

Proceedings of
National Seminar
on
Communication Education 3.0
Synergizing Technology and Development
25-26 March 2017

Media Education had its beginning in India in the early 1940s. Most of the Indian universities are now offering degrees, diplomas or certificate courses in media and communication and its allied disciplines. The structure of media and communication education in India needs reorientation and re-contextualization with the changing needs of the technology driven media and emergence of new fields for application of communication interventions. This “National Seminar on Communication Education 3.0, Synergizing Technology and Development” was organized by Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University, Assam; its objective was to facilitate networking by bringing together scholars within and outside the region for a discussion and come up with a futuristic vision for Media and Communication education in India.

Day 1 – 25th March 2017

Inauguration

[Timings: 9:30 am – 11 am]

The seminar began with an enthusiastic ‘Welcome address’ by Prof S.K Behra, Professor of Eminence, Tezpur University. He spoke about the necessity of holding the conference and introduced the eminent dignitaries whose presence made the seminar possible and welcomed them all to the platform. Further, Prof Abhijit Bora, HOD, Dept. of Mass Communication & Journalism, Tezpur University, delivered the ‘Introductory Remarks’ and reinstated the foundation of the deliberation and that the expertise of all the senior academicians present may add a lot of knowledge and inspire the students to understand the media industry. Prof Joya Chakraborty, Associate Professor, Tezpur University, introduced the theme of the seminar and highlighted on the subject matter. She also called for the formal inauguration by inviting the guests to light the lamp.

Prof Mohd Golam Rahman, Chief Information Commissioner, Govt. of Bangladesh & Former Professor, Dhaka University added to the inaugural ceremony by his enlightening speech as he was mentioning about the common issues of Indian and Bangladesh's communication sector.

The Key note address was graced by Prof B P Sanjay, Pro Vice Chancellor, University of Hyderabad. He traced the historical trajectory of communication education and projected the need for restructuring the existing curriculum framework. Prof Sanjay also congratulate Tezpur University for their initiative and expected a knowledgeable outcome from the discourses to follow.

Ms. Rania Elessawi, Communication for Development Specialist, UNICEF, New Delhi added to the launch of the seminar by her powerful views on development communication and the role of media required for the purpose.

Post this, Prof P Anabarasana, Associate Professor, Tezpur University, submitted a vote of thanks to the inaugural personage and acquainted the gathering with the schedule of Day 1.

Session 1

[11:45 am – 1:15 pm]

The first session of the seminar was chaired by Prof Sisir Basu, Head. Dept. of J&MC, BHU, Varanasi and the responsibility of rapporteur was with Dr. Junali Deka, from Tezpur University.

The first speaker in the session was Prof (Retd.) C Padmaja Shaw, Osmania University who offered an in-depth analysis of her topic "Journalism Education & Unrepresentative Media". She mentioned that people are used to mainstream media, putting more trust in the same, hence it is primarily responsible to shape public opinion in large. She also highlighted that representation of Dalits, Adivasis and even women is way too less in the media industry, while people look for "good hands and not good minds" to work for them. Prof Shaw also said that exaggeration of negative news in contemporary times is also a news value that needs to be added to the curriculum towards so that students can be made aware of the same.

The second presentation was delivered by Dr. Maushumi Bhattacharjee, Associate Professor, Centre for Mass Communication, Vishwa Bharti and her topic was "The 3.0 era – An Academic Discourse on the Transformed Dimensions of Media Studies." She mentioned that before even a teacher raises an issue, technology, internet and ICT gadgets informs the students about latest feeds well in advance, e.g. of the demonetization issue. She raised the requirement of

devising a structural framework top accommodate new digital technology in curriculum to enhance the viability of employment in new media market. She also believes that the Post Graduate level of mass communication and journalism studies should have more specific specialization options.

Next, Prof DVR Murthy, Professor & Chairman, Andhra University shared the insights about his topic “Journalism Education in India: Is Content Trap a Problem?” He explained the term content trap as lack of strategic thinking to explain the content and its mere presentation in the media. He also touched upon de-westernization of India media and ‘media morphosis’ in terms of reading, writing, seeing and visioning. Prof Murthy was in the firm belief that students look for information from their classroom that is not available on the internet; hence there is a felt need to re-conceptualize the existing pedagogy. He also mentioned about the importance of ‘intercultural communication’ and ‘peace journalism’.

