

The critical role of the media and free press in the promotion and strengthening of democracy

Behzad Khomehi

Assistant Professor, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Abstract

The media in today's modern life and society have played a wonderful and unmatched role, to the extent that perhaps it could be said that the perception of contemporary society without various media seems very difficult. Nevertheless, and given the widespread and rampant dominance of modern media, it should be noted that the media can have a huge impact on the various spheres of human life. Today, the mass media, with the new data and information transfer and the exchange of public opinions have played a critical role in the development of human culture and civilization. Therefore, many scholars in the present era have called the human life as the age of communication. The question that this paper seeks to answer is whether the media and free press with their critical outlook play an essential role in spreading democracy? In response to this question, the assumption is that the culture of media rationality is the main factor to the stability of democratic governments and citizens' political maturity in free systems.

Keywords: Media, the Press; Democracy

Introduction

The information revolution and consequently, the globalization of media such as the Internet, e-mail, social networks, blogs, mobile, fax, etc. are a milestone in the development of political, economic and cultural cooperation among societies, and in turn, the increasing speed of communication, universal access to information, creating a new source of power and the development of common global culture.

The mass media have an important role in the field of citizenship culture education, and so they contribute to the personal and social development of individuals and ultimately the social development of the communities. Nowadays, a society is developed that along with the improvement of economic indicators such as per capita income, GDP and the rate of mortality, is able to emphasize education and information and in fact the element of social knowledge.

In such a society, by desirable production and distribution of information, the press plays an important role in raising various and necessary awareness of people. Since democracy means

people's participation in decision-making, the media, particularly new media can strengthen the democracy structures with encouraging people, as the fourth pillar of democracy, to participate in the media areas.

The media and its functions

The media or mass media in the broadest definition means all communication instruments which extensively broadcast news, opinions and ideas. This instruments which have a great variety (such as newspapers, magazines, books, television, computer networks, etc.) are considered as tools of social control. McLuhan, Canadian scientist, divides human history into three periods of oral era, printed civilization era, and electronic civilization era. In the electronic era, the power is under the control of owners of television, satellite and computer.

In such process, political, cultural and economic messages are presented on the air and sweeping across borders, reach citizens within their houses, and a significant part of behavioral patterns and outlooks in political, cultural and social areas are influenced by such exchanges and interactions.

Internet as a postmodern media is the indicator of the death of distances in mental geography derived from the railway. With the construction of the railway, man was able to overcome the distance. Development of Internet infrastructure is showing the same thing. Man today is overcoming space and time.

It can be said that the severe centralization of governing traditional media has been challenged with digital a more sever decentralization in digital and post modern media. Small internet media have arrayed against the dominant media and this has led to the formation miscellaneous opinions at the level of elite dependent on the big powers (Tavakoli, 2011: 89-90).

According to Manuel Castells, the emergence of virtual space has made contemporary man enter into a new widespread environment known as "Internet Galaxy". This virtual environment which itself is a product of a major revolution, has introduced some modern concepts such as virtual community, a new culture, a virtual economy, virtual democracy, virtual state, etc. and has created a direction so eager to move toward development.

Internet should be considered as a hypermedia and a hyper-communication, not just a new medium that has been added to previous media such as radio, television or newspapers (Koubli, 2012: 1: 14-16).

Many social scientists have considered "mass media" in the row of the factors influencing and forming personality, and believe that the mass media can strengthen or weaken social norms (Cohen, 1993: 112), and according to Jean-casino, mass media tools can contribute to the cultural smoothing and homogeneity of patterns and ideas.

Today, enjoying its extraordinary impact strength, the mass media can easily handle and justify political tendencies and movement for the audience. The most objective function of the media in today's world appears in this section, and according to Toffler, modern man is completely passive toward media, especially in the face of democracy and political affairs (Toffler, 1996: 314).

Today, the media are not seen merely as a social and cultural system, but they provide a space and

framework in which culture, politics and society find voice. Nowadays, meaning creation, production and dissemination of media images and signs have converted such phenomenon into the most important variable of mental notion formation and newly-emerged evolutions, in a way that the social and historical classifications revolve mainly around social media and communications, and time periods such as global village, information society, network society, etc. are formed based on the communication and media attributes (Mehdzadeh, 2010:11).

