

Indian Media System: An Application of Comparative Media Approach

Sehrish Mushtaq

Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Pakistan.

Fawad Baig

Technical University of Dresden, Germany.

ABSTRACT

India is the largest democracy of the world with a vibrant mediascape and there is a complicated relationship between Indian media and political systems. Using the approach of comparative media analysis and available literature, this study analyses Indian media on the dimensions of media and political systems developed by Hallin and Mancini (2004) in their book *Comparing Media Systems*. Indian political system is characterized by 'clientelism' and 'polarized pluralism' thus yielding high 'political parallelism' and 'instrumentalisation' of media at the hands of political and corporate elites. Commercialization of media has ensued weak professionalism among journalists and media organizations. However, Indian media may have a promising future because of early development of democracy and minimum state intervention. Indian media carries the features of all three media models proposed by Hallin and Mancini. Though, analysis reveals that Indian media system is dominantly closer to Liberal model of North Atlantic countries.

Key Words: Comparative media research, Hallin and Mancini's models, Indian media system, Indian political system.

Introduction

India is the largest democracy in the world, yet poverty, low literacy rate and segmented social structures seem unfit to normative standards and definition of democracy (Varshney, 1998; Tudor, 2008). Therefore it is labeled "deviant democracy" (McMillan, 2008), and has been a puzzling case as far as survival of democracy is concerned (Varshney, 1998; Bardhan, 2008; McMillan, 2008). Despite showing resilience for democracy, having strong electoral process and long democratic tradition, threats to democracy are many; Indians have low level of trust in their leading political elites, political polarization is on rise, ethnic conflicts are hurting the socio-economic progress and government has been unable to solve these problems so far (Mitra & Enskat, 1999).

With this complex political landscape, India is the most populous democracy and second most populous country in the world with total population of 1,251,695,584 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2015). Readership of newspapers in India is 340 million (Kohli-Khandekar, 2013) which indicates a vigorous mediascape. Newspapers have got the highest circulation in India as compared to rest of the world and TV channels are also increasing in number. According to Christoph Reiss, CEO of World Association of Newspapers, "Circulation is like the sun. It continues to rise in the East and decline in the West" (Kilman, 2011). After advent of internet and digital revolution, newspapers are losing their ground in most of the countries but this is not the case with India and China. Out of world top 100 paid newspapers, India accounts for twenty two and China for twenty five newspapers (WAN-IFRA, 2010).

Despite a flawed democracy and history of strict media control because of being an imperial colony, India still managed to pave ways for press freedom right after independence and has come a long way since then. Thus, Indian media system is an interesting case of developing world. Tradition of comparative research on media systems can help understand Indian media system and its relationship with the political system of India.

Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956) in their book *Four Theories of Press* were the first to describe four systems of press around the world: Authoritarian, Libertarian, and Social Responsibility and Soviet Communist media systems. For a long time mass communication research has relied on this classification of media systems. But their main emphasis was on three countries Russia, United Kingdom and United States therefore their classification was far too much generalized. Other attempts also typified media systems around the world generally and never addressed the unique and individual features of different countries.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) in their book *Comparing Media Systems-Three Models of Media and Politics* have evaluated the relationship of political systems with media systems in eighteen countries of North America and Western Europe. They categorized France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal in Polarized Pluralist Model or Mediterranean Model; Austria, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland in Democratic Corporatist or North/Central European model; and Britain, United States, Canada and Ireland in Liberal or North Atlantic model.

After their first book Hallin and Mancini (2012) extended their work in another book *Comparing Media System beyond the Western World*. In this book they extended their media systems to ten more countries of Brazil, China, Israel, Lebanon, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Thailand with the help of other researchers. In some other attempts using these three models, researchers have studied media system of their respective countries as unit of analysis. South Africa (Hadland, 2007), Russia (DeSmaele, 2010), Turkey (Uce & DeSwert, 2010), South Korea (Rhee, Cho, Song & Jung, 2011), Latin America

(Wiasbord, 2013), Albania (Rafti, 2013) and Chile (Mellado & Lagos, 2013) have been studied so far.

In their second book, Hallin and Mancini (2012) have mentioned India as world's biggest democracy with growing news media but did not apply their model approach on Indian media system. So, this study draws upon the framework of Hallin and Mancini to analyze Indian media system with respect to its political system. Four dimensions for comparison of media system including development of mass media, political parallelism, professionalization and the state intervention; and five dimensions for political system including the role of the state, consensus vs. majoritarian democracy, liberalism vs. corporatism, rational-legal authority and clientalism, and moderate vs. polarized pluralism are discussed. Focal point of study is to analyze Indian media on these dimensions and at some point it also attempts to find the compatibility of three media models with Indian media system.

Indian Media System

Development of Mass Media

In India, the first newspaper appeared in 1780 when James Augustus Hickey started his Bengal Gazette but this was English newspaper by an employee of East India Company (Beck, 2006). The first local newspaper in native language was launched in 1818 titled Samachar Darpan in Bengali language (Patil, 2011). After these first newspapers, tradition of newspaper printing grew with the passage of time and at the time of partition India inherited a strong newspaper industry. On 31st March 2015, total number of publications in India has amounted to 1,05,443 in which 14,984 are newspapers while rest are periodicals and total circulation of publication is 51,05,21,445. Out of total registered publications, 42,493 are in Hindi and English language registered newspapers and periodicals are 13,661 (Registrar of Newspaper for India, 2016). Vernacular language newspapers also have a reasonable share of market and readership. Circulation wise, four indigenous language newspapers were among top ten newspapers (Indian Readership Survey, 2014).

The most prominent factor in growth and progress of Indian media is prevalence of local and indigenous languages; TV, radio and press are available in different languages (Bhattacharjee, Wang, Banerjee & Agrawal, 2014). India's twenty eight states and seven union territories are not only based on geographical division but they are created according to languages. As there are total 22 official languages, 47 other important languages and around 179 total languages with 544 dialects are spoken in India (Kaminsky & Long, 2011).

