



The role of media in promoting and activating the values of citizenship through civil society institutions.

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Abstract:

Citizenship is a fundamental value that is linked to the response of political systems in social construction through the exchange of ideas and opinions. As media is an integral part of contemporary life, it works to solidify this value by promoting awareness and participation, leading societies towards modernity and democracy. Media has become a benchmark for measuring the development of societies and their commitment to cultural values.

Keywords: *media, citizenship, values, civil society*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Citizenship today is a social, legal, and political concept that has significantly contributed to the development of human society based on principles of equality, justice, fairness, and the guarantee of rights and responsibilities. These principles can only be achieved through the dedication to transparent democratic principles. Citizenship reflects an individual's awareness of their role in confronting the challenges facing society and the state, particularly in the Arab region amidst current political transformations. It encompasses social and political dimensions that express the criteria of belonging and the level of individual participation in protecting the nation. In modern times, citizenship has taken on a new meaning that reflects the status occupied by citizens in modern democratic societies, unlike the classical image previously held. Freedom of expression and belief are considered fundamental principles upon which a democratic rule of law is based. Discussing freedom of expression means discussing the environment in which various media outlets can play a significant role in disseminating social, political, and cultural values within society, given their ability to reach the largest possible number of individuals and their widespread dissemination within society.

Media's Role in Promoting Citizenship:

Media works to shape intellectual trends and behavioral attitudes by disseminating ideas and opinions, especially after recent technological advancements that have facilitated easy communication among individuals in society. This has increased the importance and influence of various media outlets, imposing their control and impact on public opinion and the values of citizenship. However, this should not overshadow the role played by civil society institutions, which encompass organizations, bodies, and civil institutions engaged in various social, political, and cultural activities. They have a significant role in effecting positive social change and ensuring the participation and integration of citizens in political and social life. Civil society institutions cannot fulfill their role in consolidating and activating the values of citizenship without the contribution of media as a powerful force and a real authority. Media and civil society can form a strong relationship and formula to bring about the necessary social and political dynamics for change.

Through this introduction, we can raise the following question: To what extent can media contribute to the activation and development of citizenship values through civil society institutions?

Concepts to be defined:

- Media
- Citizenship
- Civil society

Media: Originally, it refers to all the tools used in the production of media and the delivery of information to people, ranging from newspapers to computers and satellites. However, media, or as it is also called "mass communication," can generally be divided into print, audio, visual, and audio-visual media. (Hijab, 2008, p. 349)

The Encyclopaedia Britannica defines it as "the relationship between the individual and the state as determined by law for that state, and what that relationship includes in terms of duties and rights." It also emphasizes that it signifies a degree of freedom accompanied by responsibilities. The concept is generally associated with political rights such as the right to vote and hold public office. (El-Eidi, 2008, p. 06)

According to Hussein Mohammed Alawi, values are a set of philosophies, beliefs, assumptions, principles, expectations, and behavioral rules that bind any society into a cohesive unit. (Boumaiza, 2006, p. 145)

Before defining media, it is advisable to understand the meaning of communication itself, as it has been defined by many researchers:

- **Definition of Communication:**

Linguistically, it is derived from the verb "to inform," with its noun form being "communication," which means news or information. (Zahawi, 2013, p. 112)

- The meaning of communication is closely related to the meaning of education. Education is derived from knowledge, and it is said, "he learned it as he heard it," meaning he understood and knew it in itself.

In terms of terminology: (Al-Delaimi, 2012, p. 50)

Communication aims to provide people with accurate and reliable news and information that helps form a genuine public opinion that reflects their orientations and inclinations objectively.

