Media self regulation mechanisms

And migrant responsive media

media - a mirror of the society

Media professionals are human beings

As human beings media professionals impacted by perceptions

Perceptions shaped by events and life experiences

Most of the time events and life experiences involving migrants are out of choice

UNESCO Media Development Indicators

Media self regulation - Category 3: Media as a platform for democratic discourse

Media has overlapping roles:

  Platform for democratic discourse

  Social actor – acting as a watchdog over private and public institutions

As a social actor it can also be a partisan force and an instrument of conflict, engender suspicion, fear, discrimination and violence by strengthening stereotypes, fostering inter-group tension and excluding certain groups from public discourse.

media self regulation

From within media houses

Between media houses

UNESCO MDIs advocate for both form and culture:

That despite having national media cultures with apparatus of self-regulation – codes of ethics, ombudsmen, complaints commissions, the printing or broad casting of retractions and corrections, etc

All these may be ineffective without a prevailing culture of public and peer scrutiny.

what are the options for self regulation

– At one end of the spectrum could be **complete statutory regulation**, that is the media to be governed by rules and regulations, through a regulator whose members are appointed by the government.

– **Independent regulator** who decides the extent of the regulator.

– **A non statutory independent regulator**, appointed by the trade associations.

– **Non statutory self regulation**, where every media entity creates and provides its own grievance redressal mechanism.

- Even with this model challenges remain with independent & freelance media professionals, electronic media professionals such as bloggers etc

the case of India - news

Self-regulation of broadcasting content is divided into news and non-news sectors.

Non-news sector is regulated by the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) within the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) that oversees channels other than the news and current affairs channels.

News and current affairs is regulated by the Broadcasting Standard Authority (NBSA), a self-regulatory body established by the News Broadcasting Association (NBA).

Press Council of India (PCI) regulates print Media.

the case of India – electronic media

NBSA (News Broadcasting Standards Authority) provides for voluntary self regulation for electronic media

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's Electronic Media Monitoring Centre monitors TV and Private FM Channels for violation of the Programme and Advertisement Code.

Cable television networks are regulated by the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 .

Online content is regulated through the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

Internet protocol (IP) addresses are regulated by the Indian Registry for Internet Names and Numbers (IRINN).

Case of India - the film industry

For each film, the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) sanction is required. The role of the CBFC is limited to controlling content of movies and television shows, etc. Unlike the PCI, it does not have the power to issue guidelines in relation to standards of news and journalistic conduct.

There are about 90-100 laws related to the media in India

at the level of professional bodies

Existing multiple journalists' unions at both the national and state levels e.g Indian Journalists Union (IJU), Journalist Association of India (JAOI), Indian Journalists Association (IJA) etc.

Media professionals working in the broadcasting sector represented through independent associations such as Broadcast Editors Association (BEA), Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), and the News Broadcasting Association (NBA).

For CR there is Community Radio Forum (CRF), Community Radio Association (CRA) and Community Radio and recently the Federation of Community Radio Stations (FCRS)

What we see here is a very diversified and fragmented media regulation mechanism

convergence in technology

Disruption in the way we communicate

Distances and physical borders can no longer be felt through communication

  E.g. mobile phone as a phone, camera, GPS device, word processor, radio, television, pen drive, credit card, bank account (MPESA) etc.

  Physical borders are being eliminated through communication – e.g scrapping of roaming charges in Europe, East Africa etc

As a result human beings are becoming more mobile (global citizens)

Cross continent migration is becoming a norm

Unfortunately physical borders still exist both on our lands and in our minds

Our legal framework continues to be unchanged to reflect technological convergence and the global nature of citizenship

Media concentration

Proliferation of the media after the 1990s in many developing countries

Leading to concentration of the media (ownership/numbers, spectrum ownership for terrestrial communication)

Same trend with digital media e.g:

- Tier 2 or 3 internet infrastructure owners also engaged in content production
- Few dominant search engines – (search engine algorithms determine search results)
- Fewer dominant social media platforms
- Fewer dominant operating systems and/or firmware

Long lasting implications to self regulation and migrants in the world of the IoT

Way forward

If we want a migrant responsive and migrant responsible media:

Approach media self regulation from the entire media ecosystem. Engage all stakeholders within the media industry and the broader public.

Review our legal and legislative framework to reflect the convergence of the media e.g in India the proposed broadcasting services regulation bill, 2007 which seeks the establishment of an independent authority to be known as the Broadcast Regulatory Authority of India as a good example.

Institute self-regulation mechanisms at all levels (statutory, non statutory, within the media, between the media)

Set up mechanisms to regulate the impact of media concentration

Official recognition of migrants in the list of disadvantaged groups – most laws cite women, children, scheduled tribes, PWDs)

Above all advocate for self regulation at individual levels – strive to have better media professionals who can act with rationality – despite the society perceptions and life experiences

Sources

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