Murky Imbalance in Free Information Flow: A Critical Review of Global Media Politics

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Abstract

Despite being a long-chewed topic both in support and against the issue of imbalance in information by the developmental theorists of late sixties and seventies of the previous century, the 'Imbalance in Global Information Flow' somehow remains perennially pertinent in many discussions in the post-globalization scenario. As the topic has been centered around the third world nations, the academia still finds it vulnerable of either producing newer issues of imbalance in the third world countries or contrarily pronouncing the issue quite resolved and cliché of late with the rapid growth of media globalization. On the other hand, the impact of globalization of media and communication technology over the academia has been so fascinating and influential that they even refuse to rally with any critical view on media globalization and the contemporary upbringing of modernity which largely tells the story of communication technology and its impact on our consumerist lives. However, the 'imbalance in global information flow' has fundamentally been a pre-globalization phenomenon which the developed countries claimed to have resolved by giving 'freedom of information' in the era of globalization of media and communication technology. So, the 'right to free information' transformed into 'freedom of information'. Here the debate ends and pops up again from the journey through nationalism to the framing of 'reality' events.

Prologue

The issue of the Imbalance in Information Flow has strictly been the issue of 'pre-globalized' third world perspectives, wherein developing nations, way back in 1970s, put forth an allegation of not getting appropriate and free flow information compared to the developed nations. The developing nations appealed to UNESCO to resolve the issue and henceforth a Commission was formed led by Sean McBride, which finally admitted the fact and recommended a pluralist kind of information dissemination order from the clutch of big news agencies toward a plausible flow of information. The recommendations of the report known as "Many Voices One World" was considered to

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A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

13

be an alternative communication order to resolve all vertical social disparities in information flow to the third world nations. The report however alternatively mentioned a new information and communication order (NWICO), earlier known as New International Information Order (NIIO, 1973).

What in NWICO was mentioned became important for any rediscovery research on the issue of 'imbalance of information flow'. Primarily Non-Aligned nations clearly mentioned the imperialist domination of US over information flow, communication technology that created an undemocratic mode of one-way flow of information.

As the backdrop of the above story on the other hand, the situations in developing or less developed countries were, as observed, something like 'system in making' since post World War-II, when the Nehru prescribed *first press commission* (1952-4) that had recommended a gross improvement of internal media and communication system. As the aftermath of the World War II that largely devastated European colonizing powers, all colonies around the world were left behind in their deplorable, drained economic and social conditions. In such a situation three situational options evolved before the third world consolidation.

Firstly, they so become politically independent with large internal economic and endodermic social soars which, at least the political bosses of these nations envisaged compulsively the external assistance for developmental resurrection.

Secondly, the third world nations collectively could prefer to be ideologically non-aligned from global superpowers which gave birth of the historic Non-Aligned Movement.

Thirdly, the whole world had consequently been vertically classified into certain binary conditions, such as, (a) *media have(s) and have-not(s)*; (b) *developed and developing*; (c) *first world and the third world*; (d) *oriental media and western media*; (e) *east-west or north-south etc.* like various terms of differential developmental identities. These classifications made the third world nations more desperate to initiate development anyhow.

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

14

Development as a Signifier

Subsequent to the above situational options and newly popped up binary categorizations the nation states of the whole world entered in a new era of newer demands and newer aspirations of development particularly in the post-war period. The "Development" became the prime signifier around the world either to promote or to achieve. The signifier of development naturally therefore created a vertically-powered inequality between *media-haves* and *media-have-nots*. The new dialectics have had inevitably designated newer power equations between the ruler and the ruled in terms of newer developmental aspirations. Nevertheless, the third world nations tried their best to figure out needs and aspirations and even ideological choice of theirs but hardly had any option to get that other than seeking external assistance from the developed world-grouping (G-7) led by United States.

