

Framing India: Pre-post globalization

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Abstract

This study attempts to explore how due to globalization framing of India in New York Times became relevant and of significance during the period of 1985-2010. An analysis of all the news articles about India was done to find out the change in the space given to India over the three phases of globalization. Later, a content analysis of as many as 450 news reports was done to find out the nature and focus of the news items pre and post globalization period. The findings indicate an exponential rise in the number of news items about India in the post-globalization phase. The nature of news reports changed from neutral to positive and more coverage was given to 'Politics and Business' section when earlier it dealt mostly with 'Arts and Culture' section. The news reporting in the post-globalization phase was more visually aided with photographs. The findings support the notion that when a nation becomes economically strong there is not only an internal positive sentiment generated but external communication agencies also facilitate in strengthening its position by representing it as a nation of consequence.

Research limitations: The study is limited to the representation made by one newspaper about a single country and therefore the findings are limited in their scope.

Originality/value: Observations and comments about India's changing position in the western world have been made but no empirically validated studies have been found. The current study fulfils that gap.

Keywords: India; New York Times; Shift in communication quality and quantity; Globalization

Introduction

Development process of a nation is a complex process with interplay of several factors within and outside the developing

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nation. It has been noted that nations often grow in groups and clusters and one such geographical block which is witnessing economic development is Asia as a continent. As quoted in the AMIC Annual Conference brochure 2013, 'A recent study by the Asian Development Bank noted that, "Asia is in the midst of a truly historic transformation. It holds the promise of making some 3 billion additional Asians, hitherto commonly associated with poverty and deprivation, affluent by today's standards." With this the world view of Asia is clearly expressed. The factors which fuel the Asian growth can be divided into broad categories - classic and new factors. The classic factors are technical progress, capital accumulation and labour force growth while the new factors are the growing middle class; climate change and the communications revolution (Asian Development Bank; 2011). Most Asian nations enjoy a privilege and a competitive advantage on these factors for various historical, political or cultural reasons. India is, one of the several Asian nations, which is leading the growth engine of the Asian continent (Kuijs, 2012) and is along with the Public Republic of China the fast growing developing economy, a conclusion which has been drawn out and concluded from the development process shown by these two countries over the last two decades (Commission on Growth and Development, 2008). It becomes important to understand the factors which play a critical role in the process of development and the impact which economic development has on the importance and relevance paid by the other nations of the world. What makes interesting study is the attention which the developed nations pay to the developing economies like India. The present paper intends to explore the attention paid by the United States (US) media agency to India over a period of 25 years which has seen the transition of the Indian economy from a closed developing third world nation to a liberalized economy with economic and legal policies which encourage and promote foreign investment.

2. Literature review

2.1. What is development?

Development is often used synonymous to economic prosperity and has been a topic of research and debate in the field of economics. Researchers have worked and written extensively about the factors which lead to economic development of a state and Smith (1776) listed out three key factors – low taxes, peace and fair administration of justice, which led to the

development of the wealth of a nation but this overtly simplistic path to development has failed in the case of several economies like Bulgaria, Romania which have not got the desired results in spite of the presence of the basic factors of economic development as laid down by Smith (1776). Coyne and Leeson (2004), argued that 'development process involves working within the given political and economic order to adopt policies which bring about economic growth' while others have laid emphasis on more sophisticated factors like media which play a subtle but an extremely firm role in the process of economic development of a nation (Sen, 1984, 1999; Djankov, et al; 2002). Most writers have asserted a positive relationship between an assertive and free media and the development outcomes of the 'development aspiring' nation. Stiglitz (2002), focussed on the enhanced degree of governmental transparency and accountability in nations where media is strong which leads to positive economic development while and better public policies (Spitzer, 1993). Similarly the private business agencies also operate better with stringent corporate governance norms and execution (Dyck & Zingales, 2002) and reduced principal agent problem (Besley & Burgess, 2001; Besley, et al, 2002). But attention has not been paid to the shifting stance and altered impact which foreign media holds development process of a 'development aspiring' nation. This paper focuses on the former part of the issue and attempts to bring out the altered stance which US media has held about a developing nation like India over a period of 25 years.