Dr. Nirmala Mani Adhikary, Associate Professor, Kathmandu University who travelled all the way from Nepal, added to the seminar, his knowledge about “Communication Education in Nepal & India: Re-orientation, Ferment and Prospects. He was also against the fact that the discipline of mass communication and journalism is ‘exogenous’ and copied from the western culture in both Nepal, India & even Bangladesh. He said that students should certainly made aware about globalization, but should also be made to learn localization with an intent to make the local concepts globally accepted. He insisted for a paradigm shift that should re-design the education content.

Further, Ms. Anjuman Borah, Assistant Professor, Tezpur University, articulated her views on the topic “Human Rights in Communication Curriculum: A Move Towards Creating Right-sensitive Professionals.” She said that the topic is covered very briefly in some subjects of communication, but there is a profound need to make it an important part of the syllabus. Prof Borah believed that Development and Human Rights are indivisible and Journalism should made right –sensitive. Media functions as agenda setters and accurate knowledge of human rights in the foundation stage can culminate better journalists who can give space and voice even to the marginalized sections of the society. Role of human right centric approach is also very crucial for Advertising & PR, Corporate Communications, TV and films. These should create and distribute content on themes which are more socially relevant.

The last speaker of this session was Mr. Manoj Deori, Assistant Professor, Tezpur University, who highlighted the details about “Technology Mediated Media Education: A Case Study of E-learning initiatives in India.” He further explained that learning from any ICT enabled platforms is E-learning and specially mentioned about simulations and computer aided learning; E-learning can help extract concepts and reflect upon observations giving concrete experience to the students. He made a mention about the online knowledge bases like MOOC, Moodle, and various other social media sites which are rich source of content; Technologies like web conferencing, simulated labs, newsrooms, digital game based software for learning can prove extremely useful for mass communication students.

Session 2

[2:30pm – 4 pm]

This session was chaired by Prof. Gita Bamezai, Professor, IIMC, New Delhi and the responsibility of rapporteur was with Ms. Anjuman Borah, from Tezpur University.

The first speaker of the session was Prof. Vasuki Belavadi, Professor, University of Hyderabad and he shared his insights about “Random Rants on Media Education in India.” He began his lecture by speaking about the rhizomatic nature of communication education and underlying confusion between journalism and mass communication branches of study. He focused on the importance of multi-dimensional skills in the era of convergence and that students need to learn to problematize goals. He also laid emphasis on refresher courses for faculty members and mentoring of young faculty members; it is also important for faculties to take up outreach projects and comprehend on issues of social interest. Prof Belavadi also suggested that if mass communication is introduced as a subject at the high school level, it will be beneficial for the aspirants during the period of their UG and PG courses.

The second speaker for this session was Dr. Surbhi Dahiya, Associate Professor, IIMC who added valuable knowledge about her topic “Curriculum vs. New Job Roles in Indian Media Industry.” She began by contrasting mass communication and journalism studies, & whether they lead to a profession or vocation. She mentioned that new job roles are created due to digitization and impact of new media, at an exponential rate; but there is an acute shortage of skilled workforce, both in quality & quantity. There is a severe necessity to identify and fill skill

gaps. Dr. Surbhi also shared statistical data from the FICCI-KPMG report about the growth of media & entertainment sector.

Next speaker was Mr. Snehasis Sur, Senior News Editor, Doordarshan Kendra, Kolkata and he spoke about his topic “Media Education: A Paradigm Shift to Cater to Contemporary Diversified Media.” He explained his concepts by establishing links between the aim of students and the job market. Digital Media has created a vacuum of possibilities and the factors concerning appropriate media education are the students, faculties, institution, infrastructure & the curriculum. Mr. Sur held the demand of a regulatory body to regulate media education and change in policy regulations. He expresses the need to capture the attention of UGC towards the same. He looks for reconceptualization in terms of networking, exchange of information, updating, quality enhancement, etc.

Moving on, Dr. Vartika Nanda, Assistant Professor, LSR College, New Delhi, deliberated upon “Industry Academia Linkages: Who Drives the Agenda?” Dr. Nanda said that Industry wants Academia to fill the skill gaps and vice-versa and the same results in unfinished bridge of knowledge and professionalism. She mentioned that Universities and Colleges interact with Industry only at the time of Placements and Industry also attached importance to educational institutions when in need of workforce. Dr. Nanda also touched upon the fact that Journalism is now a business as against its former role of a service. She strongly feels that media education reforms must be done in consultation with industry experts. As she believes, journalism is also about social responsibility and change, Dr. Nanda is intensely contributing to the life of prison inmates. She recently wrote a book on the same, ‘Tinka Tinka Dasna’.

