

The Impact of New Media on Classical Media Philosophy Theories

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Abstract:

The media is linked to politics and its systems, and to society and its coherence. It takes from them the most important principles, frameworks and philosophies. The theories that are interested in linking the media process to the political aspect are called the theories of the media philosophy. These theories are based on philosophy, values and societal ideologies to explain the most important features that characterize the media from the patterns of ownership, the right to freedom of expression, the nature of finance and others.

It should be noted that interest in studying media systems emerged at the end of the Second World War focusing on the analysis of information systems based on the dismantling of the relationship between the media systems and the governance systems under which they operate. It follows that the formulation of the features of the information system has always been characterized by the nature of the prevailing political and social system. And that's what our study came up with, which aimed to see how resilient the theories of classical media philosophy are to the digital tide. new media ", which proved to be ineffective as the new media authority grew.

Keywords: new media; Freedom; Authority; Public authority; Theories of media philosophy; Information systems.

Introduction

The theories of media philosophy have dominated a significant portion of media studies. They meticulously elucidate the political perspective on media and its roles in society, addressing the organization of tasks and the interaction with media. This perspective initially focused on the press as the first media outlet to shape society. The media sector was considered a state appendage with limited freedom. Consequently, this influenced the press, oscillating between administrative control and censorship on one side and individual ownership and freedom of expression on the other.

This trend persisted until the present, witnessing tremendous developments, particularly in the field of media systems. The evolution of media technologies culminated in what is known as the digital age. The profound effects of this technology, with its distinct characteristics and features, cannot be overlooked. This article explores the resilience of classical media philosophy theories in the face of the new media era.

What is the historical background and conceptual framework that gave rise to media philosophy theories? What are the key theories, and how has new media influenced the assumptions and principles of these theories?

It's worth noting that this article employs a comprehensive methodology in approaching the topic. The descriptive-analytical investigative approach is utilized, delving deep into concepts through historical analysis and manifestations. Additionally, deductive and analytical methods are applied to discuss various aspects of the subject. This study serves as an introductory exploration, recognizing that the impacts of new media are still in the formative stages in our society.

1- Conceptual Introduction to Media Philosophy Theories

1.1 Epistemological and Intellectual Frameworks of Media Philosophy Theories

Although the media phenomenon has ancient roots in human society, academic interest in media as a subject of scholarly studies emerged only towards the end of World War I. The focus on analyzing media systems, especially journalistic systems, began after World War II. The research aimed to understand the relationship between media systems and the governing systems they operate under. It was revealed that media systems reflect the philosophy of governance, serving as a natural extension of the political system in any human society (Abu Zeid, 2007).

These theories idealistically describe the media system, defining its structure and operations. They do not describe the actual state of the media but emphasize the idealized nature of media and what it should be. These theories stem from the philosophy, values, and prevailing ideologies in society, laying the foundation for the establishment of media institutions and giving them the required legitimacy and characteristics (Al-Qarni, 2010). This is especially true regarding ownership of media outlets, people's right to freedom of expression, and the nature of the political systems that these media serve to express.

1.2 Classifications of Media Philosophy Theories

The intellectual and philosophical history surrounding media has seen significant contributions from various thinkers, media professionals, critics, and sociologists over the years. One of the most famous media books in recent decades is "Four Theories of the Press," written in 1956 by three distinguished communication scholars after World War II: Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schram. They identified four normative theories framing media practices: the authoritarian theory, socialist theory, liberal theory,

and the theory of social responsibility (Waneemi, 2022). Despite sharp criticisms directed at these theories or models, they have remained widely used.

In 1970, communication and media scholar Lasswell introduced a new classification based on press ownership and philosophy. It included five theories: the authoritarian theory, social authoritarian theory, liberal theory, social liberal theory, and social centrism theory.

Additional classifications emerged in the 1980s by communication and media scholar Hachten, introducing the authoritarian and social communist theories and adding two new theories: the revolutionary theory and the developmental theory.

