sources are taken to study the functions and its impact of different types of media. To give a background of its growth in Mizoram a brief study of the history of Mizoram is also undertaken. The global level and the national level of the study of media are brief but the study at the State level is detailed and it has collected data which are analyzed to get a better picture of the role that media play in Mizoram.

1.9 LIMITATIONS:

The researcher has tried to make an exhaustive work in the context of Mizoram though this work has several limitations. This being the first work there are many issues that cannot be covered in the thesis. The socio-economic dimensions of the media in Mizoram have been deliberately overlooked, except dealing it in a very limited way. The reason for such limitation is to focus exclusively on the role of media. The work is also limited by time factor as the research involved lot of time to collect data for the reason of which the dimensions of media could not be focused. From the point of space also it is difficult to incorporate all aspects in one thesis. The researcher, however, has tried to corporate the limitations by dealing exclusively with media’s interaction with public and government in Mizoram.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Political Institutions
2.3 Public Participation in a Democratic State

2.4 Media a means of Public Participation:
   2.4.1 The Print Media
   2.4.2 Electronic media, radio and television
   2.4.3 The Internet and Satellite phone

2.5 Mass Media and Political Parties

2.6 Mass Media and Government
   2.6.1 Transparency in government
   2.6.2 Government and the Right to Information

2.7 Mass Media and Judiciary

2.8 Mass media and Non-Governmental Organizations

2.9 Mass Media and Church

2.10 Conclusion
Chapter – 2

Media and Politics- A Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

Man is essentially a communicating animal. Communication is his oldest activity that marked him from cradle to the grave. Perhaps the simplest and the broadest definition of the word ‘communication’ are defined by the statement, “It is that which link any organism together”. The organism may mean two friends in conversation, newspaper and their reading public, a country and its postal service or a telephone system. The medium of this communication has developed very much over the last few decades. In today’s world it is next to impossible to think of any institution without the involvement of media. Be it print media or any type of mass-media. Media has played a very important role in the development of institutions, to the point that it has become one of the most important institutions in any political system. Media, in simple explanation is means of communication. The means of communication has played an important role in the development of the state. In the recent past scholars have tried to offer theories which explain the role and function of communication especially mass media, in national development. Daniel Lerner has proposed a fundamental hypothesis which is, increasing industrialization has raised urbanization; raising urbanization has tended to raise literacy and media
exposure; increasing media exposure has tended to increase political participation in economic and political life.20

Theories of Media:

A model for understanding media systems was introduced in 1956 by three University of Illinois scholars Frederick Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm who scanned the world’s media systems to identify distinguishing characteristics that flowed from philosophical assumptions. The theories were called the “four theories of the press.” These theories characterised the type of media system all over the world. From free to not free, it even defined the role, the culture and the human experience. These are normative theories of media. In the following section, we will attempt to examine some of the important theoretical arguments about media.

Authoritative theory:

This is the oldest theory of media. It emerged when the printing press was invented in the 1400s by Johannes Gutenberg. This invention excited the authorities and the print items which were allowed to be circulated in plenty were the Bible and other religious tracts as it was the only value which interested the Church and the State simultaneously. Under Henry the VIII, there was a lot of regulation regarding the use of the printing press. As it became a means which could challenge the authority, under the king, regulation such as the ban of imported publications was imposed, license were also issued. If any press produced items which was against the crown or the church the

20 Daniel Lerner is a sociologist. Daniel Lerner’s 1958 book The Passing of Traditional Society was central in shaping Cold War-era ideas about the use of mass media and culture to promote social and economic progress in postcolonial nations. Based on a study of the effectiveness of propaganda in the Middle East, Lerner’s book claimed that exposure to American media messages could motivate “traditional” people in the postcolonial nations to become “modern” by cultivating empathy for American ideas, goods, and ways of life.
press lost its license. But there was a change in the attitude of the crown that was brought about by social change and political change. These changes were brought about by the increase in literacy, mercantile class was emerging. Parliament was developing as an expression of popular will and printers were becoming bolder.21

The main characteristics of this theory were that it was to control the mass. Censorship, licensing, bribery and repression were its main instruments of control.

• Censorship: According to this, the manuscript was read by the government agents before it was being published. The government thoroughly scans the newsroom and the items that were meant to be published. In times of emergencies and wartime such measures are taken even in democratic countries such as United State of America and India.

• Licensing: Another method to check the printing press is the issuing of license. It is more lenient than the censorship. For example, during Henry the VIII such license were given to those who held royal patent.

• Bribery: The editors were given huge amount of funds to keep them on the side of the authority. Knowing that the newspaper is an important and effective instrument the keepers of these newspaper or print item were given not only money but also material aide for the proper functioning of their press. This is a form of bribery.

• Repression: Repression was a way of punishing or rather man-handling the editors or journalist. It is when the authority directly punish or execute the editors or journalists for producing

21 Frederick Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm, ’Media and Political system’. 
items which was offensive to the authority which send message to the other journalists or editors as a sign of warning.\(^\text{22}\)

Though the authoritarian method is effective, it is effective only for a short while. It does not last long as truth can never be suppressed for long. The authoritarian media system believes that anyone who accepts the authority of the government or the king accepts the truth since they were anointed by God. Truth was monopoly of the King and the commoners would receive the truth only through the authority. Secondly, since it can also challenge the regime which was definitely not what they wanted and lastly, if the press challenged the authority, the stability of the government would shake. Therefore the factors which can pose a threat to the regime should be suppressed.

In this view, all media and public communication are subject to the supervision of the ruling authority and expression or opinion which might challenge the established social and political order can be forbidden. Although this ‘theory’ contravenes rights of freedom of expression, it can be invoked under extreme conditions. Long before the democratic societies could think of matters relating to freedom of speech, there existed a thought that the emergence of media should not challenge the authority of the government which were more in dictatorial form unless they looked like democracies. The media was forced to remain under state control. It had following features which, in non democratic governments still rule on media.