2.2 Economic Development of India: Pre-post 1991

India became an independent nation in 1947 when the political will was expressed that India must achieve its economic growth through the adoption of socialist economic policies to ensure that the development process is for the masses and reaches the common man at large. The welfare of the citizens of the country would be the states prerogative. This led to setting up various industries and an establishment of a scientific ethos in the nation (Parameswaran, 2008). As Khilnani (2004) puts it that post-independence, India under its Prime minster Nehru, ushered in an era of 'self-determination and self-sufficiency' and invested in nurturing a spirit of scientific inquiry. Investments into establishment of institutions of higher education for a technically qualified workforce were also made. So, the process of economic

development was central to Indian policy makers, in the pre-globalization times as well. As Nayak, et.al (2010) present facts to indicate that 1978 onwards the policies in India were clearly towards liberalization but they were not focussed towards any specific nation while 1991 was a watershed when policies of the government of India seemed more favourable towards the American companies.

The notion of economic growth witnessed by India, post 1991, is highly debated (Nayar, 2006) where several authors like Dollar and Kraay (2004) assert the positive benefits of economic prosperity and general human welfare attached to globalization and liberal economic policies while at the same time (Chomsky, 2002; Singh, 2005) criticize globalization and establish it as an evil systemic process which leads to economic instability and disparity and dependence on external forces. Patnaik (2003), puts up a case against globalization with specific reference to India and says that, 'many of the tendencies associated with the liberalized third world economy, namely, accentuation of economic inequalities, the preservation of and even a marginal increase in rural poverty, worsening of the food supply situation, the transformation of the economy into a demand constrained system, a tendency towards industrial stagnation, and vulnerability to speculative capital flight are already evident.' Therefore, it can be considered that Indian policies have been liberal towards integration of other countries into economy both before and after 1991 though liberalization was aggressively practiced after 1991 which has had both positives and negatives impact on the Indian economy as a whole. Development has been restricted to urban areas and limited to a few specific sectors and industries bringing in benefits to a limited companies largely hailing from the United States of America.

2.3. (a) *Media and development*

In the present globalised times the development process of a nation is highly dependent upon the investments made by the foreign companies in a nation and closed doors policies of government of India has often been considered as a factor which deterred India's growth till 1991 Johri (1983) and Kumar (2003). The foreign investment is dependent upon the 'image' which the multinational companies hold about the nation where they may want to invest funds and boost the process of economic development. Mass media plays a very important role in creating

perceptions about people other countries (McNelly and Izcaray, 1986) because most people get their information about people and systems outside their immediate environment through various channels of mass media (Lippmann, 1922 cited in Cho & Lacy (2000). Therefore mass media plays a vital role creating images about individuals, communities and nations.

2.3. (b) *Images*

Lippmann (1922) defined social and political images as, 'pictures of our heads' which Nimmo (1978) explained as a culmination of varied facets which an individual projects and others imbibe and attach meanings through their personal cultural attributes like beliefs and values. There are various factors which contribute to the formation of this image which can be categorized into internal and external factors. Internal factors are 'tendencies composed by thoughts, feelings and inclinations' (Saleem, 2009) while external factors political, historical events, geographical location and media. Boulding (1969) elaborates on the various factors which impact a national image formation by saying the national image is at its core a '*historical image*-that is an image which extends through time, backward into a supposedly recorded or perhaps mythological past and forward into an imagined future. The more conscious a people is of its history, the stronger the national image is likely to be. Wars and hostilities among nations also formulate national images as do geographical space, past friendliness and alliances, and strengths and weaknesses of the nations in terms of military, economic and politic capacity'. The role of mass media is also very important (Tanstall, 1970) and Galtung & Ruge, (1965) labelled media as the "first rate competitors for the number one position as international image former". So, a composite understanding of the country image has been defined as "a representation of a country's positive or negative standing in media, in terms of historical, political, economic, military, diplomatic and religious context" (Hanan, 2006) or as Saleem (2009) explains the way Noshina (2000) used journalistic jargons and defined national image vis-à-vis 'political, economic, military, diplomatic and religious relations in the changing domestic, regional and international scenario and its effects on the thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and inclinations of the owners of the media organization'. These images are a result of and in turn impact the framing of nations and institutions where media presents or reinforces specific image through depiction of selective events or incidents.