Since the emergence of media research (i.e. about century ago) researchers have argued over two theories. The first theory states social media have limited or reduced effects. The second theory is sometimes called the injection theory because the media act as an injector with an incessant and unchangeable reaction.

Many common people believe in the injection theory. This belief is supported by the fact that we are surrounded by different mass media and therefore they must have an effect on us (Ganz, 2006:136).

A large part of media studies emphasizes the fundamental assumption that the media inject something into people. Therefore, based on this assumption, the study of the media works must be initiated by an analysis of what is injected (Koubli, 2012: 153).

The growing importance of social media in the mechanism of social and political evolutions arises from the nature of this instrument. This is because information as the most essential element of this new tool in the new forms of social-political organization are considered as the sources of power.

The congruence of the media and information and coincidence of such concepts with the power and direct and indirect role of the media play critical roles in the formation of new public and social norms and personal values, and certainly affect the national security of all political units (Proceedings, 2002:10).

Harold Lasswell in 1948 suggested a triple essential role of the mass media:

- information role

- explanative role, or create and strengthen social cohesion.

- The educational role and the transmission of cultural heritage, in which imposing the beliefs of a particular group on the excessive number of audience is not taken into account (ibid: 28).

Wilbur Schramm (American professor) about the role of the mass media which were suggested by Lasswell introduced three special characters. He mentions the first role as "Guardian", the second as "Guide" and the third as "Teacher".

About the role of the media, intellectuals – the Western, the Eastern or the Third World - have expressed different views. For example, Roje Klaus (Belgian professor of mass communication) divides the duties of the mass media into two broad categories: 1- intellectual tasks (knowledge, education, expression and persuasion), 2- mental and social tasks (social cohesion, entertainment, mental treatment), and considers other subdivisions for some of these divisions.

For example, he sub-divided knowledge as one intellectual task into routine news and general news. On the other hand, the thinkers of socialist countries stress on the triple roles of the agitation, propaganda and organization (Motamednejad, 2000: 10-11).

Roger Klaus believes that the media "should invisibly persuade society to accept and practice the beliefs, social and cultural behaviors, in order to achieve a society based on rational thoughts, which means to promote and disseminate it is mass media.

In this period, the media, particularly the press is the real reporter and reflector of political events, and detailed political forums and negotiations between the legislative bodies. The press also acts as a platform or forum for the expression of political opinion and as an instrument in the hands of political organizations and parties to mobilize public opinion or to shape ideologies, or as propaganda for the conflict between states, or the guardian and observer of performance of governments. Also, most importantly, the press plays role as means to inform people of the national issues and imposition of power in the communities.

In addition, the media also promote the ideas of individuals and groups, thus form public opinion. This issue can guide media in playing an important role in the process of decision making, i.e. it can effectively contribute to determining which issues are considered significant, and which issues are more important than others. Pressure groups and political parties, especially in the bilateral relations between politicians and bureaucracies, political activists all can influence the press and media and determine the relevant strategies.

Unofficial relations between the people and the groups are also important. Especially through the theory of "two-step flow" in which opinion leaders act as channels of information, sources of social pressure to conform to various norms and as support resources of integration of social and political behaviors. However, similar to political participation, political participations should not be considered separately, despite the fact that it can be accomplished from an analytic perspective. However, it must be considered as a part of broader communication patterns in the society.

Marxist theorists emphasize on the role of the mass media in reproducing the status quo. In contrast, liberal pluralism underlines the role of media in promoting freedom of expression. From the perspective of classical Marxism, mass media are the means of production that are owned by dominant class in capitalist societies. According to the classical Marxism, the mass media only publishes dominant class's ideas and worldviews and oppose or rejects other opinions.

According to George Gerbner, the importance of the media lies not in the formation of the masses but in the creation of common ways to choose and looking at the events, which is actualized by "technology-based messaging system" and leads to common ways of looking at and understanding the world. In fact, the media, especially television, tend to present similar and relatively agreeable stories of social realities and also make the audience more pliant with those stories (Mehdizadeh, 2010:65).

