



Communication: Concept & Process

BA(JMC) 101

Unit IV

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Syllabus- Unit 4

- **[Theories of Mass Communication],**
- Bullet Theory, Two-Step, Multi Step Theory
- Cognitive Dissonance Theory
- Uses and Gratification Theory, Cultivation Theory
- Normative Theories: Authoritarian, Libertarian, Soviet-Communist, Social Responsibility, Developmental,
- Democratic Participation

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What is a Theories?


- **Theory is an idea or set of ideas that tries to explain something.**



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Principle

- The general idea or principles of a particular subject
- Theories are used to understand how things are likely to happen.



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What is a Theories?


- an ideal or hypothetical set of facts, principles, or circumstances —often used in the phrase *in theory* an ideal or hypothetical set of facts, principles, or circumstances —often used in the phrase *in theory*
- a particular conception or view of something to be done or of the method of doing it; a system of rules or principles

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What is a Theories?

- Communication theories are a collection theories are a collection of ideas used to explain, predict or understand the pattern, nature or outcome of communication process or activity.
- Basically it is the study of the effects of mass media on society has caught the interest of social scientists. As a result, various theories have emerged to explain the relationship between communication and society.
- A Theory is an attempt to explain or depict a phenomenon. The term "communication theory" refers to a collection of theories about how people communicate.


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What is a Theories?

- Sociological theories state mass media as a product of societal change, while other theories express ideas on how the mass media should or should be anticipated to work under current political and economic circumstances. Some of the theories explored here will illuminate the role of mass communication in society and how audiences use different types of media.


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Difference B/w Model & Theory

- Theories are aimed at generalizing studies and prove points whereas models aim at making an explanation or a concept easy to understand. Model is often described as an application to a theory in particular cases.


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Difference B/w Model & Theory


- The main difference between models and theories is that models can be considered as a representing element created to explain a theory or a concept whereas theory is considered as an answer or solution to problems by proving them with the help of facts and figures.
- Models provide the macro level of guidance whereas theories provide a micro-level of guidance regarding a particular phenomenon.

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 **Difference B/w Model & Theory**


- Model is a physical, symbolic, visual, mathematical, or graphical representation of a concept or a theory that has been founded to clarify or make it simpler to understand
Theory on the other hand is a conceptualized framework that is proven by facts and logic, by scientists. They majorly prove or predict a particular point according to their knowledge and wisdom.

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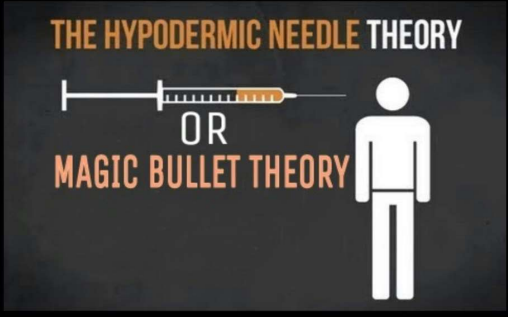


Bullet Theory, Two-Step, Multi Step Theory


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 **Bullet Theory**

THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY
OR
MAGIC BULLET THEORY




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Bullet Theory

- Bullet theory is introduced by **Harold Lasswell** . The "magic bullet" and "hypodermic needle" models originate from **Harold Lasswell's** 1927 book, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*
- It is a reflection of the fear engendered by media propaganda during World War II, this theory was developed during that time period.


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Bullet Theory

- Bullet theory suggests that the communication is sent in the form of a **magic bullet fired** directly at the receiver.
- Assume that receivers are **vulnerable and passive**, taking whatever is thrown at them and that the media has a **direct, immediate, and direct impact** on individuals who pay attention to their material.
- According to the **hypothesis**, they reached both the eye and the ear, in the same way, causing the entire audience to think and act differently.