2.3 (c) *Framing*

Framing is a term used in the field of social psychology applied for studying the role of media in ascribing issues of public interest (Goffman, 1974, Gitlin, 1980 and Entman, 1991) and has been defined as a selection of 'some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item describe', where selective aspects of reality is brought to light and highlighted while the other portions are omitted (Entman, 1993). In matters of reporting about foreign affairs and different cultures existing in far off lands, framing plays a critical role because the media most often reinforces a prevalent stereotype leading to skewed and most often incorrect opinion making (Mann, 1999) which, as Reese (2001) puts it, is employed as "an exercise of power".

Conclusively, media frames and images determine and impact the (i) colour (categories ranging from softer issues like 'Art and Music' to harder topics like 'Politics and War' and (ii) stance (positive, negative and neutral) that readers hold for an event, issue or institution. They reflect the ideological positioning of the media agency which most often is supported by the political masters of the native nation.

The current study attempts to map the shift in the images about India created by The New York Times (NYT), the most prominent print medium of the United States of America (USA) based on which the following hypothesis are generated

Methodology

Data sample: Source and size

NYT, being the most popular newspaper emanating out of the United States was chosen as the data source. A search for the total news reported about India in NYT was made. News was filtered from the 'all' category indicating all the media channels - Articles, Blogs, Multimedia and Video of NYT were covered in the search. NYT identifies 13 categories for news articles and all these were included in the search ensuring an exhaustive and all inclusive data. First 25 'most relevant' news reported in NYT every year over a span of six years in three phases between 1985-1990; 1995-2000 and 2005 – 2010 were used as a sample for the study. The sample used for analysis comprised of 450 news reports about India. The total

number of news items published about India in each of the three phases of study was used an indicator to gauge the importance attached to India by the developed world and a comparison of the total number of news items in each phase was made.

Data analysis

Content analysis was used as a tool for analysis and categorization of the news articles. It is the most commonly used technique in the field of communication research and has been described by Krippendorff (1980) as a, "research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". Each article was read and based upon the content of the article it was slotted into one of the 13 categories (Appendix 1) which were the various 'images' in which NYT classifies its news articles. These 13 categories included the entire range from 'Art and Music' to 'Business and Personal Finance'. All categories which comprised of less than 5% of the total news were dropped from analysis and the finally the 13 categories were reduced to 7 categories (Appendix 1). The categorization helped to identify the focus of the frame of the media of the developed world for a developing nation like India and the images created over a period of time.

The news articles were also separated into one of the three types – positive, negative or neutral and noted if the news feature was reported with a photograph as that does indicate deeper and more focussed attention.

Based on the qualitative analysis of data the following hypotheses were generated.

Hypothesis 1:

H_{0(i)}: There is no significant difference in the categories of news carried by NYT about India over a period of time (1985- 2010).

H_{1(i)}: There is a significant difference in the categories of news carried by NYT about India over a period of time (1985- 2010).

Hypothesis 2:

H_{0(ii)}: There is no significant difference in the positive, negative and neutral news carried by NYT about India over a period of time (1985- 2010).

H_{1(ii)}: There is a significant difference in the positive, negative and neutral news carried by NYT about India over a period of time (1985- 2010).

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to gather and analyse data. Chi-square was used to statistically test the hypothesis, validate the comparison and bring out the difference between the categories and type of news coverage made by NYT about India from pre-globalization era (1985- 1990) through young globalized India (1995- 2000) to settled globalization in India (2005 – 2010).

Results and analysis

Over a period of time and across the three phases the total amount of news covered by NYT about India has been phenomenally. There has been 1504.54 % rise in the news about India in NYT.

Table 1: Total news articles about India

Phase	Total No. of News Article	% Rise over the earlier year
1 (1985- 1990)	12340	Base Year
2 (1995- 2000)	11570	
3(2005 – 2010)	1,98,000	

Downloaded articles were slotted into different categories as specified by NYT and the focus in framing and creating images about India was noticed through the shift in categories which received attention and drew the highest number of entries in a specific phase. This was also validated statistically and the chi-square results as reported below show a significant difference in the categories which had the majority of news articles over the three phases.

