PAKİSTAN'DA MEDYA POLİTİKALARI

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Özet

Bir ülkenin medya politikaları, o ülkenin sorunlarını etkileyen ve o ülkenin dünyanın geri kalanında nasıl temsil edileceğine karar veren önemli faktörlerden birisidir. Medya politikaları ile oluşturulan bu imaj; ülkenin ekonomik, politik ve sosyal koşullarını ve uluslararası bağlarını etkiler. Bu çalışmada, Pakistan'ın mevcut medya politikaları ve farklı siyasi dönemlerde nasıl geliştirildikleri analiz edilmektedir. Bu analiz, medya ile ilgili farklı tarihsel olay ve dönemleri kronolojik sırayla tartışarak yapılmaktadır. Pakistan'ı çalışma konusu yaparak, medya politikalarını etkileyen ve medya politikalarından etkilenen farklı alanlar, dünyanın diğer bölgelerinde meydana gelen benzer durumları anlamak ve onlarla ilgili kararlar vermek için kullanılabilecek şekilde açıklanmıştır. Bu çalışmada aynı zamanda istikrarsız siyasi, ekonomik ve güvenlik koşulları altında gelişen Pakistan medyasının 2002 yılında özel sektörün de sürece dahil olmasıyla sayılarının hızla çoğalarak nasıl hızlı bir özgürlük yaşadığını ayrıca bu özgürlüğün ülkeyi ve yönetici sınıfı nasıl etkilediği de incelenmektedir. Bu çalışmada tartışılan diğer konular arasında medyanın savaş sırasındaki rolü, bilgi sağlamada medya tarafından izleyiciler arasında ayrımcılık yapılması, Pakistan'daki gazetecilerin durumu, medyada mülkiyet sahipliği, Pakistan Elektronik Medya Düzenleme Kurumu'nun (PEMRA) rolü ve Pakistan'da yeni medyanın ortaya çıkması yer almaktadır. Literatür taraması yöntemi ile gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma sonucunda Pakistan medyasının mevcut sorunlarına ve söz konusu sorunların çözümü için yapılması gereken düzenlemelere yer verilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pakistan Medya Politikaları, Pakistan Medyası, PEMRA, Medya Yasaları

MEDIA POLICIES IN PAKISTAN

Abstract

Media policies of a country are one of the important factors which influence that country's affairs and decide how that country will be represented to the rest of the world. This image created by media in turn affects the economic, political and social conditions and international ties of that country. This study analyses the media policies of Pakistan and how these policies developed over different political eras. This analysis is done by discussing different historical events and eras related to media in chronological order. By making Pakistan as subject of study, different areas affecting the media policies and those affected by media policies have been explained in such a way that can be used to understand similar situations occurring in other parts of the world and make decisions regarding them. This study depicts how Pakistani media, which seems to be fated to function under unstable political, economic and security conditions, experienced sudden liberation in 2002 by increasing the participation of private sector along with studying the effects this freedom has had on the ruling class. Other topics discussed in this study include role of media during war, discrimination done by media among audiences in provision of information, status of journalists in Pakistan, media ownership and sponsorship, role of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) and the advent of new media in Pakistan. As a result of this study which has been carried out by literature review method, the current problems faced by Pakistani media and the necessary regulations required for the solution of these problems in question have been presented.

Keywords: Pakistani Media Policies, Pakistani Media, PEMRA, Media Laws

Introduction

Media deemed as the fourth pillar of democracy (Ahmed S. , 2013, p. 458) has played major role in influencing the political situation of many nations and has equally been influenced by the politics in the form of different policies imposed on it. The nature

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of media policies of a country, not only represent the structure of the media but also the political system of that country (Croteau & Hoynes , 2014, p. 87). Long before the existence of advanced and new forms of media, Malcolm X described media to have the capability of altering truth and putting anyone in positive or negative light which is then blindly believed by the audience. This description is applicable to Pakistani media as well and can easily be used as a basis to understand the future trends in media.