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Bullet Theory

- Two assumptions that may easily be derived from a set of approaches are that:
 - 1) people receive information directly from the mass media rather than through an intermediary, and
 - 2) people's reactions are unique and not influenced by others.
- Many mass media critics still believe that the media is a very powerful institution and that media consumers are miserably naive and impressionable. Media gatekeepers are portrayed as highly manipulative.
- Contemporary media has trivialised fun, in addition to lowering the public attention span, Rushing children into adulthood, and even reducing all public conversation duplicacy.

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Two-Step Theory

- The two-step flow theory came about in the mid-twentieth century between **1940 and 1960**, when the Second World War had ended, and the cold war between **communism and capitalism** had begun.
- In 1944 Paul Lazarsfeld, (1901-1976) an American Social Researcher, Bernard Berelson (1912 – 1979) and Hazel Gaudet was introduced The Two-Step Flow of Communication in the book called "The people's choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign. New York: Columbia University Press".

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Two-Step Theory

- The purpose of the study was focused on **Presidential election Campaign and the people decision-making process towards the campaign**. All three researchers were wanted to find out practically whether the mass media messages affect direct influence in voting decision among the people.
- Unexpectedly they found the media messages (like radio and newspapers) are **very less influence then an informal, personal communication** on voting behavior..
- Based on this researched data, The Two Step Flow Communication Theory of Mass Communication was developed by **Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld**.


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Two-Step Theory

Two-step flow model

Legend:
 ● Opinion leader
 ○ Individuals in social contact with an opinion leader


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Opinion Leader:

- Opinion Leader is a leader for a certain group who gives details and information to lesser active persons in the group.
- In office, the managing director is an opinion leader
- in public, a political leader is an opinion leader. They interpret the information to their own group. But one thing the Opinion leader is a leader only for their own group not for all.


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Two-Step Theory

- **Katz and Paul** seems "the flow of media messages from **radio and print** to opinion leaders and then the leaders leads the messages to lesser active users in the population". Through this transformation of message, the leaders **may add their opinion on the actual content which may affects the low active users.**
- In some cases the Opinion leaders are filtering the actual content ensures the information is needed by the people. Mostly the opinion leaders are selective and they pass the messages to the group. (Low-end media users: Poor, Worker and People who are not affordable for getting information directly


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Example:


- Anisha watching News in ABC Channel they flash the headlines with "Research reveals some toys are leads the children's aggressive and Violent".
- That day Anisha calls her little son and went for shopping and Anisha warn her son some toys are not good and made skin allergy which leads her son to avoid those toys.
- Opinion leader: Mom
- Audience: Her Son
- Added information in actual content: Skin Allergy

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 **Critics:**


- -Researchers found substantial evidence that initial mass media information flows directly to people on the whole and is not relayed by opinion leaders.
- -The two-step hypothesis does not adequately describe the flow of learning. Lazarsfeld and his associates in the 1940 election study were unable to determine the specific flow of influence.
- – Today most of the advertising researches are based on this theory. Especially opinion leaders role in the society as well as in home to which helps to improve the market with less efforts.
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 **Strength of two-step flow theory**


- Focuses attention on the environment in which effects can and can't occur. By this we mean media messages are based on the environments and what problems they face. It is a socially based form of living with which the theory operated.
- Stresses the importance of opinion leaders in the formation of public opinion. The theory sought to basically base around the opinion leaders and that they are the major persons that determined what the entire population is aware of, making them important personalities in the time.

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 **Strength of two-step flow theory**

- Effectively challenges simplistic notions of direct effects. This is actually true according to his theory because this was the idea of the Hypodermic Theory, which stated that the media had a direct effect on the mass media which he did not agree with hence his own theory, the Two-Step Flow.


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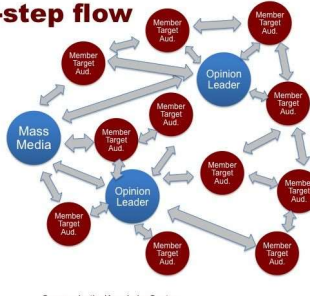
Weaknesses

- two-step flow theory is limited to its time (the 1940s) Is limited to its time (1940s) and media environment (no television). The theory is of no use to the present world.
- It used reported behaviour (voting) as the only test of media effects. The theory didn't use other approaches to test validity except for the voting era within the presidential election in 1944.
- Later research demonstrates a multi-step flow of influence.