One of the important functions of the media is their impact on national unity. National integration cannot be accomplished through repression, removal and

destruction of multiple identities within the country. Rather, the formation of national unity can only be started by mutual respect, support the development and linking of multiple identities in the nation, is

National unity is the result of the link of multiplicity to each other, not destroy the multiplicity and diversity in order to reach the mirage of a single face. Therefore, in the same mold, it is possible to link them together with all their diversity based on the common bonds. The media in this regard are able to act in line with strengthen national and internal unity in the area of national, cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic diversity (Tavakkoli, 2011: 95).

The role of the media and a free press in spreading democracy

Today media, especially the free and independent press is the true mirror of thinking, culture and internal and external evolutions of nations, and regarded as essential tools in the development trend at different dimensions. The role of the media in strengthening political development, freedom of speech, democracy, etc. is obvious and inevitable, and the political and cultural development of each nation is measured based on the presence of the press in that particular community. According to many analysts, the press is the fourth pillar of democracy, and so any country and society involved in the process of institutionalizing democracy, is more than others in touch with it (Proceedings, 2002:187).

The media society and the mass media, particularly the press and media, are the decisive factors in the emergence and spread of political, economic and social crises as well as the control and management of the crisis. Political society based on free and independent press and different mass media are in serious conflict with a monologue-based society.

Promotion of political culture, increase public involvement, create consensus, joy and hope in the community, raising awareness among citizens, recognizing the responsibility and strengthen the sense of responsibility, making authority and statement accountable and responsible, making clear the relationship between civil society and government with accurate and timely information and avoiding censorship and self-censorship, etc. are

some of the reform roles of the media that can help prevention or control of the political crises (IRNA: 2014).

By reflecting critical views and opinions of the people and government, the media are able to establish public affairs between the government authorities and people. This function which is concerned with political participation of the people in democratic societies directly affects increasing or decreasing political legitimacy of the administration, by considering the problems discussed.

In general, the mass media act as a blade that both can move toward establishment and able to hit it. Thus, they can create uniformity and continuity and extend and deepen social gaps, and also be harbinger of development or promote the seeds anti-development ideology in the society. There is also the possibility of a false sense of security that may induce public minds to distract from the real issues (Aftab, 2010).

When development perspectives are combined with communication theories create beauties and challenges, especially political ideas which make the media more appealing. This is because the function of the media is closer to politics, and today this closeness has been more prevalent.

No government and policy can form and survive without monitoring, control and protection of the mass media. This is due to the close relationship between the mass media and public opinion and ultimately the media and press regard their opinion derived from the public opinions and for them. In fact, the democracy-based states that require the public opinions, incessantly attempt to achieve a balance and concordance between public onions and the mass media (Aftab, 2010).

In a study performed by Daniel Lerner entitled "Transition from traditional society: the modernization of the Middle East" in relation to the role of the mass media in the development, it is shown that the use of mass media to what extent can the change public attitudes and opinions toward the political, economic and national development of these countries. According to Lerner, based on the modernization model, the movement from the

traditional stage to transition stage and then to the new society has always been accompanied by change in traditional systems to the modern systems and not vice versa.

And in response to their growing audience, the mass media both have capacity of communication with alterations and the capacity to engage with alterations, and there is a mutual interaction between modernity media indicators and the trend of social institutions (Molana, 2002:83).

In democratic states which benefit from the characteristics of a civil and law-based society, newspapers and the press have a great power in the real organization of public opinion and common beliefs and the true representation of social and political realities.

Newspapers and press in these countries act as intermediaries between the people and government and also offer suggestions and recommendations for improvements. The newspapers are the voice of the people, and prevent the exclusiveness and monopolization of government as much as possible. News systems in developed countries and some developing countries have such a function.

The mission of a journalist and the press organs is nothing but move towards the values of society and the rights of the people and civil values of a society. A civil and democratic citizen needs a values-based media and civil newspaper more than anything else, because rationality and civilization are the basis of a collective life

The real mission of a journalist and the press activist in the first place should be in line with the public goals and objectives, so that converting "rational public intellectual ideas" to "useful and valuable social phenomenon" must be a fundamental priority of journalism s.

In relation to free press, Denis McQuail highlights some points as follows:

- The press should be published uncensored and freely.

