❖ Globalisation, Television and Developmental Agenda

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Abstract

Theorising the impact of foreign and private television in India since 1991, does not neatly fit into the old debates about one way flow of news and information as reflected in the demand for the New World Information and Communication Order in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1990s, Indian society was invaded from the skies by a number of satellite television signals. However, did this advent of satellite television, vis à vis foreign and private television channels, lead to one way flow of information and entertainment programs from the Western world? Or, did it lead to rapid growth of Indian television industry, resulting in exponential increase in quality and quantity of television programs available to audience?

This paper argues that the *de facto* de-regulation of the television media since 1991 has led to an enviable growth in local production of programs for more than 450 channels, estimated to be worth Rs30 billion (AS$1 billion), thereby providing an increased level of opportunity for articulation of Indian local stories and culture. This way, the Indian television industry seems to have come full circle – where television, which was launched in the country as a means of development and education but became complacent and the government's mouth-piece, finally in the past decade-and-a-half has grown sufficiently to potentially provide an outlet for diverse local expressions thereby revitalising democracy in India.

Introduction

The Indian television scene has been transformed from a single government-owned (public service broadcaster) television network to a multi-channel global media market in the past decade-and-a-half. Until 1991, Indian audiences received a controlled, sometimes development-oriented and at other times propaganda-induced, television programming (Singhal & Rogers, 2001; NAMEDIA 1986; Verghese, 1978).

In contrast, in 2009 Indian audience are being subjected to a cacophony of nearly 450 commercially driven broadcasts [1] (Indiantelevision.com2009), which cater to around 500 million [2] viewers in India compared to around 30 million in 1984-85 (Indiantelevision.com 2008a; Doordarshan Handbook 1997). About 67 percent [3] of television households in India subscribe to one or more cable and satellite service (Indiantelevision.com 2008b), whereas the Indian television software industry is estimated to be worth Rs30 billion (AUS$1 billion) in 2009-2010 (Indiantelevision.com2008c). Doordarshan, the public service television broadcaster, launched in 1959, is no longer a monopoly, albeit it remains a significant player with an extensive network and territorial reach.

This historical growth in Indian television industry has raised questions about its impact on television content and on Indian audience. The paper takes a theoretical look at whether the inception of foreign and private television, has threatened the local culture, or has it resulted in improved quality and quantity of programs being available to Indian audience? The paper examines the validity of the initial aim of television in India – to be a developmental and education tool to enlighten the masses. The paper explores the question whether the entry of commercial television channels and competition has further skewed the developmental goals of Indian broadcasting as envisaged by political leaders in the 1960s. This paper engages with theories of development and modernity advanced by many scholars over the past five decades to analyse the growth of television as an institution of capitalist modernity (Barker, 1997: 13).

Development and modernity

In 1959, when television was launched in India, there were two contrary views – one, if television was allowed to degenerate into an entertainment medium it would waste the country's precious resources; the other, that television could be used as an effective education tool to enlighten the masses and change people's attitudes thereby leading to social and economic development (Ninan, 1995; Singhal & Rogers, 1989).

For India, the entertainment component, though essential for recreational purposes, and for mitigating the rigours of everyday life, was secondary to instruction, education and information, and the tackling of larger issues like unity, integrity, integration, socio-economic and secular justice and an enlightened citizenry which were very vital – indeed a question of survival and progress. (NAMEDIA, 1986: 12)

Over the next three decades (1960-1990), the two opposing views of the way television had developed in the country persisted – one, that Doordarshan was a government channel so had no credibility particularly in news programming, and its programs in general were 'dull' and 'boring' (Gupta, 1998). The other view was that it had degenerated into an entertainment medium and was not meeting its social objectives of informing and educating the audiences particularly those living in rural India (NAMEDIA, 1986; Verghese, 1978). Now that the Indian television industry with more than 450 channels has become part of the global television industry, it needs to be understood in the wider context of the globalising Indian economy and capitalist modernity.

