

Representation of Political Issues in Electronic Media: A Case Study of Peace and Conflict

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
Received:	Political issues are most discussed matters of any country and
November 03, 2019	media also plays vital role in establishing political sphere of any
Accepted:	country. The research aimed to examine what kind of role TV
December 25, 2019	plays while highlighting political issues of Pakistan. The study
Online:	also aimed to see the agendas of media organizations regarding
December 31, 2019	political issues. Working under agenda setting theory and
Keywords:	framing theory the study used content analysis to meet the
Conflict	objectives. By taking frames of peace, conflict and neutral the
Frames,	research analyzed two talk shows of leading channel from 13
Peace,	August to 18 Dec 2014, the Dharna era. The findings revealed
Political Issues,	8
Representation,	that political electronic media create conflict while highlighting
Talk Shows	political issues instead to develop peace environment and deface
Corresponding	political sustainability. The study concluded that media have
Author	their own particular interest and affiliations toward certain
haseeb.sarwar@uo	political parties and political issues are highly focused by media
n.edu.pk	organizations as compare to other social problems.

Introduction

Media and politics are interlinked with each other. Both are dependent on one another for their visions. People want to be able to see through what is going on in the head of the politician, so they chose media to give them the knowledge about media. The relationship between politics and media cannot be defined, it is complex. Media relies on politics and politics relies on media. Media can promote peace and conflicts as well (Mirza, 2011). Media plays vital role in changing of thinking and making perception of people about politics and about political parties (Becker, 2009). Media plays key role in global political affairs (Gamson, 1999). Media has very strong impact on politics and media is affected by Government (Chandrappa, 2012). Representation of media guide public to do evaluations of social issues, and such evaluations are more effective at inducing participation in political activities, particularly when such evaluations are not positive and based on negativity (Martin, 2008). Media play significant role in spreading common good (Riaz, 2017).

Television is most popular medium of mass media in Pakistan. It has direct and gradually influence over public behavior (Khokhar, n.d.). A large number of political member participate in talk shows to represent their interest on electronic media (Tolson, 2001). Participation of political member in political talk shows increased the interest in politics (Timberg, 2002). Many scholars of social sciences and communication studies are agree that coverage of political issues by mass media can develop a disparity in political matters. Many communication scholars are sure about that the media, especially Television, is considered most important and valued enough in world's political affairs (Baum, 2005; Dahlgren, 2009). For one-fourth of the year of 2014, Dharna of PTI and PAT was the most discussed topic of Pakistan media. The container Dharna reinforced the model of elite-dictated discourse. The Dharna time period was selected as in this regime different political activities have seen as the process of long march and sit-in started by the PTI and PAT from Lahore to Islamabad. During this long march different important personalities got separated from their political parties like Javed Hashmi got separate from PTI during sit in. different violated act has done during this Dharna as the Pakistan television corporation goes off air after protesters storm on its headquarter. The protesters stand armed and clash with the police in Islamabad and requested for the resignation of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. All the schools in capital of Pakistan were closed due to these clashes. PS attack in Peshawar, all parties' conference in Peshawar and the end of sit in of PTI. The Dharna organizer posed as messiahs (leaders of welfare), spoke down to the people from raised pulpits and represent over simplified answers to the country's endemic crisis. Both the leaders Qadri and Imran Khan were very successful to tell the public about the flaws and short falls of the Government but both of the leaders are also fail to provide public the better alternative of the Government. The formulas for the people's deliverance from oppression, misguide, corruption, false promises were lost in shrill rhetoric that progressively lost meaning with excessive repetition. Even the average or poorest student of the politics could not find the answer of this question that all the condition that are going in Pakistan can be solve out just by changing the prime minister of Pakistan. Dr Qadri or Mr. Imran Khan could by himself steer the ship of state out of the storm amounted to stand up the public against the democratic values and democratic laws. It is significant that how all these issues and other political issues were covered by electronic media.

