

Essay on the mass media and an enlightened public

[Media](#)



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Introduction and Thesis

Since decades ago, the media have often offered a comprehensive platform that enhances enlightenment of the public. Even in the contemporary society, the role of the media remains a noble course that is worth sustaining. In fact, the media has evolved into being termed as the fourth branch of the government tasked with the role of advocating for the people's right to information. It is imperative to note the role of the media in enlightening the public is jeopardized by a wider array of constraints. Many at times, these constraints are concentrated in the internal and the external media environments (Lidsky & Wright 10). While it is true that these constraints have a relatively similar magnitude of influence on the ability of the media to enlighten the public, there exists specific constraints whose influence are colossal. Based on a personal thought, the primary obstacle in today's media environment that poses as a great impediment to media enlightenment is lack of serious media reporting.

Definition of the obstacle

Lack of serious media reporting as an obstacle in the contemporary media environment refers to cases whereby the media lacks the ability establish and sustain serious reporting in print, audio, and visual media. Due to this, various media platforms have failed to offer adequate information to the public. As such, the role of the media to enlighten the public has been jeopardized by the inability of the media to offer serious reports that can be of benefit to the public. There is a wider array of issues in the contemporary media environment that reduce the influence the ability of the media to

establish and sustain serious reporting. Above all, media markets have and continue to make it difficult to sustain serious media reporting (Islam 24). Evidently, the media markets have put premiums on shallow and sensational media reports. As a result, it does not matter whether media report shallowly or sensationally. This has further resulted in the “ explosion” of different media whereby scores of print and audio media have sprung up. This reduces the seriousness of reporting in that the various media platforms are engaging in unnecessary competition for various consumer bases. Such competition has prompted some media outlets to air false reports aimed at gaining the attention and preference from the populations. Through this, the media fails to guarantee access to true information; hence, failing to enlighten the public (Islam 18). In a nutshell, increased emergence of media outlets injures reporting because it gives birth to poor journalism.

Examples

A recent example of a case where lack of serious media reporting has been evident in the recent past was evident during the Boston Marathon bombings incidence that took place on 15th April. During this incident, various media outlets gave false reports that an arrest had been made regarding the Boston incident. Another recent example of lack of serious reporting occurred during the Newtown, Conn. shooting incident whereby several media reported false information regarding the shooter. Precisely, the media identified the incident gunman’s brother as the shooter.

Both the above mentioned cases impeded the public from being informed because the media rushed to report information that was false. As such, the information reaching the public was not useful because it not the right

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information. On a similar note, the two examples depict the manner in which competition for reporting by different media outlets aligned with the need to attract public attention results in a lack of seriousness in reporting. If the media has observed seriousness in both the two incidences, they would have reported information that was true; hence, enlightening the public on the real occurrences.

Conclusion

Work Cited

Islam, Roumeen. Information and Public Choice: From Media Markets to Policy Making. Washington, D. C: World Bank, 2008. Print.

Lidsky, Lyryssa B, and R G. Wright. Freedom of the Press: A Reference Guide to the United States Constitution. Wetsport (Conn.: Praeger, 2004. Print.