Broad terms used in this paper are: development and modernity, cultural imperialism, and globalisation. In the 1950s and 1960s, academics generally defined 'development' as economic growth. The goal being that all newly created nations would and should evolve to a common point of being a modern society by a "transfer of capital, ideology, technology, and know-how" (Servaes & Malikhao, 2003, 7: 3). Based on some early studies, communication scholars believed that mass media had a 'magic multiplier' effect in increasing the level of development in less developed nations (Rogers, 1976). Linking the concept of modernity with communication, Lerner described it as "primarily a state of mind – expectation of progress, propensity of growth, readiness to change" (in Singh, 2003: 193). He argued that the Western model (including the population's state of mind) could be reproduced anywhere in the world by mass media dissemination of modern ideas, images and values (in Singh, 2003). Indian political leaders including the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru were greatly influenced by writings about the role of mass media in national development. Schramm (1964) saw information play an important role as an agent of change and modernisation. He argued that mass media could be used to impart information by playing three important roles: the watchman role, the policy role and the teacher role. He contended that as national development got underway, information would need to be available on-demand so that expert knowledge was available where needed, raising the population's aspirations and providing "a

forum for discussion, leadership, and decision making" (1964: 43).

It is generally the increasing flow of information that plants the seed of change. It is also the widened background of information that furnishes the climate for 'nation-ness' itself. By making one part of a country aware of other parts, their people, arts, customs, and politics; by permitting the national leaders to talk to the people, and the people to the leaders and to each other; by keeping the national goals and the national accomplishments always before the public - thus modern communication, widely used, can help to weld together isolated communities, disparate subcultures, self-centred individuals and groups, and separate developments into a truly national development (Schramm, 1964: 44).

The existence of traditional beliefs and practices was seen as an impediment to modernisation which was considered a prerequisite for economic growth. However, modernisation theory has been criticised for generating inequality and underdevelopment by accelerating the Westernisation and urbanisation of traditional societies (Servaes & Malikhao, 2003: 7, 4). Rogers criticised the paradigm of development and broadened the definition from one that centred on materialistic economic growth to other social values such as social advancement, equality and freedom (1976). Similarly, the new concept of 'development communication' dealt with the promotion of social change leading to improvement in people's quality of living, by encouraging better health, higher literacy and higher production of goods through more effective communication. Rogers and Hart (2003: 266) define the core elements of the 'development communication' paradigm as (i) the notion that mass media can deliver 'informative and motivational' messages to large audiences in developing countries and (ii) the research-based evidence that exposure to these messages can alter people's attitude, knowledge and behaviour towards economic growth and social betterment. The ultimate aim of development strategies is to modernise a society, in a way opposed to 'tradition'. It is a condition that is disconnected from the past, which through a process of social and cultural change makes life in the present different from life in the past. In the 1970s, an alternative concept – participatory process of development – came into existence in academic discourses. Rogers (1976) summarised the concept as:

A widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment (in Melkote, 1991: 193).

Cultural imperialism and globalisation

However, the transfer of technology, know-how, institutional frameworks and Western lifestyle in the 1960s and 1970s, caused some anxiety among Western theorists and those in developing countries. In the 1970s, the discourse on 'development communication' moved on to 'cultural imperialism' caused by the 'transfer' of Western values to traditional local cultures. Many government officials and politicians in developing countries saw this dependence on the developed world as a sign of 'imperialism', which may be defined as economic or political domination and dependency but without the political form of 'colonialism'. More worrying was the trend of 'cultural imperialism' where "authentic, traditional and local culture in many parts of the world was being battered out of existence by the indiscriminate dumping of large quantities of slick commercial and media products, mainly from the United States" (Tunstall, 1977: 57). Golding says 'cultural imperialism', which is a more inclusive term than 'media imperialism', includes the effects of international media, educational and cultural systems (Golding, 1983: 291). Fejes is critical of 'media imperialism' approaches which focus on the role of transnational corporations in shaping communication trends between countries. He says one needs to look at the factors operating at national and local levels "that assist and react against

the perpetuation of media imperialism" (Fejes, 1981: 286). Fejes links the discussion of 'media imperialism' to the dependency model vis-à-vis the relationship between developed and developing countries, and the developmental goals of developing nations. "Its (the dependency model's) major conclusion that the Third World countries occupy a subordinate position in the international economic and political systems which are seen as being structured primarily according to the needs of the developed countries" (Fejes, 1981: 283). Schiller's description of the concept of 'cultural imperialism' is useful here as "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" (1976: 9). Schiller (1976) says that the system of colonialism has been replaced by domination of certain power centres, their organisations and their control over the modern world system. This dependency of the developing world on the developed nations, be it the United States of America or the United Kingdom, has led to a call for a new economic order and New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO).

