

Exploring Scopes Of Post-Covid Language Promotional Literature For Odia Language

Rudranarayan Mohapatra
P.G. Department of Odia,
Utkal University, Vanivihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
E-mail: rudrautkal@gmail.com

Abstract

It is said that publishing a book is just half of a glass, and promoting to such an extent that every reader tells about it is the other half. Therefore, promotional literatures have a great value attached to any product. And present 'Language promotional literature (LPL)' deviating from its traditional style and voice comparatively inclined towards Technology, Social media, promotional and reading sessions. However, it seems that, the current regional language publishers of India not worried and/or not aware up these transformative components minimizing language promotion as compared to 'Most spoken languages' of world. Therefore, the present project undertakes a study to find out the idealistic features for regional LPL and to prepare a model LPL for Odia language as the primary catalyst of this paper.

Key Words: Promotional Literature, Odia Language, Book Publishers, Social media, Cover page

1. INTRODUCTION:

Large numbers of new literatures in different language are introduced into the market every day. Writers and publishers of the literary books use 'Language promotional literatures (LPLs)' as a major marketing tool to promote their new piece of literature. LPLs are claimed to provide vital literary information and are being utilized to convince literary readers to read and/or purchase the book and to prescribe the new books to other readers. Many a times, it is the only source on which a buyer or sellers of the book depend on for updating their knowledge about the existing and novel literature. Such marketing influences Readers buying and prescribing behavior with or without benefitting the fellow reader. Therefore, many success publishers prepare their separate sales pocket for different genres, for sighting reader's behavior. In contrast, a reader's comfort zone usually lies in reading a book in his/her mother tongue or home language. And only through the home language one can effectively express one's emotions and connect the heart, mind and imagination. According to Google-KPMG report published in 2017 "Language learning courses have seen a much higher adoption in comparison to other hobby related courses." (1) However as the time changes, and to present pandemic of Covid-19, Indian publishing industry has a dynamic transformation, and "Marketing has gone completely digital and possibly witnessing the most interesting innovations in the industry so far - from digital book launches to interviews and discussions happening in new formats." (2) Therefore, competitively, the regional language book publishers and sellers including Odia language book publishers have to adopt the changing nature of LPL well equipped and coped with technology and techniques.

2. WHAT IS PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE?

According to Collins Dictionary, "Literature is Literature is written information produced by people who want to sell you something or give you advice." And "Promotional' used as adjective phrase to material, events, or ideas are designed to increase the sales of a product or service. Therefore, "Promotional literature" is linked to business literature or literature for business and many also named it as 'Marketing Literature' or 'Good sales literature'.

Successful layout of promotional material begins with a definition of the purpose of the piece. Businesses create promotional printed and Internet-based materials to support sales and marketing efforts, and a central promotional message dictates the layout. It is built around delivering the message. Promotional literature takes many forms: a brochure, booklet, newsletter, blog, postcard or

page on a website. Designers keep the central message and target audience in mind to ensure that the layout serves its purpose. Therefore, a well-executed layout on printed or electronic pages clearly communicates a message on behalf of a business owner, marketer or manager. In other, it terms as sales literature including “Booklets, brochures, catalogs, charts, manuals, material safety data sheets (MSDS), price lists, press clippings, press releases, statutory approval certificates, technical data sheets, testimonials from satisfied customers, test results, etc., used by a firm in its sales promotion routines.”(3) However, the promotional literature today has undergone major translations from its early forms to trade marks, symbols on objects to voice and lyrics with the changing nature of people’s mindset and social media.

3. OBJECTIVE:

Language promotional literatures (LPLs) are used as a promotional tool to advertise new peace of Literature or Literary books in a particular language entering the market to readers. The objective of the present study is to evaluate the accuracy of LPLs by using the Language Book publishing criteria. There are three broad objectives that this Initiative is intended to serve:

- To create an environment where New-Readers are encouraged to integrate books and the joy of reading into their daily lives;
- To improve access to books and foster reading;
- To support the regional language Book Policy in Multilingual Country like India.