Circulation and readership seems to be huge in India yet "social reach" of news media is not much promising, as per 1000 population there are only 85 copies of newspaper and this number is quite less than developed countries with 150-550 newspapers while in some developing countries also the number is greater

than 100. In addition to this, penetration and distribution of print media across regions, states, social classes, urban rural divide, men and women is uneven and inconsistent (Ram, 2011).

Newspapers are not the only choice, 37% of Indians opt for TV while newspapers are choice of 36% people as source of news (BBC/Reuters/Media Centre, 2006). In terms of viewership India is the third largest market for Television with 138 million TV households, China and US being larger than India (Deloitte, 2011).

This enormous growth in electronic media and variety of TV channels has opened new avenues of information, knowledge, exposure and exploration of different cultures and communities for Indians (Page & Crawley, 2001).

Political Parallelism

According to Hallin and Mancini (2004) the extent of political biasness of media content and political affiliations of media organization is measure of political parallelism. They have used this term as defining character for classifying media systems. This term was originally coined by Seymour-Ure (1974) and according to him a newspaper “is paralleling a party if it was closely linked to that party by organization, loyalty to party goals and the partisanship of its readers. A press system can be defined as a paralleling party system when such links exist between each newspaper and a party” (pp. 173-174).

In India political parallelism can be traced back to pre-independence era (before 1947), when sub-continent was a colony of British Empire. At that time press was divided in terms of political ideology. Indigenous language newspapers were more of nationalistic approach and in favor of liberation from imperial rule. While not all but most of English newspapers were against independence and pro-British (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2014). The press was further divided into Muslim and Hindu press and also supporting different political cause in the independence movement.

After partition, press of India started supporting the newly formed government in order to help democracy flourish in society, but with the passage of time press changed policy and it was divided once again. Some newspapers supported government while some went against and criticized it for wrongful acts and policies (Patil, 2011). Indian media is divided politically as well as ideologically. There are newspapers who favor secular ideology while some support right wing politics, a divide similar to nationalists and loyalists press before partition and this divide is further subdivided on different issues (Kumar, 2011). While “anti-political class rhetoric” is also present in Indian media particularly in English language media, in which politicians are questioned about their credibility, efficiency and corruption. It is also a fact that most middle and upper middle class is already disillusioned from political class (Udupa, 2009).

Political divide is enhanced to its effect as many newspapers, TV channels, cable distribution services are either owned or indirectly influenced by politicians, political activists and their relatives (Udupa, 2012; Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, 2013). Along with this, editors and owners of media organizations pronounce their political allegiances provocatively. Chakravarty and Roy (2013) labeled such media as “direct or indirect partisan media”. They suggested another type “networked media” in India also which is emblem of close and interlinked ties between political, social and economic stakeholders where they all come together for their interests. While public is totally clueless of these ties and unable to trace it in media content.

On the other hand some business families like Tatas, Ambanis, Thapars, Modis and Birlas also dominate Indian media and telecommunication sector both (Thomas, 2004). These industrial giants use media to pressurize ruling parties and politicians and get benefits for their businesses. Basically, three patterns can be traced for Indian media; first is the “pluralistic” and independent media, then state controlled and lastly small media outlets owned by some groups and organizations (Misra, 2008). This refers to the fact that Indian media system is characterized by external pluralism. Media organizations have aligned them with goals of political parties and corporate sector.

Because of these ties of media with state, political parties or corporate sector, the main problem is of objective coverage of news (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2014). Still according to a poll, 85% and 76% people of India trust TV and newspapers as news source respectively. 76% agree that news is reported accurately by Indian media and 69% think that media gives coverage to all sides of story (BBC/Reuters/Media Centre, 2006).

This trust of Indians in their media can be accounted for diversity and pluralism promoted by both print and electronic media in their content reflecting the regional, social, economic and cultural heterogeneity of Indian society (Kumar, 2011). Despite of high political parallelism, Indian media is applauded for projecting Indian cultures and politics in their content both at local and global fronts, thus making Indian culture appealing and creating commercial opportunities through reaching South Asia diaspora in the world (Sonwalker, 2004). Indian media has developed an environment for advocacy journalism for issues like environment, development and sustainability (Cronell, 2009).

Professionalization

Professionalization means independence of media from any kind of pressures and keeping up with ethical norms and standards while performing journalistic practices. Indian media is not that much autonomous and there are many factors responsible for its weak professionalization. Politicization is reason of low professional standards. Political parties, politicians or their relatives own the media and exploit it for creating their desired image in public (Misra, 2008). In a study

about Telugu newspaper market, it was discussed how easily political biasness of newspapers can be gauged both in news and opinion pages instead of their watchdog role (Shaw, 2009).

Indian media is highly commercialized and owners of media organizations become a tool in the hand of political class, industrialists and businessmen for their interests. Evils like commercialization and politicization has culminated in “tabloidization of news”, manipulation of information, “conflict of interests” and paid news (Rao & Johal, 2006). Thakurta (2012) while studying the ownership of Indian media, discussed ‘consolidation’ and ‘convergence’ of media organization and concluded that another effect of these emerging conglomerates was decrease in plurality and reduction of choices for media consumers.

Paid news is particularly a pervasive problem and this phenomenon was particularly noticeable during 2009 general elections (Press Council of India, 2010). Corporate sector and politicians purchase news space for their promotions after reaching an understanding with media organizations or journalists. Some politicians are given favorable coverage and thus advertisements of advertisers are “camouflaged” as news. Press Council of India (PCI) has cited “desegregation of editorial and ownership roles”, low wages of journalists and “corporatization” of media as reason of paid news (PRS Legislative Research, 2013).

