

Communication, power and counter- power

Business



Major Contention or Hypothesis: The author analyzes how the media and the modern forms of communication provide a social platform where power and counter-power are developed. The author provides three ways in which the media and other forms of communication act as sources of power and counter-power. They are; Mass Communication and Media Politics: Social communication, which has the capacity to influence people's mind, provides the basis for politics. The media provides a channel of interaction between the politicians and the citizens. What is portrayed in the media about an individual tends to highly influence the way people think about that individual and they make their decisions concerning an individual politicians based on what they see in the media.

The working of a political system is usually staged for the media. The media in turn tailors political messages in such a way that it suites the media language, usually, the television language. How the message is formatted, has substantial effect on the message. The media does not hold power in itself, but it definitely constitutes a large space where power is decided. Moreover, how the media portrays the personality of an individual also plays a great role in influencing the mind of the people. Remember, what politically does not exist in the media, does not exist in the public.

Media Politics, Scandal Politics, and the Crisis of Political Legitimacy: Scandal politics aired in the media also play a great role in power sourcing. Scandal politics affect election and decision making by weakening the credibility of those involved in the scandals. However, the intensity of the effect varies.

There are those who take it as a form of entertainment while there are others who draw political implications from it by associating all the politicians with

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immoral behavior. However, when it comes to voting, people choose an individual whose immorality can be associated with their interest.

Therefore, scandal politics end up playing a part in power creation. On the other hand, scandal politics has effect on practice of democracy. Crisis of political legitimacy can be attributed to scandal politics and media politics although, not exclusively. There is a notion that scandal politics portrayed by the media contributes greatly in democracy disbelief among the people. Since scandal politics results in inclusion of all politicians in one bag (immoral), during the election process, people choose the lesser immoral person among the others. Mass Self-Communication and Counter-power: With emergence of mass self-communication, the media is able to combine both horizontal and vertical communication.

With many people using the mass self-communication to pass information about themselves, the media use this form of communication, basically the internet to interact with a large number of audiences. The social actors on the other hand use mass self-communication to challenge and change the power which has been institutionalized by the media to the society. The technology which is responsible for self-communication is not just a tool to the social actors, but also a medium to developing autonomy. The more an individual wants to develop autonomy (physically, professionally, personality wise) the more they use the internet. The more a person uses the internet, the more autonomous that individual becomes vis-a-vis societal rules and institutions. The author do advance his hypotheses by showing how mass media and mass self-communication converge together and contributes towards formation of a platform for creation of power and counter-power.

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Businesses in the mass media are developing investment strategies to enable them connect with mass self-communication. On the other hand, politicians are using the mass self-communication to post messages in order to capture media attention, and in the short-run, get some publicity through the mass media. Electoral politics are also trying to gain their share in the mass self-communication by using the internet to undertake electoral campaigns. Support of Author's Contentions: The author uses numerous case studies conducted in different countries to support his hypotheses. The author also uses statistical information from the case studies to support his contentions. In addition, the author uses real examples such as how Google acquired YouTube and how media businesses are investing in YouTube and other modern digitalized networking medium as a mean of converging mass media and mass self-communication. Another example given by the author is the use of Hotspup. com by a group of politicians in the US 2006 Congress elections. Overall, I found the author's approach well reasoned and supported.

Style and Substance: The literature review is thorough, well cited and supported. Recommendation to Power Seekers and Counter-power individuals: I would recommend this article to individuals who are seeking power and social actors seeking to challenge and change societal institutions and rules for the insightful information it provides.