



DAR ES SALAAM SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

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OUR MOTTOR: MEDIA FOR DEMOCRACY



TOPIC 11: DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

➤ What is Democracy?

- **Democracy** (Greek: δημοκρατία *dēmokratía*, literally "rule by people") is a form of government in which the people have the authority to choose their governing legislation. Who people are and how authority is shared among them are core issues for democratic development and constitution. Some cornerstones of these issues are freedom of assembly and speech, inclusiveness and equality, membership, consent, voting, right to life and minority rights.
- **democracy** a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections

there are two types of democracy:

Direct democracy. In a direct democracy, the people directly deliberate and decide on legislature. Switzerland is a rare **example** of **a country** with instruments of **direct democracy** (at the levels of the municipalities, cantons, and federal state). Citizens have more power than in a representative **democracy**.

Indirect/Representative democracy the people elect representatives to deliberate and decide on legislature, such as in parliamentary or presidential democracy. Liquid democracy combines elements of these two basic types.

Parliament/legislature The group of people who are elected to make a country's laws and discuss important national affairs → **government, MP**

➤ **Governance** has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive.

here are the 6 key points that cover the essential role of media in building democracy.

■ **Informing Citizens**

the role of media in democracy is to inform the public about current affairs, governmental initiatives, and other matters that have an impact on society.

The public and the government are connected through the media. It provides a field for the dissemination of information. Citizens can access diverse perspectives through newspapers, television, radio, and online platforms. News articles, and their analyses, enable them to make informed decisions.

■ **Media as a Watchdog**

As a watchdog, independent media monitor the actions of government institutions, politicians, and public officials. news media exposes corruption, malpractices, and abuse of power. it may be considered as the most important role of media in democracy.

Investigative journalism is crucial in creating openness and holding influential people and organizations accountable. By bringing such issues to light, the media helps in maintaining the integrity of democratic systems and fostering public trust.

■ **Promoting Political Participation**

promoting political participation is another key role of media in democracy. Media plays a vital role in promoting political participation among citizens. By covering elections, political campaigns, and debates, the media informs the public about the available choices and helps to shape public opinion.

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Individuals who have access to information are more empowered and informed individuals actively participate in politics to make decisions and hold elected officials responsible for their actions. Media platforms also serve as forums for public discussions, allowing citizens to express their views and concerns, and fostering an inclusive democracy.

Providing a Platform for Diverse Voices

The sharing of ideas and the involvement of various voices are essential components of a thriving democracy. Whatever their background or socioeconomic class, media provides a platform for individuals and groups to communicate their beliefs and views. This fosters the role of media in democracy.

It gives a voice to marginalized communities to enable them by highlighting their issues and advocating for change. Media diversity ensures a plurality of viewpoints and promotes a vibrant democratic culture.

Educating Citizens

Media serves as an effective educational tool. It helps citizens to understand complex issues and policies. It explains the functioning of government institutions, the role of different branches of power, and the impact of decisions on society.

The media contributes to citizens becoming more civically educated by providing in-depth reporting and analysis that improves their comprehension of democratic procedures and their capacity for effective participation.

Encouragement Public Speech

The public debate and the interchange of ideas are facilitated by media channels both traditional and digital platforms. Opinion pieces, debates, and talk shows encourage the exploration of various viewpoints, leading to a better understanding of diverse perspectives.

Strong public discourse promotes democratic principles including tolerance, respect for opposing viewpoints, and the capacity for productive debate. Media serves as a catalyst for this discourse, helping societies to navigate complex societal issues and find common ground.

- The media in a democratic society faces numerous challenges and carries significant responsibilities. These challenges and responsibilities are crucial to address in order to uphold the integrity and effectiveness of the media in serving democratic principles. Here are some key challenges faced by the media in a democracy:

■ **Challenges Faced by the Media in building Democracy**

■ **Fake News and Misinformation:**

The growth of false information and fake news is a serious setback to the media. Rapidly disseminating false or misleading information has the potential to degrade democratic processes. It undermines public trust and sways public opinion also. Media organizations face the challenge of verifying information and ensuring accuracy before reporting.

■ **Political Interference:**

Politicians or powerful interest groups may attempt to influence or control media content to serve their own agendas. Media independence and objectivity can be compromised by political intervention. It limits the media's ability to serve as a watchdog and hold transparency. Media organizations need to resist undue influence and maintain their independence.

■ **Economic Pressures:**

Media organizations often face economic pressures due to declining advertising revenues and competition from digital platforms. These pressures can lead to cost-cutting measures, compromising the quality and depth of reporting. Sustainable business models need to be developed to ensure the viability of independent journalism.

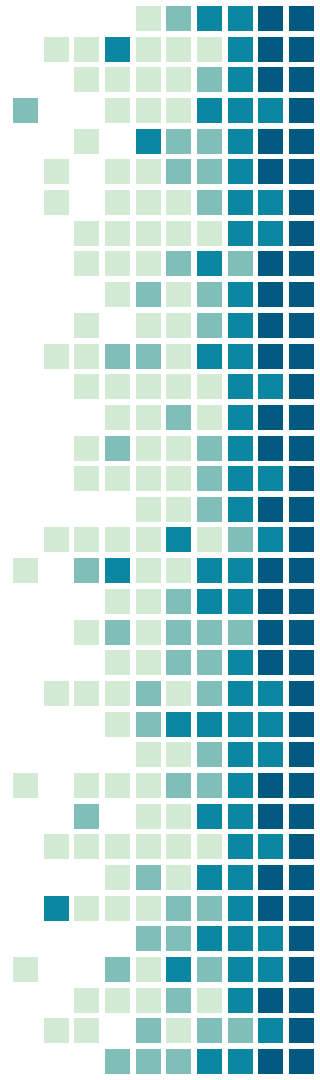
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- **Lack of Media Diversity:**

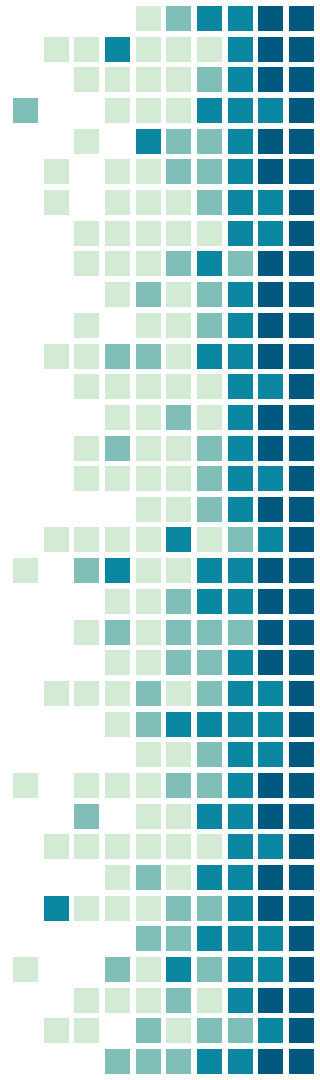
Media concentration and lack of diversity in ownership and perspectives can limit the range of voices and viewpoints represented in the media. To ensure diverse viewpoints and to accurately reflect the interests and concerns of all societal groups, it is crucial to support media diversity.

- **Threats to Journalists' Safety:**

Journalists often face physical threats, intimidation, and harassment when reporting on sensitive issues or exposing corruption. To maintain free and independent media, it is required to make sure that journalists are secure and protected.



Any Question?



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