4. METHODS:

As we defined here, the LPLs are the form of Preface of the book, or external flyers, leaflets, and brochures or cover page of the books those are collected from various literary figures or writers which are available various media coverage especially at Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

- For this an observational study has been conducted for one month’s specifically taking book promotion advertisements in different Odia Newspapers along with additional leaflets if any for promotion of certain books.
- With this it is nothing to be more say the book’s cover page, preface are the primary LPL for our research.
- Again, special comments are also collected from students and professors of different departments regarding the availability of Odia books in their discipline excluding the subject Odia language & literature.
- As the forth criteria for our LPL is the replay and thought of the Odia language & literature learners towards the Odia subject.
- Literary Awards and Authors profile are one of the USP of book promotion.

5. Literature Survey:

The Origin of Promotional literature is not new. The Origins of English Promotional Literature for America, 1553-1625 (1962) is a milestone PhD thesis in this regard. (4) However Promotional literature or Marketing Literature as a evolving discipline is now further becomes popular in western countries. It reflects the changing social, economic and cultural environment's impact on genre, format, packaging, authorship and reading. Claire Squires argues, 'Marketing does not simply sell books, it constitutes their meaning' (2007). (5) With this, the term as much popular in Pharmaceutical industry, are not such in language and literature domain but gradually further reshaping itself as the separate discipline by literary people.

“Despite this and other lacunae, Nielsen estimates the Indian book market to be worth US\$ 6.76 billion, predominantly consisting of educational books. Nielsen further suggests the Indian book market is all set to grow at a whopping pace – a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19.3 % till 2020. India has over 15,000 publishers, of whom around 9,000 are officially listed. Even a decade ago three out of four youngsters used to be illiterate. Today less than one out of four cannot read and

write. Considering a population of 1.3 billion of which over 500 million are below twenty, it is estimated that India added around 250 to 300 million new students in the past decade.”(6)

As per the endangered language study, one language dies in every 14 days as the speaking communities are abandoning their native tongues in favor of English, French or Spanish. And the same also be implemented to Odia language, i.e. its own people and society have a less respect in heart to their own language. Young writer Saqti Mohanty, author of ‘Ardhasatya’ and ‘Casino’, said only a few copies of popular Odia writers sell but demand for English novels is in lakhs. “Lack of quality literature, cinema, music and journalism as well as absence of pride in language and influence of orthodox minds is symptoms of a dying language.”(7)

However in contrast, as in last two decades, the promotional steps taken by different Govt., localization of foreign language books, organizing different book fairs for the promotion of regional literature and the huge crowd attracted to these event, questioning the myth that the culture of reading is fading away from our society. Sandip Somany, President- Elect, FICCI and Vice Chairman & Managing Director, HSIL Ltd., has said, “Within the Indian languages, Hindi controls about 35% of the market, Malayalam 8%, Bengali 6%, Marathi 4% and others 47%. There is a rich literature in these respective languages, which is consumed by their dedicated consumers. There is huge opportunity for publishers to venture into publishing in these languages, and also look at translating some of the work in to English and other languages to reach out to wider audience,” (8) However, as gone through the variety of reading, ranging from literary books to philosophical books, cultural books to political or scientific books in regional language; it only realized that anything that missing is the taste of readability of these regional literatures.

A similar finding was reported in other studies. This suggests that Book promotional companies are more involved in establishing a commercial relationship with the media and other literary eminent fellows wherein ethical educational aspect is compromised. Presently many literary promotion organizations like “*Poets & Writers Magazine*” are forming and tackling the marketing plan to get the attention a writer’s work deserves, including

To promote the Odia language in different spheres of life, the Odisha govt. has launched a portal as Odia Virtual Academy, (www.ova.gov.in) from October 26, 2018 in order to enhancing the visibility of Odia language and literature in the digital space.