\(^{22}\) Ibid.
Direct government control of the media.

- Typical to pre-democratic societies, where the government consists of a very limited and small ruling-class.
- No printing that could undermine the established authority
- No offense to existing political set up
- The government may punish anyone who questions the state's ideology.
- Media professionals are not allowed to have any independence within the media organization.
- Registration of the media by the state.

This approach is designed to protect the established social order, setting clear limits to media freedom and ensure that it is not the media which must talk about people and their problems in any manner.

**Free Press Theory/ Libertarian Theory of Media:**

In the 17th century, the notion of enlightenment became popular. It was the period when many writers, thinkers and even scientist had come up. Writers like John Milton, Locke, Erskine, Jefferson, and John Stuart Mill who was of the opinion that if given an opportunity an individual is capable of discovering the truth. Libertarian ideas took strong root especially in England’s North American colonies. When these colonies got their independence, this idea was clear in the declaration of Independence. In 1791, the U.S constitution was expanded and it clearly stated that the government should not involve in the expression of ideas therefore, freedom of speech and of press was introduced. Unlike the authoritarian theory, Libertarianism did not give importance to Church but rather to the market force. They encouraged

---

23 John Milton was an English poet, a Scholarly man of letters and a civil servant of England under Oliver Cromwell.
the formation of free opinion. The libertarians were of the opinion that,
if men were free to inquire about all things to form opinion on the basis
of knowledge and evidence and to utter their opinion freely, the
competition of knowledge and opinion in a market place of reasonable
discourse would ultimately banish ignorance and superstition and
enable men to shape their conduct and their institution in conformity
with the fundamental and invariable laws of nature and will of God.
The protection of dignity, reputation, property, privacy, moral
development of individuals, groups, minorities, evens the security of
the state and no infringement was accepted from media.

This idea came about in the 1700s in the new Most fully
developed in the United States of America, but applying elsewhere
proclai
ms complete freedom of public expression and of economic
operation of the media and rejects any interference by government in
any aspect of the press. A well- functioning market should resolve all
issues of media obligation and social need.This is just in contrast to the
authoritarian approach to media. Here media enjoys an absolute
freedom of expression. Its prominent features go like this:

• Competitive exposure of alternative viewpoints.
• Attacks on the government's policies are accepted and even
couraged: the media as a watchdog.
• Journalists and media professionals ought to have full autonomy
within the media organization.
• There is no explicit connection between the government and the
media.
• The press is free from censorship.
• It is accountable to the law for any consequences of its activities
that infringe other individuals'.
• Rights or the legitimate claims of the society.
Such an extensive freedom is also a problem as all people have the right to speak and receive information freely, but no one takes responsibility of the wrong doings. The ethics in multicultural or pluralistic societies vary from place to place; hence there is always complaint against the media of each other's society.\textsuperscript{24}

**Social responsibility theory:**

The social responsibility model of media is now in total contrast to the Libertarian model exaltation of speech and free press. This fourth theory of the press has been drawn largely from a report published in 1947 by the Hutchins Commission. Emerging from the Commission's publications and solidified in the literature of journalism by Four Theories of the Press, this new theory maintains that the importance of the press in modern society makes it absolutely necessary that an obligation of social responsibility be imposed on the media of mass communication. It raises a certain question against the free flow of information and ideas. The question that it raised is firstly, against the truth, are people capable of distinguishing the truth? Secondly, is media diverse enough? And lastly, are media really independent from the government or the authority? The Libertarian theory based on citizens’ participation and their ideas and opinion make it to the newspaper and in how many newspaper. Therefore, the newspaper being a vehicle for citizen exchange of ideas and opinion is questionable. The social responsibility model of media system combines freedom and responsibility. There is a need for the journalists to be more responsible and be more specific.\textsuperscript{25}


\textsuperscript{25} Fredrick S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm (1963), ‘Four theories of Press’, University of Illinois press, USA.
Sometimes the problem that it faces regarding profit, many media reporters in America report news which are not exactly the truth but are very close to it. It is because they are concerned about the profit. Profitability can be damaged by social responsibility. Yet, these types of media are becoming more popular in Europe and especially in U.K where there are labour unions. It is now being embraced in capitalist countries as well. Good journalism and good profit do not always go hand in hand. It is often the big newspaper who can work against good journalism and they sometimes bow to powerful influence.

It is found more in Europe and countries under European influence and is a modified version of free press theory placing greater emphasis upon the accountability of the media (especially broadcasting) to society. Media are free but they should accept obligations to serve the public good. The means of ensuring compliance with these obligations can either be through professional self-regulation or public intervention (or both).²⁶

**Communist theory:**

The German philosopher Karl Marx wrote that humankind was evolving towards a perfect state. And he believed that the process might take long. He said that all the policies that the government make should be directed to hasten this process. The mass media under such government should play its role well to hasten this process, which means that the mass-media should be unified with the Government. It is not like the authoritarian model. Very often under the authoritarian model, the media is independent from the government but in a communist model it is in sync with the government. In a communist government the economic structure being socialist, it is not very

²⁶Ibid.
concerned with the profit. The media provide coverage of the government ideologies. The media decision makers are the government official themselves. Sometimes the communist media also criticize the government. But often it is about, the inefficiency of the government which is at the lower level of the official hierarchy. When these accusations were made, such accusations were investigated and the results that were found were useful in making changes for the better and discourage the practice that were harmful for the making of a perfect state. Often, the media system of a given country will have a mixture of theoretical elements and media types, displaying neither absolute freedom nor absolute subordination to the state or ruling power.27