The International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems in its report in 1980 recommended that developing countries should establish national cultural policies to foster cultural identity and creativity. At a global level, it recommends that the promotion of "the cultural identity of every society" is necessary to enable it to enjoy a harmonious and creative inter-relationship with other cultures (MacBride, 1980: 259). The report states that countries need to safeguard their national cultural development while promoting knowledge of other cultures (MacBride, 1980: 268).

In the 1990s, with the collapse of the communist Soviet Union and the expansion of the market economy paradigm, a much broader term 'globalisation' replaced 'imperialism'. Tomlinson (1991) points out that the idea of 'cultural imperialism' is connected to the critical discourse of modernity. He argues that the critiques of cultural imperialism are protests against the spread of (capitalist) modernity "for capitalism, the nation-state and mass communications are all distinctive features of modern societies and determinants of the cultural condition of modernity" (Tomlinson, 1991: 173). However, instead of articulating the critiques in the language of domination, a language of cultural imposition by coercion (which draws its imagery from the age of high imperialism and colonialism), Tomlinson says 'cultural imperialism' can be thought of as the spread of modernity, which is a process, not an imposition, of 'cultural loss'. Here, "culture is seen as the resources through which people generate narratives of individual and social meaning and purpose" (Tomlinson, 1991: 173). The idea of 'imperialism' contains the notion of a purposeful project with the intention of spreading a social system from one centre of power across the globe. "The idea of 'globalisation' suggests interconnection and interdependency of all global areas which happens in a less purposeful way. It happens as a result of economic and cultural practices which do not, of themselves, aim at global integration, but which nonetheless produce it" (Tomlinson, 1991: 175). Tomlinson (1991) says although people's everyday experiences are 'local', these experiences are increasingly shaped by global process particularly through mass media. Tomlinson notes the link between the processes of globalisation with cultural demands for localisation.

It is significant to note that in this discussion, television is seen as being "bound up with capitalist modernity both as a set of economic activities and as a cultural force constituted by and constitutive of modernity" (Barker, 1997: 21). Barker says, if the expansion of television across transnational boundaries in the late 1980s and 1990s is a function of satellite technology and the spread of capitalist modernity across the globe, then "television constitutes, and is a consequence of, the inherently globalising nature of the institutions of modernity. Television is globalised because it is an institution of capitalist modernity while at the same

time contributing to the globalisation of modernity through the world-wide circulation of images and discourses" (Barker, 1997: 13). Baker argues that "television programs are not simple reflections of the world but specific constructions of it and thus represent forms of knowledge about the world" (Barker, 1997: 12). The nature of television programs is significant because if most of the programs broadcast in the developing world are imported from overseas, it raises issues of cultural imperialism where the knowledge of the local population is then framed by these imported programs.

Globalisation, localisation and regionalism

Summarising various views about globalisation among theorists and socio-political thinkers, Held (2000) says some equate the modern trend of world integration to the expansion of 'cultural imperialism' on a broader scale where the world is increasingly becoming homogenised and Westernised, while others believe that the impact of globalisation is mixed. Held identifies four different views about globalisation. Firstly, he sees a view that globalisation is characterised by homogenisation of economy and culture. Secondly, there is the significance of increased connectedness and sharing of cultures. Thirdly, the view denies the existence of globalisation and emphasises the continuation of unregulated capitalism, and fourthly there are the consequences of contemporary global interactions as complex, diverse and unpredictable. French and Richards (2000) also note that some perceive "globalisation as an opportunity for change, while others see it as having fractious effect on local cultures by creating new global communities with common interests" (Held, 2000: 18). Giddens (2002) states that the sceptics of globalisation theory say globalisation is not real but just an extension of the old system where countries continue to do business with their neighbouring partners.

Considering the level of economic turnover in the world market, Giddens says that globalisation is not only new, but is also 'revolutionary' (2002: 10). Globalisation, which could be said to be driven by advances in communication technologies, "is political, technological and cultural, as well as economic", and media is but a sub-set in this process (Giddens, 2002: 10). Many authors such as Giddens (2002), Nederveen Pieterse (1995), Robertson (1995) and Straubhaar (1998), discuss the various possible definitions and meanings of the process of globalisation as it is manifested in many developing countries via this technological, commercial and cultural import from Western nations, particularly the United States of America. They attempt to modify the general view that the world is becoming "more uniform and standardised, through a technological, commercial and cultural synchronisation emanating from the West, and that globalisation is tied up with modernity" (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995: 45).