Table 2: % coverage across categories and phases

Phase	Arts	Business & Personal Finance	Community news & ordinary people	Crime, courts & Legal	Disasters & Accidents	Health, Home Food fashion Travel	Politics, Govt. & War
1	62.90	4.88	28.89	55.17	40.00	36.36	31.01
2	27.42	30.49	35.56	17.24	46.67	39.39	37.98
3	9.68	64.63	35.56	27.59	13.33	24.24	31.01

There were 13 categories in the initial data search which were reduced to 7 due to inadequate coverage in the remaining 6 categories. The above data clearly reflects that 'Arts' as a category received the highest attention in the first phase while 'Disasters and Accidents' captured majority attention the second phase. In the third phase, by when, globalization was well established and Indian economy had liberalized trade policies, 'Business and Personal Finance' saw the highest news articles.

Table 3: Type of news – positive, negative and neutral across phases

Phase	Total Length of the Articles	Positive	Negative	Neutral
1	100807	25	59	66
2	111484	52	38	60
3	181143	87	23	40

There has been a drastic rise in the positive news communicated about India across the phases and a distinct fall in the neutral news about India in phase three as against phase one and two. The rise in positive news has been from 15% to over 52% while the negative news has cut fallen to half in phase three as against phase one.

It is importantly to statistically validate the results and therefore the hypothesis was tested and the results below reflect that it can be statistically validated that there is a significant difference in the categories and types of news printed by NYT about India over a period of time.

Hypothesis test results

Table 4: Hypothesis 1 (categories of news across phases)

Phases	Categories	P value	df	Analysis
1; 2 & 3	8 Final categories – Arts, Business & Personal Finance, Community news & ordinary people; Crime, courts & Legal; Disasters & Accidents; Health, Home Food fashion Travel; Politics, Government & War	significant at .000	12	Null hypothesis rejected because p value less than .05

The results of the hypothesis testing statistically validate that there is a significant difference in the categories of news coverage between phase 1, 2, and 3 of the study. Examples of excerpts of articles from the three phases mentioned below explicitly between out the difference in the focus of the categories across the phases.

Excerpt from December 30, 1987 article (phase 1)

The Princeton Charcuterie Cafe, a five-month-old restaurant, is in that most American of locations, a shopping mall in Princeton, N.J. And Bob Spiegel, the 26-year-old chef, invents American dishes like black and orange striped ravioli filled with pumpkin for Halloween. But an alert diner can also detect a bit of India in his creations, perhaps a hint of coriander and lemon verbena in chutney, a gastronomic souvenir of a trip he made to India.

Excerpt from November 1st, 1999 article (phase 2)

More than two days after a cyclone of monstrous power churned across the Bay of Bengal into India's east coast, as many as a million and a half people are homeless, hundreds of villages in one of the country's poorest states have been washed away and tens of thousands of survivors are camping along roadways without adequate food or water. The death toll is unknown, but officials are guessing it is in the thousands.

Excerpt from 2009 newspaper describing India

'... the way for a reinvention of the country: from a stultified, socialist economy to a more dynamic, capitalist one; from a foreign policy defined by suspicion of America to one defined by shared interests and even mutual affection; and from public attitudes that frowned on individualism, consumerism and ambition to a nation that today exalts those same qualities.'

Table 4: Hypothesis 2 (Type of news – positive, negative and neutral across phases)

Phases	Type of News	P value	df	Analysis
1; 2 & 3	Positive, Negative and Neutral	Significant at .000	4	Null hypothesis rejected because p value less than .05

The results of the hypothesis testing statistically validate that there is a significant difference in the type of news, falling into positive;

negative or neutral category, published about India between phase 1, 2, and 3 of the study. A closer look at the articles published over these phases reveal that Examples of excerpts of articles from the three phases mentioned below reflects the shift from the negative news to positive over a period of time.