2.2 Political Institutions

In developing countries political activities take place in an informal manner. It is not at all systematic as compared to the developed and more advanced countries but a lot of activities take place nonetheless. Formal political systems are generally publicly announced, for example in laws, regulations and codes but informal systems are embedded in socio-cultural institutions, norm and standards. For this reason, informal political systems that can be negative for development are extremely difficult to eradicate.28 In a democratic state it is important for the masses to participate. There are certain institutions which ensure the participation of the masses. These institutions are mostly formal organizations like the institutions of law and bureaucracy and they occupy a dominant role in contemporary life. Recently the means of participation are much broader and the formal institutions do

27 http://www.le.ac.uk/oerresources/media/ms7501/mod2unit11/page_07.htm as accessed on 14th October 2012.
not have as much impact as the informal and more mass based means of participation.²⁹ In democratic countries institutions are created in varying degrees to meet the goals like enabling participation either directly or through elections, to promote open and fair competition for power on the basis of the popular vote, to ensure the accountability of governments, to provide a forum for rational discussion of political problems and settlement of conflicting social interests. Politics can be defined as a struggle or competition for power or access to rule and collective goods. Yet, not all forms of politics are democratic. In a democratic politics, the aim is to hold a democratic institution to their democratic promises, by ensuring open and effective challenges to governments and their policies through free and fair elections, the party system and other forms of political contestation, increasing citizen participation, so that the exercise of power at all levels of political authority is based as far as possible with the citizens.

It is also the maximization of the accountability and transparency of the holders of political power and bureaucratic office, at all levels of government.³⁰ Democratic institution depends upon a culture of participation, including a range of its mechanisms such as pluralistic media, an active civil society, competing political parties etc through which if all citizens can acquire a political voice. It is through democratic politics that the governments and more broadly, democratic institutions acquire legitimacy. They are made accountable to their citizens and can in turn regulate powerful interests.

To be clearer about our topic it is crucial to know what we mean by political institutions. Political institutions are those which exist to carry out the policies of the competing political leaders and their ideas

²⁹ Robin Luckman, Anne Marie Goetz and Mary Kaldor, ‘Democratic Institutions and Democratic Politics’, p. 15.
³⁰ Ibid.
in a society. Examples of political institutions include political parties and special interest groups, such as lobbyists. Even labor unions are an example of a political institution. In a politically and culturally diverse world, in which globalization recreates social differences as fast as it breaks them down, there is not and probably cannot be universal agreement on the goals of democratic politics, nor about the institutions which can best express them.

2.3 Public Participation in a Democratic State

Democracy is a rule by the people and their participation is the centre of the concept of the democratic state. It is important to note that political participation derives its meaning for the individual and for political system from the interaction between political authorities and the masses as mediated through political institutions. Often the political participation faces a limitation in the existing formal political institution in the decision making. Political participation and Government is connected in many ways such as rationality, control, responsiveness, flexibility, legitimacy, conflict resolution etc. Some things are to be kept in mind when it comes to political participation often controversies and violence also do take place though these may also be a form of political expression, even developed countries has had these problems throughout history.

The importance of public participation can be seen in countries which strive towards being a Welfare State. Putting forth a platform where the people can share ideas and participate in the political process whether it is through a formal institution or informal is essential for the Democratic State. Participation is from a general perspective, a social process that may provide a bridge between the individual (citizen) and politics. Participation is a process that combines four basic criteria: (1) individuals; (2) it is voluntary; (3) it refers to a specific activity, which is (4) directed towards influencing the government or authorities in
general. Participation is thus a communication process in which individual citizens communicate their wishes to the representatives of political authorities. This link between citizen and the government is very important that today the authority have taken over the decision making on their behalf. The people are now becoming more aware of this that they have even become skeptic and suspicious about the government. The people now question the legitimacy of the government they do so in the public sphere and this is the important area of communication where public opinion is formed.\(^{31}\) According to the classic liberal theory, the media are representative institutions which expose the government to the full blast of the public opinion.

To put it simply, the public sphere refers to the informal public life from the cafes to internet chat room for expression of opinion in magazines and television talk programs, places where citizens can go to explore social interest and conflicts. The public sphere is comprised of any and all locations, physical or virtual, where all ideas and feeling relevant to politics are transmitted or exchanged openly.\(^{32}\)

The public participation is very important to a government because it is through the public participation that the decision makers can form policies and decisions in accordance to its citizens will. The public participation is very important in a democratic country. It does not refer only to the voting and election procedure but it also means the involvement of the citizen in the political discourses of the government. The public opinion is very important to the government, through the public participation a public opinion is form which is essential for a democratic country in legitimizing the government.


\(^{32}\) The idea of Public sphere comes from the the work of Jurgen Habermas, op. cit.
2.4 Media a means of Public Participation:

Media is undoubtedly the most important means for today’s participation of the public. It is the key instrument in determining the policy for the policy makers. With the growth of technology and means of communication, the importance of media has grown within the last few decades. It is not only important for the participation of the public but also for the forming of the public opinion.

As means of communication improve so has the condition for both centralization and decentralization of administration over larger areas.\(^{33}\) As population grows, the information and communication requirements for maintaining a certain level of freedom may increase more rapidly than improvement in communication technology. Without modern communication technology it would be no longer possible to consider the success of political system.

The media have a unique opportunity to play a pivotal role in educating the public and in raising the level of political discourse both, essential for political process and sound policy making. For example, comparing all the area of public life, there is no area that the political leaders take the media effect more seriously than during the time of election. During political campaign organizations spend much time, effort and money to attract favourable media attention to candidates for major electoral offices. When their candidates lose, they blame the tone of the media coverage because vigorous, information-rich electoral contests are essential to the democratic process; scholars regularly have put the activities of involved parties including the media under the microscope.

