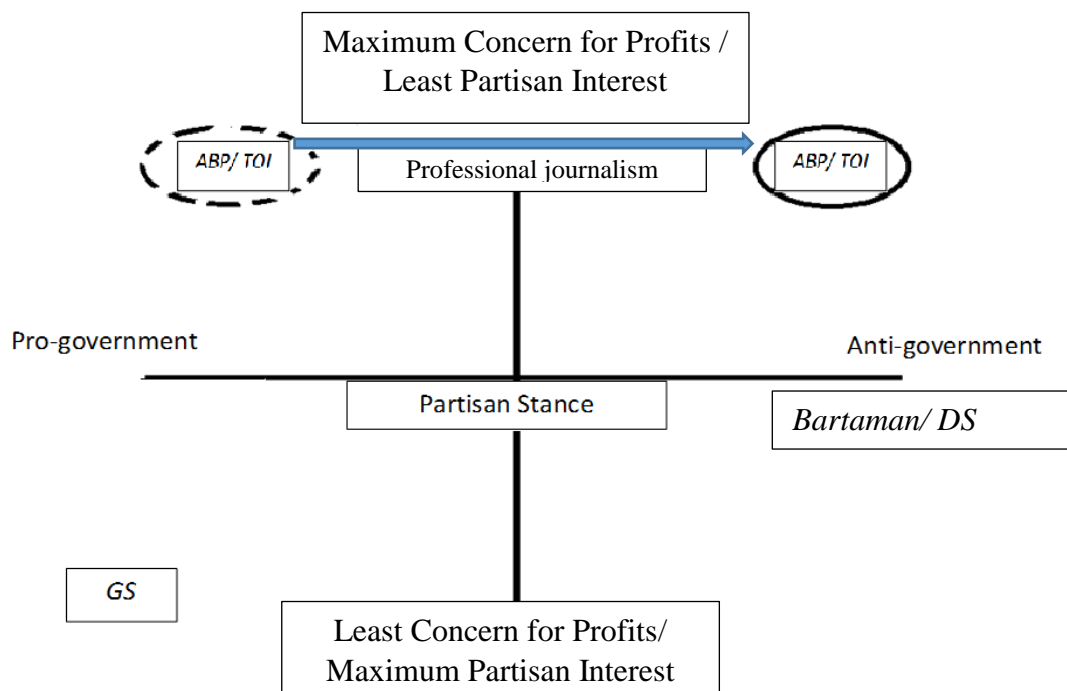
The commercially-run news media's shifting partisan alliances remain central to the concept of a "hybrid" partisan model. Waisbord (2000) observes that partisan newspapers in many contemporary settings champion the political and economic interests of specific administrations and maintain shifting political alliances rather than fixed political identities. It is because of the absence of fixed political identities the partisan alliances are influenced by professional journalistic norms. Drawing Hallin and Mancini's (2012) coinage, the partisan system has been described as "hybrid" because professional journalistic norms co-existed with the commercially-run dailies' partisan interests. Whereas, in an ideal partisan system the news media are influenced primarily by their advocacy-based roles. The "hybrid" partisan model thus considers the influence of professional journalistic norms — the co-existence of advocacy journalism as well as other professional values such as news values and the watchdog role of the press. The "hybrid" partisan model accounts for the changes in the partisan system when a section of commercially-run news media change their partisan alliances and shift from one end to the other end of the political spectrum due to the norms of professional journalism. The *ABP* and *TOI*'s attitude towards the protesters changed from oppositional to sympathetic representation due to norms of professional journalism as the protests gained momentum and drew public support. *Bartaman* and *DS*, on the other hand, already accommodated the news of the dissenters and championed their cause. Therefore, there was no significant shift in *Bartaman* and *DS*' partisan interests. But as discussed earlier this section of commercially-run dailies also showed support for professional norms such as news values and the government watchdog role. Referring to media systems in East European countries such as post-Soviet Russia and Poland, Vartanova (2012) observes that there remains tension between the news media's political role and the goal of conveying neutral information. It has been observed that certain sections of the news media, for instance business publications in Russian media system, show greater propensity than others to adopt "international" professional norms (Vartanova, 2012). Thus it has been argued that "[p]rofessionalization in Russian journalism has been an uneven process across different segments of the media system" (Vartanova, 2012, p. 138). This thesis contributes to this

