

Role of Media in Promoting Good-Governance: A Meta-Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The study explores the role of Media in promoting good governance in democratic states. This descriptive and analytical study intends to review the findings from relevant literatures. The objectives of the study are: to understand the role of free media in promoting good-governance; to recognize the way of Media empowerment in democratic states and to trace out general barriers of mass-media.

The study also indicated some other factors apart from free media operations which also contribute welfare of the citizens and promote good governance. But the main theme of good governance explored by literatures, is promoted only by free media practices in a democratic states.

The study specified clear relations between free media and good governance in democratic states. Finally, the main contribution to good governance is supported by several significant research studies which explored strong effects on promoting good governance in democratic states around the globe.

1. Introduction

Theoretically, it is accepted that media is the fourth pillar of democratic government which control over the functions of state and facilitating active citizenry and people participation in decision making. Media is not only a medium of information and awareness but it also broadens their knowledge about different political and social issues. Finally, an active citizen is the result of the best practices of media which engage people directly by an open access to take part in government functions on behalf of the society. The practice of people participation pledges transparency and accountability in public administration causes of good governance.

The other aim of the mass media is to prevent corruption, maladministration and to control over arbitration of the public officials. In this case media can report corrupt officials through investigation exploring their corruptive practices to society. Gradually, in democratic states same functions of free media promote media-development and media-governance which makes media-table as a gate-keeper for agenda setting and watchdog over all functions of the government. Therefore, the mass-media play crucial role in promoting good governance through a vertical and horizontal linkage and interaction of information between state and its citizens.

Generally, media exercise to interlink the state and people through a direct interaction by which government get the problem observed and take step toward solutions accordingly. Free media where state does not impose any restrictions on media, increasingly promotes the values of a democratic society where undoubtedly people can vote on important decisions of the state legislation. This way people enjoy their political right to vote and participation in issues of their own during parliamentary enactment.

Theoretically, there is an argument that mass-media has its effects on good governance in a democratic state but still

empirically there is lack of evidences to prove whether media promotes good governance in democratic states or not?

The studies conducted so far in this regard, had proven the potentiality of mass media in people awareness, watch-dog over the functions of the state, as a gate-keeper and flow of information and keeping active citizenry to take part in decision-making and finally functioning as agenda-setting body for the government. Because, any change in state functions could be possible only by a free and independent media operation through a vast participation of the citizens. Thus, it is logical to say that in democratic states free media is a supreme channel for citizen empowerment to promote welfare and good governance.

On the other hand, there is lack to prove it universally in practice where in the world some of the authoritarian states despite of not having freedom of press recorded less number of corruption and maladministration. For example, Singapore having no free media, has low level of corruption and criminal activities in the country. The same thing is found in comparison between China and Kenya, the study of Hassid and N. Brass (2015) reported that in democratic Kenya political parties form and die after each and every election and the newly formed government does not will to access those scandals of the previous government. So that the government does not follow a continue platform to handle all previous and future problems of the citizens. But in China, the role of China Communist Party is crucial in accessing the social problems and public scandals. This is because of the political will or capacity of the state and citizen expectations promote good governance, accountability and transparency.

2. Objectives of the study

- To understand the role of Mass-media in promoting good-governance
- To recognize the way of Media empowerment in democratic states

- To trace out general barriers of free media

3. Need for the study

This is important to know about media influence, impacts and the changes concerned with political and social environment being applied by media involvement. Many scholars from different fields the politicians, sociologists and economists stated that democratic state having free media insure citizens' interference in state policies and functions apply in a sound manner. This is the main way through which democratic governments have to perform under a continuous check and balance by media contribution with people observation. The elements of transparency, accountability, accuracy, right to information and people participation could be achieved through the free media practices which fledges the fundamentals of good governance. These links between free media and a democratic state could be clearly observed practically in most democratic states that declares the welfare state with an institutionalized capacity serving for the people.

The other important aspect for practicing of good governance is the presence of 'Political Will' of the government in order to bring transparency, accountability and timely access in the state functions. There are so many examples of democratic states but lacking behind good governance where there are reluctant officials in power who give less attention toward positive changes and welfare of society. Meanwhile democratic states involved in conflict having free media, give negative results for good governance and state-building. There is less focus on welfare of the people than it spoils and propaganda in society. The study of Allen, Putzel and Stremlau stated toward free media in conflict states like Iraq, Afghanistan and other Central African countries. Their main contribution to free media in conflict states is that in conflict states the free media could be more harmful than its goodness for the society and people which spreads out its poison and inflaming hatred around the environment.

