

# Differential Media Policy of Saudi Government: A Case of Soft Appeasement

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## *Abstract:*

*Through this paper, the author aims to establish the claim that there exists a differential media policy of the Saudi Government that governs the functioning of its transnational media and domestic media. This differential media policy exists in Saudi Arabia to appease the domestic audience and foreign policy players. The paper has been divided into four sections: first is the introduction where the focus is drawn on the Media in the Arab Region; the Second part of the paper tries to analyse how media has been used as a tool of Image building for the Foreign Policy purposes; Third section of the paper brings out the differential behaviour of Saudi Media where the focus is on the domestic and Transnational Media. The concluding part of the paper brings out the rationale for the differential behaviour of Saudi Media Policy which is governed by Saudi Government.*

## **Introduction**

Media units and corporations were primarily influenced by governmental funding in advertisements, concessional newsprints and cheap airwaves. In the Third World and post-colonial nations, maintaining freedom was a primary objective; hence, the media was state-controlled to avoid privatisation. Thus, it became the state's responsibility to provide free, cheap and objective communication of state policies. However, this rationale did not justify Arab authoritarian countries to keep domestic and national media systems under authoritarian and monarchical control. On the contrary, it eventually resulted in many countries keeping the media under government supervision and, in the process, subverting freedom of expression and differing views (Hallin and Mancini 2012).

The behaviour of media in a particular state has been categorised into Four Theories of the Press or Normative Theories of Press- Social Responsibility Theory, Authoritarian theory, Libertarian Theory and Soviet Communist Theory (Mundt 1991: 11-27). Normative theories were first proposed by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur

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