MEDIA INFLUENCE ON PERCEPTION OF POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN MANSEHRA

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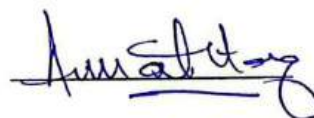**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**

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Final Approval

It is certified that we, the committee, have read this thesis submitted by Komal Zulfiqar. It is our judgment that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University, Islamabad for MS in Media and Communication Studies.

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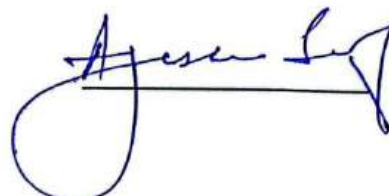
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The thesis has been submitted as partial fulfillment of MS in Media and Communication Studies to the department of Media and Communication studies. I solemnly declare that this is my original work and no material has been plagiarized and my material quoted from a secondary source has been provided with proper citations and references.

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Acknowledgement

Dedication

My heartfelt devotion is dedicated to my revered father, who has always been there for me, as well as to my devoted mother and my entire family. To my distinguished instructors, Dr. Amrat Haq, Dr. Qurat-ul-Ain Malik, Dr. Aniqa Ali, and my dearest friends.

ABSTRACT

The present study was designed to explore levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city. Study also investigated the perception of political accountability as well as the media influence on perception of political accountability in Mansehra City. Study was based on cross-sectional research design and survey method was used to obtain response from selected sample. A sample of 400 respondents comprising of 176 males and 224 females of voting age i.e. above 18 and having presence on social media had been selected from Mansehra city using purpose sampling technique. Participants were categorized demographically by gender, age and education. Moreover a well-planned questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument containing three sections of close-ended questions. Appropriate statistical tests were being applied to get the significant results. There were several theories relevant to present research work but KAP model was highly relevant to this study. The study revealed that there was average level of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city, followed by high level and low level of knowledge. Study also revealed that majority of the respondents had negative perception about political accountability in Pakistan followed by respondents that positively perceived political accountability. Similarly few respondents maintained no opinion about it. Furthermore it was inferred that there was no significant influence of media on perception about political accountability.

Keywords: Media, Traditional Media, Social Media, Usage, Influence, Perception, Political Accountability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Accountability is defined as the tacit or clear expectation that arises when someone asks others to defend their views or behaviors, as well as the extent to which those actions and behaviors are observed and accessed by others, with the outcome being either rewards or punishments based on those assessments. Politics encompasses all actions associated with state government and is linked to the discussions and disputes between individuals and political parties in an attempt to acquire power or elevate their standing or prestige within a group. Since politics and accountability are congruent, the idea of political accountability is quite intriguing. The foundation of democratic control imposed on public administration systems is political accountability. Public administration systems are represented by elected authorities, clientele and agency leaders, interest groups, and next generations. Since they handle public funds like taxes, all of these individuals are responsible for defending their policy programs to clients and the broader public. Governments would gain the support of the people who pay taxes if they were held accountable to them (Han & Demircioglu, 2016).

The notion accountability is conceived from the ancient French analogous comptes a render means proffer to accounts. If public determines the representatives then those representatives are accountable to them. People who are in government are answerable for their actions and decisions to people who elect them. The term Accountability is relational in nature somewhere person and somewhere organizations make answerable to someone else. So term is situation oriented i.e. power-brandisher and accountability wielders. It is not necessary that the accountability wielders are cognizant of what to ask about and power-brandisher is not compelled to deliver all the

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information that accountability wielders ask for but the retributions can be helpful to influence the behavior of power-brandisher (O.Keohane, 2003).

Different players, such as citizens and politicians or politicians and bureaucrats, can create a variety of kinds of accountability. The various values are carried by these forms. The goal of accountability is to prevent the abuse of authority, not to cover everything under its canopy. Political science and financial accounting have long before used the term accountability, but public administration and international development have only recently begun to use it (Lindberg, 2013).

Democratic societies do not have self-governing organizations of government since the powerful do not act autonomously but rather with the permission of the governed. We can better comprehend political accountability when we take the public sector into account. This is the unavoidable occurrence of democratic truths in today's society. Political accountability is a play that functions as a management system, with the public acting as the principal agency and giving policymakers (an agent) a certain set of instruments to use in order to achieve intended goals. This terminology is used to understand the connection between subjects in two groups. In this situation, one is strongly persuaded to inform others of their acts and to prepare for the predetermined punishments that others will impose on them. Political accountability is not limited to only democratic countries; we can also see indisputable hierarchies in autocracies where one body was answerable to another. It is untrue that judgments in autocracies were haphazardly made at the last minute. It is contradicted by Soviet governments since not all choices were made entirely by the authorities; instead, some repressive bodies were present to carry them out (A.Gusev, 2020).

Political accountability confines the use and chastise the abuse of political power. Although public exposure is central but is not adequate to confine or sanction the power abuse. Political

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accountability has two dimensions such as horizontal dimension and vertical dimension. The horizontal dimension is affiliated with institutional supervision, checks and balances within the state while vertical dimension covers the power relations between government and its public. Civil society plays its role; framing and is itself framed by interaction between vertical and horizontal dimensions of accountability. Horizontal accountability is influenced by civil society actor in two ways i.e. it contributes in creation and empowerment of institutional checks and balances, and also strengthen the vertical accountability institutions such as electoral democracy and independent media. Certain definitions of accountability state that answerability of power and transparency are necessary elements; others contend that accountability can only occur when transparency is adequate, while still others emphasize the importance of penalties. Relational in nature, accountability asks questions like: Who is accountable to whom? Addressing the dynamics of power between institutions and actors. Because it is a product of social and political construction, it is relative (Fox, 2000).

