



## **Is media replica of the reality?**

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### **Abstract**

"If it were left on me to decide whether we should have a government without newspaper or newspaper without government I should not hesitate on women to prefer the letter"

- Thomas Jefferson

Media is the important link between the people and the government. Each and every move of the public is somehow related to Media and in daily life media plays a vital role. In a democratic country like India, the constitution gives freedom of expression and an equal space to each individual. Media always aims in keeping people awakened and it can never be denied that, the growth of media in India is one of the foremost unit of social change in the country. In other words, it can be said that the total public replicates or follows the critics and circumstances through the media. Media plays a giant role in India whereby, it really works as "the watchdog of the democracy" which carry every report of administration thus keeping the public informed about the day today happenings in the country.

As the talk goes, bullet loaded from a gun can't change the perception of the human brain but a word or act from the ink of writer can. And here most importantly the ink of a journalist is definitely more powerful than the others. They can start creating the change that the public needs from their end where the media would start a new trend in bringing up the accused to the hook by their active participation. In this article the author tries to bring out the real face of Media, their unhealthy relation with the society and the wrong perception in their minds. What is the role of the media in our democratic country, the outline of the legislation pertaining to media and finally finds if media is really the replicate of the reality?

**Keywords:** media replica, media legislation, democracy

### **Introduction**

#### **Media-the fourth pillar of democracy**

India being the biggest market in the world of media, the fourth pillar of democracy with over 82,237 newspapers and more than 900 TV channels running all over India in different languages where these numbers are increasing day by day. The media influences the public and plays important role in making and unmaking the government, that it would not be wrong by saying that media is the main reason behind in making the government and in influencing the society. Across the world, media is used as a tool to inflame grievances and accelerate the escalation towards the violent conflict. In the light of the historical evidence, inter-news network foster's pluralist independent media in emerging democracy and its focus in media development efforts on reducing conflicts.

Democracy is balanced by three pillars such as; executive, legislative, and judiciary. But now in this era, democracy is lined towards the fourth pillar that is the media. Here, executive implies the laws, the legislation makes the laws and judiciary delivers the justice, such that media is considered as fourth pillar of democracy because it ensures if everything is going according to the interest of the public. Media plays a significant role in the democratic country like India which makes people get aware of numerous information in a form of news across the globe. In a democratic setup like India, everyone has the right to express and also to oppose and challenge the laws made by the government. India is having diverse culture and a huge population in the world where the Indian constitution

Guarantees the right to express anything they feel to all people. But media is dividing people to right-wing and left wing and into anti-government and pro-government which suppress the right of the people. They should not do that, they should only aim in giving exact news and show true reflection of what is happening in the society than focusing to earn.

Media can be considered as fourth pillar of democracy unless and until there is a proper transparency in media. This era of media is considered as daily necessity because the day starts with media and ends with media whether social media, print media, or electronic media.

#### **The media and the legislation**

The structure of media and the citizens of the country are those who are involved with the independence and the effectiveness of government particularly in the legislation and the judiciary. Each country has different laws that are enforced according to the situation in the society. The extent of independence and freedom established in the country's laws and the extent to which the laws are enforced defines the space in which media are allowed to operate.

In India, the legislation pertaining to control media can be tracked the British era. There are many laws with respect to media but the laws are not properly established. In the history of India, media laws was first promulgated by Lord Wellesley in 1799 which imposed regulations to the editor and the publisher. However, dividing the laws which governed media into pre-independence laws and post-independence laws are as follows

**Pre-independence legislation**

Press regulation Act, 1799.  
 The licensing regulation Act, 1823.  
 The press act of 1835.  
 The gagging Act, 1857.  
 The Vernacular press act, 1878.  
 Newspaper (incitement to offence) Act, 1908.  
 The Indian press Act, 1910.  
 The Indian press (emergency power) Act, 1931.

**Post-independence legislation**

The press enquiry committee 1947.  
 The Press (objectionable matters) Act, 1951.  
 The press commission under Justice Rajadhyaksha in 1954.  
 Delivering of books and newspaper (public libraries) Act, 1954.  
 The Working Journalist (the condition of service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955.  
 The Newspaper (price and page) Act, 1956.  
 Parliamentary proceedings (protection of publication) Act, 1960.  
 Press Council of India Act, 1978.  
 The Cable Television Regulation Act, 1995.

