

**RESEARCH PAPER****Mediatization of Politics: A Case Study of Pakistan**

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ABSTRACT

The media is fundamental to socio-political life. It delivers facts to allow us to be well informed about the matters that are essential to every individual. The Constitution of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan legally protects the freedom of press and through the freedom of information ordinance 2002 and code of conduct rules 2010. However, Media has never been independent of Politics and society. Pakistan has remained under military rule and many media outlets supported and acted on its orders. Democracy is the basic necessity for an independent media. As politics became increasingly mediatized, the influence of media on the society is far reaching than individual politicians. Various media outlets and channels in Pakistan have been seen either advocating or criticizing various governments in power or in opposition. Media outlets are often associated with politicians and bureaucrats, which are privately owned. Unlike the Associated Press of Pakistan and the state owned National Broadcaster the Pakistan Television Network. This research article covers the mediatization of politics in Pakistan and various stages through which it has passed on. The study also analyses the future of media and its technology in addition the media should also train people and educate them on media responsibilities. The role of Media in any society plays a pivotal role in building a sense of decision making and portraying the image of politicians and bureaucracy. Media has been aiding as a cautious watch dog of Pakistan.

KEYWORDS Broadcasting, Censorship, Freedom, Media Logic, Mediatization, PEMRA

Introduction

Mediatization: (Def.) : A theory which claims that it is the media which forms and surrounds the processes and address the political communication as well the social order in which that communication takes place (Lillker, 2006)

Pakistan got its independence on 14th August 1947 after the British Colonial past. Pakistan is a parliamentary democratic republic. The head of the state is the President whereas the Prime Minister is the head of the government. Currently Pakistan has three major political parties, comprising Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), there are several other parties.

Pakistan's history is full of unsettled democratic journey; the country has seen multiple military coups and interim governments over the years. However the major political parties have earned their tenure with ups and downs. Both the military and civilian bureaucracy has remained influential in impacting decision making process. Media is one of them.

Media in Pakistan

Media in Pakistan can be traced back to long periods of English in India, where various documents were presented to advance a communist or fragmented plan. The Sunrise newspaper, founded by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and first published in 1941, pledged to fight "anti-Muslim laws" and move towards a sovereign Pakistan fully independent. The moderate newspaper Nawa-e-Waqt, which appeared in 1940, was the spokesperson for the Muslim elite, which were among the strongest representatives of a sovereign and independent Pakistan. (IMS, 2009)

The Pakistani print media, so to speak, emerged with a mission to publicize the possibility of Pakistan, seen as the best public choice for the Muslim minority in British India and a form of self-protection against the concealment of the Hindu majority.

The need for self-protection due to pre-freedom work as minority and victim is deeply embedded in Pakistani history; carnage of the historical days; and defeat in three different wars. Pakistan Armed Forces is one of the custodians of their country and is seen as the guardian of the general public on the basis of inclination/aggression towards India, public religion, Islam and the common language Urdu.

The visibility of Islam as a major pillar of the public figure led to a rigid association of the Islamic Guard and pioneers with the military, joint organization and information administrations. This relationship has influenced those in charge of the Pakistani media in their attempts to use or control the media to protect their own prejudices and public personalities.

Role of PEMRA

PEMRA is responsible for regulating and conducting the operations of all broadcast media and distribution all across Pakistan. The regulatory authority is responsible for channelizing the operations of broadcast to the local public within country and abroad. (<http://www.moib.gov.pk/Pages/178/PEMRA>) The founders of the media proclaimed strict regulations controlling opportunity for expression, information departments controlled the media, and co-regulation was used to control the media through media regulation, authorization, and regulation of the mass presence of advertising. Pakistan has an energetic media industry, which incorporates papers, TV channels, and online news portals. The media in Pakistan is for the most part private, and the right to speak freely is ensured by the constitution. Be that as it may, Journalists in Pakistan face many difficulties like threats, censorship, and violence.

In recent times, social media and virtual entertainment has turned into a famous stage for political discussions and dialogues and activism, and it has given a voice to common citizens. The Pakistani government has at times blocked web-based entertainment applications like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to control the spread of unauthentic news and hate speech. Pakistan is a country with a complex political and media structure, issues among government and the media is frequently intertwined.

