

## **MASS MEDIA EDUCATION AN AGENT AND REACTOR TO GLOBALIZATION**

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### **Introduction**

With reference to Mass Media, globalization is the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, and ideas across borders and these are changing very fast. Globalization affects each country in a different way due to a nation's individual history, traditions, culture and priorities. Internationalization of higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization yet, at the same time, respects the individuality of the nation. The concept of internationalization differs dialectically from that of globalization because it refers to the relationship between nation-states, which promotes recognition of and respect for their own differences and traditions. By contrast, the phenomenon of globalization does not tend to respect differences and borders, thus undermining the bases of the very same nation-states, and leading to homogenization. In this sense, internationalization can be understood as complementary or compensatory to globalizing tendencies, given that it allows for a resistance to the latter's denationalizing and homogenizing effects. In context of higher education, the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution. Any systematic, sustained efforts aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy and labor markets. Internationalization of Mass Media not merely an aim itself, but an important resource in the development of finer channel systems towards: 1) a system in line with international standards; and, 2) one open and responsive to its global environment. Internationalization is seen as one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization, yet at the same time respects the individuality of the nation (Qiang, 2003).

An outstanding aspect of globalization observed in USA is the conformation to a new world economy with the liberalization of the flow of financial and industrial capital, while the mobility of labor from South to North is increasingly controlled (Laurell, 2000). This new configuration of the world economy expresses a new international relation of power that emerged through the series of economic crisis in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. This brand of globalization can be interpreted as a political process that implies an integral reorganization of the economy and social relations. Global interdependence has created important avenues for international involvement by reshaping the Mass Media environment in the following ways: a) international issues and events, especially movements of populations, have changed U.S.A. domestic practice and demand new knowledge and competencies; (b) social problems are commonly shared by developed and developing countries to an unprecedented degree; (c) the political, economic, and social actions of one country directly affect other countries' social and economic well-being; and, (d) exchanges are made possible by extraordinary technological developments, such as the Internet. Well, all these have a cascading effect to some extent.

### **India and US Mass Media Education Responses**

The divergent Indian and U.S.A. Mass Media responses have cropped up from forces of globalization supporting internationalization in both U.S.A. and Indian universities. In particular, educational responses to globalization processes are being pushed along by commitments of media education stakeholders at Indian and U S to broaden the preparation and experiences of their students, faculty, and graduates. However, it is

important to recognize also that educational responses to globalization are occurring within the context of institutional internationalization in each country, with commitments from media education stakeholders at the highest levels within and outside university systems. From the perspective of media education in India, there is a growing need to for international exchange programs with the U.S.A. to acquire knowledge and resources to better prepare students and faculty in an age of increasing professional specialization and expansion of knowledge, as well as to address critical issues of social well-being. Although historically based on a development and social action model, during the 1990s media education and practice in India changed its orientation increasingly towards a clinical model. Thus, there also exists a desire within the field of Mass Media in India to adopt and diffuse knowledge of clinical from international education exchange with the U.S.A. On the other hand, there is a need for international media exchange programs with India to develop culturally competent media scholars and practitioners who can effectively address a range of education and practice issues related to the growing heterogeneous population in the U.S.A.

Given the effects of neoliberal globalization processes in America, a growing need exists in the field of media education to develop faculty and student exchange programs between India and the U.S.A., as well as joint research initiatives. These educational responses to globalization are developing within contexts of internationalization in American higher education, with commitments from college and university systems, and stakeholders at the highest administrative levels. From a policy and planning theoretical perspective, these programmatic responses are being shaped in part by negotiations of power and interests among and between stakeholders situated in relational contexts. Just as importantly, these programs then contribute to the shaping of professional practice by those who participate in them. Ultimately, these socially constructed programs impact the public at large. Thus, the manner in which (how) these media educational programs are planned influences significantly the quality and efficacy of the programs, and the welfare of society.

### **Globalization and Media Policy in India**

Globalization has picked up high voltage debate now in India and is a highly contested concept. Depending on the commentator, the concept of globalization ranges from a desirable state-of-affairs to a dreaded evil condition; from reality to myth; from new postmodern phenomenon to an aging extension of the processes of modernity. Some of the contradictory tensions emerging from the usage of the concept of globalization have been highlighted as a series of binary opposites including universalization versus particularization, homogenization versus differentiation, integration versus fragmentation, centralization versus decentralization, and juxtaposition versus synchronization (Hall, Held, & McGrew, 1992). Moreover, commentators distinguish accounts of globalization that identify a single causal factor, such as economics, from those accounts that apply multi-causal logic. Of those who believe in multi-factorial causation, some describe globalization as “a set of processes which in various ways – economic, cultural, and political – make supranational connections”. Regardless of particular viewpoint, given the frequent use of the term in academic literature and the popular press, it is difficult to contest the claim that globalization is the hegemonic discourse of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The outstanding aspect of globalization observed in India is the conformation of a new world economy with the liberalization of the flow of financial and industrial capital, while the mobility of labor from South to North is increasingly controlled (Laurell, 2000). This crisis opened a political opportunity for the New Right, and it has managed to impose the neoliberal project inside almost every country of this hemisphere. This brand of globalization can be interpreted as a political process that implies an integral reorganization of the economy and social relations.