What in terms of development the third world nations actually needed and envisaged? The needed was an aggressive initiative of development in all areas of agriculture, industry, infrastructure, social systems and finally its own communication system and networks that summarily included installation and development of mass media such as radio, television as propagandist machineries for the development initiatives of the government. In this course, as observed in India, the government had also tried to consolidate the newspaper activities under a quasi-independent system i.e. Press Council of India emerged later in 1966 as per the recommendation of the First Press Commission (1952-54).

Development as a signifier promotes nationalism

If Development and Nationalism were the prime codes of Indian mediation before globalization, the code of the globalization of media was surprisingly to explore the "Reality", a new condition of media realism. The present research is supposed to explore the root of that "Reality" of Indian mass media and its impact on the Indian society.

The framing of mainstream mass media that includes Radio, Television, Cinema, Web Contents, can therefore be classified into three distinct features in Indian territory

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

15

since the colonization was lifted after the World War-II. These three features are mostly of geo-social types:

(i)   Programme for Development;

(ii)   Promotion of Nationalism and Nationalist Tradition; and finally;

(iii)   Entertainment of Reality.

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Programme for Development:

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The prime agenda after Independence of India was to use mass media specially Radio and Television for development purpose. The developmental purpose precisely was firstly to ensure government's presence among audience's mind and its initiatives toward development and secondly, to keep the audience aware of the developmental indices, like economic and social welfare activities like industrial jobs, family planning, agriculture farming, education etc. As stated by UNSCO the prime agenda of setting a development-oriented entertainment system was "*In India, such a concern for development of communication system was clearly reflected in the country's first Five Year Plan itself. Internationally, efforts were made to facilitate the growth and development of communication facilities, especially in new and emerging countries. In 1958 the UN General Assembly called for a "programme of concrete action" to build up press, radio broadcasting, film and television facilities in these countries as part of economic and social development. To draw up a suitable programme and assess the resources required, the General Assembly requested UNESCO to carry out a fact-finding survey. Based upon the UNESCO report submitted to UN, the General Assembly, in 1962, unanimously adopted a resolution "expressing its concern that the survey disclosed 70 per cent of the population of the world lack in adequate information facilities and are thus denied effective enjoyment of the right to freedom". The UN General Assembly also emphasized that information media have an important part to play in education and in economic and social progress generally and that new techniques of communication offer special opportunities for acceleration of the education process. Consequently, governments, especially of newly emerged developing countries, were urged to include in their economic development plans adequate provision for development of national information media*" (Yadava, 1995, p.1)[1].This

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

16

entertainment communication for Socio-economic Development phase continued until India launched its first home-made INSAT series satellites in 1982 onwards.

The launching of indigenously made satellites had transformed mediational scenario of the country a big leap forward. In the developmental consideration all subsequent outcomes like introduction of colour television, live telecast, national tele-networking etc all may remain in the developmental queue, but at the same time the country's tele-authority initiated the commercial journey of its tele-media in the entertainment field with immediate effect. The feature of commercial entertainment journey was primarily pro-nationalist being associated by mainstream cine-commercial culture.

Promotion of Nationalism or Nationalist Tradition

Although the pro-nationalist monopolistic phase of Doordarshan could not stay longer, as the globalization of media hit the country, Indian state did everything to sustain the 'Nationalist Code' largely manifested as 'Indian unity in diversity' in 1980s. Soon after the launching of satellites in 1982 the mediational scenario in India witnessed a vast technological upgradation which was the signifier of the second phase of our entertainment package. And this time, the nationalist identity-based agenda was prioritized more than the earlier forms to achieve basic socio-economic development indices. Audiences, in this phase, are considered rather expected to be capable enough of understanding and accepting newer innovations of development out of a bit aggressive entertainment package projected inside a total nationalist jacket. Right from the first tele-serial 'Hum Log' (1984) to the musical sign of unity 'Mile Sur Mera Tumhara' (1988) the scenario manifested a massive flow of nationally entrenched code of entertainment.

