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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Analyzing the Consequences of Social Media on Pakistani Politics**

Sadia Sabeen<sup>1</sup> Dr. Muhammad Farooq<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hassan Naseer<sup>\*3</sup>

1. MS Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Virtual University Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan
2. PhD Scholar, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan

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**\*Corresponding Author**

[hassan.sandhu37@yahoo](mailto:hassan.sandhu37@yahoo)

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**ABSTRACT**

The social media has a significant impact on all aspects of life, including politics, religion, education, and way of life. It has a strong impact on people and useful in shaping their opinions. In the modern world, a lot of political parties depend on the media and social media for mass communication. Every party has their own social media cell. Widespread correspondences are unavoidable, and they have an impact on how communities support political issues. This study is help to understand that online activities on social media have an impact on their daily life political activities. The data was collected through an online questionnaire that involved 200 politically engaged Pakistanis. The findings of this study show that people changed their behavior after viewing the news on social media not only online also in their daily life. Social media does have an impact on users' minds in terms of politics and can manipulate their opinions. The results of this study show that after viewing news on social media, people have changes.

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**KEYWORDS** Behavior, Manipulation, Political behavior, Politics, Social Media

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**Introduction**

In current days, almost everyone has spent a lot of time in watching TV and internet using and these things have an impact on our daily life. Every decision about daily life is influenced by the different form of media rather its social media or digital media (Butt et al., 2021). Apart from the fact actually that why people are more aware and up to date on current affairs, people must remember that embracing this vast transfer of ideas and allowing it to change our ideas can be risky. Our lives are influenced by social media, which tells us what to wear, how to appear, and how to act.

In this era, social media is the most powerful source of communication. It has spread data faster than at any other moment in recent memory throughout this period of mechanical innovation. Since decades, advances in electronic media have made data easier to organize and disperse. By framing social, religious, and political institutions, the media can potentially shape and also steer the organization of groups of people. (Muzaffar, et. al., 2019).

Social Media has the ability to influence and would local perceptions on a variety of social, national, and global concerns, which leads to another step in the process of forming a broad opinion of a certain nation, civilization, religion, and race. Social media especially is used to watching news and getting update about political scenario. People

are making their opinions regarding political parties by getting information from different social media platforms (Nelson et. al., 2021). & (Muzaffar, et. al., 2020). This study is mainly focus to understand how social media having impact on social media users digital and daily life routine.

### **Social Media effects on Public Opinion**

A crucial tool in today's culture is the mass media. A "controlled culture" is what sociologists refer to as when the media actively reflect and changes society. Social media saturates people and communities with messages. Without social media's ability to connect people globally, people were unable to become famous.

Due to its widespread availability, accessibility, and visibility, social media is the main topic of discussion in most mass media. The effect of the Internet has increased dramatically over time as more individuals and companies "sign on." Despite the prominence of the Internet and television in the mainstream media, magazines, especially those found in grocery store checkout lines, and other forms of media also have a significant impact on culture.

### **Politics**

Politics is the method of carrying out and performing out government functions, such as keeping systematic control over a human population, especially a state. Actively promoting one's own political opinions, engaging in dialogue with other political actors, making legislation, and wielding power, including fighting opponents, are all way used in politics.

### **Social Media and Political Manipulation**

Nowadays, Social Media are the most powerful tool in making public perception regarding any issues; also, this tool is used to aware people regarding social issues and his right. Last 10 years, social media provide awareness regarding politics in all worlds especially in Pakistan. Due to social media, the third party comes up in government in two party systems. It is happened in first time in political history of world. This all possible, because PTI focus on social media campaigns and manipulated the mindset of people and developed a positive mindset related PTI. Even till today, PTI is using social media for engaging people. According to Bibi et al, (2020) study, social media play a positive impactful role in making people perception and setting a mindset that Pakistan need to change from two party system. These circumstances are playing a vital role for Imran khan in government making. The study aims to investigate the social media role in piercing the mind of users regarding politics.

Social media is the most using platform in these days. Everyone have direct effect due to social media. No matter its shopping of house items, food, clothes etc anything, people prefer to buy online rather than to go and buy. Because social media influence people and changed their opinion. In politics, social is also influenced people and shaped their opinion. In Pakistan, PTI used social media in political campaign of 2018 general election and become as most popular party. This study is help to analysis that online political activities also having effect in their real-life participation in politics.