discussion and suggests that professional journalistic norms prevail in multiple forms in different sections of commercially-run news media in a media system and have different outcomes in times of a political crisis.

The “hybrid” partisan model in Figure 6.1. below shows the movement of the *ABP* and *TOI* from the pro-government to the anti-government political stance. The dotted box shows the pro-government position of the dailies, while the solid box shows that their position shifted to the anti-government political spectrum due to norms of professional journalism. The *ABP* and *TOI*’s partisan alliance with the state government shifts due to professional journalism. With the *ABP* and *TOI*’s movement from one end to the other end of the political spectrum (as shown in Figure 6.1), all the selected dailies except the *GS* remain in the anti-government political spectrum. This shows that the partisanship is skewed against the government.

FIGURE 6.1.

“HYBRID” PARTISAN MODEL



Dotted circle: *ABP* and *TOI*’s initial pro-government position; Solid circle: *ABP* and *TOI*’s later anti-government position; Arrow: Movement across political spectrum due to professional journalism

The “hybrid” partisan model thus accounts for the changes in a partisan system as one section of the selected dailies shifts their partisan stance and move to a different end of the political spectrum due to the norms of professional journalism. Professional journalistic norms influence commercially-run dailies’ partisan interests to minimise the differences in the partisan system on any given issue. The “hybrid” partisan model thus shows the intersection of commercially-run news media’s partisan interests and the norms of professional journalism, which alters the partisan system’s ability to represent differences.

6.1.2. Limited Impact Of Profit In Ownership Models And Lack of Diversity

This thesis investigated how the selected dailies’ interests of profits affected their partisan interests. The commercially-run dailies, which had different partisan interests in relation to the state government, were owned by family-run media conglomerates and by other diverse groups such as individuals and a leftist political party. The diverse ownership models were seen as the feature of a pluralistic setting in this thesis. Media ownership remains at the heart of the political-economic critique of the commercial model (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009; Picard, 2000). As commercially-run entities it is not unusual for the news media to pursue profits. But it has been argued that when the news media become a part of large corporations they treat news simply as a “product for sale” (McManus, 2009). The aggravated concern of profits of large media conglomerates encourages the intrusion of the goals of business into the editorial, blurring the church-state wall boundary (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; McManus, 2009; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; 2012). The media corporations’ increasing size and aggravated concern for profits contradict political participation (McManus, 2009). Thus dailies, owned by media conglomerates, were expected to be influenced more by concerns for profits rather than by partisan interests when compared with individually-owned, commercially-run dailies and the party press.

The thesis found that most of the selected dailies, which were owned diversely, advanced their partisan causes through the news coverage rather than pursuing profits. Thus partisan interests beat most of the selected dailies’ goal of making profits. But the differences of views in the partisan system diminished even though the selected dailies were influenced

more by their partisan political interests rather than the goal of pursuing profits. McChesney (2008; 2015) argues that diverse ownership models such as party-owned news media contribute to political diversity in the media system as they are expected to champion partisan causes rather than just pursue the goal of profits. This thesis argues that diverse ownership models do not necessarily translate to political diversity in a partisan system even though diversely-owned dailies such as a party press and individually-owned dailies are influenced more by partisan interests rather than profit-driven strategies.