Ethical values of Indian media have deteriorated, a study of ethics in news making revealed that in newsrooms and TV stations media ethics are not a matter of concern and Indian journalists ignore them (Rao & Johal, 2006). Code of ethics in India is not sufficient as it tells only the role of journalists, not how to play that role. This deficiency in code of ethics along with lack of training of journalists leaves interpretation of ethics vague and ambiguous to learn and practice (Ramparsad, Liu & Garrison, 2012).

Chairman of Press Council of India, Justice Katju doubted the intellectual capability of Indian journalists and indicated that they lack knowledge in fields relevant to media like economics, political science, philosophy and literature (Thapar, 2011). This gap of knowledge can be countered with educational training of aspiring journalists. Their education will not only determine the kind of journalists entering in the field but content of media and issues covered will also depend on training of these professionals (Tere 2012).

Indian media content is commercially motivated and entertainment-oriented (Rao & Johal, 2006; Rao, 2008). Tapas Ray in his article ‘Critical Tensions in Journalism Education: US parallels for India’ made this point that many acclaimed journalists consider corporatization of media and concentration of media ownership as reasons for ignoring the coverage of developmental issues (as cited in Tere, 2012, p. 129). Poverty is the biggest issue of Indian society but commodification of news has made difficult for poverty stricken people to get space in media (Thomas, 2005; Aram, 2008). People with less economic resources and low social status are not relevant for Indian media, profit is more important than media responsibility to inform citizens (Kumar, 2011). This is the reason that

media has transformed into an instrument for manipulation of public opinion instead of device for authentic news and information. Some blame this situation for education of journalism in India which is more focused on practical learning rather than sensitization of broader social issues (Ray, 2012).

The State Intervention

It is very difficult to say how far Indian media is free and how much government and other stakeholder's intervention is permissible. Newspaper has been free of government control, even right after partition all the control British colonial rulers exerted on press in order to restrain its freedom, was abolished by Indian democratic governments. No license is required to launch any newspaper or periodical, mere registration is enough. Press was suppressed by state and had to go through emergency only when Indira Gandhi imposed Internal Emergency in 1975 (Patil, 2011). Otherwise no direct restrictions or emergency is imposed on Indian press in recent past but indirect control is somewhat common as government gives subsidies to magazines, newspapers, news agencies, and also provides print and ad quota in order to get favorable treatment from press (Thussu, 2005).

Indian media cannot be declared fully free of government shackles as both TV and radio have been under government control. In 1959 state owned first TV channel Doordarshan was started by All India Radio (AIR). For a long time Doordarshan was only TV channel and source of entertainment and news for India. It was monopolized and manipulated by government for their political purposes (Farmer, 2009).

In late 1990's government liberalized the audio –visual medium and opened avenues for private satellite TV channels and radio stations. Monopoly of state channels on market share and audience reception was diminished. Transnational media organizations took over and globalized airwaves of India (Thussu, 1999). Many TV channels rapidly emerged on landscape of Indian electronic media.

These channels are regulated by an independent body Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). This body itself is not independent of state control and actually is a government organization. However there is no evidence of state intervention through TRAI on TV channels content. It is not a regulatory body like OfCom of Britain and FCC of America which can take measures against broadcast media rather it can only review the policy of licensing. But ironically Ministry of Information and Broadcasting did ban two channels AXN action movie channel and FTV (Fashion TV) of France. These channels were banned for three months on violation of guidelines set by Program Code of the Cable Television Network Act 1995 (Kumar, 2007). Ban on Pakistani state TV channel PTV is also a routine matter. Whenever the tension arises between India and Pakistan, some Indian cable operators have to give up to the pressures of state and right wing fundamentalists.

South Asian Studies 31 (2)

These bans pose a potential threat of direct state interference in broadcasting and this is the reason English language media protested against it (Kumar, 2007).

Press Council of India also wants more control on print media with “more teeth” to penalize press and it is eyeing to exert its power on broadcast media as its regulator too (Katju, 2011). Though Indian media is not experiencing punitive measures by state but these intensions for strict regulations and retribution have earned India 133rd place out of 180 total countries in Press Freedom Index in 2016 (Reporters Without Borders, 2016). This low ranking is not only consequent of pressures by the state but political and corporate ownership of media has also resulted in a biased and partisan press.

Indian Political System

The Role of the State

India is the largest democracy of the world with an electoral size of 814.5 million (Election Commission of India, 2014a). Right after partition, this new born nation took only three years to structure its first constitution which came into effect on January 26, 1950, a task completed in nine years by neighboring country Pakistan, liberated at the same time. In permeable of first constitution India was declared Sovereign Democratic State; this name was reverted with 42nd amendment in constitution and changed to Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic State in 1976 during the time of emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi. This was not mere change of name but there were argumentative debate about socialism and declaring India as welfare state in the very first constituent assembly (Kumar & Swarup, 2007; Joshi, 2013). Even long before all this Nehru and Gandhi both have been keeping differences on the idea of socialism in Indian politics (Ganguli, 1964).

Presence of words like “socialist”, “social and economic justice” and “equality” in constitution refers to the fact that Indian government promises basic human rights to its citizens thus striving for becoming egalitarian and welfare state (Kumar, 2012). Human rights are divided into two sections in Indian constitution. First are the Fundamental Human Rights in Part III ensuring right to life, equality, free speech and expression, freedom of movement and religion while in Part IV social rights like right to education, livelihood, health and housing are included as Directive Principal of State Policy (Kothari, 2004).

Fundamental human rights are part of liberal democracies’ constitution but on the other hand social rights are more focused by welfare states and Indian constitution entails both. But for these social rights in Article 38 of constitution word “strive” has been used (Kothari, 2004) thus providing a breathing space to the governments to overrule same social rights through claiming scarcity of resources to do so. In a study of 68 countries for index of constitutional commitment for social security, income support, unemployment, sickness, work

injury and old age disability survivors, India showed either no or weak commitment towards these social rights (Ben-Bassat & Dahan, 2006).

