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Abstract: This paper is focused on the inevitable presence of Anglo-American media in Asian countries. It sheds the light on the unidirectional flow of information from the West to the rest of the world promoting westernization, which is often mistaken as globalization. Also, it highlights the concept of media imperialism through the lens of western media practices. Moreover, this paper identifies the difference between global capitalism and global communication. Further, it discusses the possible solutions to de-westernize Asian continent by replacing the western theories with local works and case studies, which shall benefit the Asian media industry. The solutions are supported through the case study of China. The paper also sheds light on the inter-relation between de-westernization with Transnational Advocacy Networks and online activism.

In the contemporary age of the fight for revolutions and democracies, westernization is still a common topic of heated debate among media experts. The on-going argument between media imperialism and cultural globalization is inevitable from the field of media. The question has been asked for a long time about why BBC, CNN, MTV, etc. can dominate the flow of information from West to the rest of the world but the vice versa is yet somehow unattainable? What are the significant reasons behind the unwanted dependency on the West? Even when some Asian countries do possess the resources to compete with western media then why they are unable to in real-life?

The common mistake, which is often committed by today's world is to consider westernization as globalization. The flow of information from the Anglo-American media to Asia is keeping the citizens informed and busy, however, the citizens tend to forget that this information flow is unidirectional. Moreover, global trade has played a big role in this misunderstanding. The rapid increase in international trade has eased the flow of goods across borders. The presence of Tajik products in the United States of America (USA) and Japanese goods in Turkmenistan is, indeed, multidirectional but unfortunately, that is not the case with media.

Globalizing the media through Television, Satellites, Internet, etc. is one aspect of globalization but it is quite different from the concept of homogenization of the world's culture. An American-Korean can watch its native show in California yet it is a very different argument of globalization than what is discussed in this paper.

This paper is focused on the loopholes behind the western media theories, which are being taught in almost all the Asian countries for a very long time. This has become a major reason behind the spreading westernization among Asian societies, thus eroding the local cultures. There have been many alternative views to this argument as well like: "globalization today is only partly westernization. Globalization is becoming increasingly decentered-not under the control of any group of nations, still less of the large corporations. Its effects are felt as much in Western countries as elsewhere." (Park and James, 2006). However, statements like these can be critiqued as how the western theories are taught among Asian countries and all the media models are build based on these theories. This prevents the Asian local cultures and media houses to flourish while giving more space and dominance to western media.

The paper will further discuss the possible solutions of how de-westernization can be done by introducing unique models in Asian media studies and removing western theories that are hindering the dynamics of Asian politics and cultures. Moreover, these solutions will be supported through the case study of China. A country that has all the resources to compete in the international media sphere, yet it is unable to compete with global media.

Westernization or Globalization?

United Kingdom (UK) decided to withdraw from the European Union (EU) in 2016 and the global media is still flooded with the Brexit news. On the other side, almost no international news coverage was given to the Shanghai Cooperative Organization's (SCO) Summit held in June 2019. Not much of the world is even aware of the SCO and its initiatives to prosper the Global South along with Russia and China. However, almost the entire world is aware of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. If the global economy is going to be affected by Brexit, similarly, greater economic cooperation among SCO may have the same impact.

This transnational delivery of news can be easily justified with the reach and power of Anglo-American media houses in comparison to Global South's media outlets. The dominance of Anglo-American media is keeping the non-western societies informed about its issues and activities, whereas, these societies are ignorant of the rest of the world. Thus, when they succeed, such as what China and 'Asian Tigers' did in the 1990s, it was called a 'miracle' by the Anglo-American media. If the process that led to such phenomenal economic growth in Asia in the 1980s and 1990s was reported, no one would have been surprised and there was no need to call it a 'miracle'.

The spread of the western news in non-western societies is often considered as globalization as the public tends to believe that their connection to the rest of the world is becoming stronger with every passing day. However, the public tends to forget that this connection is just one-way, and the West is ignorant of even their existence. Not only West, but the rest of the world is also unaware of their challenges and activities. The flow of information from the West to the rest of the world is unidirectional. The news about some Britisher being stuck in Oman in August 2019 reached the entire world, however, the residents of UK must be unaware of the regular assaults, kidnappings, murders, and many other ill practices, which are sadly rooted in a lot of Asian countries.

The ignorance of the western world about non-western societies cannot be justified as the clash of civilizations. It is, indeed, the clash of ignorance that the West is still fond of media imperialism (Terushchuk, 2017). Even in the age, where the world is striving to attain global democracy, the West has not moved on from its outdated desire to dominate the global media. Democracy goes hand-in-hand with freedom of expression (FOE). However, when it comes to international communications there is no FOE for the rest of the world. Anglo-American media has gone into great lengths to ensure that this will not happen as reflected in their fierce opposition to the NWICO (New World Information and Communication Order) in the 1970s and 80s (Gauhar, 1979). Even though, it was written long ago by Robert Schiller: "Today...The United States exercises mastery of global communications and cultures" (Geburu, 2017). It is true in the contemporary age because still, the USA's drive to modernize the developing states of Asia leads to more dependency providing international dominion to the USA. Further, it erodes local cultures leading to universal homogeneity called westernization (Curran and Park, 2000).