This thesis found that the impact of profit-maximising strategies remained less not only in the news coverage of the commercially-run, party press (*GS*) and individually-owned dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) but also in a daily such as the *ABP* that was part of a family-run media conglomerate. The selected dailies' partisan interests in most of the cases reflected the proprietors' ideological values because of which the impact of profit-maximising strategies remained less in the news coverage. Referring to Chakravartty and Roy's (2013) comparative study of partisan broadcast news media across Indian states, it can be said that the proprietors' ideological values exceeded the market-based criteria of profit-maximisation and efficiency. This finding also confirms Waisbord's (2009) observation that the partisan media's political causes represent proprietors' ideological values in non-Western settings. Yet the limited impact of the profits and the strong role of the partisan interests in commercially-run, party press (*GS*), individually-owned dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) and even in a daily such as the *ABP*, owned by a family-run media conglomerate, did not translate to differences of views in the media system. Therefore, the partisan model's ability to represent differences and diversity in the media system does not relate to the impact of commercialisation or commercially-run news media's necessity to pursue profit-based goal.

Political-economic studies of media ownership (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McChesney, 2008; Mosco, 2009; Murdock & Golding, 2005; Picard, 2005) observe that when the news media are treated solely as economic enterprises within corporate entities, they primarily pursue the goal of profit over other interests. These studies argue that large media corporations and media conglomerates' goal of bottom-line profit affects the democratic functioning of the news media and the public interest goal of journalism (Compaine, 2000; Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Mosco, 2009; Picard, 2005).

This thesis found that the *ABP*, despite being owned by a family-run, media conglomerate, was driven more by the political cause of championing the state government's

economic policies of corporate industrialisation in the state rather than the goal of profit-maximisation. The goal of profits was less pronounced in the news coverage of the *ABP* when compared with *TOI* even though both newspapers were run by family-run media conglomerates. The *ABP*'s partisan interests reflected the family proprietor-editor's personal ideological values, which prevented the direct intrusion of advertising into the editorial. This implies that the family owner's ideological values tend to exceed the market-based criteria of efficiency and bottom line profit and encourage political ties even when news media are part of large media conglomerates. But the findings suggest that when the family owner's ideological values override the goal of profits it does not necessarily translate to political diversity. In previous studies family owners are credited with supporting editorial integrity and the public interest goals of journalism, the needs of shareholders (Tifft & Jones, 1999). This case study shows that the family owner's personal ideological values triumphed over the media conglomerate's profit-maximising strategies to extend the daily's partisan agenda.

McChesney (2008; 2015) argues that the presence of news media, owned by leftist parties and groups, contribute to a diversity of voices and help overcome the democratic deficits of the corporate media system. Party ownership is thus seen as conducive for a pluralistic media environment and advocacy-based journalism and beneficial for the interests of diverse social groups (McChesney, 2008; 2015). The presence of diverse ownership models was seen as a scope of diversity of views because profit-based logic was expected to be less pronounced than their political ties in case of a left party press (*GS*) and individually-owned, commercially-run dailies (*Bartaman* and *DS*) than in corporate-run newspapers (*ABP* and *TOI*). Despite being run commercially, the editorial policy of the left party daily *GS* was not driven by profit-maximising strategies. The official position of the CPIM determined the editorial policy of the party paper because of which the impact of economic rationality remained weak. However, the left party daily *GS* represented the official position of the CPIM rather than those of diverse social groups such as those of the protesting farmers. "The divergence of the party's (the CPIM's) own interest from the interests of the basic classes led to brutal suppression of popular protests as witnessed in Singur and Nandigram" (Bhattacharya, 2011, p. 71). Thus multiple partisan newspapers pursued different political interests in Kolkata's newspaper landscape and the goal of profit and economic rationality of the commercial model remained less pronounced in comparison to the commercially-run dailies' political causes. Yet this did not translate to political diversity and permanent differences in the partisan system. Thus political-economic explanations of market and

ownership structures do not fully explain the democratic deficits of the partisan media in certain pluralistic settings. This thesis suggests that commercially-run news entities' goal of making profits does not relate to external pluralism in the media system in pluralistic settings.