Indian socio-economic and constitutional history started with policies like land reforms and ended up in confusing socialist notions of welfare state with privatization, denationalization (Desai & Bhagwati, 1975; Kumar & Swarup, 2007; Kumar, 2012). India allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and became a free and competitive market when it attempted for free flow of capital and gradual industrialization in 1990's as the directives of New Economic Policy (Wankhede, 2012). This New Economic Policy was expected to bring vigor to Indian economic conditions but the fact is conditions have not progressed. Human Development Index of 2015 ranked India at 130th place (UNDP, 2015). India has 33 percent of world poorest people living under poverty line, which has reduced from 60 percent in 1981 (Ollinto & Uematsu, 2013).

Despite all these economic shortfalls democracy is strongly rooted in India and after every five years term of elected government, elections are held and so political democracy thrived way before social democracy could find its place in India (Misra, 2011).

Consensus vs. Majoritarian Democracy

In a study done on political parties of India, Suri (2004) presented this view that party system in India went through four stages; the first from 1952-1967 is Congress consolidation and dominance over party system, then from 1967-1989 consolidation of opposition to Congress thus rise of a multiparty system, then 1989-1998 a period of change and finally 1998 till date the time of coalition of political parties. Right after partition Congress remained the dominant choice for the people of India till 1960's (Manor, 2011). But split into the party, its failure to deliver its own initiatives, dynastic stronghold of Nehru then his daughter Indira Gandhi and his grandson Rajiv on party's rule and finally emergency of Indira Gandhi in 1975 all led to the failure and discredit of Congress party (Alexander, 2007).

This was the time when democracy started to clinch its roots in Indian society and in 1977 elections for first time after partition, Congress merely became a weak opposition (Manor, 2011). India transformed from "command politics" to demand politics (Rudolph & Rudolph, 1987) and many other parties started to emerge in India.

Indian democracy and party system has undergone a lot of transition since 1977. In beginning BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) surfaced as main opposition and alternative party but with the help of alliance with other parties aiming to oust Indira Gandhi (Alexander, 2007). Later in 1984 elections Congress regained its power but lost it in very next elections in 1989. From here Indian political history witnessed the herald of weak coalition governments with many parties involved both at the state and federation level and Congress still supported the non-BJP

governments but these governments lasted for very brief time (Manor, 2011; Gupta, 2009).

Coalition governments are prominent feature of consensual government where rule of “as many people as possible” rather than “majority of people” is applicable (Lijphart, 1999). Though, Indian democracy was characterized as Westminster model of democracy, as after freedom from United Kingdom, Indian politicians and constituent assembly laid down the principles of democracy according to UK tradition (Bormann, 2010). Lijphart (1996) has been puzzled by nature of transition in democratic process of India and was finally convinced that India is a deviant case of majoritarian model and more consociational in nature because of coalition governments and power sharing. He considered this power sharing system more suitable to deeply divided Indian society. Later Lijphart (1999) in his study of “Patterns of Democracy” studied thirty six democracies of the world including India. He analyzed these democracies as being Westminster model of majoritarian democracy or consensus model of democracy. Based on his ten indicators at two dimensions, he studied Indian democracy from the 1977 and all indicators dominantly were inclined towards consensual democracy.

Indian party system and democracy can be declared as consociational model. India has moved far away from the system where one party rules on the basis of its majority and other end up being opposition. In elections of 2013-2014, results showed mixed patterns of voter choice and different parties made governments in different states of India. In Lok Sabha BJP came out as the major winner and finally made government with the help of its coalition of other parties National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

But some researchers believe that this typology of Lijphart is not applicable to India (Bormann, 2010). Despite being coalition governments some conditions of consociational model like proportionality of power sharing are not met. In a study about performance of Indian states, it was revealed that both model are prevailing among Indian states and consensual government is more helpful as it is not only providing quality of governance but a ‘broader representation’ as well (Shah, 2013). This broader representation is key to resolutions between different sections, ethnicities and castes of Indian society.

Liberalism vs. Corporatism

Hallin and Mancini (2004) discussed another political dimension of individual pluralism or liberalism and organized pluralism or corporatism. In liberal democracies with restricted role of state, individuals tend to shape their relation with political process while in organized pluralism different social groups become interest groups in policy making. India is democracy with scarcity of resources but full of diversity in terms of castes, class, communities, languages and religions. Countries with disparities in access to resources and opportunities cannot sustain liberalism therefore individual pluralism could not find place in India. Social

groups in India are not organized to the level where they can influence policy makers. During making of constitution, Indian state has taken care of this matter by reconciling diversity of Indian society with the unity of nation (Alam, 2004).

Indian constitution gave recognition to social groups with non-discrimination and autonomy. Scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST), and other backward classes (OBC) are given 15, 7.5 and 27 percent of jobs respectively in government sector and seats in higher education system in constitution (Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 2013). Religious minorities like Sikhs and Muslims are also provided protection. Sikhs are also given job quotas and their majority state Punjab has been granted economic freedom also (Tatla, 2003).

India has many social groups most of them are traditional in nature. Caste is the strongest of all among religion, region and ethno-linguistic groups while modern corporatism is also evolving in form of labor groups, trade unions and students' organizations (Wiarda, 1997).

Rational-Legal Authority and Clientelism

Clientelism and rational legal authority reciprocate each other, weaker the rational legal authority stronger will be the clientelism. Max Weber (1978) explained the types of legitimate rule and authority and distinguished traditional, charismatic and rational legal authority. According to him modern societies are characterized by the powerful legal authority where rules are central and allegiance is to rules and institutions run by rationality and law rather than to the personalities. Charismatic and traditional rule prevail in most of the developing and undeveloped countries. Institutions lack legitimacy in these countries and authority slips in hand of charismatic familial, religious leadership or traditional feudal patriarchs.