Westernized Media Studies

Media studies have an Anglo-American accent throughout the world (Waisbord, 2015). How can you expect Asian media professionals to flourish their own countries without keeping west as their benchmark, when all they were taught in media schools were Anglo-American case studies, theories, laws, etc.?

The media schools cannot really be blamed of teaching in Anglo-American accent as it is true that its media has a huge history of success in reaching the entire globe and maintaining their dominance throughout Asia for all these years.

The victory of western media can be attributed to the history of colonialism as the sense of inferiority was rooted in many Asian countries, to justify their exploitation by the colonizers. The late Malaysian scholar Dr Syed Alatas explained it well in devising his theories on the 'Captive Mind' (Alatas, 2000).

For example, India and Pakistan (formerly known as sub-continent) were ruled by Britishers for almost a century leaving these states with bloodshed, disputes, poverty, crime and much more. It is still costing these countries a huge fortune to overcome the disputes and pave the way towards development.

Moreover, it is also a matter of competition which has not been posed to western media yet by many countries mainly because of economic struggles. For example, Central Asian countries are still very young to flourish in the field of media. Countries like China and Tajikistan are struggling with censorship due to the practices of authoritarianism by their rulers. These reasons have provided Anglo-American media outlets with a platform to have a powerful presence in Asian countries and to give a much stronger competition to local media houses.

If all the above-mentioned points are considered to be the reasons why Anglo-American accent is so dominant in media studies, then the media professionals from Asia cannot be blamed for being westernized instead of globalized.

Drivers Behind De-Westernization?

The significant question to be raised here is that, why de-westernization of media curriculum is important? It is an urgent need for our society because westernizing young media professionals is a huge threat to local media and cultures. Instead of globalizing the local news in the contemporary age, western stories are dominating more. For example, the citizens of Kyrgyzstan are familiar with the culture of fast food. However, the Americans – nor for that matter many of its Central Asian neighbors - have absolutely no idea about Kyrgyz specialties like “Lagman” or “Beshbarmak”. Moreover, Chinese and Korean women consider western faces as beautiful and go through torturing surgeries to look like them. Some even color their hair blonde.

Inclusiveness of the local communities in media would be an actual step taken towards the globalization of this world. The unidirectional flow of media from Anglo-America to the non-western parts of the world is a kind of ignorance to the uniqueness of other local cultures. This old and dominant practice is leading the world towards the uniform culture of westernization. One can relate this to a very sad and historic event of creating “Soviet Man” during the rule of the Soviet Union in the 20th century. Russian rulers tried to promote the uniform Russian culture among all the captured lands while striving to remove the local cultures. Their propaganda included not only religious conversions but also teaching the Russian language to all the inhabitants of the Soviet Union. The lasting effects of Soviet propaganda are still present as the Russian language and culture are widely practiced in all post-Soviets states. The way the

Russian practiced cultural hegemony or imperialism was called 'brain-washing' by the western media. But, is the Anglo-American media's cultural imperialism tendencies any better?

De-westernizing is highly significant because as once the millennial age will be completely westernized then the coming generations will not be able to carry the native cultures and traditions. The uniformity of the world would be a huge blow to the uniqueness of our nature because, indeed, the differences among the individuals are our blessings and not burdens.

Though, it is a very subjective statement, and thus should not be taken as a conclusion. The de-westernization will be a step towards embracing the differences, which is a true beauty of our world. It will let the local stories to travel across borders and allow diverse nationalities to know more about the differences and its beauties. Moreover, it will also keep the world informed about different nations and their issues.

In the age of social media, where platforms like Twitter have been widely used for political discussions and online campaigns, the two-way street of news delivery can be proved beneficial in helping the nations which are going through political instabilities. The tag of Global citizen can only be proved correct if a person acts locally for bringing a certain change. For instance, the on-going terrorism in Kashmir is a big issue as even after decades of the partition between India and Pakistan, the Kashmir issue is left unresolved. If the real Kashmir stories would start travelling from Asia to the world, then maybe even social media activism might lead to a change in this war zone.

For instance, the recent case of Rahaf Muhammad Al-Qanun, who departed from Saudi Arabia to seek refuge in a safe country. While transitioning in Bangkok, she locked herself in a hotel room and tweeted for help from the world initiating a hashtag campaign of #SaveRahaf. With

only just 24 followers, Twitter changed her life. In less than 24 hours, her followers reached to the number of 27,000+. Within that period, she saved her life by reaching out to UNHCR and was safely awarded asylum in Canada. Saudi Arabia's charge d'affaires in Bangkok, Mr Al-Shuaibi, in a meeting with Thai officials, said: "She opened a Twitter account and her followers grew to 45,000 within one day. It would have been better if they confiscated her cell phone instead of her passport because Twitter changed everything". This depicts the fear of even Saudi officials from a small device and application, which can turn a person's life upside down. It is a voice, which can travel miles and seek support.

