

Is media globalization
a form of cultural
imperialism media
essay



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It can be argued that media globalisation can be a form of cultural imperialism but others may argue that its not. Many critics have defined globalisation or media imperialism as an important channel for the expansion of consumer-based culture extending across borders (Tomlinson J. 1997, p22). The critics have also defined the growing phenomenon of people from North America who tend to buy media and entertainment products from there. As a result they are heavily influenced with what the media tells them that the consumers seem to be led in one direction of culture and hence the effect of this is that people are dislodged from their own culture because of cultural imperialism which is a direct result of media globalisation and the effects of it.

Media globalisation can play a huge role in various cultures thus impending cultural imperialism. For instance, the generation of ideas and culture from the developed and modern west to the undeveloped world such as Asia can result in ' homogenisation of consumerist culture' which can endanger and alter cultural values (Tomlinson J. 1997, p23).

Media imperialism can be defined as a progression where the arrangement, ownership allocation and the actual content of the media in a specific country can be influenced by external pressures from the content of the media in other countries or country without the same response of influence from the country that is affected (Boyd-Barrett, O. 1998, p160). The concept of media imperialism was developed after a broader analysis of cultural imperialism and dependency took place. Imperialism could differ in relation to other forms of media which consist of diverse heights, proportions of

activity in various different media sectors. The definition itself refers to ownership, structure, distribution or content (Boyd-Barrett, O. 1998, p162).

Many factors can affect media globalisation such as economic, social, cultural and political factors. Media globalisation is a form of cultural imperialism as media in places such as America with channels such as CNN broadcast government news which can most assuredly influence people from around the world as television is a communication channel and depending on what industry they belong to, it may be biased thus it would contribute towards cultural imperialism which shows how the media integrates and thus affects it (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40).

During the 1960s and the 1970s America and some other First World nations took the media to their advantage. America challenged the idea of the emergence of news and cultural factors for example 'film, music, television and advertisements' and thus entertainment was portrayed through the media which helped to develop many countries (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40). Some critics such as Herman and McChesney argue that the main universal avenue, specifically in regards to the media, is still taken over by the American interests and by the American domestic market, although its importance may turn down as other nations become more prosperous and become more media active (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40).

With the widespread of the Internet, it has given the media another channel to which to interact with the world and is the most useful, all-encompassing channel of communication used throughout the world. Media globalisation has greatly expanded the significance of communication through various

media channels such as social networking sites on Facebook which has become so dominant that people from around the globe and from countless different cultures use these communication channels even though it originally originated from the West but which still has many affects on the less developed world.

The radio is also another form of media which can generate globalisation in the sense that it has universal accessibility. The radio has been around for hundreds of years and it still seen as an influential tool in helping and expanding ideas around the globe. The radio in Europe was mainly used for governmental uses during the times of war and thus other countries from around the globe considered the radio as a ' popular movement' as well as a ' political dissenter' which was used to criticise the state policies (Boyd-Barrett, O. 1998, p162). Furthermore, the radio is a tool which can be used for media purposes, educational, entertainment and they provide as useful political mediums to benefit the community.

Hence, although many people treat the Internet as a worldwide, electronic device which is best known for democracy at its peak, it has led to a divide and has its own disadvantages. The Internet and technology itself has affected many social and economic factors within the society which has also affected those living in undeveloped countries that people who are poor do not have access to the Internet and considering that the Internet is part of a global movement, they seem to be neglected. The radio can still solve this issue in the sense that the radio has been around for many years and the less fortunate people may have some or little access to it and can contribute to everyday debates, politics and communication (Boyd-Barrett, O. 1998, <https://assignbuster.com/is-media-globalization-a-form-of-cultural-imperialism-media-essay/>)

p162). In summary, media globalisation affects people on so many levels depending on which form of media they use that although the Internet revolution may leave some people neglected, the radio may help and act as a substitute. Thus the form of cultural imperialism will depend on who uses what media and whether they are influenced by it or not.

Schiller's early definition of cultural imperialism was highly inclusive. He described it as the total of the procedures in which the community is placed into the 'modern world system' and how powerful it is that it tends to attract, force or even induce social institutions by shaping them (Stevenson N. 1999, p22). Thus the way the social institutions are shaped, it liaises and advertises the morals and structures of the powerful centre of the actual system.

There is no globalisation without media and communication but this is sometimes ignored. The media itself acts as a connector which interconnects different cultures from around the globe. Marshall McLuhan describes globalisation as inter-relations amid various countries which aim to highlight the 'electronic media and technology which increasingly integrates the world' and therefore the events in a certain country may be experienced in real-time by other people which would make the world more integrated (Eds. Golding P. & Harris P. 1997, p17). Hence people from around the world are imposed by the cultural imperialism which takes place in regards to the media which heavily influences the public. The fusion of different cultures from different countries can be integrated, mixed and represented into various foremost forms of media representation which can form the media globalisation and multiculturalism.

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The expansion of the business ' model of media, foreign investment in the media and the power of multinational advertisers were seen to threaten the use of media for nationally determined, development -oriented purposes' (Eds. Golding P. & Harris P. 1997, p16).

Media globalisation is a form of cultural imperialism as the media is tied in with the cultural concepts which originate from the financial dealings of dependency. Thus the minor or Third World countries are dependent on the industrialised world for money, technology and commodities whilst delivering cheaper items ensuing in little advantage to the local economy (Eds. Golding P. & Harris P. 1997, p16). Therefore, the role of this culture is to make the undeveloped countries satisfied with what they have. This idea is similar to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, in which the privileged battle to use the media and in order to set a prominent ideology for culture and informational uses (Eds. Golding P. & Harris P. 1997, p18).

In conclusion, there are many theories in regards to media globalisation and whether it is a form of cultural imperialism. The media imperialism is not structured. Boyd-Barrett depended on an experimental definition. He believed that media imperialism was unequal in the sense it provided different set of connections amongst countries specifically in regards to the media (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40). On the other hand, Marxist centered his theory on the inequality of power and the path in which the media flows whereas Lee described the stages of media imperialism which was observed. He particularly focused on the emergence of television, overseas savings and the adoption of foreign models and their impact on cultures (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40). However, some other critics noticed that Lee had missed several <https://assignbuster.com/is-media-globalization-a-form-of-cultural-imperialism-media-essay/>

correlations between the bigger context of dependency and the media especially advertising as the focal point (Straubhaar, J. D. 1991, p40).