According to Giddens (2002), the process of globalisation has been influenced by the developments in systems of communication dating back to the late 1960s. He says the advent of satellite communications has made a dramatic impact on breaking away from the past and modernising the world. "Instantaneous electronic communication isn't just a way in which news or information is conveyed more quickly. Its existence alters the very texture of our lives, rich and poor alike" (Giddens, 2002: 11). Globalisation is a complex set of processes, it pulls away power from local communities, it revives local cultural aspirations and it creates new economic and cultural zones within and across nations.

Giddens does not agree with those who say that nation-states lose power as the world becomes more globalised, stating that nation-states are still powerful, and political leaders still have a large role to play in the world. However, he believes that the nation, the family, work, and tradition, have changed. "They are institutions that have become inadequate to the tasks they are called upon to perform" (Giddens, 2002: 19). Nederveen Pieterse argues that because of the pervasiveness of this process across many spheres, "globalisation may be understood in terms of an open-ended synthesis of several disciplinary approaches" (1995: 45), extending

from social science to technology, agriculture or business sectors.

Two points of relevance emerge – one is that globalisation can be a "tandem operation of local/global dynamics, global localisation or globalisation" (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995: 49). And, the second is that world cultural experiences are not moving in one uniform and standardised direction, but are two-way, including the impact of non-Western cultures on the West. He says that "for some time now we have entered a period of accelerated globalisation and cultural mixing" (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995: 62). Nederveen Pieterse describes the process of globalisation as the process of 'hybridisation' where introvert cultures are gradually receding, and translocal cultures, made up of diverse elements, are coming to the foreground. As a result, there is a nostalgic upsurge of ethnicity and religious revivalism in some parts of the world. According to Nederveen Pieterse, the world is a place for a global 'mélange' of cultures.

Robertson (1995) talks about the concept of 'glocalisation', which is defined in terms of the co-presence of both 'universalising' and 'particularising' tendencies. He says that, contrary to common belief, the concept of glocalisation has its origins in Japan and not in the United States of America. According to Robertson, the agricultural principle of adapting the farming technique to the local situation was adopted in Japanese business for global localisation, "a global outlook adapted to local conditions" (Robertson, 1995: 28). Glocalisation also manifested itself as the 1990s business mantra of tailoring a company's services to local market needs. For example, in 1996, Coca-Cola engaged the services of "30 advertising agencies to bring a creative local flavour to the global message" (Rodwell, 1996: 16). Robertson describes this process of corporations producing products for the global markets by adapting to local and other particular conditions as 'universalisation' and 'particularisation'. He argues that:

[t]o considerable extent micromarketing – or, in the more comprehensive phrase, glocalisation – involves the construction of increasingly differentiated consumers, the 'invention' of 'consumer traditions' (of which tourism, arguably the biggest 'industry' of the contemporary world is undoubtedly the most clear-cut example) (Robertson, 1995: 29).

Straubhaar (1998) extends the 'glocalisation' theory by Robertson and Nederveen Pieterse to argue that in the area of television production, "there is good evidence that regional or geo-linguistic area productions of major genres are influenced by global developments in those genres, such as the global evolution of the soap opera, in which global, regional and national experiences interplay" (1998: 295). According to Straubhaar, the impact of globalisation in homogenising world culture is overstated. He quotes Ferguson to argue that the world is not becoming one homogeneous culture, largely fed by the United States of America's cultural industries. "The media imperialism and cultural synchronisation theories assumed an epochal change in the power of media to affect culture" (Straubhaar, 1998: 296).

Straubhaar goes on to argue that television's flow and impact needs to be looked at not only at a global level, but also at regional or geo-linguistic level, at national, sub-national or even at local level. At the global level, some television channels take the same content to worldwide audiences such as the CNN, whereas others are creating more regionally or locally adapted versions of the CNN programs. There are minimalist approaches such as the Cartoon Channel dubbing its programs in Hindi for the Indian audience, and there is Star TV broadcasting Hindi programs. The geo-linguistic focus on the impact of global media is significant because 'many local audiences would like to see programming in their own languages, addressing their own cultures' (Straubhaar, 1998: 286). If the local language is shared by a larger geo-linguistic group, then the programming may be imported to the other region, adding to the regionalisation of television program flows along language boundaries. Straubhaar says there is "a subtle interplay between the global and local in television form and content" (1998: 288). The television programs on one hand are spreading the message of materialism, of comfort, of

enhanced consumerism, but are doing so in the local language, moderating its message to local needs and cultures.

