

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF GLOBALIZATION AND MEDIA MANAGEMENT: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the theoretical foundation of globalization and media management is primarily examined. The subject of globalization has been widely discussed in the new millennium by the scholars, administrators, activists and others all over the world from media research and communication policy points of view. A substantial amount of research has been carried out on the impact of globalization on media system, management and operations in abroad. Scholars have conducted an extensive and intensive review of major studies about media and globalization. There are several schools of thought in the field of media. The scholars examined television programs, news networks, children's culture and pop music and noted that the adoption of local cultural texts into mainstream U.S. culture provided a greater opportunity for their voices to be heard on a global scale. Scholars have coined a new theory of media globalization which pointed out that feedback in the converged world of digital communication is instantaneous in comparison with traditional analog mass communication. Globalization is commonly used as a shorthand way of describing the spread and connectedness of production, communication and technologies across the world. The effect of the spread of multinational media corporations has resulted in cultural imperialism, a loss of local cultural identity. Scholars have noted that global media adversely affect local culture, value system and public interest because of increasing media monopoly and imperialism. The phenomenon of media globalization along with the increasing abundance of media-text production has produced various effects which are being researched by communication scholars. The media organizations are required to strike a balance between profit motive and service motive in order to achieve the goal of corporate social responsibility in the age of globalization of media.

Keywords: Globalization, Media Management, Communication

INTRODUCTION

The subject of globalization has been widely discussed in the new millennium by the scholars, administrators, activists and others all over the world. The process of globalization has affected all spheres of human life including communication and journalism. During the last three decades, globalization has affected the media regionally, nationally and internationally. There is commendable expansion of media across the world in the age of globalization. Multi-national corporations have established the media institutions which have become instrument of profit making in the age of globalization. A comparison of international monetary, telecommunications and trade networks suggests that these three networks are quite similar. GNP per capita was significantly correlated with centrality for all three networks. A substantial amount of research has been carried out on the impact of globalization on media system, management and operations in abroad. Scholars have conducted an extensive and intensive review of major studies about media and globalization.

In this paper, the theoretical foundation of globalization and media management is primarily discussed.

Tomlinson (2002) examined several issues related to cultural imperialism discourse and noted that traditional Marxism divided the world into a political-economic dialectic struggle between an elite ruling class and a larger working class. For the Marxist, capitalism is interpreted as a 'homogenizing cultural force'. The scholar observed that capitalism propels a sort of cultural convergence which people are not able to resist and that cultural imperialism implies a spreading culture of worldwide consumerism. As a matter of fact, cultural imperialism is used as a term which described a foreign culture invading an indigenous community. Tomlinson visualized cultural imperialism as a critique of modernity.

THEORY OF MEDIA GLOBALIZATION

Today American media play a prominent role in the global scene. A handful of firms dominate the globalize part of the media system. They include - AOL, Time Warner (U.S.), Disney (U.S.), Vivendi-Universal (French), Bertelsmann (German), Viacom (U.S.), and Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation (Australian). The other four main global firms are AT&T (U.S.), Microsoft (U.S.), and two media groups that are part of much large industrial corporations: General Electric/NBC (U.S.) and Sony/Columbia/ TriStar (Japanese) (Variety, 2002). Of the top 10 global media firms, then, six are American (counting News Corporations as Australian), mostly produce, distribute, and regulate almost all media outlets. These types of companies were growing and globalizing quickly. Time Warner and Disney generated considerable revenue outside of the United States in 2010.

Wang (2003) observe: "Some media industries such as the Hollywood films and TV studios represented by the Motion Picture Association of America have long been global in their operation and scope. They control a number of companies in other that distributed and exhibited (in theaters) the films that they produced in the United Sates. More recently, the owner of Hollywood itself has become globalize, as we have seen. The resulting operation has been scrutinized by critics to see whether the kinds of films produced by Sony will now reflect Japanese rather than American sensibilities".