Pakistani media and its policies stand as a combination of both, convention and uniqueness. Many of the highly studied, researched and worked upon issues related to media in the world are also applicable to Pakistani media. At the same time, Pakistani media presents itself as a unique example of many different phenomena like media mushrooming, role of media policies in shaping the geographical boundaries of a country, enforcement of strict religious laws on an ideally secular state, its impact and many more. All these unique factors coming together makes Pakistani media and its Pakistani media policies as a great subject of scholarly research and work, that could lead to brining applicable solutions to many of the media related issues with which the world has been struggling.

The aim of writing this paper is to go through the old and present media policies and structure of Pakistani media in a manner that helps identifying and understanding the different ways in which media has affected the political, geographic, economic and social position of Pakistan on national and international levels. This will lead to finding an applicable and democratic structure for the media policies of Pakistan. The paper also involves the study of different international players who have had and those who still have parts to play in shaping Pakistani media. These players include United States of America, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh and England.

The paper follows the "deductive" method of research, i.e. going through a wide range of information and perspectives and narrowing down to a clear conclusion (Worster, 2014, pp. 447-448). The different historical events and eras related to the media that shaped the media policies of Pakistan have been discussed in a chronological order. Greater focus has been on the news media which includes newspapers, TV news and news available on online news outlets.

1. Role of Media in Shaping the History of Pakistan

Where media was invented as a tool to be aware of the different events taking place in the world and as an efficient way of mass communication of news (Bösch, 2015, p. 6), its ability to influence the different events of the world was soon realised and used accordingly to gain different goals like political, economic, national, personal, social, religious goals etc. on personal, professional, national or international levels (Neuman, 2010, pp. 1-7). From being claimed by some as the tool of propaganda used in World War II by Adolf Hitler (Irvine, 2008), media also managed to gain a positive repute of strengthening the movements for the rights of oppressed black community of US during the 1960s civil wars (Causey, 2015). In present age, advanced media in the form of social media (new media) has been used by the Turkish leadership in 2016 to create a nation-wide call for civilians in opposition to the attempted military coup (Erol, 2016). There are several other similar examples from history which along with these three examples prove that the role of media in shaping the fate of different nations in different eras cannot be undermined.

Just like these examples of different countries, media has also served as one of the major factors influencing the political, economic, social and geographical state of Pakistan. However, unlike many other countries, where media of that country was established after the creation of the country itself, pro-Pakistan newspapers existed before the establishment of Pakistan which started influencing the political and geographical matters of this Muslim majority country that was yet to be formed.

1.1. Role of Media in Creation of Pakistan

At the time of partition of sub-continent, from among the different religious and ethnical groups residing in pre-partitioned India, the three groups which stood most prominent were British Raj, Hindu community of sub-continent and Muslim community of sub-continent. Sikhs, despite being a big population in India at the time of partition, had either to side with Muslims or with Hindus. They could never manage to be seen to making strong point or demand of their own as a separate state at the time of struggle, thus leaving just 3 major parties in India i.e. British, Hindus and Muslims (Pandey, 2001, pp. 16-17). British raj was the ruling party and Hindus were second to British in power. Both had their media identity (Iyengar, 2017). Their pro-British and pro-Hindu newspapers supported the idea of undivided India and highlight the disadvantages of partition of sub-continent into present day Pakistan and India. At that point Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of Indian Muslims, realised the lack of Muslim voice in press. Considering the dire need and importance of newspapers, he laid the foundation of one pro-Muslim newspaper "Dawn" in 1941 i.e. 6 years before the partition (Long, 2017).

Other pro-Muslim newspapers also came forward which were used it to strengthen the efforts made for the creation Pakistan as a separate state where Muslims could practice their religion freely (Omer, 2014). "Dawn" still continues to work and still stands among the top publications of Pakistan.

1.1.1. Regulations on Media during Different Government Regimes in Pakistan

Ever since the establishment of Pakistan, its leadership has been in constant cycle of parliamentary government alternating with military regimes (Hashim, 2013). The military governments in Pakistan have always been found to impose stricter rules (Riley, 1978, p. 95) which have affected all fields including that of media.