In summary, in a sense Straubhaar and others argue that globalisation is not equal to global homogenisation. "In fact, global diffusion of certain elements of consumer culture may well be more effective when those consumer elements are cast in local terms and adapted to local economic realities" (Straubhaar, 1998: 288). So, how does the growth in the television industry in India fit into this overall debate on globalisation?

Competition and glocalisation of television programming

The entry of private and foreign television media has meant that television channels in the 1990s, (following an opening of the Indian economy to multinationals), not only had to compete in a crowded market, but also needed to deliver audiences to their advertisers. Here the new entrants had to compete with other private channels as well as the established monopoly of the public service broadcaster (Doordarshan), which was, (as a result of the competition), already in the process of launching multiple regional channels and offering more privately produced and sponsored local entertainment programs. All television networks began looking for niche markets and producing programs that would interest 'local' audiences. As discussed above, globalisation goes hand in hand with the counter force of the need to localise products. For television media this means producing local programs in local languages by local talent, particularly in a multi-lingual country like India. This is a common trend in many Asian media markets, depending on the size of the local market along with each national government's ability and willingness to control this 'invasion from the skies' (satellite television). As French and Richards note that:

recent evidence from national and local television practices in many Asian countries points to the importance of local programming, ethnic and cultural differentiation, and the use of local language and dialect in influencing program preferences" (2000: 17).

In the case of Greater China and India – the two largest markets in the world:

[t]he providers of new 'global', satellite relayed television have been forced to recognise the need to 'localise' their services in recognition of the reality of local market conditions. Often, but not always, this takes the form of adapting genres to meet specific requirements of language or other cultural circumstance. (French & Richards, 2000: 19)

So in the mid-1990s, the 'cross-border' channels began changing their strategy to reach audiences beyond a small urban elite population who watched their foreign-originated English programs. Star TV network, now part of News Corporation, was the first to start adding Hindi sub-titles to Hollywood films (Thussu, 2000). In 1996, Star Plus began telecasting locally produced programs in English and Hindi. Thussu notes that the Star TV network boasted a policy of localisation, but he argues that "this change of heart was not because of any respect for Indian languages or culture on the part of the media conglomerates but the sheer logic of market pressure – localising the product to reach a wider consumer base and increase advertising revenues" (Thussu, 2000: 297).

Needs of a diverse society

India, which is a multi-class, multi-religious and multi-lingual country, has 22 scheduled languages and several hundred dialects (Census of India 2001a). Hindi is spoken by about 41 percent of the population (Census of India 2001b). At the same time English, which is a foreign language, is spoken and understood by about 2.2 percent of the population (Census of India 2001c). However, because of India's colonial past, English carries a degree of prestige and many times is used as a substitute common language in metropolitan India. Many people in

southern and north-eastern parts of India either do not speak Hindi or resent the imposition of Hindi as the national language (Gupta, 1998: 43). As a result, channels such as Zee began using the hybrid language Hinglish (a mix of Hindi and English) to reach as many people as possible thereby increasing the number of viewers they could deliver to advertisers. In fact, the process of deregulation of Indian economy in the 1990s went beyond the official unchaining of the government's control over businesses. Some sections of society often exposed to a Western lifestyle or aspiring to enjoy the comforts of a Western lifestyle had already moved on to a different time and space of life and work in a globalised world. Indian society, which was going through transformation after more than four decades of development and economic growth, also had to accept the cultural impact of modernisation where the upper middle and middle class started breaking away from Indian traditions, including being told by the government what to watch on television.