Mohammed Jameel Hamami defines it as one of the forms of mass communication, and by communication, he means the social interaction process aimed at satisfying diverse needs. It is one of the most important social phenomena because it is the result of interaction between the individual and society and is the urgent and continuous human necessity that a person lives with throughout their life to satisfy their multiple needs. (Al-Delaimi, 2012, p. 63)

Types of Media:

Media has diversified and evolved historically. There are practical media, auditory media, and written media used according to the requirements of the political, military, and media situation and the event that needs coverage and delivery to the recipient. Media institutions and media have developed and followed scientific, professional, and technical methods and approaches. They have been divided as follows:

Traditional Media: There are many traditional media, including: (Qasim, 2013, p. 19)

A- Print Press: Its roots can be traced back to the 19th century to the second half of the 20th century. A significant part of the print press is known as the opinion press, meaning that it creates a space for expression (for the people), where it becomes a subject of debate and opposition to institutional objectivity and neutrality on the subject. It is known as the social process of disseminating news and explanatory information to the readership through print to achieve specific goals. It consists of newspapers and magazines. Newspapers have several characteristics, including:

- They publish large amounts of information that deals with current events and news and provide commentary on them.
- Newspapers can be read at a speed that suits the reader, and they can be read multiple times and anywhere.
- The prices of newspapers are cheap compared to other media.

B - Television:

Television is known as a medium for transmitting audio and visual images simultaneously through electrical signals, meaning it utilizes electromagnetic waves and satellites.

Television consists of satellite and local channels. These channels are broadcasted through a network of satellites orbiting the Earth in defined paths. Generally, the direction and angle on the compass are used to determine the reception direction for each group of satellite channels. These channels broadcast a variety of programs such as news bulletins, movies, documentaries, ... (Sultan, 2011, p. 31)

C - Radio:

Radio has become an effective means of reaching a wide audience. It can instantly translate dialogue due to its simplicity. It is often used alongside other media to connect communities with each other. If radio is considered a means of expression, it can captivate listeners' imagination through skillful storytelling, precise production, conscious perception, and effective utilization of radio resources. This makes the listeners feel immersed in the events of the radio program. (Al-Delaimi, 2012, p. 56)

Electronic Media:

Electronic media is associated with the concept of new media.

The internet: The word "internet" is short for "international network." It refers to a global network that connects various networks in multiple countries through telephones and satellites. It has the ability to exchange information between these networks through central computers called servers, which store essential information and control the network in general. The computers used by individuals are referred to as client devices. (Ajgu, 2006, p. 105) The internet is a widely accessible and high-quality technological communication medium. It is characterized by its independence, decentralization, and its own tools and rules. It has users and customers and offers countless services in various fields, especially in the field of information.

Internet Services: The internet offers many services including:

Online Journalism: It combines the concepts of journalism and sequential or serialized file systems. It refers to periodical electronic publications that contain current events and are read through a computer. (Qasim, 2013, p. 23)

Internet Television: It uses synchronous audiovisual streaming technology, relying on programs based on the file package used in the broadcasting process.

Internet Radio: It includes audio software applications used for streaming over the network, relying on information streaming technology to play audio or video content.

Email: It is the sending of messages from one computer to another over the network, allowing communication with users anywhere.

Social Networking Sites: These are online platforms that serve as the cornerstone of new or alternative media, enabling individuals and groups to communicate with each other in this virtual space. (Sadik, 2008, p. 218)

Social networking sites are a system of electronic networks that allow their subscribers to create their own websites and connect them with other members through an electronic social system who share the same interests and hobbies. Many enthusiasts in the electronic field have classified these sites as second-generation web (web 2.0) sites and have given them the name "social" because they emerged from the concept of "building communities." This way, users can discover individuals with shared interests while browsing the internet and explore more websites related to their interests.

They are also known as interactive social networks that allow their users to communicate anytime and anywhere in the world. They have been on the internet for years, enabling users to engage in visual and audio communication, exchange pictures, and utilize other capabilities that strengthen social relationships between them. (Al-Delaimi A. R., 2011)

The functions of media are as follows:

Guidance and shaping of opinions and attitudes: Media directly and indirectly influence society by guiding and shaping public opinions and attitudes. The effectiveness of media messages increases when they are tailored to the language and content that is suitable for the audience. It is important for media to address individuals with a certain level of intellectual and linguistic competence.