India has been under clutches of caste system since centuries whereby upper castes exercised their traditional authority. During and after independence movement of India, Gandhi rose as charismatic leader but he never remained part of government and people of India believed in him as their spiritual leader (Parmeshwar, 2005; Joseph, 2012). Jawaharlal Nehru was also prominent leader who along with his political companions in All India Congress formed the first constituent assembly after independence. Willner (1984) has not labeled Nehru as charismatic leader instead she put him in another category "quasi charismatic leader", as he did fascinate his electorate. All India Congress inherited the charisma of Nehru and Gandhi both and till elections of 2008 grabbed enough seats for formation of central government.

From this familial charisma of Gandhi family, India is now in transition towards rational legal authority. Institutions are getting stronger and free of political control though empirical evidence suggests otherwise (Subramanian, 2007). In order to provide relief to masses, judiciary has taken decision against government and endorsed laws like Right of Children to Free and Compulsory

South Asian Studies 31 (2)

Education Act 2009, while Election Commission of India administers polls and Finance Commission allocates funds without any partisanship (Beteille, 2012; Jayadev & Krishnaswamy, 2012). Bureaucracy, backbone of administrative system in modern democracies is not autonomous in India; deeply rooted clientelism in political system has weakened rule of rational authority.

Favoritism in India is not aligned on basis of race, religion, ethnicity, language or vocation but clientelism is based on party affiliations (Markussen, 2010). The state and central governments are indulged in bestowing favors particularly granting jobs, business subsidies and licenses to their voters and affiliates to sustain political support (Weiner, 1967; Wilkinson, 2006; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2012). But Markussen (2010) studied clientelism in South India and concluded that not always favoritism results in slow rate of progress but in some Indian states progress rate has been high with clientelism.

Moderate vs. Polarized Pluralism

People of India have shown tremendous support and trust in democracy, electoral system has been robust with increasing voters' turnout of 66.40 percent in 2014 elections (International IDEA, 2014). The number of political parties is increasing; starting from Congress in 1947, now 464 political parties contested in 2014 but only 35 could win any seat while 27 out of these 35 parties bagged less than ten seats (Election Commission of India, 2014b). This rising number of political parties seems alarming for democratic process and indicates fragmentation in society and political ideologies (Misra, 2011). Indian society is already segmented on basis of religion, language, caste, tribes and ethnicities (Subramanian, 1999; Sridharan & Varshney, 2001).

In their typology of party system, Sartori (1976) and Hallin and Mancini (2004) based the definition of polarization on right and left spectrums of ideology but in case of India this seems not relevant, cleavages in religion, caste and ethnicities have resulted in polarization of Indian society and political system.

Indian religious diversity encompasses Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrians at one hand and Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism on other which emerged from Indian soil. In this religious diversity, clashes of Hindus with Muslims and Christians are quite prominent. Rise of Hindutva (Hindu nationalism) has been a characteristic feature of some political parties and their prominent leaders have been allegedly responsible for inciting riots between different religious sections. BJP and its allied parties have been involved in communal riots between Hindus and Muslims during Ayodhya mosque destruction in 1992 and Gujarat incident in 2002 (Sonwalker, 2006).

BJP whose parent organization is RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and its allies Vishwa Hindu Parishad or World Hindu Council and Shiva Sena are right wing parties who want a unified Hindu nation. Congress and its allies have been more of a secular nature, and then there are parties like Communist party of India

with their ideological leanings towards left. Indian politics is polarized between Hindu nationalism and secular nationalism (Sridharan & Varshney, 2001).

Ethnic diversity in India has yielded some ethnic movements. Some of these movements ended up being separatists' movements also. Subramanian (1999) discussed four ethnic movements; Hindu revivalism against secular notions of constitution, Kashmiri nationalism fighting for their separate territory, Sikh and Dravidian movements both against Hindu nationalism.

According to Sartori (1976), polarized pluralism has characteristics of multi-party system with extreme ideological gap and history of political violence. Some anti-system parties even challenge the existing system. In this scenario India undoubtedly has all these features in its party system but Sridharan and Varshney (2001) has declared India more inclined towards moderate pluralism and they see no threat to this status of Indian party system. Nikolenyi (1998) has rightfully described Indian party system at the "borderline of moderate and polarized pluralism".

Conclusion

After discussing all these dimensions, it seems that Indian media system carries features from all three models developed by Hallin and Mancini. Looking at the role of the state, India is not a welfare state but it is in a transition toward liberal democracy because of embracing neoliberal economy. Media is also not interfered by state though at some instances governments have tried to overpower directly in the form of state ownership of media particularly radio and TV channels. While indirect ways like funding and subsidies are also somewhat prevalent, but there is no censorship from the state in any form. This weaker role of the state in both media and politics suggest that India is closer to Liberal model. High circulation of press and deep penetration of broadcast media along with liberal democratic tradition also indicate to Liberal model.

Political parties in India share power at federal and state levels to represent different linguistic, religious, ethnic and castes' groups and therefore India has a consensual party system. Fragmentation of Indian society suggests polarized pluralism but as this polarization is not purely on ideological grounds so Indian society has features of moderate and polarized pluralism both. Media organizations align themselves with the goals of different political parties and stakeholders so there is external pluralism with high political parallelism. These features of Indian media and political systems are similar to Democratic Corporatist model.

Indian media does carry the features of Polarized Pluralism as it is still struggling to develop strong rational-legal authority while favoritism on basis of political affiliation is also a matter of concern. Media has become instrument of projection in the hands of different political and corporate elites and media professionals also seek favors from them. Putting ideology at stake, commercial

gains are priority of media professionals. Partisanship in journalism is at rise and professional values and ethics are ignored.