It is significant to note that although India has a growing number of middle class within its population, something which is attractive to multinational corporations, it also has a huge underbelly of poverty-stricken people. Some estimate that the Indian middle classes total about 650 million (of the total one billion population) (Asian Development Bank, 2001), while others put the statistics at 300 million (Sridharan, 2004; Perry, 2004). However, there is a consensus that the number of people living below the poverty line will be about 300-350 million (Asian Development Bank, 2001). In fact, some political scientists such as Rajni Kothari argue that it was the model of development that India imported from overseas which has led to the creation of 'two-Indias': "with one India cornering resources and institutions and, the other India left to fend for itself" (Kothari, 1988a: 2227). According to Kothari, the two Indias are: one that comprises the urban and rural elite, the big farmers, the industrialists, the bureaucrats, the executives and professionals, and the intelligentsia; and the other, which is impoverished, malnourished, the poor, the untouchables, the backward classes, the lower castes, and a large section of the religious minorities and women (1988a, 1988b and 1993). It is the existence of these two large sections of the Indian population which places competing demands on the government's general economic policy and specifically broadcast media policy.

The so-called economic reform of early 1990s expressed itself in terms of rising literacy and aspirations, economic prosperity, exposure to Western culture, and in terms of a new generation breaking away from joint family ideals leading to the rise of the nuclear family and a need for accessibility to entertainment and information at home. These changes in turn led to significant numbers of middle class people embracing cable and satellite television (Ninan, 1995). With Doordarshan unable to meet the growing number of peoples' entertainment and information needs, coupled with falling costs of new hardware (television, video recorders and later digital video players), multinationals were well placed to tap the huge Asian markets, with satellite technology, making it possible to telecast programs from the skies. It is ironic that the expansion and privatisation of the broadcasting industry is seen as a positive move towards democracy and choice for the individual rather than an abandonment of public service broadcasting in India (Pendakur & Kapur, 1997: 196).

As noted elsewhere, the government stifled Doordarshan programming in the name of development and nation-building, leading to a sense of dissatisfaction all round. Pendakur and Kapur (1997) say that the popularity of programs such as Aapke Adalat (Your Court), which simulated tele-visual trials of politicians and other public figures on Zee TV, was a sign of the potential for using mass media as a forum for expanded democratic debates, which of course was not possible on Doordarshan, overseen by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of India. "The liberalisation of the Indian television industry has revolutionised broadcasting in what used to be one of the world's most protected media markets" (Thussu, 2000: 294). But it was not as if India did not have a 'free press'. India has had a long tradition of press (print

media) working as the Fourth Estate along with a multi-party political system. "While the broadcasters toed the official line and abstained from any criticism of the government, the privately owned and politically plural press provided the critical framework within which Indian journalism evolved" (Thussu, 1999: 126).

However, the government did not totally abandon its development agenda. Through the 1970s and 1980s, it kept expanding television to rural and remote parts of India. It still carried messages of development – the importance of sending children to school, health warnings, new farming techniques and women's status in society – but these messages were presented in a dull and timid way causing many people to switch off (Gupta, 1998).

In the 1970s the advancements in space technology, pushed the Indian government to expand the reach of television in the country by launching one of the well-known experimental research project designed to measure the impact of mass media on a rural audience. The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was launched in August 1975 by borrowing satellite time from American satellite ATS-6. The experiment, implemented by the Indian Space Research Organisation, offered two transmissions a day to 2,400 villages in six far-flung states in India (Ninan 1995, Rajagopal 1993). Community television in these villages received direct signals from the satellite with the help of a dish antenna. Three quarters of the 2-1/2 hour program was devoted to agriculture and the rest to a mix of news, culture, health and family planning. Subsequently, the impact of this experiment, which lasted a year, was extensively evaluated. However, doubts remained about its success. It was concluded that the experiment failed because, though television was a good source of initial information, it was not backed by ground-level implementation of the schemes it propagated (Ninan 1995). No significant differences were found between 'television villages' and 'control villages' in their knowledge of the development materials shown in these programs. But the SITE experiment did help to narrow the knowledge gap. Those who were illiterate and had poor knowledge of the subjects covered by the television programs learnt the most from the programs (Chu, Schramm & Schramm, 1991).

Rajagopal (1993) points out that though SITE was a useful exercise in broadcasting reception via satellite, the instructional part of the experiment was considered a low priority. One of the major criticisms of development communication, which pertains to the fundamental process of development, is equally valid for the failure of the SITE project. Changing people's attitudes alone, without paying attention to their economic and political factors, is not sufficient for initiating development in a country. The critics of development communication say that although the emphasis on cultural and psychological factors is important, development essentially relates to productivity, which is often curtailed by under-utilization of resources and inequitable distribution of wealth. Other television led, development-focused projects included Kheda Communication Project in the 1980s; an education-based channel DD-GyanDarshan launched in 2000; and in recent years, a health focused series, *Kalyani,* launched in 2002 to telecast programs in eight of the most populous states in India to raise awareness about health issues and how to safeguard against diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis. These programs have been successful to varying degrees, but not sufficient to reach and mobilise the masses.