- Communications distribution and publication activities must be done by anyone or group, without the need for prior authorization.
- Attack on a government, official authority or political party should not be punishable.
- Pressure to publish any type of content is prohibited.
- Propagation of errors same as the propagation of truth have to supported
- No restriction should be applied for the release of information.
- The exportation and importation of, or send and receive messages across national borders should not be limited.
- Journalists must have professional autonomy within their own organization (McQuail, 2003: 1698-169).

Freedom of the press is a tool for public oversight of the government and essentially this freedom is not an obstacle but a worthy and necessary condition for sustainable development, and more freedom in these countries, easier it will be to control corruption. According to Pippa Norris, freedom of the press is a means that such a watchdog prevents governments from abuse of power.

From a political perspective, freedom of the press in a democratic society not only promotes the supervisory role of the people and the objectification of national sovereignty, but also converts the existing political structure into a constantly growing and dynamic entity by using the critical mind of thinkers. In addition, the sovereignty's conception of the press as the rectifying mirror of society ensures the proper and accurate recognition of political agents of the trends formed in the community (Moemenirad, 2013:90).

According to Joshua Meyrowitz, today, by the dominance of electronic media, people can access to a more democratic public culture, the traditional boundaries between public and private spheres and social roles have been greatly destroyed, and the physical and social space been separated and divorced. He claims that electronic media through a process of information and education have led to the promotion of citizens (Laughey.2007: 85).

The democratic process is meaningful only if citizens really be aware. The work of a journalist is to inform them. According to New York Times columnist Justin Levine the most important jobs in democracy is citizenship job.

Defending the role of journalists, he tells us that the theory of democracy is that citizens are the ultimate rulers; yet in the world today, people cannot see events personally and make a decision in a debate, as it was in ancient Greece. To be informed and aware, people are required to rely on the media. The main purpose of journalism is to tell the truth, so that people have the information needed to govern (Ganz, 2006: 31-32).

Concurrent with the formation of the element of competition and choice in the new definition of government, "knowledge" and "information transparency" as an element congruent with new competitive market were emerged. The politics play which is today performed by the presence of a spectator called citizen is not possible without a tool for information and awareness, and it is the same important point that makes the role and status of media in the contemporary world so prominent and critical.

media as one of the most effective tools against the domination of civil society, government conspiracy, and that's why freedom is increasingly focused on its role and its interest spreads (Proceedings, 2002).

By collecting and reflecting the opinions, critiques and the opinions of people and officials, the Medias are able to establish a vertical communication between the authorities involved in state affairs and people. This function which is related directly to political participation of people in democratic societies have a direct influence on reducing or increasing political legitimacy of governing board through considering the issues raised.

By making people more aware, the Media are able to make them informed of their rights and social responsibilities, and by creating self-confidence and capabilities such as practice and experience, encourage people who want to work politically influential. Therefore, the media can establish a focal

point for dealing with and opinions, new innovations and political values (ibid: 17-39).

By creating and developing the tradition of dialogue between people regarding political, trade and cultural organizations and establishing the relationship between the organizations and the executive managers of the country, the mass media can contribute to the further expansion of participation. They can act as a link between people and government. On the one hand, they can recall the duty of the people to government and on the other hand, make people informed of the government's duty toward themselves.

By promoting public cultural development, the mass media creates a sense of security and participation in decision-makings along with the necessary material assistance in this process.

In recent history, the media has a special influence in the survival or destruction of states and governments, and it has been seen frequently that in a democratic society, the media plays the role of strong pressure and leverage in the organization of the political process,. Even scientists practicing in the area of communications have warned that the current foreign policy is determined and controlled by such devices which are not useful and desirable for national sovereignty.

The mass media has a prominent position in terms of the institutionalization of political pluralism, explaining the views of the various parties and the promotion of democracy, etc., and especially during the transition period, help in leaving behind the crisis.

This is because one of the main components of the transition period is the presence of the public media with a pluralistic approach to modern political and social values, as the diversity of the mass media leads to the presentation of pluralistic political cultural approaches, and transformation of the traditional foundations of society have been deeply influential and accelerate the process of institutionalization of modern social norms.

In fact, the prominence and consolidation of media's role in democracy promotion and its establishment as a political modern pattern confirm the

transformational force of objective relations and norms of politics and society.

