

Indian Mass Media, Development and Globalisation

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims at the role and transformation of Indian Media over the past six decades; throwing light on empirical details in the context of some major developments namely modernisation of the country after independence, globalisation and advances in communication technologies.

The study also highlights the critical points about the function of media in purveying political, economic and cultural identities over changing times and tells 'how this purveying function' became the pivotal medium in governing the political, economical and social system of India, both internally and externally.

The recent Indian media culture that adapted and involved 'foreign' media and its dynamics, introduced powerful Globalised media propellers that not only stimulated the minds of India with conceptual power and probabilities; but also gave access to consumer power, decentralisation of power and above all freedom of selection to large part of general public.

However, it is also important to understand that India is a country which is just sixty-seven years out of colonial rule and has completed merely two decades of economic liberalisation. In this regard a question arises; does this form of hybrid 'Globalised Indian Media is a treat of 'Cultural Imperialism?' Will it divide the public into a new kind of inequality of 'Local', 'Global' and 'Glocal?'

Or does it have presented better solutions about the quality and quantity of Media content for the public thus extending our frames of references extraordinarily.

INTRODUCTION

Modernity and Prosperity of any country is proven by three basic standards of development:

- a) Economic Development
- b) Technological Development
- c) Development of Mass Media

It is also important to note that the development of these three areas is connected with the growth of each other. If the country is economically prosperous then it will be a strong motivating force to boost the technological and media modernity. If media instruments are more accomplished, then they will in turn impact and bring awareness in the outlook of social, political, economic and technical fields.

In this context, explorations made by Marshal McLuhan are remarkably interesting. His book 'Understanding Media' gives a detailed account about how a medium is itself a message and how just by the power of information Media can influence economic, socio-political even cultural structure of any country, changing its role, experience and behavioural process to a different dimension.

At the same time he talked about 'Global Village' by which he meant that new electric technology which we now know as 'World Wide Web' will decentralise the global power and will heighten the human awareness by an instantaneous moment of information.

Needless to say, the prophecy of Marshal McLuhan has played a key factor in necessitating economic interdependence, which in turn led to political and social interdependence, thus making remarkable changes in national identities.

And India in this case is no exception. The revolution of Globalised Media has turned the Indian media market into a more economically productive industry, generating multi crore business every year ¹.

According to World Association of Newspapers (WAN) (May 2009), India is one of the most developing markets where the newspaper readership figures are constantly increasing. At the time of independence in 1947, the Indian population was around 345 million, with the literacy rate of averaging around 18 per cent. There were 214 newspapers, including 44 English newspapers published in India, and there were All India Radio (AIR) stations and no television network.*

The Indian print media, which played a significant role in the freedom movement, has since multiplied to 62,483 registered newspapers,* according to National Readership Survey, Indian newspapers and magazines are read by 222 million readers. Meanwhile, there are more than 500 radio stations and nearly 450 television channels

broadcasting news, entertainment and other programmes in India. The Media- print, radio, television and online- at present, caters to a huge market by any standards with 1.1 billion people, of which 65 per cent are literate. But, as though we now celebrate this boom in our media market it is also important to understand those factors behind this potential boom.

How this Media phenomenon was able to attract the Indian market, which was still considered to traditionalist closed economy? How it was able to access to a host of things that opened the floodgates for foreign Media? What contexts played a key role in Indian Media to form a new culture of 'Glocal Media?'

1950s and 1960s: The Initiation

After the Independence, India, in the eyes of the world, was nothing but a large collective rural society which was battling with backwardness, poverty, social inequality and lack of political knowledge.

The new government under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which came into the power after the independence, declared a development-oriented agenda of governance dedicated to the improvement of the economic, educational, and health conditions of the people. Use of modern communication attained high priority as a developmental resource during this era when the planners analysed the prospects of using radio as an evolutionary agent, i.e. 'for information and enlightening the people in the countryside and towns on developmental issues'. *

Radio as a mass communicator

All India Radio became the initiator of the movement of implementing Communication strategy being adopted by the government. The Radio Rural Forum experiment was carried out by the All India Radio at Poona during 1956. The project covered 156 villages where listening and discussion groups were classified in each of the selected villages. A programme of thirty minutes duration was broadcast on two days in a week ranging agriculture and allied subjects to help promote rural development.

Prof. Paul Neurath on behalf of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences investigated an evaluation study, and came out with remarkable results:

(1) The radio is very suitable medium to communicate with rural audience and to spread the message of development.

(2) A majority of the listeners appreciated the value of the messages. *

Following this experiment, The Farm and Home units were established at many AIR stations to provide wider support to the Integrated Agriculture Development Programme (IADP). The contribution of the radio is widely acknowledged by farm scientists in increasing agriculture production and achieving a green revolution which changed India's status from a food-deficient country into one of the world's leading agricultural nations. A similar attempt was taken in respect of the Family Welfare Programme.