6. SAMPLE COLLECTION & ANALYSIS:

To analyze the problem and to reach a microscopic solution, we have gone through a sample survey of book promotion components. As our analysis process we choose 100 numbers of Odia language books published within Odisha and of Odia literature domain in last twenty years, i.e. from the year 2021 to 2020 as the random sample basis. And found that, rather than the other region of Odisha, specifically the publishers belongs to twin city Cuttack and Bhubaneswar are more dominant in Odia book publishing and marketing than the other region of Odisha. As our survey the number of books catered respect to publishers. Though this sample may vary in the large scale promotional literature market analysis, however, it is revealed that more than 70% of Odia literature publishing market is dominated by five major players such as Odisha Book Store, Friends Publishers, Arya Prakashan, Grantha Mandira and A. K. Mishra Agency, i.e. 71%. A graphical representation of the above data can be shown here in Fig. No 1. And as categorized market share in Odia literature books, the other minor publishers’ together shares only 9% of total market value.

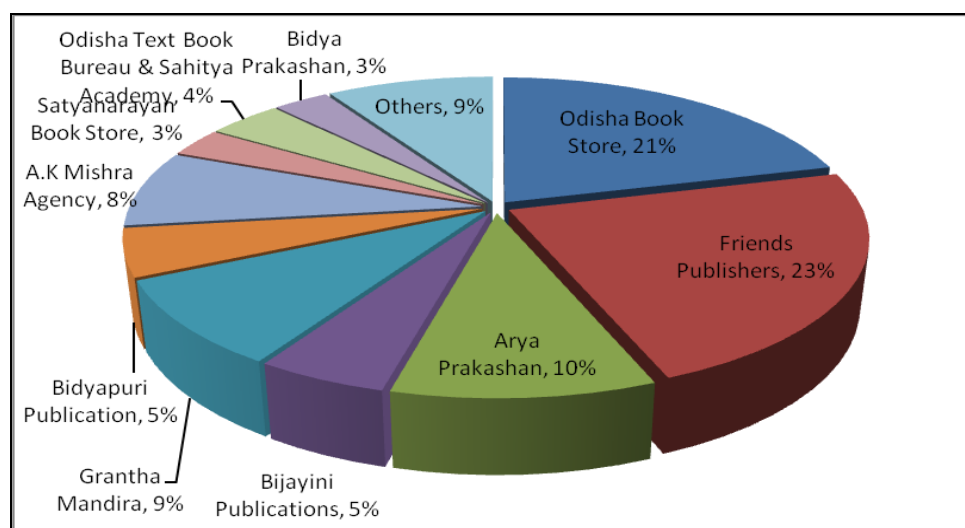


Fig No1: Odia Literature Book market share by Publishers

Again as going through the different promotional components of Odia literary books, a number of factors and set-backs come as the result of the survey which is part of this research paper in the sub-section of ‘discussion’. And out of the components we are here providing the position of only promotional factors of the book i.e. ‘Cover pages’ of the Odia books. The project try to analyze the Odia books cover page promotional value in terms of digits to understand the publishers thinking and marketing strategy or any other limitations in this promotions. As the analyzing above samples, we have further divided the cover page of the books into different subparts as (a) Front-Cover page, (b) Back-Cover page and (c) Artistic Components

As analyzing the Front cover pages of our sample books the following factors are dogged out. Where 27% of books cover pages are plain or some way colored, the 63% of books cover pages are theme based. Further it is also seen that while 47% of books backside remain blank with no promotional literary components, the 38% of books backside have Authors brief profile by publisher to promote the books and where as only 15% of books back side is with subject themes.

Again Analyzed the artistic value of the cover page of the books, it is revealed that only 18% of books cover page has the designed artistic components and reflects professionalism, but a lion share of the book cover pages, i.e. 82% have digital cover pages with less promotional literary and aesthetic components. Therefore, the buyers as compared to international booksellers are not attracted towards regional books such as Odia literature books.

Again when compared to Publishers directory of Odisha (2015), it is revealed that Odisha has more than 2500 more registered publishers.(9) However hardly 100 publishers are involved them to Odia literature book publishing actively. Again only 20 to 25 publishers have line share in Odia literature book market.