Imbalance of Information and Development of Communication: Point of Dichotomy

It is however clear, as mentioned in the prologue, that both aspects of the above sub-headline articulate third world nations' common ideological expressions or aspirations.

(i) The first facet [*imbalance of information*] led to a collective *allegation* of the third world nations, placed to UNESCO against concentration of global information flow in the hands of the 'Gang of Four' news agencies and big western media houses, particularly the short-wave domination. This facet was comprised of three major types

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

17

of aggression: (a) Militarization over many countries of Asian and Latin American regions; (b) Big Four News agencies' grabbing of information; (c) The famous Short-Wave war; particularly media domination through Voice of America.

The allegation for not getting information about the current affairs of the developed nations was largely an alternative proposition against the rise of media imperialism backed by open armed aggression unleashed by US combined forces in various corners of the world. Precisely the US aggression was a double-layered structure. Prof. Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman effectively formulated it by categorizing US effort in three successive conditions. These are Constructive terrorism, benign terrorism and nefarious terrorism (Chomsky-Herman, 1996)[2]. Constructive is where US combined forces directly invaded the region/country to control or grab the resources. Benign is where US sponsored internal insurgent forces to organize trouble internally. Nefarious is which US was largely annoyed with, was of no help for US. From Indonesia and other South-east Asian countries to West Asian nations to various Latin American nations like Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba witnessed such aggression.

The rest of the world largely some Asian and African nations was cordoned and manipulated by the information imbalance for which the big four news agencies played the pivotal role. The non-aligned countries had a long standing complaint of not getting appropriate and enough information about the developed nations as the flow of information was largely thwarted by the global media players of most developed nations. The global media players were large media houses and news agencies earlier belonged to developed nations under nationalist control. Television networks like BBC, CNN, CBS, ABC etc. The news agencies were AP, AFP, UPI, Reuters, and German Wolff etc. Besides, the western film producing firms became very powerful controlling the global film spaces. They were Warner Brothers, Twentieth Century Fox, MCA (Universal), MGM, and Paramount etc[3].

The Short-Wave and Medium Wave radio service played an ideological machinery for US that on the one hand controlled the third world situation and engaged on the other hand in ideological battle with another superpower Soviet Union. In this course, Hollywood also started taking-over all film producing industries including cinema theatres of various third world nations to project/screen favourbale movies of their

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

18

choice. The VOA domination was and is still such a phenomenon since Nehru's regime that could be defined as the direct evidence of US control over Indian media scenario. Noted Commentator A.G. Noorani writes,

"*On July 9, 2013, it will be 50 years since India signed an agreement with the United States for sharing the facilities of a powerful, 1,000 kW medium wave radio transmitter to counter China's propaganda in South-East Asia. India would build and operate a radio broadcasting station near Calcutta (now Kolkata), while the U.S. would supply the transmitter and ancillary equipment. India would own in perpetuity the station and all the equipment supplied by the U.S., but it would make available three hours of prime time daily for the relay of Voice of America (VOA) programmes to South-East Asia.*

The terms of the agreement are interesting. The U.S. government would use the time "for the sole purpose of increasing understanding between the United States and the countries of South-East Asia"; the contents of VOA programmes "will take into account the friendly relations which exist between the Government of India and other countries"; and a schedule of programmes would be shown to Indian officials in advance—texts would be provided "for the purpose of any review desired". Further, "The Government of India agrees to pay to the Unites States government one rupee only as purchase price for the entire equipment"[4].

This agreement had been very important for US to establish a substantial base to combat China and establish control over the whole of South-East Asia.

(ii) The second one [*development of communication*] was the *need* of the third world for which they sought external assistance to ensure internal socio-economic development. McBride Commission too mentioned the need of the development in the third world, but somehow ignored the political economic condition behind the development. Here the dichotomy or paradox lies. The commission in its report mentioned:

"*...development strategies should incorporate communication policies as an integral part in the diagnosis of needs and in design and implementation of selected priorities. In this respect communication should be considered a major development source, a vehicle to ensure real political participation in decision-making, a central information*

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First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

19

base for defining policy options, and an instrument for creating awareness of national priorities"[5].