Mediatization in Pakistan refers to the rising impact of media and correspondence technologies in the country. Throughout recent many years, there has been a quick development in private TV channels, radio broadcasts, online news entrances, and web-based entertainment platforms. This has led to an expansion in the variety of media sources accessible to the general public, as well as more prominent competition among news sources. Despite the development of private media, the

Pakistani government actually keeps and maintains directing and controlling the media industry. The country's media regulations and guidelines are frequently criticized for being prohibitive and restricting press freedom.

However, there have been some positive developments in recent years. For example, in 2018, Pakistan passed a new law aimed at protecting journalists and ensuring their safety while on the job. This law includes provisions for investigating and prosecuting those who attack or threaten journalists. Overall, the mediatization of Pakistan has both positive and negative effects. On one hand, it has increased access to information and provided a platform for diverse voices to be heard. (IMS, 2009)

The military's motivation to change its media mandate was based on the reason that Pakistan's media could be used to strengthen public security and counter threats from India. By controlling the fake Indian media. This change was brought about by a tactical understanding during the last two showdowns with India. One was the brutal Kargil war, and the other was the seizure of an Indian ship by Pakistani attackers. In both these cases, the Pakistani military believed it had lost India's media war. Government authorities, academics, security organizations and the military believed that Pakistan was left unable to respond on the grounds that its electronic media was mediocre compared to India's. Henceforth, a better electronic media limit was proposed, and then the electronic media market changed. (IMS, 2019)

The support was tantamount to a desire to resist the power of the Indian media, as there was a desire to "liberate" the media from the privileges enjoyed by electronic media in liberal, open social systems. In any case, the tactical idea that he can control the media and rein in, assuming the system has deviated from what he accepts, is in the public interest and in line with his own political agenda.

This assessment has already been discredited as mass media, and especially many new TV channels had already influenced the society and become a powerful force in society. The media played key role in examining the cycle that led to the downfall of Musharraf and his regime. The media played an important role in preparing a common society and Legal Advisers Development 2007 HQ was widely involved in the fight to restore equality. This oppositional development left Musharraf with little support from the general public and the military as large numbers of Pakistanis embarked on a loose executive and a government based on popularity. Finally he had to call the races. Recently, through a renewed agreement between joint civil associations, legal advice and electronic media, the former president of Pakistan, Asif Zardari, had to succumb to social and political tensions and restore basic equality. The growth of powerful public entertainment is exceptional in the history of Pakistan. They could never have gained strength without the media, which must continue to play a crucial role as Pakistan needs to promote a more fundamental system of majority rule, more pronounced stability and bring about socio-political change. (IMS, 2019)

"The main expectation of Pakistanis is that the media should continue to train people. The media has worked effectively, even if it is extremely dilettantish in some cases and has to accept the line between reporting and political commitment," says Christine. Fair is a Pakistani researcher with the RAND organization. Whether the Pakistani media can take on such a huge responsibility with its powerful television channels and bring about change from within depends on working within the broad working environment; about the army and the state system; security status of columnists; correction of media regulators; better preparation of the news release; and in the end – by the will of the mass media and the media owners themselves.

Relationship of Media and Politics in Pakistan

Media is considered as the fourth pillar of democracy, and it plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and political discourse. In Pakistan, there has been a complex interplay between media and politics since the independence of Pakistan in 1947. The history of media in Pakistan is marked by periods of censorship, government control, and suppression of independent media voices. In the 1950s, the first-ever press laws were enacted, which gave the government the power to ban newspapers and imprison journalists who published "offensive" content. Since then, the relationship between media and politics in Pakistan has been tumultuous.

In recent years, there has been significant growth in the media industry in Pakistan. The advent of private television channels and social media platforms has provided an opportunity for diverse voices to be heard. However, this has also led to the proliferation of fake news, sensationalism, and propaganda.