Pavlik and McIntosh (2005) contributed a theory of media globalization called 'Interactive Global Media Theory' which pointed out that feedback in the converged world of digital communication is instantaneous in comparison with traditional analog mass communication. The study further revealed that television has become an increasingly interactive medium of communication which is accessible to millions of viewers all over the world. The scholars noted that cable television currently has interactive capabilities allowing viewers to order a pizza directly through the cable connection. Third, there is an increasing competitive pressure between first tier multinational media corporations to offer more locally produced content.

Global Media Competition

Straubhaar and La Rose (2004) have observed that global media force competitors to react to them. The other major aspect of globalization is the increasingly worldwide penetration of media technologies which have brought about a new age of interactive communication. The process of globalization is reshaping the world's social, political, economic, and cultural landscapes. In the age of globalization, several organizations have come into existence in order to deliver the goods and services to the global audience. Global standard bodies such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) allocate satellite orbits, determine broadcast frequencies, and define the standards for telephones, mobile phones, faxes, and Internet connections. Global telecom companies, like Cable and Wireless, run much of the world's communications infrastructure of optical fiber cables, satellite, and high-speed lines.

Global media also force competitors to react to them. When Murdoch's Star TV started broadcasting in India, the state television broadcast had to respond with more competitive entertainment or lose its audience.

The other major aspect of globalization is the increasingly worldwide penetration of media technology. Globalization is commonly used as a shorthand way of describing the spread and connectedness of production, communication and technologies across the world. That spread has involved the interlacing of economic and cultural activity. The speed of communication and exchange, the complexity and size of the networks involved, and the sheer volume of trade, interaction and risk give what we now label as 'globalization' a peculiar force. With increased economic interconnection has come deep-seated political changes - poorer, 'peripheral', countries have become even more dependent on activities in 'central' economies such as the USA where capital and technical expertise tend to be located. There has also been a shift in power away from the nation state and toward, some argue, multinational corporations.

The second tier of media conglomerates are also competing on the international level through foreign investment, mergers and acquisitions. They are mostly based in North America, Western Europe and Japan. Prominent among them include - Dow Jones, Gannett, Knight-Ridder, Hearst, and Advance Publications, Kirch Group, Havas, Media-set, Hachette, Pisa, Canal Plus, Pearson, Reuters and Reed Elsevier. McChesney (2004) observed that sixty or seventy first and second tier multinational corporations control a major portion of the world's media in the areas of publishing, music, broadcasting, television production, cable, satellite distribution, film production, and motion picture theater exhibition. The scholar concluded that the effect of the spread of multinational media corporations has resulted in cultural imperialism, a loss of local cultural identity.

Empirical studies are conducted all over the world in order to understand the effects of media globalization. The researchers tie their observations to their own theories which attempt to explain certain observed effects. In contrast, other researchers may take on a more descriptive approach preferring to describe detailed effects and apply the theories of other scholars as models for explanation. Thomas (2005) stated that the most successful television programs are no longer made for national consumption but rather for international distribution. He has also noted that media contents are affected by the desire to increase the marketability of international television program distribution.

Studies have also reported that global media adversely affect local culture, value system and public interest because of increasing media monopoly and imperialism. The scholars have recommended that the public would be better served by stricter regulation of the media. The causes and effects of media globalization will continue to be both observed and debated by communication scholars, sociologists, economists and politicians alike. The trend of continuing media globalization has showed no recent signs of retreat. Both critics and advocates of media globalization agree that there is fierce competition taking place between the first and second tier corporations. The smaller regional second tier corporations don't want to loose market share to the larger multinational corporations. Experience reveals that globalization occurs as a result of the activities in advanced countries of news and entertainment media that produce different programmes. A small number of media conglomerates, based in a few Western countries, dominate the production and global distribution of film, television, popular music, and book publishing. Scholars have observed that the biggest intentional issue in communication is cultural imperialism which deals with the consequences of media flow across the globe.

Liberal Media Capitalism

The new communications and information technologies have provided methods for large corporations to maximize profits by entering foreign markets. Friedman (1997) observes: “Globalization is not a choice. It’s a reality. There is just one global market today, and the only way you can grow at the speed your people want to grow is by tapping into the global stock and bond markets, by seeking out multinationals to invest in your country and by selling into the global trading system what your factories produce and the most basic truth about globalization is this: No one is in charge – not George Soros, not the ‘Great Powers’.