Globalisation to development

Anthropologist Rico Lie links the concept of development communication to globalisation via the localisation of media messages. Localisation, which is mostly accepted as an integral part of the globalisation process, is an inward process of articulation of local identities and local cultural practices. Localisation reinforces cultural identities at local level by contrasting it with other cultures (Lie, 2001). Globalisation is the "tandem operation of local/global dynamics" leading to

a cultural mixing or global mélange of cultures (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995) or a complex set of processes which pulls away power from local communities, but also revives local cultural aspirations by creating new economic and cultural zones within and across nations (Giddens, 2002). Thus, the revival of local aspirations and cultures is synonymous with development as it puts emphasis on "the articulation of local cultural identities and local community characteristics" (Lie, 2001: 19). Lie argues that the link between globalisation and development can only be established by taking the concept of localisation seriously. Lie (2001) says that thinking about cultural globalisation is not new, but builds on existing theories and ideas of dependency, Westernisation, cultural imperialism, cultural synchronisation and 'the global village'. "Globalisation and localisation, as far as they refer to culture, are interpretative processes. This means they are not objective processes, but are defined differently by different subjects, belonging to different communities, in different times and different spaces" (Lie, 2001: 20).

It is not a global structure that plays a role in people's lives, but it is the local context that shapes people's everyday life. By the act of interpretation of global messages in a local context, people become the real actors in the process, and thereby "localise the exogenous, and make them relevant for their daily lives" (Lie, 2001: 20). The other parallel process to this localising of global messages is the articulation of local cultures in a global environment, leading to an invigoration of local cultures. An example is the revival of some of the Indian folk music and dance rituals after being re-mixed as pop or rap music. The classical version of the folk music from the northern states of Punjab and Rajasthan seemed past their heyday of popularity. However, 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. Some critics feel the mixing of local folk music with Western styles of presentation has destroyed the local music and culture, while others see it as a revival of folk music and dance.

Appadurai contends that modernity has become more practical and experimental as a result of globalisation, which has "shrunk the distance between producers and consumers, broken many links between labour and family life, obscured the lines between temporary locales and imaginary national attachments" (Appadurai, 1996: 10). He states that the experimental characteristics of this process of modernisation in the 1980s and the 1990s has seen greater working class engagement with modernity, resulting in electronic mass mediation and a high degree of transnational mobility. This has in turn broken the monopoly of nation-states over the modernisation process. In the case of India, television as an important tool for modernising the masses is no longer the state's monopoly. In fact, since the *de facto* deregulation of the Indian television industry in 1991, it is the state which has been floundering on the media policy front and has embraced the mantra of self-sufficiency and commercialisation for its public service broadcaster.

Impact of the de-facto deregulation

The change in the Indian television market has meant a significant amount of choice of programming for the Indian audience – from one channel to nearly 450 channels for cable subscribers. It needs to be acknowledged that all households do not receive 450-plus channels on their television set due to lack of capacity of either the set itself, the hardware used by the cable service provider, and/or the package a household may subscribe to. However, there is no denying that Indian households have many more choices of programs than before 1991. If one looked at just news and information programs, Doordarshan's national channel in 2009 typically broadcasts four newscasts of about 15-20 minutes each in Hindi and English, and one-to-two news programs on its regional channel/s depending on what feed a viewer could receive. However, a cable subscriber could watch news on a number of 24-hour news and other entertainment channels such as DD News, STAR News, Zee News, CNN, CNBC India, BBC, CNN,

and daily newscasts on several regional channels, such as Sahara Samay, Udaya TV, Raj TV and Gemini TV. Before 1991, there were many stories which remained untold on television because the time slots available on one Doordarshan channel were limited. In 2009, with the increase in the number of TV channels (both within the Doordarshan network and the launching of private and foreign networks in India), theoretically the story of development and modernisation can be told by many and not just one public service broadcaster.