In a democratic country the people have the right to know what the government is doing, the policy that it is making, the rules that they have laid out for the people. The people will know and be aware of these only when it is printed out; it is published or even broadcast. For the public to participate and to create an environment for the growth of democracy it is essential to have a strong media which will provide for the public to know and be aware. Media plays an important role and as for various political institution like the political parties, pressure group, NGO’s. Political activities like election, campaigns, caucuses etc cannot be done without the help of media. Organizations, pressure groups and various other groups need the media to spread their agenda and to communicate with the public. Public participation does not mean voting alone. It means that the citizens and the policy maker should be in open dialogue and their voice should affect the decision making of the authority. Genuine public participation means social inclusion, personal security and freedom of speech and assembly. A strong civil society and good channels of communication between all levels of society is needed for public participation.34 Let us look into different means of media and its relationship with the public.

2.4.1 The Print Media

The print media is and will always remain an indispensable institution of our political system and an important element of our intellectual and economic life and of the entertainment industry.35 The press faces new problems every where even in the advanced democratic societies. It is also under so much pressure, not only the government

but also from television and technological change. In America, 85 percent of the people are said to depend on TV for news rather than newspaper. Financial and managerial factors are leading to a fall in the number of newspaper. In England, the circulation of newspaper is dwindling rather rapidly. Even in Japan, the land of large circulation, the expansion of print media has been slowing down. So, it now seems like we are now coming to the age of news without paper. Yet, it is difficult to believe that Press will ever become obsolete.

On the contrary in India, the press still rising and circulations are growing as literacy is expanding. We also have a magazine boom. Editors and managers are now high fliers paid well and pampered a lot. The newspapers are becoming fatter and the magazines glossier. In India the newspaper shows that it wins to stay in the stiff competition faced from the electronic media. The basic reason could be due to the steady growth of literacy, better purchasing power and political awareness of the masses. However the western countries are losing its young readers. This could be due to the social and technical change in print media. The people tend to use more advanced form of print media such as online newspaper on internet. The print media no matter what its future may be cannot be ignored nor be denied of its role as one of the main tools in bringing about political and social change in the society. It is a written document which has made the history recordable and accurate. The longevity of written media is much more than the electronic ones.36

2.4.2 Electronic media, radio and television

The Electronic media is now one of the important means of communication. The growth of electronic media has changed the communication system in many ways more ways than we can even comprehend. The whole system of communication has been totally altered. The existence of television, radio and computer system has revolutionized the communication system. New technologies have introduced a more convenient way of putting across ideas and opinion. Not only does it provide information and new means of communication and participation but also entertainment. Unlike the print media which has been slow in development and transformation, once the electronic media was developed and used, it transformed into a dynamic and forceful means of communication. It encouraged the participation of the masses.

As for India, although it did not inherit any television apparatus from the British, it did inherit broadcasting structure in the form of All India Radio, with 14 radio stations, a developed bureaucracy and a colonial state’s mechanism for official censorship. Broadcasting under the British had remained under a tight leash, primarily due to the compulsion of a colonial regime to keep a mass media with potential for trouble under stringent controls. It was this colonial legacy that shaped broadcasting and future television policy.

Independent India had three choices on broadcasting: it could open the broadcasting sector and follow a commercial model; create an autonomous public institution like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); or follow the colonial practice of keeping it a preserve of the state. It chose the last option.

Although the first India radio stations - opened by the privately owned Indian Broadcasting Company in 1927 - had been commercial
ventures, they failed due to lack of infrastructural support and were taken over by reluctant colonial regime in 1930s. All India Radio became a government department and the state derived its monopoly from the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, which gave the central government ‘the exclusive privilege’ of establishing, maintaining and working telegraphs as well as the right to grant licenses. The nationalist regime that succeeded the raj continues to be guided by this 19th century legislation and an amendment to it in 1957 expanded the term ‘telegraph’ to mean ‘apparatus for the purpose of affording means of telegraphic communication’. Until the mid-1990s, this legislation, drafted and enacted by the colonial administration in the 19th century, remained the basis of the Indian government’s monopoly over radio and television.

In today’s world, TV has been pampered so much that the radio feels neglected. There is a considerable sibling rivalry between the two. Radio feels like the elder sister who is now condemned to spinsterhood. The neglect of radio is unfortunate because radio was just on the point of achieving near universal coverage. We have to develop newer forms of radio programming and communication to make it more informal.

The television explosion is the biggest thing that has occurred in our cultural life in the last decade. It used to be argued that our income levels would be favourable to a rapid growth of television. But this is now proven wrong. What was called the ‘idiot box’ in all countries including Britain, America and even in India is probably the most sought after single article not only by the idle-class but also by the working class as well, not only by the urban “educated” but the rural “illiterate” no less. Development is said to be the process in which


38 Ibid.
more and more luxuries become everyday necessities. TV has proved this. But TV is desired mainly for the entertainment. Its potential for communication and education is yet to be exploited.

Satellite television news network have never expanded as they have in India. In less than a decade, between 1998 and 2006, India has experienced the rise of more than 50 24-hours satellite news channels, broadcasting news in 11 different languages. They are a prominent part of a vibrant satellite television industry, comprising more than 300 channels, that has targeted Indian homes since the early 1990s. They have arisen in a country where the state had monopolized broadcasting since independence, and as late as 1991, India had only one government-controlled television network. Until private satellite network shattered the barriers of state control, television was meant only to be the voice of Indian state; today it is a daily Trojan horse entering the living rooms of its citizens. The nature of ‘Independence’, of course, varies across networks but their expansion illustrates how rapidly the Indian State lost its control over television. The existence of such private satellite news industry appears even starker when compared with the fact that private radio networks in India are still banned from broadcasting news, which remains a monopoly of government radio.39

The media, essentially, are a people talking to themselves. The guiding principle of any communication policy should be to make this internal dialogue more spontaneous, more earnest and more enjoyable.