The last speaker for the session was Dr. Junali Deka, Assistant Professor, Tezpur University; she spoke about “Understanding Media and Communication Education in Web 3.0 Culture.” Dr. Deka highlighted the fact that media literacy in India is quite inconsistent towards successful implication of E-Learning solutions. Also, the rural parts of the country are not well-equipped in terms of infrastructure and power supply in order to make optimum use of digital technologies and new media. She also mentioned that placements and success ratio of students directly depends on their interest levels and involvement in the learning process. Media & Industry pushes the idea of ICT training and there is rise of technocracy; what results is ‘AIDS – Anti Information Deficiency Syndrome.’ She believes that technology needs more human cooperation there should be deliberation on sustainability of teaching methodology.

Session 3

[Timings – 4:30 pm – 6 pm]

This session was chaired by Prof. G S Pandey, Professor & Head, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Assam University, Silchar and the responsibility of rapporteur was with Mr. Manoj Deori, from Tezpur University.

The first speaker of this evening session was Dr. Sashapra Chakrawarty, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Tezpur University. She spoke about her topic “Role of Digital Mass Media in Teacher Education: A Step Towards Continuous Professional Development”. She highlighted the usability of digital media in the teaching learning process and that parents prefer ICT enabled institutions over the traditional ones. The conversion of books into e-books, library into online library, Black Board to screens and so on is dominating the educational scenario and hence teachers need to change and be well prepared. She says that digital media is an effective way of learning and online resources like MOOC are extremely useful in acquiring and imparting of knowledge.

The next speaker was Dr. Ratnamala, Head of Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Mizoram University and she delivered a lecture upon “Caste Matters in Indian Media Education: Question of Teaching Caste in Classroom.” She believes that mass media does not kill traditions but adds to them; and that culture and communication should be more elaborately studied. The social injustices on marginalized groups such as Dalits carry no newsworthiness. She also said that mainstream newsrooms are dominated by upper class people and there is a regime of caste hierarchy in the recruitments in media houses.

Further, Dr. Sudarshan Sahoo, Assistant Professor, Berhampur University, shared with the gathering, the details on his topic “Media Education in the Off-the-city Areas in Odisha: Problems and Prospects.” He divided the society into three groups, viz. Digital Refugees, Digital Immigrants & Digital Natives based on their knowledge about ICT and new media. He cited many issues present in mass communication & journalism education the interior areas of Odisha such as untrained teachers, thrust on English journalism, inadequate infrastructure and

poor industry interfacing. He also emphasized on the need of vernacular media training and less focus on westernized cultures.

Dr. Padmavathy, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Tezpur University spoke about “Role of Digital Media in Liberating Teacher Education: A Brief Study.” She said that Teachers and students should be ‘learning partners’ and there should be interactivity in flow of knowledge. She conducted a brief research on teachers and students to establish the high usage of internet and online platforms for educational purposes. She also mentioned that increased access to information leads to enhancement of creative thinking and helps one to attain the ideals of ‘Being, Valuing & Doing’

The last speaker of this session was Ms. Shradhanjali Pradhan, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Tezpur University who deliberated upon “Social Media in Teaching Education.” She began by telling that UNESCO and UNICEF highly support the integration of technology in the teaching process. Hence, the digital literacy standard needs to be met and there must be ethical use and dissemination of content. She acquainted the attendees with the fact that there are more than 100 social media platforms and applications that can be used for educational purposes by forming communities of teachers and students for information exchange and tracking of progress.

Day 2 – 26th March 2017

Session 4

[Timings – 9:30 am – 11:00 am]

This session was chaired by Prof. N Usha Rani, Professor, University of Mysore and the responsibility of rapporteur was with Dr. Uttam Kumar Pegu, from Tezpur University.

The first speaker of this session was Prof. Sisir Basu, Professor JMC, Banaras Hindu University and he spoke about his topic “Rereading – The Passing of Traditional Society – Modernizing the Middle East...Looking at the Context and Purpose of Development Communication.” He said that Development Communication is the panacea of the Third world countries. He cited the case study of Daniel Lerner and his work in the middle-east that reflected Islam in poor light. Prof Basu said that there is a need for further digging the knowledge as created by Asian

Experiments in media and communication such that of The Asian Development Bank, SITE in India and more.