Politicians in Pakistan are known to use media as a tool to influence the narrative and shape public opinion. There have been instances where politicians have used media outlets to promote their agenda, discredit opponents, and propagate their ideology. (Muzaffar, et. al. 2019) The level of growing mediatization and extreme level of journalistic intervention the politicians use less policy contents and criticize their rivals by campaigning against them. (Esser, 2008)

Moreover, media ownership in Pakistan is concentrated in the hands of a few powerful individuals and corporations, which further limits the diversity of voices and perspectives. The relationship between media and politics in Pakistan is complex and multifaceted. While media has the potential to act as a watchdog and hold those in power accountable, it can also be manipulated and controlled to serve political interests. The more politicians believe in strong media effect, the more they become vulnerable to the agenda of media settings. (Pintak, 2016)

Constitution and the Media

The Constitution codifies and protects the foundations for a vibrant equality and guarantees of the freedom of speech and the basic principle for media freedom. While stressing the state's faithfulness to Islam, the law of the land features the key rights mainly civil inherent in a popular democracy and states that:

"Citizens are equal and will be guaranteed their basic and fundamental rights, which includes equality, fair opportunities, political, social and economic justice before the law. In addition it also guarantees the safety through freedom of expression, faith and practice of beliefs and association which is subject to law." (Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973)

Literature Review

There is abundant research available on the topic however some literature is mentioned below:

Politics and media, Politics and Media, Intersections and New Directions Jane, hall, 2021

The book covers a wide range of the role of gender, race and ethnicity in politics and the media. It puts current issues in recent historical context through various sources of media and electoral process. It covers a series of recent exploration of the changing role of media in politics." The author is confident that the researchers will benefit and comprehend the relationship between Politics and Media."

Media in Pakistan, July-2009, The report published by International Media support and gives a detailed insight of the historical perspective and developments of the Media and its role in Pakistan. The landscapes, executive summary and features of media and failures across Pakistan especially in the northern areas.

The Mediatization of Politics in Pakistan: A Structural Analysis, Khan, M.A ,2009 This research paper published by Mr. Khan mentions the time when the influence of media on the politics and society had started to make everything possible to achieve its objectives, the study includes a gallop survey and a structural analysis of Media in Pakistan, including the list of viewership of various media channels and sources by the people of Pakistan. The author has also identified the influence and hegemony of experienced and popular journalists in Pakistan.

Material and Methods

The importance of the research was on gaining the broad understanding of the process through which media goes under political pressure. The quagmire through which media works is a cobweb of influence that results in biased information or altered coverage. Based on preliminary studies, the study has covered secondary source of data and applied a structured method of collection and analysis. The research design includes a qualitative framework of study.

The review mainly includes data sources which include academic books, articles from journals and web sources related to media. Data from various articles are used to analyze different times from 2009, 2008 to 2017. The researcher has prioritized credible authentic sources.

Results and Discussion

Media and Responsibilities

The basis of any democratic system is a free, competent and reliable mass media. Their responsibility is to highlight, condemn and bring the realities of life before the local public. Being careful means being clean, but also following the law and telling the truth in the way a reviewer collects data. If the press breaks the rules, it loses the admiration of its readers and the country. The essence of mass media should reflect truth, credibility, impartiality and balance. This should be automatic in the regulatory framework and the foundations should be laid. He should keep away from anything that may cause injustice, evil or general trouble or offend the minority assembly. It educates citizens on current issues, critical situations, government issues, business, misconduct, sports and climate, which also affect their navigation and growing public interest.

In addition, the development of the media requires the achievement of a neutral development in its center over a long period of time; There must be responsibility for uniform development; for accountability to flourish, there must be sustained resistance to the veiling of the administration and the right to speak freely to strengthen the word; the press opportunity is at the base of this pyramid; and everything basic runs a majority

government. In the pursuit of improvement, nothing can replace majority government. Encourage and mobilize people by taking responsibility at social and corporate levels.

Media and Conflict

Pakistan was once viewed as unsafe country on the earth for journalists. The security circumstance in the contention impacted region of the Governmentally Regulated Ancestral Regions (FATA) and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa previously NWFP Territory was desperate. There, columnists confronted publicity, dangers, suppression and designated killings. A few regions were basically forbidden to writers, and columnists working in the focal point of struggles were adjusted to self-oversight so as not to outrage the clashing gatherings. (IMS, 2009)

Subsequently, limitations have been forced on the free progression of data, and a few areas of FATA, KPK and Baluchistan experience the ill effects of a data deficiency or through and through data hole. There is an extraordinary need to guarantee expanded wellbeing for writers through risk mindfulness schooling and struggle delicate reporting. (IMS, 2009) Pakistani media have not exclusively been up to speed in this savage struggle, yet additionally in a conflict of words, belief systems and misleading publicity. FATA and KPK have in excess of 100 extremist, unlawful disdain discourse radios and the established press has been exposed to an extreme plan too.

Future of Media in Pakistan

The role of ethnicity, gender, civil society and politics in media is very important. (Hall, 2021) The fate of media keeps on moving towards advanced improvements for entertainment, news and business, and that implies gigantic business open doors. As indicated by the Seat Exploration Center, the computerized media industry proceeds to develop, and around 86% of American grown-ups get some news on the web. As the web-based media crowd develops, so do the quantity of stages. Organizations must keep an internet based presence that permits them to discuss successfully with their interest group. (www.futuremedia.com)

The future of Media will also drive the job market, areas as:

- Mobile Video Marketing
- Data Analytics and Public Relations
- Investment in Software & Hardware technology
- Modern Social Media Trends.
- Media influencers.

Mediatization is depicted as a meta-process on similar level as other enormous scope social changes like globalization and individualization. Subsequently, mediatization addresses a drawn out pattern that influences all fragments of society, including governmental issues, daily existence and personality development, as well as religion. Be that as it may, as of late have researchers endeavored to foster a more profound reasonable comprehension of intervention and related intercession (Muzaffar, et. al. 2020). The two ideas are applied more nonchalantly than they are appropriately characterized in automatic exploration or utilized systematically. This is sad in light of

the fact that the idea of mediatization can possibly coordinate various strands of political correspondence hypothesis and examination, and on the grounds that it gives a system to relative exploration. (Bucy, 2013)

The future of media is very vibrant and far fetching in Pakistan, due to its nature of vastness and viewership. However the mass media in Pakistan needs improved ethics of conduct not just following by its regulatory (PEMRA) Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority but also as a social corporate responsibility. (<https://pemra.gov.pk/>)

The Pakistani media has undergone tremendous growth and transformation since the early 2000s. The opening up of the media space in the country has given rise to a number of private media channels, which have become essential players in shaping public opinion. The influence of the media in Pakistan has been particularly significant in the political sphere. Political parties regularly use media platforms to run their election campaigns and reach out to the electorate. The media also plays an important role in holding politicians accountable for their actions and scrutinizing their policies.

The mediatization of society has also impacted the social and cultural norms in the country. The media has given voice to previously marginalized groups, such as women and minorities. However, the media has also been criticized for promoting Western values and undermining traditional Pakistani culture. Overall, the growing mediatization of Pakistan has led to a more open and dynamic society, but it has also presented some challenges and complexities.

Discussion

Over the years Pakistan media was limited to National Television as Pakistan Television Network (PTV) and Shalimar Television Network (STN) but the timely increase in Private media outlets from print media to electronic media with hundreds of channels has changed the view and perception of people regarding state, government and its organisations. Following are some of the core results of the study:

- An Independent and neutral media are important in shaping public opinion which is essential for the smooth running of democracy.
- The study finds Governments control over media through PEMRA to comply with International media procedures, anti-state and propaganda to malign state entities must not be allowed at any cost.
- Media outlets must apply positive criticism on the government's policies not to target individuals and state actors on personal enmity and grudge.
- Over the years the military controlled the media to restrict them not to publicize and portray Indian narrative over Kashmir and state failures.
- The Independent media covers a wide range of western norms and cultures as it has curtailed the National culture and its values.
- The study identifies one major flaw in independent media is false information, fake news, propaganda and sensationalism.
- The Government of Punjab passed the Defamation Bill 2024 in order to protect from false, misleading and defamation claims.
- The Government of Pakistan intends to control media through legislation in 2024, in order to prevent them from criticizing government and their use of force against its opponents.

- The Government of Pakistan is using firewalls which are under trials to protect state and its organization from uncontrolled social media platforms, which has resulted in slow internet access to the users in Pakistan.