7. ODIA PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE IN PRESENT CONTEXT:

It is said that the promotional literature is a 'Loaded Language'.(10) Preparation of promotional literature in any language are used to keep an eye on the target audience. However without realizing or ignoring the Odisha market, nowadays, the promotional literatures in Odia language are often wrong or political victims. In the recent past, a garment company has been criticized due to its advertisement for writing "Poojo" instead of Odia pronounced lexicon "Pooja". Similarly, the different mentalities behind writing ‘Rajo’ in the place of Odia pronounced term ‘Raja’ have been revealed. Similarly, Air Asia has recently been criticized for writing in English as ‘Keman aachho Bhubaneswar’. But these are limited to protest only. The commercial attitude of various media outlets or magazines is that no such major visible steps have been taken for the promotion of Odia literature.

In Odisha, on the other hand, the addiction to dressing up as modern has become so strong that in the midst of this artificial dressing, the Odia language is losing its true natural identity. In this new flow of time, as much as the Odia language has been influenced by the foreign language and customs, the language has not been able to influence the outside as much even in its own spoken region. Even the number of invitation cards used for weddings, sacred thread-ceremony, etc. is declining in Odia language. However, fortunately, this problem is less common in the advertisements of Odia literature books.

Phonology: As gone through the Odia promotional literature, we found many Tag lines are mnemotechnical effect, which ensures that the target or the receiver can remember easily. Such as in the advertisement of 'Bisk Farm Cake' used a tag line by slightly twisting the term 'Fantastic' to 'Fun-Tas-Tic' and text with cultural effect as 'Fun' in English text but the term 'Tas-Tic' in Odia character. And its side, makes two pieces of cake as the two wings of a butterfly to catch the target consumer, here is children. With this when we go through the target audience is socially wider, the promotional literature is rhyme with the ending of 'rhyming words'; such as in the case of Covid awareness programme, the Health and Family welfare department used a tag line as, "Samajika Durata Bajaya rakhibaa/Corona Bhuttaanu Thaaru durei rahibaa". Here the words 'rakhibaa' and 'rahibaa' ending with the sentences creates 'Metre pattern' for user and to remember.

However, as we gone through the Odia literature books promotion test, it looks that it is just like monotonous with only a brief idea about the book with its cover page and writers name. And at first site it has no power to catch the target group. However, in the case of students text book or workbook case, some publishers are using promotional literature with singing and graphic to attract the target consumers.

Transliteration Pattern: Only a few cases of other language books when translated to Odia text, in that case the promoters use the transliteration style to connect the people with the Original book and by introducing the translated book. Here as an example, a book title, 'Ganra Naa Sujanpur' when translated to 'Village name Sujanpur' when translated by Basant Kumar Tripathy and published by Authors press, New Delhi.

Semantic Aspect: The semantic aspect of Odia promotional literature for Odia language and literature books are only some way reflected from the cover page or from the 'title' of the book. Such as the one of the notable Odia writer Pratibha Ray' in his book title, 'SiLa Padma' reflects how the fine and aesthetic artistic views of Odia artist reflected on the stone of temples including Konark temple of Odisha. Sameway, 'Yajnaseni' as the Draupadi from the famous epic Mahabharatha and reflects the meaning as a woman born out of fire.

8. PRAGMATIC OUTPUT:

As going the book promotion process and of promotional literature, it is found that the majority of Odia publishers along with the writers are still upholding the age old promotional process, such as 'book lunch with a special folk gathering, featured article in the newspapers, pushing the books to get a place in the bookshelf of book store, arranging for editorial review in local level.

A majority of writers and Odia book publishers except few are required to cope up with modern promotional process as the progress of technology. Only a few of publishers have their own website for the promotion of books. Only a few books are shown their online presence such as in publishers' website, or in any popular BlogSpot.

Large number of Odia book authors are not well versed with social media; therefore not making an authors page in Facebook or in Twitters, for the promotion of books and to receive comments, likes and able to share their book publishing message up to wide range of audience.

As examining the other metadata such as titles, cover design, back covers and preface of the books, a number of lacking as compared to International publishers can be well recognized. Very

specifically, in cover page design, though a number of Odia publishers adopting the strategy such as the connecting words in book title with much simpler but theme based coverage as the international publishers do. However still miles to go for Odia book publishers to compete with other international books sellers.