Above analysis indicates that Indian media system is dominantly closer to Liberal model of North Atlantic countries. But it is important to note that Indian media and political systems both are not homogenous in nature because of much diversified regional and local media and political system. In order to characterize India with one unified model, features of different states of India and relationship of media with political, economic and cultural forces within those states needs to be evaluated.

As some works on Hallin and Mancini models have already suggested cultural dimensions (Mellado & Lagos, 2013) while some have suggested another model also for the emerging democracies (Voltmer, 2008; Rhee *et al.*, 2011). So, further investigation and empirical study employing economic and cultural dimensions may help in evaluating media system of the world's largest democracy India.

References

- Alam, A. (2004). *Liberal state, multiculturalism and Muslim minority: India and Europe compared*. Retrieved from <http://chs.univ-paris1.fr/Sem/alam.pdf>
- Alexander, P. C. (2007). Reforms of political parties in India. *ASCI Journal of Management*, 36(2). Retrieved from [http://journal.asci.org.in/Vol.36\(2006-07\)/36_2/12.%20P.C.%20Alexander.pdf](http://journal.asci.org.in/Vol.36(2006-07)/36_2/12.%20P.C.%20Alexander.pdf)
- Aram, I. A. (2008). Indian media devote little space to poverty. *Media Development*, 55(1), 26-30.
- Bardhan, P. (2008). Democracy and distributive politics in India. In I. Shapiro, P. Swenson and D. Donno (Eds.), *Divide and deal: The politics of distribution in democracies*, (pp. 280-297). New York: University Press.
- Bardhan, P., & Mookherjee, D. (2012). *Political clientelism and capture: Theory and evidence from West Bengal* (Working Paper). Berkeley: Department of Economics, University of California.
- Ben-Bassat, A., & Dahan, M. (2006). Constitutional commitment to social security and welfare policy. Presented at DEGIT Dynamics, Economic Growth and International Trade, Kiel, Germany.
- BBC/Reuters/Media Centre. (2006). *Poll: Trust in the media*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/02_05_06mediatrust.pdf.
- Beck, S. (2006). *Ethics of civilization: India and Southeast Asia to 1800* (Vol. 02). California: World Peace Communications.
- Beteille, A. (2012). *Democracy and its institutions*. India: Oxford University Press.
- Bhattacharjee, A., Wang, L., Banerjee, T. & Agarwal, A. (2014). Media ownership and concentration in India. In E. Noam (Ed.), *Who owns the World's media?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bormann, N.-C. (2010). Patterns of democracy and its critics. *Living Reviews in Democracy*, 2. Retrieved from <http://democracy.livingreviews.org/index.php/lrd/article/view/lrd-2010-3/24>.
- Central Intelligence Agency. (2015, July). *The World Factbook: India*. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>
- Chakravartty, P., & Roy, S. (2013). Media pluralism Redux: Towards new frameworks of comparative media studies "Beyond the West". *Political Communication*, 30(3), 349-370.

- Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. (2013). *Review of representation of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in senior positions in Government of India*. New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat.
- Cornell, J. (2009). Advocates, adversaries, and adjuncts: The ethics of international science Journalism from a US Perspective. *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics*, 9(1), 17-24.
- Deloitte. (2011). *Media and entertainment in India: Digital road ahead*. Retrieved from <http://www.deloitte.com/assets/dcom-india/local%20assets/documents/me%20-%20whitepaper%20for%20asocham.pdf>
- Desai, P., & Bhagwati, J. (1975). Socialism and Indian economic policy. *World Development*, 3(4), 213-221.
- DeSmaele, H. (2010). In search of a label for the Russian media system. In B. Dobek-Ostrowska, M. Glowacki, K. Jakubowicz & M. Sukosd (Eds.). *Comparative media systems: European and global perspectives*, (pp. 41-62). Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Election Commission of India. (2014a). *General elections-2014: Schedule of elections*. New Delhi: Election Commission of India.
- Election Commission of India. (2014b). *Archive of general election 2014*. Retrieved from http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/statistical_reportge2014.aspx
- Farmer, V. L. (2009). Nation, state, and democracy in India: Media regulation and government monopoly. Presented at International Communications Association Preconference on India and Communications Studies, Chicago, IL, USA.
- Ganguli, B. N. (1964). Nehru and Socialism. *The Economic Weekly* 16(29, 30 & 31), 1213-1218.
- Gupta, D. (2009). *India: The weakening of the Congress stranglehold and the productivity shift in India* (Working Paper). Canberra: Australia South Asia Research Centre. Retrieved from https://crawford.anu.edu.au/acde/asarc/pdf/papers/2009/WP2009_06.pdf
- Hadland, A. (2007). The South African print media, 1994-2004: An application and critique of comparative media systems theory (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing Media Systems: Three models of media and politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (Eds.) (2011). *Comparing media systems beyond the Western world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Indian Readership Survey. (2014). *Indian readership survey*. Retrieved from http://mruc.net/sites/default/files/IRS%202014%20Topline%20Findings_0.pdf
- International IDEA. (2014). *Voter turnout data for India*. Retrieved from <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?id=105>
- Jayadev, A., & Krishnaswamy, S. (2012). Healthcare law in the US and the RTE in India: Steps towards Universal provision of social good. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 47(35), 31-36.
- Joseph, P. (2012). Mahatma Gandhi's concept of educational leadership. *International Journal of Economics Business and Management Studies*, 1(2), 60-64.
- Joshi, D. D. (2013). Dr. Ambedkar and drafting of Indian constitution: A 'see through' into the making of a masterpiece from the eyes of its architect. *Journal of Law Policy and Globalization*, 13, 38-45.
- Kaminsky, A.P., & Long, R. D. (Eds.) (2011). *India today: An encyclopedia of life in the republic* (Vol. 1). Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.
- Katju, M. (2011). The role the media should be playing in India. *Amicus Curia*, 88, 10-13.
- Kilman, L. (2011). *World press trends: Newspapers still reach more than internet*. Available at: <http://www.wan-ifra.org/press-releases/2011/10/12/world-press-trends-newspapers-still-reach-more-than-internet>