### **Literature Review**

Social media provides a new platform for the dissemination of political information since it allows people to communicate with one another. The monopoly on some communications that was formerly held by a small field of "professional communicators" has in fact been eased with the arrival of Web 2.0 technologies, which make it simpler for citizens to communicate political facts and ideas with other citizens (Moy, Xenos, & Hussain, 2013). As a result of this shifting environment, where citizens "increasingly give knowledge of politics" via social media, academics are still emerging. There is rising evidence in the literature (Bode, 2012; Bond et al., 2012) connecting social media use to a range of political activities, both online and offline. However, little is known about how users come to show these behaviours. This effort fills that vacuum by looking into how much social media users may learn about politics.

Therefore, it is conceivable to view people's assessments of media credibility as including the metrics they use to gauge their level of trust in the media. This may be one of the reasons why "news credibility" and "news media trust" are often used interchangeably. Another essential component of practically all frameworks of both general and news media trust is the trustees' expectation that interactions will result in profits rather than losses for them (Strömbäck et al., 2020). Despite the simple fact that "the influence of a message likely depends partly on the kind of the channel via which it is sent," they concentrated on certain communicators. Since then, it has become more common to distinguish between origin and medium legitimacy (Na, S., et al 2020).

Social media communication between candidates during campaigns is now widespread. Candidates may interact directly with voters, organise their support, and influence public conversation via websites like Twitter and Facebook. As a result of these fundamental changes in political communication, presidential candidates now have access to a greater range of tactical alternatives. Should candidates discuss the topics that the public cares about the most? Should businesses change their messaging to suit the specific preferences and users of social media? Even though research on social media campaigning has exploded in recent years (Boulianne, 2016), it is still unclear which problems politicians address on these platforms. This is because earlier studies tended to concentrate primarily on the meta data generated by the use of interaction norms like retweets, @-mentions, likes, or hashtags. By observing how politicians alter the substance of their messages to meet the particular features of various platforms, we can gain a better understanding as to how social media influences political communication. 2018 (Stier et al., 2018). Fake news and cyber-propaganda, which involves spreading misleading information and influencing public opinion, are intimately intertwined. False news became more popular during the US presidential election in mid-November 2016. The president, Donald Trump, rejected his detractors and said that the media had purposely distorted his conduct. Additionally, the term was used to describe media sources that disseminated false information about Hillary Clinton on social media, which is believed to have aided Donald Trump in winning the election (Ncube et al., 2019).

## **Material and Methods**

The study is quantitative in nature to investigate the political behavioral change among the people of District the study is aimed to analyze the change of political behavior in district Gujranwala. In this quantitative study, to investigate the impact of social media on people's political behavior in district Gujranwala. Respondents realized that their responses to the questions were significant, and that they may help with understanding and analysis quality. Purposive sampling was used to acquire data from peoples of Gujranwala who are actively involved in political movements.

## Population

The study's participants include all men and women who are basically belong to in the district of Gujranwala.

## Sample technique

200 people of district Gujranwala were selected as sample through purposive sampling technique.

## Sample Size

The study's sample size is 200 men and women from district Gujranwala.

## Variables of the study

There are independent and dependent variables in this study.

## Dependent Variables

Dependent variables are those that are influenced by independent variables. User's political behavior is dependent variable in this study

## Independent Variables

The independent variables are those that have an impact on the dependent variables. The independent variables in this study are social media.

## Results and Discussion

The results were obtained through conducting survey among the people of district Gujranwala and collect data were analyzed quantitatively. The total numbers of responses are 200 from district Gujranwala people

**Table 1**  
**Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	65	32.5	32.5	33.0
	Male	133	66.5	66.5	99.0
	Transgender	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

. Table 1.1 shows that out of 200 respondents 65 (32.5%) are female respondents. And those who fall in male group are 133 (66.5%) and the respondents who fall in group of transgender are 2 (1.0%).

**Table 2**  
**Age**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-22	50	25.0	25.0	25.0
	23-28	70	35.0	35.0	60.0

23-28	31	15.5	15.5	75.5
35-40	21	10.5	10.5	86.0
Above 40	28	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 2 shows that out of 200 respondents 50 (25.0%) respondents are in between 17-22 years of old. Respondents who fall in the age group of 23-28 are 70 (35.0%). Respondents who fall in the age group of 29-34 are 31 (15.5%). Respondents who fall in the age group of 35-40 are 21 (10.5%). and those respondents who are above from 40 years were 28 (14.0%). Most of the respondents are male 133 (66.5%) and 65 (32.5%) respondents are female while 2 (1.0%) respondents are transgender in gender.

