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### Impact of Media on State Policy: A Review of Pakistan

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**Abstract** Do media outlets have an impact on how policies are made? How much control over this impact do politicians or other organizations have? In effect, the relationship study of media and policy is a complex affair. It also focuses on complicated large-scale issues while also being linked to topics that are affected by a wide range of forces and individuals. It is significant because of how it is connected to politics, technology, and the economy. As different study of ideologies examine different components of the picture in public policy, communication processes, and others like, our grasp of the connection between media and policy making tends to be limited. The main purpose of this study is to examine the impacts of media on state policy. Moreover, it makes an effort to close these gaps, to demonstrate how information from several domains can support one another, and to identify flaws and blind spots.

**Keywords:** Media Impact, State Policy, Pakistan, Public Policy, Technology

#### Introduction

The rapid spread of online media and the tech transformation has established a worldwide community (Voltmer & Baumgarten, 2007). Knowledge, news, and activities can now circulate to any spot on earth with no restrictions. Since before the authorities can respond and take power, these events quickly locate the living room. The media's expanded role has altered cultural, industrial, and legislative affairs. The visuals presented in the media shape how one feels acts and interprets the world. All people, including commoners, political class, decision-makers, and politicians, are affected daily.

States have a history of using the media to spread propaganda for both military and diplomatic objectives. For example, the 1980s and 1990s saw the sociopolitical exploitation of US media. The portrayal of the Soviet Bloc as an "Imperial Power," the story of Saddam and his "Weapons of Mass Destruction," and the transformation of Osama Bin Laden from "independency Struggler to Terrorist," etc. (Hussain, 2012). Since the media is independent of government regulation, both heroes and villains, rulers and terrorists, are created by funders, media outlets, and media hosts.

Due to this the press's position in the strategic decision is changing from that of a spectator to one of an active part. Political figures and legislators now rely on the media to explain and support their agendas. The media is a fundamental element of accomplishment, where "more anti-government will attract more money." In 1986, Swedish media scholar Kent Asp and later D.G. Lillker used the term "mediatization" to describe this exaggerated role played by the media. Pakistan, a nation in development with diverse socioeconomic, geopolitical, and

security needs, is not immune from the consequences of the modern world's media.

It is said that the Pakistani media is now more forthright, direct, and aggressive than ever. It currently draws focus to the social injustices, low economic administration, and governmental errors pervasive in the nation. The Pakistani media has developed into a potent tool for examining how government entities operate over time; rather than giving government strategies and proposals, it now makes its own decisions. As a result, this essay aims to illustrate the role of media in Pakistan by exploring its history, current situation, main media outlets, governing entities, and the industry's prospects in the nation.

#### Historical Background of Media and State

The rise of privately run media in Pakistan in the past ten years has political significance due to concerns that it is threatening the power brokers that have traditionally governed the nation. In the past, Pakistani politics have been the outcome of an agreement reached among good army and administrative authorities and local officials from the province, who are still quite strong. Home politicians are the outcome of a benefactor connection between administrative authorities and regional governors.

However, the force has controlled this arrangement concerning foreign affairs and national defense. A politics of embargo that has the traits of several Pakistani states—the security state, the parliamentary state, and the Islamic state—and that marginalizes distinct political figures, and religious minorities pose a severe threat to the government system. In the

past, the Pakistani media acted as a weapon for state-building, limiting its ability to democratize.

The media in Pakistan has a long history of supporting pro-democracy initiatives as well as these opposing agendas. It has been used to further the agendas of both army and democratic administrations. Understanding this heritage will help put the press's capabilities - and constraints - for advancing Pakistan's present liberalizing movements in perspective. This section of the paper will further demonstrate the role of media and its impact on the state during 2002.

The position of state authority in Pakistan has traditionally been represented in control of the media. Despite alternative publications being closed by regional governments run by civilians in the decades following Pakistan's freedom, the full institutionalization of central media influence occurred during Pakistan's first military leader, General Ayub Khan (1958–69). The Press and Publication Ordinance, which General Ayub enacted in 1960, gave the government the power to impose broadcast restrictions and control media outlets like Progressive Papers Limited (PPL), which compiled the Pakistan Times, Imroze, and the weekly Lailo Nahar, and the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) media outlet.

When PPL changed its name to the National Press Trust media conglomerate in 1964, it continued to buy newspapers that backed the policies of succeeding army rulers. The authorities also started to assert more influence over privately operated businesses to maintain the price of newspapers and magazines in range and limit circulation. Since its founding in 1964, the state-owned PTV has been transmitted from Karachi, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta. PTV and Radio Pakistan's programming aimed to uphold the legitimacy of the ruling party of the moment and to preserve the modern nation-state's reputation as a land of different societies bound by a common Islamic belief.

General Zia ul-Haq then oversaw the media's most incredible explicitly theological country function. General Zia insisted that journalists who supported him owned the Urdu-language broadcast network medium by giving the religious and political party Jamaat-Islami authority over the Ministry of Information and Education. Privately run newspapers published pieces critical of Pakistan's armed dictatorship despite remaining regulated. Due to this and the newspapers' prior involvement in the campaign for Pakistan's freedom, the media came to be seen as anti-establishment and pro-democracy.

Throughout Pakistan's so-called "period of freedom," a "satellite movement" throughout South Asia also raised people to desire free programs. In the 1990s, the region had 7 satellites delivering American, Chinese, European, and Indian programming, and several Pakistanis accessed unbiased reporting through the BBC World Service and CNN broadcasts. The Pakistani community was, therefore, aware of the

implications of privately run media to progress democratic principles by the time Pervez Musharraf assumed power in 1999. However, the state attempted to impact public opinion via its telecast channels, and its effect over privately run media outlets changed.

### **The Effect of Media on State Policy**

#### **Elector, Press, and Law-Making**

Even though initial research on media impact claimed that its impacts were at most "minimal" (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944), later research concurred that media, at significantly less, affects what electors think over (Iyengar & Kinder 1987, McCombs & Shaw 1972, Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007). Electors' opinions of individuals may be influenced by what matters to them: Candidates are assessed based on their potential behavior on such topics as they grow increasingly prevalent, particularly during election seasons (Iyengar & Kinder 1987). Furthermore, this problem examination might impact the subjects politicians emphasize throughout the election and pursue after winning the election. In a related vein, how we frame an issue might affect how we discuss potential effective interventions (Shih et al., 2008, Soroka et al., 2012).

In this paradigm, much writing focuses on elucidating voting behavior. At its finest, the press's influence on decision-making is oblique. Electors support the government for whom the legislative agenda they like by casting for that party throughout elections. If casting is affected by the press, it impacts laws affecting the balloting choice. Participating and governments ring elections may advocate particular concerns and policies. Nevertheless, this kind of thinking entails getting over numerous barriers. The prior underlying presumption is that the groups propose a divergent range of regulatory options, perhaps taking control of particular policy areas or projecting ownership of them (Petrocik 1996, Walgrave et al. 2012).

The fact of party rivalry, therefore, does not permit unique problem management since governments frequently turn to actual problem methods (Sulkin 2005), copying their primary opponents or fringe groups (Abou-Chadi & Orłowski 2016, Green-Pedersen 2019). Adler & Wilkerson (2013) note that administrations or legislative bodies frequently fight for the constant influx of new issues. Additionally, because of the "unequal expansion" of data, the problem ownership presumption raises doubts about the assertions that electors are logical and competent about state opinion (Converse 2000, pp. 333–34; also see Campbell et al. 1966). The most common political and electoral action theories presume that decision-making is significantly affected by one's societal position and beliefs (Achen & Bartels 2017).

Data may influence, at minimum, some kinds of electors, according to Zaller (1992). Most believe electors might depend on heuristics, signals, and other possibly distorted perceptions of reality (Popkin 2020). The majority of

regulations are only sometimes assumed to be known by the general public, not even by the most upbeat accounts. Given that the press is the essential data source for making policy decisions, they could have a significant impact (Barabas & Jerit 2009). This interpretation of the media's function presupposes a highly informed media landscape, which is a further component that needs to be clarified.

### **Problems & Media Focus**

Press propaganda can differ and primarily rely on particular situations and areas of concern characteristics. Our priorities change throughout the period, as do the concerns and aspects of those problems that we find significant. For example, unemployment may occasionally be perceived as a macroeconomic issue, while on other occasions, it may be viewed as an issue with personal adaptability or lack of movement (Grossman, 2021).

The Lowi-Wilson concept is a common term for the conventional research of state public policy concerns (Lowi 1964, Wilson 1980). The basic premise is that a particular policy's particular interests and characteristics frame the allocation of expenses and benefits and, as a result, identify the points of civil struggle (Schneider & Ingram 1993).

