

## **Election 2018 and Media; A comparative content analysis of two selected current affair programs**

**Dr. Babrak Niaz**

Assistant Professor,

Department of Media Studies,

University of Balochistan, Quetta

### ***Abstract:***

*This research article will provide in depth knowledge regarding the electronic media and the portrayal of propaganda through electronic media towards general audience that impacts the people's political opinion. The purpose of this research article is for determining the part of electronic media with respect to politics. The data collection is done with one month of the content analysis of the two programs 11th Hour with Waseem Badami and Dunya Kamran Khan ke Sath on election campaign 2018. The result analyses through the selected content are directly and indirectly influencing the public. The participants of the political parties are invited in the shows who then defines their political agenda and party narratives which forms the opinion of the general public towards politics. The content of the shows highly impacted the audience, the communication through electronic media by a political party influenced the audience more. This research dissent with the statement that media works for the betterment of state, only in the case of election campaign.*

## **Introduction**

In a world inspired by satellite and cyber-space technology, electronic media has played a very important role in shaping the life and destiny of world. The visual media, especially television has a splendid impact upon molding human minds and opinions.

Moreover, television became a modern tool of communication in 21<sup>st</sup> century because it provides us information, news, entertainment and let us know what is happening worldwide. The electronic media has responsibility in describing the problems of societies and spreading the fair information. This can easily be done if the media follows the path of accuracy and objectivity in presentation of its material to the public. Television channels started to change the opinions of people with their content. Because of this a trend of talks shows spawned, as a result of these talk shows, the political ideology and opinions of people were influenced. People started to form opinions by watching their favorite talk shows. Just like that, the trend of talk shows becomes famous all over the world and politicians started using this trend as a tool of political propaganda. Media plays a very important role in Pakistan's politics because different parties and politicians use it as a tool for propagation and also to spread their own agenda to the public. The political controversy in Pakistan is increasing day by day and talk shows grab the opportunity of public interest. "Our lives are being heavily influenced by the TV News channels running their broadcasts round the clock. The influence of new media technology is a matter of great concern for media scholars and the society at large. The advancement of new media technologies in the new horizons of the 21st century is an important issue of concern for the modern societies".(Saqib,2010)

Additionally, media plays an important role during elections, media reports about the election campaign of political parties and guides the public about their democratic rights. Media works as a platform for common public to convey their issues, problems and needs to the politicians and candidates of election. "The crucial factor that makes communication 'political' is not the source of a message, but its content and purpose" (Denton, 1998). And similarly Brian McNair also explain a similar definition by "that political communication is "purposeful communication about politics" (B.McNair, 2003). From point forward the nation has worked under between time lawmaking body until 1973, when it got a formally dressed constitution. This demonstrates the media was in the control of government, and couldn't extend the enthusiasm of the average folks. In 2002, during Pervez Musharraf era, the proclamation of PEMRA Ordinance enabled private sector television channels to communicate and broadcast social and political issues existing in society. In William Riker and Peter Ordeshook's (1968) study on why people vote, the idea of relatedness is applied when they argue that participation in voting process provides individuals' satisfaction without their aspirations of affecting outcome of elections process. Man bridge describes political participation as "necessary for personal development, to make one fully human, broad in outlook, and conscious of one's own interests". Finkel, finds that casting a ballot and taking a shot at a crusade have various impacts on individual fulfillment with majority rule government.(Steven,1985)

One of the prime functions of the electronic media is to inform along with providing the information to the whole masses. Furthermore, there will be comparative study between two channels ARY News and Dunya News. The study will try to focus to explore that how these programs will

influence the audience, during election campaign of 2018. Moreover, why these talk shows are so famous among people of Pakistan. This research will determine how talk shows of two different channels influence election campaign and political propaganda according to their channel's policies. However electronic media plays an important role as an opinion leader, of public therefore they have power of evaluating and providing the nation a complete background information along with the perception and point of view of spokesperson from different political parties in Pakistan on a particular issue. According to Melvin" Socialization refers to the internalizing of all of the lessons from many sources concerning ways of behaving that are approved or expected by society, as individuals mature through every stage in the life cycle". (Melvin,1996)

### **Objective**

1. To find out how political parties represent or defend their political agenda on two different platforms.
2. To analyze the policy of two news channels and coverage during elections 2018.
3. To evaluate whether the contents of the programs were based to aware the voters.

### **Relevant studies**

Muhammad Anwar and Mirza Jan conducted a research on "Role of media in Political socialization" a case study of Pakistan published in The Dialogue (volume V number 3), The private channels affect positively the rise of the political public sphere in Pakistan through political communications, but the people of Pakistan don't believe in functional

approach of development. Whereas impartial political programs are the essence of democratic system. (Dialogue,2010)

A research titled “The Daily Show” conducted by Baumgartner (2006), with Jon Stewart telecast from Monday to Thursday on CTV is a fake news program in which they made fun about politicians in result of which viewers perceive presidential candidates negatively when they were criticized on talk shows.

A researcher Bilal et al. (2012) concluded a research on talk shows (Pakistani TV). the objectives were to find out the relationship between “ideologies of the talk shows and spoken words by the anchors”. The comparison was between the two shows of Geo TV. Bilal concludes that the show was controlled intentionally by the channel and program host to meet the agenda that was set.

Professor “Tawana Kupe” from University Of the “Witwatersrand Johannesburg” concluded in her research that media should strictly cohere to ethics and professional norms. The role of the media is to prevent one party from winning with a landslide victory that the opposition is to all intents and purpose of irrelevance.

The proposed study is different from the relevant studies and it will bridge the gap that exist between available knowledge and the knowledge that will be produced through this research. The proposed study is the comparison between two political talk shows that define the policies of both the news channels (ARY) (DUNIYA).

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Agenda Setting (1972)**

Agenda Setting explains a very strong influence of media on audience. Media has ability to present us what is more important and what

is less important. The theory suggests that media set agenda for public. The theory was originally made for news media but in certain cases it applies in other areas of media also. But sometime media focuses on a single event and ignore other important news stories. Media filters every story we see. Media gives more attention to a certain story and ignores other stories. Politicians set different agendas during elections and talk shows are example of agenda setting because politicians use it as a tool to spread their agendas to the public. Framing theory is a part of agenda setting theory. Framing theory explains that how news, a talk show or any program presented to the audience. The term frame building refers that how a frame of news, story is built, and the factors that change the qualities of news story. Framing change the mindsets of people by showing same story in different ways. Framing is use to propagate a story.

### **Research Methodology**

The data for the study will be collected through primary and secondary data collection. The research articles, books, newspapers contents, annual reports of the organizations, websites and other means of already published material is used as source of secondary data collection.

While primary data collection will be collected through content analysis of selected programs. The programs of ARY news channel and Dunya news channel will be analyzed. One-month program of ARY news and Dunya news channel would be analyzed (25<sup>th</sup> June – 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2018). The selected programs which on aired before election would be analyzed. The program on aired from ARY news 11<sup>th</sup> Hour and Dunya Kamran Khan ke sath of Dunya news will be analyzed. The program content, guests, nature of the questions (Supportive or criticizing), reply of the guests on both these programs and anchor or channel title. The contents of the programs will be

coded according and will elaborate in detail. According to the report of Monthly Logic 2018 ARY news and Dunya News is on top in ranking and the rating of ARY show 11<sup>th</sup> Hour with Waseem Badami is on 9<sup>th</sup> rank.

According to the report of Daily Pakistan (2016) the show of Dunya news Dunya Kamran Khan ke sath is on 2<sup>nd</sup> rank and the show of ARY news 11<sup>th</sup> Hour is on 3<sup>rd</sup> rank. The show 11<sup>th</sup> hour with Waseem Badami is very popular (Pakistan Herald). The content of this show is current affair. It is a complete political debating show. The Duniya channel show Duniya Kamran Khan Ke Sath is also very popular the content of this show is also current affairs and politics. (Pakistan Herald).

The study will be based on Qualitative research and content analysis of one-month programs of the Election Campaign of 2018 election from 25<sup>th</sup> June to 23<sup>rd</sup> July. The research would be comparative study of selected programs. Furthermore, the researcher would do the content analysis of both programs. For analyzing data some parameters will be designated, and the result will be prepared using these parameters.

### **Discussion**

The questions asked in 11<sup>th</sup> hour with Waseem Badami were promoting PTI. The show was showing biasness towards PTI. On the other hand, the content of Kamran Khan's was balanced. The show was not promoting any political party they adopted balance approach gives a chance to public to formulate their own opinion about upcoming election, issues and problems.

Most of the content of both shows was based on politics and current affairs. The show 11<sup>th</sup> hour with Waseem Badami was providing information about upcoming elections, election campaign of all political parties. He invited guest from different political parties to talk about their election

campaigns and party narrative. The content of the show was based on upcoming election for whole one month. Whereas Duniya Kamran Khan Ke Sath was providing information about upcoming election, all issues and current affairs. The show was providing information about issues like death of newborn babies in Thar, Water crises in Thar, Current economic situation of Pakistan and Business. The show was covering all the important issues of Pakistan.

The host was totally biased towards one political party i.e. PTI and he invites the guests who were related to PTI and if he invites the guests from any other party, he would ask harsh questions with strong criticism and he indirectly supports the views and responses of PTI. In this show the focus of Waseem Badami was mainly on Karachi and the major constituency of Karachi. On the other hand, the show Duniya Kamran Khan Ke Sath, the host is totally unbiased towards all the political parties. He raises questions wisely from all the political parties and if he criticizes than all the parties are equally treated. In this program Kamran Khan discussed other important issues of the country with the election campaign 2018.

The guests invited in both the programs were including the politicians and government officials. Questions that has been asked by the guests in “11<sup>th</sup> hour with Waseem Badami” was varying from party to party and individual to individual. The questions from PTI guests were well warming and smooth, while from other political parties’ representations were asked critical questions. On the other hand, in the show “Dunya Kamran khan ke sath” invites one guest for one topic and asked them every single detail that should be explained to the public.



## Findings

- The voters have access to the electronic media, especially the talk shows.
- Political talk shows influenced the mind of their audience and turn their opinion according to the content they are generating.
- The findings proved that there was no voter education and civic awareness during the whole election process.
- The content that was generated by both the shows was totally based on the interest on of the news channels as per their policies instead of serving for the interest of public as the given information helps in making better decisions.
- The host of 11<sup>th</sup> hour on ARY criticizes other political parties except PTI.
- The host of Dniya with Kamran khan on Dunya news covered all the issues along with the electoral campaign of few political parties.
- In both the shows coverage given to political party's campaign was not equal in result of which the highly covered party has the more chances of winning the elections.
- The pre-election coverage or discussion in talk shows includes propaganda that affect the reputation of parties among the audience.

### **Recommendations:**

In the light of findings of the research, the researchers recommend the following suggestions:

- The electronic media should not be biased before, during and after elections because it can directly affect the audience.
- We suggest that the show 11<sup>th</sup> Hour with Waseem Badami should host the programs unbiasedly as per the election campaign 2018 was concerned.
- Waseem Badami should allow his guests to clarify their point of views without interrupting them.
- Kamran Khan should invite more guests in his show rather than taking calls and analysts in the program.
- According to PEMRA the standard timing of current affair shows timing are 45 minutes and 15 minutes for advertisements but Kamran Khan's show timing is 1 hour 30 minutes.
- The show Dunya Kamran Khan k sath should have focused on election campaign rather he focused on the other issues.
- The show 11<sup>th</sup> Hour telecasted for three days whereas Kamran Khan's show were five days of the week.

### **Conclusion**

Election in Pakistan 2018 was a challenge because of previous experience back in 2008 and 2013 because after elections oppositions claimed about unfair elections in result of which most of the Pakistani population were curious about the Pre-election coverage as it's the easiest way of being aware of every turn in politics. That is why how electronic media cover the pre-elections was important for the better decision making and for the betterment of country. This research study concluded the comparison

between both the shows “11<sup>th</sup> hour by Waseem Badami” on ARY news and “Dunya Kamran Khan ke sath” on Dunya news worked differently according to the policies of ARY news and Dunya news respectively. The content of the show “11<sup>th</sup> hour” reflects the agenda of the news channel that how in most cases one political party was given the complete coverage while the election campaigns and pre-election workings of other parties was being ignored but ethically the coverage should be equal for all the political parties. In this show the nature was the questions was not investigated but based on criticism. however, critiquing on some issues is important for receiving the answer required or show the relevancy but the nature of the question should be same for all the representations of political parties, ethically.

The content of show “Dunya Kamran khan ke sath” was based on segments and in those segments, he hardly focused on the election campaign. The episodes or segments in which he discussed elections were based on the ideologies of political parties and their defense that can help people from their opinion regarding. The guests he invites were not the famous politicians, famous government officials or spokesperson except in one or two episodes in which he invites the guests that can relate and defend regarding the issue or topic, which can also affect the decision of public. The crux of both the content from the shows highly impacted the audience, the communication through an electronic media regarding a political party that influenced the audience more and in result of which it has made the public take a decision for a party that is different from the old shuffling political groups by convincing the voters through the electronic media.

## **Bibliography**

B, McNair, An Introduction to Political Communication, London: Routledge, 2003. p.24.

Bilal,HafizAhmd. , Ahsan, HeenaMujeeb. , Sundus, Gohar. , Younis, Sehreen. , Awan, SaqibJaved. (2012).

D.A.Graber, In Association of Young Journalists And Writers, Universal Journal, (1980)

[http://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/5\\_3/Dialogue\\_July\\_September2010\\_212-227.pdf](http://www.qurtuba.edu.pk/thedialogue/The%20Dialogue/5_3/Dialogue_July_September2010_212-227.pdf)

Melvin L. DeFleur, Everette E. Dennis, Understanding Mass Communication, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996), p.582.

R.E. Denton, Woodward G.C. Political Communication in America, New York: Praeger, 1998. p.11.

Riaz, Saqib, Journal of Political Studies, Vol. 1, Issue 2, 161-173,2010.

Steven E Finkel, “Reciprocal Effects of Participation and Political Efficacy: A Panel Analysis” American Journal of Political Science, 29(4), (1985), pp.891- 913.

Theory, M. C. (n.d.). Agenda setting Mass Communication Theory. <https://masscommtheory.com/theory-overviews/agenda-setting-theory/>.

Twente, U. o. (n.d.). Agenda Setting Theory University of Twente. Netherland : <https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/communication-theories/sorted-by-level/macro/Agenda-setting%20theory/>.

University, A. (n.d.). agenda setting theory Alvernia University. <https://online.alvernia.edu/agenda-setting-theory/>