ABSTRACT

This study examines the historical and cultural context of the emergence of Telugu Television news and focuses on political economy of the television news industry in Andhra Pradesh. It explores the current status of television industry, its ownership and the nature of influence on the state of Andhra Pradesh and it’s Public. Based on in-depth interviews, it seeks to critically analyze the questions of regulation, representation, social responsibilities for strengthening the democracy and the voiceless people. This study presents the history of television in India and reviews related television studies in India. Part one primarily discusses the effectiveness of television as a medium of instruction both at elementary and secondary schools and to farmers and people working at the village level. It described the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) conducted in the year 1975-1976, which was the world’s largest techno-social experiment that provided data on television within the cultural context of Indian villages thus highlighting the role of television in initiating change. The study includes Post-Satellite communication studies such as the level of television utilization in development and education and the television expansion; the organization and ownership of television industry and that threw light on the New Economic Policies/ Reforms and Globalization of Mass Media during and after the 1990s to reveal changing face of Television Journalism in India.

It discusses the historical and cultural context of the emergence of mass media and its basis for establishing the media industry in Andhra Pradesh. It also elaborates the roots of the Green Revolution and the rise of the Agriculture Industry in Andhra Pradesh, the rise of cinema industry and the emergence of regional parties in AP, social movements and the
rise of SC, ST and OBC voices in politics, political decisions on SEZs, real estate and supporting neo-capitalists in the name of development. It also narrates the history of private satellite television news channels in Andhra Pradesh and the impact of 24-hour television news and the cultural changes that it brought about based on empirical data. Along with these issues political economy of television news channels in Andhra Pradesh and how it has become a laboratory experiment on the Public were also discussed. To support the discussed issues data was collected from different news channels from Andhra Pradesh and analysed using qualitative methods for the narration of the political economy of television news channels and its growth.

The results indicate that television news channels have become a powerful medium for neo-capitalists in AP and a political communication tool in maintaining the status quo in the political platform. The rise of the 24-hour television news channel proliferation is a big question based on the demand and supply model for the television medium in Andhra Pradesh. When the government started Doordarshan Television in 1959 its objectives were "Information, Education and Entertainment." After fifty years, Indian television has changed drastically at the level of content, form and ownership and structure of the media organization. Television has become a symbol of social status, a powerful tool of communication and an influential medium in the hands of capitalists and multi-national corporations. Now, it is working under their direction for their wealth and these aspects have changed the face of television as a mode of political communication: in short, infotainment, entertainment and sensationalization of issues are fundamental to the discourse of television. The original objectives of the television medium, i.e., information and education, are distant in comparison to the current objectives. the Television has
become a neo-feudal enterprise and business model for the upper class/castes or neo-capitalists. The real challenges that lie ahead for television in Andhra Pradesh are to ensure that growing concentration of ownership in an oligopolistic market does not lead to loss of heterogeneity and diversity. In the absence of cross-media restrictions and with government policies contributing to further corporatization of media, especially with respect to the television medium, diversity of news flows could be adversely affected contributing to the continuing privatization and commodification of information instead of making it more of a “public good”. This leads to monopolization of information and knowledge in the hands of multinational corporations.

The study also found that media as a Watch-Dog has become Pet-Dog in the hands of Multi-National Corporations or neo-capitalists, deals like the three outlined ones raise several key concerns relating to consolidation within the Indian media industry in general and specific to AP context. This study witnessed the data that the ownership of the television news channels is by politicians and political parties. In this context TV has become a Propaganda model for the political parties and business people for protecting their interests.