Such a paradoxical situation had ambivalently established and ushered enough political economic complication that even nowadays remains a source of all ideological crisis in the third world nations. United States by that time had developed a master plan to extend assistance to the developing nations and US financial organizations had already started working in many developing nations in connection to that. Noted Development Researcher Everett Rogers termed the master plan as 'Dominant Paradigm of Development'[6].

Meanwhile alongside the dominant development agenda, US started diversely progressing in many third world nations such as, benignly programmed strategic armed-financial assistance to curb down any internal political upsurge and control, and finally the Marshall Plan of technical assistance for setting up the development of communication networks in some third world nations beyond their own NAM mutual ideological cooperation initiatives.

The Indian experience in both ideological and techno-financial development therefore reveals the truth that on the multipurpose development agenda, the third world nations consciously sought external assistance to both superpowers US and USSR [Soviet Union]. If the rapid industrialization project of Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) was envisaged with assistance of USSR, India at the same time directly sought US cooperation for communicational development, when the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1957 sent a team of newly founded ISRO scientists to NASA for training in satellite communication technology.

Philosophy of Development: Top-Down Mechanism

The philosophy or the concept of development as evident in the third world countries remained quite general across ideological differentials. As stated by Everett Rogers that the "*dominant paradigm*" *of development as it exercised a dominant influence in the field of development. The emphasis of this model was that development could be achieved by increased productivity, economic growth and industrialization, through heavy industries, capital intensive technologies, urbanization, centralized planning.*

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

20

Development was measured by gross national product (GNP), total or per capita income. There was a shift from a static, agricultural, primitive and rigid society to a dynamic, industrialized, urbanized and socially mobile nation". Other communication researchers like Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm (1964) supported *'the dominant paradigm and advocated automation and technology for development and change. They made significant contributions in identifying the role of communication for technological development*' (Rogers, 1976)[7].

The above statements overtly expose the philosophy of the US master plan or the so-called Dominant Paradigm of Development project designed for the third world. Three aspects of western capitalism were primated as the indicators of development: *Industrialization, Urbanization, Increased productivity*. The development of media and communication systems was planned rather destined to achieve the growth agenda. The rest of the development other than developing the above modernist pockets was defined as per the trickle-down process. The top-down or trickle-down process of development obviously required three contingent elements: *capital intensive technologies, heavy industries* and a *central media system.*

The outcome of the above capitalist growth oriented socio-economic system also was destined such as, the "growth of indicators": like GNP, Per Capita Income, and users of mass media specially Television. Despite all the inequalities and mal-distribution in the lower socio-economic strata the upward sign of growth indicators would always show the rise of Indian economy and society. The philosophy of the US master plan of development was as stated by Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm as the 'automation and the growth of technology' where the installation of mass media would act as a '*magic multiplier*' to reach and enrich the audience.

Main Elements of the Dominant Paradigm (of Development)	Emerging Alternatives to the Dominant Paradigm	Possible Factors Leading to the Alternative Paradigm
Economic growth as measured by GNP.	Equality in income distribution.	Discouraging rates of economic growth.

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

21

Capital-intensive technology.	Appropriate technology.	Environmental pollution and perceived limits to growth.
Centralized planning and development.	Self-reliance in planning and development.	Positive outcomes in countries that were self-reliant.
Underdevelopment is caused by internal factors.	Underdevelopment is caused by internal and external factors.	World systems theory. Dependency theory.