Increasing culture and knowledge: General education aims to increase individuals' knowledge and is achieved through media rather than traditional academic methods. General education occurs within the social framework of individuals, whether spontaneously or through planned and deliberate means. Spontaneous education involves the continuous exposure of individuals to information, ideas, images, and opinions presented by the media. Planned education, on the other hand, is the result of the media's guidance and dissemination efforts, such as agricultural, economic, or political programs broadcasted through radio and television.

Social communication and interpersonal relationships: Social communication refers to the mutual interaction between individuals. Media plays a role in deepening and developing social relationships by providing daily news about individuals, groups, social institutions, and cultural events. Newspapers, for example, establish a daily connection that transmits news and serve as a means of daily social communication among various segments of the public.

Advertising and promotion: Media has the function of advertising new products and services relevant to citizens. It also plays a significant role in the fields of work and commerce by advertising job vacancies, available employees, tenders, and implementation commitments. Media serves as a means of communication between individuals and society, and it has the ability to introduce and present new information to the public through its various functions, such as guidance, education, communication, and more.

In summary, media serves as a diverse set of tools for establishing communication between individuals and society. Despite the complexity and rapid advancements in life, inventions, industries, and discoveries, media has managed to fulfill its mission of introducing and presenting new information to the public through its various functions, including guidance, education, communication, and more.

Concept of Citizenship:

The concept of citizenship has been historically associated with the recognition of equality for some or many citizens, as described by Robert Dahl in the context of contemporary democratic practice. (Al-Kawari, 2004, p. 77)

Citizenship extends beyond the literal meaning of the word. Derived from the notion of a homeland, and since the homeland is the issue and the origin, the concept of citizenship encompasses a broader framework, which is the nation-state.

Citizenship is the quality of being a citizen, which defines an individual's rights and national duties. Individuals understand their rights and fulfill their duties through national education. Citizenship is characterized by a special kind of loyalty that citizens have towards their homeland and their service to it during times of peace and war. This includes cooperation with other citizens through institutional, official, and voluntary work to achieve common goals, unify efforts, create plans, and establish budgets. (Badawi, 1982, p. 60)

The concept of citizenship has been associated with the human struggle for justice, equality, and fairness. This was evident even before the term "citizenship" and similar terms emerged in political, intellectual, and educational literature. The struggle escalated and took the form of social movements since the rise of agrarian governments in Mesopotamia, passing through the civilizations of Sumer, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, China, India, Persia, and beyond. These civilizations, along with the political ideologies that emerged from them, laid the foundations of freedom and equality that surpassed the will of rulers, opening up broad horizons for human beings to affirm their nature, assert themselves, and participate actively in decision-making and choices.

In Europe, Dr. Ali Khalifa Al-Kuwari sees that three major integrated transformations have contributed to establishing the principles of citizenship in the contemporary nation-state:

1. The emergence of the nation-state as a result of the conflict between kings and the church, which ended with each congregation being subject to its king and his adopted doctrine within the framework of the society in which his state exists, based on its nationality, history, and distinct culture.
2. Political participation, which resulted from the mutual need between the state and its people, led to the recognition of mutual rights and participation in political work and supervision over its movement.
3. The rule of law, where the nation-state formulated laws that regulate social relations and meet political and economic needs. The issuance of these laws responded to the needs of those societies. Subsequently, the issuance of these laws gradually shifted, as in Britain, or revolutionarily, as in France and America, to the people who became the source of authority and legislation, representing the pinnacle of citizenship. (Al-Kawari, 2004, p. 66)

Some sociologists have made efforts to categorize the new forms of citizenship highlighted by current global developments, including John Urry, a sociology professor at Lancaster University in the UK. He conducted an important study on globalization and citizenship, in which he stated that there are new forms of citizenship, including:

1. **Ecological citizenship:** Citizens increasingly recognize the importance of environmental issues and their responsibility towards sustainable development and the well-being of the planet.
2. **Digital citizenship:** With the rise of the digital age, individuals are becoming active participants in online communities, engaging in digital activism, and recognizing their rights and responsibilities in the digital realm.
3. **Cosmopolitan citizenship:** As globalization connects people across borders, individuals are developing a sense of global citizenship, emphasizing human rights, social justice, and global solidarity. (Yassin, 2005, p. 68)

These are some of the new forms of citizenship that have emerged in response to the changing dynamics of the modern world.

1- **Ecological citizenship:** It relates to the rights and responsibilities of the "citizens of the Earth".

2- **Cosmopolitan citizenship:** It refers to how people develop attitudes towards other citizens, communities, and cultures across the planet.

3- **Mobile citizenship:** It pertains to the rights and responsibilities of visitors to other places and cultures.

There are also levels of citizenship awareness, including:

1- The individual's sense of common bonds with other community members, such as blood relations, neighborhood, homeland, and way of life, including customs, traditions, systems, values, beliefs, professions, laws, and others.

2- The individual's sense of continuity with the community throughout the ages, recognizing that they are a product of the past and that they, along with their generation, are the seed of the future.

3- The individual's sense of connection to the nation and belonging to the community, meaning that their future is tied to its future and that whatever affects the community also affects them.

4- Integration of this sense into a unified thought, direction, and movement. (Aishour, 2012, p. 09).

Thus, the concept of citizenship encompasses the relationship between the state or the nation and the citizen. It is based on the social and political competence of the individual. Active citizenship requires certain essential qualities in a citizen that make them influential in public life and capable of participating in politics and decision-making.

Nationality refers to the love of one's country, indicating feelings of love and attachment to the homeland and the resulting responses. Citizenship is the quality of a citizen that defines their national rights and duties. It is achieved through national education and is characterized by a kind of loyalty to one's country and service to it, both in times of peace and war, through institutional, individual, and official work, as well as voluntary efforts to achieve common goals, unify efforts, develop plans, and establish budgets.

From these definitions, citizenship can be defined as follows:

Citizenship is an individual's affiliation to a specific country by birth or nationality within a political and institutionalized society. It grants the individual rights and imposes duties based on this affiliation, ensuring equality with others without discrimination or bias, and achieving a healthy relationship with the state within a framework of transparency and democracy.

Citizenship Patterns:

Below are the different patterns of citizenship:

1- **Civil citizenship:** Civil citizenship involves mutual recognition and tolerance among individuals, which allows for a high level of social harmony. It also involves considering the ethics of the public interest, which requires the participation of all segments of society. This participation can be envisioned from multiple levels: local, national, and even global. It ensures justice, equality in rights and duties, and dignity, bringing together a community of citizens who demonstrate mutual respect through their collective behavior. This normative dimension of citizenship can only be achieved through the standards and values of democracy or civility.

2- **Political citizenship:** Political citizenship entails political participation and the right to contribute to public administration within a legal framework that grants individuals rights in exchange for fulfilling a set of responsibilities. These privileges include the right to vote, the right to run for elected positions, the right to serve in the state's administrative apparatus, freedom of opinion, and belief.

3- **Social citizenship:** Since the recognition of economic and social rights within the realm of work in 1945, which include the right to work, the right to claim protection from the social security system, and the establishment of institutions that meet training needs, social issues have become a fundamental aspect of citizenship. This progressive perspective has led each stage to complement the previous one. Civil equality is a necessary condition for transitioning to political participation, and the latter is necessary for opening the way to social equality. Thus, these acquired freedoms reinforce each other. Political equality strengthens civil equality and protects it from potential abuses, while social equality enriches the content of political equality and gives it its full significance.