With this, as examining the use of book blurb that appears on the back cover of print books are mostly monotonous; and these are nothing more than a compliment to the writers with their short bio and photo. A reader of the book always not gets the desire clever opening line that piques his/her curiosity.

As the points of promotion, the most vital area, the distribution channel of Odia books are primarily localized base. Except the countable publishers, other is yet aware or has lack of adequate business knowledge to promote and sell their books through 'Amazon's KDP, Apple's iBooks, Barnes & Noble's Nook, and Kobo' type retail digital distribution channel.

9. STEPS CALL OUT FOR ODIA LANGUAGE LPL:

- An institution should be established both at national and also regional level for the preparation and promotion of Language Promotional Literature.
- Skill base training should be given to Regional Language publishers for their knowledge enhancing and adoption with new Technology, Platform and Readers
- Regional Language Publishers should have to tie-up with national and international publishers and book promotion organizations.
- Healthy coordination among publishers, designers, marketing personnel, sellers, authors and web designers
- Odia language publishers should grasp the opportunity new promotional ideas.

10. CONCLUSION

Promotional literatures have to play in between economics, utopia and culture. As the cultural ecosphere is reshaping in the age of technology and globalization, the local literature have to search a space in between for growth and sustainability. Therefore the regional LPL should have to respect readers' response, motivation and practice. Till date no such concrete and visible steps are taken by the stakeholders of regional languages to chalk out and write out the regional LPL and same for Odia language LPL also. Again as the present Covid-19 crisis reshaping the ecocultural and eco-business sphere from global to local, the regional LPL should be more vocal.

REFERENCE:

- (1) <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2017/05/Online-Education-in-India-2021.pdf>
- (2) 'Indian publishers innovate in times of caronavirus lockdown' Published: 16th April 2020 05:37 PM, The New Indian Express; <https://www.newindianexpress.com/lifestyle/books/2020/apr/16/indian-publishers-innovate-in-times-of-caronavirus-lockdown-2130998.html>
- (3) 'sales literature', Business Directory, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/sales-literature.html>
- (4) Loren E. Pennington, 'The Origins of English Promotional Literature for America, 1553-1625', PhD Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1962
- (5) Dr Claire Squires, 'Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain'; <https://www.amazon.in/Marketing-Literature-Contemporary-Writing-Britain/dp/140399773X>
- (6) Sandip Sen, "Printed books sales grow at a healthy clip in India (Regional language books sell faster than English)", Published on: September 26, 2018; <https://indianprinterpublisher.com/>
- (7) The Indian Express' 23rd September 2019; <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bhubaneswar/2019/sep/23/odisha-literary-festival-use-technology-promote-odia-chorus-grows-2037741.html>

- (8) 'FICCI organized “PubliCon 2018” with the theme “Publishing in Indian Languages” on December 6, 2018 at FICCI, New Delhi', All about Book Publishing
<http://www.allaboutbookpublishing.com/4818/publicon-2018-publishing-in-indian-languages/>
- (9) Publishers directory of Odisha, Harekrushna Mahtab State Library, Bhubaneswar, Govt. of Odisha, 1st Revised & Enlarged Edition, 2015;
http://odishaculture.gov.in/pdf/bibliography/Pub_directory.pdf
- (10) Leech, Geoffrey, N., English in Advertising: A Linguistic Study of Advertising in Great Britain (English Language Series), London: Longman, 1972, p. 76.
- (11) 'NEP: Children's Literature and Reading Promotion – Missing Link?', 'Hindustan Times' Updated: Aug 07, 2019, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/nep-children-s-literature-and-reading-promotion-missing-link/story-W1nrjET7Q8sXhFcW0YSc0I.html>
- (12) '11 Powerful Book Promotion Ideas for Self-Published Author' Editage;
<https://info.editage.com/book-editing-services/articles/11-Powerful-book-promotion-ideas-for-self-published-authors.html>
- (13) Online Education in India: 2021, A study by KPMG in India and Google, May 2017;
<https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2017/05/Online-Education-in-India-2021.pdf>