**Table 3**  
**Marital Status**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	42	21.0	21.0	21.0
	Unmarried	158	79.0	79.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 3 shows that out of 200 respondents, 42 (21.0%) are married respondents and 158 (79.0%) are unmarried respondents. Most of respondent are unmarried that shown unmarried people have interest than married person in politics.

**Table 4**  
**Social Media Using Behavior**

Do you use social media regularly?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Strongly Agree	22	11.0	11.0	61.0
	Neutral	66	33.0	33.0	94.0
	Disagree	12	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4 shows that out of 200 respondents, 100 (50.0%) respondents are agreed and 22 (11.0%) respondents are strongly agreed. The data of table 1.4 also shows that 66 (33.0%) respondents are neutral while 12 (6.0%) respondents are disagreed. Most of people watch TV regularly but other side a big number of respondents is neutral about that because maybe these are not regular TV viewers.

**Table 5**  
**Social Media Using Behavior**

Do you watch news on social media?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Strongly Agree	23	11.5	11.5	61.5
	Neutral	32	27.0	27.0	88.5
	Disagree	23	11.5	11.5	100.0

Strongly disagree	22	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

According to the table 5 shows that out of 200 respondents, 100 (50.0%) respondents are agreed and 23 (11.5%) respondents are strongly agreed. The data also shows that 54 (27.0%) respondents are neutral while 23 (11.5%) respondents are disagreed. 100 respondents are agreed that they are watching news on TV. The result shows that most of people are watching news on TV.

**Table 6**  
**Social media using behavior**

Do you think watch news and current affair programs on social media provide information correctly?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	78	39.0	39.0	39.0
	Strongly Agree	34	17.0	17.0	56.0
	Neutral	22	11.0	11.0	67.0
	Disagree	56	28.0	28.0	95.0
	Strongly disagree	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

The data of table 6 shows that 78 (39.0%) respondents are agreed and 34 (17.0%) respondents are strongly agreed. 22 (11.0%) respondents are neutral but the opposite side of hand, 56 (28.0%) respondents are neutral while 10 (5.0%) respondents are strongly disagreed. The most of respondent are agree with that media provide information correctly but on the other side 56 respondents are disagree.

**Table 7**  
**Social media using behavior**

Do you think using more social media has more impact on people?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	110	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Strongly Agree	70	30.0	35.0	90.0
	neutral	10	5.0	5.0	95.0
	Disagree	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Strongly disagree	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

With the reference of table 7 shows that out of 200 respondents, 110 (55.0%) respondents agree with that and the respondents 60 (35.0%) are Strongly Agree. 10 respondents (5.0%) are neutral; while the 10 respondents (5.0%) are disagree with the statement and 10 respondents (5.0%) with the statement.

**Table 8**  
**Political behavior**

Do you think that trust on social media news influences the individual's behavior?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	138	69.0	69.0	69.0
	Disagree	28	14.0	14.0	83.0

Strongly agree	20	10.0	10.0	93.0
Neutral	14	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

With the reference of table 8 shows that 138 (69.0%) respondents are agreed and 28 (14.0%) respondents are disagreed. Table 1.8 also shows that 20 (10.0%) respondents are strongly agreed while 14 (7.0%) respondents are neutral. The result shows that most people are influence by social media using.

**Table 9**  
**Political behavior**

<b>Do you feel that there is a change in your behavior after watching news and programs?</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	agree	111	55.5	55.5	55.5
	Strongly Agree	14	7.0	7.0	62.5
	neutral	62	31.0	31.0	93.5
	Disagree	9	4.5	4.5	98.0
	Strongly disagree	4	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

According to the table 9 shows that out of 200 respondents, 111 (55.5%) respondents are agreed and 14 (7.0%) respondents are strongly agreed with that watching news have an impact. Table 3.2 also shows that 62 (31.0%) respondents are neutral and 9 (4.5%) respondents are disagreed while 4 (2.0%) respondents are strongly disagreed.

**Table 10**  
**Political behavior**

<b>Do you think that your affiliation with political party is changed after watching news on social media?</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	agree	56	28.0	28.0	28.0
	Strongly Agree	5	2.5	2.5	30.5
	neutral	56	28.0	28.0	58.5
	Disagree	62	31.0	31.0	89.5
	Strongly disagree	21	10.5	10.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 10 shows that out of 200 respondents, 56 (28.0%) respondents are agreed and 5 (2.5%) respondents are strongly agreed. Table 1.10 also shows that 56 (28.0%) respondents are neutral and 62 (31.0%) respondents are disagreed while 21 (10.5%) respondents are strongly disagreed. That is possible because nowadays people are influencing by using media.

