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THE ROLE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN GOVERNANCE: A MODERN “FOURTH ESTATE”

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the evolution and significance of electronic media in contemporary society, tracing its historical development from the telegraph in the 19th century to the rise of digital platforms today. It examines how various forms of electronic communication, including television, radio, and social media, have transformed information dissemination, entertainment consumption, and cultural exchange. The discussion highlights the profound impact of electronic media on public opinion, societal norms, and political discourse, as well as its essential roles in education and socialization. Moreover, the article highlights mass media as “the fourth estate” in the government and demonstrates the impact of it to the governance. Ultimately, it underscores the necessity of understanding electronic media’s dynamics to navigate its complexities and leverage its potential for positive societal influence. The remarks are exemplified on the basis of some countries.

KEYWORDS

Electronic media, policy management, categories of e-media “fourth estate”, “watchdog”.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, electronic media is an integral part of everyday life, forming ways of human interaction,

communication and information consumption. From the earliest days of broadcasting to the global reach of



the internet, electronic media has experienced significant changes affecting society norms and global information flow.

Electronic media refers to any form of communication or broadcast transmitted by electronic means. This broad category includes television, radio, internet and social media platforms. Over the years, these media forms have evolved to be tools that reflect technological progress and changes in consumer behavior.

According to a Russian scientist A.V. Kazakova, electronic media is an electronic resource created to perform the functions of the media, with a reputation among a certain audience. It should be noted that many scientists include not only websites, but also television and radio broadcasts among the electronic media.

The origins of electronic media can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the advent of telegraphy, as well as radio and it can be associated with the further development of television. According to an American scientist

C. Jones, the roots of electronic media can be related to the 19th century invention of the telegraph by Samuel Morse, one of the earliest pioneers, which enabled to transmit long-range messages.

These early forms of electronic communication made a revolutionary change in the ways in which people received news and entertainment, eliminated geographical barriers and made it possible to disseminate information in real time. At the end of the 20th century, the invention of the internet further accelerated this process and ushered in a new era of digital media, which continues to develop rapidly.

In turn, the discovery of radio in the early 20th century paved the way for the public use of audio content. However, the advent of television has truly revolutionized electronic media. The first successful demonstration of the television system took place in the late 1920s.

By the middle of the 20th century, televisions had become simple household appliances that had a significant impact on how people perceive information and entertainment. Television animated images and sounds, eliminating the difference between distant events and viewers. It played a decisive role in the formation of public opinion, the spread of political speech and culture across borders.

The role of electronic media in the culture, politics and daily life of society is very wide-ranging. Politician and analyst Sh. Nawaz recognizes the main role of electronic media as its informal or general and educational impact. Media platforms such as educational television programs, documentaries and



online educational resources provide educational content that improves learning and expands knowledge.

In addition, Turkish scholar E. Zinreich has cited the socializing effect of electronic media, which helps to convey social norms, values, and beliefs, shaping our perceptions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

World researchers and a number of scientists classify electronic media into two categories. In particular, I.V. Zhilavskaya cited the division of media into two categories according to their evolution, namely traditional and new media. Despite the criticism that the term “new media” in the media world is too relative and vague, it has spread widely. We are more likely to turn to newspapers, television and radio, which were formed during our traditional culture, and in contrast to them, new media emerged in the era of universal digitization, virtualization, and multimedia technologies.

Traditional media refers to established forms of electronic communication that have existed since the early 20th century. This category includes television, radio, and to some extent print media (when distributed electronically, such as in PDF or e-books). Traditional media is typically characterized by one-way communication, where content is produced by media companies and received by the public without much interaction between the two.

Today, electronic media, along with their many advantages, also exhibit some negative characteristics. We can understand them in terms of misinterpretation or misinformation, privacy issues and cyber threats, and cultural homogenization, that is, the process of changing or absorbing local cultures by a dominant external culture.

In most developed countries of the world, including the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, China, India, and etc. the media have risen to the fourth level of power in the government. These states consider mass media to be an integral branch of democracy and a major force in ensuring the implementation of new reforms. It primarily plays a major role in public policy management.

With the help of the Internet, television, radio, newspapers and magazines, every day a huge number of people around the world receive information about events taking place in different parts of the globe. It is worth noting that the task of the media is not only to cover any events, but also to influence the emotions of the audience - often published messages can be evaluative in nature, focusing the public's attention on important moments, from the point of view of the authors, thereby “helping” people (often not even understanding the impact on them) to form an opinion about a particular incident through the use of various speech techniques and other methods .