Press Media, which had emerged as a key medium in disseminating the messages and awareness about the country's situation before the independence, was now getting a hard competition by Radio in the development – oriented agenda of the government. The reason was clear; except the 18 per cent of the population, which mostly consisted the intellectual and privileged class, the rest of the mass was illiterate and didn't had any special access to any feasibility which could help them to raise their standard of living. *

But the range of this powerful medium was not only limited to the development goals for the mass, It also contributed much towards the art and entertainment like preservation of Indian classical music. Vividh Bharati radio channel was launched on October 2, 1957, -providing entertainment for nearly 15 to 17 hours a day. It presented a mix of film music, skits, short plays and interactive programmes, Some of the old popular programmes of Vividh Bharati are 'Sangeet Sarita', 'Bhule Bisre Geet', **Hawa Mahal**, 'Jaimala', 'Inse Miliye', 'Chhaya Geet' etc. The channel employed a large number of musicians as well as provided prominent slots for classical music, particularly after royal patronage waned with the merger of many Indian states into the Union of India. In the year 1967, commercials were introduced in vividh Bharti Radio giving a wide space to radio jingles, which gained popularity instantly.

Advent of Television

While coming to the end of the 50s, television got introduced to the India. Although Nehru was uncertain of introducing television in India as he was apprehensive that it will be monopolized by the middle class rather than be of use for the development of the masses.

Nehru believed that a poor country like India could ill afford the superfluity of television. But visionary scientists like Vikram Sarabhai argued that India needs all possible technological know-how to induce all round development. Sarabhai famously said: "Our national goals involve leap-frogging from a state of economic backwardness and social disabilities, attempting to achieve in a few decades a change which was incidentally taken centuries in other countries and in other lands. This involves innovation at all levels."*

Reluctantly, the government carried out the first terrestrial television as an experimental telecast among the very few selected audience in Delhi on 15 September 1959 with a small transmitter and a makeshift studio. The regular daily transmission started in 1965 as a part of AIR.

Advertising

While this new electric media Technology was battling hard to get space in the Indian market, another old media technology was undergoing through drastic change. Advertising; which could be traced back since the days of Hicky's 'Bengal Gazette' was now becoming 'India centric'.

With the independence, new social and economic changes emerged in the newly formed nation. The Indian middle class emerged and ended the hitherto exclusive clientele of the noble and the princely classes and its focus shifted from state driven luxury goods, which previously were enjoyed by a small cluster of British administration and privileged families, to convenience driven goods for the masses.

In the first Advertisement convention that held in Calcutta in 1960 (now Kolkata), B.V Kesker exhorted the industry that the time had come for advertising in India to become "totally Indian in thought and content".

Though the brand advertising was still carrying out the market with old venerable like Lifebuoy, Dalda, Singer through press and radios like radio Ceylon and Radio Goa; which aired commercials well before AIR did, but the scale was small and limited.

As with those times, advertising and consumption were an abomination to Nehru and he reportedly told the Indian Society of Advertisers that ads are essentially to induce consumption, to make people buy things they do not want! It was in this environment that the world's first social marketing programme was launched in the mid-1960s with the Nirodh family planning campaign taking the help of advertising.

The first five year plan (1952-1957) brought in this realization to the policy makers that the geometrically progressing population growth was the real culprit behind the failure of the plans. The threat of the ever bulging population was the first issue that was addressed by the media experts. In fact, India was the first country in the world to announce an official Family Planning Programme. During the inter plan period of 1966-1969, Family Planning department carved out a unit in the form of Mass Education and Media Unit in 1966 and the first tirade against population growth was launched. Simultaneously, the media units of Information and Broadcasting Ministry were strengthened for Family Planning communication. The objective was to evolve a Differential Communication Strategy. Simple messages with simple pictures were selected for wider dissemination and through media, which were easily visible and audible.

The scheme started with the concept of a small family and the raging slogan was, 'Hum does humor do' (Literally translated, 'us two and our two'). The symbol propagated was that of the red inverted triangle. Similarly, social messages such as 'chota parivar khushal parivar' (Small family is a happy family), 'Agla bachcha abhi nahin, do ke bad kabhi nahin' (The next child not now after the second never ever) and 'Beti ho ya beta, do ya teen hi achche' (A Girl or a boy two or three are enough) were promoted among the masses to achieve population control.²

Till this date, this agreement is considered a landmark in evolving communication strategies in Family Planning programme.

Press

News papers and magazines started with a good pace in the post independent India with all support of Nehru; who helped to pass the Working Journalist Act to assure the security of job. It helped the scribes to face many hazards and write objectively and independently without the fear of being dismissed. Slowly but steadily Local capitalists began to replace foreign capitalists in the press media and fulfilled Nehru's wish to Indianise the press.*

Yet, Nehru failed was to lay down, in the Constitution, was the provision for the protection of freedom of the press. America recognized its mistake and explicitly mentioned freedom of the press in the first amendment to the American Constitution. In India, the Supreme Court has come to the rescue of journalists. In several judgments, the Court has said that Article 19 relating to freedom of speech included freedom of the press.³ Still,

the constitutional amendment to guarantee the press freedom is necessary to bring India at par with the other democratic countries in the world.

In 1960s, News papers and magazines however were falling out slowly under the tight control of the government because it was imported through a state –controlled corporation. Although print media has had the protection under the Indian constitution, as a part of citizens’ rights to the freedom of speech and expression but the government was able to exert its control over it by tactfully maintaining high taxes on imported printing machinery and a wage tribunal that mandated salaries for the media personnel.

Cinema

These decades saw a series of patriotic films such as Shaheed and Jagriti, but also the new realism as well as deep romanticism best exemplified with Raj Kapoor’s Jagte Raho and Dilip Kumar’s Devdas. The period between 1930- till 1960 is considered ‘The Golden Age’ of Indian Film Industry in the memory of a majority of Indian audiences. It was a period of ‘All India Cinema’.*

During these years no real distinction was drawn, between the popular film and art film for even the most innovative and demanding directors did not in any way, wished to overturn the norm of film industry or considered themselves, separate from the commercial cinema. For e.g. Guru Dutt film like Pyassa-which might considered ‘difficult’ today were well received by the audience that time.