South Asian Studies 31 (2)

- Kohli-Khandekar, V. (2013, June 3). The booming market for newspapers: The growth of Indian newspapers continues to startle. *Business Standard*. Retrieved from http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/the-booming-market-for-newspapers-113060301081_1.html
- Kothari, J. (2004). Social rights and the Indian constitution. *Law, Social Justice & Global Development Journal*, 2. Retrieved from http://www.go.warwick.ac.uk/elj/igd/2004_2/kothari
- Kumar, A. (2012). Social welfare and constitutional responsibilities of government: An analysis of the current scenario. *Vivekananda International Foundation*. Retrieved from <http://www.vifindia.org/article/2012/january/03/Social-Welfare-and-Constitutional-Responsibilities-of-Government-An-Analysis-of-the-Current-Scenario>
- Kumar, K. J. (2007). Media education, regulation and public policy in India. Retrieved from <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/KevalKumar.pdf>
- Kumar, P., & Swarup, A. (2007). Socialism and new economic order: Constitutional perspective. *Nalsar Student Law Review*, 3, 9-18.
- Kumar, S. (2011). The exercise of hegemony in contemporary culture and media and the need for a counter hegemony initiative. *Social Scientist*, 39(11/12), 30-40.
- Lijphart, A. (1996). The puzzle of Indian democracy: A consociational interpretation. *The American Political Science Review*, 90(2), 258-268.
- Lijphart, A. (1999). *Patterns of democracy: Governments form and performance in thirty six countries*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Manor, J. (2011). The congress party and the great transformation. In S. Ruparelia, S. Reddy, J. Harriss & S. Corbridge (Eds.). *Understanding India's new political economy: A great transformation?* (pp. 204-220). London & New York: Routledge.
- Markussen, T. (2010). Inequality and political clientelism: Evidence from South India. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 47(11), 1721-1738.
- McMillian, A. (2008). Deviant democratization in India. *Democratization*, 15(4), 733-749.
- Mellado, C., & Lagos, C. (2013). Redefining comparative analyses of media systems from the perspective of new democracies. *Communication and Society*, 26(4), 1-24.
- Misra, S. N. (2011). Indian democracy at crossroads. *Orissa Review*, 67(6), 25-29.
- Mitra, S. K., & Enskat, M. (1999). Parties and the people: India's changing party system and resilience of democracy. *Democratization*, 6(1), 123-154.
- Murthy, C. S. H. N. (2011). Dilemma of course content and curriculum in Indian journalism education: Theory, practice and research. *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, 1(21), 24-42.
- Nikolenyi, C. (1998). The new India party system: What kind of a model? *Party Politics*, 4(3), 367-380.
- Olinto, P., & Uematsu, H. (2013). *The state of the poor: Where are the poor and where are they Poorest?* Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Page, D., & Crawley, W. (2001). *Satellites over South Asia: Broadcasting, culture and the public interest*. New Delhi: Sage Publications India.
- Parameshwar, S. (2005). Spiritual leadership through ego-transcendence: Exceptional responses to challenging circumstances. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16(5), 689-722.
- Patil, D. M. (2011). Recent trends of print media in development communication. *Global Media Journal*, 2(2), 1-20.
- Press Council of India. (2010). *Report on paid news*. Retrieved from <http://presscouncil.nic.in/CouncilReport.pdf>.
- PRS Legislative Research. (2013). *Standing committee report summary: Issues related to paid news*. Delhi: Institute for Policy Research Studies.
- Rafi, A. (2013). Is Albania ready for a new media model? *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(2), 485-488.
- Ram, N. (2011). *The changing role of news media in contemporary India*. Patiala: Indian History Congress, Punjabi University.
- Ramaparsad, J., Liu, Y., & Garrison, B. (2012). Ethical use of new technologies: Where do Indian journalists stand? *Asian Journal of Communication*, 22(1), 98-114.