(*Rogers: The Diffusion of Innovation, Chapter-3*)[8]

The magic multiplier by all means was targeted to establish an ideological signifier as 'Development' behind that the prime instrument considered was industrialization. The industrialization as a prime signifier of the whole Capitalist system from its monopoly period to the contemporary era of post-World War-II epoch was such a signifier that Europe during Monopoly Capitalism and US in so called state-capitalist era could not resolve sustainable development criteria by it. It was only used as a control mechanism behind the cursory of development mechanism, which was strictly considered a Top-Down process to the poor and for which mass media were so desperately needed as propaganda machinery.

The industrialization and mass media-oriented development mechanism established its own criteria in countries like India with one and only common factor, Employment Generation. Economic Growth, GDP are still all statistical figuration which common people can still hardly decipher its meaning in their lives. And most importantly India, after three decades of globalization process, is still finding way out of all problems through the same signifier of industrialization in the form of rapid industrial investment. The technique of urging for investment has however been changed.

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

22

Within two decades of the working out of Marshall Plan as the development mechanism, scholars like Rogers (1976) started believing that the top-down information mechanism failed to reach common people of vast rural India. The magic multiplier effect of Doordarshan and Akashbani worked but could not convince common people as number of social factors, e.g. illiteracy, impoverishment, lack of infrastructure etc. came forward as major hindrance. Ev. Rogers criticized the whole method as western formulation that remained ineffective in third world nations. And the experimentation of development mechanism went on to be implemented on India audiences (Rogers, 1976)[9].

The Indian Political-Developmental axis: need versus compulsion

The growth orientation of socio-economic development had imputed three above mentioned contingent elements that Indian government too had accepted and framed its initial five-year plans accordingly. The second five-year plan envisaged the growth of heavy industries on the one hand and as per the recommendations of first press commission (1952-54) the government had taken the decision to establish television system.

In this way Indian economy had complied with the US agenda of the capital-intensive method in every aspect of the internal economy and the social system to *firstly* ensure productivity with a prognostic view of development to be further trickled down to the large impoverished people. This was placed in the first two five-year plans when heavy industrialization, employment generation to boost up the market mechanism had been the primated agenda.

Meanwhile in 1959 India first experienced the transmission of the third contingent element 'Doordarshan' (station-based television system) on an experimental basis. The other cities of India successively witnessed the start of television station in later years. US firm Ford Foundation had distributed more than 500 television sets to the local people to watch the transmission. The prime contents of transmission included programmes on agriculture, child education, family planning etc.

The third five-year plan (1961-66) in Nehru's regime could not however achieve considerable growth both in industry and agriculture. Akashbani (AIR) and

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

23

Doordarshan as magic multipliers of development however continued to grow and spread across cities and regions of the country as they both had played a very important role during Green Revolution programme in late 1960s. Meanwhile Indira Gandhi took over the governmental power as a Prime Minister. In her regime the Green Revolution project was announced and carried out with active cooperation from US and its financial institutions operating in India. The agenda continued until Indian government (ISRO) jointly with NASA introduced SITE (*Satellite Instructional Television Experiment*), the first television *field project* on satellite television transmission programme (1974-76) primarily in Kheda district of Gujarat and subsequently in 2400 villages of the country[10]. Before that AIR also introduced a field, project called Rural Radio Forum in Nagpur in 1956. This UNESCO project was also introduced in other third world nations Ghana, Nepal, Zambia, Canada etc[11]. Both SITE and Radio Rural Forum projects were envisaged determinate outcome from the audience feedback, as both were the field projects with the confirmed presence of audiences.

The outbreak of internal emergency (1975-77) and subsequently the defeat of Indira Gandhi in 1977 general election changed the monolithic development scenario. The new coalition government started changing many earlier decisions blowing that earlier governments used radio and television for their own political benefits.