Literature Review

Media has great role in promoting democracy. Media play active role in democratic values. People of urban area attract towards media for political awareness. Media is involved in auditing political parties and performing the watch dog role for the promotion of democracy system in Pakistan (Safdar, Shabir, Javed & Imran, 2015). Private media in Pakistan still has important services to Pakistani society in its political socialization and creating political awareness in the public of

Pakistan. Private news channels play an important role in promoting democratic norms and values in Pakistan (Yousaf, 2012) Electronic media provide political awareness to the people. PTV is the only channel which proving information to the people of rural areas. As other political talk show criticizes the Government and create conflict in the parties. But PTV is highlighting it in peaceful manner (Hassan, n.d.). Electronic media play an active role in changing the opinion or in shaping the opinion of the public related to any issue (Wassan, n.d.). It is not forgetting or denied that media has been used as proxies between political opponents who destroy the peace situation and led to give hate speech and create conflict. Media play an active role to give education to the people to tell the people how they can use the right of votes, highlighting the human rights and also play an active role in making strong democracy in spite of all limitations (Ahmad, n.d.).

Media give great coverage to the women politicians and also public give attention to them but that coverage hardly talks about their real achievements in the field of politics and their role in national and international level politics. Both the political parties and the society also take women as politicians less seriously after the portrayal of women as 'fashion commodity' and their negative coverage on media, all media outlets resort to these stereotypes of women politicians for their so-called 'rating' of viewership (Waqar, 2015). The current political communication approach of the private channels has solid effect on the development and progress of creating public sphere in Pakistan. The channels try to effect the quality of the news by got effected by the ownership of the media groups. Moreover, the political communication approach of leadership with foreign country is not well disciplined and media also highlight different reforming policies like policy war on terrorism in friendly frame between leadership and pressure groups (Anwar & Jan, n.d.). Media highlight or give preference to highlight the problem of civic society. Media plays an active role to reach the voice of the public in front of the Government. Media plays pro democratic role during the military era. No doubt mostly media work under the dictator era but in that era it also promotes democratic values and wants to create peace in political situation of the country. It always supports democracy in Pakistan (Hassan, Ali & Hassan, 2016). Media more focuses on political news and human development news are sensationalized and bring no result (Hanan, Saleem, Ali & Mukhtar, 2016). The reporting of the political issues in electronic media is creating conflict instead of peace. Media create propaganda when there are more threats to the national security of Pakistan, whereas this media adopt humanistic approach when the threats to national security are below (Iqbal & Hussain, n.d.). Current affairs talk shows in Pakistan electronic media have the ability to change the perception of Pakistan people (Mnadi, Shehzad & Abdullah, 2016). The news talk shows changed the young youth perception and the young educated youth also take participation in politics. It also has been seen that the educated young youth that watch the political talk show are more socialized are connected with the people as compare to those that don't watch the political talk shows (Ahmad, n.d.). People give importance to the opinion of journalist and experts. Results indicate that exposure to talk shows positively influences the level of individual political efficacy

and participation (Zaheer, 2016). Talk shows of Pakistan's different media channels have hyped so much to different political topic according to their agendas, which is leading to nowhere (Hassan & Subhani, 2012). Media spreads candid information and swaps opinions that could bend public opinion toward peaceful resolution or conflict. Media conceals resolves and, triggers the conflict. Media influences the policy makers for peace and brings hidden stories in front of audiences (Jan & Khan, 2011). The existing literature leads to conclude that it is media that manipulate the realities and plays a significant role in developing political atmosphere by using different frames.

H1: Political issues got more coverage by Media as compare to other social issues.

H2: Media create conflicts in representation of the Political issues.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda Setting Theory and Framing Theory were used. Agenda Setting is defined in mass media as it is the process whereby the media decide that what we have to think and we have to worry about. How Media give hype, makes a silent isuue as crruent issue of the society and how the agenda of media become public agaenda (Kim, Kim, & Zhou, 2017). Agenda setting theory provide theoretical base to the study as it focused on Media agenda about political issues in electronic media. Different media organizations have different agendas as compare to each other. Working on 1st level of Agenda setting theory that is Media agenda the study analyzed how much political issue got coverage on media. Second level of agenda setting theory is framing theory. Framing Theory refers how media represent the subject in specific frame. Media use different frame to show the content to the public. Framing of thoughts in which mental representaion, interpertation, opinion and perception are included (Arowolo, 2017). Framing theory also provides theoretical base to the study as it focused on how media use specific frames to represent the political issues. It always up on media that how media formulate the agenda by using specific frame into the public.