In 1983, communication and media scholar McQuail presented a new classification that retained the four theories established by Siebert and his colleagues, adding the developmental theory (Al-Mashaqbeh, 2011).

1.3 Roles of Media Systems Based on Media Philosophy Theories

Golding and Elliott proposed comparing media systems based on the roles they perform, identifying four roles that may overlap or coexist: (D.S.M., 2020):

- The Fourth Estate role as the vigilant guardian of people's rights.
- The role of marketing the policies of the existing system.
- Support and dissemination of a specific ideology or defense thereof.
- The role of the spectator and neutral observer of societal events.

2. Classical Media Philosophy Theories

2.1 Authoritarian Theory

Authoritarian theory is considered the first theory that explained the relationship between media and the prevailing social and political system. It originated from the idea that "the ruler is the shadow of God on Earth," supported by philosophers such as Hobbes, Plato, and Machiavelli, emphasizing the governance of Authority over all aspects of society, including media.

2.1.1 Conceptual Framework of Authoritarian Theory:

This theory emerged in England in the 16th century and spread across Europe with the invention of the printing press. It was associated with dominant elites in England, France, and Spain, viewing humans as subjects of the state and instruments for the natural right of the state. In this context, the theory defends authority while monitoring published content, justifying it by preserving societal stability. Samuel Johnson in the 18th century stated that every society has the right to preserve peace, security, and public order. Governments have the right to prevent opinions that pose a danger to the society's safety (Waneemi, 2020).

2.1.2 Basic Principles of the press within the Authoritarian Theory Framework:

The theoretical framework of the authoritarian press system is based on aligning journalism in the service of the ruling authority, whether based on despotic or absolute rule. The characteristics of the authoritarian press system can be described as follows (Abu Zeid, 2007):

- Ownership of Newspapers: Allowing individuals to own newspapers alongside the government, adopting a mixed ownership approach.
- Newspaper Publication Methods: Requiring government licenses for publication.
- Financial Assurance: Requiring financial deposits before publication.
- Right to Practice Journalism: Requiring citizens to obtain a license from the authority to work in journalism or pre-registration requirements.

- Press Penalties and Sanctions: Granting administrative authorities (authoritarian) the right to impose penalties and sanctions on newspapers.
- Disabling and Cancellation of Newspapers: Granting administrative authorities (authoritarian) the right to disable or cancel newspapers.
- Press Control: Granting the authority the right to impose control on newspapers.
- Right to Criticize the Political System: Newspapers are not allowed to criticize the political system.

Through these characteristics, it is evident that the authoritarian system imposed extensive restrictions on the media system (means, ownership, publication, etc.), resulting in limited progress in media practice at that time.

2.2 Freedom Theory of media

Initially, scholars did not provide a specific definition for the freedom theory of media. Instead, they focused on explaining the various meanings associated with the term "freedom." Some referred to this theory as the "théorie," and others used the plural form due to its diverse aspects (Ihdadn, 2007).

Freedom theory is considered the complete opposite of the power theory. It places the individual above the state, viewing humans as rational beings. Although individuals may not be perfect on an individual level, when collectively engaged, they are believed to make better decisions for the common good of society.

This theory evolved slowly in the 16th century and was refined in the 18th century (Al-Musailmi, 9952). Some argue that Edmund Burke was the first to introduce this term in the late 18th century, referring to the growing role of the press in England. It aimed to keep pace with the functions of the other three authorities: the House of Lords, the Church, and the House of Commons.

2.2.1 Concept of Freedom Theory of media:

Proponents of this theory believe that the individual and their well-being are the ultimate goals of the existence of society. Society exists for the benefit of the individual, and therefore, necessary precautions must be taken to protect the individual from oppression, whether it be individual or societal, or at the state level. The state is seen as a mediator through which individuals conduct all their activities. If the government attempts to interfere with this activity, individuals must fight against it with all their strength and seek to overthrow the government, bringing in a new government in line with the liberating ideology (Al-Mashaqba, 2011).

