



Dark Side of Fake Journalism: Consequences of Media on Pakistan's Politics

¹Muhammad Zohaib Ali - Email - bhattiz684@gmail.com

²Dr. Imran Ali - Email - imran.ali@iub.edu.pk

³Dr. Muhammad Arif - Email - muhammad.arif@iub.edu.pk

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

³Department of Special Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

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Corresponding Authors*:

Abstract

This research provides a comprehensive analysis of the media's role in shaping Pakistan's political environment, a transformative era characterized by significant technological advancements and the emergence of diverse media platforms. The study explores the consequences of fake journalism on the politics of Pakistan. The investigation delves deeply into the impact of electronic and digital media, with a particular focus on the proliferation of television channels and the growing importance of online platforms in mobilizing the electorate and shaping political discourse. It also acknowledges the potential pitfalls, including the spread of disinformation and partisan reporting that can polarize society. This study uses the primary and secondary sources to complete this imperative study.



Introduction

Media has been instrumental in transforming Pakistan's political landscape since the early 2000s, revolutionizing the conduct of political debate, governance and how the state interacts with the citizenry. The liberalization of electronic media, the availability of digital platforms, and the adoption of social media have revolutionized political communication (Riaz, 2018). Such advancements have led the media to act as a vital pathway between the government and the masses of the public, contributing to better political knowledge, promoting sociopolitical involvement, and increasing the responsibility of politicians and political institutions (Zaffar, 2020). However, despite its numerous contributions, the influence of media has also resulted in a host of challenges, such as the spread of misinformation, the emergence of sensationalist journalism, rising political polarization, and state interference, which has raised concerns over press freedom (Aslam, 2019).

Media has played a significant role in strengthening democratic participation in Pakistan which is one of the significant impacts of media on Pakistan's politics. The growth of private-sector television news channels such as Geo News, ARY News, and Dunya News have surfaced a place for political conversation, empowering natives to learn about government arrangements, decisions battle, and political improvements (Khan & Joseph, 2021). As significant tools for public opinion formation, political talk shows and televised debates allow voters to critically evaluate the political leaders and their policies (Rais, 2022). In the same way, the expansion of digital and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have democratized access to information, enabling citizens to participate in political debates, mobilize for causes, and communicate directly with decision-makers (Ahmed & Sheikh, 2020). Such change has resulted in the youth being more involved in politics, using online forums to debate issues, protest, and even campaign (Hussain, 2021).

Similarly, media has been an important factor in shaping the electoral processes and political narratives. Parties in Pakistan have understood the influence of media to reach a wide volume of crowds, and they have employed many ads on TV, campaigns on the internet and social media strategies (Khokhar, 2019). This scenario was best reflected in the 2018 general elections, where digital platforms were used to manipulate voter behavior, mobilize political support, and counter opposition narratives (Malik & Riaz, 2021). Social media campaigns, hashtag movements, and live-streamed political events played a key role in constructing party narratives and connecting with the electorate. Conversely, the growing dependence on digital media for political campaigning has triggered concern over fake news, online propaganda, and foreign interference in electoral processes that can skew public perception and interfere with voters' decisions (Shah, 2020). Media has made a very useful contribution to make the government more accountable and transparent. While investigative journalism has indeed revealed corruption, governance failures, and human rights violations, and has pressured political leaders to act (Yousaf & Mahsud, 2018) Media's accountability can be demonstrated with high profile cases such as Panama Papers Scandal in 2016, which was extensively covered in the media and ultimately also led to disqualification of then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (Haider, 2019). Yet, this role has come at the cost of placing journalists and media institutions at the receiving end of censorship, legal threats and intimidation exercised by both state and non-state actors (Qureshi, 2020). Nevertheless, dissenting voices have continued to be



suppressed and the media's role to generate a democratic and open society is still a challenge as well (Farooq & Rehman, 2021).