6.1.3. Hybrid Professionalism — Co-existence Of Advocacy And Information

This thesis also investigated how individual journalists' role of advocacy and shared professional values influenced the news coverage. The tradition of advocacy journalism was expected to raise support for disadvantaged social groups such as protesters. At the same time journalists' support for shared professional norms was expected to impact the news coverage of protests. This thesis found that journalists of Kolkata showed support for the anti-industrialisation protests because of their advocacy-based roles. But they reported favourably of the protests also because of their professional necessity to convey information. Thus advocacy journalism and the shared professional value of conveying information, which are seen as contradictory goals of journalism, fulfilled the common purpose of raising support for protesters in Kolkata's newspapers. This also minimised the differences of the partisan system. The findings suggest that the tradition of advocacy journalism does not necessarily remain opposed to the norm of conveying information. The co-existence of advocacy journalism and shared professional values of conveying information encourages the practice of "hybrid" forms of professional journalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). This, however, minimises the differences of the partisan system.

The goal of advocacy and conveying information are seen as contradictory goals of journalism (McNair, 2009). The purpose of advocacy journalism is to champion the interests of social groups, typically those denied "powerful spokesmen" (Waisbord, 2009). Objective journalism, on the other hand, has been criticised for protecting the interests of the elite, for encouraging the political and economic status quo and marginalising dissenting views (Gitlin; 1980 Kaplan, 2010; McChesney, 2008). It has also been argued that the norms of objectivity translate to lack of political engagement (Hallin, 1984). However, even though professional norms such as the goal of imparting neutral information, which remains an integral aspect of objective journalism, ordinarily disadvantage marginalised causes, it has been argued that the same professional values encourage journalists to report favourably of diverse social groups

at the time of organised social action (Gitlin, 1980; Hallin, 1984; Hackett & Carroll 2006). The findings of this thesis confirm this observation.

Journalists of Kolkata's partisan press argued on behalf of the protesting farmers as they perceived themselves as "activist-journalists". But journalists reported favourably of the protests also because of their professional goal of sharing information. The model of advocacy journalism is perceived to be different from the principles of "professional journalism", the "gatekeeper model" that is guided by the ideals of objectivity, fairness and public service (Waisbord, 2009). But the findings of this thesis suggest that journalists' advocacy-based role and the goal of conveying information do not necessarily oppose each other and can co-exist to fulfil the common function of raising support for the protests in a partisan system. This thesis thus argues that the co-existence of the goal of advocacy and information dissemination translates to "hybrid" form of journalistic professionalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2012) when partisan and commercial interests co-exist. Scholars observe that journalists in most parts of the world show allegiance to certain commonly agreed professional values even though this does not necessarily translate to objectivity (Schudson & Anderson, 2009). This thesis confirm this observation. Journalists' professional value of sharing information triggered a shift in *ABP* and *TOI*'s attitude to the protests, which skewed the partisanship in favour of the anti-industrialisation protests and opposed to the government. This thesis thus suggests that "hybrid" forms of professionalism do not necessarily translate to a diversity of views in the partisan system when advocacy and information-driven journalistic roles fulfil similar function in the partisan system (Hallin & Mancini, 2012).

6.2. Theoretical Implications And Contribution

This thesis suggests that there remains support for professional journalism in "hybrid" forms in partisan media settings that have a recent history of the market model despite the "centrality" of commercially-run news media's partisan interests and advocacy-based roles (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). The norms of professional journalism determine the democratic process of the models of partisan media that co-exist with the commercial model in pluralistic settings. Thus the partisan model's ability to contribute to the democratic process and represent external pluralism in the media landscape and diversity remains dependent on

professional journalistic norms (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). In theories of political economy market-driven news media's necessity to pursue profits over social and political ties is seen as a key feature that counters the democratic potential of journalism (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; Barnhurst & Nerone, 2009; McChesney, 2008). But these theories draw primarily from the experiences of advanced, industrial economies such as the United States and Britain that have a long history of corporate capitalist economy and relatively less predominance of the news media's social and political ties (Hallin, 2000). This thesis suggests that the limited impact of commercially-run news media's profit-based criteria over their partisan causes do not necessarily contribute to the democratic process.