- Rao, S., & Johal, N. S. (2006). Ethics and news making in the changing Indian mediascape. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics: Exploring Questions of Media Morality*, 21(4), 286-303.
- Rao, S. (2008). Accountability, democracy and globalization: A study of broadcast journalism in India. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 18(3), 193-206.
- Ray, T. (2007). "Critical" tensions in journalism education: US parallels for India. *Global Media Journal - Indian Edition*. Retrieved from http://www.caluniv.ac.in/global-mdia-journal/past_issue.html.
- Ray, T. (2012). Globalization, democracy and journalism education: Some thoughts for India. *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, 22(1), 107-114.
- Registrar of Newspaper for India. (2016). Retrieved from <http://rni.nic.in/welcome.html>
- Reporters Without Borders. (2016). *2016 world press freedom index*. Retrieved from <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>
- Rhee, J. W., Cho, H. J., Song, H. J., & Jung, J. H. (2011). South Korean media system: Towards a democratization model. *Korean Social Science Review*, 1(1), 303-337.
- Rudolph, L., & Rudolph, S. H. (1987). *In pursuit of Lakshmi: The political economy of the Indian state*. Chicago: University Chicago Press.
- Sainath, P. (2001). None so blind as those who will not see. *The UNESCO Courier*, 54(6), 44-46.
- Sartori, G. (1976). *Parties and party systems: A framework for analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seymour-Ure, C. (1974). *The political impact of mass media*. London: Constable/Sage.
- Siebert, F., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four theories of the press: The authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and soviet communist concepts of what the press should be and Do*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Shah, V. D. (2013, May 1). Consensus democracy and state performance: Evaluating the impact of coalition government on Indian states. *College Undergraduate Research Electronic Journal*, University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved from <http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1202&context=curej>
- Shaw, P. (2009). News and democracy. *Revista de Economía Política de las Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación*, 11(2). Retrieved from <http://www.eptic.com.br/arquivos/Revistas/vol.XI,n2,2009/09-PadmajaShaw.pdf>
- Sonwalkar, P. (2002). Mudochization of the Indian press: From by-line to bottom-line. *Media, Culture and Society*, 24, 821-834.
- Sonwalker, P. (2006). Shooting the messenger? Political violence, Gujarat 2002 and Indian news media. In B. Cole (Ed.). *Conflict terrorism and media in Asia*, (pp. 82-97). London & New York: Routledge.
- Sridharan, E., & Varshney, A. (2001). Towards moderate pluralism: Political parties in India. In L. Diamond & R. Gunther (Eds.). *Political parties and democracy*, (pp. 207-237). Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Subramanian, N. (1999). Ethnicity and pluralism: An exploration with reference to Indian Cases. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 32(4), 715-744.
- Subramanian, A. (2007). The evolution of institutions in India and its relationship with economic growth. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 23(2), 196-220.
- Suri, K. C. (2005). *Parties under pressure: Political parties in India since independence*. New Delhi: Lokniti - Programme on Comparative Democracy, Centre for Study of Developing Societies.
- Tatla, D. S. (2003). Sikhs in multicultural societies. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 5(2), 177 -192.
- Telecom Regulatory Authority India. (2013). *Consultation paper on Issue relating to Media Ownership*. Retrieved from http://www.trai.gov.in/WriteReadData/ConsultationPaper/Document/CP_on_Cross_media_%2015-02-2013.pdf.

South Asian Studies 31 (2)

- Tere, N. S. (2012). Commentary: Expanding journalism education in India-concern for quality. *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, 22(1), 127-133.
- Thappar, K. (2011, November 1). *They are of poor intellectual level. The Hoot*. Retrieved from <http://www.thehoot.org/web/home/story.php?storyid=5564&mod=1&pg=1§ionId=19&valid=true>
- Thakurta, P. G. (2012, August 1). Good for business, bad for freedom: Convergence and consolidation - Part I. *The Hoot*. Retrieved from <http://thehoot.org/web/Goodforbusinessbadforfreedom/6169-1-1-4-true.html>
- Thomas, P. N. (2004). Media ownership and communication rights in India. In P. N. Thomas & Z. Nain (Eds.). *Who Owns the media? Global trends and Local Resistance* (pp. 213-236). London: Southbound in association with WACC and Zed Press.
- Thomas, P. (2005). Contested future: Indian media at crossroads. In R.A. Hackett & Y. Zhao (Eds.). *Democratizing global media: One world many struggles*, (pp. 81-99). Lanham, MD, USA: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Thomas, P. N. (2010). *Political economy of communications in India: The good, the bad and the ugly*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Thussu, D. K. (1999). Privatizing the airwaves: The impact of globalization on broadcasting in India. *Media, Culture and Society*, 21(1), 125-131.
- Thussu, D. K. (2005). Adapting to globalization: The changing contours of journalism in India. In H. D. Burgh (Ed.). *Making journalists: Diverse models, global issues* (pp. 127-141). London & New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- Tudor, M. (2008). India's democracy journey. [Book Review: *The State of India's Democracy* by S. Ganguly, L. Diamond & M. F. Plattner (Eds.)]. *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, 4(2), 189-193.
- Uce, V., & DeSwert, K. (2010). Introducing Turkey to the three media system models: The content of TV news in eleven countries. In B. Dobek-Ostrowska, M. Glowacki, K. Jakubowicz & M. Sukosd (Eds.). *Comparative media systems: European and global perspectives* (pp. 63-76). Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Udupa, S. (2009). Mediatised Terror: Terror in the age of media explosion. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 44(9), 18-21.
- Udupa, S. (2012). Beyond acquiescence and surveillance: New directions for media regulations. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 47(4), 101-109.
- UNDP. (2014). *Human development report 2015 work for human development*. New York: United Nations Development Program. Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report_1.pdf
- Varshney, A. (1998). Why democracy survives: India defies the Odds. *Journal of Democracy*, 9(3), 36-50.
- Voltmer, K. (2008). Comparing media systems in new democracies. *Central European Journal of Communication*, 1(1), 23-41.
- Waisbord, S. (2013). Media systems in Latin America: Media patrimonialism and the virtues of 'methodological statism'". Presented at World Social Science Forum. Montreal, Canada.
- Wankhede, H. (2012). India: The next super power? Globalization, society and inequalities. In K. Nicholas (Ed.). *IDEAS Reports - Special Reports, SR010*, (pp. 39-44). London, UK: LSE IDEAS, London School of Economics and Political Science.
- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Weiner, M. (1967). *Party building in a new nation: The Indian national congress*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Wiarda, H. J. (1997). *Corporatism and comparative politics: The other great "ism"*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Wilkinson, S. I. (2006). *The politics of infrastructural spending in India* (Working paper). Chicago: University of Chicago, USA.

Willner, A. R. (1984). *The spellbinders: Charismatic political leadership*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Biographical Note

Sehrish Mushtaq is a Lecturer in Department of Mass Communication, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Pakistan. She is Ph.D. scholar at Institute for Communication Sciences, Technical University of Dresden, Germany.

Fawad Baig is PhD scholar at Institute for Communication Sciences, Technical University of Dresden, Germany and already holds Ph.D. in computer science. He is working as Producer Programs at Pakistan Television (PTV), Lahore Centre.