According to credible estimates and studies, in the West, mass media more than any other institution or organ, play fundamental roles in political and diplomatic policy making, individuals or parties victory in the elections, isolation or closeness of governments from each other, stock exchange markets, etc. Therefore political activists, before taking any action, are passionately trying to attract the attention of the media toward themselves.

Concerning the role of the media, Hadi Khaniki states that the relatively classic division between power and society relies on the centralization of a strong government, which its real meaning is that society is powerless and sources of power, wealth and community are in lack of the real power. Another theory is a theory of liberal ideals. Regarding the role of government, this theory believes that the government should be eliminated. Both approaches are far from reality.

There is also a third approach that includes a strong society and a strong state, and the state is strong when its citizens are strong, and we must accept this approach to the role of media in the development. In addition, we must admit the interpretation of UNESCO that reinstates such conditions bring about "good governance" and naturally diminishes the rift between the government and the people.

In this context, due to their critical role, the media reforms the governance processes and a successful community could be formed at this level. In these circumstances, the media neither is public nor anti-government. Most of Habermas's criticism on the formation of cyberspace is that parts of the social-cultural actors are marginalized, and the virtual space has not been able to bring all sectors of constructive ideas in the text.

New media language becomes more superficial and general, and it is different from written culture and literature. Critics of cyberspace are those who base the foundation of criticism on the difference between virtual culture and real culture. In other words, virtual culture is quick, simple and more superficial and

makes thought less involved, while real culture further involves the senses.

Now we must admit that in the paradigm of ideas of mental models, recognizing the realities ahead, increasing evolution paradigm, the world has undergone new intellectual ideas. One main feature of a media is its challenging tasks, so democratic and participative management is a solution that can manage the relevant complexities.

On the other hand, if the media has a development role, to play a democratic role, it should help democracy processes and interactions as well. Also, the media must provide a fertile ground in which culture, economy, politics, society, and the individual are supported to advance towards democratization in a dialectical model. If the media can move in the direction of the democratization of economy, politics, society and citizens, it can move in the direction of sustainable development.

The new generation of theorists (Frankfurters) such as Habermas highlighted the status of the media and its dual role in the public spheres, and also analyzed the contrast of relational interaction and strategic interaction. Also, they investigated when the media was able to form public sphere and where it has had positive impacts.

In the public sphere and communicative action, this group of thinkers believes that cafes, galleries, theaters, etc. could form together and organize independent citizens freely. In this regard, the media in general and newspapers in particular can play a critical role (E'temad: 2013).

Regarding the role of the media in public sphere, Jürgen Habermas states that the main objective of the public sphere is that critical rational debate occurs between the citizens about the "common good" in a way that this activity lead to the formulation or development of a series of measures to serve the public interest. In this context, given the main focus of mass media on the dissemination of news and critical analysis of the government performance, so it is considered as one of the pillars of efficient public domain.

Critical publications and periodicals that had emerged from public domain, with the development of rational and critical dialogue and political awareness play an important role in promoting and deepening of political modernity. But later, because of the commercialization of media and the reduction of political content, cultural analysts became consumer culture mass and by the reintegration of the state and society (Refeudalization the public domain) the space was provided for the creation of a public deceptive sphere (Mehdi Zadeh, 2010: 33-34).

In general, the realization of active and democratic citizenship and requires a combination of knowledge and skills. People should acquire knowledge especially on the key aspects of the phenomenon of the mass media such as the media industry, media messages, audiences, or media effects and should also be able to apply this knowledge during decomposition, analysis and evaluation of different types of media messages.

According to many media analysts and experts, goal-oriented handling of the media is one of the reasons for the rise in awareness in all sectors of society, and in turn mutual communication and cooperation with the media on the one hand and the strengthening, representation and reproduction of democratic structures in the society through active participation of citizens in the media on the other hand.

We need media literacy as an important educational goal to increase news consumption, civic activism and democratic participation in order to enhance citizenship and democracy situation. It could be said that media literacy is the ability to investigate and analyze the messages that daily inform and entertain us. It is a kind of ability that will cause critical thinking skills to include all media.

Along with an effective role in the process of communication and handling of information shared within the community, the media also can deeply influence political, economic and cultural institutions and create great changes in certain beliefs and values of the community. In addition, the media can contribute to the community's prosperity and promote cultural activities in the direction of desired social objectives (Akhtarshahr, 2007: 101).

In recent years have a strong and independent information system is one component of security. This evolution has happened due to the changing nature of security from a military aspect to a cultural one. In the Western democratic systems, the media play an important and effective role in ensuring the national security, because the existence of a media system free and independent is an instruments and the factor to the realization of democratic government. In contrast, in dictator systems, most of the media are the public and their duty is to support the government.

The functioning of the media in the accomplishment of a civil society is so important that the media has been called the fourth pillar of democracy, because the media can also be a way to recognize the rights of society and the fundamental rights of people.

The media can be effective in several dimensions, including: the development of fundamental rights, enrich the literature and culture of dialogue in the community, transparent and impartial information, reducing the amount of dogmatism, intellectual orientation to feelings and emotions, participation in national decision-making , deepening scientific knowledge, intellectual analysis of the community, fattening and documentation of data sources (Sadeghi, 2000:15).

Realization of democratic states in any country relies on some conditions without any of them realizing a democracy is nothing other than mere claims. Social scientists believe that the main pillars of democracy in any country are 1- active participation of citizens in social processes 2-Clarification of state interactions, and 3-Responsiveness of state.

After presenting the three fundamental pillars of democracy, scientists refer to the fourth pillar that is complementary to the previous three pillars. They say the press is the fourth pillar of democracy (Shahsavari, 2009: 38).

One of the basic principles of a civil society and a democratic state is the principle of transparency and objectivity of affairs. What determines the role of the press as the fourth pillar in democracies is transparency in information, because the transparency of government actions is one of the

pillars of democratic systems. Newspapers in this field are expected to disseminate transparent information and free from the lies and censorship.

The presence of lies in the dissemination of news and information, as well as the information censorship has led to the invalidity of the press and ultimately the loss of the credibility of governments (ibid: 390).

A democracy without up-to-date information and the means of acquiring it is nothing other than tragedy or a comedy. People who want to govern themselves must be equipped with sufficient awareness. The democratic process does not begin with change in the external form of government institutions but the first of all it requires one's inner consciousness of three questions: a) involvement b) influence c) Accept responsibility for the social processes.

As soon as the society begins to overtake understanding, democracy begins to develop. Only by an inner awareness of the issues one can be involved in the community issue and play effective roles, and if there exists an influence its impact is not enough to cause a positive result (ibid).

The media now is an indivisible part of people's lives and along with other institutions plays a significant role to advance its goal in the community and especially a democratic society. The media help democratic societies and citizens to move in their direction with more knowledge and information. Also, the media impact the mutual interaction of citizens, and make actions and reactions more directed and consistent with other aspects of society

The media makes social organizations more prominent and develops common emotional and psychological feelings among citizens (Share, & Kellner, 2007; 3-23).

In today's world, an amazing increase has happened in information circulation in terms of volume, such that a thinker such as Jean Baudrillard has focused on explosion of symptoms in the contemporary culture. Frank Webster writes in this regard: in recent decades, an explosion of diversity has been occurred and has caused many people remarkably have accesses to them. Due to this event, there is a marvelous prospect of sign creation (Tajik, 2006:53).

David Reisman, American sociologist, believes that in the current period that now lies before our eyes this is the mass media that make people. So we can say that today the mass media is one of the most powerful institutions in the modern society, and modern society without it is almost impossible to imagine.

In the framework of committing role of the media and their critical role in raising social awareness, critique is of the utmost significance. It is a double sided tool: its elemental form can work to guide the direction of the media and its non-elemental form can destruct the media function.

The media typically "criticize" issues in several aspects including: criticizing ideas, beliefs and political attitudes, criticizing the government's behavior in terms of promises and tasks, criticizing government policies and programs; criticizing cultural and artistic works (books, film, drama, visual works, criticizing the customs, rituals and popular culture and criticizing the harsh realities (injustice, insecurity, poverty, hunger, poor health, inadequate housing, etc.).

Conclusion

In the current era, because of the complexity of the social nature of the role of mass media in establishing the vertical and horizontal relationships in communities, the use of these devices in cultural, economic and political area have been more dramatic. At no time in human history, man has been so involved in politics, and probably it can be said that one of the main causes of politicization of the public, has been the spread of the mass media.