Such online networks, which play their advocacy roles can be attributed as Transnational Advocacy Networks (TAN). These often have quite strong ties and may assist the locals to avoid abuse of power through transnational advocacies (Aday and Livingston, 2008). Through the presence of social media, transnational advocacies have become comparatively much easier than past as the above-mentioned case study states. TANs can actually be proved really important as these networks can be the source for new ideas, norms and solutions. TANs are described as 'voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchange' (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). The theory of TAN can directly be related to the de-westernization because these advocacy networks is an inclusion of the global citizens in the media platforms rather than just focusing and spreading information about western theories and politics.

Global Flow of Information – Unidirectional to Multidirectional

The core problem is that, how can this happen in real life? How can the flow of information be changed from the status of unidirectional to multidirectional? How can the voices of Asia be reached to the west and the rest of the world?

It is possible by altering the years-long practice of teaching the Anglo-American media curriculum. Even though it is a benchmark of success stories, yet it needs to be altered by adding world-wide case studies, small success stories of news outlets from developing countries, challenges and opportunities of many local media houses, etc. It is also significant to highlight the critiques to Anglo-American media. Regardless of it being very successful yet it has some loopholes, which must be taught in Asian media schools so that young media professionals should be encouraged to form new theories based on local case studies.

The development of TAN as a counter to Anglo-American media hegemony should be included in the media studies curriculum of Asian universities. Students are well aware of these technologies, but the political dimensions of its use need to be discussed, not merely as a FOE tool, but as an avenue to de-westernize global communication flow.

The matter of inferiority, which was mentioned above is somehow embedded in the post-colonial states. This inferiority can be gradually removed by embedding more local case studies, theories, laws, etc. in the curriculum. The curriculum should be revised, which would be an encouragement to the locals and a driver for Asian countries to explore and design their opportunities among media houses. As Alatas (2000) argues the 'captive mind' needs to be freed.

Localizing the curriculums will be a voice of development to the Asian media outlets, which have the funds and potential to grow yet are captive to ideas of Anglo-American media. The

media schools should encourage young students to refer to local sources while seeking news instead of referring to Anglo-American channels during lectures. Moreover, students must be encouraged to either polish existing platforms or build new media sources upon graduation instead of praising the dominant western media outlets, which of course becomes a driver for media professionals to seek the jobs abroad.

The countries like China, Japan and India, which possesses the technology and funds to promote their media houses abroad and reach a much higher population are also far behind than expected in competition with Anglo-American media houses. The reasons are quite diverse, and China has lately begun to spread its television footprint in particular globally.

Lesson for China

The strength of online media can turn active audiences into storytellers, co-authors, watchdogs and producers. Chinese citizens are rapidly indulging themselves into online media as they have understood that traditional media is reporting filtered news and is a one-way news channel. However, present-day needs require citizens to have a platform for open discussions, which can assist them in making informed decisions. The Chinese media platform is indeed a box with boundaries, which is monitored and censored by the government, and yet is strong enough to practice democracy and activism within it. Thus, online media is successfully on its way of decentralizing Chinese citizenship. China is the most ironic example in this case of adopting social media as a tool to bring political change for a social cause. The case of netizens online campaign against the anti-vagrancy laws of China enforced human rights on the Chinese authoritarian government (Yu, 2006). Even though Chinese media is highly censored and controlled by the authorities and its little box of media apparently did not have enough power

to fight against its strong and repressive government, but online media's power dominated authorities and brought a change for the interest of homeless and helpless young individuals of China from dying in the hands of police. Such successful stories shall be included in the curriculum because it lies within the dynamics of authoritarian countries like China instead of western case studies, which does not fit the model of Asian countries.

The media theories, which are taught in Asian countries including China are based on western political economy (Park and Curran, 2000). However, each Asian country has a different dynamic in terms of politics, economy, culture, etc., and thus must have unique theories to be studied during graduation degrees. For instance, China is a closed authoritarian state with a long history of a centralized economy. Yet, its media has played a big role in China's economic success. By dismissing it as not 'democratic' or 'libertarian' we may be missing a great lesson in the use of media for human progress.

Only in recent past, the developed cities like Beijing has started moving towards a market-based economy, which is yet a controversial topic to discuss. China needs to use its country-specific theories and teachings to be included in the media studies program rather than opting for westernized teachings. Moreover, Chinese media is highly censored and edited at every stage before being approved for the publishing. However, western theories are quite democratic by nature. Yet, as China's experience has shown, the libertarian 'democratic' media structure may not be the best recipe for media development in a developing country.

Conclusion

The Asian continent is a collection of diverse countries with their unique histories, cultures, traditions, economies, inhabitants, etc. With all the diversity that this continent encompasses

yet it has been still following the footsteps of western media and losing their own cultures. The dominance of Anglo-American media in Asia has left the continent with a dilemma of opting for the abandonment of western media theories and developing their local theories based on each country's dynamics.

Even though western media brings a long history of success and maintenance of their dominance, yet it has some drawbacks which need to be studied along with its case studies in media curriculum. The techniques of only praising Anglo-American media during the media studies and ignoring the local dynamics must be abandoned within Asia if the countries want to prosper and give competition to western media outlets.

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