Material and Methods

The study used content analysis as research method. The time period for conducting the research was selected from 13 august to 18 December 2014 (The Dharna regime of PTI and PAT). TV was selected as a universe from electronic media as television is a most popular and important medium for communication. Simple random probability sampling was used by selecting two leading private news channel of Pakistan that were GEO news and ARY news. Capital talk (Hamid Mir) from GEO news and off the record (kashif Abbasi) from ARY was selected as unit of analysis as the archives of these talk shows were easily available. Categories and frames of analyzing are operationalized below.

Categories for Analysis

Election Reforms, Early Election, Strengthening Democracy, Development Projects, Peace and Security, Political stance on Social issues, Involvement of Non democratic Forces, Good Governance by the Government, Judicial Decision, National Sustainability, Socio-Economic matters.

Operationalization of Categories

Election Reforms were the most useful and most important problem highlighting on electronic media during the selected time period. Election reforms have taken as to improve the set up or to improve the method of election for avoiding the element of ragging. Early Election was also most discussed topic during the Dharna period of PTI and PAT. Early election was taken as all opposite parties wanted to reelection due to the blame of ragging. Strengthening Democracy considered as the discussion to make the democracy stronger than the existing values. Development Projects considered as the policies that are started by the Government for the welfare of the public. Peace and Security considered as the condition of the violation in the country; it may deal with the peace or violation of the people in Dharna or the terrorism activities of the country or any other things that can raise the question on the peace situation of the country. Political stance on Social issues considered as what the stance of political parties on the problems of an individual while living in the society. What the political parties said about the solution of the problems of the society and how it was presented on electronic media. Involvement of Non Democratic forces considered as the forces that are not sitting in public offices but take part in political issue and influence polices and matters of the country. Good Governance by the Government considered as the work of the Government related to different sectors like political, economic and religious issue are good and how it is representing on electronic media. Judicial Decision considered as the decisions that are done by the court of the country related to any issue and how it was represented on media. National Sustainability considered as the development of the country or the how much a nation is strong and how much a country has a power to defend a country. Socio - Economic Matters considered as the problems or the decision that deal with the social acts and budget or income and currency matters.

Operationalization of the Frames

Categories considered as *Peace* creating if it's general or basic concept was positive about highlighted the political issues and not creating any kind of hype or conflicts. Peace means that are highlighting the issues in favorable manner. Categories considered *Conflict* creating if it's general or basic concept was negative about highlighted the political issues and creating conflicts. Conflict means the material is pessimistic in tone and highlighted the issues in unfavorable manners. Categories considered as *Neutral* if its general concept was portrayed vague

emphasis on either of the favorable or unfavorable aspects of a political issue or if it displayed a balance of peace and conflict arguments.

Results and Discussion

	Table	1			
Total	Total observation of Talk Shows for all categories				
Program	Channel	Frequency	Percent		
Capital Talk	Geo News	48	100.0		
Off the Record	ARY News	43	100.0		

Table 1 depicts the overall observation of selected talk shows. According to the result a number of observations of Capital Talk from Geo news are 48 (100%) and a number of observations of Off the Record from ARY news are 43 (100%).

Frames used for Election Reforms in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
	Peace	2	4.2
Capital Talk	Neutral	2	4.2
	Total	2 4 12	8.3
	Peace	12	27.9
Off the Record	Neutral	1	2.3
	Total	13	30.2

Table 2 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Election Reforms. According to the result total number of peace observation is 2 (4.2%), and neutral observation is also 2 (2%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 12 (27.9), and neutral observation is One (2.3%) from Off the Record.

Table 3Frames used for Early Elections in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
Capital Talk	Conflict	1	2.1
	Peace	1	2.3
	Conflict	1 4	9.3
Off the Record -	Neutral	1	2.3
	Total	6	14.0

Table 3 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Early Election. According to the result total number of conflict observation is 1 (2.1%) from Capital

Frames used for Strengthening Democracy in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
	Peace	4	8.3
Capital Talk	Conflict	2	4.2
Capital Talk	Neutral	1	2.1
	Total	7	14.6
	Peace	4	9.3
Off the Record	Conflict	7	16.3
On the Recold	Neutral	3	7.0
	Total	14	32.6

Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 4 (9.3%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.3%) from Off the Record. **Table 4**

Table 4 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Strengthening Democracy. According to the result total number of peace observation is 4 (8.3%), conflict observation is 2 (4.2%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.1%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 4 (9.3%), conflict observation is 7 (16.3%) and neutral observation is 3 (7.0%) from Off the Record.