By the dissemination of news and information about social issues and events, the media establish a communication between people and make them informed of each other about the issues. This function is so helpful in making decisions consistent with the life programs for the media audience or people that can be referred to as the artery of social life.

Information is the necessity of a free society. Therefore, need for information is the main factor of the existence of a democratic society. A democratic society requires freedom of information and freedom

of expression, and these two provide the press with an effective and sensitive role. The press and other mass media which are presented to describe and analysis and interpret social issues and events and also to present public thoughts and beliefs reflect the problems of mass, are essential element of intellectual development in today's world.

In addition the press is the main cause of "public space" on the axis of "rational reasoning" and "critical debate" in the community, so that even the basic principles of new democracy are a result of "disclosure" of decisions, activities and dissemination of thoughts and opinions in the pages of newspapers. Therefore, from one hand, there is a direct and rational relationship between democracy and the level of intellectual development, and on the other hand, between the newspapers and the media.

In fact, the transfer and the free dissemination of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious and valuable human rights and every citizen may freely speak, write and print, unless some legal and customary restrictions exist for dealing with the abuse of such liberties.

REFERENCES

- [1] Akhtarshahr, A. (2007). Mass media and its role in the socialization of religion; *Maerefat Journal*, 16(123): 27-31.
- [2] Tajik, M. R. (2009). Iran in the outlook 1400. Tehran: Publications of Humanities Development and Research Institution.
- [3] Tavakkolo, F. (2011). the role of the media in the cultural democracy of the contemporary world. (2009). *Interdisciplinary studies in Media and Culture*. Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 1(1): 63-74.
- [4] Alvine, T. (1994). *Third Wave*. Translated by Shahindokht Kharazmi. Tehran: Fakhteh
- [5] Shahsavari, B. (2009). The role of the press in the realization of democracy. *The Public Relations Society's scientific journal*, 6(9): 61-76.
- [6] Sadeghi, R. (2000). *Media War (a case study)*. Tehran: Gofteman Publications.
- [7] Koubli, P. (2012). *communications theories*. Translated by Shahoo Sabar. Tehran: Center for Social and Cultural Studies.
- [8] Koubli, P. (2012). *Communications theories*. Translated by Goudarz Mirani. Tehran: Center for Social and Cultural Studies.
- [9] Quail, M. (2003). *Introduction to the theory of social communication*. translated by Parviz Ejlali. Tehran: Media Research Center.
- [10] Kohen, B. (1993). *Basics of sociology*. Translated by Fazel Tavasoli. Tehran: Samt Publications.
- [11] Ganz, H. J. (2006). *Democracy and News*. Translated by Alireza Dehgahn. Tehran: Samt Publications.
- [12] Hadi, K. (2013). *The role of the press in the development of Iran: the critical press reforms the governance trend*. Tehran: E'temad.
- [13] Irna Press. (2014). *The role and status of the press in Iran and world*. Tehran: Iran.
- [14] Aftab Press. (2010). *Media and the media policy*. Tehran: Iran.
- [15] Molana, H. (1992). *Transition from modernization*. Translated by Younes Shokrkah. Tehran: Media Research & Study.
- [16] Mohammadnejad, K. (2000). *Media Tools*. 3rd Ed. Tehran: Allameh-Tabatabaei Publication.
- [17] Moemeni, Rad, P., & Ahmad, A. (2013). *Comparative restrictions on freedom of the press in Iran and the United Kingdom legal system*. *Islamic Human Rights Studies Quarterly*, 2(4): 12-29.
- [18] Mehdizadeh, S. M. (2010). *Media Theories*. Tehran: Hamshahri.
- [19] Tavakoli, B. (2002). *Proceedings of the media and the social and political stability*. (2002). Tehran: Center for Strategic Research.
- [20] Kellner, D., & Share, J. (2007). *Critical media literacy, democracy, and the reconstruction of education*, D. Macedo & S.R. Steinberg, *Media literacy: A reader ed*. New York: Peter Lang.

[21] Laughey, D. (2007). Key the mes in Media Theory, New York: MCGraw Hill publications.