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Multi Step-Flow Theory



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Multi Step-Flow Theory

- The Two-Step Flow Theory gave way to the Multi-Step Flow Theory.
- It was observed that the influence from the media could be multi-directional and it is not necessarily downwards but can be upwards or even back to the media as well.
- The Two-Step Flow led to the change in name basically because of the opinion leaders who are more than just a second hand. This caused the description —Multi Directional because the multi-step had to do with more than one opinion leader


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Multi Step-Flow Theory

- They could be two, three, four, five or even six people. Many a time, the information reaching the audience is altogether different from the original piece of information. That is opinion leaders who pass the information add their own interpretation to it, giving it a new meaning and making the information distorted.
- The audiences here are active because they send feedback to the media suggesting, appreciating or criticising things or events. There is a peer to peer discussion as well, where the audiences with similar opinions share insights with each other.

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Strength of multi-step flow theory

- Information travels fast and gets to everyone in society.
- Everyone participants actively in the communication process.

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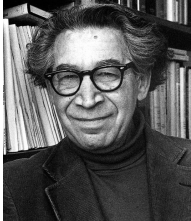
Weakness of multi-step flow theory

- multi-step flow theory are Misinterpretation and distortion of information or messages. Since messages get to opinion leaders first, they add, subtract and change the meaning of the intended message from the media and send messages they deem important for consumption by the opinion followers.

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Cognitive Dissonance Theory

- **Cognitive dissonance** and a host of consistency theories that emerged in the **mid-20th century**. **Leon Festinger** advanced the theory of cognitive dissonance in the **1957**.



Leon Festinger

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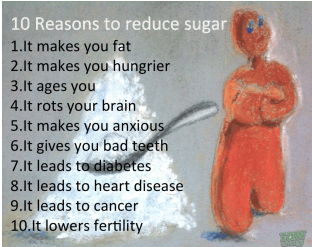
Cognitive Dissonance Theory

- **What is Cognitive means?**
 - refers to "the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses".
 - It encompasses many aspects of intellectual functions and processes such as: **perception, attention, thought, the formation of knowledge, memory and working memory, judgment and evaluation, reasoning and "computation"**, problem solving and decision making, comprehension and production of language. Cognitive processes use existing knowledge and discover new knowledge.

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Cognitive Dissonance Theory


For Example:- we believe Sugar is harmful to health

10 Reasons to reduce sugar


- 1.It makes you fat
- 2.It makes you hungrier
- 3.It ages you
- 4.It rots your brain
- 5.It makes you anxious
- 6.It gives you bad teeth
- 7.It leads to diabetes
- 8.It leads to heart disease
- 9.It leads to cancer
- 10.It lowers fertility

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 **Cognitive Dissonance Theory**


- But still, you love to consume it and can not stop yourself from consuming it.
 - So we feel discomfort by consuming it. That discomfort is dissonance.
- Dissonance means lack of agreement the dissonance between the truth and what people want to believe especially

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 **Cognitive Dissonance Theory**


- This theory predicts that people will seek out information which confirmed existing attitude and view of the world or reinforces other aspects according to their behavior.
- Similarly, it predict that people will avoid information which is likely to increase dissonance.
- For Example :- If someone dislike person he will dislike his or her views coma what he or she says is unlikely to cause cognitive dissonance.
 - Dissonance is acute when a liked person says something seemingly out of character or fail to record with expectation on the image held of him or her

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 **Cognitive Dissonance Theory**

- Festinger stated in his theory thus: any time a person has a information or an opinion which is not considered by itself would lead him not to engage in some action.
- when such dissonance exist the person will try to reduce it either by changing his action or by changing his belief and opinion. If he cannot change the action, opinion change will ensure.
 - People start thinking it does not matter if he or she is consuming sugar because they are exercising. It will not affect their health.


