

CENTRE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA & GOVERNANCE

Jamia Millia Islamia

New Delhi



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REGULATORY DISCOURSE IN TELEVISION AND ROLE OF ACTORS

By

Pallavi Majumdar

Abstract:

The Indian broadcasting regulatory framework has evolved as a knee jerk response to the transforming political, economic and technological dynamics. The evolution demonstrates that policy formation involves negotiation among powerful actors. Analysis of the actor's actions and reactions showed that selected powerful actors (politicians, bureaucrats and broadcasters) with strong economic and political resources and ingenious strategies could block, oppose or exploit any developments. The Civil Society as an actor has been sidelined, and in theory, being a democracy, does not ensure public participation in policy making.

The researcher argues that the discourse amongst the actors was regarding the regulatory frameworks. Though at the surface the powerful players were seen engaging in regulatory debates about the structure and form of regulation, it has resulted in limited regulatory reform from 1990 to 2010. Expected restructuring such as setting up of an independent Regulatory authority has not been achieved.

The state has held on its control over broadcasting citing public interest. Free Speech provisions have been invoked by the broadcasters as a front to negate provisions related to ownership restrictions, licensing, PSB obligations, in the proposed broadcasting legislations which directly conflict with their interests. Despite well-established examples of independent regulatory authorities worldwide, business players have played deaf and mute, aggressively pushing for a free market model and questioning the need for regulation in a democracy. The stiff resistance has influenced the discourse – with changes in nomenclature from regulation co-regulation.

Bio:

Pallavi Majumdar is a media educator, trainer and former journalist. She is currently pursuing her doctoral research from CCMG, Jamia Millia Islamia in the area of broadcast regulation.

Venue: CCMG, Network Lab.

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