Post-Conference Report - "Regulation in the Innovation Economy"

DIF, Ashoka University and The Dialogue

May 9, 2018

Overview

The roundtable event titled *Regulation in the Innovation Economy* was held at Taj Mansingh Hotel, New Delhi on May 9, 2018. The conference involved participation of 38 people from diverse fields, including corporate sector, government, consultancy, research and academia.

The areas discussed for the first roundtable under the series were broadly categorized into two categories:

1. Norms for Digital Media, Content and News
- Categorization of digital media as creators, aggregators, hybrid etc.
- Standardizing norms across digital media
- Balance mechanism for controlling fake content vs. freedom of speech

2. **Agile Policy Frameworks for the Data-driven Economy**
- Regulatory sandbox approach for agile policy making
- Role of government as a positive force in an innovation economy

- Data Empowerment & Protection Architecture

Participation

1. Norms for Digital Media, Content and News

The discussions started with the topic "**Norms for Digital Media, Content and News**" with a strong focus on categorization of digital media, its regulation mechanism, epidemic of fake news and how to balance controlling fake news and freedom of speech.

Major Talking Points

1. What is news? How do we define fake news?

2. Who is a Content Creator, Aggregator and what is the Hybrid model?

3. There is an overlap between the regulation framework under which digital media is governed. Two of the main entities are the Ministry of Electronics and IT and I&B Ministry.

4. Fake news is a challenge to not only to the government but also the journalists who constantly have to find the right source for an article.

5. How can we use technology to tackle the challenge of fake news?

6. How should digital media be regulated – Self Regulation or Government Controlled?

7. Digital Media has democratized news and therefore, we need regulations that can

8. One of the challenges faced while regulating content is the question of freedom of speech invoking article 19.

Key Outcomes

1. **Categorization**
   - There is a difference between professional and citizen journalism that must be defined clearly for regulation purposes.
   - New aggregators and creators are separate entities and should be defined independently of each other, along with the 'Hybrid' model that combines the first two.

2. **Regulation**

   - A regulatory mechanism should be the same for digital as well as non-digital media. Balanced regulations for traditional media and new-age digital media should be adopted.
   - Just like the print media has a press council and broadcast have News Broadcasters Association(NBA), digital media should come up with a self-regulatory commission that has a standard code of conduct. The consumers should also have an option to opt for cutting-edge technologies such as AI or Blockchain.
   - A digital editor's association, who would act as a self-regulatory framework for governing digital media should be led only by personnel's holding official PIB credentials.
   - From a perspective of Indian Armed Forces and Police, news affecting the national security must be of top priority.
   - In order to achieve the same level of credibility as print media, there has to be a monitoring committee that oversees ethics and code of conduct in digital media.
   - A mandatory trademark system should be put in place to track news source and the founder/editor of digital media houses must be PIB accredited.

- An owner should be responsible for the content regulation on its platform and full disclosure of the founders should be given on the digital news media's websites.
- Hybrid regulatory models for hybrid news models could be tested.
- The revenue of digital media outlet should be tied to a score with regards to is credibility and transparency in operations.

3. **Fake News**

- Fake News should be tackled algorithmically that uses Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence to sift between fake and genuine news.

- Capturing the benefits of new age digital media while keeping a check on fake news will require regulations that allow for freedom of speech and also regulates fake news.
- A framework that could track the people who are consuming fake news would lead to an efficient awareness targeted campaign to tackle this challenge.

- Introduce the concept of verified news

- Blockchain and AI could build a transparent, secure system which would eliminate the human bias in decision making and create a trusted ecosystem. The role of Blockchain is vital in digital media and fake news content tracking. A blockchain mechanism where community can give trust scores or rate an article or media house on news site. Through multiple data points, a dashboard that keeps a tab on media houses can be generated.

2. Agile Policy Frameworks for the Data-driven Economy

The second discussion point focused on policy frameworks for data driven economy with a strong focus on regulatory sandboxes, data localization and innovation economy.

Major Talking Points

1. We need to strike a balance between regulatory framework and new data economy

2. Without killing innovation, how can we establish regulatory sandbox for maybe per quarter?

3. What is the difference between data protection and data localization?

4. Is it possible to have free tech zones where technology regulation could be tested without government intervention?
5. Should Indian data be stored within the geographical boundaries of the territory of India?

Key Outcomes

1. **Data Protection**

   - Data localization should not be confused with data protection – they are different concepts altogether.
   - Privacy and national security go hand-in-hand and data localization is not a solution for privacy and security.
   - Develop a data market and upload and sell data for a price.
   - Framework for Accessing data required.

2. **Innovation**

- Innovation should be promoted through regulations that foster development of Indian concepts such as 'Jugaad', as well as providing a safe platform to experiment.
- Develop randomized trials to test regulatory hypothesis.
- With a huge number of vernacular languages present in Indian demographics and democratization of data, AI should be developed incorporating all these factors.