From the 60s onwards, Technicolor, an indispensable element of films, became an affordable and became the regular feature of the films. In these crucial years, the definitive evolution of Indian commercial cinema was taking place, particularly that of Hindi cinema, towards the stars system, escapist and successful formulas.⁴

Audience were no longer hooked to ‘serious’ socio- political subjects but shifted towards ‘family dramas’ for pure entertainment. With the objective of making the audience dream, they included numerous form of art and exaggeration of stars to make them known in public. While the commercialism was setting the formulaic codes, entrapping the best of minds of cinema industry to its entanglements, some of the few filmmakers remained free from its hook.

People like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Ritwik Ghatak remained the most brilliant representatives of Bengali and Indian intelligentsia of their generation that about the synthesis between western scientific approach and instinctive aesthetic tradition of India.

Ray’s ‘Pather Panchali’ got a worldwide premiere and huge success. It got president gold medal award 1956 and in the same year it was awarded with best human document at Cannes. Following year it received Golden Lion Award at Venice film festival. It was the early voice of new wave cinema in India which became dominant in the seventies and eighties.

The 1970s-1980s : Turbulent Time

If 1950s was a time for construction and development, then 1960s saw a depletion of physical and emotional resources with two wars (China and Pakistan) and the death of two Prime Ministers (Jawaharlal Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri).

Seventies were the roller coaster years. Until now, India was existed as a collective nation. Now, a new sense of individualism was beginning to be felt in various fields.* Television, which was living an anonymous identity, had begun its journey to become popular.

Television: Beginning of a journey

Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India was supportive of Sarabhai’s ideas and it culminated in the launching of the momentous Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) (**IBID REF4**) in 1975-76. It started beaming development oriented programmes to 2400 Indian villages; the software was designed according to the socio-cultural specificities of the areas concerned. It was a path breaking experiment in the field of development communication not only in India but also for the whole world. Till then Radio and television was considered an instrument of entertainment for the elite. And this was a new effort in utilizing both the media for Development Support Communication.

These experiments were revolutionary in character as market forces would never have taken TV sets to many of these villages and most certainly not to the houses of the poor and the marginalised--the most information

needy. This means was high technology (a direct broadcast satellite and a direct reception system) and the configuration was need-based.

But as is a typical Indian trait, the SITE experiment in the Kheda district died a silent death with Sarabhai. The reasons were misplaced focus on hardware expansion and too little attention in developing local software.

Television was embarking its baby steps in the field of Indian media; a much mature Media technology was facing challenges in keeping intact its integrity.

Emergency and Press Censorship

The last few years of 1960s had witnessed an unprecedented turn of events in the socio-political climate of India. From the very beginning of independent India, the Congress Party of India remained in power in one form or another until March 1977. At the inception of national independence, the country adopted democratic principles and pronounced India a democratic socialist nation. However, several incidents that occurred during Indira Gandhi's reign indicated that the country was drifting away from parliamentary democracy. Political pressure exerted upon the government from opposing political parties which were striving to fight corruption, inflation and economic chaos in the country.* Indira Gandhi's government, rather than taking this as a political challenge, resorted to declaring a national emergency and imprisoning the opposition party leaders.

She immediately took control of the press, prohibiting their reporting of all domestic and international news. The government expelled several foreign correspondents (mainly American and British) and withdrew accreditation from more than 40 Indian reporters who normally covered the capital. Indira Gandhi's government use the "security of the state" and "promotion of disaffection" as its defence for imposing strict control on the press.

Power lines to newspaper presses like The Statesman, The Indian Express, The Times of India, The Herald were cut so none of this could be reported. By the time power was restored, censorship was in place. During censorship, most of the nation's domestic dailies, however, gave up the battle for press freedom. (IBID REF7) But two tough, prominent publishers of English- language dailies, The Indian Express and The Statesman, fought courageously against Indira Gandhi's opposition of the Indian press. Despite some bold fights and stubborn stands taken up by these publishers, it was quite clear that Indira Gandhi had a strong a grip on the Indian press as she had on Indian politics, at least during the government-imposed emergency.

Methods of Press Control: Indira's Way:

Indira Gandhi's first attempt was to impose "thought control" on the populous, which had to be effectuated not merely by controlling the Indian mass media but also by moulding the media to her own purpose. It was easier for the government, since radio and television in India at that time were government owned and operated and it was just a simple matter of controlling the newspapers in order to achieve a total control of the mass media. She used:

(1) Allocation of government advertising

The revenue of many leading Indian newspapers depended a great deal on governmental advertising; to which government took advantage and withdrew its advertising support from that newspapers which were speaking against the government. Later on, government used many types of financial castigation on those rebellious newspapers, which were writing and publishing against the government.

(2) Shotgun merger of the news agencies

The government decided to bring about a shot-gun merger of the four privately-owned Indian news agencies; to alter the management and control of the Indian news agencies and thus to control much of the content of the leading newspapers. Since these agencies had been acting as the gatekeepers of information, it was essential for Indira Gandhi and her Information and Broadcasting Minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, to control the gatekeepers. First of all, pressures were put on the members of boards of these agencies. Then the financial squeeze was applied to the agencies themselves by withholding governmental subsidy. Thirdly, the government introduced the threat of cutting-off the teleprinter services, the lifelines of a news agency. The manipulation of these four news agencies was so effective that hardly a voice was raised to resist the governmental perfidy. Soon after this, Shukla reported to the Indian parliament that these four news agencies accepted the merger "voluntarily".