The emphasis in political expression is on news's impact and accessibility, or how much press users can relate to a particular subject (Zucker 1978). Compared to, say, the quantity of sovereign debt, people are more likely to connect to jobless or crime rates. As a result, the earlier should be more manipulated by the press than in this regard (Soroka 2002), although the potential fusions of the two strategies have yet to be considered.

There may be additional elements at work. Particular concerns may be traditionally notable, such as Germany's devaluation, which has received far more political attention in Germany than in neighboring France (Lewis-Beck 1986). Similarly, some democratic institutions may be linked to specific topics, which could make them either more or less troublesome for the present government. We are aware, however, that a problem's importance changes throughout the year.

Boydston (2013) has provided a novel viewpoint on the influence of punctuated-equilibrium processes on press focus on issues and state policymaking. She demonstrates how response mechanisms are at play concerning information processing in a series of interactions between press narratives, concerns about audience perception, and governmental ideology.

Due to various reactions, reporting is frequently intense and out of scale (Baumgartner & Jones 2005). Increasing press coverage has helped speed up formulating policy (Wolfe 2012), favoring quick fixes over long-term ones. It may shape the choice of policy areas or problems for the

general public toward the enlargement or contraction of the area of dispute.

In essence, the press may focus on and exert influence on various subjects to varying degrees. But problem qualities are flexible. Emergencies or concentrating occurrences can upend the topical pyramid and have clear repercussions on how policies are developed.

### **Role of the Press**

Press is naturally never impartial, contributing to their varied impact on the portrayal and state policy decisions. Press represents a structure with unique principles, behaviors, and characters, which has often been argued in support of examining news as an organization (Cook 1998, Schudson 2002, Sparrow 2006). Changes to these components have an impact on both the broadcast's shape and information.

The regulations and restrictions controlling marketized press decide what is and is not newsworthy. Whatever constitutes information relies on the media standards prevalent in the field and sources (Harcup & O'Neill 2017). Besides reporters, the news system is fundamental; it consists of the marketplace, potential intellectual prejudice in coverage, the ownership group, and the legislative backdrop (Hardy 2010).

An individual program's or news outlet's particular blend of standards will likely favor particular topics or approaches to state policymaking and distinct prior perspectives (Lee et al. 2008). Choosing and publicizing particular problems while ignoring them elsewhere, such standards and restrictions contribute to a type of gatekeeping. Due to varying access to news, this gatekeeping also establishes a pyramid among players (Shoemaker & Vos 2009). Interestingly, political influence is frequently associated with particular media exposure.

In this setting, authority is crucial. The public employee focus of press output is heavily influenced by capital structures (Benson et al. 2018, Picard & Van Weezel 2008). Corporate press encourages more incredible fun or entertainment to pique consumers' concentration spans, which are getting shorter. In addition to favoring more basic reporting of state policy matters and information, this concentration on recreation has been shown to take an active coverage of elections (Dunaway & Lawrence 2015) or a bias for unfavorable news.

The national press and press owned by the public sphere are less apt to be influenced by economic mechanisms and corporate rationale. The amount of public understanding of elections and state policymaking is considered to increase under this form of press dominance (Curran et al. 2009). In this regard, innovation is vital as well. Various kinds of press, such as tv, journals, and online publications, favor in-depth analysis, potentially prioritizing focusing on particular problems above

others. Similar socioeconomic limitations may further emphasize this distinction (Bennett 2004).

In conclusion, the consequences of increased business and evolving press consumers may result in more planned reporting and stress on confrontation and loss. Within that setting, it is to be assumed that responsible journalism on state policymaking will be more challenging. State policy reporting could become increasingly biased and lacking as more national press networks have been privatized, and several national press outlets have changed towards a more industrial stance. However, other writers claim that many reasoning operates in various contexts in an ecosystem, becoming more composite (Brants & van Praag 2017).

### Suggestions

It is crucial to aid the Pakistani press in promoting an open instead of restrictive political ideology. One way to deal with this is to encourage discussions about how Pakistan's federal news outlets may reflect, honor, and appreciate the state's variety and how local media can encourage national cohesion. The most incredible audience-commanding state-owned channels in Pakistan can try a significant part in this regard.

The relevance of online journalism and the democratic aim of facilitating it will increase as web availability increases in Pakistan. To guarantee that this modern media sector contributes positively to Pakistan's destiny, pro-stability, diverse, and liberal media should work to improve their internet existence. Due to this, foreign agencies must boost Pakistan's nationwide media's technological indicators (Manzoor, 2013).

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