This is where media historically plays a critical part in Pakistan's political ecology, and despite these problems, media remains an indelible feature. Key measures in mitigating the impact of misinformation and addressing concerns like bias and media restrictions include promoting responsible media practices, supporting policy interventions, and fostering digital literacy (Ali, 2021). When well applied, media may remain a cornerstone of democracy, providing transparency, accountability and making an informed and politically active citizenry (Khan, 2023).

Media as a Driver of Political Awareness and Participation

In Pakistan, media has played a crucial role in developing political consciousness and increasing civic participation, predominantly since early 2000s, the liberalization of electronic media and the advent of digital platforms. The spread of television news channels, the swift development of social media and the growing convenience of online news sources have significantly changed how citizens engage with political affairs. These expansions have eased spreading of political information and empowered public discourse, mobilization and active involvement in governance and electoral developments (Ahmed & Sheikh, 2020). By formative political narratives, providing platforms for argument and holding political leaders accountable, media has developed as a crucial pillar of democracy in Pakistan.

The Role of Television News in Political Awareness

The introduction of private television news channels in Pakistan transformed political communication and outreach. Until the early 2000s, the broadcasting landscape was dominated by state-run media, led by Pakistan Television (PTV), which offered a government-centric narrative (Riaz, 2018). Nonetheless, the media sector underwent a liberalization process, which contributed to the emergence of commercial news channels like Geo News, ARY News, and Dunya News which brought political debate and investigative journalism to the masses (Khan, 2021). These platforms gave continuous political coverage, live discussions and analytical status of national and international happenings, which raised political awareness amongst the people. Other popular shows like Capital Talk and Off the Record were also seen to be quite useful at this time to provide public with information from different sides of politics and policies (Yousaf & Mahsud, 2018).

Television media has significantly contributed to bringing governance issues, corruption cases, and policy failures to the foreground. Such media coverage drove political accountability and mobilization of the public during events such as the lawyers' movement (2007–2009), which concluded with the restoration of the judiciary, as well as the Panama Papers (2016), during which the prime minister Nawaz Sharif was disqualified (Haider, 2019). The capacity of television media to deliver political developments into people's homes has greatly enhanced democratic participation by providing citizens with the information they need to make informed political decisions (Shah, 2020).

The Influence of Social Media on Political Participation

The shift toward digital media and social networking sites has broadened the range of political motivation. Furthermore, social media tools like Twitter (Now X), Facebook and YouTube have formed alternative spaces for political discourse, express their views, enabling citizens to engage directly with politicians and organize political act (Hussain,



2021). Social media has become essential for political participation as political parties have used these channels for campaign activities, policy promotion and voter outreach (Malik & Riaz, 2021). The 2013 and 2018 general elections saw a rise in one of the most potent political movements stoked by social media like Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) campaign. PTI effectively used Twitter and Facebook to reach young voters, counter opposition narratives, and mobilize its supporters for rallies and protests (Ali, 2021). The role of social media in shaping public discourse and holding political authorities accountable can also be illustrated by hashtag movements like #JusticeForZainab and #ReleaseShahbazGill (Farooq & Rehman, 2021).

Social media has also increased political activism by giving a voice to marginalized groups and enabling grassroots movements. Through these digital platforms, women's rights activists, human rights organizations, and independent journalists have shed light on issues such as electoral rigging, press censorship, and human rights violations, thus holding those in power accountable democratically (Aslam, 2019). Nevertheless, social media has also become a source of concern for misinformation, propaganda, and the spread of false information, which proliferates public perceptions and aids in crafting specific voter behavior in certain ways (Shah, 2020).