Doordarshan's mission has been to 'promote national integration' (Doordarshan, 1997: 23) by creating 'mutual awareness' (NAMEDIA, 1986: 13). However, the public service broadcaster miserably failed as the multi-lingual and multi-religious personality of the nation struggled against being fitted into one straightjacket (Gupta, 1998; Mitra, 1986). As Kothari notes, the challenge India faced at the time of independence was to produce a nation out of a vast heterogeneity of social and regional entities without destroying them (Kothari, 1993). A similar strategy of incorporating many regional cultures needed to be reflected on Indian television, in this case, on Doordarshan. Instead there was a monolithic image of Delhi-centric India being portrayed on television (Verghese, 1978). The stifling control by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, the bureaucratic managerial structure and lack of competition made Doordarshan programming 'dull' and 'boring' (Gupta, 1998; NAMEDIA, 1986; Singhal and Rogers, 2001). At the same time, commercialisation pushed Doordarshan to schedule the unadventurous and less popular education and development programs to unpopular hours.

In the early years after independence, one could understand the Indian government's attempt to restrict broadcasting to a monopoly condition for public service broadcasting for all, and not degenerate into another entertainment medium. But, in later years, in the 1980s, when the government decided to expand television's reach in the country, it could have allowed the private sector to enter the industry to expand television's reach and creativity. "Being the only channel for a growing pan-Indian audience, the national network reflected in many ways the Congress' high claim to be 'all things to all people'" (Kothari 1990 in Ohm, 1999: 83). The network continued to expand its reach across India's population rapidly, but lacked a coherent policy and any significant competition (Ohm, 1999).

In these circumstances, the entry and establishment of private and foreign television networks was welcomed by the general population (Rahim, 1994; (Rodrigues) Manchanda, 1998). The private and foreign media also changed its programming to suit local tastes and local demand by localising their programs – producing and broadcasting programs made by Indians for Indians (Thapar, 1998). This prompted the government to allow Doordarshan to expand its reach further and modify its content, by launching a number of regional channels to meet different geographic and linguistic needs (Doordarshan, 1997). Doordarshan remains a serious competitor in a crowded market, but the audience has greater choice today to watch Doordarshan or switch to one of the other cable channels. The production of television software too has been a boon for local actors and crews (Indiantelevision.com, 2008c).

In a way, we have completed a full circle where television, which was envisaged as a catalyst for social change, is finally reaching more and more people in the country. Many more stories of local interest are now being told with the help of this powerful audio-visual medium. Reiterating anthropologist Lie's (2001) argument, the revival of local aspirations and cultures is synonymous with development as it puts emphasis on the articulation of local identities and local characteristics. Now, the need is to maintain healthy competition in the industry, encourage industry not to overlook the other half of India, which is yet to benefit from the globalisation process. Television, which can be a powerful agent of change (Chandra, 2000), has to meet the needs of these two distinct constituencies in the country – the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. And, it is in this context that Doordarshan as a public service broadcaster, similar to the UK's BBC and Australia's ABC, can find a permanent place in a competitive market

without imitating its commercial counterparts where profitability for the network is the most important imperative. This is where the government needs to regulate television content in the interests of all sections of the 'public' without making the public service broadcasters "an organ of the government" as referred to by late Indira Gandhi in 1976 (Kothari in Ohm, 1999: 84). However, it is worth noting that there remains an ad hoc regulation of television industry and its content in India, aiding to the manifestation of negative aspects of commercialism and excessive competition. As a result, Indian television industry seems to be following the footsteps of some of its Western counter-parts by shaping its content by the demands of advertisers and sponsors, resulting in "more urban biased, consumer oriented media which have diminishing interest in or concern for people living in poverty" (Deane, 2005: 182).

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Footnotes

1. According to Minister of State Information and Broadcasting, Anand Sharma, in February 2009, there were a total of 215 news and current affairs television channels receive by Indian viewers, while there were 233 non-news including general entertainment and niche channels (Indiantelevision.com 2009a).

2. According to the Indian Readership Survey report released in November 2008, about 352.83 million viewers catch television at home, while 105.786 million watch television at their friends and neighbours' houses, and 49 millions watch on community sets (Indiantelevision.com2008b).

3. According to the Indian Readership Survey report released in November 2008, there are

about 100.38 million homes with television, of these 66.54 subscribe to one or more cable and satellite service (Indiantelevision.com2008c).

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