The next speaker was Mr. Raj Kiran Doley, Research Scholar, Tezpur University who spoke about "Media Education and Employability in North East India: Examining the Gaps in Curriculum and Industry." He said that there is a sharp increase in number of Central Universities offering Mass Communication & Journalism courses; but the number of Undergraduate courses in the discipline is not yet sufficient. He also added that entry level education for media should be licensed and competitive examinations like UPSE, State PSC exams, SLET, etc. should include Mass communication & journalism as subjects.

Further, the assembly was enriched by the experience and enlightening lecture of Prof. Mohd. Golam Rahman, Chief Information Commissioner, Government of Bangladesh, and Former Professor, Dhaka University, Bangladesh. He spoke on the "Communication, Technology and Development: Changing Scenarios of Bangladesh Education." He maintained that Bangladesh is developing in matters of society and health such as life expectancy, lowering of infant & child death rates, maternal deaths, immunization and so on. Though Bangladesh is squarely progressing in terms of GDP, the media does not portray the statistics authentically. There are about 97 private universities in the country and an industry academia interface with skilled experts. Prof. Rahman also threw light on conflict of interest that arise from profit motives of media organizations in developing countries.

The next speaker was Prof. G Ravindran, Professor & Head, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Madras University who lectured upon "Critical Pedagogical Approaches to Journalism & Communication Studies." He focused on the critical approaches to communication studies such as laid by the Frankfurt School, Neo-Marxism & Neo-Liberalism. He mentioned that in the advent of new media, oral cultures of TV, Radio, Print media, etc. all are losing their vibrancies. He established an inspiring concept of 'Class outside Class' to make students more comfortable in the natural surroundings and bring about their best potentials. He involved himself and his students in voicing in social programs such as protest against alcohol sale and *foot yatra* for the purposes.

Dr. Ayesha Tahera Rashid, Assistant Professor, Assam University deliberated upon "Ferments in the Field: Reflection on Media and Communication Studies in India." She said that there is

acute necessity of revisiting the curriculum framework as most of the failures and discrepancies are overlooked. General perception about the Mass communication courses in the outside world are not positive and its students are often ridiculed by terms like 'Media studies are Mickey Mouse Studies'. Media Industry pressurize academia that they are not practical and the latter succumb to media dynamics and trends. Communication scholars are marginally recognized and therefore the focus should be on improving the quality of researches conducted. There should be an effort to reduce plagiarism and focus on critically conscious citizenary.

The last speaker of this session was Ms. Eishita Das, Research Scholar, Tezpur University and she spoke on "Media Education a Philosophical Overview: Analysis of Environmental Communication as a Discipline in Media Education." Ms. Eishita began by saying that media culture and its competence is based on cooperative production and critical approaches. She further talked about the 'Sustainable Development Goals -2030' as set by UNESCO in 2016, which clearly states the need for creation of awareness and henceforth a subsequent need to recognize 'Environmental Communication' as a discipline. There should be an integration between public discourses and scientific communities.

Session 5

[Timings - 11:30 am – 1 pm]

This session was chaired by Prof Kiran Thakur, Adjunct Faculty & Research Coordinator, FLAME School of Communication, Pune and the responsibility of rapporteur was with Mr. P J Daimari, from Tezpur University.

The first speaker of the session was Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee, Professor, IIMC, Dhenkanal, Odisha who delivered his lecture upon "Why should Media Ethics be Proactively Taught to Mass Communication Students?" Dr. Chatterjee said that ethical dilemmas emerge when goals become conflicting and hence there should be honesty, objectivity and authenticity matrix in the profession. He sighted the viability of ethics as a part of the communication discipline by calling it professional basis of journalism, giving credence to it and that its underlying objective should be service to the society. He also added that there have been allegations of corruption on media multiple times and they have been called 'Presstitutes' who sell news for money. Thus, the

introduction of ethics in media education syllabus will give direction to the students and they will become 'cogs in the wheel' that drives the whole business with morals and principles.