Challenges to Media-Driven Political Awareness

While the media can have a positive impact on increasing political participation, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. Media bias and the proliferation of partisan news outlets have exacerbated political polarization. Some media organizations have been blamed for their inclination toward political parties and, therefore, for circulating biased narratives that have the potential to mislead the public (Khokhar, 2019). A further contributing factor would be the rise of sensationalist journalism, through which the focus has increasingly shifted from meaningful political discussion to entertainment-oriented coverage of politics, usually at the expense of real policy matters (Qureshi, 2020). A second salient challenge is the state's control of media freedom. In Pakistan, journalists and media institutions endure mounting pressure from the state, military, and political entities to conform to certain narratives or risk being complicit with the powers that be (Rais, 2022). If the free media is impeded, then its implications on political cognizance and increased engagement in democracies cannot be overstated, as evidenced by the shutting down of TV channels, the censoring of digital content, and the harassment of journalists (Ahmed & Sheikh, 2020).

Recently, an enormous change has happened in the media landscape in Pakistan, fueling the political awareness and public participation. The advent of television news channels, digital media and social networking sites has helped empower citizens to gain access to political information, express public opinion and participate in electoral processes. Nevertheless, the issues of misinformation, slanted reporting and press freedom repression continue to hinder the goal of a fully-informed and engaged electorate. In years to come, such as perhaps through media ethics, digital literacy and guaranteeing press freedom, the positive impact of media on Pakistan's democratic growth can be enhanced (Khan, 2023).

Influence on Electoral Processes and Political Campaigning

Media has emerged as a core component in Pakistan's electoral processes and political campaigning, especially from the early 2000s. This increasingly led to a transformation of political communication with the growth of electronic media, the emergence of digital



platforms, and the proliferation of social media. Candidates and political parties now depend on media to access the electorate, galvanize the base, and shape public opinion. The increasing impact of television news channels, online platforms, and social media channels has brought a paradigm shift in how political campaigns are run, voter attitudes are shaped, and electoral mobilization is facilitated. The growing involvement of media in electoral processes is not without its share of challenges, including misinformation, online propaganda, and media manipulation.

Role of Electronic Media in Election Campaigns

The early 2000s marked a significant turning point in Pakistan as electronic media was gradually liberalized, drastically changing political campaigns. The rise of private television channels like Geo News, ARY News, Dunya News, and Express News facilitated political discussions where candidates could address how they intend to serve the public (Khan, 2018). Political debates, interviews, and talk shows in the media have become important tools for shaping public opinion because they enable voters to critically assess political leaders and their manifestos. Also, political rallies and speeches have gone live and become much more visible. Political maxims of political campaigns have made the electioneering process a very competitive and dynamic process (Ahmed, 2020).

One example of the media's role in electoral politics is the 2013 general elections, where television channels became the center stage in mobilizing and "deciding" voters. Politicians had to ensure their presence in electronic media to approach more people with little heated discussion and campaigning to gain popularity. Thus, just like in the general elections of 2018, the media channels covered as much of the political events, streamed the campaign rallies live as possible, and also broadcasted the candidate interviews, which had a quantifiable impact on how voters perceived the candidates (Shah, 2021).

Social Media as a Game-Changer in Political Campaigning

The evolution of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok has even changed the landscape of political campaigning in the country. The use of social media has allowed political parties to communicate directly with voters — no media gatekeepers necessary. It has enabled politicians to craft and promote their brand, outline their political vision and challenge contrary narratives in real time. Political parties like Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have become major users of digital platforms in political mobilization for their parties using the platforms to promote its campaign and reach voters (Malik, 2019). A key turning point was the elections of 2018 where communication through social media was used effectively by PTI to galvanize youth support. Hashtag campaigns, live-streamed speeches, and voter awareness drives (Yousaf, 2022) on the digital front through the party's digital team influenced the election outcome significantly. Platforms such as Twitter have also been found to facilitate grass-roots movements among independent candidates and third parties who otherwise may not have gained exposure in the traditional media (Rizwan, 2021).

Media's Role in Voter Awareness and Electoral Participation

Through media, electorate citizens can be educated on the civil proceedings of the political system, know about candidates and voters themselves, and, ultimately, make political participation more possible. Organizations like the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and several civil society organizations have also used media campaigns to create awareness about voter registration, polling procedures, and the importance of voting (Ali, 2020).



Widely publicized media campaigns such as public service announcements, televised debates, and social media awareness campaigns have increased voter turnout in past elections (Hassan, 2022). Additionally, fact-checking initiatives have also sprung up to combat misinformation and disinformation, aiding voters in obtaining accurate information about candidates and policies (Javed, 2021). The spread of disinformation, however, nevertheless is a significant challenge; politically motivated fake news and propaganda campaigns can mislead voters and distort public perception (Naseer, 2023).

Challenges of Media Influence in Electoral Processes

Although media has positively influenced electoral processes, its role in the political landscape comes with challenges. One of the biggest problems that we face in world is the misinformation and fake news, which are one of the most spreadable news especially when it comes to social media as they say by saying the name of news itself that are not authenticated news which has spread all over in a few minutes time. False narratives, juxtaposed images, and misleading statistics are manipulated to sway a voter's mind at times leading to Political unrest (Ahmed, 2021). Also, polarization and media bias has clouded the credibility of election coverage. A few TV Channels AND Newspapers are correlated to a particular political party, and this reporting is biased and affects the voter's mind (Farooq, 2019). Moreover, this non-neutral coverage from journalists creates an imbalance in media, where some political parties get better coverage than others do (Aslam, 2022).

A critical point is state control/censorship of media coverage during elections. In several cases, media organizations have been pressured to reduce the coverage of parties that differ from the government, or journalists who were critical of government policies have been harassed or silenced (Reporters Without Borders, 2022). These restrictions hinder free and fair elections by restricting voters' access to diverse opinions (Khan, 2023).

In Pakistan, the media is an indispensable pillar of electoral politics, as election campaigns are designed and run through it, which affects voter behavior and enhances political participation. However, in particular, electronic and social media have facilitated political parties contacting the electorate and greater voter awareness and engagement. Nonetheless, misinformation, media bias, and censorship pose tangible risks to the integrity of electoral processes. These challenges will mean that increased regulatory frameworks, media literacy programs, and ethical journalism practices are needed to ensure that media remains a critical force for democratic empowerment rather than manipulation. If responsibly harnessed, media will continue to be a driving force for transparent and inclusive elections in Pakistan.

Media's Role in Political Accountability and Transparency

In Pakistan, the media has played as an essential role in fostering of political accountability and transparency, particularly since the early-2000s. Amidst the liberalization of media landscape and expansion of digital platforms, media became a significant tool of exposing, monitoring and ensuring accountability to the public. All these are part of the key role that investigative journalism has played, along with onscreen debates and digital engagement, in holding political leaders accountable and fostering democratic governance. Unfortunately, there are significant challenges to media's role as a watchdog, which come in



the form of increasing pressure on journalists, a proliferation of misinformation, and a political system heaping more restrictions on press freedom.

Investigative Journalism and Political Accountability

In Pakistan, investigative journalism has been one of the most significant contributions of media towards political accountability. Investigative journalists and media organizations have exposed power abuses, corruption scandals, and governance failures, forcing government spokespersons to answer to public apprehensions. In 2016, as an important case, the Panama Papers leak had a crucial role in the political history of Pakistan, as investigative reporting exposed offshore accounts of the then-Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. After concentrated media coverage and public debate, everything concluded in a Supreme Court trial and, finally, the disqualification of the then Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif from holding public office (Khan, 2018). The influence of the media in revealing corruption and demanding political accountability was showcased in this case (Ahmed, 2020).

So, like Geo News's Capital Talk and ARY News's Off the Record, TV shows have been indispensable in holding political leaders accountable for governance issues, corruption charges, and public policy decisions. These are the platforms where journalists and analysts question politicians, seek justification and educate the public about political malpractice (Shah, 2021).

Media as a Watchdog of Democratic Institutions

As a check on the government, free and independent media are vital to promoting accountability and transparency of democratic institutions. The media throws a public spotlight on all branches of government, creating at least some mechanism of accountability for public officials. The press highlights governance underperformances (failures) through investigations and reportage (journalism) and interrogates (rubs shoulders with) statesmen (policymakers) through public debates and opinion editorials (Rizwan, 2021). For instance, media coverage was instrumental in revealing electoral discrepancies after the General Elections in 2013. Media was the platform used by political parties, most significantly PTI, to showcase "evidence" of rigging, resulting in nationwide protests and the formation of a judicial commission that investigated the rigging allegations (Malik, 2019). The coverage of the issue by the media was broad in scope and showed how some institutions like the media determine democracy and electoral transparency.

Digital and Social Media's Contribution to Transparency

Social media including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube facilitated platforms and ultimately bolstered political accountability as citizens could directly engage with political leaders and question government policies. Social activism through social media facilitated the public to expose the bottlenecks of the government and vigorously work against any form of corruption and resultant injustice in socio-political spheres (Hassan, 2022). A widely acclaimed case in point is the 2018 #JusticeForZainab campaign, which was a case of digital activism whereby collective efforts compelled the government to respond quickly to a lawsuit against a high-profile child abuse case. The authorities acted promptly due to the wave of criticism the incident drew on different social media, which resulted in the arrest and conviction of the guilty (Javed, 2021). Moreover, this case was an example of how digital media magnifies the voices of the public and holds state institutions to account. Increased transparency has also been achieved through live-streamed political



happenings and government press conferences on social media platforms, allowing citizens to obtain information directly from them and not through traditional media filters (Ahmed, 2021).

Challenges to Media's Role in Accountability and Transparency

The media's efforts to hold Pakistani politicians to account have been fruitful, although they are under increasing pressure from several directions:

State Control and Censorship

The restrictions on press freedom remain one of the significant challenges to media acting as a watchdog. Fear of violence is not the only reason journalists and media houses have to circumvent reporting on sensitive issues (Naseer, 2023), as state authorities, military institutions and political groups pressure them not to bring critical issues into public facts. Independent media outlets have been under restriction in the past few years: channels have been taken off the air, and newspapers are being questioned to change what they write (Ali, 2020). One example occurred in 2019 when Dawn newspaper—one of Pakistan's largest English-language dailies—saw its circulation disrupted after running reports critical of the government's policies (Farooq, 2019). Likewise, several journalists have been charged and arrested for exposing corruption and failures in governance, constraining the domain of independent investigation (Aslam, 2022).

Misinformation and Fake News

The spread of misinformation and disinformation has seriously undermined media credibility to the point that the public has become confused between what is accurate information and what is misleading content. Media streams are strategically exploited by political parties and interest groups to build biased narratives and sway public opinion (Shah, 2021). This concern is especially salient during election cycles when fake news, doctored images, and misleading videos proliferate across social media platforms, influencing voter opinions and undermining democratic discourse (Hassan, 2022). This is why we see misinformation as a harmful scourge threatening informed decision-making and political processes' integrity.

Commercial Pressures and Media Bias

Many media organizations in Pakistan are owned by business conglomerates with considerable political connections, leading to biased reporting and partisan media coverage (Malik, 2019). When it comes to reporting, certain outlets represent certain political parties and are more concerned with their interests rather than the interests of the public. Such partiality undermines media neutrality and contributes to the erosion of media as an independent institution (Khan, 2023). This absence of impartial journalism thus falters the media's watchdog function and, subsequently, the capacity to put political actors to account erodes, leading to low public trust and vulnerability of democratic functions. Citizens deserve genuine free press to balance partisan politics.