2.2.2 Characteristics of Journalism under Freedom Theory:

The characteristics of the liberal system can be described as follows (Abu Zeid, 2007):

- Ownership of Newspapers: Individual ownership.
- Newspaper Publication Methods: Unconditional publication without licensing or notification.
- Financial Assurance: No required financial deposit before or after publication.
- Right to Practice Journalism: Citizens have the right to practice journalism without conditions.
- Press Penalties and Sanctions: The judiciary alone has the right.

- Disabling and Cancellation of Newspapers: No authority in society, including the judicial authority, has the right to disable or cancel newspapers.
- Press Control: No control on newspapers is allowed.
- Right to Criticize the Head of State: Newspapers are allowed to criticize the head of state.
- Right to Criticize the Political System: Newspapers are allowed to criticize the political system.

Through these principles, the broad freedom granted to journalistic practice, whether through ownership or practice, is evident. This allowed journalism to grow and flourish, both quantitatively (the number of newspapers and other media) and qualitatively (diversity of media content and its various forms: news, articles, etc.).

2.2.3 Functions of Journalism According to Freedom Theory:

Based on the significant freedom granted to journalism in terms of ownership and practice, the following tasks are assigned to journalism (Hadi Hassan Aliwi, 2006):

- Serving the agreed-upon political system by the general public.
- Informing the public opinion and promoting the people's self-governance.
- Protecting the rights of individuals (citizens) and the rights of the state to serve society while respecting the public order and media ethics.
- Providing balanced programs for entertainment and recreation for individuals, achieving the comfort of all, and aligning with the traditions and ethics of society.

Thomas Jefferson asserted that journalism, according to this theory, has two major functions: enlightening the public and safeguarding personal freedoms. He also believed that journalism should act as a watchdog on the state (Abu Arjah, 2000).

These functions have undoubtedly evolved and expanded with the growth of liberal theory in politics and media, adding other functions generally centered around serving the individual.

2.3 Social Responsibility Theory

The philosophy of freedom in Western societies has evolved since the late 17th century and early 18th century under the influence of calls for freedom by figures such as John Milton and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Liberal philosophy aims to minimize the restrictions imposed by the state on individuals. During the 20th century, it became clear that media freedom entails certain risks, as the ultimate goal shifted toward maximizing profits and diverting people's attention rather than providing informative, cultural, and beneficial content (Abdul Hamid, 2000).

In response to criticisms of freedom theory, the theory of social responsibility emerged, attempting to reconcile the independence of media with its responsibilities towards society.

2.3.1 Principles of Social Responsibility Theory:

The social responsibility theory seeks to find a balance between the concepts of freedom and responsibility. It originated after World War II when scholarly and research communities in the United States and Western Europe began studying the role of mass media in these societies and its functional obligations toward individuals, society, the state, organizations, media institutions themselves (Abdul Rahman, 2005).

Dennis MacQuail summarized the fundamental principles of the social responsibility theory in the following aspects (Rishty, 1978):

- The press, as well as other media, should present and implement specific commitments towards society.
- These commitments can be fulfilled by adhering to professional standards for conveying information, such as truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance.
- To fulfill these commitments, the press should self-regulate.
- The press should avoid publishing content that could lead to crime, violence, social chaos, or insults to minorities.
- The press should be diverse, reflecting a variety of opinions and committed to the right of reply.
- Society has the right to expect the press to adhere to high standards in fulfilling its functions.
- Public intervention can be justified to achieve the public interest.

Through these principles, it is evident that the theory of social responsibility has outlined all aspects of journalistic work, emphasizing service to society and addressing its concerns. This is corroborated by the functions proposed by this theory, which journalism must fulfill.