The scientist emphasizes the influence of media on international relations in the USA in sufficient detail: “They (the US) have achieved the creation of a system that provides information support for the implementation of their national priorities in every corner of the globe... The White House not only creates and maintains its image, but also influences the news policy of other states, forms information occasions (i.e., it publishes events that influence the development of consolidated public opinion in a certain area, in a way that is favorable to the US)⁶.

The influence of the media at the national-political level is still significant is shown by a survey by the Mainz scholar and media specialist Hans Matthias Kepplinger. He conducted a study among members of the Bundestag who see the media not as the fourth, but as the first power in the state. Thus, the survey among members of the Bundestag showed that they collectively rate the degree of influence of the media on politics at 8.18 points on a scale from “0” (no influence at all) to “10” (very great influence). At the same time, the influence of politics on the media is rated at only 5.32 points.

Additionally, we are currently aware that the media has a great influence on the process of government activity and a number of measures are being taken to transform it into the fourth power in the Republic of Uzbekistan as well. The following words of our

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev are evidence of our opinion in this regard:

“... Today, communication with people, living with their dreams, aspirations, pains and anxieties are rising to the level of state policy, we can achieve the goals we have set ourselves only if each mass media becomes a real platform for communication, a platform for free thought”, because “Presently, as we strive to strengthen cooperation with countries far and near in the world and further deepen democratic changes in our country, we understand well that we still have a lot to do in the field of mass media activities, along with other areas. The mass media must rise to the level of the “fourth power” not in words, but in practice. This is the demand of the time, the demand of our reforms”.

The concept of the “fourth estate” refers to the role of the press and mass media as a critical component of democracy, serving as a check on power and providing information to the public. Different countries have varying perceptions of this role, influenced by their political systems, cultural contexts, and historical experiences.

According to historian-publicist Sh. Salomov, the “Powers’ separation” system in each country’s government primarily indicates the legal form of democracy in that country.



The media is often called the “fourth estate”. In fact, there is no such authority in the official system of state governance. This is because the media does not have a command mechanism or authority to correct someone’s mistakes.

For example, if an organization does not pay people their monthly salaries, deviating from the Labor Code, or someone breaks the law, the mass media cannot punish them, nor can it issue an order to correct the mistakes. The press can only draw the attention of the legislative, executive, and judicial authorities to a problem, issue, or event.

Although the term “fourth estate” is a lyrical term that expresses the extent to which the press can influence public opinion in society, it can and has the right to draw the attention of each of our compatriots to the political and social processes taking place in society and arouse a sense of involvement in it.

The ideological role of journalism, precisely, mass media which is designated by the term “fourth estate”, on the one hand, is expressed in the effect of a “watchdog”, ensuring the integrity of the government and protecting the interests of the public. This means that journalists investigate, report on, and hold the government accountable for its decisions and policies. The idea is that by shining a light on government activities, the media can help prevent corruption and ensure that officials act in the best interest of the

citizens. On the other hand, the news media have become an independent institution of political power, the ideological basis of the concept of soft power.

It is worth noting that the impact of electronic media on society is widespread and complex, presenting a mix of opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, their emergence and development have democratized access to information, strengthened political movements, and facilitated cultural exchange. On the other hand, it has also contributed to the spread of misinformation, raised privacy concerns, and led to cultural homogenization.

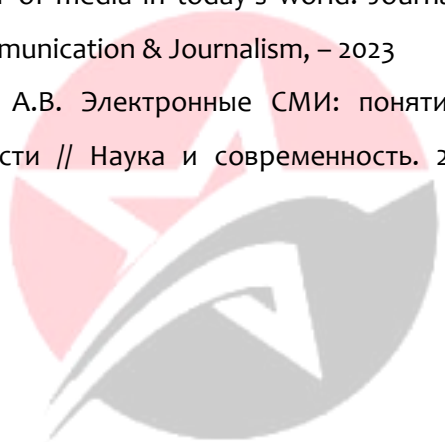
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, electronic media has become an essential component of contemporary life, influencing how individuals interact, communicate, and consume information. Its evolution from the telegraph to modern digital platforms illustrates significant technological advancements and shifts in consumer behavior. The profound impact of electronic media extends beyond mere entertainment; it plays a crucial role in shaping societal norms, political discourse, and educational opportunities. As society continues to adapt to these changes, understanding the dynamics of electronic media will remain vital for navigating its complexities and harnessing its potential for positive societal influence.

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