ROLE OF MASS COMMUNICATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was to explore the role and significance of mass communication in developing countries. Mass communication is defined as a process of collecting, sending, and receiving the information to masses and the channels employed during this process are known as mass media. There are different types of mass media ranging from print and broadcast media to outdoor and digital media. All types of mass media are considered to perform some vital functions ranging from surveillance, correlation, and cultural transmission to entertainment, sensationalization, mobilization, and validation. Apart from these functions, one of the most pivotal functions of mass media for both developed and developing economies is its inevitable role in encouraging development within the nations. All of the world's leading organizations like FAO, UNDP, have undeniably agreed that humans are central to the development process and media play a central role in developing humans by increasing literacy, improving employment opportunities, and ensuring equality. Reviewing the literature, it is evident that the nexus between development and media in the context of developing countries is the least studied area. Therefore,

the present study was organized to evaluate the ways through which mass media promotes development in developing countries of South Asia. The selected countries were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.

The present study has followed a qualitative research design and the reason for selecting this approach is knowledge development and a thorough understanding of different factors influencing the association of mass media and communication that is only possible through qualitative research methodology. The research instrument for gathering the data was document analysis. The reason behind adopting this research instrument was the reliability of documents and a safe approach due to the ongoing corona pandemic. The study considered different types of documents like reports, public records, journal articles, news articles, and public records. The data once gathered was analysed through thematic analysis and the association of mass media and development was discussed separately for every country for getting an inclusive picture of the country.

The thematic analysis identified five themes in the case of every country and these themes were discussed in a country-specific manner. The historical account of mass communication within the selected countries has indicated that print media was the first type of mass media developed in every country. The development of broadcast media was followed by the development of print media in all selected countries. In the case of broadcast media the radio was developed first in all countries and it remained one of the most dominant sources of information for the rural population. The television that was developed afterward is a significant source for the urban population. All chosen countries are equally influenced by the advent of the internet and the wide availability of smartphones has enhanced the adoption and use of social media platforms. Furthermore, the research study also provides recommendations for improving the mass media in the selected

developing countries. These recommendations include formulating effective regulatory authorities for monitoring the content and ensuring the autonomousness within the media, improving the skills and competencies of media persons, and securing adequate funds for mass media development through increasing the involvement of the private sector.

Keywords

Mass communication, Mass media. mass communication in developing countries, nexus between mass communication and development

Chapter1: Introduction

1.1 Research background:

Mass communication refers to the process of creating, disseminating, receiving, and analyzing the information across the public or masses either in the written or verbal form. It is imperative to highlight that mass communication is entirely different from other kinds of communication i.e. organizational and interpersonal communication as it emphasizes specific resources disseminating the information to various receivers. Therefore, mass communication focuses on the process through which the content convinces or impacts the attitude, opinion, behavior, or emotions of individuals receiving that information. The advent of satellite communication has made mass communication an indispensable part of both individuals and societies. On one hand, mass communication is employed by individuals for obtaining information and entertaining themselves and it is increasingly interwoven in their lives. While on the other hand, it is responsible for delivering vital information to a large number of people about politics, the country's policies, rules, regulations, and information about health, education, and entertainment in no time. The research studies have revealed that mass communication also plays an important role in acquainting masses about the culture, values, and norms of the country apart from getting awareness about current political and economic issues. Mass communication generally employs different media which range from radio, television, billboard, and social networking to newspapers, magazines, books, films, and the internet. The major functions of mass communication may include informing the public, building public opinions, persuading people to bring alteration in their attitude, circulating government policies, disseminating education and health programs, providing entertainment and pleasure, establishing linkage and social contact, helping in disaster, highlighting diplomatic role, and promoting political ideologies.

The need and use of mass communication are enhanced by many folds with the increasing modernization, enhancing literacy, and rising cosmopolitan approach as there are a majority of areas having common interests and concerns about which individuals want to know. And it is mass communication that brings people closer to each other by developing a common understanding or consensus about any issue. Moreover, with the increasing complexity within the society, there are many functions that are unable to perform through interpersonal or group communication. For instance, in a country like India, it is not possible to train masses in fundamental life skills uniformly and simultaneously through formal education, therefore it requires mass communication. Hence, mass communication not only acts as a means of obtaining information about various issues and getting entertained but also plays an important role in developing nations.

1.2 Problem statement:

Mass communication is considered to play a significant role in the development process of societies and economies within developing countries. It is evident from research that mass communication poses an imperative impact on educating people by reaching the illiterates within the rural areas, acquainting people about innovative technologies, and inspiring them to adopt these technologies. The individuals being exposed to a plethora of information brings a noticeable change within their attitudes, opinions, and behaviors which is a prerequisite for the development process. The research done by Wete(2010) has also highlighted that individuals are considered as a significant agent for change and therefore, they should be convinced to bring a change. And mass communication plays a central role in bringing a change within the thinking approach and behavior of individuals which is necessary for encouraging development. The better the mass

communication is, the better would be the socioeconomic development(Wete,2010). Similarly, individual participation was regarded as a central issue by the United Nations Development Program(UNDP) in its Human Development Report(UNDP, 2020). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has also supported the views of UNDP and highlighted within its report that communication is the most important factor in increasing individual participation(FAO, 2019). The report indicated that the success of development programs is inevitably linked with the extent of sharing knowledge and technology with individuals. The better the individuals are committed and motivated through effective communication, the better they would be equipped for achieving success. By the power of mass media, we can now not only understand about global warming and impact of arctic melting (Sakib, 2022) but also know about the impact of oil and gas development on the landscape and surface in Nigeria (Sakib, 2021) without researching those ourselves. The development scholars are also of the view that neither investment nor provision of inputs and technologies can bring improvement in socioeconomic conditions of societies unless individuals possess the driving force to bring improvement within their lives which is inexorably linked with mass communication. On one hand, mass communication enables the planners of development programs to take into account the needs and priorities of people while on the other hand, it helps them to foster teamwork and coordination which is necessary for the success of these programs. Therefore human factor is one of the most pivotal themes in development issues and mass communication plays a central role in developing this human factor. We came across new technologies like electrochemical waste water treatment (Sakib, 2021) , LiDAR technology (Sakib, 2022) etc. throughout the development of mass communication. There is no doubt in the fact that future prospects of development, its direction, pace, and sustainability are all determined by individuals and their level of skills, participation, and awareness. The increasing investment in scientific inputs is of no use unless adequate investment is done for developing human factors and mass communication is one of the most effective ways of developing this factor. Thus, the developmental issues of developing countries can only be solved by developing effective communication channels for humans thus confirming that mass communication plays a significant role in the development process of developing countries(Ute,n.d).

Considering the significance of mass communication for developing human factor and its association with the development process, the significance of mass communication is enhanced by many folds for developing economies. Reviewing the literature, it is evident that though the research studies are presently embracing the significance of mass communication for the development process, however, there is a dearth of studies indicating the importance of mass communication particularly for developing countries. Moreover, only a few studies have found delineating the process through which mass communication promotes development in developing economies. Therefore, the present research has been organized to explore the relationship between mass communication and the development process within the developing economies of the South Asian region(UN,2020). The study has particularly focused on highlighting the significance of mass communication in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. Furthermore, the study has also indicated the ways through which mass communication facilitates development in these countries.

1.3 Research aims and objectives:

The research aims to explore the relationship between mass communication and the development process within the developing countries of the South Asia region. This aim is accomplished through the following objectives:

1. To identify the significance of mass communication for developing countries within the South Asia region
2. To explore and analyze the ways through which mass communication pose a significant impact on the development process within developing countries
3. To explore and analyze the challenges faced by developing countries in establishing the mass communication
4. To provide recommendations for improving the mass communication channels for enhancing the development process

1.4 Research questions:

The research questions for fulfilling the research objectives are:

Q1; What is the significance of mass communication for development across developing countries within South Asia?

Q2: How mass communication fosters the development process? Explain ways through which development is enhanced by mass communication?

Q3. What challenges are faced by developing countries in establishing mass communication channels?

1.5 Significance of research:

The present research is one of the few studies indicating the significance of mass communication for developing economies. The research study has played a significant role in identifying the ways through which the development process is instigated and encouraged through mass communication within developing economies of the South Asian region. Moreover, the study has also highlighted the challenges faced by developing countries for establishing these mass communication challenges and suggested effective recommendations for addressing these challenges. Thus, this study would act as an effective guidebook for developing countries for fostering development within the country through mass communication.

1.6 Structure of dissertation:

The work organization or structure of the dissertation is shown in the table below:

Table 1: Structure of dissertation

Introduction	This chapter has focused on explaining the research background, stating problem statement, and highlighting research aims and objectives
Literature review	This chapter has dealt with studying the previously published studies explaining the process of mass communication, history of mass communication, and different types of mass communication
Methodology	This chapter has focused on delineating the research design of the present study. The current study has adopted a qualitative research design and has employed document analysis as a research instrument for data collection. And the gathered data has been analyzed through narrative analysis

| Results & findings	This chapter has focused on explaining the results obtained through narrative analysis through emerged themes as a result of analysis
Discussion	This chapter has dealt with discussing the results of the present study and evaluating whether the results are coherent with previously published research studies or provide new insight into the subject
Conclusion	This chapter is focused on concluding the findings of the whole dissertation and provide recommendations for improving the mass communication channels.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter has focused on explaining the previously published studies on the process of mass communication, its history, and different types currently employed for encouraging the development process in different countries. Moreover, the following chapter has also thrown light on the libertarian and social responsibility theory of mass communication due to their significance for prevalent mass communication channels in developing countries.

2.1 History of mass communication:

The history of mass communication is very short despite the development of different types of media during the previous years and its significant impact on the political, technological, economic, cultural, and social trends of each nation. The concept of mass communication dates back to the prehistoric forms of writings and arts with the help of fundamental printing technology in 800 AD(Lee, 2010). A series of significant events within the history of mass communication are shown in the figure below:

Figure 1: Evolution of mass communication
Source: Lee, 2010
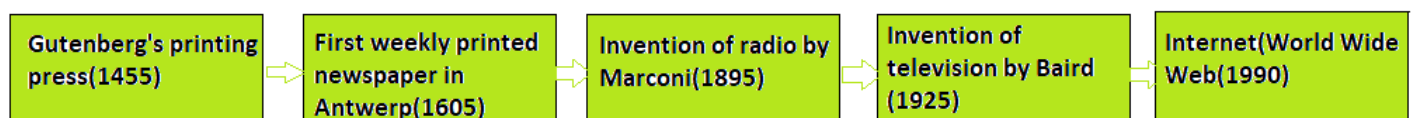
The number of users benefiting from these varying art forms has increased steadily from hundreds and thousands to millions. And currently, the audience or number of users using and benefiting from the internet or worldwide web is limitless and definitely in billions(Mcdonald,2018). The recent statistics have indicated that more than 4 billion people possess unrestricted access to the internet in 2021 which is equal to 59% of the world's population and 92% of these individuals access the internet through their mobile phones(See figure below)(Johnson,2021).
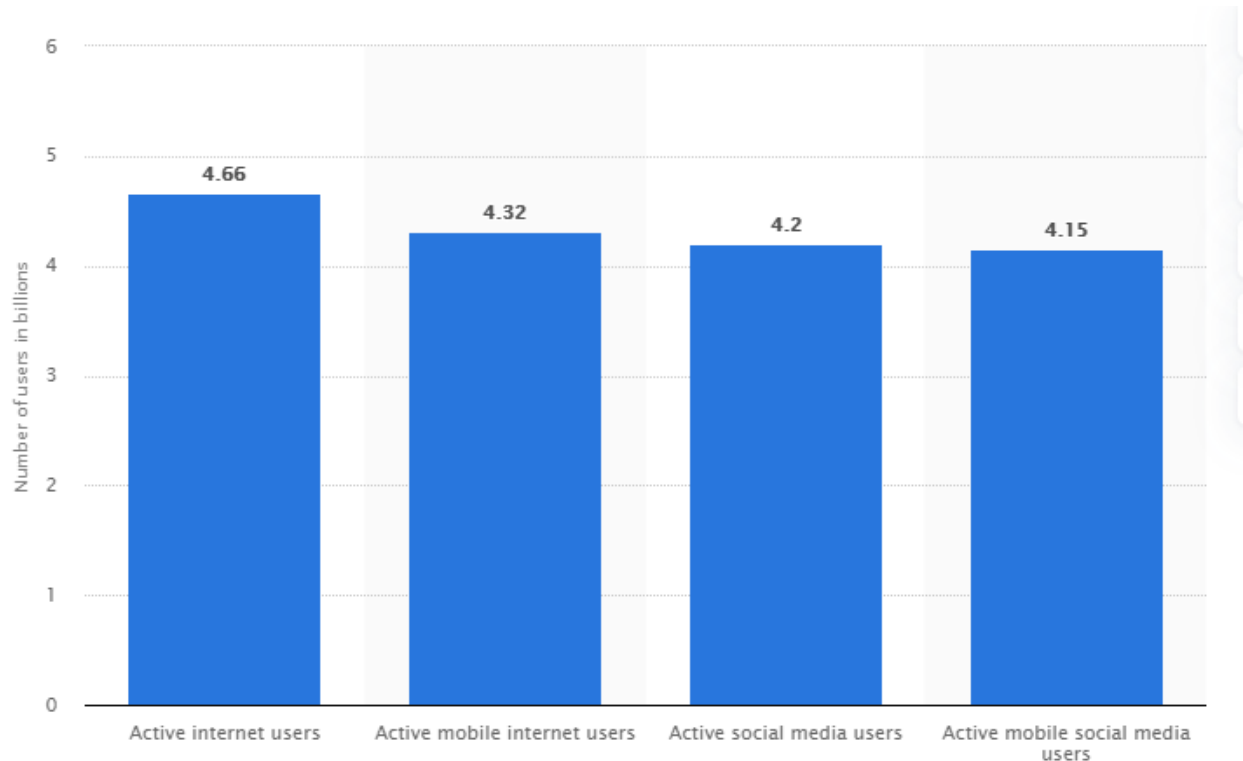

Figure 2 : Digital population across the globe
Source: Johnson, 2021

2.2 Mass communication process:

The communication process is referred to as an exchange of ideas, facts, emotions, and opinions by two or more individuals by Newman. On the other hand, according to Louis, the communication is defined as the sum of all activities an individual does when he/she desires to make it understandable for other individuals through a continuous and systematic process. And Sigband thinks that communication is the process of transmitting and receiving ideas, attitudes, and feelings both in verbal and nonverbal form. And this communication process becomes mass communication when it involves communicating the messages to a large number of people at the same time beyond the geographical boundaries. Mass communication is therefore a study of processes through which individuals share information through mass media across a large segment of the population simultaneously. It is primarily concerned with studying the way through which the content of mass communication impacts the attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of individuals acquiring this information. Okunna(2011) has also highlighted that it is a process of disseminating ideas, information, and attitudes to many individuals generally through machines. It is also considered a scientific study of mass media, the message they generate and the audience response towards it and the message they disseminate. The other researchers have highlighted that this

process is different from interpersonal, face-to-face, and group communication(Okunna,2012). Considering mass communication a scientific process, it is considered to have series of stages which are explained in detail below:

2.3 Elements of mass communication:

The researchers embracing mass communication as a scientific process highlights that it consists of the following elements. These elements are described below(Hanson,2017):

1. **Source:** The process of communication starts with a particular source that possesses a significant message, information, or idea to be delivered. The source can be an individual, organization, government, or institute.
2. **Communicator:** The second component of the process is the communicator which is also known as an encoder. The communicator or encoder is responsible for gathering the message from the source. The communicators are generally professional, experienced, and trained personnel who further develop the messages in a way that becomes interesting, appealing, and understandable to the audience. The extent of the impact of a message on the audience is dependent upon the skills and capabilities of the communicator. For instance, a small piece of information can become increasingly appealing for the masses just because of the communicators. Examples of communicators include journalists, reporters, authors, scriptwriters, lyricists, official spokespersons, and many more.
3. **Message:** The message refers to the actual piece of news or information to be delivered or disseminated to the audience. The messages are also known as symbols in the language of research. Examples of messages include movies, novels, dramas, songs, headline news, TV shows and programs dealing with particular issues, and advertisements.
4. **Channel:** The channels are ways or vehicles through which the message is delivered by communicators after collecting it from the source to the target audience. The channels are also known as mass media. Examples of mass media include magazines, newspapers, leaflets, posters, films, television, radio, and the internet.
5. **Editor:** The message once developed and the way to transmit the message is decided then it is delivered to the editor. The editor refers to the experienced and skillful person who is adept in managing and controlling the mass communication channels. He is actually responsible for reviewing the message prepared by the communicator to guarantee the effective transmission of the message through the chosen channel.
6. **Audience:** It refers to the receiver or recipient of the message or symbol. The audience can be the general public or a particular segment of the general public. In most cases, an audience is a large group of individuals who are heterogeneous and diverse in nature. Moreover, the audience differs in gender, age, income, education, social status, profession, beliefs, religion, opinions, and values. Some segments of the audience are active while others are inactive and in other cases, some receive messages directly while others acquire them indirectly.

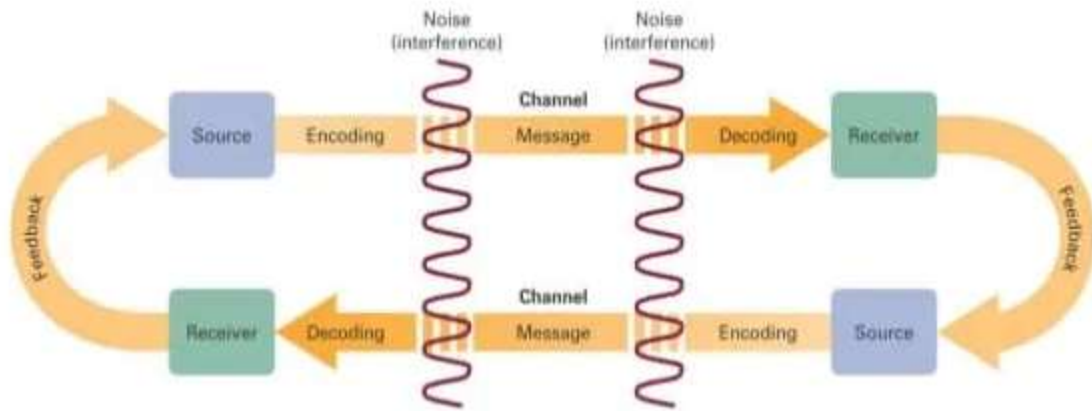See figure below for elements of the mass communication process

Figure 3: Elements of the mass communication process.

In the whole process, the reaction or feedback of the audience is very important and it takes place in many ways. The audience can provide their valuable feedback either to the communicator or editor. The communicator would then intimate the source of information about this feedback through another channel. Likely the editor if receives the response may send it back to the communicator through a different medium(Hanson,2017).

2.4 Functions of mass communication:

Mass communication has been evolving since its inception and an increasing number of users have started depending upon it. Moreover, the role it plays within our lives has also been enhanced by many folds. However, the four following functions of mass communication are still relevant within the present modern age. These functions are explained below:

1. **Surveillance:** Firstly, mass communication plays an important role to provide information about the surrounding world and environment. Television, newspaper, and the internet are the most dominant sources of obtaining information regarding daily lives. Mass communication using any of the channels mentioned above informs the audience about current affairs, political and economic issues, sports, weather updates, gossip about celebrities, and much more. For instance, the news about the bombing at Boston Marathon 2013 spread like a fire and was known to everyone because of rapid access to the internet and the wide availability of smartphones. In addition to this, the news app has further revolutionized mass communication surveillance through notifications of the latest news on smartphones.

2. **Correlation:** Correlation is referred to as the facts presented by mass media which individuals employ for moving through the world. It is also known as the editorial or opinion function of the press. This function allows the individuals to know the views and opinions of other people about a particular issue or scenario which enables individuals to evaluate that scenario or issue in the light of other's opinions. Some of the individuals may agree with this viewpoint considering that it is true while others do not agree. In other words, the media allows people to see the world around them in the light of opinions and views presented through different mass media(Berman,2017). For instance, Hitler also used the media for manipulating the minds of individuals against jews for his war of propaganda.

3. **Entertainment:** Entertainment is also one of the pivotal functions of mass communication. Mass communication in the form of dramas, talk shows, songs, and movies are sources of

entertainment for individuals of all ages. Presently, this function has been revolutionized with the wide availability of the internet and smartphones. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Snapchat, TickTock, and YouTube have provided new entertainment options in which the users are both informed and entertained simultaneously. Furthermore, these platforms also enable individuals to socialize and interact beyond geographical boundaries.

4. **Sensationalization:** Stimulating or exciting individuals about a specific situation or issue of common interest is also an important function of mass media. The most sensational findings are shared for arousing individuals. For instance, the breaking news culture which is practiced commonly by nearly all news channels across the globe is meant for sensitizing individuals. Likely, the sensationalization was at its height during the peak hours of the Corona Pandemic and initially, it created havoc among masses instead of informing and preparing them to fight against this disease.

5. **Transmission of cultural norms:** Another pertinent function performed by mass communication is the transmission of cultural norms, rules, values, and habits. Mass media generally plays an essential role in the process of socialization. The factors which influence the way through which the audience perceives or learns culture include age, culture, the kind of media used, and other cultural variables. For instance, the mainstream of every society generally does dressing, walking, talking, and smelling according to the most popular celebrities of that society. This is the reason that the majority of brands give millions to these celebrities for advocating their brands(Emma, 2019).

6. **Mobilization:** Mass communication is also important in mobilizing people during crisis time. The mobilization through mass media means a process that motivates and engages a broad range of allies and partners either at local or national level for raising awareness about a particular issue or scenario and demanding a specific development objective through a dialogue. For instance, the mass media has played a significant role in mobilizing people to fight against the unprecedented conditions created as a result of the Corona pandemic(Lynch,2017). In this case both print and digital media played their role and mobilized people to make the wearing of masks mandatory in all public and private sector organizations and change the Standard Operating Procedures(SOPs) in nearly all sectors(TBIGC, 2020).

7. **Validation:** Mass communication also helps to validate the norms and status of specific individuals, organizations, movements, and products. And the validation of specific individuals or groups of individuals helps in enforcing the social values and norms. The media generally validates some peculiar cultural norms by eradicating the variations and differences from these norms. This is the reason that the media is increasingly criticized for promoting a particular group of individuals while ignoring others(Verboord,2020).

See figure below for further understanding the functions of mass communication
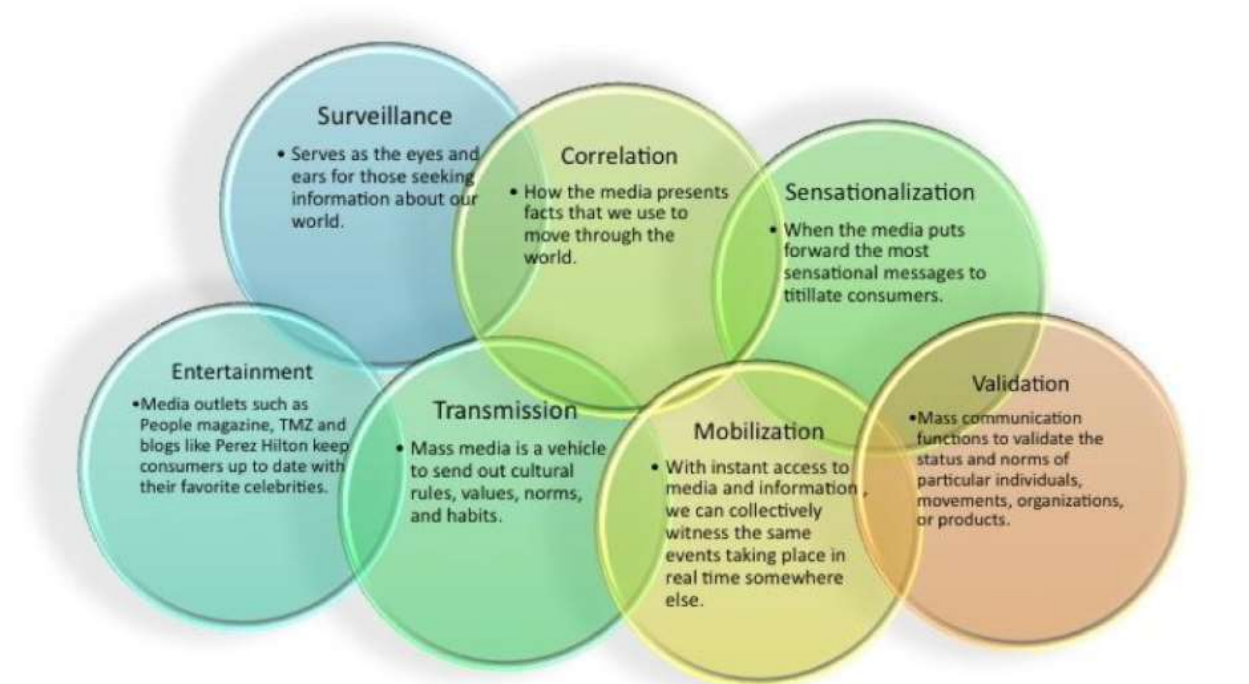
Figure 4: Functions of mass communication

Considering the pertinent functions performed by mass communication, it is the most important factor for developing societies.

2.4 Types of mass communication:

As mentioned above mass communication, the act of disseminating information to a large number of people at the same time employs different channels for communication known as mass media. Therefore, there are different types of mass media which are explained below(See figure below)

Figure 5: Types of mass communication
Source: Cater, 2017

1. **Print media:**

Print media is one of the most traditional forms employed for mass communication. It is the platform that primarily allows communication in written form like newspapers, journals, books, and magazines. During earlier days, when there was no radio and TV, the communication among the masses was entirely dependent upon print media. Since print media was used for publishing new happenings around the world, news about political or socioeconomic conditions and entertainment as well. It is imperative to highlight that print media has not lost its position and significance for mass communication even after the advent of the digital age. This form of mass media is still considered one of the most reliable and integral sources of information as compared to other kinds of mass media. The most recent advancement within the print media is the availability of newspapers, magazines, and books on online resources apart from printed copies which have further enhanced the access to these sources of information significantly. All of the leading newspapers nowadays update the online version along with the print version for attracting a wide range of audiences and catering to the needs of all individuals. For example, journalism is one of the most prominent examples of print media in which the journalist collects information about a particular event and then reports the event by writing an editorial or news article on it thus enabling to spread the keynotes of that event among the masses(Carter,2017).

2. **Broadcast media:**

It refers to the electronic platforms for broadcasting the information among the masses and is considered as one of the most pivotal types of mass communication. This type of mass media employs visual and audio messages through electronic broadcasting platforms. There are primarily three types of broadcast media i.e. television, film, and radio.

- **Radio:** Radio is one of the earliest types of mass communication. It is the channel in which electromagnetic signals are sent across long distances. Traditionally, it was employed for announcing news updates and telecasting significant events. Then afterward, it started broadcasting musical and entertainment-oriented programs as well. The advent of the digital age has also led to the development of online radio channels which has enhanced their accessibility. This is the reason that FMs stations now work on specific frequencies and network connections.

- **Television and film:** Television and film are fundamental ways of entertaining oneself and more than 90% of the worldwide population is dependent upon this type of mass communication for entertainment and acquiring information. The clear sounds and rotating pictures coiled with interesting story-telling operate in confluence with one another to generate the most entertaining and engaging content. Thus, mass communication employing both audio and visual symbols creates a more long-lasting and persuasive impact among the masses.

3. **Transit and outdoor media:** Another possible type of mass communication that is generally employed by leading brands for advertising their services and products is outdoor media. This form of media is also employed for disseminating social information or creating awareness. It means spreading information and advertising the products through external environments like banners, posters, boardings, and billboards. Transit media is akin to outdoor media as it involves providing information by posting posters, signs, banners, and notices across various transportation mean like Metro, Buses, Rail, and many others.

4. **New/digital media:** Digital media is one of the most popular and recent types of mass communication and is considered one of the most influential forms of media of the modern

age. It is also known as new media as it integrates all forms of interactive communication. The Internet is a source of the easiest and quickest way of acquiring information about any topic, issue, or scenario. Moreover, this information is available in different forms like articles, research papers, magazines, blogs, websites, videos, emails, podcasts, and social media. The digital media in all of these varied forms have increasingly interwoven within our lives to the extent that one cannot imagine life without them.

2.5 Nexus of mass communication and development:

2.5.1 Notion of development:

Development is a concept that does not possess a definite definition as it has no parameter, no shape, and is defined according to the context or situation in which it is applied(Abuiyada, 2018). The best way to define the development process is considering it a philosophy, a process, or product of that process, and a plan providing guidance to that process for achieving the defined objectives. Considering it a philosophical concept, it delineates an ideal future condition of a society to which it must progress and increasingly impact the development policies(Haruna,2018). The development can also be defined in various ways in the light of developmental theories. For instance, it is referred to as the status of human beings within the society, access to significant utilities like water, food, health, education, and transportation facilities, and the condition of a country's resources across the world's system. Some research studies on the other hand, have indicated three major objectives of development i.e. freedom, self-esteem, and sustenance of life. While other research reports have explained development as improvement of welfare or improved state of affairs of the country. The other research studies have linked the development to three vital questions like what is the status of poverty within the country? What is the employment status of the country? and what is the current status of equality? The answers to these questions play an important role in determining the development status of the country(Haruna,2018).

2.5.2: Notion of mass communication/mass media:

Mass communication as discussed above is defined as the process of disseminating and exchanging information to a large number of people at the same time. While mass media is referred to as a channel through which information is shared among the masses. It is the responsibility of the media to provide reliable and factual information to the masses that educates, advocates, builds public opinion, and entertains individuals. There are different types of media as mentioned above, however, digital media is one of the most popular and effective media of the contemporary modern world for disseminating information among the masses.

2.5.3: Relation between communication and development:

Mass media is responsible for bringing significant changes within both thoughts of humans at the individual level and the development of culture at the collective level. The media is considered to perform various roles in encouraging development within society. On one hand, government, civil societies, policymakers, developmental organizations, and the private sector are acknowledged by the media while on the other hand media enables the common man to participate and give their opinions to the above-mentioned institutions and ensure an effective development process.

Mass communication and mass media are therefore considered as one of the most pertinent agents for encouraging development in the modern era. Since it is an undeniable fact that the wide

availability of information and effective platforms for communications are purveyors for fostering national development in all countries across the globe. The significance of mass media is enhanced by many folds in the case of countries where either the development is going on or not started yet. The mass media as an agent for exchanging and transferring information responsible for the growth of national cultures, unity across various languages, and increase in literacy plays a significant role in the development process. Another research report has indicated that adequate media development can foster sustainable economic and democratic development by offering a voice to individuals and acting as a watchdog for averting the misconduct within the government(Fog, 2013). Bas(2017) has also indicated that media plays a significant role in poverty eradication by removing the barriers to education and socioeconomic opportunities, offering a platform for exchanging opinions of vulnerable populations, and informing the audience about strategies reducing poverty(Bas,2017). Likely, the research by Hewapathirana(2018) has also highlighted that television has played a significant role in reducing poverty in Sri Lanka(Hewapathirana, 2018). Choudhury(2011) has highlighted that mass communication is something more than a platform for spreading and exchanging information and plays an essential role in facilitating the participation of individuals in the development process. He coined the term development communication, the communication which fosters development across nations. The development communication promotes development by performing two pertinent roles like transforming role(bringing change within attitudes of individuals) and socializing role(preserving the socialized values within the society)(Choudhury,2011). Ocloo(2015) and Singh(2017) have confirmed that mass media play a significant role in the development process by educating individuals, enabling them to participate in different developmental programs, and providing improved socioeconomic activities within the society(Ocloo, 2015 and Singh,2017).

The research done by UNESCO(2017) has revealed that the notion of 'Knowledge societies' is dependent upon four fundamental principles: universal access to information, freedom of expression, respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, and equal access to quality education. The media plays a significant role in this regard by expanding the accessibility to information, contributing towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs), and minimizing the digital gap which is more severe as compared to technological issues. Likely FAO(2019) has expressed that humans are central to the development process and developing them means fostering development within the whole country. And mass media plays a significant role in developing human factor(FAO, 2019)

Thus, all of the above-mentioned studies have agreed upon the fact that mass communication in all forms possesses a close association with development across nations. And the most popular ways of contributing towards the development process include educating them, providing them access to information, equal access to education, eradicating poverty and inequality issues, improving the socioeconomic conditions within the societies, and enabling the public to participate within the developmental programs.

2.5 Theories of mass communication:

The theories which are important in encouraging the development process include the Libertarian theory and Social responsibility theory. These theories are explained in detail below:

2.5.1 Libertarian theory:

The libertarian theory emerged from the liberal thoughts prevalent within Europe in the 16th century. This theory delineates the societies that offer the media ultimate freedom from the government's regulations and control and they are free to report varying views and opinions.

According to the libertarian approach, there should be no censorship or control on media, and media is primarily owned by private companies. According to this theory, the primary aim of the media is to inform, sell, serve, and entertain and keep checking the government as a watchdog. This theory believes that every individual has the right to be informed and all individuals are rational enough to determine right or wrong. In the purview of this liberal approach, people possess equal right to see both sides of the picture or both bad and good aspects of any institution, policy, organization as this would not only enable them to have actual information but also inspire them to take part in this process and make the things better. An example of a country using the Libertarian theory of mass communication includes Finland. The Freedom House, an organization promoting freedom across the World ranked the press within Finland as the 'freest across the world' in 2011. Moreover, access to information and freedom to express one's thoughts are ensured under Article 12 of Finland's Constitution and every citizen has the right to get the false information corrected and answer their concerns. The threats against journalism are very rare and more than 80% of the citizens have unrestricted and open access to the internet(Kelley, 2012). The other countries using the libertarian approach for communicating across the masses are the Netherlands and Hungary.

2.5.2 Social responsibility theory:

Social responsibility theory is the further development of Libertarian theory. According to this theory, the media cannot be used by anyone to publish his/her opinion or views as encouraged by Libertarian theory. This theory rather talks about the codes of conduct, professional procedures, and standards while expressing their views, opinions, or disseminating information. The ownership of the media is private as in the case of libertarian theory, it implements self-regulation in the purview of guiding principles, standards, procedures, and codes. Moreover, the media is also free from any government control. The purpose of the media while following this approach is to serve the information and entertainment needs of the public without any interference from the government. Furthermore, the media possess a moral obligation to ensure the provision of suitable information to all citizens for making informed decisions. And it is also the responsibility of the media to represent cultural diversity and should comply with high standards of truthness, accuracy, and professionalism. This approach is used by the United States of America for informing the masses. The US possesses a Bill of Rights according to which the Congress shall not make any law sacrificing the freedom of press or speech. This bill on one hand, provides the media the freedom while on the other hand, also highlights the trust that congress has in the media for encouraging a responsible attitude from the media. The other countries using this approach include Japan, Germany, and France(Ullah,2015).

2.6 Gap within the literature and purpose of the research:

After reviewing the literature, it is evident that only a few studies are focusing on the role and significance of mass communication. Secondly, most of the research studies are focusing on the importance of new or digital media within developed and developing countries due to wide popularity and increasing dependence on the internet and worldweb. However, these studies have ignored evaluating the significance and impact of other forms of mass media which are still relevant and play an important role in developing countries. For instance, print media is still relevant and considered one of the most reliable sources of information within developing countries and there is a serious dearth of studies contemplating the impact or significance of this form of mass media on the development process within developing countries. Thus, it is safe to say that there is not any study within the literature that provides a comprehensive picture of mass

communication and its role in developing countries specifically within the South Asian region. Therefore, the present research has been organized to explore the significance of mass communication in developing countries of South Asia and identify and evaluate the ways through which it influences the development process in these countries. The research has also thrown light on challenges faced by these countries using mass communication and also suggested some recommendations to improve the effectiveness of mass communication in the selected countries.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The present research was organized to explore the relationship between mass communication and development within developing countries of the South Asian region. The study has adopted a qualitative research design for fulfilling the research objectives. The details of the research methodology are discussed below:

3.1 Rationale behind adopting qualitative research:

The rationale for adopting qualitative research is knowledge development and a deeper understanding of varying factors that occur only through qualitative design and is considered a prerequisite for evaluating the impact of mass communication on the development of any country. This knowledge development provides a comprehensive understanding of development dynamics within a country which is not possible through statistical analysis. Since the qualitative analysis focuses on the traits, characteristics, and meaning of different types of mass communication on the development of developing countries which would consequently facilitate the researcher to delve deeper into the issue and explore the nexus between development and communication within developing countries of South Asia(Rahman,2017).

3.2 Study area:

The study area for this study was the developing countries of the South Asian region and the purpose of the research is to explore the role and significance of mass communication in fostering development within these countries. The study has focused on exploring the nexus between communication and development within four developing countries of South Asia. These countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.(See figure below)
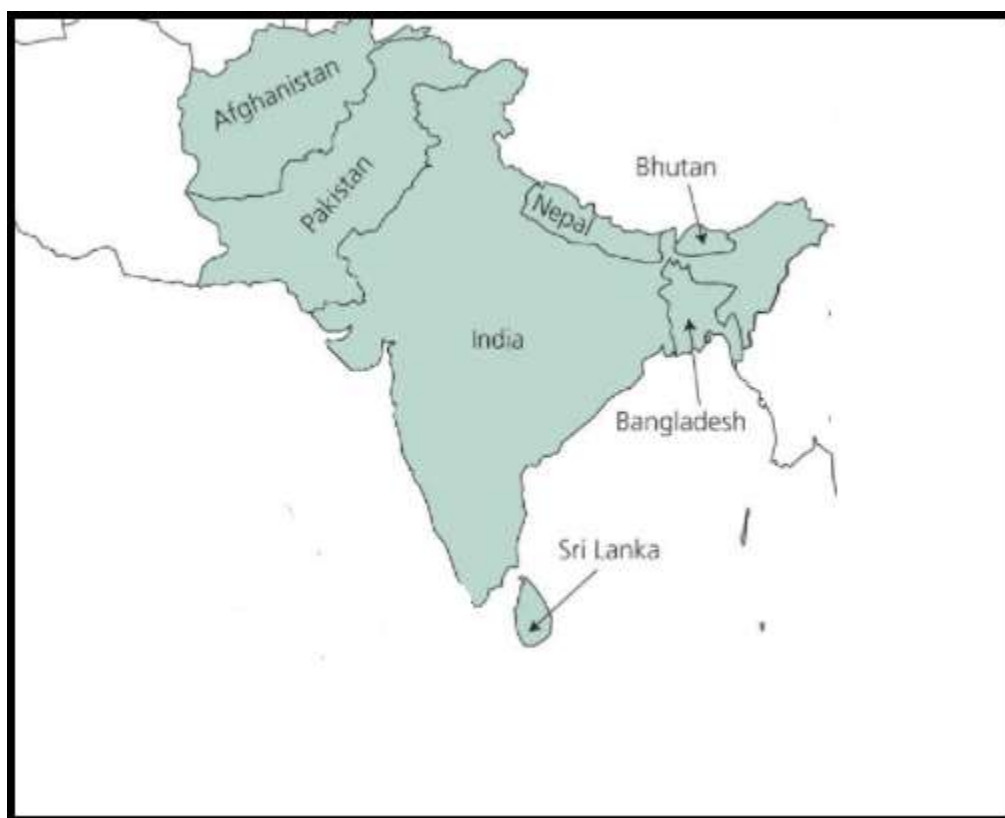
Figure 6: Developing countries in the South Asia region
Source: UN,2020

These countries have been selected as their human factor needs further development for improving the political and socioeconomic development of the country which is inevitably linked with mass communication. The development needs of the human factor are evident from the Human Development Index(HDI) of these countries mentioned below(See table below).

Table 2: Human Development Index(HDI) of the South Asian developing countries

Name of countries	Human Development Index(HDI)
Afghanistan	0.496
Pakistan	0.63
Nepal	0.579
Bhutan	0.617

Source: UNDP, 2020

The inadequate development of the human factor is also responsible for ineffective income per capita. This is the reason that these countries are classified as low to lower-middle-income countries(See table below).

Table 3: GNI per capita in South Asian developing countries 2019

Name of countries	GNI per capita
Afghanistan	Low income
Bangladesh	Lower-middle income
Nepal	Low-income
Bhutan	Lower-middle income

Source: UN, 2020

Considering the situation of HDI and income per capita in these countries, the significance of mass communication within these countries is enhanced by many folds. Since mass communication plays an essential role in developing the human factor which is the key to development within any country. Moreover mass communication by removing the barriers for obtaining education, acquiring information, and giving input in developmental projects also open new socio-economic opportunities for individuals beyond geographical boundaries and play a significant role in raising their standard of living. Furthermore, these countries are the least studied regarding mass communication and its impact on development. Therefore the present study has been organized to explore the role of mass communication in developing countries.

3.3 Research Instrument:

The research instrument is defined as a tool through which the data is collected within a particular research approach. The research instrument is generally chosen depending upon the research aims and objectives. In the case of the present research, the research instrument while following qualitative research design is document analysis. This research instrument has been adopted for studying the relationship between mass communication and development by following the methodology adopted by (Haruna,2018) for exploring the nexus of globalization, mass media, and development in Nigeria(Haruna, 2018).

The document analysis has been selected as a research instrument because it is one of the efficient methods of gathering data as documents are reliable, manageable, and easily available resources. In addition to this, the data collected through this tool is also time and cost-effective. The other benefits of employing document analysis are stability, and non-reactiveness of documents, and broad coverage on the given subject which would not have been possible by employing any other research tool(Bowen,2009).

3.4 Sample profile:

The documents were selected through the purposive sampling technique and in this case rather than selecting the documents randomly, the researcher selected the documents which are capable of meeting the requirements of the study. In other words, the documents were chosen based upon specific inclusion criteria which are described below. This sampling technique was adopted because of its capability of facilitating the researcher in identifying the relevant documents in a time-effective manner. Moreover, it also enabled the researcher to pick those documents which possessed all relevant information and served the research hypothesis effectively.

The research considered 20-25 documents and these documents ranged from reports, journal articles, and news articles to public records and annual reports of international organizations.

3.4.1 Inclusion criteria:

The inclusion criteria were established for facilitating the researcher in generating reliable results in a cost and time-effective manner. The present study has included documents discussing the role and significance of mass communication within the selected countries, the ways mass communication influences the development process in these countries, and challenges faced by these countries in integrating mass communication within their societies. In other words, any document discussing mass communication and development from the perspective of developing countries was considered for this research.

3.4.2 Exclusion criteria:

The exclusion criteria were also designed for the ease of researcher. Therefore, the research excluded those research studies that did not deal with mass communication and its relation or impact on development.

3.5 Content validity:

It is the most significant part of the research study for ensuring that the chosen research tool is capable of accomplishing the identified aims and objectives of the study. For validating the research tool of the present study, the researcher discussed the reliability and viability of the chosen research tool i.e. document analysis in fulfilling the research aims and objectives with the experts belonging from varying departments. And the document analysis was approved as an adequate tool for studying the role of mass communication within developing countries by all faculty members and experts. Therefore, the research was pursued by using document analysis as a research tool(Taherdoost,2016).

3.6 Collection of data:

The relevant data was collected by analyzing different documents. The documents were chosen depending upon the nature and aims of the research. The present research considered the following documents for obtaining relevant data. These documents include:

- **Journal articles:** It refers to the research papers published within renowned journals or magazines. This type of document was considered for obtaining a reliable, independent, evidence-based view on the relevant subject
- **Reports:** The reports mean documents entailed with comprehensive and inclusive information presented in an organized manner for a particular audience or specific purpose. The present study has preferred full/completed reports over summaries or briefs. The purpose of utilizing this document type is to obtain an unbiased view of mass communication in developing countries.
- **Public records:** It means the record recorded and maintained by public organizations and these records are considered for evaluating the state's or government's views on the chosen subject.
- **News articles:** This document type is also a very important part of document analysis as these documents play an essential role in highlighting the role print media plays in boosting development within developing countries.

After identifying the type of documents to be considered for analysis, the researcher adopted a meticulous planning process suggested by O'Leary(2014) for generating reliable results. The planning process consisted of the following subjects:

1. Generated a list of documents to be analysed
2. Classified the documents into different classes depending upon their type as it would simplify the whole process

3. Determined the process of considering cultural and linguistic barriers within the documents
4. Addressed and acknowledged the biases within documents
5. Strived to comprehend the subjectivity and aim of documents
6. Identified whether the author was first-hand observer or second-hand observer
7. Assessed the integrity and authenticity of all documents
8. Struggled to obtain background information about the documents like aim, style, and tome of documented
9. Developed skills and competencies for conducting research
10. Adopted adequate strategies for ensuring credibility and while doing so, the researcher asked different questions from the documents by considering them as participants or informants. For instance, who generated the document? When was it generated? What was the purpose of generating that document?
11. Developed a backup plan
12. Acknowledged and considered the ethical aspects while conducting research.

Moreover, it is imperative to highlight that the present study consulted 20-25 documents for exploring the role of mass communication in developing countries. The documents were obtained by adding the key words like significance of mass communication for developing countries, mass communication and development nexus, and mass communication in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.

3.7 Analysis of data gathered:

The data once gathered was analyzed through narrative or thematic analysis. The thematic analysis refers to identifying the patterns or themes within the information or data present in documents. The researcher while adopting this methodology looked for common themes that emerged while analyzing the documents and categorized them into different categories. The researcher adopted a cautious, focused, and meticulous approach while reading, reviewing, and analyzing the documents. The common emerging themes provided an effective platform for developing a comprehensive understanding of the role of mass communication in developing countries. Since Bowen(2009) has highlighted that thematic/ narrative analysis not only allows the researcher to lineup the data according to the research aims and objectives but also assists to adopt an objective approach for analyzing the data and generating credible and reliable results(Bowen,2009).

3.8 Ethical considerations:

Ethics means rules and regulations conducting research in a reliable manner without posing harm or disturbing any of the surrounding environment. There are some ethical standards and principles which are necessary for conducting research in a dignified manner. It is worth mentioning that in most cases, the ethical considerations are omitted in case of qualitative research techniques especially while employing document analysis. However, in the present case, the researcher aiming at generating trustworthy and reliable results ensured that every step of the research process complies with all ethical standards and principles. The ethical aspects that were considered during this research are described below:

The first ethical aspect was preserving the confidentiality of documents as the research involved studying some confidential documents that were neither easily accessible nor open readily. Therefore, for guaranteeing the confidentiality of these documents, the researcher ensured the individual providing access to these documents that the information provided would only be used for research purposes. Moreover, the information would be accessible to only principal researchers and the acquired information would be discarded after five years.

The second ethical aspect is to ensure integrity and reliability of the results of the study. In the

purview of this, the researcher did concerted efforts to conduct independent and objective research for fulfilling the research objectives instead of focusing on its personal predispositions and inclinations. since the personal opinions and views would have distorted the results and hide the reality from the public. Hence an objective and unbiased investigative approach are quite essential for conducting a reliable research study.

3.9 Strengths and limitations of the research:

This study is one of the few studies providing a comprehensive picture of the role and significance of mass communication in developing countries. The study has not only identified the type of mass communication employed in the selected developing countries but also delineated the ways through which the employed category of mass communication has encouraged development in developing countries. The nexus of communication and development within developing countries was firstly identified and elaborated within this study. Apart from identifying the benefits and contributions of mass communication in developmental plans and programs in developing countries, the study also identified and discussed the challenges faced by these countries in employing mass communication. Moreover, a comparative picture of mass communication in developed and developing countries was also presented within this research study that has not been presented before within any reputable research study.

Despite these strengths and merits, the present research study is also entailed with some limitations. Firstly, due to the ongoing Corona pandemic, the research could not include focus group discussions and interviews to acquire first-hand information from experts and seniors. This is the reason that the whole research study had to depend upon the investigative skills of the researcher. Secondly, there were some documents which were not produced for research purposes therefore any loophole within the investigative or research skills of research might tarnish the entire research. Accessing the documents was another limitation associated with document analysis as there were some documents having the most relevant information about the research subject, however, the inability to access them forced the researcher to rely on documents providing minimal information on the subject which may influence the results of the study. Similarly, inconsistencies, inaccuracies, and incompleteness within the data demanded exhaustive research skills to fill these shortcomings within the data. Furthermore, the biasness prevalent within the researcher's opinion and documents was another limitation while using document analysis as a research instrument. Lastly, the present research has covered only four developing countries from the South Asian region which may not present a comprehensive picture of the entire region.

Chapter 4: Results & findings

The inclusive analysis of various types of documents i.e. journal articles, reports, public records, and news articles through thematic analysis has generated the following themes. And all of these themes are discussed for every country separately for understanding the country-specific picture regarding mass communication and development.

4.1 Mass communication in Afghanistan:

4.1.1 History of mass communication in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is one of the most fragile countries in the world and has been suffering from civil war for more than three decades and currently also experiencing grave conflicts. For many years, Afghanistan did not have any native media. The puritanical excesses of the Taliban regime, war, and occupation during 1990 devastated the entire infrastructure for the media. The majority of journalists, media persons, and artists became refugees and the war-weary population of the country was dependent upon international news agencies for knowing what was the situation within their own country(Merzaiee,2011). However, the situation was changed in 2001 when the Taliban was defeated by taking help from the international community. The old radio and television sets were recovered from different places and were sent to repair shops for repairing and connecting with the entire world(BBC, 2012). The donors and international agencies played a significant role in developing the mass media in Afghanistan. Consequently, as a result of the increasing efforts of donors and Afghan people, the mass media started expanding in both urban and rural areas of Afghanistan. Mobile phones also started proliferating within the lives of Afghan people. Initially, it was available in Kabul only and was quite expensive. However, with the development of infrastructure for mass media, the availability of mobile phones was improved and its costs were reduced(Seerat,2016).

4.1.2 Legal measures for mass communication in Afghanistan:

The laws relevant to mass media in Afghanistan include

- Constitutional Loya Jirga-2004,
- Article 34 of Constitution of Afghanistan, and
- Wolesi Jirga-2007.

4.1.3 Current status of Mass communication in Afghanistan:

Currently, mass communication in Afghanistan has improved significantly. The mass media currently employed in Afghanistan include print, broadcast(Tv and Radio), and digital media. See the table below for the current status of mass communication in Afghanistan.

Table 4: Current status of mass media in Afghanistan

Type of Mass media	Current status
Television stations	200 local and international channels(107 in other provinces and 96 in Kabul)
Radio stations	150 radio stations
Print media	1500
Internet users	8.6 million

Source: BBC, 2012

It is imperative to highlight that all of these channels are both state owned and independently owned by different private agencies, thus indicating the freedom of mass media in Afghanistan. Television is more common in urban areas and 68% of the population depend upon it for acquiring information. And radio is the most dominant source of information for rural areas and 28% of the rural population depend on the radio(Haand, 2019). In the case of the internet, its availability is enhanced due to mobile phones and 88% of urban people and 60% of rural people have access to mobile phones. The social media platforms are also popular and social media users are 4.4 million in Afghanistan. See the figure below for the current state of media(Khalvatgar, 2021).

Figure 7: Current state of media in Afghanistan

Source: Khalvatgar, 2021

4.1.4 Development process in Afghanistan through mass communication:

The mass media has played a significant role in improving the state of development of Afghanistan which is explained below:

1. **Increased access to quality education:** The increasing access to television, radio, and digital media in the form of the internet and social media has created awareness among the masses about the significance of educating both girls and boys. The mass media has played a significant role in realizing that education is the first step to acquire competitive skills and competencies for surviving any kind of invasion or conflicting situation. Resultantly, the recent statistics obtained from the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education have indicated that more than 9 million children are enrolled in schools and out of them more than 3.5 million are girls. Moreover, 300,000 students are enrolled in public and private universities out of which 100,000 are women and this proportion is enhancing year by year(Akseer,2019).

2. **Improved access to health facilities:** The mass media has also played an important role in creating awareness about the significance of improving the healthcare facilities by connecting the nation with the whole world, bringing donations from international donors for repairing the destroyed healthcare system, and informing about the latest technologies in the healthcare system. Moreover, the access to health facilities has also improved as compared to the Taliban's time by investing and upgrading the infrastructure. This is the reason that infant mortality has reduced significantly. However, the number of physicians per 1000 people is not satisfactory in Afghanistan(Mohseni,2016).

3. **Fostered democracy:** Media is considered an enabler for democracy as it not only enables the political parties to reach a large number of people effectively but also brings an educated voter, thus ensuring the establishment of a legal democratic government. The nation has been enjoying democratic elections since 2004, however, the political and economic stability is influenced by continued insurgency and conflicting situations(Siddique,2012).

4. **Improved transparency:** The mass media has also contributed towards improved accountability and transparency. An increasing number of Afghan people have contacted journalists within TV and radio for voicing their complaints about government services and media is playing a vital role in investigating these cases and making the officials accountable. For instance, the coverage of the deadly stoning of a female student in the Kanbul 2015 played a pivotal role in building public opinion against the murderer(Akseer,2019).

4.1.5 Challenges faced by Afghan mass media:

Mass media has though developed significantly since 2002 within the nation, and contributed towards the development process voraciously by improving the access to education, healthcare facilities, fostering democracy, and encouraging transparency and accountability. However, the mass media within the nation is facing the following challenges for perpetuating within the nation. these challenges are(Khalvatgar, 2015):

1. Inadequate security
2. Lack of adequate foreign funding
3. Ineffective economic growth
4. Stalled legislation on the freedom of media

5. Absence of compliance with Information Act and laws governing freedom of expression
6. Lack of suitable workforce and competencies in media
7. lack of training and development program for media personnel
8. Restrictions on reporters from some countries
9. Legal challenges despite the presence of rules and regulations
10. Conservative attitude of Afghan people

4.2 Mass communication in Bangladesh

4.2.1 History of mass communication in Bangladesh:

The history of mass media in Bangladesh dates back to the Pakistan regime(1947-1971) when Bangladesh was part of Pakistan known as East Pakistan. During the war, the radio station was renamed Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra and it was used for raising the morale of the masses. The radio possessed a wide coverage across the country, however could not flourish because of using it for political propaganda.

The television was introduced in Bangladesh in 1964 within Bangladesh when it was part of Pakistan then in 1971, the state-owned TV Bangladesh TV or BTV started broadcasting. However, initially it was considered an expensive medium to obtain information or entertainment, and lack of power supply was another reason for the low number of TVs within households. The robust increase in the TV stations started in 1992 when two prominent political leaders issued licenses to their closed ones. Resultantly an increasing number of broadcasting companies including satellite, terrestrial, and transnational broadcasting companies started invading Bengali TV(Azad, 2020).

The print media also played a significant role during war days and Bangladesh is one of few countries where the print media sustained for a longer time period. However, it is also imperative to highlight that the development and circulation of newspapers kept low due to increasing poverty and decreasing literacy rate. Digital media was introduced in 1996 and as of 2019 13% of the population had access to the internet(Hamida,2017).

4.2.2 Legal measures for mass communication in Bangladesh:

The laws relevant to mass communication in Bangladesh include(Farhana,2014):

1. Article 39 of the Constitution of Bangladesh provides freedom of expression
2. Right to Information Act -2000
3. Press and Publication Act-1973
4. Press Council Act-1974
5. Digital Security Act-2018

4.2.3 Current status of mass communication in Bangladesh:

Despite the increasing restrictions on the freedom of mass media in Bangladesh, it kept on growing at a faster pace during the past decade. According to recent statistics, the current status of mass communication in Bangladesh is described in the table below:

Table 5: Current status of mass media in Bangladesh

Type of Mass media	Current status
Television stations	34 TV channels out of which 30 are private channels while 4 of them are owned by the government
Radio stations	35 radio stations out of which 17 are commercial and 18 are community radio stations
Print media	3025 registered print media out of which 1191 are daily and 470 of these dailies are located in Dhaka.
Internet users	112.713 Million

Source: Azad,2020

TV consumption keeps increasing within the country and currently more than 80% of the country's population watch tv. TV is considered the most viewed media and a large number of Bangali employ this media for gaining information and getting entertained. Radio is also considered one of the strongest media in Bangladesh and its availability was larger as compared to Tv, however, it did not grow significantly despite the prevalence of community and commercial radio stations. Print media is prevalent but only 13% of people rely on this media for acquiring information due to increasing poverty and decreasing literacy. One important feature of a country's print media is that newspapers are brought in each administrative district and still play a central role in building the opinion of the masses. Digital media also got popular within the country at a faster pace and internet users have reached millions in 2020. The increasing availability of smartphones has also increased the dependence of the masses on social media platforms for connecting with the world(Azad,2020). The current state of media in Bangladesh is shown in the figure below:

Figure 8: Current state of media in Bangladesh

Source: Azad,2020

4.2.4 Development process in Bangladesh through mass media:

The mass media experiencing exponential growth within the country has played a central role within the development process. The way Bengali mass media influence the development process is described below(Salam,2011):

1. **Promote harmony among diverse cultures:** Bangladesh is a country that is characterized by diverse cultures(Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism), and languages and media has played a significant role in unifying these cultures by eliminating the difference among them. This unification would enable the nation to avert the threats from western cultures and foster peace, and harmony within the country, and this peaceful environment is considered a predictor of development(Farhana,2014).

2. **Creating awareness among the masses:** The mass media in Bangladesh has played an important part in creating awareness about social, political, and economic conditions within the country. Moreover, it has also enabled the masses to know about their rights and helps them to practice these rights. The better the masses know about the prevailing conditions and their rights, the better would be their capabilities in participating and giving their input in developmental activities(Farhana,2014)

3. **Enhancing education level:** Both print and broadcast media have played a significant role in enhancing the level of education among both rural and urban areas by informing them and creating awareness about pertinent issues within the country. The Cartoon 'Meena' broadcasted under the project sponsored by UNICEF has played a significant role in raising the status of women and providing them equal opportunities in different spheres of life like their counterparts. Likely the 'Gombhira song' broadcasted on the radio became very popular and it created awareness about the positive impact of compliance with rules and regulations on society and its betterment.

4. **Improving socioeconomic conditions of masses:** The mass media within the country has evolved into an industry that is an important source for generating revenue. The industry not only increasingly employs a large number of individuals but also opens up new avenues for talented people in other disciplines and industries(Salam,2011).

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5. **Fostering democracy:** Mass media within the country also played a key role in fostering democracy within the country by informing people about different parties. analyzing their agendas, building public opinion, highlighting the significance of voting, and analyzing the government performance.

4.2.5 Challenges faced by mass media in Bangladesh:

The growth and development of mass media in Bangladesh are hampered by the following challenge(Farhana,2014).

1. The blurred line between politics and journalism
2. Increasing corporatization in media
3. Lack of diversity within the media
4. Absence of trained and skillful workforce in media
5. Lack of professionalism
6. Absence of institutionalization of media
7. Increasing use of media for political purpose
8. Absence of guidelines and long term objectives regarding mass education in media laws
9. Absence of uniformity within different media houses policies

4.3 Mass communication in Nepal:

4.3.1History of mass communication in Nepal:

The history of mass communication is centuries old and dependent upon the political history of Nepal. The 'Katuwal Karauney' was one of the oldest processes of communication among the masses and it persisted for decades within the country. The mass media-originated within the country with the introduction of a printing press named 'Giddhe Chhapakhana' in 1851 AD which led to further development of print media in Nepal. The printing press established afterward include Manoranjana, Muluki Ain, Jungi Lithography Press, Budhha press, Chandra Prabha Press, Pashupat, and Narayan Press. The first magazine was introduced in Sudha Sagar in 1898 AD which led to the establishment of other magazines within the country. The mass media was further developed during the multi-party democracy system. And the first radio channel was broadcasted in 1951 and the transmission was started in 1995. However, the *'Panchayat period'* was again resumed during 1961-1990 which is considered as the darkest period for mass media(Duwadi, 2012). During this time, the journalists were divided into two types i.e. pro panchayat and anti-panchayat. The country entered the television era during this time period and the radio was also spread outside Kathmandu. The democracy was again restored after 1991 and it also posed a positive impact on mass media. The right of the freedom of expression and opinion was safeguarded through a constitution. Digital media was introduced in Nepal with the advent of the internet in 1993 with the venture of Mercantile Office Systems (MOS) and the Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST). Internet usage was further enhanced in 2003 with the introduction of mobile phones and initially keeping mobile phones was considered a status symbol(Powell, 2011).

4.3.2 Legal measures for mass communication in Nepal:

The laws relevant to mass media in Nepal are(IAFN,2013):

● Article 19 of the Constitution of Nepal grants freedom of expression

- Press and publication Act-1982
- Press and Publication regulations -1983
- Radio Act 1957,
- No legislation is present for television
- Espionage Act and Defamation Act for complying with ethical standards

4.3.3 Current status of mass communication in Nepal:

Nepal media is increasingly vibrant and diverse. The current status of mass communication in Nepal is discussed in detail below:

Table 6: Current status of mass media in Nepal

Type of Mass media	Current status
Television stations	The government has granted licenses to 117 Tv channels. 71 of them are cable tv channels, 3 channels are transmitted through a Direct-to-Home system, 4 are digital terrestrial channels, and 42 channels are based in Kathmandu.
Radio stations	736 FM radio stations, 48 of them are present in Kathmandu valley while others are spread across the entire nation. and 314 of them are community radio stations.
Print media	3685 registered newspapers out of which 1640 are present in Kathmandu, 2778 are weeklies, 402 are fort nightlies, and 655 are dailies.
Internet users	10 million internet users

Source; Acharya, 2021

The reports have indicated that more than 70% of the households in Nepal have Tv and 60% of the population watch TV regularly. And the state-owned Tv has the highest viewership i.e. 38% in 2021(Acharya, 2021). Television, like other countries, is more popular in urban areas while radio remains the dominant media for rural outskirts of the nation. The radio is considered one of the most cost-effective, easily accessible, and impactful media in Nepal. The recent data has indicated that 59% of households have radio sets and more than half of the population listen to the radio regularly and 69% of radio listening is attributed to the wide availability of mobile phones. Moreover, Nepal is the only country within the region that allows private radio channels to broadcast the news. The self-created syndication is another unusual attribute of Nepal's radio(Acharya,2021). The internet has also proliferated increasingly within the nation and the wide access to the internet through mobile phones has also enhanced the usage of social media platforms

as social media users in Nepal reach 10 million in 2021. See figure below for the current state of media in Nepal
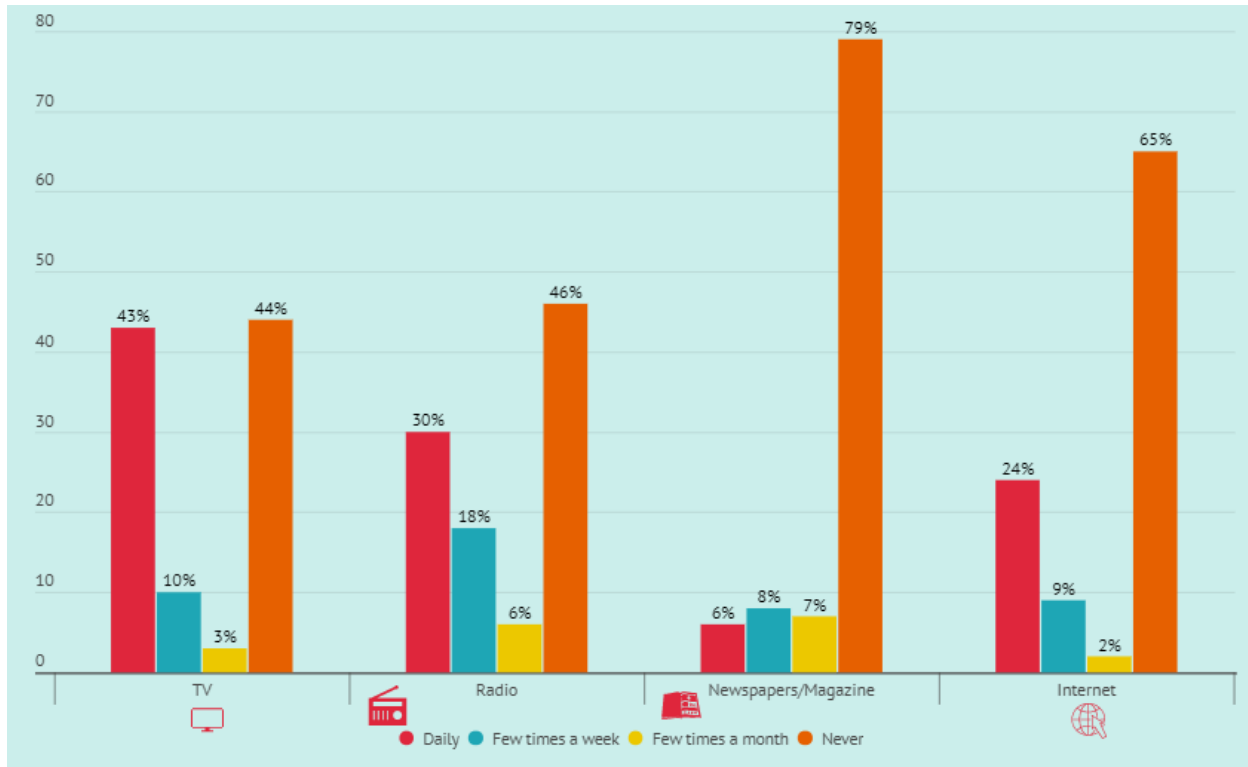

Figure 9: Current State of media in Nepal

Source: Basnyat, 2020

4.3.4 Development through mass media in Nepal:

Nepalis mass media like other mass media has played a key role in enhancing development within the country. The mass media contribute towards development in the following ways(Rijal,2014):

1. **Empowering masses and educating them:** The important aspect for encouraging the development is empowering and educating the masses. Television and radio are the most dominant source of information and they are also considered reliable information sources. Both of them have played a significant role in providing information to the nepalese about the current situation of the country and empowering them to make evidence-based decisions. Specifically, the community-owned radio stations have played the most significant role in this regard.
2. **Keeping masses informed:** The mass media after releasing from the monopoly of the state tend to provide information about both the current state of affairs within Nepal and also international affairs. Having up-to-date information has equipped the masses with critical thinking abilities and cognitive skills for analyzing the prevailing situations effectively and making informed decisions.
3. **New socioeconomic opportunities:** The wide availability of the internet and smartphones within the nation has opened up new opportunities for Nepalese beyond the geographical

boundaries. Moreover, the increasing connectivity with the entire world has also enhanced the opportunities for acquiring competitive skills and improving the standard of living.

4.3.5 Challenges faced by mass media in Nepal:

The challenges faced by the mass media of Nepal in growing and contributing towards development are as follows(Acharya, 2018):

1. Fragmentation and politicization in mass media due to its interaction with politics
2. Decreasing level of freedom for mass media
3. Limited market incentives for mass media
4. The international community is undermining the role of media in remaking Nepal
5. Lack of professional practices
6. The inability of media to make government officials accountable
7. Inadequate financial resources
8. Ineffective performance of media as watchdog
9. ineffectiveness in promoting social cohesion
10. Legal limitations
11. Digital divide

4.4 Mass communication in Bhutan:

4.4.1 History of mass communication in Bhutan:

Mass media in Bhutan was started with the development of Kuensel Bhutan Broadcasting Services(BBS), a national broadcaster. The development of Kuensel, a national paper in 1965 was also followed by the establishment of Bhutan Broadcasting services. Keunsel was a government circle and its purpose was to provide all relevant information about government activities. And the most pertinent activity during that time was the country's first five year plan(Dorjan,2010).

The modern media was started with the first radio broadcast within the country by the National Youth Association of Bhutan(NYAB). It was afterward taken by the government which further developed it into a regular broadcast station in 1986 known as Bhutan Broadcasting Corporation. The television and internet were introduced within the country for the first time in Bhutan in 1999 and it revolutionized the Bhutanese media. The media proliferation was slow initially, however, the mass media in Bhutan was revolutionized after 2006 with the introduction of media liberalization policy. This policy encouraged exponential growth in both print and broadcast media. The private sector involvement not only transformed the Bhutanese media but also posed a significant impact on the country's democracy and governance. Since then the media proliferation has been enhanced among both urban and rural populations of the country(Lamsang,2015). The historical timeline of Bhutanese media is shown in the figure below:
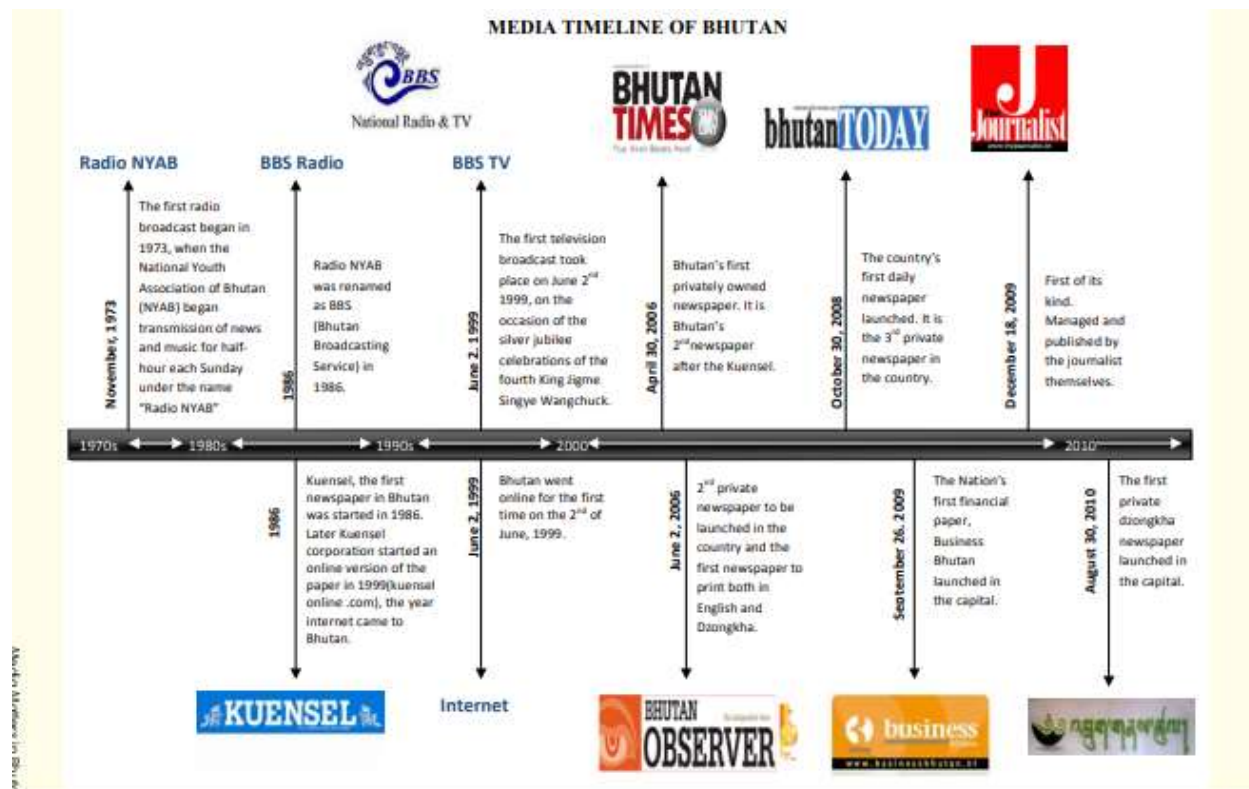
Figure 10: Historical timeline of Bhutanese media

Source: Dorji, 2010

4.4.2 Legal measure for mass communication in Bhutan:

The laws relevant to Bhutanese mass media include:(Oyama,2015)

1. Article 7 of the Constitution of Bhutan granting freedom of expression and the right to information
2. Bhutan Information, Communication, and Media Act-2006

4.4.3 Current status of mass communication in Bhutan:

The current status of mass communication in Bhutan is evident through the table below:

Table 7: Current status of mass media in Bhutan

Type of Mass media	Current status
Television stations	31 Tv stations
Radio stations	8 radio stations
Print media	7 newspapers out of which one is state owned while rest of them are private

Internet users	373 thousands

<div align="center">Source: Oyama, 2015</div>

The statistics have indicated that the nation does not possess a huge infrastructure for mass media. Television, like other countries, is more popular among urban areas and radio is the dominant source of information for the rural population. The radio is one of the most prolific media in Bhutan and more than 77% of the population rely on radio for obtaining information. The print media consisting of only seven newspapers still act as a pertinent source of information for the masses. The internet was introduced late within the country, however, the social media platform was adopted quickly by the internet users and currently, 560 thousand people use social media platforms in Bhutan.

4.4.4 Development through mass communication in Bhutan:

Bhutanese media has played a significant role in promoting democracy and fostering development within the country. The ways through which the development is enhanced is explained below:

1. **Enhancing literacy:** The Bhutanese media plays an important role to inform the masses about the varying disciplines, engage them in positive activities, influencing their opinion, and educating them to make informed decisions in every stage of life. In other words, developing the human factor is a prerequisite for fostering development within any country and Bhutanese media play an important role in developing humans.
2. **Bringing cultural change:** Mass media also pose a long-lasting impact on the masses's beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors. The findings of the Media Impact Study have highlighted that media led to the substantial change in language, talking style, dressing, and behavior of masses(UNDP, 2013).
3. **Shaping democracy:** Bhutanese mass media also possess close association with democracy and it is shaped largely by the media. This is because the mass media is used to having discussions about the policies, rules, regulations passed by elected governments and ongoing elections within the country. Therefore shaping a healthy democracy is inevitably linked with autonomous media.
4. **Making youth smarter:** The Media Impact Studies conducted in Bhutan in 2013 has highlighted that television is considered to pose a significant impact specifically on the young population of urban areas. Most people are of the view that television has improved the confidence level of their children and made them smarter and intelligent
5. **Improving the sports:** Television has also influenced sports and placed a positive impact specifically on football. Television provided an effective platform to Bhutan sportspeople and by watching international sports, they improved their sports significantly.
6. **Introduced innovative idea:** Television has also improved the development process of the country by introducing new ideas in food, fashion, and politics as a result of information and knowledge obtained from different channels(UNDP, 2013)

4.4.5 Challenges faced by mass communication in Bhutan:

The challenges faced by Bhutanese mass media are explained below(UNDP,2013):

1. Lack of freedom
2. Absence of adequate financial resources

3. Absence of professionalism
4. Lack of skilled personnel
5. Limited involvement of private sector

Chapter 5 Discussion

This chapter has focused on further discussing the result and findings of the study in the light of published studies. The primary aim of the discussion is to evaluate which of the country's mass media has promoted development within the country and pose a positive impact on the country. Moreover, the findings of the study have also been evaluated in the light of Libertarian and Social Responsibility theory and identify the approach used within the selected developing countries.

5.1 Evaluation of mass media of selected developing countries in the development context:
The mass media plays an important role in promoting positive prospects and encouraging development within both developed and developing countries. The present research has revealed that the role of mass media has been enhanced by many folds in the case of developing countries as an increasing responsibility is placed on the media to share factual and unbiased information for encouraging improvement in all sectors of society. The present research employing document analysis has revealed that the most prominent indicators for development within a country are improved education level, increased equality, improved employment status, and socioeconomic condition(Haruna,2018). The evaluation of selected developing countries in the light of these indicators is explained below:

Evaluating the effectiveness of mass media in promoting development across the selected developing countries, it is evident that mass media within all of the developing countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan has played a significant role in enhancing the

education level among the masses. The present research has confirmed that mass media plays a central role in educating the masses about their rights, roles, and responsibilities which lead to the development of a prosperous and progressive society. The topics of education may range from health, cleanliness, politics, economy, food, and fashion. Both television and radio are confirmed as significant sources in this regard as both of them played an important role in educating the masses, improving the literacy rate. For instance, the media in the case of Afghanistan has not only improved the literacy rate in schools but also enhanced the number of students enrolled within higher education universities. And this number has been improved specifically among females as an increasing number of females are enrolled in universities. Similarly, Bhutanese television is responsible for improving the confidence level of urban youth and making them smarter through informing and educating them. The mass media of Bangladesh is also responsible for educating the masses, specifically raising the status of women within the society through the most popular cartoon known as 'Meena' under the program sponsored by UNDP. Apart from eliminating gender inequality, the cartoons also increased awareness about the significance of cleanliness and access to health facilities for reducing infant mortality. The present research findings are coherent with the research done by Jelly(2020) that mass media is very important in educating the masses and improving their literacy level(Jelly, 2020).

The improved access to education is also closely associated with better socioeconomic conditions and improved poverty levels. The present research has confirmed that both forms of broadcast media i.e. television and radio have played a central role in improving the socioeconomic conditions of the masses by removing the barriers to education and opening new opportunities. The community radio stations driven by the need to provide an effective communication platform especially for rural areas have played an important role in connecting the rural areas of these developing countries with the rest of the world, increasing access to education, and offering innovative employment opportunities. These findings are also coherent with the research done by FAO(2019) that developing human factor is central for poverty eradication and media is a key to human development(FAO, 2019).

The role of digital and new media is also undeniable in the case of improving the socioeconomic conditions for the masses specifically within the urban areas of developing countries. Since the present research has confirmed that the internet was expanded in all of the selected countries at a faster pace and its enhanced usage led to the availability of innovative employment opportunities for both men and women. Consequently, these employment opportunities led to improved socioeconomic conditions and eradication of poverty.

The mass media within all of the selected developing countries is observed to encourage and foster political democracy within the nations by informing them about prevalent policies, rules, and regulations and building opinions about various political parties. It is imperative to highlight that mass media facilitate both political parties and masses in this regard as on one hand, it enables the political parties to reach a large number of people and enhance their outreach while on the other hand, it helps people in evaluating the political agendas of these parties. Thus the media plays a pivotal role in ensuring political democracy within a nation. However, in most cases, the freedom of media is restricted either due to increasing politicization or persisting influence from the state or government which is hampering its role in ensuring the development of democratic nations. These findings are also consistent with the research conducted by Hanitzsch(2016) indicating that mass media is very important for the demcoractic development of the country(Hanitzsch,2016).

Furthermore, apart from direct contribution to the development context, mass media also contribute to the development process indirectly. The indirect impacts are cultural cohesion which refers to uniting diverse cultures. The countries chosen within this study possess diverse cultures, various ethnicities, and languages. Mass media is observed to pose a significant impact on these diverse cultures, ethnicities, and languages. It is observed that mass media can impose both positive and negative impacts in this regard. The results have shown that mass media is contributing to cultural cohesion to some extent and its full potential is not harnessed due to biases towards particular cultures or ethnicities. Removing these biases within media and equipping it with professional and skillful people would help mass media to play a significant role in promoting cultural cohesion which could lead to the formulation of peaceful societies which are prerequisite for development within any country. The research done by Leupold(2016) also supports these findings and indicates that all forms of mass media ranging from print and broadcast media to digital media play an important role in promoting cultural and social cohesion.

The findings of the present study have indicated that mass media in the form of print, broadcast, and digital media has played a significant role in developing societies within the selected countries. Though the role of mass media in these countries is undermined due to some challenges mentioned above, however, addressing these challenges can improve the growth of mass media within these countries, thus leading to enhanced development.

5.2 Analyzing the findings in the light of theories:

The theoretical approaches significant in promoting development within the developing countries are the Libertarian theory and the Social Responsibility theory. The findings after analyzing the mass media of chosen developing countries in the light of these theories are discussed below:

The analysis has revealed that most of the developing countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal have witnessed political instability, insurgencies, and conflicting situations which have greatly influenced the growth, development, and freedom of media. This is the reason that none of the countries mentioned above completely follow the Libertarian or Social responsibility theory because of either increasing hold of the state or politicization of media. The results have highlighted that initially after restoring the democracy within these countries, all kinds of mass media were primarily owned by the state. And the growth of the media occurred after the involvement of the private sector in 2006. However, despite the increasing involvement of the private sector, the unrestrained freedom to mass media was not ensured in the majority of cases. For instance, in the case of radio, Nepal is the only country within the South Asian region that allows private channels to broadcast the news. While in the case of other countries, private radio channels are not allowed to broadcast the news. Likely, the journalists and news agencies within the print media of all chosen countries are not provided with unrestricted freedom of expression and threatened seriously to stop releasing information against the government or a specific political party. The ministries and regulatory authorities are not performing the expected role for expanding the mass media within these countries and are heavily influenced by the government and politicized for political gains. The mass media in these countries striving to play the role of watchdog had to suffer a lot from the state or government, therefore, media in these countries is neither authoritarian nor liberal.

The Social Responsibility theory is also not adopted by any of the chosen countries appropriately as all of the countries have formulated various codes of conduct, standards, practices, and rules and regulations. However, the adequate implementation of the all above countries is not guaranteed

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through any means. Moreover, according to this theory, it is the moral duty of the media to provide factual and real information without any biases and distortions. Contrarily, the mass media in nearly all of the chosen countries do not provide factual data and information either due to a lack of professionalism or due to hidden political agendas.

Thus, the mass media of the selected countries can neither be called liberal nor be classified as socially responsible. This is the reason that mass media in these countries have not flourished the way it could be and have not utilized its full potential in promoting development.

Chapter6 : Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is focused on concluding the findings of the entire research study and following these findings, this chapter would also highlight some recommendations for these countries for addressing the challenges faced by developing countries and strengthen the nexus between mass media and development. In the end, the chapter has also suggested future research areas for providing further insights into the subject.

The present research study was organized for exploring the role and significance of mass communication in developing countries. The present study chose the developing countries from the South Asian region. The selected countries were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. The rationale for selecting these countries was the increasing need to develop human factors in these countries which is greatly dependent upon mass communication. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology for conducting the research and the research instrument for data collection was document analysis. The study considered various documents ranging from reports, and journal articles to news articles and public records. The findings of the study are as follows:

- The growth and development of mass media in all of the chosen countries is increasingly dependent upon the political conditions of the country. The better the political situation of a country is, the better would be the growth and development of mass media.
- Initially, the mass media in all of the countries was owned by the state or government and private sector involvement in all countries was allowed after passing liberalization policy
- The mass media in all countries experienced robust growth after involving the private sector
- The mass media in all countries was initiated with print media followed by the development of radio and television
- Radio remained a dominant source of information within the rural areas of the selected countries while Tv remained a significant source of information for the urban population
- All countries witnessed an increasing proliferation of the internet and smartphone which consequently enhanced the usage of social media platforms
- The nexus between development and mass media was ensured in the case of all selected countries by improving the literacy rate, informing the masses, reducing poverty, improving socioeconomic conditions, and promoting democracy.
- All chosen countries experienced some challenges while developing the mass media within their countries. These challenges range from lack of adequate financial resources, absence of skilled workers, blurred lines between politics and media, and lack of unrestricted freedom to the politicization of media, and lack of private sector involvement.

- All countries are neither following the libertarian approach nor considered socially responsible due to the increasing involvement of government and lack of effective implementation of the code of practices, rules, and regulations.

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested to address the shortcomings within the mass media of selected countries.

- Firstly, it is recommended to increase the private sector involvement within mass media for securing adequate funding resources. Since lack of suitable financial resources is one of the most prominent pressing challenges in the majority of countries, and the best way to address it is to invite the private sector. However, it is necessary that the license should be awarded by strictly scrutinizing the skills, competencies, and professional experience of these companies.
- The provision of unrestricted freedom is another vital attribute and absence of which is seriously undermining the potential of mass media in all of the selected countries. Therefore, it is strongly suggested to ensure the provision of unrestricted freedom by decreasing the involvement of the state in media matters and encourage the media to perform a role of effective watchdog by amending the regulations governing the media practices that the government shall not intervene in media matters unless the news or situation jeopardize the national interest, security or sovereignty of the state. This amendment would help to provide freedom to the mass media and harness its full potential for development.
- The absence of professionalism and lack of a skilled workforce is another important challenge for the majority of media personnel in developing countries. Media is an increasingly dynamic field, therefore, it is strongly suggested to arrange training and workshops for media persons according to the needs and preferences of the prevailing situation to ensure the provision of factual and unbiased information.
- Lastly, there is a need to formulate an effective regulatory authority for monitoring and regulating all types of mass media within all countries. This regulatory authority should not only oversee the implementation of amended rules and regulations but also ensure that none of the information is distracted or manufactured for serving any personal gains or political agendas.

To conclude, it is expected that the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations would help to address all underlined challenges effectively and improve the effectiveness of mass media in encouraging development in developing countries.

The present research has some limitations like in the purview of the ongoing corona, it could not include focus group discussions and interviews and only four countries were selected for evaluating the role of mass media in development. Therefore, in future studies, it is suggested to replicate this study by including the primary data either through focus group discussions or interviews, and explore the relationship between development and mass media in the light of the information provided by participants and compare this information with the published studies. Secondly, the study can also be replicated by adding all countries belonging to South Asia and obtain a comprehensive picture of the whole region about mass media and its role in promoting development in this region.

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