Therefore, there is serious need to study and find out mass media role in promoting transparent and accountable government. Thus, the two components, the free media and a vast accessibility to official information for both media and people are mandatory in promoting good governance in a democratic state. For the purpose of the study, it is necessary to understand about good governance and its characteristics in brief.

4. Good governance and its characteristics

Here before good governance the word 'governance' has to be identified first. Governance is the process of decision-making where formal, informal bodies and actors of a country come to participate in decision-making, implementation or non-implementation of such decision.

According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, good governance means; "the process of decision making, and the process by which decisions are implemented or (not implemented)".

Apart from this there are many other national and international agencies, civil societies, media agencies and

informal actors involved in decision making. Government itself is the important actor of policy formulation and implementation.

On the other hand the good governance is the process where democratic states maintain welfare of the people and social security and ensure equal approach to all citizens of the country. Normally, under democratization, states have been changed into a welfare states and try to engage common masses in government functions and decision making so that the bottom-up approach have been applied to ensure equal and justified participation of the minorities.

The purpose of state through the process of good governance is to enhance the capabilities of both government and societal settings to embark on the management of their resources and maintain development of the country.

Landell-Mills and Seralgildin identifies good governance as "The use of political authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of resources for social and economic development".

The UNDP defines good governance as; "good governance among other things participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law."

Good governance is defined by OECD, that "it encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the environment in which economic operators function and in determining the distribution of benefits as well as the relationship between the ruler and the ruled."

Finally, the good governance is the process where all functions of the state going through the way of transparency and accountability of the state to its people. In this regard in democratic states mass-media play a crucial role to enhance transparency, responsiveness, people-participation, equitability, efficiency and rule of law. These are the main characteristics of good governance where democratic states try to reach and maintain them in their policies, schemes and daily administrative functions.

Generally, there are eight characteristics of good governance and most of them make the state to provide welfare and services to people based on a transparent mechanism. Here for extra knowledge, they are mentioned in brief.

1. Participation
 2. Rule of law
 3. Transparency
 4. Responsiveness
 5. Accountability
 6. Consensus oriented
 7. Effective and efficient
 8. Equitable
1. There should be people participation in government functions and decisions from the grass-root level and common masses.

2. A good governance is the mean of rule of law which would ensure transparency and equitability of the government.
3. Transparency is the other criterion of good governance, where government must have an open and transparent approach toward its functions in order to get people satisfaction.
4. Responsiveness means that government must give timely and proper response to citizens' queries and demands. There should be state-responsible channel settled for approaching their problems and queries.
5. Accountability is the other important feature of good governance where each government department and other individual officials should have accountability while performing their duties.
6. The census oriented means that its functions and performance should be accurately evaluated where each and everything is done on the basis of right accountancy.
7. Effectiveness and efficiency should be guaranteed in the skeleton of good governance.
8. And the equal approach toward all citizens of the country must be followed where different masses of the lower communities, vulnerable and ethnicities participate in decision-making and implementation of the policies and programs.



5. Research Methodology

The study is based on secondary data. It is a descriptive and analytical study, means to find out the link between Media and Good-governance in different countries. Relevant books, reports (World Bank, UNDRH) and articles from different sources are reviewed to gain insights into the study.

6. Reviews of literature

The present study aims to understand the role of Mass-media in promoting good-governance by active citizenry participation. Here are several studies on various aspects of media which emphasizes the role and impact of media on

democracy and good governance. The accessible literature review is presented here as below.

Johanna (May, 2009) in her research article, pointed out three aspects which empower media to promote good-governance. These three dimensions are 1; Media as a watchdog can protect public need and interest of society which would prevent news broadcasting about corruption and misinformation. 2; Media as agenda-setters, play a main role to raise awareness about major social and global issues and 3; the Media as a gatekeeper, unites various perspectives and voices of people to debate on concern issues.

Author further states that active citizenry participation in media debates can improve socio-political conditions which ensures fulfilment of citizens' rights and obligations.

In a report to the center of Media Assistance By Mayer (June, 2012) stated different scholar's viewpoints of their research as some of them states that a free and pluralistic media is a good tool for improving democracy, accountability, transparency and development but some of them misquoted its support for Good-governance. This report further indicated that "A free Media system surely goes side by side with good-governance and democracy but is there any evidence? Or it applies everywhere in all circumstances?" Scholar Pippa found a strong correlation between free media and good-governance and democracy but at the same time she indicates that there are some countries like Singapore having low level of corruption with restriction on freedom of press.

By the same report the other important approach of Tim Allen, James Putzel and Nicole Stremlau stated toward free media in conflict states like Iraq, Afghanistan and other Central African countries. Their main contribution to free media in conflict states is that in conflict states the free media could be more harmful than its goodness for the society and people which spreads out its poison and inflaming hatred around the environment.

The same study found about media role played in Afghanistan for bringing peace-building and security but the result revealed its less positive impacts on maintaining peace and security.

In a report for "Media and Peace-building in Afghanistan" Himelfarb (2010) stated that since eight years before now we have a high and dramatic expansion of media channels in Afghanistan which raised the hopes of people for a new era of permanent peace, stability, transparency and good governance in the country but after failing media in this regard, disappointment have spread in mindset across the country.

Norris and Adugbemi (2012) in a report to the Center for Media assistance, concluded that based on the evidences there is a systematic link between media and good-governance and media as watch-dog controlling over the powers and bring transparency in the functions of the government.

Norris (2004) in her article entitled "Good governance, Human development and Mass-communications" stated the

suggestions of Liberal theories about media role played as Watchdog strengthens human development and democratization, promoting transparent government and highlights maladministration, corruption and policy failures of the state and officials. The author further states that investigative journalism can bring more transparency and openness by critical evaluation and records in the whole process of government.

The author quoted the statement by the World Bank President, James D. Wolfensohn about free press that free media is the core of equitable development, which means that the whole development of a society is vulnerable being promoted by freedom of expression. He further states that if there is no channel of searchlight on corruption and maladministration then there would be no proper decision-making for community development.

In addition to this study revealed that media empower good governance and enhance the development of the societal settings based on two conditions; first where there is a free functioning of mass media and the people has full freedom of expression. Second there should be wide spread public access to these media channels. The author further indicates that apart from the free media and democracy the political will or state capacity and citizen expectation are two other variables which promote good governance and social empowerment.

The availability of political will and citizen participation have the same effectiveness for good governance. No matter there would be a freedom of press but some countries having free media and democratic systems recorded higher in corruption and maladministration than an extreme authoritarian country. Here is a comparison study of Kenya and China which shows high corruption and less political will in democratic Kenya than an authoritarian China which has a full censorship on free media but willing to solve different problems on time.

Hassid and N. Brass (2015) in an article entitled "Scandals, media and good governance in Kenya and China" reported that in democratic Kenya political parties form and die after each and every election and the newly formed government does not will to access those scandals of the previous government. So that the government does not follow continues platform to handle all previous and future problems of the citizens. But in China the role of China Communist Party is crucial in accessing the social problems and public scandals. This is because of the political will or capacity of the state and citizen expectations promote good governance, accountability and transparency.

The other study focusses on people participation in decisions and policy-making process in a democratic state where media should give political knowledge and awareness to the masses in order to engage them in political and administrative functions of the state.

In the study of Tomaselli and A. White (2008) quoted Hyden and Okigbo's views about media role in democratization of Africa. The authors stated that media as an important institution of recognizing and formulating specific demands of

the citizens for promoting more democratic governance. The authors further indicated that media as a channel of providing plenty of information and knowledge about each function of the government but there is a high need of citizen education and political awareness which broadens media access and finally ensures direct participation of the citizens in decision making process.

Yadav (2001) in an article stated the key elements of good governance point out as three essential aspects; legitimacy, accountability and transparency of the government and transparency could not be in practice without a free and developed media. The author further indicated that media helps people to know about the current affairs of the state and in general the whole globe. Media identifies modernity and pluralism and publishing information in order to make public service more responsive to the people.

Therefore, media is a powerful tool which performs vital tasks of publishing information, utilization of the societies, controlling the powers of the authorities and transforming societal settings toward good governance.

The study of Louw (2008) found that free and independent media can control government functions, raise issues and highlight deficiencies of the government but a media tied to government like in Zimbabwe cannot criticize government shortcomings which inculcates corruption and authoritarianism. He further stated that free and independent media can open the way to for people participation which stabilize good governance of the state.

Free media and freedom of speech is the first need for the establishment of good governance. And mostly the Journalistic views as well as the liberal theorists believe that good governance is impossible without having a free press and freedom of speech for citizens' participation in government functions. This view is supported by many countries of the world especially, by courts of European Union, North America and United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human rights. In article 19 states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression which gives right to every single citizen to seek, receive and impart information through any media channels without interference of the state.

Serveas (2009) in his article stated about media communication that it establishes foundation for good governance, accountability and effectiveness of the government and ensures the active participation and engagement of civil society in decision making. He further pointed out that free media gives birth to a system of checks and balances over the all functions of government, manages conflicts of interests by delegation of the powers with grass root people of society.