4- **Economic citizenship:** Citizenship is not limited solely to the political sphere and the exercise of civil rights. It encompasses all aspects of life in society, especially work

relationships, which have gained increasing importance with the development of trade. It is necessary, in this context, to avoid the negative impacts of economic policies on the exercise of citizenship. For example, a policy of reducing public consumption that puts pressure on social protection expenditures and expenses allocated to public services can weaken social solidarity, undermine major social functions, and exacerbate inequality, as observed in countries with a neoliberal capitalist orientation. The right to work is considered one of the most prominent economic citizenship rights, a constitutionally valued goal. Every citizen has a duty to work and has the right to access employment, and the state ensures equal access to vocational training and guarantees the rights of its representatives in collectively determining working conditions and managing institutions.

5- Social Citizenship:

After the recognition since 1945 of economic and social rights within the sphere of work and the world of labor, including the right to work and the right to claim protection from the social security system, the establishment of institutions that meet training needs, social issues have become a fundamental aspect of citizenship. This progressive perspective has led to each stage complementing the previous stage. Civil equality is a necessary condition for the transition to political participation, and the latter was necessary to pave the way for social equality. Thus, these acquired freedoms reinforce each other. Political equality strengthens civil equality and protects it from potential abuses, while social equality enriches the content of political equality and gives it its full significance.

6- Economic Citizenship:

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The Importance of Citizenship:

Citizenship is a social, legal, and political concept that has greatly contributed to the development of human society, alongside the advancement of states through the principles of equality, democracy, and transparency. It is important because:

It works to reduce disputes and differences within society and the state, in the context of cultural interaction, by activating the values of citizenship, as an effective mechanism to reduce sectarian and ethnic conflicts in any society.

Citizenship is a constitutional and political principle and reference that does not eliminate competition but is based on respecting diversity, not negating it. It seeks, through legal means, to benefit from this diversity to enhance the foundation of national unity, so that everyone feels that their future is dependent on it, without denying their particularities, but rather providing a space to express them in accordance with the principles of democracy.

The concept of citizenship is not complete without the establishment of a democratic state, through practicing positive neutrality towards the beliefs and ideologies of its citizens.

It preserves the diverse rights of citizens and imposes duties on them towards their state. This leads to mutual trust between citizens and the state, achieving social cohesion within society.

It ensures equality, justice, and fairness among citizens before the law and the services provided by institutions. This is achieved through participation in responsibilities and the distribution of public wealth, as well as fulfilling duties such as paying taxes, preserving the homeland, and defending it.

It leads to the establishment of a diverse civil political structure encompassing ethnicity, institutions (family, tribe, party, union, etc.), culture, ideology, and religion, in order to respect popular participation of citizens and their leadership over state institutions.

Citizenship is considered a measure of progress and development in societies. The more social, political, and cultural formations there are, the more citizenship becomes a foundation for building a modern state that defines the relationship between society and the state.

The concept of citizenship refers to the culmination of the interactions between society and the individual, as well as between the individual and the state. The historical development of citizenship illustrates the historical milestones it has gone through to reach its contemporary meaning. Its concept is influenced by global changes and political and social transformations that have contributed to the diversity of citizenship patterns (civil, political, social, and economic). The importance of citizenship is evident through the practice of democratic principles in the daily lives of societies, where democracy becomes part of the prevailing societal culture.

Dimensions of Citizenship:

Citizenship is a complex historical concept with multiple dimensions, including material, legal, cultural, behavioral, and social dimensions. These dimensions can be defined as follows:

1. **Legal Dimension:** Citizenship is primarily a legal status. This status includes, above all, the right to vote and elect representatives. It also encompasses a set of rights and freedoms that citizens should enjoy without restrictions other than those imposed by society. Legally, citizenship signifies the individual's relationship with the state as a geographical and political entity defined and governed by constitutional and legal texts. These texts establish, based on equality, the different rights and obligations of individuals towards society, as well as the means through which rights are enjoyed and obligations are fulfilled. Nationality is usually a key criterion for determining who is a citizen, and based on it, political, civil, economic, and social rights and duties are established.
2. **Social Dimension:** The defining aspect of citizenship is the individual's belonging to a group of individuals (citizens) within a defined and recognized geographical territory. Belonging is an attempt to shape identity and subsequently loyalty based on understanding that identity and its essence.
3. **Cultural and Behavioral Dimension:** The practice of citizenship in reality is closely linked to the prevailing cultural system within a society. Customs, values, traditions, and social norms unconsciously contribute to the integration of the self into social life according to specific conditions set by the community, thus determining rights, duties, and their exercise in practice.
4. **Political Dimension:** Citizenship today seems closer to a civil behavioral pattern and active and daily participation in societal life rather than a legal status related to granting citizenship. A good citizen actively participates in public life in all its details. This includes the freedom to form political parties, the right to protest, assemble, and contribute to shaping the political system.

In summary, citizenship is a multifaceted concept that encompasses legal, social, cultural, and political dimensions. It is a crucial aspect of building modern states and fostering democratic values within societies.

Citizenship culture is based on fundamental pillars, including:

1. **Values:** Citizenship is built upon a set of positive values, principles, and ethical foundations. It forms a system of values that interact internally among themselves, as well as externally with other values. These values are directed towards the citizen, the nation, the state, the environment, and the universe as a whole.

After instilling these values during upbringing, citizenship works towards fostering a sense of belonging to the country and serving it, as well as defending it. It also strives for coexistence with social partners who share life within the nation. The exercise of rights and duties within citizenship is surrounded by an ethical framework that does not allow for any violations, regardless of whether the citizen practices or benefits from them. (Abdel-Naeim, 2007, p. 97)

2. **Acquisition:** Citizenship and its values cannot exist without being acquired through various means and methods, starting from the family and extending to schools, media, technology, and civil society institutions. (Fawzi, 2007, p. 13)
3. **Practice:** Citizenship holds no meaning without actual practice in real-life situations. Practice is what gives citizenship its transactional value in the market of citizenship. Without practical application, it becomes an intellectual luxury with no real benefit.

Therefore, these values, acquisition, and practice interact within the scope of social dynamics to produce a culture of citizenship. This culture serves as one of the means to establish and sustain citizenship in society, and to disseminate it as a practical foundation for interaction between individuals, communities, and the state. Thus, citizenship can only thrive through its foundations, conditions, and necessities. (Fawzi, 2007, p. 143)

The role of media in promoting citizenship:

Media outlets in our present time have become one of the most influential means in shaping public opinion. They compete with families and schools in shaping individuals' personalities, values, attitudes, and behaviors. It is widely recognized that the media represents a powerful tool with significant influence over individuals' thoughts and opinions. Therefore, it presents a challenge in terms of how to harness these means and utilize them to solidify the meanings and values of citizenship, loyalty, and belonging to the nation. (Jubour, 1999, pp. 125-126)

For media institutions and their various channels to increase national awareness and contribute to the upbringing of conscious citizenship, which works towards developing positive national concepts, behaviors, and skills among the younger generation, the following tasks need to be carried out:

Establishing a unified vision and goals across all media institutions to fulfill their national mission in achieving the concepts and values of citizenship.

Raising public awareness about the concept of nationalism in an accurate and continuous manner, based on objectivity without exaggeration, sensationalism, or ambiguity.

Organizing media campaigns to serve national issues in their various forms.

Rooting the values of citizenship, loyalty, and belonging to the nation through innovative and engaging approaches, employing well-thought-out educational methods.

Presenting cultural and folk heritage in a way that instills pride, fosters cultural identity, and preserves the cultural identity of society.

Opening channels of communication for all segments of society to engage in dialogue and discussion using democratic and refined methods.