Global Control over News: Cross Media Concentration

Along with the compatible master plan of dominant paradigmatic development the agenda of managing or controlling the news (information) flow remained truly aggressive, as argued earlier, where the big media houses and news agencies started controlling or manipulating global news flow. Having considered the audiences of the third world nations quite backward in terms of consuming news of the developed world, the big news agencies unleashed full power to control the information flow. Noted media theorists Ed. Herman and R. McCheseney analyzed that '*the dominant activities in global media had been those of the Big Four news agencies and the global film industry centered in Hollywood...In keeping with the US role in the world, both AP and UPI gained ground globally on Reuters and AFP...this western grip on global print news agency reporting was unchallenged. The new big four expanded their services to include radio. Television presented a greater challenge and for that a*

handful of specific news-film agencies emerged to provide television companies...' (Herman, 1998)[12].

In this way the concentration of cross-media ownership activities through merger and acquisition had taken a sharp rise which led to the control of more than 75% of the total global media and advertising share. So, a severe imbalance in information flow to the third world countries was quite observable. But the problem with the accusation was when the third world nations were planning to put that forth against western media activities, the western mass media already started concentrating through all-round cross media ownership activities.

This was the second-generation concentration after the western media went under corporate ownership from the earlier state control. The concentration phenomenon was so unknown to the developing countries that they even could not get hold of the situation at all. The media of the third world developing nations had just started crawling with direct external assistance where US development communication researchers prepared the theoretical ground to transform the whole developing nations into a great 'field of research' for framing and formulating media programmes.

McBride Commission and moral criticism against information imbalance

Finally, it was NAM that came forward to protest in the UNESCO and ITU (International Telecommunication Union) against the imbalance in global information flow and cultural imperialism. But the diversified characters of NAM member countries put the proposal of alternative news flow even in further problem. As already mentioned in this article that some countries of NAM remained pro-capitalist, some were socialists, and some remained under dictatorship. So expecting any meaningful alternative resolution toward New World Information and Communication Order from NAM countries was really a problematic affair.

UNESCO however constituted a Commission having Sean McBride as Chairman in 1976 to admit and resolve the problem with NWICO. In 1980 McBride Commission finally submitted its report but UNESCO before that passed a Mass Media Declaration to announce the moral dictum and professional responsibilities of mass media. McBride Commission however admitted the imbalance in information flow but came out quite

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

25

vague in implementing NWICO. UNESCO then passed a resolution in support of the commission report which had rejected state media monopolies, so vaguely promoted the plurality of media channels surprisingly under state scenario. The resolution finally stamped on the capitalist decision of FDI in news media even in the third world countries.

What happened to the McBride Report?

The biggest question that hit the whole initiative against the institutional imbalance of information flow to the third world countries was its own fate after it was tabled in the UNESCO. What happened really with this report was and is rather the foundation of today's globalization of media for last three decades. Moreover, for the first time since the Second World War the aggression of western media became surfaced when some newspaper houses along with US and UK openly challenged the report alleging the curbing down of information democracy.

Nothing substantial was expected from both McBride Commission and UNESCO because even the vague report disrupted global media powers enough that weakened the proposal of alternative communication order (NWICO) and the nodal formulating body (UNESCO). Global Media powers led by Time Warner house, Wall Street Journal, BBC etc. severely protested against the report. Both US and Great Britain had withdrawn from UNESCO in 1985 that led UNESCO to retreat from any alternative proposal. Such an unruly stance of capitalist powers was really a big blow to the third world protest. The situation had therefore been limping toward global media concentration and all-pervasive convergence. Ed. Herman and R. McChesney correctly argued that '*the withdrawal from UNESCO also reflected a broader change in US and Western politics in the 1980s, a move toward aggressive global pro-market policies...often referred to as neoliberalism*' (Herman, 1998)[13].

India celebrating satellite transmission exposure

Meanwhile amid so much hustle bustle in United Nations on the imbalance of information issue, India was celebrating its satellite transmission exposure in the whole decade of 1980s. It started with the launch of indigenous satellite INSAT-1A (1982) and INSAT-1B that led to no less a revolutionary change in Indian television experience.