(3) Use of fear-arousal techniques on newspaper publishers, Journalists and individual shareholders.

By making false charges with regard to tax arrears, possible reductions in new spring quotas, imprisonment of publishers and their immediate families, threats of shutting down the press, and removal of governmental housing and other facilities for Delhi-based journalists, government was able to successfully control the major part of press.*

Though the serious and 'hard' news delivering press was uprooted, Magazines devouring entertainment and gossips about celebrities were promoted by increasing their advertisement slots, in order to make the mind of public to be engaged with trifles and keeping them shut.

It was only after the emergency period, in 1977, that the new government repealed most of the repressive laws and that the print media in India began 'modernising'.

RADIO:

Radio, still under the authority of government, was turned into a propaganda media, where programmes were mostly "filled with fawning accounts of national events, flattering discussions about Mrs. Gandhi and her ambitious son, and not coincidentally, lucrative government advertising". Except the commercial radio Programmes, nothing more was delivered through this medium. owing to this infamous emergency (1975-1977), many developmental programmes conducted through this medium lapsed due to neglect of government, lack of inclusiveness and participatory functions in the programmes. People refused to respond actively and took it as a propaganda work of the government.* In 1976, the national network Doordarshan got separated from the national radio network, All India Radio.

As the emergency lifted up from the country, the information gap had already done a lot of damage to the country. In the 80s, the new government introduced a series of developmental programs aiming mostly on the rural education and literacy among the adults.

CINEMA:

In 1971, India became the largest producer of films in the world (overtaking Japan) with a figure as high as 431 feature films.⁵ Most of these films followed some set rules and formulas where distinction between subjective and objective couldn't be decoded in the common dreams and desires of frustrated public, who were already in grip of national emergency.

From entertainment, popular Hindi Cinema and its regional equivalents had transformed into pure escapism meant to fulfil the unrealistic dreams, divorced from the real lives of its principal audience.

Thus an oversimplified cinema was produced in reaction to main stream cinema. More than a structure kind of 'school' of cinema, this new movement was a relievable of aesthetics and vitality in Indian Cinema. Film society movement which was started in 1943 spread film culture across the country. For the first time young minds were exposed to the work of old master like Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, Dreyer and Renoir. These films provoked reflection on moral social and spiritual problems. A series of 'festivals' augmented the activities of the film society. A significant contributory factor in the arising of the new cinema in India was the surprisingly enlightened attitude of the government controlled Film Finance Commission; which took a risk of funding young filmmakers which had little or no experience. IMPEC was created to promote export of Indian cinema, and Hindustan Photo Films was created to manufacture raw stock. Moreover, India also launched platforms like the International Film Festival of India, and the national awards to encourage cinema, artists and filmmakers.*

From 1969 to 1973, FFC financed number of film, notably Mrinal sen's Bhuvan Shome (1969), Avatar Kaul's 27 down, Basu chatterjee's Sara Akash, Mani Kaul's Uski Roti, Kumar Shahani's Maya Darpan, Ms Sathyu's Garam Hawa, Basu Bhatta Charya's Anubhav, Kantilal Rathord's Kanku and Adoor Gopala Krishnan's Swayamwaram.

A Far cry from the petrified clichés of commercial cinema, they focused on the common man, his socio-economic problems, expectations and frustration. The importance of these films lay not so much in its cinematic virtues, as in the fact that it showed the way for a viable alternative to commercial cinema, who's had brain washed the public and destroyed its ability to appreciate good cinema.

Then a sharp fall came in the parallel cinema movement after 1980's. Interestingly, this was also the period when the digital revolution took off worldwide including India. VCR had only just entered in the domain of Indian household and quickly made its way. This new technology made the middle class audience to watch new Television soaps and old films on video cassettes (VHS) in their home rather than going to cinema halls. This however not only declined the rate of revenue generated by films but also gave a high flag to the piracy of Indian films(most evidential proof was pakistan; pirating videos of Bollywood fare, available in great abundance).*

ADVERTISING:

The 1970s were the consolidation years for the advertising industry. With reasonably stable economic scenario, lot of the middle class improved, necessitating 'lifestyle' advertising. Advertising became more scientific as National readership Survey (NRS) happened and MBAs from Business schools were hired for client servicing roles. The first media explosion happened with magazines, specifically targeting the business and leisure audiences. Rural marketing also gained more respectability and scientific dimensions.

The decade also heard some memorable ad jingles that are seared into the collective memories of that generation: 'I love you Rasna'; Jenson & Nicholson's 'whenever you see colour, think of us', the 'Only Vimal' sarees campaign. A huge burst of 'public sector' advertising and public awareness campaigns occurred in 1970s-1980s. Banks, the insurance and coal sector industries and enterprises in the textile industries were nationalised. Restrictions were placed on foreign investments apparently to 'defend national sovereignty'. Located within such an economic history, the indian citizen was told to patronize Indian products and services. This created a strong national fervour and 'be Indian buy Indian' became the popular slogan in the 1970s. *

Advertisements from family planning, recruitment of armed forces, national integration, and anti-drug campaigns were actively propagated by the Central Government. colour printing in newspapers and magazines enhanced their readability. to proclaim the serious role of advertising in competitive scenerio, the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) was born. The 1980s also witnessed the first round of sponsored television programming. The turnover jumped from a 100 million-rupee industry in 1955 to Rs. 1600 million in 1978. However, what catapulted the industry onto a higher plane was the landmark launch of color television on Aug 15, 1982, to coincide with the hosting of the Asian games in New Delhi.