2.4.3 The Internet and Satellite phone

Today the internet is a ‘World Wide network’ that is connected to each other. The global proliferation of the internet also holds great

39 Nalin Mehta op. cit., pp 68-93.
promise for exchange of ideas, information and methodologies for socio economic development. The internet is now the information highway. Once the highway further develops, individuals and companies will find the applications for multi-media communication. The opening up of cyberspace in the service of individual citizens and group heralds in fact, the birth of cyber democracy.

Mobile technologies are opening new channels of communication between public and governments. It provides a better access to public information. Internet communication technology has played a very important role in bringing about participation of the public as it is easily accessible and it is less complicated. It is bringing about a new wave of democratization; we are witnessing through the ICTs new channels that it is breaking barriers and territorial boundaries. The people all around the world now have their own mobile phone subscriptions. Through our mobiles phone, we are now becoming the world citizens. We can witness at any given point of time the happening around the world. In developing countries mobile phone has gained great popularity. Mobile technologies have great impact in human development. It has even enhanced democratic governance and other development areas such as health, education, agriculture, employment, crisis prevention and the environment.40

Mobile technology has empowered the citizens. It has allowed them the access to knowledge and information by creating new areas for people to participate, giving them new voice. What was once in the hands of the government officials, large private companies or corporate media is now in the hands of anyone who owns a mobile phone or has an internet connection. It has broadened the scope of distribution of information. This has now made the citizen more powerful and allows

them to involve in the decision and policy making of the government. It has strengthened their voice and it has become an important and powerful instrument in fostering broader transparency and social accountability on the part of the government. People now voice their opinion regarding public administrators to parliaments and even the system of justice. It has made the government service more transparent and efficient.41

The rural are not lagging behind as one of the beneficiaries of the boom of the mobile technology the information gap is now reduced in the economic growth of rural areas as well.42 Mobile phones have become so advanced technologically that there are many applications in these phones which enables us to have any tools that we need to make our life easier and provides us with the information that we want. Depending on the type of phone that one uses, we can easily access the internet which allows endless connectivity with the world. Phones, such as I-phones, Android phones and Blackberries have enabled applications to be downloaded which allow users to have endless access to information and participation.43 It provides new ways for citizens to have their voices heard and new opportunities for civic engagement in the larger governance process.

Many observers consider the Internet one of the greatest of the transformational technologies (ranking steam engines, railroads, electricity, etc.) that at first challenged and then fundamentally changed

---

42 K.B. Mathur op.cit.
the way that people learn, play, create, and communicate. Satellite Phones are an essential communication device. Mobile internet capability allows them to check into social media websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, reading communication text from their friends and colleagues and send quick replies. At times, the communication isn’t text, but a photo, completely removing the need for words to convey a response, feelings and even location. Cell phones with broadband capabilities are also frequently used to communicate with others via email. While the sole purpose of the first telephone was to provide a way to speak to someone not in our presence, the cell phone has moved far beyond this concept. In some countries, however, it may be the sole way of communicating verbally and maintaining relationships. In certain countries where young men and women are forbidden by religious or cultural norms to communicate in public, the cell phone allows them to speak with one another freely, and without accusation. While development had ushered in a new form of communication yet at times it is also let the traditional ways take the back seat. But overall it cannot be denied that the growth of these technology has not only changed the whole system of communication but also the system of participation of the public in the decision making process of the state.44

2.5 Mass Media and Political Parties

Political parties are one of the most important political institutions especially in a democratic country like India. India being a multi-party system has a huge number of parties with different ideologies. The Newspaper and the television play a very important role in the formation of public opinion and therefore very often most of the media companies are linked with political parties one way or the other. In the contemporary media scenario the nexus between media

44 Ibid.
and politicians has been quite convenient for promoting their respective interests. Not only do the politicians use the media but also the media professionals have also leveraged their reputation to enter the political arena. Continuing this vicious circle, we see politicians taking over media stakes for using it to their advantage.45

But in this age of media abundance, does this media ownership by our politicians matter? And what does this signify to our democracy where both politicians and media play different, yet dominant roles. In a democratic setup, ownership matters, especially when it is deliberately used to influence opinion or attempts to mislead. Also worrisome is when a few of these owners try to dominate or monopolize certain sections of the audience. The political leaning of many media owners are not disclosed.

While newspaper circulation and readership have declined in many places, the use of the internet has exploded, particularly among the younger generation in many countries. Internet user clearly has a greater capacity for electoral campaign involvement. The internet gives them the ability to directly communicate with candidates and parties - from communicating to political party by making comments in blogs to posting articles about politics on websites. Though many social scientists are not convinced that the internet plays a critical role in electoral choice, yet the internet, while not fundamentally changing politics, does have the ability to reinforce messages, mobilize activists, and strengthen the views of political partisans.46

Media coverage is very important and it plays a very important role in helping political parties project themselves in a particular way before the masses. An example can be cited of the US presidential

46 Ibid.
election of 2004. In this election it was obvious that the Fox News was biased in favour of President Bush and the republicans. This was a significant departure from American news tradition, in which the major television networks had generally attempted to remain relatively unbiased in their political coverage and framing. At the same time Fox rocketed to the top of the ratings for news. As Bush won the re-election by a narrow margin this suggests that the influence of a popular news show may have made a very important difference.

2.6 Mass Media and Government

Government and media are always in a relationship. This relationship is a love-hate kind of a relationship. In a state it is impossible for a government to exist without a media. Media plays an important role of bridging the gap between the government and the citizen. The kind of relationship between the government and the state depends on the kind of a government that exists within the state. The media no doubt is an important instrument used by the government. In these kinds of state, the media is usually controlled and it is used to publicize the government’s agenda and promote the ideology of the government. They do not criticize the government action and they do not challenge their authority. Very often these are states which are young or where development of technology is lacking behind. On a positive note these instruments of mass communication should mobilize to assist the government in nation building. Media under such state should support the government. Information should flow from the top. It does not focus on the individual rather it focuses on the larger social problem of poverty, illiteracy, disease etc. This concept is usually applicable to under-developed or poorer countries that are technologically underdeveloped.