This thesis argues that the presence of the norms of professional journalism in "hybrid" forms affect the democratic process. It has been observed that when commercially-run news media fulfil political roles, it may not necessarily translate to external pluralism in the media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). The explanation of market structures fail to fully explain the lack of diversity of the partisan model in multiple settings such as Morocco, Brazil and Britain (Curran, 2011; Douai, 2009; Porto, 2003;). This thesis contributes to this discussion by suggesting that the norms of professional journalism determine the partisan model's ability to represent external pluralism in the media system. Political-economic studies ignore the impact of professional journalism in the democratic process. Marxist analysis underplays the influence of journalistic professionalism in media production (Curran et al., 1982). Political-economic studies thus focus exclusively on economic explanations such as the impact of market and ownership structures to account for the democratic deficits of corporate-run news media (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001; McManus, 2009; Picard, 2000). Based on this discussion I suggest that political economic theories must bridge the gap between the influence of the market and ownership-related factors and the micro-level of influences such as the norms of professional journalism. The norms of professional journalism are known to find support in multiple societies in different forms (Schudson & Anderson, 2009; Waisbord, 2013; Weaver, 2009).

The conceptual framework of the "hybrid" partisan model, proposed in this thesis, seeks to bridge the gap between macro factors such as commercially-run news media's partisan interests and the impact of micro factors such as hybrid forms of professional journalism and the norms of professional news making. This conceptual framework suggests that micro influences such as professional journalistic norms affect macro factors such as commercially-run news media's partisan interests and thus influences the partisan system's

democratic potential when commercial and partisan models co-exist. The “hybrid” partisan model’s ability to contribute to the democratic process remains dependent on the norms of professional journalism. The conceptualisation of professional journalism needs to be revisited on the basis of this discussion. In political-economic views professional journalism that is conflated primarily with the values of objectivity and the “gatekeeper” model of news production is not seen as a desirable aspect of the democratic process (Curran, 2007; McChesney, 2008; Waisbord, 2009). But it would be challenging to evaluate the role of professional journalism in ethical terms. This thesis suggests that, on one hand, the norms of professional journalism defeats the partisan model’s ability to reflect differences of views in the media system. But, on the other hand, the norms of professional journalism and news production raise support for diverse social groups such as protesters in the media system at the time of movements as a section of commercially-run players renounce their partisan alliances. Therefore it would be useful to conceptualise professional journalism as an inherent rules of the field or the specific sphere of journalism (Benson, 2008). Theories of political economy reiterate the importance of the collective action of “media workers” or the role of unionisation in encouraging the democratic process (Mosco, 2009; 2011). But it can be said that the success of the collective action of organised social forces such as trade unions would remain dependent on their ability to imbibe the rules of the profession.

Policy Implications

This research shows that professional journalism finds support in “hybrid” forms in multiple global settings that have a strong tradition of partisan press. This reiterates the importance of the process of professionalisation and training of journalists. Institutions such as press councils have a role in encouraging professionalism. Research also shows that professionalism does not necessarily translate to Anglo-American values of objective journalism. The concept of professional journalism needs to be revisited on the basis of this research. Brewin (2013), referring to scholars, calls for an “open acknowledgement on the part of journalists of a bias — a bias not for any particular political party or movement but for democracy itself, and the maintenance of a healthy democratic discourse” (p. 225). This conceptualisation of professional journalism would translate to better democratic processes in societies that have the tradition of partisan media and advocacy.