Television

In 1980s, INSAT-1A, the first of the country's domestic communications satellites became operational and made possible the networking of all of Doordarshan regional stations. For the first time Doordarshan originated a nation-wide feed dubbed the 'National Programme' which was transmitted from Delhi to the other stations. The year 1982 saw landmark launch of colour television which coincided with the hosting of Asian Games in New Delhi. This was the period when no private enterprise was allowed to set up TV stations or to transmit TV signals. commercial television was introduced in 1976 but it was in year 1983; with the advent of Shyam Joshi's popular soap opera 'Hum Log' that brought a major shift in the role of television. With soap operas like 'Buniyaad', 'naukaad', 'chitrahaar', 'yeh jo hai zindagi' television emerged as prime entertainer for the masses. These early serials were themed on serious issues of gender inequality, health, alcoholism and family planning.

(IBID REF 2)

The serials like 'Bharat Ek khoj' Indian historical drama, unfolding the 5000-year history of India, 'Chanakya' a series about the life and times of 4th century B.C. economist, strategist and political theorist Chanakya (also known as Vishnugupta), , 'Mirza Galib' biographical television drama series about the famous poet Ghalib, 'The Sword of Tipu Sultan' and 'Malgudi Days' a literal adaptation of R.K Narayan's book , not only entertained the viewers but also gave knowledge about historical, social and cultural background thus shaping the early form of new kind of entertainment 'infotainment'. But the greatest wave of popularity was being

commanded by Mythological Serials like 'Mahabharat' (1988) and 'Ramayan (1987)'. The reason was clear; television with its effective audio-visual advantage was able to take this ancient old mythology into a highly demonstrating form of storytelling.

But the most popular feature of television in India was Sunday feature films. Outdoor Broadcast vans(OBVs) were used only for Republic Day functions and cricket matches. The first television advertisement was a still photo of Topaz Blades and the first advertisement film was 'Vichitra Sarees'. In the 1980s, advertisers had a three way choice: either the sunday feature film, chitrahaar(programme of popular hindi films) or phool kile hai gulshan-gulshan(interview based programme with leading film stars).

From the change in the political landscape following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, to the way the Maruti car which mobilised middle class India into new dimension of economic freedom, from the contrast between commercial and parallel cinema, to the Doordarshan phenomenon, 80s was an unfathomable decade that was singularly responsible for changing the course of India's history.

1990s 2000s- Explosive Decades:

In 1991, India faced serious economic crises when the country's foreign exchange reserve went down to less than one month's import bill. The country was already faced with serious problems of high inflation, high interest rates and high government budget deficit. In this scenario, the Congress party government launched a drive to restructure the country's economic system through a process of liberalization.

It took a massive loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to avert the danger of defaulting on its debt payment, agreeing to IMF's condition to open Indian markets to foreign competition and investment. The cornerstone of the Government's new economic policy was 'Globalisation'. This meant lowering and simplifying imports tariffs and quotas imposed to protect the domestic industry, getting rid of the licensing raj (regime), and providing incentives for exports and foreign investment. This brought a big revolution in the broadcasting industry especially in television.*

The opening of Indian doors to media from overseas was not confined to its television industry alone. Technological advances and the introduction of entrepreneurial media management strategies also changed the traditional print media industry in India. As a result, newspaper circulation has continued to grow with the optimum speed, particularly in non- English languages where print media adopted a strategy of 'localization' of news to reach smaller and rural India.

Print:

Three factors influenced the growth of print media between 1977 and 1999: rising literacy; increased availability of technology and increasing influence of capitalism. In the 1980s, Indian polity was increasingly being influenced by the world phenomenon of techno-managerial structure of governance. As a result, print media too witnessed some revolutionary changes in the style of management, which became the foundation of current growth of print media in the country.*

New off-set printing and computer technologies, introduction of colour and the entry of young entrepreneurial managers introduced the newspaper industry to shorter deadlines and risky marketing strategies of price wars and big discounts to increase circulation and under-cut competitors in the market. The new blood in the industry, which was the part of the new environment of free market economy in the country in the early 1990s, brought a seismic shift in the news paper arena.

Though the technological boom in broadcast media; especially in news media, undermined the revenue stream of print, but this trend was reversed in the mid 2000s. It was realized by the general public that though the television had become quick and accessible provider of news and information, the mushroom growth of channels created cut throat competition to maximize their revenue potion, which resulted in sensationalizing and glamorizing the news content, hence degraded this medium's credibility. Print media again emerged as a people's 'urge' for more and reliable information.