1.1.2. Ayub's Era: An Era of Media Modernism and Restriction

General Ayub Khan came as the first military dictator in Pakistan in 1958 who ruled for 10 years. On one hand, he imposed Press and Publication Ordinance (PPO) in 1962 as the first ever regulations enforced on Pakistani media which put media under the control and check of military (Hussain N. , 2011) and brought the prominent news agencies of the country under the ownership of state. On the other hand, he modernised the media by coining the establishment of Pakistan Radio and Television in 1964 (Hussain S. , 2018). However the content produced by this advanced media was still shaped by the army. Any one or any agency which seemed not to follow the directions given by army could easy be arrested and punished by the authorities (Qadri & Qadri, 2015, p. 79). Ayub used the media in a way which could help him materialise the vision he had for Pakistan as a states (Mezzera & Sial, 2010, p. 21).

1.1.3. Zia's Regime and Islamisation of Media

Ayub era was followed by a democratic regime which continued to follow the rules set by Ayub with a few leniencies in punishments. The next military era started in 1977

with General Zia ul Haq ruling over Pakistan for 10 years. The restrictions imposed on media got stricter than ever. Zia used media to fulfil his aim of forcefully implementing Islamic laws in Pakistan. This was termed as Islamisation caused by Zia (Zainab, 2018).

Zia used media to portray a very staunch Islamic impression of Pakistan (Paracha, 2015). The content was strictly pro-government and anything against the government was to be taken out of news. The history of Pakistan had never seen such enslavement of media which was recorded during Zia's regime. Anti-government journalists were publically tortured. There was no freedom of speech (Mezzera & Sial, 2010, pp. 12-33). Zia's rule ended with his death in an air crash in 1988 and the coming democratic government by Benazir Bhutto revised the media laws (Revised PPO) (Sethna, 2015, pp. 21-26).

1.2. Importance of Media during Wars

Wars secure an important place in shaping the history of nations. One of the different factors directly affecting a war is media, for it has the ability from influencing the initiation and intensification of a war, to cooling it down or even ending it. This relation between war and media stands true for Pakistan as well. Out of the 5 wars Pakistan fought with India, the second one took place in 1965 (Ashraf T. , 2015, pp. 309-310). During this war where Pakistan had stronger army, India had more advanced media. The geographical proximity and common language spoken on both sides of the border between India and Pakistan turned the Pakistani citizens, living close to the border, into potential audience for Indian radio content along with Indian listeners (Kroon, 2018, p. 4). The fear of possibility that the Indian radio content might be used as a propaganda tool to demoralize the Pakistani army and spread false rumours among Pakistani public lead the Pakistani government to use the voice of popular Pakistani singer Noor Jehan on radio in order to keep the patriotic spirit alive in the nation and motivate the soldiers at the border. This shows the importance of media and its reach during wars (Ahmed R. U., 2017) .

Another example of importance of media during war time is the war of 1971 in which East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh) separated from the West wing (Present day Pakistan) as a separate autonomous country (Ahmad, 2016, pp. 84-85). East Pakistan accused the government residing in western wing of ignoring them during economic, political, social and cultural development. Most of the newspapers published in Pakistan were in Urdu, the official language of country. Bengali majority at the eastern wing did not know the Urdu a lot. They used Bengali language (Ahmad, 2016, p. 87). Despite the repeated demands made by Bengali community, the government in West Pakistan, did not give due importance to Bengali language (Jabeen , Chandio , & Qasim , 2010, pp. 104-106). The lack of Bengali newspapers created a communication gap between East and West Pakistan which never allowed the two sides to understand or develop trust for each other (Iqbal J. , 2008, pp. 56-57). India took advantage of its geographical proximity with East Pakistan and filled the communication gap with their channels of communication (Abdulmuminov, 2015, p. 4). This further fumed the animosity between the two wings and finally resulted in separation of East Pakistan and from West Pakistan in 1971.