Limitations

The sample of this case study had some limitations. The exclusion of non-commercial, partisan news entities in the sample, for instance those run by radical left parties of Kolkata, as a point of contrast to commercially-run, partisan mainstream newspapers can be seen as a limitation. The non-commercial partisan media make for a point of contrast to commercially-run partisan media. The non-commercial partisan can be described as “representative media”. A varied sample of newspapers could not be included for the limits in the scope of this study. Kolkata’s newspaper market was fragmented and accommodated multiple players due to the split of the readership in urban areas and the district. But the state did not intervene enough to promote diversity in the mainstream media market through revenue support. Such state-led intervention is known to be common in Scandinavian media markets that are defined by diversity policies of the state (Baker, 2006). The absence of state-led diversity policies can be seen as a limitation of the pluralism of Kolkata’s newspaper market. The qualitative interviews and thematic analysis, the key qualitative methods for this research, was done by a single researcher. To address this shortcoming I relied on previous studies of media and social movements to formulate the themes. This thesis acknowledges that the researcher’s subjective values have influenced the identification of the themes and the process of qualitative interview.

Suggestions For Further Research

This thesis found that the norms of professional journalism determines the external pluralism of the partisan system. The differences of the partisan system were blurred as one section of the commercially-run dailies temporarily abandoned their partisan alliances. This raises the question whether multiple partisan players in the media system respond differently to professional journalistic norms. Future studies can explore the relationship between ownership model and the impact of professional journalistic norms. The interplay of partisan interests and professional norms in non-commercial ownership models such as publicly funded news media, trust, charity-owned or non-profit news entities deserves attention for future research (Christians & Nordenstreng, 2004; Picard & Weezel, 2008).

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- Basu openly expresses displeasure on Singur incident. (2006, May 27). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.
- State government uncomfortable due to spontaneous opposition. (2006, May 25). *Dainik Statesman*, p. 1.
- An unnecessary controversy. (2006, May 29). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 6.
- Farmers won't give land in Singur at any cost. (2006, May 29). *Bartaman*, p. 6.
- Promise of more employment for the poor. (2006, May 29). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and p. 7.

It won't be difficult to get land for car factory: Biman Basu. (2006, May 30). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and p. 7.

Industry, not land reforms, is revolution for Left. (2006, July 10). *The Times of India*. p. 3.

No festivities in Singur to protest land acquisition. (2006, September 1). *Bartaman*, p. 1.

Tata factory can happen in Dankuni, Mamata makes alternative proposal. (2006, September 11). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Singur farmers will not be allowed to construct houses if they oppose. (2006, September, 16). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1 and p. 5.

Bajmelia, Beraberi bursting in anger, unhappiness and anxiety. (2006, September 23). *Dainik Statesman*, p. 1.

Cheque distribution complete under close supervision; discontent in Singur on police crackdown. (2006, September, 27). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Despite being [opposition leader] Mamata's ally Congress is not against the Tatas. (2006, September, 28). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Please make the Tatas stay, Congress sends letter to Buddha. (2006, September, 29). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Party workers quitting the CPIM for their land being taken away forcibly. (2006, September, 30). *Bartaman*, p. 1.

No-cooking day observed in Singur homes. (2006, October, 3). *Dainik Statesman*, p. 1.

Strike faces stumbling block at the heart of Singur, 60 farmers sell land. (2006, October 10). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1 and p. 7.

Tata factory will happen in Singur, CM remains firm. (2006, October 10). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and 2.

State had to compete to bring in the Tatas. (2006, October 10). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and 2.

Strike faces stumbling block at the heart of Singur, 60 farmers sell land. (2006, October 10). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Industrial board's camp started in Singur with the goal of job creation. (2006, October 11). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and p. 7.

State would release a statement on development policy. (2006, October 19). *Ganashakti*, p. and p. 2.

Tata and Salim given rebates, with extra tax on common people. (2006, November 5). *Bartaman*, p. 1.

Tatas to go ahead with small car plant. (2006, November 26). *The Times of India*, p. 1.