As stated before, the power of free media is crucial in promoting accountability, transparency and people participation. A free and independent media can promote good governance through institutional monitoring which plays dual role to spread awareness among the people about any corrupt action of the private or public institutions and meanwhile can

report investigations of the relevant corruption and maladministration.

Hussain (2014) in his article stated that good governance is a skeleton of transparency, massive access of people to information and participation of the people in decision making process which all these could be possible only when there is a free and active media in operations. The author further indicated that having access to officials information on their performance, citizens can exercise their civil and political rights in a better way in order to fight against corruption.

Udomsip stated that media as a mirror performing the duties of society, media as a single window of information performs great role in education and media as a powerful channel for people participation ensure good governance. He further indicates that the investigative reporting makes the officials for deep and confidential information to be shared with citizens which prevent corruption and other maladministration of the state. This also encourages people to exercise their right to information which confidently makes them aware about all decisions of the government so that they could participate in socio-economic affairs of the state.

The study of Voltmer (2009) revealed that media as a flow of all kind of information between government and citizens puts preconditions for both government accountability and social accountability. And more specifically, media should be an open channel for a broad range of voices of different political parties, social activists, ethnicities, independent experts and ordinary people of the society where they could express their alternative views about government policies and decisions. Furthermore, the author stated that media is considered as 'Forth Estate', which goes together with government functions to provide a continuous platform of "Check and Balance" in order to control the power of political officials, prevent corruption and maladministration of the government.

Apart from this the author stated McQuail's view on media accountability, as the principal of media accountability is not only to apply obligations and restrictions in its functions but it strengthens media independency from the government to ensure free and vast access rights to information. But practically, Voltmer (2009) stated that researches and empirical studies resulted media lacks behind in fulfilling democratic roles in its coverage because of its reliance on official sources. Thus, Blumler and Gurevitch pointed out that in this manner media plays less role in political reporting as a watchdog than the journalistic principles imply.

Peters (2016) in his article entitled "Governance and the Media" pointed that media involves any numbers of actors from both state and society in framing of governance with different styles of governing. The author further includes that the real power of mediatisation is to bring a transparent governing body with proper openness to citizens. On one hand media hand over major information about government functions to people by its investigative reporting and on the other hand the transparent climate facilitates media governance in the sphere of information and interactions.

The study of Nisbet (2008) examined the relationship between media and democracy in developed nations to know how mass media enhances political and social knowledge of the citizens. The result of his research revealed that newspaper and radio strongly promote democratic citizenships.

7. Findings and discussion

Going through various literatures found very specifically about the media practices and its role in democratic in non-democratic states, declared that there is very clear relationship between free media and good governance. And it is almost revealed by many literatures that free media in democratic states resulted in promoting good governance and people participation which proves that media best practices of watch dog, gatekeeper and check and balance can enhance the capabilities of both government and its citizens.

The findings from literatures are supporting almost that there is a strong relation between free media and a democratic states where media has the potentiality to criticize on government for maintaining transparency and accountability.

The study of Johanna (May, 2009) in her research article pointed out three aspects which empower media to promote good-governance. The first, Media as a watchdog can protect public need and interest of society which would prevent news broadcasting about corruption and misinformation. Second, Media as agenda-setters, play a main role to raise awareness about major social and global issues and third, the Media as a gatekeeper, unites various perspectives and voices of people to debate on concern issues.

The study revealed that media perform three major functions which contribute in promoting welfare and good governance. Media as watch dog, monitor all functions of the state that helps to bring transparency. Media as agenda-setter spread public awareness about national and international issues and Media as gatekeeper, unite people to demand for their needs which leads them toward social and political transformation.

The study found that free and pluralistic media is a good tool for improving democracy, accountability, transparency and development but some of them misquoted its support for Good-governance.

Further, it found a strong correlation between free media and good-governance and democracy but at the same time Singapore having low level of corruption with restriction on freedom of press.

This revealed that free media and good governance has strong relations but this is not universally applicable in each democratic state in all situations. Here it has found some other factors that also contribute good governance and welfare of the citizens which at the same time could not be achievable in a democratic state with the sphere of free media.

This study also revealed another origin of free media in conflict states which could be more harmful than its goodness for the society and people that spreads out its poison and

inflaming hatred around the environment. Here this study shows a changing role of free media in democratic states dependent on unstable conditions.

The other important thing for maintaining good governance is the political will and people expectations from government. Despite of free media and democratic states there won't be any guaranty of transparency and responsibility in the functions of the government where there is lack of government will. Study reported that in democratic Kenya due to political instability the newly formed government does not will to access and handle those scandals of the previous government. So that the government is lacking behind to handle all previous and future problems of the citizens. But in China the role of China Communist Party is crucial in accessing the social problems and public scandals. This is because of the political will or capacity of the state and citizen expectations which prevent corruption and maladministration.