2. Pakistan, a Good Example of Media Mushrooming:

From 2002, a new phase started for Pakistani media when General Pervez Musharraf (1999 to 2008) gave sudden liberation to Pakistani media. This allowed private entities to enter the field of media which was previously shadowed majorly by the government only. They launched numerous private radio and TV channels (Iqbal Z. , 2015, pp. 59-62). Musharaf's aim behind this historic scale liberation of media was to strengthen

Pakistan's national security against the enemy states, especially India (Bose, 2011, p. 12). The increased media capacity of Pakistan was to fill the gap which was previously filled by agenda-led Indian media content (Gul, Obaid, & Ali, 2017, pp. 43-45). However, this stronger than ever media couldn't even be controlled by army and soon it turned into a giant monopoly which could influence different aspects of the state.

Free media also raised the public issues and it went against the political agenda of Military (Prabhat & Sindhuja , 2014, p. 2). Despite Musharaf's efforts to control it by imposing new set of rules called Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) (Mithal, 2016), media weakened Musharaf's control over the state resulting in ending his dictatorship and returning the democracy to the country with the parliamentary elections of 2008 (Iqbal Z. , 2015, pp. 48-51). On one hand this case of sudden media liberation in Pakistan can be used as a great example of "Media Mushrooming" i.e. rapid increase in the number of media outlets which can be studied by researchers and media practitioners to understand new trends in media with sudden increase in its power and the ways to handle such a situation (Collins, 2018). On other hand this case also explains the negative consequences of sudden and unchecked media liberation. An important example of this is "Mediagate" scandal in Pakistan. It was a series of cases in which famous TV anchors were accused getting bribe from major business tycoons of Pakistan (AP, 2011).

3. Present Situation of Media Politics in Pakistan

According to mediatisation theory, the political situation of a country and how the public perceives a certain political entity depends on media (Hepp, 2014, p. 3). This theory can be applied to Pakistan as well. The present political scene of Pakistan, where the political party named Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has formed the new democratic government after the parliamentary elections of 2018, is Media saturated and media dependent (Mustafa, 2013). Like any other country, Pakistan also follows a media frame. Media frames are moulds in which news content is shaped to serve specific agendas which can be completely irrelevant to the actual topic of the news (Amber, Justin, Philip, & Noah, 2013, pp. 3-7). Since media in Pakistan was liberated under a military regime so the media frames followed in Pakistan have dictatorial influence on them. Even outside the military regimes when the country's governments are democratic, the news tends to follows the trend of "Attach Journalism" while presenting political parties, highlighting their negative sides and presenting them as corrupt agencies (Dawn, 2010) while the army is shown as a trustworthy and professional department (Budiman, Safdar, & Hamid, 2014, pp. 26-30).

PTI has announced new media strategies (Chaudhry & Hussain, 2018) and the replacement of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) with Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority (PMRA) in order to save national resources by assigning one institute to monitor all forms of media which include electronic, press and social media. The state run channel, PTV National is said to be replaced with a channel which will specifically show the proceedings of the national and provincial assemblies to the public. Despite all these steps, PTI seems to have an element of opposition towards the political parties which made governments in Pakistan before them. A clear example of this opposition is another announcement to put an end to the trend of using media platform for personal promotion. Politicians had been using media for their election campaigns in Pakistan before this (Desk, PTI govt mulls new body to regulate all media, 2018).

4. Sponsorship and Ownership of Pakistani Media

At present, some media outlets are owned by the state and the rest are private. The private media outlets are either owned by bodies from Pakistan (usually political parties) or by foreign institutes. The state owned media outlets present news and content which goes along the interests of the government (Mezzera & Sial, 2010, p. 21). The negative news about the government is not shown. Similarly, the private media outlets serve the interests of the bodies that own them. The bodies inside Pakistan who own the media privately are usually political parties. A news channel owned by one party will promote positive aspects of the owner and negative news about the opposition. The channels owned by foreign parties in turn serve their interests and show the content that benefits them (Hanan, Saleem, Ali, & Mukhtar, 2016, p. 342).

The three biggest media groups in Pakistan are Jang Group, Herald Group and Nawa-i-Waqt Group. All three are owned by different political parties. It is important to understand sponsorship and ownership in a media industry. It helps understand the different ways in which news in presented and the reasons behind such presentations. The major source of income for Pakistani media has been advertisements (Rasmussen, 2009, pp. 14-24).

5. How Outer World Influences Pakistani Media

5.1. Involvement of US in Training Pakistani Journalists

There are both educational and financial ways by which US has been involved in Pakistani media. Some of the prominent projects started by US to reform professionalism in Pakistani media industry are UPI Next (UPI, 2018), NearMedia LLC (NearMedia, 2015) UPI Next (UPI, 2018), NearMedia LLC (NearMedia, 2015) and Media Foundation 360 (360, 2018). US also started different partnership projects with Pakistani journalists which include exchange programs like East-West Center (EWC) and United States Journalists Exchange program and International Center for Journalists (ICFJ). The Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Pakistan started a joint training project in Karachi, Pakistan. The training included ethics and methods to develop news on print, electronic and social media (Arif, Golan, & Moritz, 2014, pp. 202-203).

The war against terrorism is between US and Taliban residing in Afghanistan but due to Pakistan's geographical position, it is left with no choice but to get involved. Both, US and Taliban make efforts to make Pakistani media support their stance (Hussain & Munawar, 2017, pp. 43-46). Taliban taking advantage of common language, common cultural and social values with Pakistan and their better understanding of Pakistani media earned them more success (Yousaf, 2011, pp. 5-6). US, despite of investing a huge amount of money, time and effort, was less successful. The distance maintained by US officials from Pakistani journalists due to the fear of security issues of US has created lack of trust between the both parties. It has been much easier for the Pakistani journalists to reach Taliban and get their point of view (Sethi, 2011). Another reason is the difference between the working trends and methods used by each party. Where US media is digitalized, Pakistani media still uses old methods of reporting (Stats, 2016).

5.2. Implementation of British media laws on Pakistani Channels

The Pakistani channels rebroadcasted in United Kingdom are answerable to British courts. PEMRA laws are not followed by these channels. One of the biggest Pakistani

media group ARY comes under the laws of Britain. The content on the channel is decided by UK government, thus allowing British government to be a part of Pakistani media and hence influence the views of Pakistani community living abroad (Boone, 2016).

5.3. Role of Media in Pak-Afghanistan Relations

The communication gap between Afghanistan and Pakistan and weak media reach has created many misunderstandings between the two countries. Efforts were made to decrease the gap but the situation hasn't improved. One such program is International Media Support (IMS, 2001), which ran for three years but couldn't generate enough benefits (Mushtaq & Baig, 2015, pp. 40-41).

6. Some major changes that media brought in Pakistan

Media has won a trust worthy place in the Pakistani society (Irshad, 2015) by identifying various corruption cases with the slogan of getting justice. Some of the prominent corruption cases include Steel Mill scam, insurance company scam, corruption in Pakistan's biggest airlines, financial losses caused due to corruption in Pakistan Railways, financial dishonesty in Pilgrimage case, Misplacement of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) containers, corruption in the field of electricity generation, misconduct in health ministry of Pakistan, the movement for restoration of judiciary carried out by lawyers in 2007 and many other (Wafayi & Bin Aziz, 2012). All these cases involved huge amounts of money. Media did not fear to put forward the names of the influential people involved in these cases. In fact media did not even hesitate to highlight Media Gate scandal which narrated the large scale corruption done within media industry. Thus, it can be said that media has truly played the role of a watch dog in Pakistan (Abid & Shah, 2011, pp. 34-36).

Freedom of speech is part of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Niazi, 2012, p. 12). Media has given awareness to the people of Pakistan and has encouraged and strengthened them to participate in development of the country. Continuation of such practices will help in gaining the lost political and social stability in Pakistan and bring it to fit the true definition of a democratic state. (Ashraf M. M., 2017).