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Cognitive Dissonance Theory

- The psychological process which can be call dissonance reduction, does not explain the frequently observed behavior of people justifying their action. When dissonance exist, dissonance reduction will also occur.
- Festinger portrays the following typical sources of dissonance between two beliefs:
 - logical inconsistency
 - cultural More
 - past experience
 - when one specified opinion is launched by definition in a more general opinion this theory states that behaviour can cause persuasion


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Cognitive Dissonance Theory

- For example Fake news
 - People feel that they have to be all-in on one side. And another side is full of lying and cheating. Cognitive dissonance plays a part in this polarisation failing to research the medicine of covid 19. Calling fake remedies like drinking alcohol was one way to minimise the discomfort of knowing that going out and partying could also cause your life or others. So we saw many waterfall circulating stories on this. Are results the minimising the cognitive dissonance.
 - ;


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Uses and Gratification Theory

- This theory has **emerged out** of the studies which shifted their focus from what the media do to the people to what people do with the media (**Katz 1959**).


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Uses and Gratification Theory

- The user's approach assumes **that the audience are active and willingly expose themselves to the media** and that the most important mass media content cannot influence an individual who has no use for it in the environment he lives. **The uses of the mass media depend on the perception, selectivity and previously held value, belief and interest of the people.**

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Gratification

- The term **Gratification** refers to the reward and satisfaction experience by audience after the use of media
- it help to explain **motivation behind media used and habit of media used are the actual need satisfaction by the media** are called media gratification.


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Uses and Gratification

- uses and gratification** has been classified in following subways:
 - Cognition:**
 - Diversion**
 - ✓ **Stimulation**
 - ✓ **Relaxation**
 - ✓ **Emotional**
 - ✓ **Reality exploration or Advice**
 - Social utility**
 - Withdrawal**


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Cognition

- **Cognition** means of coming to know something when a person uses a media medium to obtain information about something then he or she is cognitively using the medium


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Diversion

- **Stimulation** is seeking relief from boredom or the routine activities of every day you watch the program then they are bored and have nothing else to do or simply to pass the time
- **Relaxation** for escape from the pressure and the problem of the day to Day existence- too much stimulation coma, however, is undesirable


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Diversion

- **emotional release** of pent up emotions and energy- the use of media for emotional release is fairly of ab bas. Emotional release can take many subtle form full stop one of the big attraction of soap operas, For example seems to be that many people in the audience are comforted by seeing that other people have troubles greater than their own. Other people identify with the media heroes and heroines and participate where is Li in their triumphs. Such a process evidently enable 20 people to vent some of the frustration connection with their normal life.


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Diversion

- Reality exploration or Advice- **the program is used to help solve problems in the viewer on life some of the program help the viewer understand his or her own life** as well as others and to provide an accurate reflection of reality.


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Social utility:

- **Social utility: psychologists have also identified a set of social integrative needs, including our needs to strengthen our contact with family, Trends and other in our society** full stop the social integrative me seems to Spring from an individual lead to affiliate with others. The media function that addresses this need is called social utility.


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Withdrawal

- the media is used not only for **relaxation but also for withdrawal uses**. At times people use is the media to create a barrier **between themselves and other people or other activities**.

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Objectives

- The objectives of uses and gratification theory are-
 - ✓ To show the relation of mass communication and how it is used to gratify needs
 - ✓ To find out primary intentions of media use by people
 - ✓ To know the positive and negative aspects of media use on the media users. Goals of Media


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The Goals Of Media Use

- ✓ To be informed or educated
- ✓ To get entertained
- ✓ To develop social interaction
- ✓ To feel connected with the situations and characters emotionally
- ✓ To escape from real-life situations
- ✓ Other goals are affective disposition, psychological reassurance, fashion, status, access to information, cognitive needs, etc.


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Criticism

- ✓ The theory does not show media as important.
- ✓ The theory does not believe in the power of media and how media can unconsciously influence human needs and gratification.
- ✓ The model is audience centred and shows the audience as an active participant.
- ✓ Critics think that the theory does not meet the standards to be called a theory and can only be taken as an approach to analysing as research relies on recollection of memory.
- ✓ The theory ignores the use of media in social structures.
- ✓ The audience might not always be active.


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Cultivation Theory

- This theory was developed by **George Gerbner in 1967**. It is based on the assumption that **mass media have a subtle effect on the audience** who, **unknowingly observe that dominant symbol images and message of media**. He calls it the cultivation of **dominating image patterns**.
- According to this theory, a **long persistent exposure** to television is capable of cultivating common beliefs about the world. Gerbner and his colleague are of the view that the **message of television does not portray reality in society**.


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Cultivation Theory

- However, **repeated exposure to such distortion leads** to development of particular belief about the world; and **these beliefs about get reinforced** once they are **developed**. He also strongly suggest that the powerful **effect of mass media act as moulders** of the society.
- Additional, cultivation analysis concentrates on **the long-term effects of exposure rather than the short term impact on attitude and opinion**.


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Cultivation Theory

- Gerbner and his Associates have detected a phenomenon called **mainstreaming** where by differences apparently due to cultural and social factors tends to diminish among heavy TV viewers.
- They have also found evidence for what they called '**resonance**' situation in **which the respondent real-life experience our argument with those of television world** thereby leading to a great cultivation effect.
- finally some studies have noted that cultivation seems to work best when audience members have only indirect and distant contact with the topic interestingly Enough this finding seems to run counter to the resonance notion.


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Application of Theory


- Various studies have supported the claim that those who watch television more frequently often **display higher tendencies of being depressed and lonely, a sense of alienation, have feelings of mistrust and think that the world is a malicious place.**
- A study conducted in an experimental setting saw the outcome, at the end of the test period, that students who **watch more action-adventure programs during six months are more likely to believe that the world was a dangerous place.** They also believe that **there is a high chance that they would be personally involved in a violent incident.** This is in stark contrast to the attitudes of other students who did not watch as many action-adventure shows as the test group.

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NORMATIVE THEORIES: AUTHORITARIAN, LIBERTARIAN, SOVIET- COMMUNIST, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, DEVELOPMENTAL, DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION


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Normative Theories of the Press

- Normative communication theories are a **group of four** press theories proposed by **Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm** in their book called **—Four Theories of the Press—**.
- The theories are also known as **Western theories of mass media.** The media does not exist in a vacuum and normative theories **try to explain how the socio-political structures surrounding the media affect its expected roles, freedoms and accountabilities.** This theory explains how Media systems behave when operated by different kinds of government in four different theories.

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Normative Theories of the Press

- The theories do not give any kind of scientific predictions or explains them scientifically. **They just provide explanation on the relationship of press in different parts of the world with their governments,** ownership of press and how that kind of press affects audiences. The theory also talks about control and censorship of press.


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Concepts in Normative Theories

- Media became **competitive and yellow journalism developed** in the nineteenth century. The media used sensationalism to attract people.
- So, normative theories of the press were developed to **understand the use and responsibilities of media** for the general public through the relationship of media and governments.
- These theories were made to **clean media practices and guide the press.** **Accuracy and objectivity were taken to be the significant improvement factors.** These theories tell media how they should behave even though their philosophies are different.


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Concepts in Normative Theories

- Normative press theory describes what role media takes in which kinds of government. It shows **the ideal path to be taken by media, structures that media can adopt, and media operation.**
- The media must be **clean and yellow journalism should be avoided** in all the press theories in practice. **The media must always be credible, truthful and reliable.** Although very few countries have a media that falls under a specific category, and there **is often a mixture of two or more theories,** understanding these theories can help us get the bigger picture of the effect of the media's environment.


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Authoritarian Theory

- ✓ Authoritarian theory of press: according to this theory though media is not under the control of state and ruling classes but they must do their binding.
- ✓ The media is not allowed to criticise the powerful people or the government.
- ✓ There is censorship by the government on criticisms and other things negatively portrayed about them.
- ✓ Similarly, licensing of media, punishments and content approval are other means used to curb full freedom of the press.
- ✓ Media is taken as a means to serve the interest of authorities and the state.


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Authoritarian Theory

- ✓ The reason was given as to why it is done —to achieve social orderll.
- ✓ The theory ignores the needs of people and only establishes agendas and propaganda. There is limited freedom. The press in Bhutan can be taken as an example of authoritarian theory in practice.

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Libertarian Theory

- The basis of this 'free press' goes back to 17 century England when the printing press made it possible to print several copies of books and pamphlets at a comparatively low price.
- In contrast with the authoritarian theory, **Libertarianism is founded on the fundamental right of an individual to freedom of expression full stop with liberal democracies swear by this belief.**


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Libertarian Theory

- Press was given more freedom and people involved were taken to be **conscience and intellectual**.
- They were believed to possess the capability to find out truth from false.
- Public engagement was also started. People were given a lot of press freedom and there was little to no government control over press.
- —Laissez-fairell approach was used.

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Libertarian Theory

- There were some **restrictions in place for libel, false advertising and false news, but for the most part, media was a different body rather than a part of the government.**
- The media **could criticize the government and serve as gatekeepers or watchdogs for society.** It ignored privacy and worked for capitalism.
- An example of it was the U.S. adopting it after declaring independence.


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Libertarian Theory

- Publication should be **free from any prior censorship.**
- Attacks on any government, official or political party, **should not be punishable, even after the event.**
- There should **be no compulsion to publish anything.**
- **No restriction** should be placed for gathering the information for publication.
- The act of publication and distribution should be open to person, **a group without licence or permit.**
- There should be no restriction on getting or sending information overseas.
- Journalists should have professional autonomy within their organisation.


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Criticism

- In practice, however, **the story provides the prerogative of free speech** only to the rich and the powerful **Elite of the society**. The marginalized groups do not have access to and **indeed can't afford the means or tools of free expression**.
- What happened **on the ground is that media merchants and media monopolies exploit that freedom to expand their empire**. This theory Media owners rather than in the rights of editor and journalist or of the public


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Social Responsibility Theory

- This theory can be said to have been derived from the Hutchin Reports (**entitled A free and responsible Press: A General Report on Mass Communication: Newspaper, Radio, Motion Magazine and books**).
- In social responsibility theory, the press is given freedom to publish anything but be responsible in its actions.
- The primary role of the press is to help preserve and grow democracy. **Guidelines and regulations make the press behave responsibly**. **Government can censor** if it deems some information inappropriate for democracy and social order.

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Social Responsibility Theory

- The audience is also **taken to be responsible for understanding things shown in media**. Government cannot intrude on media as per its will. Media is taken to be a spokesperson of the **poor and marginalised and provides diverse views/perspectives**.


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Principle

- Media should **accept and fulfil certain obligations to society by setting high or professional standard of truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance, etc.**
- In accepting and applying these **obligation, media should be self regulating with in the framework of law and established institution.**
- Journalist and media professionals should be **accountable to society** as well as to employers.


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The Soviet Theory

- This theory is derived from **Lenin's application of Marx and Engels's dictum** in the German ideology that the idea of the ruling class are in every period the ruling ideas.
- The media are thus a means of **mental production** of the ideology, in other words. Hence **the need for their control by the working class, that is through the communist party, so that the interest of the working class rather than those of the ruling or elite class are projected**

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The Soviet Theory

- In a socialist society, therefore the media should be used to tool to socialize the people; The primary function of the media are **to educate and inform motivate and mobilize citizen and to support progressive movement** everywhere what is expected is objective presentation of the society.

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The Soviet Theory

- Censorship **and restriction on the media are legitimate** for the media are accountable to the state to the public and to the party the public is **encouraged to provide feedback** as it is only in this way that the media will be able to serve the public interest

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Developmental Theory

- The Limited application of the four established theories of the press third world countries has led to the world of a new media theory was named as is that communication be used to carry out the development function in our society.
- McQuail is another theorist who added two more theories to the four normative theories. One is Democratic-Participant Media Theory, and the other is developmental media (development communication) theory.