It is not so in the states which are more liberal. In a government under the libertarian regime, we find that the media is more of an
instrument of the citizen. The flow of information is mostly from the citizen themselves. Usually the media in such countries are engaged in a dialogue amongst themselves. This enables the government to know and understand the opinion of the people within the state. In these types of regime the engagement of the citizen is at its highest level. The media is free from the government’s control. With the development of technology, the control of the government on the media is losing its hold. The media is also growing with the growth of technology. Before, the news that was broadcast through radios and television were information that the government to give its citizens, now with Globalization and free-market society, there is a growth of cable networks which are owned by private company. News is no longer edited by the government. Rather, information now reaches the masses as it happens whenever or wherever. In such state, the media plays the role of a watch dog.47

The mass media plays an important role in parliamentary democratic government especially in India.48 A free and responsible press put forth facts as also the standards of right and wrong not only in the fields of politics but also as regards to many aspects of human activity. The media keeps the people informed of what is happening in the parliament. The press is often called the extension of the parliament. It is the press again which tries to unearth administrative lapses and shortcomings and gives grievances and hardships. Most of the raw materials for parliamentary questions, motions and debates come from the daily press. The press can discharge this function effectively only if it enjoys what is termed ‘Freedom of the press’.

---

In India freedom of the press has not been expressly provided for in the constitution, but is implicit in the fundamental right of the ‘freedom of speech and expression’ guaranteed to the citizens under the Constitution. Legally it has been settled that the Freedom of speech and expression’ includes freedom of press. Whenever attempts were made to by any Government either through an executive order or through legislative to put curbs on the media, it has been resisted with full vigor. In spite of these freedoms, the parliament also has a special privilege to keep some of their discussions confidential. Clause (3) of article 105, as amended by the constitution (44th amendment) Act 1978 provided that powers, privileges and immunities of each house of parliament and of the members and the committees of each house. These privileges, besides freedom of speech mentioned above, mainly are: 49

**Right to exclude strangers:**

Each House of parliament has the right to exclude strangers and to debate within closed doors, the idea being to prevent the publication of such debates and proceedings in the house.

**Right to control publication of debates and proceedings:**

The publication of report debates or proceedings of parliament is subject to the control of the respective House which has the right to prohibit the publication of its proceedings permissible.

The press also has to guard itself against any libels casting reflections on character or proceedings of the house or its committee, or any member for, or relating to the character or conduct as a member of parliament, as such publication would constitute a breach of privilege or contempt of the house.

---

The newspapers have a duty to report faithfully the proceedings of either House of Parliament, Legislative Assembly and in this regard the newspapers shall not be liable for any proceedings civil or criminal in any court unless it is proved that reporting have been made with malice.\textsuperscript{50} However, the newspapers should not publish any report based on proceedings of a sitting of either House of Parliament or Legislative Assembly or as the case may be either House of the Legislature of a State, which is not open to the media.\textsuperscript{51}

2.6.1 Transparency in government

Question often arises whether media should be restricted to tell the people something which is of vital importance to the nation and in which maximum people have maximum interest\textsuperscript{52}. Whether it justifies applying the provisions of the Official Secrets Act in the case of such revelations. As also in the case of Rajiv Gandhi’s death, the one-man Jain Inquiry Commission constituted to probe the conspiracy angle in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi submitted its interim report to the Union Home Ministry on August 30, 1997. The government is contemplating to take action in the light of the report. Chairman of this Commission and what action the government intended to take on the report.

On November 9, 1997, India Today’s issue of November 17 came in the market with these revelations of the Jain Commission report. The Government was stunned. It was heard in government circles that this kind of leakage was an offence under the provisions of the Official Secrets Act. But the Government was in a fix as to who

\textsuperscript{50} \url{http://presscouncil.nic.in/norms.htm} accessed on 10.06.2012.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
should be held responsible for this leakage. So, these are the kind of problems faced by the Government.

### 2.6.2 Government and the Right to Information

There is a need to enact laws providing for disclosure of governmental information\(^53\). Such laws have been enacted in many democratic societies. A citizen should be entitled to obtain copies of document, expeditiously at a small cost, concerning matters on which public decisions are made or about to be made.

Right to Information can also be an effective check on the rampant corruption in government functioning. There is a growing feeling among the people that the Right to Information statute should also provide for declaration of economic assets held by public persons. Periodic assets disclosure required by the law will foster, over a period of time, greater public vigilance on the corrupt acts of public officials and ministers.

This kind of Right such as a Right to know or Right to information has constitutional guarantee in many democratic countries.\(^54\) In Sweden, the citizens’ right to know is well established and guaranteed by the Constitution since the beginning of the 19\(^{th}\) Century. Constitutional safeguards for media Freedom of the Press Act of 1766, the oldest and probably, still the most liberal of its kind in the world. It has been revised and modernized a number of times.\(^55\) The Right to Information Act 2005 (RTI) is an Act of the parliament of India "to provide for setting out the practical regime of right to

\(^53\) Ibid.


information for citizens." The Act applies to all States and Union Territories of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir has its own act called Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act 2009. Under the provisions of the Act, any citizen may request information from a "public authority" (a body of Government or "instrumentality of State") which is required to reply expeditiously or within thirty days. The Act also requires every public authority to computerize their records for wide dissemination and to pro-actively publish certain categories of information so that the citizens need minimum recourse to request for information formally. This law was passed by Parliament on 15 June 2005 and came fully into force on 13 October 2005. Information disclosure in India was hitherto restricted by the Officials secrets Act 1923 and various other special laws, which the new RTI Act now relaxes.