Table 5Frames used for Development Projects in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
Carrital Talle	Peace	3	6.2
Capital Talk ———	Total	3	6.2
	Peace	1	2.3
Off the Record	Conflict	5	11.6
	Total	6	14.0

Table 5 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Development Projects. According to the result total number of peace observation is 3 (6.2%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 5 (11.6%) from Off the Record.

Table 6Frames used for Peace and Security in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
	Peace	1	2.1
Capital Talk	Conflict	16	33.3
Capital Talk	Neutral	1	2.1
	Total	18	37.5

	Peace	3	7.0
Off the Record	Conflict	10	23.3
On the Record	Neutral	2	4.7
	Total	15	34.9

Table 6 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Peace and Security. According to the result total number of peace observation is 1 (2.1%), conflict observation is 16 (33.3%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.1%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 3 (7.0%), conflict observation is 10 (23.3%) and neutral observation is 2 (4.7%) from Off the Record. **Table 7**

Frames	Enganona	
	Frequency	Percent
Conflict	1	2.1
Neutral	4	8.3
Total	5	10.4
Peace	1	2.3
Conflict	7	16.3
Neutral	1	2.3
Total	9	20.9
	Neutral Total Peace Conflict Neutral	Neutral4Total5Peace1Conflict7Neutral1

Table 7 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Political stance on Social issues. According to the result total number of conflict observation is 1 (2.1%) and neutral observation is 4 (8.3%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 7 (16.3%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.3%) from Off the Record.

Table 8

Frames used for Involvement of Non Democratic forces in talk shows				
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent	
	Conflict	3	6.2	
Capital Talk	Neutral	1	2.1	
	Total	4	8.3	
	Peace	1	2.3	
Off the Record	Conflict	4	9.3	
On the Netora	Neutral	1	2.3	
	Total	6	14.0	

Table 8 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Involvement of Democratic Forces. According to the result total number of conflict observation is 3 (6.2%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.1%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total

number of peace observation is one (2.3%), conflict observation is 4 (9.3%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.3%) from Off the Record. In the table percent, valid percent and cumulative percent are also given.

Frames used for Good Governance by the Government in talk shows			
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent
	Peace	2	4.2
Capital Talk	FramesFrequePeace2Conflict20Neutral8Total30Peace1Conflict19Neutral1	20	41.7
Capital Talk	Neutral	8	16.7
	Conflict20Neutral8Total30Peace1Conflict19	62.5	
	Peace	1	2.3
Off the Record	Conflict	19	44.2
On the Record	Neutral8Total30Peace1Conflict19Neutral1	1	2.3
	Total	21	48.8

Table 9Frames used for Good Governance by the Government in talk shows

Table 9 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Good Governance by the Government. According to the result total number of peace observation is 2 (4.2%), conflict is 20 (41.7) and neutral observation is 8 (16.7%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 19 (44.2%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.3%) from Off the Record.

Program	used for Judicial Decis Frames	Frequency	Percent
Capital Talk	Peace	1	2.1
	Conflict	4	8.3
	Total	5	10.4
Off the Record	Conflict	6	14.0
	Neutral	2	4.7
	Total	8	18.6

Table 10 depicts number of talk shows for Good Governance by the Government. According to the result total number of peace observation is 1 (2.1%) and neutral observation is 4 (8.3%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of conflict observation is 6 (14.0%) and neutral observation is 2 (4.7%) from Off the Record.

Table 11Frames used for National Sustainability in talk shows						
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent			
Capital Talk	Peace	1	2.1			
	Conflict	9	18.8			
	Neutral	2	4.2			

	Total	12	25.0
Off the Record	Peace	1	2.3
	Conflict	7	16.3
	Neutral	1	2.3
	Total	9	20.9

Table 11 depicts number of observations of talk shows for National sustainability. According to the result total number of peace observation is 1 (2.1%), conflict observation is 9 (18.8%) and neutral observation is 2 (4.2%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 7 (16.3%) and neutral observation is 1 (2.3%) from Off the Record. **Table 12**

Frames used for Socio-Economic matters in talk shows						
Program	Frames	Frequency	Percent			
	Peace	1	2.1			
Capital Talk	Conflict	1	2.1			
Capital Talk	Neutral	6	12.5			
	Total	8	16.7			
	Peace	1	2.3			
Off the Record	Conflict	3	7.0			
	Total	4	9.3			

Table 12 depicts number of observations of talk shows for Socio-Economic. According to the result total number of peace observation is 1 (2.1%), conflict observation is 1 (2.1%) and neutral observation is 6 (12.5%) from Capital Talk. On the other hand, total number of peace observation is 1 (2.3%), conflict observation is 3 (7.0%) from Off the Record.

Table 13											
Chi-Square											
	Election Reforms	Early Elections	Strengthening Democracy	Development Projects	Peace and Security	Political stance on Social issues	nvolvement of Non Democratic forces	Good Governance by the Govt	Judicial Decision	National Sustainability	Socio-Economic matters
Chi- Square	7.118°	4.571 ^d	2.000 ^e	.111 ^f	30.727g	5.286 ^h	6.200 ⁱ	43.765 ^j	3.846 ^k	17.429 ^e	2.000 ¹
df	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.008	.002	.004	.003	.000	.001	.004	.000	.003	.000	.368

The table shows the statistical results using chi-square the overall respond regarding Election Reforms is not significant as chi-square is 7.118 whereas p=.008, Early Election is significant as chi-square is 4.571 whereas p=.002, Strengthening Democracy is significant as chi-square is 2.000 whereas p=.004, Development Projects is significant as chi-square is .111 whereas p=.003, Peace and security is significant as chi-square is 30.727 whereas p=.000, Political Stance on Social issues is significant as chi-square is 5.286 whereas p=.001, Involvement of Non Democratic Forces is significant as chi-square is 6.200 whereas p=.004, Good Governance by the Government is significant as chi-square is 43.765 whereas p=.000, Judicial Decision is significant as chi-square is 3.846 whereas p=.003, National Sustainability is significant as chi-square is 17.429 whereas p=.000, Socio-Economic matters are not significant as chi-square is 2.000 whereas p=.368

Hypothesis Testing

Findings showed that *H1*, *H2* has statistically proved.

H1, Political issues got more coverage by Media as compare to other social issues has approved as Talk shows covered political issues more than other social problems. Other social problems were neglected by media and did not get high coverage by media. H2, Media create conflicts in representation of the Political issues has also approved as media create conflicts and give hype to issues. Like the violation of rules by public during Dharna regime and police role was also hyped by media jus to gain their own political benefits.

Discussion

In Dharna, it has been seen that many of the incident was highly covered by media like attack on PTV, clashes between police and protest, schools of Islamabad were closed and most importantly, the visit of China President to Pakistan was cancelled due to Dharana sit in and most importantly APS attack of Peshawar.

Both talk shows discussed these matters in different way. The cancellation of visit of China's President was considered economical downfall as important projects was going to started with china by Geo, on the other hand, ARY not liked it with economical conditions. Same cases with other incident both channel were worked for their own interest. Military operations were also linked with this sit in, Geo said Dhrana also damaged the operation Zarb e Azab and encouraged terrorist as political sustainability was not good. Other political issues like election reforms, ragging, democratic values, government and opposition relation and protests were also represented in different frames from both selected talk shows. APS attack Peshawar was equally covered peacefully by all media houses. So it is media that use different frames and then adjust the reality in that frames. Secondly, media neglected other social problems like employment, poverty, terrorism; energy crisis etc. media keep focused on Dharana, press conferences, meetings between political leaders and statement transformation between political parties.

More than 70% content of Media creates conflicts. The findings revealed that more than 70% content of Capital Talk promote conflict and more than 72% content of Off the Record promote conflict related to the political matters. The individual

result off all the selected categories from these two perspectives are also mentioned in Data analysis.

Conclusion

Media did not create peace. Both the selected channels work for their political affiliation. The findings showed that that GEO work pro PMLN and ARY work anti PMLN in the selected time period. The problems that are against of the Government (PMLN) most covered by the ARY news and that are in favor of the Government (PMLN) are neglected by the ARY news in selected talk shows. The same case is also seen with GEO news; it is observed from the data GEO highlighted the content in favorable manner of the Government (PMLN) and neglecting the unfavorable matter.

When Media highlight the content by keeping their own purposes in mind then they don't see the welfare of the public or responsibility of journalism. Media tries to create conflict among political parties and it also automatically followed by the followers of the political parties.

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