It was in 2002 that the government decided to allow 26 per cent of foreign direct investment (FDI) into print media.*The rules for foreign investment were further modified in 2005, resulting in several Indian newspaper companies raising capital in domestic and international markets. In 2008, the Indian Government approved that foreign news and current affairs magazines could publish their local editions in India, In effect making them cheaper for Indian consumers.* Hindi and regional language press has also continued to lead and expand in the last decade, creating much wider reach and circulation, in terms of readership figures than English press and

broadcast media, which may reach out to the more affluent sections of the population and commends a disproportionate share of advertising revenue but declines in creating impact on general public.⁶

Advertising:

The last two years of the century, 1997- 1999 saw the advertising industry grow at a mere 17.9 per cent growth, much lower than the 49.5 per cent growth clocked in 1994-1995, at the peak of India's post liberalization economic boom. The decline since then was steady till it flattened revised tariffs as soon as there was a price hike in imported newsprint. Hindustan Thomson Associate (HTA, the Indian arm of JWT and part of the London – based Wire and Plastic Products, WPP) remains the top advertising agency in terms of income. Its growth rate is lower than the average rate but it is still significant enough to maintain an unbridgeable gap between it and the nearest rival, Lintas. In the 1999, when HTA was approximately Rs. 1,500 million, Lintas were close to Rs. 1,000 million. O&M and Mudra recorded approximately Rs.700 million each holding third and fourth positions respectively. Many of India's biggest spenders found HTA to be choice agency. Apart from being the club agency for Levers, HTA accounts for 16 per cent of the total Indian expenditure on advertising. **(IBID REF5)**

Lintas, although started as in-house agency of Hindustan Levers, its popularity rode high with products like Liril. The advertising guru Alyque Padamsee, was the head honcho before CEO Prem Mehta took over. Lifebuoy, Surf, Rin(all soap and detergents) are some of the prime accounts of Lintas, which has been pushing up its bottom line over the years.

Despite being the oldest agency of India, O&M reinvented itself in the 1990s reviving once again the legendary David Ogilvy's strategic thinking and out-of-the-box creativity. With some spectacular work on the Kodak films, Titan watches, Fevicol glue and Cadbury's chocolate products, O&M reclaimed its legitimate place in Indian advertising firmament. Amidst all these foreign goliaths, the David of the advertising agencies, Mudra advertising, has emerged triumphant. A total indigenous agency with a marginal affiliation with DDB Needham, Mudra has demonstrated that it is possible to excel in a market dominated by multinational giants. The agency shot to fame with the popular slogans "Only Vimal" (for Vimal fabrics), "I love you Rasna" (fruit flavoured drink), and Nestlé's "Mint with the Hole"(the peppermint), founded by A.G Krishnamurthy in the 1980, Mudra has a well- integrated set of subsidiaries including Mudra Institute of Communications ,MICA, at Ahmedabad, Gujarat. **(IBID REF 15)**

After these companies, there were large gaps in billing terms. FCB Ulka Advertising with Rs.500 million ranked fifth, followed by Rediffusion DY&R. R K Swamy /BBDO, McCann Ericsson, Contract and MAA Bozell in the top ten list in that order.

Radio:

The 1990 were a watershed era in the history of Indian radio for at this time it made a spectacular return as a medium of development and entertainment. FM radio which arrived in 1977 caught the imagination of people and became the youth medium that it is today. The current format of FM programming can be traced to Mumbai, when on 15 August 1993 All India Radio (AIR) leased FM slots to private producers. The first entrants were 'Times FM' of the Bennet and Coleman Group, publishers of English daily, The Times of India, and 'Radio Star' and 'Radio Midday'. The Supreme Court judgement in 1995 which ruled that broadcasting could not be treated as a monopoly by the government, organisation or individuals, led to a spurt in the leasing of air time by AIR. In phase II introduced by the government in July 2005, 337 channels, encompassing 91 cities, were put on bid.*

Letter of Intent (LOI) were issued were issued to 245 channels of which about 150 had become operational by the end of the year. The revenue earned by the industry had grown from Rs 350 million in 2007 to Rs 550 million in 2008.

The popularity of FM stations is not hard to fathom given that they seem to, the same time, borrow from and break every rule followed by AIR in terms of programming and content, making it a lively, casual and entertaining medium. What is significant for media analysts is that in the era of Globalisation, it has emerged as the most local of mediums. Covering a radius of up to 60 square kilometres, it caters to audiences comprising a few million in metropolitan cities and much fewer in smaller towns. It is this preoccupation with the local that has come as a boon to the medium, for it has become the most effective advertising medium for local and small business.⁷

Though they are high in providing the easiest, cheapest and popular medium for content, the issue of allowing news and current affairs programming on private channels, and allowing foreign ventures still rests with the hands of Union Cabinet. It has also been reported that the task force of the Radio Broadcast Policy is to thread the path of 'more control citing security reasons'. Much like the community radio stations that seemed to hold a lot of promise but failed to take off in a big way due to the government regulations and restrictions, the FM stations are grappling with vague guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Although 'hard' news is banned, almost all the FM channels carry information about the local area: events, sports and stocks throughout the day.

Television

In the early 90s, when liberalization was introduced in the economic policy, government clearly recognised that television is a highly visible cultural product that functions as the best marketing tool for the liberalization of the Indian economy.

With the use of satellite technology by the commercial media the dramatics of communication began to change rapidly in India and television was the well-documented medium of this revolution. Until 1991, Indian audiences received a controlled, sometimes development-oriented and at other times, propaganda induced television programming. When the Government of India, reversed its protectionist economic policies in the 1990s, it also opened country to foreign ownership. To prove its seriousness about economic reforms, government ignored the unsanctioned revolution in the broadcasting industry: the receiving and illegal re-distribution of satellite signals of foreign and private channels from foreign soils into Indian soils.*

It also overlooked the mushrooming of cable operators, and the illegal and ugly proliferation of dish antennas and cables in urban streets.