Conclusion

The media boom since the beginning of 21st century has opened numerous opportunities and challenges to it. (Hussain, 2012). Pakistan as a country has vast network of Media landscape and its channels. Independent and honest approach by media gives them positive credit in the eyes of its viewers. Unfortunately media houses are run by capital and their finances through sponsors and marketers. The politicians use media as a source of coverage and as critic for their opponents. State owned media speak of positive about the ruling governments and the elites, however it is the role of private independent media to play anchored role in highlighting the failures of the government. A review including Pakistani writers, individuals from the strategy local area and media scholastics observed that the mediatization of Pakistan is mixed affecting the strength of the country's delicate majority rule government. Individuals from the strategy local area by and large have a more certain perspective on the effect of the media on Pakistani society than the people who work in the calling and say they consider media response prior to deciding, albeit all gatherings said the media are as yet unfit to satisfy its guard dog job unafraid of revenge. The outcomes are in accordance with concentrates on in the created world that found that the more legislators have confidence in a more grounded media impact; the more powerless they become to media plan setting. The discoveries additionally support the 'co-advancement' hypothesis that contends media gain impact as a vote based system settles in post-imperious conditions.

'Mediatization' has impacted the governmental issues by forming and changing the mentalities and practices of political entertainers. It is a significant test to a vote based system in the present period. This study plans to examine the elements of media legislative issues exchange in Pakistan and the logical variables which administer this transaction. It will likewise address the apparent impact of media on the acts of lawmakers according to the points of view of the entertainers. One of the major differences between western political elites to media's response is reactionary as 15 out of 150 did not response or complain to the false information reported by media. In comparison the politicians in Pakistan remain silent in most cases against media. (Aelst, 2017)

Pakistan is more determined by media rationale than political or majority rule rationale. Media and legislative issues have a cozy relationship. Political biology is profoundly media-prompted: legislators decisively embrace and adjust the media rationale to be in the 'media spotlight'; columnists, on different hands, don't rehearse 'fair reporting rather an all the more politically parallelized. The mediatized political correspondence ways of behaving of the entertainers are the sabotaging the public assistance rationale and influencing the soul of a majority rule government in Pakistan. The review offers a few esteemed ramifications for media, lawmakers and strategy creators. (Imran, 2018) The future of media in Pakistan looks bright as the country continues to witness significant growth in the media industry. With the rise of social media, digital platforms and the penetration of smartphones in the market, access to news is becoming easier for people than ever before.

In recent years, the use of online media outlets has increased, and many news organizations have launched their websites and applications to compete in the digital

space. Furthermore, radio, television, and print media are still widely popular throughout the country. The advent of 5G technology will also have a significant impact on the media industry in Pakistan. With faster internet speeds, streaming platforms, online TV channels, and interactive content will become more accessible, leading to a shift in consumer behavior and a growing demand for personalized content. The growth of digital and social media in Pakistan signals a promising future for the media industry. The sector will continue to evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of audiences while continuing to maintain its role as an important pillar of democracy and accountability. (<https://online.maryville.edu/>)

In conclusion, there is a question needs to be answered, as politics became mediatized and has increased its influence in Pakistan , Does media need to be independent or is it the society and politics which needs to be free from media. (Strömbäck, 2008)

Recommendations

- Increase the independence of media by securing media men and workers by improving observing, training in risk consciousness and conflict-sensitive journalism, safety responsive mechanism, encouragement and lobbying.
- Promote the importance of neutral and honest media approaches through better relations by organizing forums and professional collaboration.
- Addressing the information gap and media distortions due to unwanted media distractions and media radicalization in provinces by raising awareness and strengthening radio channels and innovative use of new and traditional media.
- Strengthening exploratory journalism through education and financing that can sponsor journalists who want to start broad scale projects.
- Contribute to the mechanism of self-regulations that can improve the principles of Media and Communication in Pakistan.
- Launch awareness programs through open discussions and debates on the benefits of media regulations and process.
- Promote unity and harmony among media houses and state actors and institutions, the dignity, pride and respect of institutions must be protected rather maligned for media coverage and popularity.

Contrasted with the past presentation of state-possessed channels, the distinction in communicating of private news channels had a colossal effect. They were independent and their range extended from the authority passages of the official royal residence, the state leader's structure and the secretariats of services to little towns and common towns all through the country. Individuals began contrasting Khabarnama and Wazeernama and the victor in this opposition became effective as it covered genuine governmental issues and issues of general audience. (Khan, 2009)

Then came the boom in media industry in Pakistan when Jang Group, launched the GEO News network broadcasting followed by ARY News and other news channels. Today the news channels are available online on streaming websites and social media links too. Every quarter a new channel is inaugurated and scores of newspapers both

International and local papers are published. Local and domestic newspapers highlight the feudal and other administrative bureaucrats in the eyes of the people as messiah.

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