This theory aims to avoid the negatives associated with freedom theory by focusing on serving society, addressing its concerns, providing entertainment, defending its interests, and raising conflicts to the level of objective discussion, free from emotional bias. Generally, this theory proposed solutions through the regulation of journalism, issuing codes of professional ethics to protect the freedom of journalistic editing, and the enactment of laws to curb monopolies. It also recommended the establishment of press councils and the creation of a system to provide aid to newspapers (Rishty, 1978). Despite these recommendations, the theory faced several criticisms.

In this context, some researchers have introduced synonymous terms for media theories, such as media systems, media doctrines, or media philosophies. For example, there is authoritarian media theory, authoritarian media doctrine, and authoritarian media philosophy for liberalism, socialism, etc. (Al-Mashaqbeh, 2011).

These theories are closely related to media philosophy due to a significant relationship between them. Media philosophy explores the dialectical relationship between media and its applications in society, analyzing the interaction between the foundations of media as a science and its actual practice in social reality. Scholars argue that media theories are part of media philosophy because media philosophy is broader and more comprehensive than theories. Often, media theories are colloquially referred to as media philosophy, but, in reality, using the term "media theories" reflects discussions about ideologies, social and economic beliefs, or discussions about the origins and sources of the media process (Mursal, Message...) (Said, 2008).

It is noteworthy that the association of media theories initially started with the press. In fact, journalism paved the scientific and research ground for the birth of media theories. Some Western researchers even refer to them as "journalism theories" because journalism is the oldest media outlet, and the opinions and ideas crystallized in media theories mostly originated when the press was the only means of communication. As journalism reflects the social and political structures that emerge under its umbrella, this necessitated a thorough and analytical examination of human nature, society, state, the individual's relationship with the state and society, the nature of knowledge, and the concepts of truth, objectivity, or bias (Al-Mashaqbeh, 2011).

2.4 Social Theory

This theory emerged as a reactionary response to the extreme individualism that characterized liberal theory during its flourishing in the 18th century. The socialist theory was born out of the excesses of individualism that marked freedom theory.

2.4.1 Social Theory and Media Freedom:

Freedom, as conceptualized in media freedom theory, concerns individual freedom as a consumer of media. Within the Western context, it is one of the arenas where the conflict between the rich and the poor unfolds, with money being a force that allows itself almost limitless power. In this sense, it becomes another weapon wielded by those with financial power to shape public opinion under the guise of freedom. Marxists reject this freedom, arguing that it does not truly liberate humanity. They contend that Western freedom is more formal than real, granting those in power the right to strengthen their authority at the expense of the weak. Thus, if both the rich and the poor are told they are equally free to do as they please, the rich can do things the poor cannot, placing the poor in their service and limiting their freedom.

Marxists believe that justice demands, above all, the liberation of humanity from all the restrictions and obstacles imposed by society, allowing individuals to truly benefit from freedom. According to this perspective, the state, under the leadership of the party, can ensure this liberation, and the media aids the state in this task, which is its function (Ihdadnan, 2007).

2.4.2 Principles of Social Theory in Media:

The social theory in media is based on the fundamental idea that the working class holds power in any socialist society. To maintain this power, the working class must control the means of intellectual production, of which media constitutes a significant part. Therefore, media should be subject to the control of representatives of the working class, primarily members of the Communist Party.

The social media system operates on the following principles (Abu Zeid, 1986):

The press should be realistic, meaning it depicts social reality without distortion or exaggeration.

The press should be committed, meaning it aligns with the issues and problems of the existing political system and the prevailing ideology. It should play a role in raising awareness about this social system and its ideology.

The press should be collective, meaning it does not rely on private activities and emphasizes collective work, continually highlighting the relationship between events and society.

In the Marxist system, to achieve realism, commitment, and collectivism, the press rejects any form of private ownership and advocates for social ownership, represented by parties, unions, and associations (Abu Zeid, 1986).

In summary, media under this theory is directed towards enhancing the success and continuity of the socialist system, especially the dictatorship of the Communist Party.

2.4.3 Characteristics of the Social Media System:

The characteristics of the socialist media system can be described in the following dimensions (Abu Zeid, 1986):

- Ownership of newspapers: Allowing public ownership and prohibiting private ownership of newspapers.

- Newspaper issuance methods: Requiring a license from the government or the party.
- Financial insurance: Not requiring financial insurance payment.
- Right to practice journalism: Requiring citizens to obtain a license from the government or the party to work in journalism.
- Press penalties and sanctions: Some fall under the jurisdiction of administrative authorities, while others are under the sole jurisdiction of judicial authorities.
- Disabling and canceling newspapers: Allowing the government or the party to disable or cancel newspapers.
- Press censorship: Granting the government or the party the right to impose censorship on newspapers.
- Right to criticize the head of state: Not allowing newspapers to criticize the head of state.
- Right to criticize the governing system: Not allowing newspapers to criticize the governing system.

Many critics argue that communism used the media more for propaganda than for scientific theorization. The slogans of equal opportunities, social justice, and cultural progress, aimed at lifting the exploitation of the working class, were often employed more as propaganda than as sincere objectives.

2.5 Development Communication Theory

Due to the different conditions of the developing world, especially the countries that emerged in the mid-twentieth century, which differed from advanced countries in terms of material and social capabilities, these countries needed a media model that differs from the traditional four theories we have discussed. The Developmental Theory emerged in the 1980s and is based on ideas and opinions presented in the MacBride Commission report on "Communication Problems in the Third World." This theory goes beyond the dichotomy of control and freedom as the basis for classifying media systems, as similar situations in Third World countries limit the applicability of the previously mentioned media theories, given the absence of fundamental communication factors such as professional skills, cultural materials, and audience (Saeed, 2008).

2.5.1 Journalism Under Development Communication Theory:

Leonard Sussman defines developmental journalism as "journalism that focuses on reporting developments in various developmental fields, leading to the success of economic development and achieving unity." According to him, it requires the government to use communication channels to achieve economic and social development. This journalism critically examines, evaluates, and writes about the extent of the developmental project's connection to various needs and national issues. It scrutinizes the differences between the plan and its implementation, as well as the difference between its effects as stated by officials and its actual impact (Narendra Agarwala, as cited in Dr. S. M., 2020).

2.5.2 Media Philosophy and its Role According to Developmental Theory:

According to this theory, the media is based on a set of principles and performs multiple functions, including (Saeed, 2008):

- Media should accept the implementation of developmental tasks in line with the existing national policy.

- The freedom of the media should be subject to restrictions imposed by developmental priorities and the economic needs of society.
- Media should prioritize national culture and language in its content.
- Media should give priority to ideas and information for geographically, politically, and culturally close developing countries.
- Journalists and media professionals have the freedom to gather and distribute information and news.
- The state has the right to monitor and regulate media activities to serve developmental goals.

2.6 Dependency Theory

This theory emerged in Latin American countries in the post-independence era as a reaction to the failure of Western modernization theories in explaining the causes of underdevelopment in developing countries. Its main idea is that the technology, media systems, and professional practices transferred from advanced countries to developing ones work to create and deepen the media dependency of these countries, increasing their reliance on advanced industrialized nations.

Prominent theorists of this theory, such as Schiller, Mattelart, and Boyd-Barrett, argue that these technologies, systems, and media practices from advanced countries distort the cultural structures in developing countries, contributing to negative outcomes such as creating hybrid cultures, cultural alienation, and cultural invasion. In this context, UNESCO's efforts are noteworthy for providing a critical perspective characterized by inclusivity and objectivity, attempting to overcome partial views seeking to dominate the Western perspective in media and communication. The MacBride Commission emphasized the need to develop a comprehensive concept that includes the views and demands of Southern countries in the field of media and communication, aiming to change prevailing communication structures and adopting an open communication system that engages the masses in the communication process (Dr. S. M., 2020).

The in-depth view of Third World experiences reveals the true role of the media in shaping public opinion in a deceptive and misleading way, primarily aimed at legitimizing the authoritarian policies of ruling political authorities. This occurs by relying on communication and information technology controlled by multinational corporations, in addition to local powers with political and economic influence (Dr. S. M., 2020).

In conclusion, the Dependency Theory has increasingly focused on cultural, historical, and international dimensions in explaining the relationship between the media and political power. However, it is criticized for exaggerating the importance of external variables and their impact on the media systems and policies of Third World countries. Despite the significance of international pressures, the formulation of media policies is primarily a national responsibility, reflecting the will of the people to preserve cultural autonomy (Al-Mousawi, 2006).

2.7 Democratic Participation Theory

This theory is considered an extension of liberal theory, with its direction stemming from assigning high value to the structural horizontal aspect of media in Western societies. Democratic Participation Theory seeks to break the monopoly established by major media organizations by finding alternatives in local media (Al-Mushaqba, 2011).

The fundamental ideas of this theory can be summarized as follows (Saeed, 2008):

- Individual citizens, groups, and minorities have the right to access and use the media, and they also have the right for the media to serve them according to the needs they define.
- The organization and content of the media should not be subject to centralized national control.
- The reason for the existence of the media is fundamentally to serve its audience, not for the organizations that produce these media or the media professionals.
- Local groups, organizations, and associations should have their own media.
- Smaller, interactive, and participatory media are better than large professional media outlets with one-way content flow.
- Communication is more important than leaving it to journalists or media professionals.

In essence, the Democratic Participation Theory advocates for decentralization and greater inclusion of diverse voices in media, emphasizing the importance of local media and community engagement.

3. Cognitive Approach to the Concept of New Media:

New media is considered a new form of mass communication compared to traditional media, as it is an interactive means that allows users to access databases and exchange information with others (Jafat, 2021). The concept of new media also refers to new ways of communication in the digital environment, enabling smaller groups of people to meet and gather online, exchange benefits and information. It provides individuals and groups with the opportunity to voice their opinions and the voice of their communities to the world (Sadek, 2012).

Nicholas Negroponte highlighted the difference between new and traditional media, stating that new media replaces material units with digital ones. Finn Crossby supported this by stating that new media combines the advantages of personal and mass communication, surpassing their drawbacks. Richard Davis and Diana Owen went further by blurring the distinction between new and traditional media, categorizing new media into three types: traditional technique (e.g., live talk shows), new media impact with new techniques (e.g., online newspapers, mobile media services), and mixed technique application, bridging the supposed gap between new and traditional media (Hassouna, 2014).

New media has various names such as digital media, interactive media, networked media, cyber media, information media, and multimedia media. Derived mainly from the internet, new media is characterized by its interactivity, participation and dissemination, mobility and flexibility, global nature, media integration, attention and focus, and storage and preservation capabilities (Al-Yasri, 2019).

These features have contributed to the emergence of various forms of interaction, such as online discussions in social networks, electronic journalism, and blogs.

3.1 New Media and the Transformation of Power Concept:

The fourth estate, represented by traditional media and its old means, can no longer withstand the invasion of the fifth estate, represented by various online media outlets such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, personal blogs, and others. The concept of the fourth estate, which had a supervisory role over other authorities, started to fade with the emergence of the internet, changing the landscape of life. The balance of power shifted from the gatekeeper in traditional journalism to the fifth estate, representing citizens (new media), gaining legitimacy from lived reality (Miloud Murad, 2016).

Traditional media used to employ old means to achieve various goals for governing systems, parties, and political currents. However, contemporary political, economic, technological, and media changes have forced us to define democratic functions for the media.

Recent studies suggest that the use of the internet in countries classified as non-democratic has helped break the constraints on various political groups, leading some to believe that modern communication technology, including the internet, has become an enemy of political systems that violate individual rights (Al-Mousawi et al., 2011).