Being enabled with satellite communication Indian government achieved a consecutive growth of national transmission, live telecast, and colour transmission. Now these successive developments paved the route of commercial exposure in all respects and categories of mediated contents. Advertising and entertainment transmission had grown significantly. Production of Soap Operas, News Magazines and even some reality projection of popular filmy songs caused a massive internal growth pro-market development in a monopolistic condition, which was expected a further and sooner transmission.

The last three-four years of 1980s had consequently witnessed a direct entry of global entertainment channels like M-TV along with the unleash of US-allied military power exposition over Iraq what was a culmination of Iran contra scandal during Reagan-Thatcher regime in the initial years of 1980s. India and many third world nations were forced to telecast war-capsules of the Gulf -War as again directed by CNN. So, the decade of satellite transmission exposure ended with a steady note media globalization in India. The precursor got started when Prasar Bharati Bill (1989) was placed in the Indian Parliament for the autonomy of AIR and Doordarshan. So, finally it was just eight-nine years of journey of Indian mass media before the pronouncement of liberalization in 1991, if 1982 is considered as the base year of media modernization (Chattopadhyay, 2010)[14].

Dialectics of Right to Information versus Freedom of Information

So, what McBride Commission projected and recommended was the right to get proper and useful information to each countries of all regions. And what big media houses backed by US-UK combined force projected while moving against Commission's report was the context of freedom of information. This was the prime signifier of the ideological battle between the commission's report and big media houses' new invasive policy. The period, if we try to look at it, witnessed all major events occurring simultaneously. We can summarize that by:

(a) India's own indigenous satellite launch with US collaboration; (b) commercial television ventures started in third world regions as per US plan; (c) Big US media houses threatened US government to launch protest against McBride commission's report; (d) US-UK threatened UNESCO and UN that they would leave otherwise; (e) US

combined force was planning to attack Iraq and so Gulf War started on a fake information of Iraq's attack on Qwait, as sent by US media (Kellner, 1996); (f) US-UK left UNESCO and stopped funding; (g) Soviet Union collapsed and New World Order was announced by US President George Bush; (h) Globalization of media and Liberalization of nations' economies started; (i) global media started entering in third world nations; (j) UNESCO had withdrawn McBride Commission's report; (k) US-UK rejoined UNESCO in 1996. The circle in this course of development had completed. Freedom replaced Right.

Globalization resolved Imbalance of Information?

The era of media globalization was marked with a massive inflow of media conglomerates including television networks, FM channels, book publishing houses, amusement parks, film production companies, globally operating newspapers etc. These were followed by empowered financial institutions, insurance companies, and other transnational corporations not with any further expansion with new employment opportunities but with their new networks and exploiting the cheap labour and skill.

Now, the question is: does globalization resolve the imbalance problem? The whole influx of both private and foreign media doubtlessly enhanced information dissemination for the people of the third world. But it was absolutely a new corporate neoliberal information base altogether that captivated the third world audience as a new idea of corporate operations. The issue of earlier ideological imbalance in information flow as a critical political stance of the third world consolidation remained obliterated. The US and allied forces captured middle-east by devastating Iraq, the long-awaited target since 1960s. The new consumer society had emerged in the third world systems with newly transformed media audience. The audience transformation as a new reality factor over the traditional social realities started becoming a new topic of mass mediation.

Conclusion: The story of Neoliberal Media

If the above three conditions project a new imperialist action in some parts of the globe, the jinx in other regions including Indian subcontinent had witnessed a new highly aggressive influx of global convergent mass media with huge technological

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
A Unit of Society, Language and Culture Trust

28

support entered with a neo-liberal note over the outcast of age-long developmental note. The whole 'national' code suddenly became 'Global' code for the perusal of Indian audience. These codes always remained a very distinct signified, signifier of which remained largely unknown among intelligentsia. Nobody questioned whether the developmental indices were achieved in the praxis of last four decades.

