

The role of independent journalism in the implementation of public control by the state authority functioning

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Abstract

The article covers the role of independent media in the exercise of public control over the functioning of state power. The author emphasizes that journalism is the leading means of such control. The control functions of independent journalism are revealed.

Keywords

Journalism, independent media, civil society, political power, public control.

Introduction

The most important task that has emerged in the process of democratic transformation of Ukraine is to ensure control over the functioning of state power from the side of civil society. Independent journalism plays a leading role in the implementation of public control together with the institution of free elections and the concurrent mechanism of political parties competitions. Through independent journalism, citizens are informed about the activities of power structures, which give them the opportunity to form their own opinion. Journalism allows both individuals and groups of people to inform the authorities and society as a whole about their problems and interests.

Although today there is a certain circle of scientific publications from Western [1-5] and domestic scholars [6-7], in which the problem of the role of journalism in ensuring the control of power is violated, but its disclosure is clearly inadequate. The purpose of this publication is to uncover the control functions of independent journalism.

Main part

Independent journalism is a journalistic activity carried out within independent media. The adjective "independent" has a specific content, since it characterizes the independence of certain media from the state (government). In Western science, independent media are usually defined as "non-governmental". Independent (non-governmental) media represent one of the varieties of civil society structures, which refers to the social space, where relations between people are not mediated by state authorities, where citizens freely interact with each other as politically independent entities [8]. Just as free entrepreneurship is the economic foundation of civil society, independent media are its informative background. Public functions are carried out by independent media through journalistic activities called "independent" or "free" journalism. Independent journalism performs very important functions in society. Under the functions of journalism is understood complex of its social roles. The essence of the role characteristic is to identify certain social responsibilities that journalism fulfills in accordance with public requirements and expectations in various spheres of social life: political, economic, social, and spiritual [9]. In order for journalism to really contribute to the democratic development of society, it is necessary to have the following conditions for its functioning:

- independence of the media from political power;
- eliminating the pressure of officials and other persons with personal interests;

- access to obtaining fair and unbiased information from political and public authorities in order to provide an open information policy;
- protection of the rights of journalists, in particular the right to secrecy of the source of information [10, c. 14].

The social role of independent journalism manifests itself primarily through its control functions. The main control functions of independent journalism are following:

- *Information*, which is to provide the public with objective information about the activities of political power.
- *Critical*, the implementation of which allows the authorities to more widely see their disadvantages, deeper comprehend them and timely take measures to eliminate them.
- *Communicative*, which is manifestation of the fact that independent media help to establish links between citizens who have similar views and social preferences, as well as to establish a dialogue between members of society that have different views and preferences.
- *Education* - is that, through journalistic publications, consumers of information (citizens) acquire useful knowledge of the political system, state, government, legal norms, etc., which contributes to the formation of their political and legal culture. Obtaining knowledge leads to increased interest of citizens in the activities of the authorities, the objectivity of its evaluation, promotes better understanding of the ways of solving problems that arise in the process of social development.
- *Socializing*, the essence of which is that the acquisition of knowledge by citizens and raising their level of culture through journalistic activities contribute to their greater involvement in the system of social relations, political, economic, cultural and other processes taking place in it.

Conclusion

The fundamental principles of journalism in a democratic society are that journalists must act responsibly, adhere to universal ethical standards and, above all, not lose independence and criticism. Journalism should serve the freedom of speech, which involves receiving and transmitting information while respecting other fundamental rights, freedoms and interests protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. The existence and development of true democracy is impossible without the existence and consolidation of free, independent, pluralistic and responsible journalism.

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