In the present times, the liberal capitalism appears to have triumphed to put an end to the history of ideological contestations. The hegemonic state-corporate system will continue to be challenged by sporadic but persistent acts of resistance unless the world learns to respect and celebrate diversity by devolutions of power to sub-communities of a national entity. Dinda (2006) argues: “A clash of civilizations is characterizing our own era because new economic and communication power is enabling the ancient civilizations of Asia to challenge the truth claims of the relatively new nations of Europe and America. However, thanks to global communication, a new dialogue of civilizations is also being conducted via the international communication networks. Communication technologies are enabling the past silent voices to be heard in a global Tower of Babel characterized by old and new ethnic and racial hatreds. But global communication networks are also fostering a new ecumenicalism leading to the negotiation of new global worldviews and ethics.

Scholars defined globalization as a set of processes changing the nature of human interaction across a wide range of spheres including the economic, political, social, technological, and environmental. Practically, globalization is perceived as the process of integration of the world community into a common system either economic or social. It essentially means the growing increase in the inter-connectedness and inter-dependences among the world’s regions, nations, governments, business and institutions. Some others say, it is a process, which engenders free flow of ideas, people, goods, services and capital thereby fostering integration of economies and societies. The most visible aspect of globalization is the spread of information and communication technologies.

Globalization has also been defined as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding. The traditional constructs of time and space are broken down during the process of globalization, thereby stimulating the renegotiation of societal relationships. Individuals and groups attempt to explain these major shifts and events at local, national, and international levels. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have played a pivotal role in the corporate expansion on an international scale in the age of globalization. The early studies revealed that a few Western nations controlled the international flow of information.

Gasparini (2008) stated that globalization was 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'. This process of 'globalization' is often portrayed as a positive force which is unifying widely different societies and cultures integrating them into a 'global village', and enriching all in the process. It is variously described as an inevitable by-product of human evolution and progress, as if it were an organic process, governed by the laws of nature. In reality, globalization is not necessarily a natural progression emerging out of the ordinary communication and interaction of people and cultures around the world. It results from deliberate human choice by a powerful group of

nations, transnational corporations (TNCs) and international organizations which have stakes in the process.

Phases of International Communication

The world has witnessed four phases of the growth and development of international communication. The first phase saw the emergence of development communication as a full-fledged discipline in 1960s. The second phase witnessed the cultural imperialism in 1970s. The third phase saw the acceptance of MacBride Commission Report which pleaded for communication balance across the globe in 1980s. The fourth phase saw the globalization of communication services in the age of economic liberalization in 1990s. All these four phases originated mainly due to the big brotherly attitude of USA which has dominated the global economic and media scenario.

The economists have examined the media economics which includes the economic policies and practices of media companies and disciplines including journalism and the news industry, film production, entertainment programs, print, broadcast, mobile communications, Internet, advertising and public relations. Deregulation of media, media ownership and concentration, market share, intellectual property rights, competitive economic strategies, company economics, media tax and other issues are considered parts of the field. Media economics has social, cultural, and economic implications. Regular study of media economic issues began in the 1970s but flourished in the 1980s with the addition of classes on the subject in U.S. and European universities. Prominent among the media economists include - Steven S. Wildman, Alan Albarran, Bruce M. Owen, Ben Compaine, Stuart McFadyen, Gillian Doyle, Karl Erik Gustafsson, Nadine Toussaint Desmoulin, Achour Fenni and Stephen Lacy. The media economics research has grown over a period of time as a systematic discipline all over the world.