However all these laws and the regulatory bodies governing media seems to be flippant which is not enough to curtail the negative aspects of media. The wrong should be questioned and good must be appreciated by the media on the basis of merit. It should lay more emphasis on fair reporting and media should give importance to the core issues in the society and have to deliver the same to the people in a better way which has to be true and be free from all the ill-effects that media possess today. Media should work in such a way no matter if there are governing laws, authorities watching or there is code of conduct media should remain original without any fake news in it. If media fails to work in such a way then the value of media is slowly vanishing where people are gradually losing their faith in the media.

**Loopholes in media**

Media plays vibrant, vital and vigorous role in society but when it fails and joins hands with the other three pillars of democracy than marrow core of democracy becomes disastrous and devastating. But the Media is not completely honest in depicting the real problem of the society. There are many factors which make media biased. The reality should be showcased whatsoever the situation may be. It should be believed that the true test of the vibrant democracy is the extent of independence given to media but the complications made by the people in media due to the independence given to them is the sole reason for certain issues in the country. Those issues which are made to look up by media in a certain way to benefit certain group and they manipulate the public opinion. The biggest problem in Indian media today is the paid news. The origin of this unprincipled practice of paid news was first raised by Paneer Selvam who was the editor of Hindu later back involved in liberalization of Indian economy in 1991. The paid news by the media often resulted in the misleading understanding to the public which constantly left them in untrust of media. Paid news lowers the standard of journalism. One examples of the paid news which resulted in serious consequences is due to the paid news controversy

the telephonic tapes between the corporate lobbyist Nira Radia and the journalist Bakrkha Dutt, Vir Shangi which resulted in controversy for running scripted interviews with the politician. Also for lobbying, A Raja, then the telecom minister for his role in 2G Scam held liable <sup>[1]</sup>. These incidents are the proof which shows that the ethics in journalism stands no longer being followed by the journalist today. The paid news which is given by the political party or any other big organisation easily deviate the media from the real objective. Media should act as the mirror to the world or should be an eye-opener but now Media has become the puppet in the hands of the government.

News is being manipulated to influence the public which would increase publicity of media. They always aim only in earning money rather than providing the quality information to the public. The people in media provide wrong information which diverts young mind that create social unrest and became a reason to cause violence in the society but, the actual responsibility of media is to bring out the real situation which is unknown to the public. Media persons have their own the liberty to expose all scams, frauds, corruption, and murder to light.

At times because of the lack of important news the simple casual matter in the society catches more attention. The news which has to be reached to millions of people remained reserved. Media should provoke the minds of people and people should get more impressive ideas, thoughts and nurture according to the society but when we get to see the whole world in a small window in front of us we start believing them to be true even without checking its validity. So, the media has to properly highlight the contemporary issues in the society.

Media favours or disagrees upon any issues. It is basically their opinion. Their opinion must depend only on the facts of the matter not on any other personal gains. In such a case people should use their minds to know if the facts are true or not. Media has the power to change the opinion of the people. To achieve this, people need a clear and truthful account of events and so that people will decide their own opinion and give their comment and view point in that matters. The flawless media is the one which gives unbiased news to the public and then leave it to the audience to make their own assessment. The people in media often fail to question the fault made by the authority which becomes advantage to the people who make mistakes. When the people who have the responsibility to break the fault themselves commit mistake intentionally or not it becomes free for people to continue the same.

**Conclusion**

In a nutshell, it is obvious that media is forced to be the puppet of the government. In the hide of freedom of expression which is guaranteed in Article 19(1) (a) of the Indian constitution <sup>[2]</sup>. The watchdog of democracy are always having connection of political parties, corporates, and business organisation for their own personal gain. The danger in this democratic country should be curtailed immediately, which is caused by media should be remedied. Media should be the voice of the voiceless, conscience of the conscienceless and the lamp to be lighted.

**References**

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2. Article 19(1)(a) of Indian constitution reads as, Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech etc, All citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression;