



Research Article

MEDIA AND PR INSTITUTIONS IN POLITICAL PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

Mass media are the main link in the structure of political communication. They are institutions created for transmitting various information, open to any persons, in a public way, using special technical means. Mass media play a decisive role in building a democratic society. They significantly impact political, economic, social, and cultural processes in certain countries and globally.

KEYWORDS

Media, mass media, public relations, political communication, political culture.

INTRODUCTION

The main tasks of mass media in the political communication system are:

- dissemination of ideological and political values, knowledge about politics, and political information;
- integration and orientation of political relations;
- formation of public political opinion;
- dissemination of political culture;
- ensuring the exchange of political and cultural experience;
- preparing the public to participate in politics [1, 58].

For the mass media system to be democratic, it should be equipped with modern technology and meet pluralistic and democratic requirements. What does this mean? First, this is the legal and moral control of society over the mass media, the direct communication between the sender and receiver of information, and the respect for freedom of speech. Intellectual freedom, enlightened public opinion, high political culture, and independence of the mass media from the power system are essential conditions for the development of democracy.

Mass media play a significant role in the formation of public opinion. Until now, the main consideration in forming public opinion was the mass media's official and one-sided information transmission to the population. However, in the later periods, attention was paid to the study of its reaction, i.e. attitude, to the information transmitted to the population. This is also logical because mass communication is successfully assimilated by people only if the information of the official entity (mass media) is positively received and supported by the informal entity (ordinary citizen). Any important message or information is usually discussed and evaluated in the family, work team, or informal group. This assessment forms one or another attitude towards one or another official source of information. If the mass media keep silent about some fact or problem, their reputation will definitely be low [2, 2].

Mass media today influence every member of society thanks to scientific and technical progress. Because of its importance and influence, the mass media is described as the "fourth estate". This "authority" plays a vital role in shaping public opinion, and the legitimacy of power systems appears as an attribute (symbol) of

oppositional political activity and serves as a source of stability or instability in society.

One critical condition for forming a democratic society is that the process is provided with information. After all, information is the primary resource necessary for the democratic development of society. Since civil society requires people to be active in all aspects, the information factor plays a decisive role in achieving this. Also, information serves as a basic resource in establishing a constant dialogue between the state and citizens, as well as in the implementation of public control over the activities of government agencies. It is the responsibility of public relations in organizations and state systems to fulfill this urgent task.

A strong civil society requires people to be active, including in the adoption of state decisions and the participation of citizens in the process of reforms. As long as transparency is ensured in the implementation of reforms, if the activities of state agencies are "transparent" for society members, it will be possible to mobilize the creative potential of people in the process of reforms. Suppose it needs to be explained that people are at the center of reforms and that all changes serve people's interests first. In that case,

there is a danger of alienation of people in the process of reforms and the creation of an invisible wall between state bodies and citizens. Eliminating this danger, and establishing mutual communication between state bodies and citizens is one of the public relations tasks.

Public relations appear, on the one hand, as an element of the environment of the political system, and on the other hand, as a part of this system. The activity of PR departments has a significant impact on the activity of management structures, on the competent solution of short-term and strategic forecasting tasks, and the state policy in various spheres of social, economic, and cultural life.

The following tasks of public relations units in the field of politics are noted in the "Manual for the organization of the press service":

- 1) formation of ways, goals, and strategies of the political development of the state;
- 2) change the political direction, change the tactical aspects of policy implementation;
- 3) the formation of the political elite of a democratic state, the emergence or disappearance of parties, movements, and

individual political leaders in the political arena, and the rise or fall of their prestige and popularity;

- 4) study the formation or dissolution of various political institutions;
- 5) implementation of the public policy of the political entity [3, 8].

Theorist V. Korolko writes: "PR should not be organized on a whim. Cheating the people and abusing public trust to create better conditions for themselves by any means will have unpleasant consequences. Society can be deceived for a certain period. Only a part can be cheated on for longer. And no one has yet been lucky enough to deceive the whole society" [4, 11-12]. Practically, it is no secret that abuse of public trust in any field can have negative consequences.

The structure of PR affects the process of acceptance, transmission, and change of social norms, traditions, etc. It helps the emergence and formation of new criteria and norms, and the change of old ones, in the interests of the subject they represent. Public relations structures' practical importance is increased because they act on behalf of the institution of general

authority, which can only work by communicating its will to citizens and announcing and explaining its decisions. Democratic principles of community development, developing market relations, and healthy competition create an environment in which PR has a two-way communicative nature.

Yoni Inman, president of the National Association of Public Press Service Employees of the USA, believes: "We not only implement the communication between our governments and our people and make the information released by the government in an easy form for the public to use, but we also need to know what is happening around us, in reality, and to convey this information to the government officials" [5, 6].

Therefore, these and other aspects place a great responsibility on the structure of public relations. PR can achieve communication and mutual trust only where there is openness, truth, and sincerity. PR helps establish communication between government organizations, legislative and executive authorities, and the public. In the words of English scientist Sam Black: "Public Relations is the science and art of mutual understanding, based on accurate, truthful information" [6, 10]. So, as a social institution, PR is essential as a tool

and element of political communication. It is not for nothing that Indira Gandhi called PR, which was formed as a social institution, "the oil of democracy".

Politics is a factor that determines people's lives and the development of society. The purpose of political power is to regulate and manage the life of society and the state. However, the political authorities' regulation and management must also ensure citizens' freedom and the rule of law. Therefore, the principle of separation of powers should be observed as the basis of the organization of power in a democratic state, as a political-legal, constitutional principle. Because, as A. Hamilton said, "People love power, give power to the many, they start oppressing the minority, give power to the few, they start oppressing the majority." That is why power should be equally divided between them and divided in such a way that both sides can protect themselves from the other" [7, 67]. As noted by thinkers John Locke and Charles Louis Montesquieu, who theoretically founded the principle of separation of powers, state power should be divided into legislative, executive, and judicial powers. So that there is no possibility of abuse of power, such an order should be

established, in which different powers should be mutually restrained. Social institutions keep the balance between these authorities, and their free operation makes it possible to carry out social control and form mutual relations between the public and the authorities. This mass media is an institution with the status of "fourth power". Mass media have their tasks and principles. We know that operating within the framework of these tasks, it, directly and indirectly, affects the political processes of society.

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