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Developmental Theory

- The absence of some of the condition in these countries were which are necessary for developed mass communication system are follows :
 - ✓ Communication infrastructure the professional skills the production and cultural resources and the available audience etc
 - ✓ Technology, skills and cultural products.
 - ✓ Devotion of these society to economics, political and social development as a primary National task.
 - ✓ Developing countries Awareness of their similar identity and interest in international politics

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Developmental Theory

- The normative elements of emergent development theory are shaped by the condition described Above and have both negative and positive aspects:
 - ✓ Opposed to dependency and foreign domination and to arbitrary authoritarianism.
 - ✓ For positive uses of media in national development.
 - ✓ For anatomy and cultural identity of the particular National society.

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Developmental Theory


- Development media theory labour democratic grassroots involvement to a certain extent. It emphasized on a right to communication based on article 19 of the universal declaration of human right everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression this right includes of freedom to hold opinion without interface and to seek.
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Developmental Theory

- The main principles of this theory are
 - ✓ The media should accept and carry out the positive development in line which with nationally established policy
 - ✓ Media should give priority to the national culture and language
 - ✓ Freedom of media should be restricted to an extent keeping in view the economic priorities and development needs of society
 - ✓ Journalist and other media worker have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination task
 - ✓ The state has a right to intervene in our restrict media operation and devices of sensitive and direct control in the interest of the development of a country.


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Democratic Participant Theory


- Grassroots level media started the Democratic participant theory idea in the 1960s. It emerged because of the dissatisfaction with other models such as Libertarian theory, social responsibility theory, etc.
- The democratic-participant theory believes there is democratic and professional hegemony in the media today, and the media is commercial.

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- All these ill practices should be removed for the media to be democratic and be easily accessible or participatory. It considers there should not be monopolisation (public/private), centralisation of press and top-down approach in the media.
- The press should be pluralistic, decentralised, bottom-up or horizontal and must have equality. The primary concept is participation and full circular communication.

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- The theory places greater importance to the receivers. There are no political regulations but some legal regulations. The theory is also known as Democratisation theory.


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Concept

- Media is said to be important in rural settings and in cultures degrading with time. The theory is believed to conserve and revive local cultures by promoting the right to information (global and local), right to express (feedback), right to use new technologies (means of communication), freedom to local data, freedom to take part in social action, etc. The process expects the government to provide funds, training, and subsidies after identifying if they have financial or technical difficulties.


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Concept

- The democratic-participant theory is more relevant in liberal democratic developed countries than developing and least developed countries because the countries in transition from underdevelopment and non-democracy are alleged to lack the infrastructures and professional skills needed for free media in democracy.

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Concept

- The theory considers local information, feedback, and social action at the community level to be media roles. It discourages uniform, monopolised and commercialised media culture. Instead, it wants local non-institutionalised media to provide the information relevant to small groups of the population.


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Major Features

- ✓ Encourages horizontal and bottom up approach in media
- ✓ Supports democracy, existing political rule, national socio-economic development efforts and to implement policies
- ✓ Media has supportive rather than critical role
- ✓ Government controls some aspects if media does not act as it should by the process of registration, licensing, censorship, by preparing guidelines for media, monitoring, etc.
- ✓ Self regulation of media is also encouraged
- ✓ More applicable to new media
- ✓ Development of creativity and innovation in small media
- ✓ Replacement of media from big media houses to small media
- ✓ Participation and interaction of media and audience (as both are from the same group of population)
- ✓ Different communities, groups and organisations possessing their own media

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Examples

- The examples of the democratic-participant theory are the present concepts of community newspapers, community radios and televisions. Other examples are the trend of social action through social media and language programs through phone apps. Even underground and alternative press are examples of this theory.
- The theory is in use in Western Europe, which the cultural and ethnic revival can be seen through media. Many countries have started following the theory in mass media such as Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Ghana, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, US, UK, etc. Community radio is most popular in South East Asian countries.

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