Edward Chulze argues that free media has undermined the legitimacy of the government, denying it the privilege of sovereign authority over rational decision-making and marketing demands. The lack of legitimacy weakens the effectiveness of power or reduces belief in its legitimacy, affecting overall political awareness.

The development of new media, with its novel form, has deprived many countries of one of the most effective tools for authoritarian rule by controlling the flow of information. These countries are now unable to confront it because it supports free communication flow. The rapid flow of information and continuous exposure to different cultures constitute a new form of shaping the opinions, concepts, and perceptions of citizens in different societies (Al-Mousawi et al., 2011).

3.2 New Media and the Concept of Freedom:

New media has provided a fertile environment for the exchange of opinions and ideas through its diverse tools and applications. With these changes, the concept of electronic expression, which eliminates many restrictions and forms of censorship, has emerged. In this regard, new media enjoys a significant degree of independence in various forms, as follows:

Political Independence: Political authorities find it challenging to exercise control and censorship due to the multitude of websites. With the existence of numerous platforms, political authorities find it nearly impossible to monitor and control, as users can create alternative accounts and sites under the pretext of preserving national security.

Financial Independence: The creation of new media platforms does not require enormous financial resources or massive funding. Additionally, electronic advertising generates substantial profits for media creators, along with income from followers and views.

Editorial Independence: New media liberates content from various pressures, such as those exerted in traditional media, and frees it from the gatekeepers' authority.

3.3 Public Authority: The Other Face of New Media:

Habermas introduced the concept of the public sphere, highlighting that it emerges through every dialogue where private individuals come together to form a public body, regardless of social differences. New media, through tools like blogs, forums, and social networks, acts as a platform for providing an environment for discussion, interaction, and expressing opinions, especially among young people regarding various issues (Ben Shahab, 2023).

New media operates outside government control and serves as a means of communication with citizens who have transitioned from passive receivers to active participants. It works to erode state sovereignty over its territory and citizens, challenging traditional notions of control and bypassing parliamentary functions. Users of new media have the ability to build their own opinions independently, fostering discussions, proposing solutions to existing crises, or preventing political events or decisions before their time. This contributes to

changing traditional decision-making methods, and the power of new media is evident in shaping public opinion (Al-Abdullah, 2023).

Conclusion:

Classical media philosophy theories aimed to clarify the relationship between media and power. They highlighted the variations in this relationship but generally agreed that media is closely linked to power, subject to control and restrictions. With the emergence of new media, characterized by its diverse means and applications, it has marginalized the priorities of power. New media, with its independence, has become a separate form of authority, making political authorities genuinely apprehensive. New media has transformed into a tool for shaping public opinion and has dual-edged power. Therefore, it is suggested that new media adheres to ethical principles in both editorial and community interactions to ensure it serves as a force for progress and development.

The shift from traditional to new media has not only transformed how information is disseminated but also how power is negotiated and contested. Traditional media, often centralized and regulated, operated within frameworks established by political and economic elites, thus maintaining a level of control over public discourse. New media, on the other hand, decentralizes communication channels, allowing diverse voices to emerge. This shift has created a more participatory public sphere where individuals can engage directly with political processes, challenge existing power structures, and demand accountability. However, this democratization of media has also introduced challenges, such as the spread of misinformation, hate speech, and the potential manipulation of public opinion by non-state actors.

In this evolving landscape, the dual-edged nature of new media becomes more pronounced. While it offers unprecedented opportunities for freedom of expression and civic engagement, it also poses risks to social cohesion and democratic stability if not managed ethically. Media organizations and content creators must recognize their role in fostering a well-informed public, countering the spread of false information, and ensuring respectful dialogue within digital spaces. By upholding ethical standards and prioritizing truth and transparency, new media can continue to serve as a catalyst for positive change, facilitating informed decision-making and nurturing a more engaged and responsible citizenry.

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