Land given to (private) promoters (for real estate) in the name of industry. (2006, November 30). *Dainik Statesman*, p. 1.

Land given to (private) promoters (for real estate) in the name of industry. (2006, November 30). *Dainik Statesman*, p. 1 and p. 3.

The administration progresses with work in Singur by managing dissent. (2006, December 3). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1 and p. 5.

Chief minister Buddha wants to discuss with Singur with the opposition. (2006, December 4). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

CM ready to talk. (2006, December 5). *The Times of India*, p. 1.

Mulaylam [chief minister of a north Indian state] too wants to give land, sends letter to the Tatas. (2006, December 5). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Angry farmers hoisting black flags at home. (2006, December 7). *Bartaman*, p. 1.

Industrialisation essential for the progress of history: chief minister. (2007, January 4). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and p. 2.

Green Light. (2007, January 4). *The Times of India*, p. 1 and p. 4.

The CPIM waiting for the tension to subside. (2007, January, 7). *Bartaman*, p. 6.

We won't escape, declares Mr Buddha. (2007, January, 8). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

CPIM leadership supported party criminals from behind. (2007, January, 8). *Bartaman*, p. 6.

Peace prevails in Nandigram on condition that the police won't enter. (2007, January, 6). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Despite terror Nandigram wants industry. (2007, January 9). *Ganashakti*, p. 1 and 7.

Supporters deserted the party, the CPIM had no clue. (2007, January 9). *Anandabazar Patrika*, p. 1.

Bullets leave trail of queries. (2007, March 16). *The Times of India*, p. 1.

APPENDIX A

List of Interviewees

Interviewees	Designation	Purpose of Interview
1. S. Sen	Resident Editor, <i>TOI</i>	Understanding <i>TOI</i> 's economic policies, profit-based interests, political role, news production process and journalistic professional role
2. S. Roy	Chief of News Bureau, <i>TOI</i>	Understanding <i>TOI</i> 's economic policies, profit-based interests, political role, news production process and journalistic professional role
3. N. Banerjee	Political Editor, <i>TOI</i>	Understanding <i>TOI</i> 's economic policies, profit-based interests, political role, news production process and journalistic professional role
4. Sl. Sen	Correspondent, <i>TOI</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, advertisers' influence, professional autonomy
5. C. Mandal	Correspondent, <i>TOI</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, advertisers' influence

6. S. Niyogi	Correspondent, <i>TOI</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production
7. S. Bhattacharya	Correspondent, <i>ABP</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, advertisers' influence
8. D. Bandopadhyay	Correspondent, <i>ABP</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, role of proprietor, advertisers' influence
9. Prasun Roy	Senior Correspondent, <i>ABP</i>	Journalists' professional roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, role of proprietor, advertisers' influence
10. D. Ghosh Thakur	Chief Reporter, <i>ABP</i>	Understanding <i>ABP</i> 's economic policies, profit-based interests, political role, news production process and journalistic professional role
11. H. Banerjee	News Editor, <i>ABP</i>	Understanding <i>ABP</i> 's economic policies, profit-based interests, political role, news production process and journalistic professional role
12. A. Mandal	Correspondent, <i>ABP</i>	Journalists' professional

			roles, news coverage of protests, news production, impact of editorial policy, advertisers' influence
13. D. Chakraborty	News Editor, <i>GS</i>		Party policy, News production
14. A. Dutta	Deputy Editor, <i>GS</i>		Party policy, commercial interests, news production
15. K. Sarkar	Correspondent, <i>GS</i>		Party policy, commercial interests, news production, professional journalistic role
16. C. Das	Correspondent, <i>GS</i>		Party policy, commercial interests, news production, professional journalistic role
17. R. Sengupta	Special Correspondent, <i>Bartaman</i>		Editorial policy of <i>Bartaman</i> , owner's role, news production, history of Kolkata's newspapers; professional journalistic role
18. P. Ghosal	Special Correspondent, <i>Bartaman</i>		Editorial policy of <i>Bartaman</i> , owner's role, news production, history of Kolkata's newspapers; professional journalistic role
19. A. Sarkar	Correspondent, <i>Bartaman</i>		Editorial policy of <i>Bartaman</i> , owner's role, news production, history of Kolkata's newspapers; professional journalistic role
20. T. Mallik	District Correspondent, <i>Bartaman</i> ;		Editorial policy of <i>Bartaman</i> , owner's role, news production, professional journalistic