7. PEMRA

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) created by Musharaf in 2002 contains two sets of rules for private TV channels; one set is applicable to programs which include news, entertainment and current affairs and other set is applicable to the advertisements run on the media outlets (Akhtar, 2009). The cable operators are strictly checked by PEMRA to avoid airing any uncultured media content (Desk, Private TV broadcasts to be suspended in Punjab if tax not revoked: Cable operators, 2016).

PEMRA faces a lot of criticism from media professionals. The fact that only private channels are bound by PEMRA and state run channels are not interfered by it develops a sense of unfair biasness (Sohail, 2012, pp. 71-77). This control of government on media goes against the spirit of freedom of speech (Team, 2014).

The ways by which PEMRA gathers its funding is also debatable. Despite being a government institute, its main source of income is through the different licence or subscription fees collected from private channels or the fine imposed on late deposit of such fee. PEMRA also gets 5% of the profit that channels make from advertising. PEMRA is popularly accused of imposing undue fines on channels and banning them in order to gain money from the penalties (Sohail, 2012, p. 39). Media professionals widely think that

PEMRA needs to be restructured as an institute. PEMRA should also focus on the security, respect of rights of the media practitioners and provide better working conditions to journalists (Akhtar, 2009).

8. Banning Channels and Torturing Journalists in Pakistan

Private channels, shows or anchors are frequently banned by PEMRA. The rules set under PEMRA are to be strictly followed by media outlets and anyone failing to do so is made to pay by different methods. There are numerous examples of channels being banned by PEMRA. One important example is that of GEO News Network when one of its leading anchors, Hamid Mir got seriously injured during an attack. The anchor accused military of Pakistan to be responsible for the attack. This resulted in suspension of license of GEO channel for a long time (News, 2012).

This trend of torturing journalists in Pakistan has been continued from the military regimes of 1950s till now. A list of top ten most dangerous places for journalists to work in was created by Reporters without Borders" in 2011. Pakistan was part of that list (Organization, 2011). The killing, brutally torturing, silencing and suppressing journalists is sometimes done by government agencies, sometimes by military, sometimes by terrorists and sometimes by powerful private groups. Many Pakistani journalists have moved to other counties for security reasons (Ricchiardi, 2012, pp. 20-27).

Pakistani media has been an arena of various kinds of conflicts and controversies. Numerous times media has been used as a tool of propaganda by various parties. A large number of illegal radio stations work in Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan where tribal rule continues. These media outlets run by themselves and are not checked. Most the content presented by these outlets involve "hate speech" and radicalism (Correspondent, 2012).

9. Discrimination done among Pakistani Audience

Pakistan inhabits a diverse range of people who belong to different ideological, religious, political, linguistic and ethnic groups (Gulwani, 2019). The news outlets are aware of this division. They target the audience accordingly. Majority of Pakistani community reads Urdu newspapers or tune to Urdu news channels on radio and TV. The content presented on such outlets gives the popular news which is usually aimed at gaining support of the audience for the party that owns that news outlet. English news content is usually read by the elite class. The content provided on such outlets is more objective and informative. Thus the audience receiving this information is more informed than the ones who follow Urdu news channels or read Urdu newspapers (Bukhari, 2015, p. 226).

There is a difference in reach of newspapers in different parts of the country as well. The whole country doesn't have access or same access to newspapers. Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) which is one of the most sensitive areas of the country has no publishing of newspapers, thus creating a gap in information and communication. This leads to the rise of various political, security and social issues in that area (Alam & Rehmat, 2011, pp. 4-5).

There is also a difference in the provision of news on different media channels. Different media groups are owned by different political parties. Where same event can be portrayed differently on GEO (pro-government) and ARY (Pro-opposition and military), at the same moment state run channel PTV may show as if nothing is wrong at all (Rehmat, 2014).

