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THE ROLE OF NEWS MEDIA IN DEVELOPING POLITICAL AWARENESS

Irum Sarwar, Aimen Zafar, Naureen Riaz

Department of Statistics, Lahore Garrison University (LGU), Lahore, PAKISTAN

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Political Participation, Electronic Media, Political Knowledge, Political Awareness	To determine the influence of media on the social behaviors towards politics, the survey based research design was carried out at Lahore Garrison University, Lahore, Pakistan. A sample of 150 students was selected randomly and they were asked to fill the questionnaire. After examining respondent's views, it was concluded that the popularity of television news channels plays greater role in increasing the interest of people in political affairs. Supposition that premeditated elective Government strained people's quality of opinion and inspire them for political contribution to claim their perspective. Media is enormous documentation of presuming information. The main conviction of this study occupied on Television news channels as public press. In this study, the audience and political phenomenon programs like the news bulletins, political talk shows and political programs like, interview of political dispositions and factual programs were examined as political awareness.

INTRODUCTION

The audience awareness and engagement in politics is the key of parliamentary politics. The politics is much affected by the influence of electronic media. The electronic media including, television, radio, press and talk shows are different means for political awareness. Media has positive and negative impact on people and it has increased political awareness and literacy rate of people about political issues. A variety of words and terms are used while presenting different shows and debates on media to provoke the thinking ability of viewers (Bhatti, Ali & Hassan, 2016). Since media is the main source to broadcast news and programs on political affairs, hence it proves to be main stage to publicizing different political parties and influence people in an easier way. Ultimately, increasing the literacy rate about politics, this makes people aware about the importance of casting vote. Media may have negative impact on the people, if news is address in a negative and exaggerating way (Memon, Ishak & Hamid, 2018). Young people are very important sources for the country and involvement of youth is very crucial for strengthen the political system and democracy due to these reasons attitude of the

young people is very significant democratic countries including Pakistan (Kanwal, Shahid & Naeem 2016).

Qualitative researches for evaluation the voting behavior about elections in Pakistan are large in number but there are very few quantitative studies for analyzing the view point of people about democratic process (Kanwal et al., 2016). Media is badly affected by the influence of the popular leaders of different parties. This is main cause for biasness of print media in our country (Aaldering, Meer & Brug, 2018). Different news channels and newspapers are backup some personalities and specific party which is hurdles in the promotion of political awareness. News expressed in positive way will have a positive approach, hence making it easy for people to decide (Matthews, 2019). Most of news on electronic media are baseless, and are created just for purpose of channel rating. Media plays role in the formation of audience views and to develop political interest. Political awareness has a constitutional value. It is a distinct integral in democratic autonomy. One of dominant objective of news media in constitutional society is to enlighten its inhabitant. This objective becomes essential at time of the election campaign, when balloter know about the political issues to support and encourage the rival parties and candidates in elections. Thus, current research aimed to examine effect of media on political awareness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It has been observed that during the electoral campaign, number of citizen's party preferences changes during election campaign (Johann, Königslöw, Kritzinger & Thomas, 2018). In their study they use integrative data approach by linking public opinion to the media content which helps them to check relative impact of news, media reporting and party communication. The final results showed that campaigns matter a lot to increase the number of voters on the other hand media reporting effects are limited. According to Aaldering et al. (2018) in democratic elections party leaders matters a lot, as a very few people has direct contact with party leaders so media is the primary source of information about these leaders. In this paper they provide an analysis on effects of media coverage of party leaders on prospect of voters. They combined an extensive automated content analysis of leadership with panel data. It includes more than fifty thousand unique respondents. They concluded that during campaign periods, positive image of the leadership is very influential. Moeller, Kühne and Vreese (2018) investigated the exposure of news media on participants in election. Combined data set was used on content analysis of the news stories. The results indicate that offline media had no significant effect on participation.

According to Darr, Hitt and Dunaway (2018) in America there is an increased polarized voting due to changed media environment through both addition and subtraction. They argued that American politics has greatly affected due to decline of local newspaper. They identified that there is a significant decrease in split-ticket voting in areas where newspaper is closed. Memon et al. (2018) studied that how much communicative environment of family influence on youth for the participation in politics. They provided an empirical justification of youth participation

in politics which influenced by the peer group political socialization activities. Zakuan, Sani, Abdullah & Azmi, (2018) examined the factors influencing women participation in elections and concluded that they have least interest in political preference. While voting, majority of women voters support women nominated candidates, they also observed that demographic background has significant influence. Riaz, Nazir and Bhatti (2018) examined that political programs were the core foundation of political information. It also be concluded that exposure to political shows made voters political well aware. Moeller et al. (2018) investigates influence of news media exposure on electoral involvement of new voters. The news in offline media had no noteworthy effect on participation, whereas connecting to online media certainly affected voters' turnout.

Kanwal et al. (2016) determined relative impact of various social and political factors which influenced the youth participation in election. Udoka and Eugene (2015) examined the effect of social media on politics. The main purpose of study is to determine effect and performance of social media in the Nigerians presidential election conducted in 2015, which resulted in the transference of power to the most populated nation. The trend of obtaining the news related to politics, by means of social media is increasing rapidly. A study conducted in 2014 provided the result that 62% internet users preferred Facebook to have political news. Radio is the most prominently used platform to get news in Nigeria 77.4% totally and even more than 7 from 10 across all bigger demographic groups. This says that, they preferred to use radio for news. Their youth preferred internet, Social sites e.g., Facebook for information 33% of Nigerians, people uses internet. In 2015 election people were provided information with the help of social media. That is why they become actively conscious about elections. For which the transfer of power took place for African most populous nation. This all happen due to the social media. Gad (2015) observed the impact of the social media on the Egyptian's political orientation and choices.

The main purpose of this study was to know that either Egyptian people interested in political promotion through social sites or not. It has been noticed that they are interested in political promotion and politically conscious. Their choices are influences little social media. Egyptian wants to improve their political platform. That is why they prefer political promotion. They try to participate in political events and organizations. The politicians can contact public and can make aware about their goals and aim as politician. People can comment and also expressed their views, and can demand for any change to their leader. The political platform of Egypt is improving rapidly. Javaid and Elahi (2014) estimated the effect of media on voting decision of people of Pakistan living in rural and urban areas and assume that rural areas are less affected by media influence as compare to urban areas. Evaluating the National Election Study data from 1996 to 2014, Verma and Sardesai (2014) inspect the effect of media coverage on Indian ballot process to study and comparing influence of old and modern media on voting decisions of electoral process. It also discovers that voters having high exposure of the media were more to be expected to support the economic liberalization, but that it made no change on the social traditionalism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the selection of sample, simple random sampling was used in this study. The population of the study was students and professionals of Lahore Garrison University, Lahore. A sample of 150 individuals was taken. Out of which 40% were males and 60% were females, age between 15-45 years. The survey research designed was assent for study. Conditional survey appliance with valid and certain questions that measure the assessment attribute and conversation were used in this study. Media and other variables like, political interest, political participation and media use standard questions were adopted. The survey was constructed taken information from the people inclusive demographic.

The Analysis is divided into two sections.

1. Descriptive Study
2. Analytical Study

In descriptive section frequency tables and bar charts were used to analyze the data. While in analytical section Probit Analysis with voting decision as (dependent variable), demographic variables and other media variables as (predictor) is carried out as the linear probability model has a major flaw and assumes conditional probability function to be linear. Finally, chi-square test is used to check goodness of fitted model. The Chi-Square Test “Chi square test is a test which was originally proposed by Pearson in 1900, and it provided one of the earlier methods of statistical inference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Section

In this section percentage and frequency distribution of concerning the research variables are given to understand the description of the responses towards the statements concerning the variables under considerations.

Table 1 Percentage and Frequency Distribution of Voting Reason

Voting reason	Frequency	Percent
Party loyal	23	15.3
Development seekers	51	34.0
Legislation minded	13	8.7
Value/Morality seekers	16	10.7
Biradri bound	03	2.0
Skeptics	01	0.7
Don't know	43	28.7
Total	150	100.0

Table 1 shows the frequency of important reasons for which on the base of people voted like 15% on the base of party loyal, 34% people voted on the basis of development seekers 9% on the base of legislation minded, 10% on the basis of value morality seekers, 2% people on the base of Biradri bound, 1% on the basis of skeptics, and 29% don't know why they are voting in

the elections. Consequently, the respondents have provided diverse responses over the research concepts.

Table 2 Percentage Distribution of Favorite T.V Channel Variables

TV Channels	Frequency	Percent
News Channel	31	20.7
Film/Drama	54	36.0
Musical/Sports	42	28.0
Cooking	05	3.3
Others	18	12.0
Total	150	100.0

Table 2 shows that, which are the most favorite T.V Channels for the people, 31 people (21%) like to viewing News Channel, 54(36%) are interesting in Films/Drama, 5 (3%) watch cooking channel, 42 (28%) watch musical/sport channel, 18 (12%) are interesting in watching other T.V Channels. Therefore, the respondents have provided diverse responses over the research concepts.

Table 2 Percentage and Frequency Distribution of Reliable Source of Political Information

Reliable Source	Frequency	Percent
TV	75	50.0
News Papers	25	16.7
Family/Peer Groups	15	10.0
All	35	23.3
Total	150	100.0

Table 3 indicates that for 75(50%) T.V is the political source of information for the people, 25 (17%) reads newspaper, 15 (10%) get information from family/peer group, and 35 (23%) get information from different channels. Thus, again the respondents have provided the diverse responses over the research concepts.

Analytical Section

Probit and Logit Analysis

In this part, the Probit and Logit Analysis is performed by using demographic variables and other media variables. The demographic variables like, age, qualification, household income have been used in this study as a controlled variables concerning the personal characteristics of the respondents under study. Other media variables like, Favorite T.V channel, reliable source for political information, watching Talk shows, programs about political affairs, interest in politics are also included

Probit Analysis with voting decision as (dependent variable), demographic variables and other media variables as (independent variable).

Table 3 Estimation of parameters

Parameter	Estimate	SE	Z	P-values	95% C-I	
					LB	UB
Age group	-.486	.340	-1.433	.152	-1.152	.179
Qualification.	-.431	.165	-2.610	.009**	-.755	-.107
House hold Income	-.046	.099	-.464	.643	-.239	.148
Favorite TV channel	-.213	.101	-2.111	.035*	-.410	-.015
Source for Political Information	-.118	.101	-1.174	.240	-.316	.079
Watching Talk Shows	-.146	.145	-1.008	.313	-.431	.138
Programs of Political Affairs	.199	.164	1.213	.225	-.122	.519
Interest in Politics and Issues	-.150	.177	-.849	.396	-.497	.197
Intercept	4.212	1.213	3.474	.001**	3.000	5.425

** p<0.01, * p<0.05

PROBIT model: $PROBIT(p) = intercept + \beta$

From above model summary estimates of probit model along with their significance value (p-values) are given. For demographic variables (age, qualification, house hold income) and media variables (favorite TV channel, Reliable source for political information, watching talk shows, watching programs about political affairs, interest in politics and governance related issues) p-values of the estimates implies that qualification and people's favorite channel has a significant influence on voting decision (political awareness).

Table 4: Chi-Square Tests

	Chi-Square	Df	P values
Pearson Goodness-of-Fit	106.63	80	0.025

After fitting the Probit model, chi square goodness of fit test was run and χ^2 statistic is given as 106.63 along with p-value 0.025 which is less than level of significance 0.05, So Probit model for this data is a good fit by political awareness as dependent variable, demographic variables and media variables as independent variables. Above results are same as the results of some previous researches (for example Bhatti, Ali & Hassan 2016; Scheufele, Shanahan & Kim, 2002; Pasek, Kenski, Romer, & Jamieson, 2006) who examined that the electronic media has significant influence on shaping the political awareness especially young people in developing countries like Pakistan.

CONCLUSION

This research is actually designed to check the impact of news media on political awareness. In this study, the audience and political phenomenon programs like news bulletins, political talk shows and other political programs like, interview of political dispositions, factual programs etc. were examined. It is concluded that media played prominent role in decency of behavior about electoral process. The findings showed the effect of the news, political knowledge and

participation on politics is very vital. The media is playing its role for shaping the behavior of people about different political parties. In future researches, effect of different kinds of media such as print media, electronic media social media will be helpful for checking the comparative role of all kinds of media. For generalizing the results, the data will be collecting from different universities of Lahore. It is also better to compare the political thoughts of rural and urban area of the countries.

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