Entertainment for Reality

The national entertainment code had soon become obsolescent to even more gigantic emergence of global entertainment 'codes' with the emergence of global media beyond the nationalist frame. This particular feature has been very aggressive and empowered by its new political economic configuration far beyond the audience's approval or social approval. The whole third world societies have been facing a sudden rise of an aggregate demand for certain 'global' codes like, global media, global market structure, global brands, global technology, global gadgets, and of course global entertainment shows. So, both 'glocal' and 'national-global' became revitalized when the 'global' codes became locally discernible and the national agenda became more aggressive resting on the global.

The 'global' codes in this course gradually engulfed the 'developing' territories over all its traditional socio-cultural codes with all empowered 'Sign' factors. For global gadget brand code, the unit gadgets are the 'signs' e.g. a mobile phone; and for a global clothing brand code all apparels and outfits are all unit signs, and finally within a global media code all new productions act a Sign factors. Among these the most featured and empowered sign factor of global media is its Reality events. The new reality code has emerged as a new phenomenon beyond all earlier development notions.

Obliterating the traditional 'showcasing and audience' relationship the new global reality code has surrounded the audience in its production system to establish the 'Reality'. So, the audience has become a target of the new 'sign factor' of the giant reality production rather than the destination of production as we observe in KBC and in IPL. The inclusion of audience as the factor of production becomes an integral part of a new code "Reality".

Society Language and Culture – A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal
First Year I Fourth Issue I ISSN - 2583-0341
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29

The whole situation therefore appears like a journey through the 'Development – Entertainment – Reality' route in the last 70 years since Indian independence. Presently the Indian media and entertainment industry shares a magnum market of more than 1K Billion Dollars, where the reality shows occupy the biggest share of it. Reality Events or Shows probably are the latest media programme that exploits the best out of audience activism. The reality code has become so popular and inclusive nowadays that promotes a massive convergence of all television contents being added to the reality mechanism. Almost every mega soap is engulfing natural social time lapse to become at par to the mundane life pattern through mobile apps, secondly, every episode is added to the reality mechanism such as audience poll, opinion etc.

Emergence of reality events

In such a situation, the influx of global media houses is not at all giving us a newer industrial condition, it rather promotes an unprecedented postindustrial condition toward an absolute convergence or concentration of media houses and media activities. The argument of postindustrial media can be easily justified with the emergence of Media Conglomerates.

There are 14-15 global media conglomerates, of late all operating in India, share the entire media-space of the world. Some of these are AOL Time-Warner, Walt Disney Corporation, Viacom, News Corporation, General Electric, Sony etc. Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation has established largest media network in Indian territory taking over more or less almost all indigenous media houses through FDI and internal investment mechanism. The conglomerated media houses therefore do not at all follow any competitive industrial condition, it rather sucks out earlier competitive environment that once required the mass audience as judge or Judgmental 'Janta Janardan'. The audience is now being treated as an element in the gigantic media production system.

The most featured aspect of postindustrial media is its 'reality events' that eventually overrule the age-old concept of media's coverage for state development including aesthetic, ethical and statist creation of social incidents and rejuvenation of nationalist identities.

So, the story of reality shows/events in such an oligopolistic relationship with the mass audience project newer magnitude of 'realities' on the televisual and virtual planes thus revitalizing subjects like relationships, knowledge, experiences, performances, games, sport categories etc in a general affective manner.

The largely projected categories of 'reality shows' often seen in Indian media are Musical Events, News Talk Shows, Gambling Shows, Quiz Shows like KBC, lifestyle shows such as Big Brother, Big Boss, Sporting Reality Extravaganzas like IPL-Cricket or ISL-Football, Pro-Kabaddi show, Pro-Badminton show, Travel-Tourism Reality Shows, Film and Tele Award Ceremonies etc. All reality shows/events occupy most time and spaces of Television channels and largely control social spaces transforming public spheres into mass spheres.

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