Television was the first to experience the de-facto regulation, and as a result of the entry of foreign and private channels, the industry was transformed from a government-owned single network to a multi-channel industry. The economic reforms expressed themselves in the terms of rising literacy and aspirations, economic prosperity, exposure to the western culture and a new generation breaking away from joint family ideals, leading to a nuclear family and a need for accessibility to entertainment and information at home.*

However, the entry of private and foreign television media meant that television channels not only had to compete in a crowded market, but that it also needed to deliver audiences to their advertisers. The new entrants had to compete with the other private channels as well as the established monopoly of the public sector broadcaster, which was (as a result of competition) already in the process of launching multiple regional channels and offering more privately produced and sponsored local entertainment programmes.

So in the mid-1990s, the 'cross-border' channels began changing their strategy to reach audiences beyond a small urban elite population which watched their foreign originated English programmes.

STAR was the first to start the HINDI subtitles of Hollywood films. It also started telecasting locally-produced programmes in English and Hindi, thus initiating the policy of localization. ZEE network on the other hand, began using hybrid language 'Hinglish' for reaching the both metropolitan and small cities, thereby increasing the number of viewers they could deliver to advertisers.*

This localisation of the foreign networks reinforced the cultural identities at the local level by contrasting it with other culture. It not only pulled away power from local communities but also revived local cultural aspirations by creating new economic and cultural zones within and across nations.

These changes in turn led to significant numbers of middle-class people embracing cable and satellite television. With Doordarshan unable to meet the growing number of people's entertainment and information needs, coupled with falling costs of new hardware (television, video recorder and, later, digital video players) multinationals were well placed to tap the huge Asian markets, with satellite technology making it possible to telecast from skies.

Internet

The era of globalisation is also an era of convergence where communication technologies come together in the pocket sized gadgets. Since the advent of internet in India in the year of 1995, the phenomenal advances in technology have no doubt made communication much easier, leading to the evolution of ever newer forms of expression that seem to be bound neither by rules nor convention.

Computer-aided technologies, such as social media, offering a range of platforms for expression, call for a fresh evaluation of issues such as freedom of expression, libel and language. As communication technologies allow any person with the internet to access information anytime along with disseminating it to anywhere, it has proved extremely useful in situations where the more organised and dominant media have not been able to respond swiftly.

These social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Orkut and Blogs not only provided news but views, which become even more valuable when the person, himself, is an eyewitness to any event, such as tsunami. Though these technologies took a slow start in India, but gained fast response as they not provided an impetus on education and gave companionship but also offered a way to bypass the 'superficiality or the hostility of their reception in their media.'*

2010 and aftermath

Economic liberalization in India has, in turn, led to changes in the Indian national identity. Although the size of the cake is increased, this wide participatory process of economic and social change has brought out advancement, given media a greater control over the environment and a strong sense of freedom to the people which was never enjoyed before; it has also led to several changes which can affect the 'developmental climate' of the nation. In this context, the role of media becomes important to analyse. Several massive changes that upgraded the media structure in India also brought several challenges to its different mediums.

Increment of quantity and decline in quality:

Since this change has broadened the Indian media market, it has also increased the competition and led both print and broadcast media to come up with aggressive strategies which may help in bringing more 'consumers' for its content but also in turn let the mediums lose their credibility and quality in work.

For instance, In print media new trend for emphasising 'local news', modified language standards, and diminishing line of distinction between advertising, advertorials and news may have given rise to the circulation rate but it has also adversely affected the seriousness of news journalism and information dissemination. *

Television, which has emerged as a 'maximum economy generator' is not an exception to this condition. The intensification of competition (450 channels currently) and the commercial pressures are causing television media to fall for two problematic areas –violation of the voluntary norms of broadcasting conduct and fragmentation.

Many media analysts miss this point as they focus only the rapid growth of advertising revenues in India. They are impressed with advertising market's growth figures of around 14 per cent- which is indeed impressive by the world standards. But Advertising revenues reflect only the demand side of the media. The supply side i.e. - the advertising time available – is growing in India at the rate of 35 per cent a year. As a result, supply side is growing almost three times faster than the demand side, resulting not only lower advertising rates and more space for trivial and sensational stories but also dumping of serious 'content'. *

Ambiguity in using new media technologies:

Since 2000, the advancement in media sector both technologically and market-wise have raised to new phenomena, which has given ample amount of freedom and power in the hands of common man. But this immense amount of power doesn't really bring the maturity needed for understanding this media power. Though people quickly become habituated with the media gadgets but they don't adhere to optimize its utilization for development purposes. Rather, this new advancement has created ambiguity and make tough for the government to apply rules and regulation to it.

The most celebrated case perhaps is that of radio jockey (RJ) of Red FM, Johnathan Nitin Brady, who reported made offending remarks against the Indian Idol winner, Prashant Tamang, in September 2008. Tamang was referred as 'guard' resulting in clashes around Darjeeling, leading to deployment of soldiers, which prompted the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to term it as 'racist and insulting'. Tamang's fans moved to Supreme Court against the RJ. The channel also faced a week's ban, which meant going off air, the first time in the history of Indian radio. *

Another case is of Ajith, who had been charged with criminal intimidation and hurting religious sentiments in 2009. Ajith, a 19-year-old computer science student was instrumental in setting up an anti- Shiv Sena Orkut community, in which an anonymous commentator has posted a death threat against the Sena leader Bal Thackeray. There are also incidents of an Information Technology (IT) professional being arrested for obscene

comments about the Congress leader Sonia Gandhi in the Orkut community, 'I hate Sonia Gandhi'. However, community groups that profess hatred to particular programmes on television, to actors, to politicians, and even historical figures continue to sprout.*

While the Government time-to-time takes measure to tighten the media activities by guidelines and policies, the onus of adhering to these guidelines is mostly on media networks. Also there is a minimal authority which oversees its implementation and those who are, like Censor Board of India, still very much rigid with their own grammar of media and hence doesn't want to upgrade with the advancement.