		role, news coverage of protests
21. R. Jain	Managing Editor and proprietor, <i>The Statesman</i>	Management policies, political interests, economic policy, news production of <i>The Statesman</i> . Kolkata's newspaper market trends
22. M. Ghosh	Editor, <i>DS</i>	Political Role of <i>DS</i> , business interests, news production
23. A. Ghosh	Chief Reporter, <i>DS</i>	Political Role of <i>DS</i> , business interests, news production, professional role, coverage of protests
24. S. Mitra	Senior Reporter, <i>DS</i>	Political Role of <i>DS</i> , business interests, news production, professional role, coverage of protests
25. S. Saha	District Reporter, <i>DS</i>	Political Role of <i>DS</i> , business interests, news production, professional role, coverage of protests
26. Rajagopal	News Editor, <i>ABP Group</i>	Editorial, management policy of <i>ABP group</i>
27. K. Basu	Senior Correspondent, <i>ABP Group</i>	Professional role of journalists in Kolkata
28. D. Purohit	Senior Correspondent, <i>ABP Group</i>	Professional role of journalists in Kolkata
29. S. Bhattacharya	Correspondent, <i>ABP</i>	Professional role of journalists in Kolkata
30. C. Chakraborty	District Reporter, <i>ABP</i>	Professional role of journalists in Kolkata
31. D. Bagchi	<i>Sangbad Pratidin</i>	Professional role of

		journalists in Kolkata
32. S. Maitra	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	Professional role of journalists in Kolkata
33. A. Mukherjee	Senior correspondent, <i>Aajkal</i>	History of Kolkata's newspapers, partisan role
34. A. Dasgupta	Proprietor-editor, <i>Aajkal</i>	History and market of Kolkata's newspapers, partisan role
35. S. Datta-Ray	Former editor, <i>The Statesman</i>	History of Kolkata's newspapers, partisan role
36. S. Banerjee	Former journalist, <i>The Statesman</i>	History of Kolkata's newspapers, partisan role,
37. B. Chatterjee	Advertising and Marketing Director, <i>ABP</i>	Kolkata's newspaper market
38. A. Dasgupta	Advertising and Marketing Director, <i>Aajkal</i>	Kolkata's newspaper market

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General Introductory Questions

1. How long have you worked as a journalist? How long did you work in the present job?
2. Do you have any educational background of journalism?
3. What got you interested in the profession?
4. What qualities do you think are essential for journalists in Kolkata to be good at their job?
5. Do you see it to be your role to be critical of the government?
6. Is it necessary to criticise the government to serve the public?
7. Is it especially important for journalists to take a neutral/ impartial approach?
8. How often can you report subjects of your choice?
9. Do your personal/ political ideologies/ politics sentiments affect your role as a journalist?

News Production, Professional Values and Protests

10. Did your newspaper have an editorial policy on the issue of Singur and Nandigram's protests?
11. How did it impact your daily coverage at the time?
12. Did you agree with that stand? Was it possible to go against that stance in the news coverage?
13. Did you ever end up getting involved with the protests while covering them? Did you sympathise? Did that impact how you reported?
14. Did your personal political values/ ideologies impact how you reported the protests?
15. Why did you ignore xxx news while you covered more of xxx news?
16. What was the owner's/ business division's role? Did it vary especially during the protests?
17. How often do you report subjects of your preference? Was it any different during the protests?