Excerpt from, February 15, 1986, carried news titled *Heroin Addiction Big New Problem in India* detailing the news as, “You can get smack in any place, on any road, on any corridor, even a hospital corridor”. Another example from June 28, 1987, announced *India's Drought Is Worst in Decades* describing the news as, “After weeks of false hopes that the summer monsoon rains would come, India faces the prospect of devastation to the national economy, the uprooting of hundreds of thousands of people and the need for a huge relief effort to distribute drinking water and prevent starvation”. An article published on May 3, 1989 had news about *A Billion Bottles a Year Defy India Liquor Ban* describing Indian scenario as, “To accommodate a powerful anti-alcohol lobby, the Indian Government wrote a section into the Constitution declaring its intention to enforce prohibition. But today, state governments across the country are violating this edict with impunity, officials here say, because the liquor industry is a major source of revenue. The national Government says it is virtually helpless in the face of such open defiance”.

Whereas news in phase three was dominated by news like *India Expands Role as Drug Producer*, Published: July 6, 2010 detailing conditions in India as, “ Below an ancient hilltop temple to Kali, the Hindu goddess associated with destruction and change, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries churns out generic versions of cancer drugs and epilepsy medications bound for the United States”. On April 10, 2010, news about *Turnaround of India State Could Serve as a Model* reflected progress in India by writing “Bihar announced earlier this year that it had notched an 11 percent average growth rate for the last five years, making it the second fastest-growing economy in the country, the news was greeted as a sign that even India’s most intractable corners of backwardness and misery were being transformed.” Positive communication across all spheres is noticed in phase three. On December 3, 2009, NYT carried news saying, *India Announces Plan to Slow Emissions*, with convincing arguments, “With international talks on climate change starting next week in Copenhagen, India staked out its early position on Thursday by announcing that it would slow the growth of the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, while also leaving open the possibility of taking bolder steps if an “equitable” deal can be reached during the negotiations.”

Both positive and negative events happened during both the phases – first and third but during the third phase India's economic and capital structure was better aligned to United States and its economy and therefore the framing of images by NYT is also evident.

Discussion

Indian economy has seen an ideological shift in its stance towards growth and development from being a state-driven economy where the development was a responsibility of the government (state) and a clear disdain for consumerism was rampant though the pre-globalization policies supported a liberal growth and development of trade (Nayak, et al. 2010). It is consequential to note that since the pre-globalization liberal policies were not focussed upon a specific nation the media coverage made by newspapers of the nation did not frame India in a very trade and commerce friendly light. This era continued till 1991 and therefore the phase 1 of the research (1985-1990) clearly was during the times when economic socialism was integral to India. In this phase since the Indian economic ideology did not match or stood contrary to the American approach to development which advocated capitalism and an open economy, the western media covered issues about 'crimes', 'disaster's or soft aspects like 'culture', 'art', 'travel', 'food' etc.

Once the government entailed upon itself the task of charting policies and which helped in bringing economic progress and prosperity to the nation, post 1991, which supported the American companies the images drawn about India by NYT were more about business, finance and government policies. Therefore, with a change in the economic ideology there is a clear shift in the focus of the American media which began to frame India as an economic power and covered double the number of stories about India than the earlier phase.

The images about India as a land stricken with poverty and crime were rampant in phase 1 where Bhopal Leak, Sikh Violence, droughts in Bihar were stories which dominated the coverage about India. The other aspects which were covered were stage performance by Indian classical artists in New York and exhibition of Indian textiles and garments in America. Post-globalization, NYT talked about the growing financial and technological might of nation. It discussed the clout which Indian

businessmen and professionals hold in the global scene especially in the US. Such shifting frames have helped to create an image about India as a land which suffered depravity to a flourishing and prosperous nation.

It's important to note that the total coverage which the NYT carries about India has increased 16 times since India looked positively at globalization in 1991.

Scope of further research

The findings of the study can be used a starting point to conduct further research and interview readers and publishers to measure the impact of framing through newspaper articles on the minds of the readers. It can be investigated whether an average American perception about India has undergone change and the role that newspapers have played in creating the perception.

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1 (Categories for initial data collection)	Appendix 2 (Categories for final analysis)
Arts	Arts
Business & Personal Finance	Business & Personal Finance
Community news & ordinary people	Community news & ordinary people
Crime, courts & Legal	Crime, courts & Legal
Disasters & Accidents	Disasters & Accidents
Education	Health, Home Food fashion Travel
Health, Home Food fashion Travel	Politics, Government & War
Parent Relationships & Religion	
Politics, Government & War	
Music	
Science, Technology & environment	
Sports	
TV & Movie	
Editorial/ Op-Ed	