The new world economy has had a significantly negative impact in India. Consequently, today the country is politically divided and increasingly confined within the orbit of the U.S.A., pressured by international financial agencies to adopt prescribed adjustments, and fractured by inequality and social exclusion. There is the question, however, of what has changed, since many of these conditions are perennial. Perhaps the most important problem is the acritical acceptance by politicians and policy makers of two postulates: (1) the only manner to survive in globalization is to be competitive at any cost; and (2) the only road to economic growth is exports. Like almost all countries in the Americas, India has adopted structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed from above by the government and from abroad by international financial agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The purpose of the SAPs is to promote and support a new pattern of accumulation based on the export of manufactured goods (Valenzuela, 1991). These policies are both caused by, and a condition for, a specific form of “neoliberal globalization” dominated by the interests of large multilateral corporations and financial groups that expresses new international as well as national power relations. The measures taken in India to constitute this new pattern of accumulation have not only sacrificed the national general interests, but have also provoked unstable and inequitable growth with a dramatic social impact. Although the SAPs may be considered mainly economic, they require a profound reform of the state that is another face of the integral reorganization of Indian society that has occurred in the past 25 years. There are different propositions regarding the content of this reform, but the one that is being instrumented obeys the neoliberal premise (Vilas, 1995). The so called social reform of the state is crucial to social policy, since it redefines in economic terms the conception of how to satisfy social needs and involves all major social welfare institutions. In this particular field the World Bank plays a dominant role which explains the striking uniformity of this reform in the countries of the Americas.

### **Globalization and Indian Media Education**

In an extensive and exhaustive educational literature available much has been written in recent years about globalization and media education. Within this literature, globalization theory has been used to explain a range of diverse and complex phenomena and has garnered a central position in all sub-disciplines. A problem with many accounts of globalization and education is that they frequently lack a clear definition of the concept of globalization. Related to the problem of definition is the tendency in the educational literature to keep the underlying view of the nature, extent, and future trajectory of globalization implicit rather than explicit. This is despite the existences of numerous distinct viewpoints within the social sciences in Held et al. (1999) distinguish between three broad approaches to the analysis of the concept of globalization within the social sciences: (1) the hyper globalist approach; (2) the skeptical approach; and, (3) the transformationalist approach. The hyper globalist approach is premised on the idea that we are entering a truly global age, heralded by the triumph of global capitalism, in conjunction with the advent of new forms of global media culture, governance, and civil society. This approach is demonstrated within the educational literature by various media authors. Hyper globalists argue that global post modernity has undermined the modernist goals of national education and lifelong learning, and of creating national culture. For example, in his analysis of new technologies and globalization, Edwards (1994) argues that the interaction of the information superhighway with global markets will lead to the demise of schooling in traditional forms. In response to the hyper globalists, Green (1997) points out such claims are overstated because national governments still hold primary responsibility for providing education. Green also indicates that information technologies and strategies for their use are still relatively underdeveloped in relation to schooling. Those who support viewpoints of this second approach typically disagree that trading blocks are in fact weaker

now than in earlier periods of history, although they acknowledge that there has been a growing trend towards “regionalization” in trade and politics.

The skeptical approach to globalization sees the logic of capitalism leading to greater polarization between the developed and developing countries. It also sees, paradoxically, a greater role for the nation state in managing the deepening crisis tendencies of capitalism. This view is reflected in many skeptics’ viewpoints by their assertion that there has not been any meaningful globalization of media education in India (Green, 1997). While admitting that national education systems have become more “porous” and “have become more like each other in certain important ways,” skeptics claim that there is little evidence that national education systems are disappearing or that national states have ceased to control them. Instead, they suggest that there has been a more limited process of “partial internationalization” of education involving increased student and staff mobility, widespread policy borrowing and attempts to enhance the international dimension of curricula at secondary and higher levels. The skeptical approach to globalization, with its references to the increasing polarization between high and low income countries, appears on the surface to be a useful and compelling frame for analysis of education systems in India. Structural adjustment and austerity, combined with rising populations, have led to a decline in enrollment rates and quality of media education in India. There are, however, other aspects of the skeptical approach that are less helpful when applied to Indian condition. For example, the role of the state in managing crisis does not fit with recent empirical reality in various states of India. This amounts to more than just a “partial internationalization” of education. Rather, structural adjustment policies are global in origin and affect many more people than Green’s examples of “limited policy transfer”