The impact of media on citizenship:

Media has both positive and negative effects, including:

Positive effects of media on citizenship:

Spreading awareness and culture: Media plays a crucial role in disseminating culture and reinforcing values, particularly those related to citizenship, loyalty, and belonging. Media content should meet the needs, aspirations, and goals of society, characterized by honesty and integrity. Some of its important roles include:

- Reinforcing positive values and customs that contribute to the progress and development of society.
- Providing accurate information about its history, civilization, and national identity.
- Emphasizing the importance of values such as loyalty, belonging, and respect for others.
- Highlighting the importance of the nation and the need to protect it from aggression through advertisements.
- Shaping national character through programs that promote citizenship and advocate for national loyalty, respect for diversity (political, social, intellectual) as a strength that ensures unity and cohesion of society, and encouraging a culture of dialogue among its members. This helps to strengthen them against challenges. For example, broadcasting national anthems and documentary series about historical events (e.g., the Algerian revolution).

The negative effects of the media on citizenship values can be seen through the following elements: (Benouda, 2006, pp. 139-140)

mental imagery, status attribution, and fake events.

Mental Imagery: The primary element in shaping the mental imagery of society is the media through its communication messages. These messages work to raise awareness about specific issues or causes perceived by citizens. The mental impact reflects on individuals' behavior and, consequently, affects their values of citizenship and belonging. Media outlets amplify certain issues and events, giving them preference over others, which grabs the attention of citizens. This provides them with a definition of the existing mental imagery they have regarding the values of belonging, influenced by new additional information. The Arab region witnessed revolutions as a result of media outlets, particularly news channels, shedding light on protests and popular demonstrations, leading to their spread and demands for regime change. Initially, these protests were mere expressions of discontent with social and economic conditions and calls for reforms. However, media played a role in covering protests and forming a mental image about the importance of change.

Status Attribution: Media outlets draw attention to certain individuals and events, highlighting them and turning them into public figures. This, in turn, affects citizens' values of citizenship, as public opinion is divided based on the belief that those who receive media attention are important personalities or significant events. When loyalty and patriotism values diminish, it can result in a weakened sense of national identity.

Fake Events: Fake events also play a negative role in shaping values, particularly citizenship values, within the context of media's creation of events that undermine the interests of citizens and businessmen. One thinker identified four characteristics of fake events: they are not spontaneous but deliberate and planned; their value lies in their media dimension, aiming to achieve personal goals; and they are exemplified by the Iraq War in 2003 when the media promoted the notion that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons, stirring up the issue of the "Axis of Evil." Consequently, the Iraqi people supported American intervention in Iraq, leading to further division within Iraq (such as the Kurdistan region).

Despite the prevailing belief in the power and effectiveness of the media, its effects are still not fully understood. There is ongoing debate and no single theory explains all these effects. As one researcher stated, "Believing that the media is an important influencing apparatus is generally true, but the methods by which the media exerts influence are complex and conditional."

The concept of civil society has become a common term among social and political thinkers and advocates of democracy in many countries, especially developing and backward ones. This is due to several reasons, including increased awareness of human rights and the call to preserve them, citizens' desire for more rights, and the exercise of a form of oversight over governments. Strengthening civil society is essential not only for weakening the power of governing authorities but also for its necessary presence in achieving social partnership, democracy, justice, and equality in society, based on a genuine partnership between the state and its citizens.