This study revealed the Liberal theory about media where a free and independent media in a democratic state could bring accountability in officials and develop democratic values of the state. Public awareness, education, active citizenry engagement in decision-making, transparency and accountability are the fundamentals of good governance which could be effectively achieved in the sphere of free media and democratic environment.

Furthermore, the study found that free media raise issues and highlight the deficiencies of the government but a media tied to government like in Zimbabwe cannot criticize government shortcomings which inculcates corruption and authoritarianism.

Mostly the Journalistic views as well as the liberal theorists believe that good governance is impossible without having a free press and freedom of speech for citizens' participation in government functions.

Free media and communications establish foundations for good governance, accountability and efficiency of the government and ensure the active participation of civil society in decision making. This is because, free media give birth to a system of check and balance over the functions of government and manage conflicts of interests by delegation of the powers with the grass root people of society. Thus there would be less chance of a transparent government without an independent media.

The same study of Hussain (2014) in his article stated that good governance is a skeleton of transparency, massive access of people to information and participation of the people in decision making process which all these could be possible only when there is a free and active media in operations.

From the study of literatures have been found three important aspects of media and good governance where these aspects are interlinked with each other. The empowerment of mass-media and the general barriers are the important aspects which influence each other and finally a free and developed media could promote good governance. Mass-media play a

positive role in democratic states for the sake of democratization and a transparent government which has been mentioned in the following points.

- Mass-media ensures active participation of people in government functions from society.
- Media functioning as watchdog over officials, executing check and balance on government where prevention of corruption could be possible.
- Public awareness about various national and international issues performed by Mass-media which inculcate special energy in masses to think and share their ideas about them.
- Education and knowledge is the other important phenomenon for an active citizenry in democratic states which is through different channels of Mass-media.
- Media as agenda-setter, can facilitate to unite all voices of the country to vote for public and national interests. Media during critical conditions could interlink different ethnicity groups, civil societies and pressure groups to keep unity and integrity of the country.
- Media as a fourth pillar of the state, observe and investigate about corruption and corruptive officials and other illegal actions of the state and society in order to bring transparency and efficiency in all-round functions of the state.
- Media brings both government and people together and facilitate to omit the gap between people and state which ensures real cooperation among them.

Media empowerment is the key for promoting good governance where there should be free and independent media in operations on one hand. And on the other hand public awareness, education and broaden access of information is mandatory for people participation in government. Therefore, free media having vast access to official information could establish a transparent sphere of government. Thus, media empowerment could be possible in following ways.

- Democratic state and freedom of press is the first step toward the empowerment of mass-media practices.
- Access to vast information and investigation could boost media empowerment and extreme coverage of issues to broadcast or telecast them.
- Citizen journalism and people participation is the other important way of media pluralizing.
- Media ethics and media development should be gain through national and international training programs and conferences.
- The international journalistic standards and an independent law for press-freedom are the key principles for the development of media practices.

However, constitutionally, there would be freedom of press but in practice there is lack of free media practices so that mass-media come under state-censorship where journalists could not perform their duties in accordance to a responsible and professional journalism. In this case some of the general barriers for Mass-media are mentioned in the following points.

- An authoritarian and autocratic state usually bans on free media practices which creates big challenges for the freedom of press and right to information.

- Simultaneously, state-controlled media follow only government-given agenda and it broadcasts mostly the propaganda of the government rather than to promote welfare of the state.
- Having less access to official information is the other challenging phenomenon even in democratic states where government shares less and choice-based information with media for the purpose of propagandizing.
- Less education and less awareness of the citizens can prevent people participation in government which impacts negatively on media empowerment.

8. Conclusion

People in democratic societies represent their own origin of societal, political and economic perspectives as being free to share and discuss such issues. The medium of mass-media is broadly used to pertain interact between citizens, civil societies

and government to guarantee people participation in decision-making. This way government allows grass-root people in a bottom-up approach while framing policies and programs.

Media on the other hand perform as watch dog through a system of check and balance on government functions in order to ensure a transparent government. The investigative journalism which purely indulge in finding fault practices of the corrupt officials, explores them to social and legal judgment to prevent such kind of fraudulent and illegal functions of the officials.

So the study found that mass-media has an intensive role in promoting good governance and welfare of the state. But it is also realized that government and political will is mandatory to support an accountable administration. Therefore, mass-media as a bridge interact people with government in order to have access to information of their demands.

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