In the new millennium, the global communication has brought about many effects and blurred the cultural, political, economic and technological boundaries. The print, electronic and new media technologies have developed fairly independently over a period of time. The new media technologies including the satellite communication are undermining the traditional boundaries and sovereignties of nations. The Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) is violating national borders by broadcasting foreign news, entertainment, educational, and advertising programs with impunity. Similarly, the micro-media of global communication are narrow casting their messages through audio and videocassette recorders, fax machines, computer disks and networks, including the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Practically, the new patterns of global communication are creating the new global cultural and economic orders which are strongly supported by global advertising and the entertainment industry. The phenomenon of media globalization along with the increasing abundance of media-text production has produced various effects which are being researched by communication scholars. Media globalization is a broad topic, which includes television, radio, film, music, the Internet, and other forms of digital media. Media globalization is defined as the phenomenon of expanding multinational corporate media investment, resulting in the emergence of a global oligarchy of first tier corporations, which own and operate a variety of mass media content and distribution technologies including: television, radio, film, music, broadcasting, satellite, telecommunication, cable, newspapers, magazines, publishing companies, Internet content providers, and other forms of converged digital media.

The UNESCO (1978) brought about a thought provoking publication entitled 'The Declaration on Fundamental Principles Concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media'. The work called upon the mass media to contribute effectively to the strengthening of peace and

international understanding, to the promotion of human rights, and to the establishment of a more just and equitable international economic order in the world. The media conglomerates are increasingly competing on the international level through foreign investment, mergers, and acquisitions. The merger mania seems to be the rule of day when it comes to multinational corporations. McChesney noted that sixty or seventy first and second tier multinational corporations control a major portion of the world's media in the areas of publishing, music, broadcasting, television production, cable, satellite distribution, film production, and motion picture theater exhibition.

Herman and Mc Chesney (1998) state the impact of globalization on media thus: “We regard the primary effect of the globalization process – the crucial feature of globalization and manifestation of the strength of the great powers and TNC’s whose interest they serve-to the implantation of the commercial model of communication, its extension to broadcasting and the ‘new media’ and its gradual intensification under the force of competition and bottom line pressures. The commercial model has its own internal logic and being privately own and relying on advertiser support, tends to erode the public sphere and to beat a ‘cultural entertainment that is in compatible with a domestic order media outputs are commoditized and designed serve market end, not citizenship needs”.

MacBride Commission (2004) observed that media globalization gained further momentum in the 1980's, when a prevailing policy of deregulation of media in many developing nations along with openness to private investment occurred. McChesney (2004) also noted this trend of free-market deregulation occurring in the eighties and the nineties, in the cable and digital satellite systems around the world. Hilger (2008) observed that in the mid-1980's privatization and deregulation gained momentum in Europe, in the cable and telephone industries, through foreign investment. Critics of media globalization have long held that the United States is far too powerful and that it exercises cultural imperialism over smaller nations by overwhelming them with movies and television programs produced in the United States writes Mc Chesney (2008).

Media Imperialism in the New Millennium

Media imperialism has been examined by the media scholars seriously across the globe. They have argued that media imperialism follows logically from cultural imperialism. The western countries have achieved the goal of cultural imperialism through media imperialism which creates the conditions for conformity to the hegemony culture and limits the possibilities of effective resistance to it. These scholars have challenged the US hegemony effectively in a wide variety of ways. The US has the largest media industry by far and its practices are invariably taken to be the state of the art. The capitalist consumerism is equated with the Americanization of capitalism. It implies that if American influence could be excluded then cultural and media imperialism would end. The cultural critics have argued that the media institutions of America have imposed the American cultural imperialism on the rest of the world.

Tehrani (1992) writes: “The global communication is empowering hitherto forgotten groups and voices in the international community. Its channels have thus become the arena for contestation of new economic, political, and cultural boundaries. Global communication, particularly in its interactive forms, has created immense new moral spaces for exploring new communities of affinity rather than vicinity. It is thus challenging the traditional top-down economic, political, and cultural systems. In Iran, it facilitated the downfall of a monarchical dictatorship in 1978-1979 through the use of cheap transistor audiocassette recorders in conjunction with international telephony to spread the messages of Ayatollah Khomeini to his followers within a few hours of their delivery from his exile in Paris”.

Ganley and Ganley (1992) comment: “In the Philippines, the downfall of the Marcos regime in 1986 was televised internationally for all to witness while alternative media were undermining his regime domestically. In Saudi Arabia, a BBC-WGBH program on ‘The Death of a Princess’, banned by the Saudi government as subversive, was smuggled into the country by means of videotapes the day after its premier showing on television in London. In China, despite severe media censorship, the democracy movement in Tiananmen Square spread its message around the world in 1989 via the fax machines. In the Soviet Union, computer networkers who opposed the Moscow coup of 1991 and were sympathetic to Yeltsin, transmitted his messages everywhere despite severe censorship of the press and broadcasting”.

Barnet and Cavanagh (1994) present a quantitative assessment of the webs of international finance, telecommunication and trade. The global structure is described in terms of three types of nations; i.e. the core, the semi-periphery and the periphery. Semi-peripheral countries are seen in engaging both in core-like activities (as exploiter) and peripheral-like activities (as the exploited). International transaction data (consumer transactions based on credit card purchases and bank-to-bank exchanges). Roland Robertson (1995) calls such combination global-local productions done with global forms and ideas. The semi-peripheral-countries are mainly East Asian countries which are not integrated into the global economy.

The Economist (1996) reports: “In Mexico, the Zapatista movement managed to diffuse its messages of protest against the government worldwide in 1994 through the Internet. In this fashion, it solicited international support while embarrassing the Mexican government at a critical moment when it was trying to project a democratic image for admission to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In Burma or Myanmar, as it is officially known, both government and opposition have employed the Internet in their political struggles. E-mail has been used to achieve rapid global mobilization for withdrawal of Western companies from Myanmar in protest against the government's repressive policies”.

Technological advances in communication science and technology have brought about remarkable progress in the field of mass communication and journalism across the globe. The modern media institutions are profoundly changing the various spheres of human life. They are also facilitating transfers of science, technology, information, and ideas from the centers to the peripheries of power. On the other, they are imposing a new cultural hegemony through the ‘soft power’, according to Nye and Owens (1996).

The new communication technologies have profoundly transformed the nature of human society all over the world and have served as new actors in international relations. The communication revolution has led to the emergence of a new class system of information haves and have-nots within and among nations. Walker and Ferguson (1998) have stated that cultural homogeneity is a myth which is predicated upon McLuhan's theory of a global village. The myth is not evidenced by real-world observation since identical consumer products, movies, clothes and architectural expressions are not seen in every nation.

The media institutions are operating in three markets namely – market for creative content, market for financial resources and market for manufacturing the consent of the customers. The power of media has grown commendably over a period of time but the media power is not directed at creating a just society since it has the ability to act in pursuit of one's aims and interests, the ability to intervene in the course of events and to affect their outcome, according to Thomas (2000).

Globalization of media is not a term of global nature. Sparks (2000) has examined the globalization of communication and noted that global media's audience is too small, too rich

and too English-speaking to be considered inclusive. There is little evidence that supports the existence of a global public sphere and the public sphere remains largely state-oriented. There is no question that all these globalizing trends are made possible with the help of mass media at both the domestic and international level, according to the scholar. In reality, globalization is not necessarily a natural progression emerging out of the ordinary communication and interaction of people and cultures around the world. It has practically resulted from deliberate human choice by a powerful group of nations, transnational corporations (TNCs) and international organizations which have stakes in the process.

The acquisition of modern science and technology is the key to catching up. In this process, the role of information technologies, from print to the Internet, cannot be overemphasized. The impact of global communication on international cultural life is perhaps the most visible of its effects. Through global satellite and computer networks, trans-border data flows, scientific and professional electronic mailing, and commercial advertising, the macromedia are supporting the globalization of national markets, societies, and cultures. The new media are closely interlinked via social networks of governments, markets, and civil societies. Without contextualizing their social and political functions in historically and cultural specific situations, media effects would therefore remain largely mystifying and incomprehensible.

The UN-sponsored World Summits on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005 have given a serious thought to the global information and communication order. There is considerable empirical evidence which points to the global concentration of power over media production and distribution in Western nations, states and corporations. In a sense, the global form is localized for the purposes of global capitalist development, expansion of media monopoly and expression of local identity.