The next speaker was Dr. Saswati Gangopadhyay, Associate Professor, Mass Communication, University of Burdwan, who also spoke about "Media Ethics in Theory and Practice." She mentioned about the dissimilarities between theory and practice of media ethics. She further added that mass media should promote positive values of the society and it is also expected to be self-regulatory. Dr. Saswati gave examples of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks and Pathankot firings, where media was giving insights of every second and the same was immensely unethical as it posed a threat to the security of common people and success of defense plans. She also said that media organizations avoid any negative news about frequent advertisers in lieu of the expected clientele.

Further on, Ms. Kuntala Das, Research Scholar, Tezpur University, presented on "Media Ethics in Pedagogy and Praxis: An Analysis." She said that media coverage and discourses have the competency to either provoke or reduce conflicts on any potential issues. She also maintained that both laws and ethics are distinct from each other and the latter are not legally enforceable. Another important proposition is that conflict reporting should have moral sensitivity; also, there is a general trend of derogatory representation of ethnic issues in mainstream media.

The next speaker was Dr. Uma Shanker Pandey, Assistant Professor & Head, Mass Communication, Surendranath College for Women, Kolkata, who spoke about "Critical Media Literacy: Pedagogy for Digital Age." He established that Media Literacy, Deliberative Democracy and Active Audience are essential for any contemporary political structure. Media has the power to affect the public opinion and hence the public sphere and major transformation and 're-feudalization' of the public sphere is taking place. Another finding by Dr. Pandey was 'Narcotizing Dysfunction' of the media where they deliberately do not voice against particular issues.

The last speaker of the session was Ms. Madhusmita Boruah, Research Scholar, Tezpur University, who elaborated upon her topic "Critical Media Literacy and Transformative Learning: A Pedagogical Approach to Media Education." She spoke about media culture and meaning making process; using critical media literacy to bring about changes in the pedagogy. It is an urgent need to develop an analytical sense of perception to understand the content as

published by media. This analysis should be both textual & contextual. The dialogues between teachers and students should encourage collaborative learning process and both should become the co-learners.

Session 6

[Timings – 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm]

This session involved a panel of senior academicians – Prof. A S Balasubramanya, Prof C Padmaja Shaw and Prof. Vasuki Belavadi; together with Masters Students pursuing their degree in Tezpur University to make a presentation based on their views.

The first speaker of the session was Ms. Sonal Sidhu K Sharma, Semester II, M. A., who presented on “An Ingress of Experiential Learning in Communication Pedagogy.” She traced the growth of Education from 1.0 to 2.0 and the recent 3.0 curriculum framework. She also conducted a brief survey to bring about the views and opinions of the students on the kind of exposure they are looking for and suggested ‘Experiential Learning intermixed with Communication 3.0’ as the best solution.

The next student was Mr. Suman Das, Semester IV, M. A., who shared his views upon “Communication Education in India: A Student’s Perspective” mapped the availability of resources and the thought-process of instructors and students towards communication education. He noticed that there is an unequal and non-uniform distribution of infrastructure of various colleges and universities and efforts must be done in order to attain world class education possible in every educational entity.

Lastly, Mr. Mrinmoy Borgohain, Semester IV, M. A. presented on his topic “Photojournalism in Today’s Communication Education.” He explained the meaning and application of photojournalism together with its future prospects. He condemned the morphing and manipulating of photographs and the consequent misrepresentation of facts. He also suggested that Photojournalism should be made a part of the syllabus so that aspirants can learn the art professionally.

The academicians on the panel addressed each of the above three speakers and added more knowledge as answers to their questions.

Valedictory Session
[Timings – 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm]

The Valedictory session commenced with Welcome Remarks from Prof. S K Behra, Professor of Eminence, Tezpur University, who envisioned a roadmap of the communication fraternity and the changes that will occur in Tezpur University.

Prof P Anbarasan, Associate Professor, Tezpur University, recapped the seminar proceedings and presented a brief report on how the sessions took place.

The Valedictory address was delivered by Prof. Devesh Kishore, Professor Emeritus, MCNUJC, Former Director EMPC, IGNOU who described the concept of 'Experiential Learning' in large details. He suggested 'learning through reflection by doing' and summoned the students to involve themselves in the learning process.

Further, Mr. Snehasis Sur, Senior News Editor, Doordarshan Kendra, Kolkata introduced a "10 point Declaration" which was drafted by the senior academicians after the intense discussions over this National Seminar on Communication Education 3.0. This declaration was one of its kind and truly established the purpose of the seminar.

The Seminar was officially closed after a formal vote of thanks extended by Dr. Joya Chakraborty, Associate Professor, Tezpur University.