10. Use of Social/New Media in Pakistan

Considering the wider and faster spread of new media in the world, media groups and sectors in Pakistan have also started using internet and social media. After 2010, various web channels were launched like 63 News and siasat.pk. Pakistan has its own agendas and ways in which social media is brought into use. Due to trend of ownership in popular media, the news benefitting the owners is preferred over the rest and as a result, some of the important news is ignored. Social media has provided space to such news. In 2011 the mission of raiding Usama Bin Laden's residence in Pakistan and then killing him was conducted in secrecy. However, unknowingly a Pakistani journalist, Shoaib Ather live tweeted the incident and brought the secret out in the world. This shows the power and reach of social media (Mullen & Saifi, 2016).

Social media has also been used to bring social issues to government's notice in order to seek solution. The case of Khadija Siddiqui, a law student who was stacked and brutally stabbed by her class fellow is one such example. The attacker was imprisoned but then released. The matter was taken to social media. The nation showed support for Khadija and demanded justice for her. As a result the case was reopened by Supreme Court and Shah was arrested again (Bhatti, 2019).

Now a days politicians use social media to influence the voters. PTI is the top user of social media. This is one of the reasons of its popularity among the youth. Thus Pakistani media is also moving towards digitalized media. This will help Pakistan to improve its media industry (Eijaz, 2013, pp. 123-124).

Findings and Observations

Pakistani media acts as a tool in the hands of the ruling authority. The rule has constantly moved between dictatorship and democracy; however the main framework of Pakistani media has prominent impact of dictatorship on it, owning to its development during a military regime. Internal government or military are not the only ruling party over media in Pakistan. External forces in form of governments of other countries who act as sponsors or have invested interests are also seen to influence Pakistani media a lot and use it for their own agendas. This is done by either, bribing the media personnel, forcing and torturing them sometimes or putting false restrictions and bans on them.

A detailed study of Pakistani media policies shows that the main focus of media outlets is on political affairs. Public and social issues are mostly addressed by entertainment industry. Pakistani media is a newly liberated industry which makes it powerful but also requires it to have proper rules. The present media system requires revision in order to ensure proper functioning of media. PEMRA is in severe need of institutional revision as well. Journalists in Pakistan face security risks and the incentives are not equal to the efforts that are made by them.

The difference in providing news content to different groups in Pakistan shows that news producers do not trust the ability of Pakistani audience to be able to accept and understand every kind of news. This deprives the citizens from learning the truth and getting the most refined and correct form of information.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The regulatory body over Pakistani media needs to be redefined and reinstructed to ensure proper running of the system. Efforts must be made to improve the work

environment and experience for the journalists by sorting their security concerns, providing them with training to work in high risk areas and increase their their ability to use new technology.

Journalists are faced by high security risks and huge vacuum of information in the FATA and other sensitive regions of Pakistan like Baluchistan and KPK (Khyber PakhtunKhwa). This vacuum needs to be filled by providing equal facilities and enforcing same media system in all regions of Pakistan. This will bring the whole nation on a joint and progressive point of view. To ensure that media becomes a pillar of democracy, Pakistani media should not be forced to follow laws that serve certain dictatorship or any party.

The most important idea generated from this study is the type of media system that should be used in Pakistan. The question is what standards should Pakistani media follow? Should they be international, from Islamic world or something designed particularly to suit Pakistan? What would be the best way for Pakistani media to fulfil its duty of acting as fourth pillar of democracy? The answer becomes clear by understanding that there are different ways in which different countries allow their media industry to work. The framework of each country is designed in a way that serves its purpose. Pakistan is a declared Islamic state with huge number of minorities living along with the Muslim majority. Thus the frame to be applied should cater to the needs of all the groups. This crosses out the idea of putting strict Islamic laws over media for this leads to ignoring the minorities who will be then forced to practice according to an ideology they do not believe in. This can result in civil unrest. International standards or the media frames followed by some developed countries like US and England can also not be applied to Pakistan. The geographical position, diverse population, religious and political sensitivities present in Pakistan requires it to develop its own set of media rules which suit its system and can bring positive results. This is the way media can truly serve as fourth pillar of democracy in Pakistan.

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