In Pakistan, media has emerged as a powerful instrument of political accountability and transparency. Through exposure in cold hard facts, debates on the screen, and activism through our devices, investigative journalism has had a significant impact on exposing corruption, questioning governance, and raising voices. Nonetheless, obstacles like state censorship, misinformation, and media bias still limit its efficacy. Finally, the paper calls for further measures focused on strengthening the press freedom and promoting ethical journalism to ensure that media remains as an anchor to allow media to function as a crucial tool of democratic accountability in Pakistan. That's how



media will keep holding the power accountable and help create a more transparent and responsible political system as long as it is independent of political and corporate influence.

Challenges and Negative Impacts of Media on Politics

While media has played an undeniably vital role in determining Pakistan's political landscape, it has also introduced numerous challenges and negative impressions. The growing influence of media in the political domain has brought about concerns regarding misinformation, sensationalism, political polarization, and the manipulation of public opinion. The rise of media outlets, particularly in the digital age, has provided a platform for democratic participation and political engagement. Still, it has also given rise to practices undermining political integrity and public trust. In this section, we explore the media's various negative impacts and challenges on Pakistan's political system, focusing on issues such as the spread of misinformation, the increasing commercialization of news, media bias, political polarization, and the erosion of journalistic ethics.

Misinformation and Fake News

A significant hazard of media is the spread of misinformation and fake news within Pakistan's political landscape. The propagation of unverified information has become a reason for serious apprehension with the upsurge of digital media and social platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube (Shah, 2021). In particular, information and misinformation campaigns by political parties, interested parties, and foreign actors have already misled voters and distorted public perception, especially in their impact during electoral processes. During the General Elections of 2018, several political opponents of this particular news accused them of fake news stories that gained popularity (Ahmed, 2020). With the support of social media, this kind of illegal fake news spread like wildfire, harming political campaigns and further degrading public confidence in the election procedure (Hassan, 2022).

Additionally, political leaders and parties have sometimes employed bots and troll accounts to amplify their messages and create illusions of false narratives, thereby contributing to misinformation. Citizens are now represented by so many contradictory narratives from various personalities and platforms that they often do not know what to believe (Javed, 2021). This sends political conversations awry and further complicates voters' ability to vote with knowledge.

Sensationalism and Commercialization of News

A factor behind sensationalism in Pakistani media is the commercialization of media in Pakistan, in which media channels compete to increase the audience with reading and viewing, instead of providing correct and balanced reporting. From big stories on political scandals, violence and controversies that grab the headlines, others covering serious policy issues or governance challenges get pushed aside. To counter this trend of polarization, they have continued, media establishments have relied on sensational content—scandalous news articles and reports—resulting in more polarized views among the public, and further deepening political rifts. This received hyper-sensationalised coverage often misinterprets the substance of the issues at hand, and has the effect of degrading the quality of political discussions (Khan, 2023).

One notable instance of sensationalism occurred in the wake of the Panama Papers leak in 2016, when allegations of corruption against then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif were widely reported across different media. Although the issue was a public concern,



several outlets sensationalized it, prioritizing narratives that would increase political frenzy and polarize public opinion, primarily along party lines (Farooq, 2019). Sensationalism, to this degree, undermines the independence of the media to offer objective accounts of political affairs and contributes to society's polarization.

Media Bias and Partisanship

Media bias and partisanship in Pakistan are yet another challenge faced by the media. Most media organizations in Pakistan are controlled by prominent political figures and business tycoons or are led by the influence of state institutions, resulting in biased reporting in favor of certain political parties or ideologies. TV news channels, newspapers, and online platforms all show visible biases while covering political events, leading to a distorted understanding of politics among the people. This is demonstrated by channels such as Geo News and ARY News, often viewed as sympathetic to certain political parties, with reports skewing in favor of these parties but against their opponents (Ahmed, 2021).