Studies have reported that media were used by the advertisers to manufacture the consent of the people in favor of the goods and services produced by them. In the information revolution age, the media create a profound discontinuity between past and future in general and widen the gap between the privileged and under – privileged sections of society. Robert McChesney (2008) criticized multinational corporations in a number of ways. He observed that the global media market is dominated by eight multinational corporations namely -General Electric, AT and T/Liberty Media, Disney, Time Warner, Sony, News Corporation, Viacom and Seagram and plus Bertelsmann, the Germany-based conglomerate. The scholar also found that international deregulation and free-market policies have created a climate that has been conducive to foreign investment in media.

The relationship between media and globalization has been widely examined by the media scholars who observed a variety of effects resulting from media globalization. Some of these observed effects are open to interpretation while others are acknowledged by most communication scholars. Certain researchers tie their observations to their own theories which attempt to explain certain observed effects. The media programmes that contain violent materials are considered to travel well according to Jhully (2009). Jonas has singled out media technology as one of the major phenomena separating the possibilities of 20th century humanity from those available to the Greeks. In reality, the process of globalization has brought about a new era of ‘exclusive development’ instead of ‘inclusive development’. The media are used as instruments of manipulation by the owners who are basically wedded to status quoism. The new communication technologies have also widened the gap between the haves and have notes.

Today, the central task of the media in democratic societies may be considered to be twofold: (1) to allow for the diversity of voices in society to be heard and (2) to channel that diversity

into a process of democratic integration of public opinion and will formation. Scholars have argued that without free and vigorous debate among competing views, no nation can achieve the level of integrated unity and determination necessary for democratic societies to act on public issues. Studies have reported that media pluralism would serve these purposes better than a media system exclusively dominated by state, commercial, public, or community media. Pluralism in structures of ownership and control are therefore needed in order to obtain pluralism in perspectives and messages. However, structural pluralism is hostage to the presence of independent market institutions and voluntary associations (political parties, trade unions, religious and civic organizations). The existence of a strong civil society to counter the powers of the state and the market is therefore a precondition for media pluralism.

There are several empirical evidences which demonstrate that American and European media institutions dominate the present global media scenario and that the dominant strain of global popular culture remains centered in the West and it always speaks in its own language. The major media houses have also promoted cultural imperialism and uneven distribution of communication services and resources across the globe. Some consequences of media flow are indeed deadly serious and pose serious threats to local culture and society. Media critics have expressed serious concern about the economics underlying the flows of media which tend to tie countries into a global economy based on advertising and consumption.

The continued dominance of the First world countries over global economy and media under the leadership of the United States and Western Europe has posed certain challenges to the developing nations. In the present times, the big corporate organizations dominate the media and related industries in the new millennium. The formulation of locally relevant media policy assumes great significance in the age of globalization since it has a bearing on the structure, conduct and performance of media organizations. The advocates of public interest have strongly questioned the decreasing relevance of nation-state by the media controlled by the market forces.

In the age of globalization of media, the world is becoming a much more integrated market based in capitalist or marketplace economics. The media institutions are subjected to commercialization supported by advertising industry. A comparison of international monetary, telecommunications and trade networks suggests that these three networks are quite similar. GNP per capita was significantly correlated with centrality for all three networks.

CONCLUSION

The media globalization presents significant challenges for media and cultural policy. Scholars have discussed the subject of globalization from the perspective of the media management and pointed out that media globalization has aided in both the production and distribution of information. The phenomenon of media globalization along with the increasing abundance of media-text production has produced various effects which are being researched by communication scholars. Studies have revealed that major global media corporations have achieved monopoly over media institutions. The phenomenal expansion of multinational corporate media investment has resulted in the emergence of a global oligarchy of first tier corporations, which own and operate a variety of mass media content and distribution technologies including: television, radio, film, music, broadcasting, satellite, telecommunication, cable, newspapers, magazines, publishing companies, Internet content providers, and other forms of converged digital media. The local media organizations are required to strike a balance between profit motive and service motive in order to achieve the goal of corporate social responsibility in the age of globalization of media.

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