### **How much critical can you be?**

Arising criticisms of the skeptical approach led Held et al. (1999) to identify a third broad approach within the social science literature and its sub-disciplines in media education. They call this as the transformationalist approach. Similar to the hyper globalist approach, those who fall into the transformationalist camp argue that there are indeed unprecedented levels of global interconnectedness. Unlike the hyper globalists, however, the transformationists’ question whether we are entering a new “global age” of economic, political, and cultural integration. Instead, they see globalization as a historically contingent process replete with contradictions. Consequently, globalization is resulting in greater fragmentation and stratification in which some states, societies and communities are becoming increasingly enmeshed in the global order while others are becoming increasingly marginalized. In contrast to the skeptics, transformationists argue that these contradictory processes are unruly problematic, which are linked to a transformation in the global division of labor, such that the core-periphery relationship is no longer just about relationships between nation states, but involves new social relationships that cut across national boundaries. According to Hoogvelt (1997), the “core” of the world economy now includes not only wealthy nations, but elites in the poorer nations as well. Conversely, the periphery now increasingly includes the poor and the socially excluded in the more affluent nations. In a similar manner, transformationists see nation states retaining much power over what occurs in their territories, while at the same time their power is being transformed in relation to new institutions of international governance and law. As one who views globalization as essentially a phenomenon of late modernity, Anthony Giddens (1992) frames globalization as a transformation of time and space in which the development of global systems and networks reduces the hold of local circumstances over people’s lives. According to Giddens, through this process, the “disembedding” of social relations occurs, during which they are lifted out from “local contexts of interaction” and recombined across time and space.

Globalization is irreversibly changing the politics of the nation-state and its regional sectors, domestic classes and nationally-defined interest groups. It is creating new potentials and limits in the politics of education. Its effects on the politics of education are complex ... Increasingly shaped as it is by globalization – both directly and via the effects of globalization in national government – media education at the same time has become a primary medium of globalization, and an incubator of its agents. As well as inhibiting or transforming older kinds of education, globalization creates new kinds. Importantly, what distinguishes this view is the idea that globalization both acts on and through (acts in) media education policy. This viewpoint sees education not only affected by globalization, but also having become a principle mechanism by which global forces affect the daily lives of national populations. There are multiple advantages of a transformationalist approach from the point of view of a “reconceptualization” of globalization theory. As Tikly (2001) indicates: They revolve chiefly around the extent to which the approach allows for a complex and contingent view of the relationship between education and globalization; the role of the state and civil society in mediating the influence of global forces, and an exploration of issues relating to culture, language, and identity....Further, those who have adopted a transformationalist perspective within education do try to relate the emerging global division of labor and increased social stratification within and between countries to developments in education policy. Nevertheless, “The transformationist perspective has not gone nearly far enough in extrapolating the educational implications of increasing stratification along the lines of race, culture, class and gender and that this analysis will need to be deepened in relation to highly stratified countries” such as India. Moreover, he argues that “exponents of the transformationist perspective fail to acknowledge the continuing impact and relevance of prior forms of globalization, especially those associated with European colonialism”

### **Conclusion/Discussion**

Thus we have examined in part how U.S.A. and Indian universities are responding to this phenomenon in their cultural complexity and social contexts and how it dealt with the relationship between globalization, internationalization, and media education from a perspective of international scenario. Much focus is required to distinguish the concepts of internationalization from globalization in international media exchange planning and practice, given the inevitability of increasing globalization, which constrains decision making in the area of internationalization in higher education. The obvious case indicating that internationalization of media education is an agent and reactor to globalization demonstrates this need, and describes the influences of these types of constraints on planning practice, especially decision making, for a variety of stakeholders in various contexts within the international players. An attempt had been made to examine in part how U.S.A. and Indian universities are responding to this phenomenon in their cultural complexity and social contexts. Given the social relations and problems, the need for new knowledge to help address these shared issues will only grow. A recommendation for future research activity in this area involves the need to follow up some of the key issues raised in the study. It is recommended that a study based on internationalization of media education attempt to map and describe the paths of the flows of people, knowledge, and technologies that occur in context of an exchange program, and how these flows in turn prompt new responses to these globalizing processes in the form of new programs and policies. In particular, the need to describes the influences of these types of constraints on planning practice, especially decision making, for a variety of stakeholders in various contexts. Historically studies on media theories and models of mass media planning normally have not considered the role of stakeholders. Now many are beginning to advocate the need for more inclusive perspectives. A number of studies in media education



have demonstrated the centrality of negotiating power and interests in shaping educational programs. From the established body of work we can say with some confidence that we know what media educators do. We know relatively less, however, about how media educators and other stakeholders in the planning process actually negotiate multiple and often conflicting interests in practice. There is a need to focus the efforts to explain both what planners do in their work, and, moreover, how planning stakeholders negotiate to shape and form programs through the planning process. Recommendations for future research in this area are a further exploration into the tactics planners use in negotiating at planning tables in development of international academic media exchange. In particular, it would be useful to know whether planners adopt different negotiation strategies and tactics both among and between domestic and foreign stakeholder groups.

The paper discussed and explored the values and rationales that underline the approaches of the international dimension into media education. Also came to fore the ethical commitments, values, and rationale for the approaches that shaped the academic media exchange. The power relations among and between elite stakeholder and researcher pose methodological challenges. This conclusion was obtained primarily from the personal experiences of the researcher in negotiating with elite stakeholders in the study.

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