**Table 11**  
**Political behavior**

<b>Do you think that social media could be the backbone for any political party to win the election?</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	agree	118	59.0	59.0	59.0
	Strongly Agree	35	17.5	17.5	76.5
	neutral	14	7.0	7.0	83.5
	Disagree	5	2.5	2.5	86.0

Strongly disagree	28	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 11 shows that out of 200 respondents, 118 (59.0%) respondents are agreed and 35 (17.5%) respondents are strongly agreed. Table 1.11 also shows that 14 (7.0%) respondents are neutral and 5 (2.5%) respondents are disagreed while 28 (14.0%) respondents are strongly disagreed. The data shown that most of people are think that news on social medial is playing a support role to win the election.

**Table 12**  
**Political behavior**

Do you think that peoples decide to cast the vote for any political party while keeping the news content in mind?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	97	48.5	48.5	48.5
	Strongly Agree	48	24.0	24.0	72.5
	neutral	21	10.5	10.5	83.0
	Disagree	34	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 12 shows that out of 200 respondents, 97 (48.5%) respondents are agreed and 48 (24.0%) respondents are strongly agreed. The table 1.12 also shows that 21 (10.5%) respondents are neutral while 34 (17.0%) respondents are disagreed. According to the table 1.12, most of respondent are agree that they making perception by watching news content related political parties on TV or another media platform. All scholars agree with that people changing his behavior after watching TV. So, the change of behavior is possible.

## Discussion

Making up one's mind is one of the responsibilities of the media, which is seen as the fourth pillar of any community or government. Nowadays, social media is more popular than traditional media. Social media has a significant impact on how viewers' brains are built. Regarding how viewers' minds are built, there are two media perspectives. Social media has the power to positively and negatively influence viewers' minds. Positive development is essential to the advancement of any community or state. Negative viewpoints, on the other hand, might ruin the situation in any state or society.

This study provides evidence that the use of new media terminology caused a change in political conduct. Butt et al. (2021) claim that modern lifestyle and attitude changes are feasible as a result of new media. The tool with the biggest potential is social media. Social media influences people, who want to adopt the lifestyles they see on various social media platforms. In politics, the same thing has happened. Social media are influencing how people perceive all political parties. Even some older research look at how utilising social media regularly can boost political awareness (Pasek et al., 2009). That occurred as a result of new media. All kinds of communication, especially those dependent on information technology, are referred to as "new media." Political parties communicate with the public via a variety of media. Since the 1960s, a collection of rapidly developing and different exposed communication technologies have been referred to as "new media" (McQuail, 2011). Lo et al. (2018) defined new media as a broad spectrum of modifications to media production, distribution, and consumption.



Social media is not trustworthy platforms for gathering information. However, they trust social media. However, social media is utilizing his influence to forward any agenda that is advantageous to someone. (Lee, T. T. 2010). This is known as fake news. False news imply Falsified information that resembles news articles but does not follow the editorial standards and requirements of legitimate journalism is referred to as fake news. Due to their exposure to fake news, people are more likely to embrace various political misconceptions, which may have an impact on their personal conduct, including political decisions. In 2020, Ognyanova et al. But a common denominator in politics is faith in the news. Data shows that individuals believe social media to be a trustworthy source.

### **Conclusion**

The notion that social media has an influence on politics is shared by all academics. Social media has a responsibility to play a significant part in informing and alerting people to what is happening all around them, especially in every aspect of daily life. It also instructs individuals on how to survive and control their lives. The media assist in simply educating people about everything. Using the media, a message can quickly reach millions of people. Because of this, the media's function is crucial. But when the social media is unable to fulfill its function, it has a detrimental influence on any community. In the 20th century, particularly in a developing nation like Pakistan, the importance and responsibility of media, either traditional or social, are accentuated and demanded even more. Social media has a variety of effects, both beneficial and harmful. This study demonstrates that viewers' conduct may be predicted by how much they trust social media news, and it is true that this affects viewers' behavior. The 2018 election in Pakistan is the best illustration of social media's influence. In Pakistan's two-party system, PTI prevailed and took power. Social media is to thank for helping PTI build a positive brand and shift people's perspectives. Due to the faith that individuals have the account on social media. This study also demonstrates a constructive shift in users' political conduct, suggesting that social media should promote viewers' political behaviour in a more constructive manner.

### **Recommendation**

This study is help to understand that social is having the impact on people. People online activities are having an impact on people real life political participations. Other scholar can study the impact of social media is positive or negative and also can study that how to overcome the impact of social media in politics.

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