The concept of civil society does not have a specific definition, as some see it as a collection of institutions and organizations that allow individuals to access material and symbolic benefits independent of the state and government. If we look at the concept of civil society based on the writings of social contract theorists, it is synonymous with the political society, which is established based on the social contract. John Locke asserts that when a group of people form a single community and each individual relinquishes their natural executive power to the community, then we have a political or civil society.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau believes that civil society is situated between the natural state and the civil state associated with the establishment of the state based on the social contract. Thomas Hobbes considers civil society to be the political society organized within the state, which emerged as a result of the social contract, with the aim of transitioning from the chaotic state governed by the law of the jungle to a state of security and peace characterized by the prevalence of order in society. Hegel criticized the concept of the social contract, considering it limited to achieving security and protecting private interests, failing to address the public interests of the state. Hegel argued that the components of civil society are characterized by

conflicting interests, which makes it closer to a field of conflict and disorder. (Shukr, 2003, p. 176)

With the emergence of Marxist theory, the concept of civil society undergoes a new trajectory. Civil society is considered the economic and political interests of the bourgeoisie, and thus, according to Karl Marx, the concept of civil society is a space or arena for class conflict, with the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as its polarizing forces, considering class struggle as a driving force in history. (Al-Dini, 1997, p. 58)

Therefore, we find that the concept of civil society remains a flexible concept influenced by political, legal, and social developments and activism within society. Consequently, researchers have different approaches to it, but there are some foundations assumed for the establishment of a genuine civil society. These foundations include ensuring a minimum level of independence from the political society while empowering civil society to create non-governmental institutions capable of mobilizing citizens and playing the role of counterpower to political authority. In building civil society, power and sovereignty should be transferred to the people, and the rule of law should be applied to everyone. This elevates the value of the individual and personal initiative in the formation of civil society organizations. Furthermore, individuals feel a sense of belonging to the society they live in and are concerned about what happens in it, positively or negatively. They also feel the importance of cooperation and engagement with others to achieve the public good. Finally, individuals experience the satisfaction of achieving results that benefit society as a whole through collaborative work. As a result, we would have a state of justice and law, a state of institutions and pluralism in the political, labor, and social spheres. (Qarnafol, 1997., p. 54)

In addition to these foundations necessary for the establishment of a genuine civil society, there are several components that contribute to its formation. These components include trade unions and professional associations, chambers of commerce and industry, the private sector, the general public, non-governmental organizations such as human rights centers, youth organizations, women's and children's organizations, media and publishing institutions, awareness and education agencies, research centers, sports centers, as well as political parties, which have had different ideological views on their affiliation to civil society. Some include them within civil society if they serve the interests of citizens, while others reject this view, such as Dr. Hassan Qaronfol:

I consider that political parties belong to the political society and employ both legitimate and illegitimate means to attain power, which contradicts the principles of civil society. Alongside these components, there is a crucial element, "associations," which have emerged as a means of struggle seeking to change the existing conditions. Consequently, social mobilization is carried out by voluntary actors, such as the women's movement and student organizations. The associative fabric now plays an active role in political, cultural, economic, and even social development, where they have the right to propose developmental projects and demand support for these projects in order to advance the society they live in.

Thus, civil society aims, through all of this, to consolidate a democratic culture, educate individuals on citizenship, which entails freedom, responsibility, participation, and expanding the base of those interested in the public interest. It strengthens the sense of national belonging, the spirit of volunteering, organized collective work, and absorbs cases of political and social tension, allowing for public expression of divergent opinions, achieving integration and cooperation among individuals who share a common desire to serve society.

The role of participatory institutions in embodying citizenship:

The existence of active civil society organizations is a fundamental requirement for democracy, as they serve as the optimal tool for educating and raising awareness within society about their rights and duties.

Due to the absence of a clear and precise understanding of the concept of civil society and civil life, voluntary civil society organizations that operate directly have emerged as a result.

How can the concepts of democratic civil society, which some believe are a hidden fabric of Western-Christian thinkers in confrontation with Eastern despotic thought, be achieved? Looking back at recent history, democracy and its realization in the West were only decisive after the fall and retreat of fascism in World War II. Can fundamental democratic principles such as freedom of expression and assembly, general suffrage, freedom of the press, free

exchange of ideas and information, personal individual freedoms, rule of law, and peaceful transfer of power be achieved? In this sense, civil society is the society based on the theory of the contract between the individual and society, necessitating the construction of a society and authority based on contract and freedom.

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