2.7 Mass Media and Judiciary

Although law has generally been considered to be a close ally of liberty and constitutes an important means of fostering personal liberty and safeguarding human rights, on occasions it has been used as a powerful tool for imposing tyrannical rule and for perpetrating gross and systematic injustice under the tool for imposing tyrannical actions. The fundamental objective of journalism is to serve the people with news, views, comments and information on matters of public interest in a fair, accurate, unbiased, sober and decent manner. To this end, the Press is expected to conduct itself in keeping with certain norms of professionalism, universally recognised. The Press Council of India set down certain rules and norms for the professional conduct of the journalist to self-regulate his or her conduct. There are many points to be remembered and followed by the journalists. What

---

56 Ibid.
57 [http://presscouncil.nic.in/norms.htm](http://presscouncil.nic.in/norms.htm) accessed on 10.06.2012

54
kind of a relationship to be kept and how to keep it is also noted down under the various norms of Journalism listed by the Press Council of India. It has been mentioned that it shall not publish anything which, in its direct and immediate effect, creates a substantial risk of obstructing, impeding or prejudicing seriously the due administration of justice; or is in the nature of a running commentary or debate, or records the paper's own findings conjectures, reflection or comments on issues, sub justice and which may amount to abrogation to the newspaper the functions of the court; or regarding the personal character of the accused standing trial on a charge of committing a crime. Newspaper shall not as a matter of caution, publish or comment on evidence collected as a result of investigative journalism, when, after the accused is arrested and charged, the court becomes seized of the case: Nor should they reveal, comment upon or evaluate a confession allegedly made by the accused. While newspapers may, in the public interest, make reasonable criticism of a judicial act or the judgement of a court for public good; they shall not attribute improper motives, or personal bias to the judge. Nor shall they scandalise the court or the judiciary as a whole, or make personal allegations of lack of ability or integrity against a judge. Newspaper shall, as a matter of caution, avoid unfair and unwarranted criticism which, by implication, attributes to a judge unconnected consideration for performing an act in due course of his/her judicial functions, even if such criticism does not strictly amount to criminal contempt of Court.

Before publishing a news item about court proceedings, it will be appropriate for the correspondent and editor to ascertain its genuineness and, correctness and authenticity from the records so that

58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid
the concerned person can be held guilty and accountable for furnishing incorrect facts or wrong information about the court proceedings.

According to Justice H.R Khanna, the questions have also been posed as to whether there are any limitations on a journalist’s right to obtain information in respect of matters of public interest 61. A connected question is whether a journalist who obtains such information can be compelled to disclose the source of his information. There have been occasions when some journalists preferred to go to jail rather than to disclose their sources when asked to do so in judicial proceedings. These are matters which must engage the attention of lawmakers for there is need for evolving some broad guidelines on these issues.

The Freedom of Press and the Independence of Judiciary are two of the most important indices of democracy in a country. It is essential to preserve both. Bendable press and submissive judiciary are the first step in the process of smothering of democratic rights.

2.8 Mass media and Non-Governmental Organizations

An informed, educated, active public is central to the democratic public policy decision making process. In many democratic country citizens do not have time to research every issues that concerns them. Instead, citizens rely on other resources specially the mass media for information that enables them to develop opinions and make informed decisions about candidates for office, public policies, government actions and social trends. 62.

The information which is transmitted from the mass media comes from many sources, academic experts, government officials, business, financial observers, participants in a given events and very important, volunteers of non-government organizations. These public policy advocates whether they specialize in environmental problems, government corruption, children’s health problem or drug abuse have two things the mass media needs: accurate information and a point of view. Armed with accurate information, Non-Governmental Organization can counter misinformation, educate the public, establish the political agenda and support for the issues.

Non-Governmental Organizations are very important source of information for the public. They have many tools and means of putting across information. Some of them are:

- Press releases
- Press conferences
- Media briefing
- Media events (luncheons, locally sponsored fairs etc)
- Radio, television, newspaper and magazine interviews.
- Appearance on television and Radio talk-show.
- Development of one’s own television or radio program.
- Meeting with editors.
- Placing opinion pieces in newspapers.
- In-house publications, newsletters.
- Electronics communications.
- Banners.
- Websites.

Non-Governmental Organization has a large contribution in our Society. In many democratic states it is them who guide the public in the formation of opinions. There are many non-governmental
organizations dealing with various issues like gender, child rights, industrial workers, health benefits, youth affairs etc. They are non-profit based and they also play a very important role as a pressure group. To spread their wings and to make more contribution to the society, the media is a very useful tool for them especially in this age where technology is very advanced.

The importance of the media to the works of the NGOs are:

- Mass media are channels, such as newspaper, magazines, radio or television used to communicate information to large groups’ people.
- By regularly conveying information to important audiences, from the general public to government and international decision makers, the media plays a large role in shaping public debate.
- The media are amongst the most important allies to the NGO community. Establishing good relationship with the journalists is the integral part of any effective media outreach campaign.
- Some ways of which the media can be of importance to NGO includes writing articles that:
  - Create an environment of political pressure.
  - Convey general information, serving as public education tool.
  - Counter popular misconceptions.
  - Comment on an issue, providing an alternative viewpoint.  

---

As we continue our research in the upcoming chapters we shall see how the NGOs even in the State like Mizoram play an important role in framing the mind of the Mizo people and how they make use of media in doing so. The media also in turn tries to maintain a good relationship with such kind of NGO. To cite an example there is this one very popular NGO in Mizoram called Young Mizo Association. Young Mizo Association (YMA) is a non-political, voluntary organization, established on 15th June 1935 at Aizawl, Mizoram. It has huge number of membership. It deals with various issues such as preservation of Mizo culture, adult education, youth development etc. To cultivate awareness amongst the Mizo people such type of NGO has a very deep relationship with the Media. It has branches all over the state at every level and all young Mizo are part of this association. They have newsletter issued in every locality. We shall learn about this in detail in the upcoming chapters.