The other problem lies in distinguishing the line between 'public' and 'private' space, which becomes more proving in the case of Internet. Though the Information Technology (Amendment) Act of 2008 has granted the power to the police and Authority to intercept email, block websites and web content, monitor and collect traffic data relating to a website in order to foil cyber fraud, in the name of National interest, it still doesn't prevent users to express 'inflammatory' content if it is published within the circle of their own community. Though that may pass as non-threatening but is also misleading and provoke sensation. Secondly; the identity of the user/producer of the content which is still guarded with the veil of anonymity (though people might be ignorant in utilizing the media as their resource, they are very smart inciting sensation and hiding themselves) makes it next to impossible task for the police to trace the person behind the malice.

Emergence of 'Glocalisation or Cultural Imperialism?'

India is not only a multi-class, multi-religious and multi-lingual country, but also has two large segments of population: the growing middle class and the huge underbelly of poverty-stricken people. While one India is cornering resources and institutions, the other India is left to fend for itself. In this regard, the use of new found globalized media, has not only uplifted the lives of millions of illiterate and poor by resourcing developmental programmes through its medium but has brought out social and material advancement, including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities.

But this transfers of technology, know-how, institutional frameworks and western lifestyle has also led to a debate whether this change has in real, helped improving the 'development goals' and 'modernity' of India or does it has actually moved the nation into 'cultural imperialism' which according to many scholars, may be defined as economic or political domination and dependency, but without the political form of 'colonialism'.⁸

As more and more people get occupied in adapting themselves in this new trend, the chances of 'battering out the existence of 'authentic, traditional and local culture of India by indiscriminate dumping of large quantities of slick commercial and media products, from developed countries gets close. Some argue that it is not the global structure that plays a role in the people's lives, but the local context that shapes the people's everyday lives. By the act of interpretation, global messages emerge in a local context, and thereby 'localise the exogenous, and make them relevant for their daily lives.' The other parallel process of this localising of global messages is the articulation of local culture in a global environment, leading to an invigoration of local culture. For example, the revival of some Indian folk music and dance rituals after being remixed as pop or rap music. The adoption of these traditional, local songs and dance rituals as upbeat pop music presentation in Indian movies and on MTV has revived the local artists' fortunes.*

Conclusion:

With the multiplication of media instruments and range in past two decades, it has become significant to note its dual role, which it plays in disseminating information to all segments of Indian population- the poor and the disadvantaged, the middle and the upper class as well as creating new sphere and possibilities for development and growth. Although this media expansion in India is seen as increasing choice for the individual vis-a-vis 'glocalisation' of Indian media content, question remains whether the government is doing enough to guide this industry, to meet the developmental goals envisaged for its medium since their initiation. The future lies not only the propensity of the government and inclination of the public for the media but to fill the gaps which may hurdle the path of growth by using the media resources more intelligently.

ENDNOTES:

1. According to FICCI-KPMG report, the Indian Media & Entertainment Industry (IME) registered the growth of 12 per cent over 2010, to reach INR 728 billion.

2. During the same Fifth Five year Plan, the Government of India executed an agreement with the Advertising Agency Association of India to design a communication strategy for the states of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. The objectives of the strategy were to provide appropriate knowledge about methods of contraception, allay fears among the people, provide accurate information as to where one can have family planning services, and finally stimulate interpersonal contacts.
3. It is obvious that, unlike the American Constitution or owners in which freedom of the press is mentioned as one of the fundamental Rights, the Indian Constitution doesn't specifically mention freedom of the press. However, the fundamental Rights Clause of the Indian Constitution treats freedom of the press as an integral part of the larger "Freedom of expression." Based on the First Amendment Act of 1951, the Indian courts, in the past, have considered press freedom as a Fundamental right.
4. Aruna Vasudev, one of the most discerning Indian Film critics says "These films were packed up with the formula of absurd Romances which had song and dances, made like fairytales with morals".
5. According to the unofficial estimates available in January 2001, Production of Indian Films in the 1970s-90s was 750-850 a year with high point of 1948 in 1989.
6. Readership and circulation of dailies especially of Hindi and regional language have been growing in Southern states of India, which coincides with proliferation of television channels including language television in these states (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka). Similarly, in the neighboring state of Maharashtra, Marathi newspapers have flourished (Press Council of India, 2008)
7. According to the report, in 2007, the Indian radio advertising industry from 2004-2007 has recorded a growth of 37 per cent. It stood at 6.2 billion in 2007, up from Rs 5 billion in 2006. The report adds that 60 per cent of the revenue of the radio advertising industry comes from private FM broadcasters and the balance from AIR.
8. According to H.I Schiller, in article 'Communication and cultural domination' (New York : International Art and Science Press Inc 1976) .. "The sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating structure is attracted, pressured, forced and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and structures of the dominating centre of the system."

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