Such biased reporting destroys the role of media as impartial information and limits the ability of the public to engage with political questions critically. The decline of neutral, fact-based journalism has led to media outlets becoming politicized, acting more like propaganda tools than objective authorities. Partisan reporting like these drives increasing political polarization in the country, driving apart the public into red and blue divisions and further undermining the ability of the media to foster democratic deliberation.

Political Polarization

The media's role in political polarization is another crucial issue in Pakistan. With increasing media specialization, media outlets have started serving ideological or politically affiliated groups, creating echo chambers that strengthen biases and deepen societal divisions. Robust political polarization was on display in the 2018 elections, driven by media coverage of political leaders — who were highlighted as either saintly or satanic by certain outlets. This makes it stiffer for voters to have reasoned, balanced discourse and for political rivals to find areas for negotiation (Rizwan, 2021). In particular, the massive contribution of social media has in this polarization, following pages and channels and ending up getting news only from people on the same side while ignoring information from opposing viewpoints. This tribalization of political discourse reduces the dominion of constructive dialogue and enhances the hazard of violent political rhetoric, particularly around election cycles (Shah, 2021).

Erosion of Journalistic Ethics and Press Freedom

In Pakistan, the pressure on journalists and media outlets, at the hands of state and non-state actors alike, has only blurred the lines of journalistic ethics and eroded press freedom. Criticism of the government or military frequently leads to harassment of journalists and censorship and threats that inhibit independent reporting (Ali, 2020). A glaring instance was the treatment of the Dawn newspaper and several other outlets that have faced restrictions and reprisals for carrying critical stories (Farooq, 2019). Some journalists self-censor out of fear of reprisal, while others engage in caricature or biased reporting to avoid running afoul of institutions with power. The inextricability of media and politics challenges the role of the media to hold (political) leaders accountable and to inform the public correctly (Naseer, 2023).

Although the media in Pakistan has played a significant role in the country's politics through political awareness and checking leaders, it has also led to some deleterious



effects. Misinformation, sensationalism, bias, and political polarization have compromised the media's ability to serve the public interest and provide accurate information about politics. Given these challenges, it is critical to uphold press freedom and accountability in journalism, beat down misinformation, and encourage responsible media habits. Only then can the media play a more constructive role concerning the political development process of Pakistan towards ensuring a political system that is less ignorant, opaque, and unaccountable.

Conclusion

The media's role in Pakistan's politics has been essential in significant political narratives, shaping governance and enabling public engagement. Over the earlier few decades, the media has experienced a fundamental growth, revamping itself to fit the needs of its audience and adopt technological change. The current research discussed the historical trajectory of media as an injector of Pakistan Politics and how electronic, print, and digital media was the injection of challenge and support for the growth and development of Pakistan Politics. The increase of polarizing press in the last decades has been highlighted as an increasing divide among citizens, as the consumption of such media reinforces biases and drives polarization.

The impact of media on Pakistan's political landscape extends to more than just its electoral and governing systems. Media has influenced public conversation on civil-military relations, human rights issues, and foreign policy. The media has become one of the most deliberate tools for political empowerment and state control in declaring any state's narrative. While the media has done what is needed for political awareness and democratic participation, it has also been a weapon for political manipulation, character assassination, and ideological polarization. Political parties and state institutions pressure media organizations to conform to the narrative, leading to self-censorship, editorial bias, and media blackout. The media and state regulation tension is another contentious issue in Pakistan's democracy.

In conclusion, while the media has been an enabler in making Pakistan's politics more dynamic, it has, more often than not, turned into a battlefield under which various players and interests are hiding. The media landscape's evolution will continue to be a key determining factor in shaping Pakistan's democratic development within the political processes. The evolution of media in Pakistan rests on maintaining a balance of freedom of speech, journalistic ethics, and regulatory systems to deter incorrect information and unwanted political manipulation. When the media fulfills its role, serving as a pillar of democracy rather than a tool of political persuasion, it, in turn, will be strengthened as an institution with less political interference and improved ethical journalism and digital transformation.

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