2.9 Mass Media and Church

Mass media has always been an instrument which has been used by all organizations. The very origin of media was to spread religion. It was to vent their feelings about religions and other matters. With the growth of literacy it has become an even more important medium of spreading awareness about certain policies, doctrines etc. Church has used this means in reaching out to the people. Church is by definition about community and relationships. So are social media. It is important that we take up a brief study of Mass Media’s impact on church in Mizoram in this chapter because church plays one of the most important roles in Mizoram in shaping the mindset of the people. The Church is one organization which has maximum public participation.

64 http://mizoram.nic.in/more/yma.htm accessed on 27th august 2011
Before we highlight the role of church in Mizoram, let us understand what writers and scholars say about the impact of Mass media on religion in general. Today, the biggest criticism leveled by people of religion is that media are somehow taking up religion's place in society. That is to give shape to a value system and to express the essence of a culture. For some people, for example, television has come to be a kind of religion. As if its secret role were to tell us how the world is, how it works and what it means. Therefore they think that the technological Cosmo vision offers at least three threats to religion. Firstly, it is stunning the greater part of interests, motivations, satisfactions and energies that are the purpose of religion. Religious people have feared the media especially because the media threaten traditional religious values and beliefs. They see how, as one result, the churches are emptying. Secondly, religious language is being appropriated. New symbols, images and rites are being created. Thirdly, religious themes that have no connection with organized religions that are being developed.65

Giorgio Giradet, an Italian Waldensian pastor, has taken five things into account: (a) the importance of the media in a context that includes technical, financial, political and cultural aspects; (b) that using an electronic medium like it or not is a political act; (c) doing everything possible not to isolate the medium from reality; (d) preventing technical questions from alienating the medium from reality (e) encouraging public participation, forestalling passivity. He concludes: "The struggle for and insistence on possible and sensible use of the media of mass communication centers in the end on reflection

about the church." We have to accept that in our world today mass media are more and more becoming the most important source of information and entertainment for us. We also need to recognize that they can play a significant role in encouraging participation in the search for a more just and peaceful world\textsuperscript{66}.

From time immemorial the church always find ways to use Media. What is Media to church? It is actually a medium of transportation of its ideologies to a group of people who had not heard about it. Institution had also played an important role in spreading its ideologies. Christianity has been spreading since the time of the Roman emperor Constantinople who spread Christianity to the whole of Europe. During the Colonial era, the British Empire had spread Christianity as they annexed countries around the world, making Christianity a part of the known world. Even today with the growth of Technology and Media, Christianity has grown and with it growth Church has also been established. Therefore, we can see that Church and Media has a deep connection. With the growth of technology, radio, television, internet, mobile phones and so on.. When we talk about Church, it may not be a church build on the land with bricks and stones, many virtual church has established on the internet. Media will always be an instrument for the Church no matter how many criticism and obstacle it may face along the way. Media and Church has always gone hand in hand.

2.10 Conclusion:

Looking at relationship between media and other institutions, Media has always played the role of a watchdog. The other institutions are now aware of the importance of media and have acknowledged its presence. It is the mirror of the society. When the idea of democracy

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid
developed thousands of years ago in ancient Greece, philosophers thought a democratic system would not endure with more than 30,000 people because that was the number of people who could climb on a hill in Athens to see and hear one speaker at a time. Democracy is not perfect, but it has endured. And among the many reasons for democracy’s survival in America and other democratic nations is the technology that enables an individual to reach far more than 30,000 people at a time.

Over the years, with each successive advance in technology, it became possible not only to reach more and more people, but also to reach them more quickly. James Carey wrote that the telegraph was able to collapse the constraints of time and space by allowing people from one side of the world to communicate almost instantaneously with someone on the other side of the world. 67 What Carey articulated about the telegraph is applicable to other technological advances such as radio, television and the Internet. Telegraph communication was primitive by today’s standards, but it marked a revolutionary change in how people communicated across distances and over the time. This revolutionary change became greater with radio and television and now has reached remarkable levels with the advent and proliferation of the Internet.

Although technology has changed significantly, the role of the news media in a democratic society has remained relatively constant to ensure an informed citizenry. Political theorists and media scholars believe that media must not only inform the public, but also provide information that represents a full range of ideas and opinions.

67 James Carey was a communications theorist, media critic and a journalism instructor at the University of Illinois, and later Columbia University. He died in 2006 at age 71. Carey is credited with developing the ritual view of communication. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_W._Carey accessed on 2/09/2013
Conversely, if the news media fail to expose citizens to dissenting and divergent opinions, they effectively reinforce the power of dominant ruling elites; self-governance becomes flawed, and democracy does not operate as it should. It is essential for the news media in a democratic society “to provide the balance that best serves rational decision making among the public at large.” 68

---

68 Ben Bagdikian explains in *The New Media Monopoly*, 2004 (p. 87).
Chapter-3

3.1 Introduction

3.2 From Agrarian based industry to growth of Communication industry

3.3 Conceptualizing Indian Media

3.4 The Indian Media and its functions
   3.4.1 The press in India
   3.4.2 Radio
   3.4.3 The Broadcasting Television
   3.4.5 Telecommunications
   3.4.6 The Internet

3.5 The growth of Information and Communication Technology and E-Governance

3.6 Media and women participation in India
   3.6.1 Portrayal of women by the Media
   3.6.2 Limited coverage in Media
   3.6.3 Women Journalist in Media

3.7 The Mass Media: Problems and Impacts.
   3.7.1 Stimulators of crime
   3.7.2 Trivialization

3.8 Conclusion