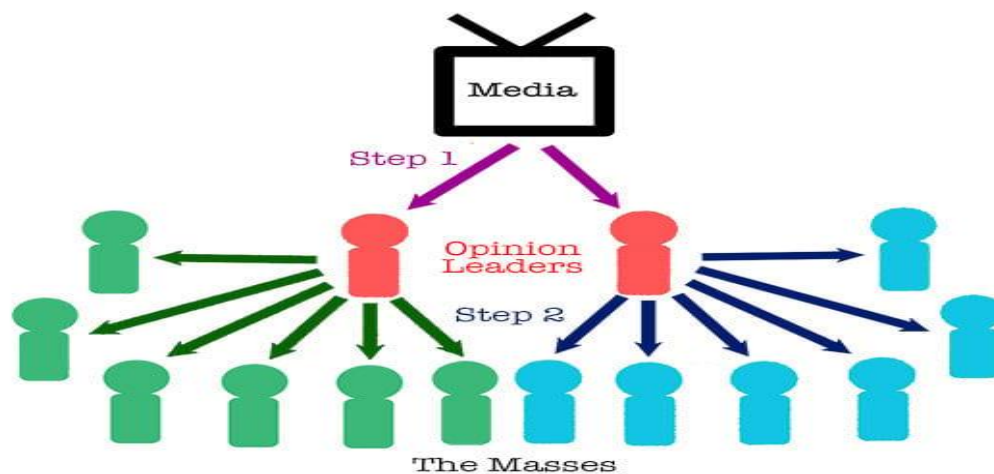


## Two-Step Flow Theory Of Media Communication

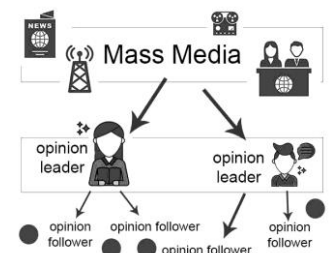


### Definition

The two-step flow model posits that the media does not have a direct effect on the whole of the media audience, but is mediated through **opinion leaders**, who absorb the information and pass it on to their immediate social group.

The two-step hypothesis suggests that opinion leaders are the **crucial conduit** for political information<sup>1</sup>.

The concept of the 'two-step flow of communication' refers to the idea that the **flow** of information and influence from the mass media to their audiences occurs in two steps: first, from the media to certain individuals known as opinion leaders, and then from these opinion leaders to the general public<sup>2</sup>.



### Some ideas of the theory:

- The two-step flow model is a theory of communication that holds that **interpersonal interactions** exert a significantly stronger effect on influencing public opinion than outlets of mass media do.
- According to the two-step theory, opinion leaders who are directly influenced by mass media, help shape the views of most individuals in society. Herein, these opinion leaders pass on to their followers not only media content, but also their own interpretations thereof.
- The two-step flow model stands in contrast to the hypodermic needle theory which posits that mass media directly influences the public, and that political media **campaigns** directly affect the way people vote.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.simplypsychology.org/two-step-flow-theory-of-communication.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/two-step-flow-of-communication>

## Origins of the Theory



Paul Lazarsfeld (1901 - 1976)



Bernard Berelson (1912 - 1979)



Hazel Gaudet

The two-step flow model was introduced by **Hazel Gaudet, Bernard Berelson** and **Paul Lazarsfeld** in **1948**

Their book **The People's Choice**, revealed the results of their analyses of the decision-making processes of voters during the 1940 election for **President of the United States**.

The authors held that content on mass media first reaches highly active media users (also known as opinion leaders) who accumulate, interpret and convey the meaning of such content to less-active consumers of mass media.

**Gaudet, Berelson and Lazarsfeld** had discovered that a majority of voters in the election had procured information concerning the presidential candidates not from the media directly, but from others who had read in the newspapers about the campaign.

### Paradigm Shift in Mass Communication Theory

The introduction of the two-step flow model marked a paradigm shift in mass communication theory by challenging the prevailing [hypodermic needle model](#).

Research conducted by Lazarsfeld demonstrated that only approximately 5% of the population had altered their voting preference as a consequence of direct media consumption.

Factors such as communication with one's family, friends, and colleagues seemed more capable of predicting one's voting patterns than one's exposure to media.

Lazarsfeld, later collaborating with Elihu Katz, managed to further develop the two-step flow theory especially in their book *Personal Influence*

Furthermore, the opinion followers share much in common with opinion leaders in terms of interests, personality, and demographics<sup>3</sup>.

### Discussion

- How does this theory consider media influence? Compare it with the previous theory

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.simplypsychology.org/two-step-flow-theory-of-communication.html>

- What is the main idea of the two-stages communication theory? How did it emerge
- What type of communication does the theory talk about?
- Who are the opinion leaders according to this theory
- Give 5 terms for this theory?

### **Translation**

Translate underlined words to Arabic?

- Translate to English:

الرأي العام- الاتجاهات- اتصال سياسي- السلطة- اتصال شخصي- الناخبون- السلوك الانتخابي

### **Give the correct aspect for each definition?**

#### **Voting behavior - Opinion Leader- Political campaigning - public opinion**

.....is a leader for a certain group who gives details and information to lesser active persons in the group. In office, the managing director is an opinion leader and in public, a political leader is an opinion leader. They interpret the information to their own group

.....is the decision-making process of individuals when choosing a political party or candidate to vote for

.....is an aggregate of the individual views, attitudes, and beliefs about a particular topic, expressed by a significant proportion of a community

.....is where political parties and their candidates try to persuade you to vote for them, normally by talking about their policies

### **Fill in the blank with the appropriate word**

#### **political issues -interpretations -opinion leaders-**

In this process of communication, the mass media broadcast values and ideologies but the information is filtered and synthesised by .....who then share their own .....with opinion followers. For example, .....cited a waitress who overheard “many customers in the restaurant” claiming “Willkie would be no good” so she voted for Roosevelt. One respondent said “I hear men talk at the shop” and another mentioned “my husband heard that talked about at work”.

In fact, there were several clear cases when the .....or candidates’ personalities had no impact on the voter. One interviewee said her friends “all voted Republican so I did too”

For more: follow [https://youtu.be/Tai\\_RN6MosU](https://youtu.be/Tai_RN6MosU)