Beyond the basic idea of holding someone accountable for their conduct, the definition and use of accountability have spread in many ways. Far beyond the external locus implied by being called to account, it now focuses on the internal aspects of official attitude, institutions that regulate official behavior rather than hold them accountable, strategies for making officials responsive to public demands rather than holding them accountable, and, last but not least, democratic conversations among citizens in which they are not held accountable. Since the activities involved in each extension case are intimately tied to analyses and accountability evaluations, they are all understandable. Who should be held responsible for the things? Led to the urgent problems of internal values and personal accountability. It is necessary to consider how to manage bureaucracies and make officials receptive to the requests of the public and elected authorities

when evaluating the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms. In the meantime, public explanations and justifications incorporated into accountability procedures make it an essential component of rational democracy (Mulgan, 2000).

It is essential for democratic governance to research accountability as a virtue and as a mechanism. Additionally, since these two dimensions address different kinds of problems, it is imperative to distinguish between them. Accountability studies implicitly employ the notion of accountability as a virtue, concentrating only on the real performance of elected officials and agents. Accountability studies examine whether authorities or organizations adhere to a set of implicit and explicit principles for good governance. In actuality, good corporate or public governance is the subject of these research. These studies demonstrate accountability inefficiency as improper conduct, poor leadership, or organizational misdirection. In contrast, the primary focus of accountability studies, which view accountability as a mechanism, is not public officials' actions but rather the procedures that institutions adhere to. These studies address the purposes and efficacy of systems for accountability. Accountability deficiencies are described as a lack of control or feedback in these studies since they deal with political and social restrictions. Despite their differences, the two ideas are similar in that they both involve responsibility, openness, transparency, and responsiveness in their work. In the former scenario, these attributes are expected of the actors; whereas, in the latter scenario, they are linked to systems. However, transparent arrangements are necessary for accountable government because they keep elected officials on the right track and prevent them from making mistakes (Bovens, 2010).

Separation of powers may enhance voter utility and elected officials' accountability, but only if there are checks and balances in place. The division of powers contributes to the

establishment of systems of checks and balances that satisfy two requirements, such as the existence of a conflict of interest between the executive and legislative branches and the requirement that the legislative branch's decision-making authority be approved by both. Voters benefit when the budget decision is made in two stages but requires the two bodies to reach a compromise at each stage. However, because the legislature controls the budget's composition and the executive has total control over the budget's size, this has increased voter control over abuse. Legislators' and executives' competing interests do not contribute sufficiently to increase accountability. No policy can be implemented unilaterally, that is, without the consent of both bodies, which is the fundamental requirement that distinct powers benefit the people. Voters may suffer dire repercussions if these groups with divergent agendas assert their unique claims over public resources without seeking agreement. Under such circumstances, the division of authorities may retrograde responsibility and so give rise to a common-pool issue. On the other side, the absence of informational rents results from the separation of powers, which enables voters to request access to private information that elected officials possess (Persson, Roland, & Tabellini, 1997).

The history of mankind predates the idea of accountability. It existed in various forms across all societies. In 1085, William I ordered a count of the people's property under his rule after conquering England. His officials gathered data on the assets that people had and recorded it in Doomsday Books to lay the foundation for his regal rule. Strong centralized control was intended to be maintained through the property record (Ahmed, 2020).

It is possible to suppose that electoral discipline in Barro (1973) and Ferejohn's (1986) works led to the emergence of the term political accountability. According to studies, there is an

internal and derived shift from permissive to non-permissive norms, where people are proactive enough to confront violators and hold leaders accountable. Voters who are engaged enough to hold elected officials responsible for their actions are necessary for a democracy to work well. Reformist leaders brought about change by altering citizens' beliefs regarding accountability norms. Voters who support good leaders are more likely to believe that accountability standards have been raised, which encourages them to support more accountable leaders in the future. They must depose the underperforming one in order to do that. The idea of non-permissive norms of accountability took a hit after this. Ironically, the pressure to alter voters' expectations stems from the leaders' behavior (Binder & Francois, 2013).

Candidates compare the platforms and base their votes on promises made by politicians regarding their future performance during the election process. The decision of the voter is based on the incumbents' prior performance. Promises are only kept when they seem to be in the office holder's best interests. Voters can influence elected officials to consider their interests by putting a lot of emphasis on evaluating their performance. Office holders will work tirelessly and with all of their motivation if voters punish them for their poor performance in office. The outcome of the elections has a significant impact on the economy of the entire country (Ferejohn, 1986).

The term Hesab appears in the Holy Qur'an in several verses. The word hesab, which means account, is derived from accounting, and the Qur'an holds everyone accountable for their deeds. The idea of accountability was promoted by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). In Islam, accountability is valued as an ethical virtue and is viewed as a prudent trait to have in governmental institutions. The Islamic notion of Administrative Accountability is the cornerstone of Pakistan. The Prevention of Corruption Act of 1947, the Pakistan Penal Code of 1860, and the National Accountability

Ordinance of 1999 are the laws that are in effect in Pakistan to combat corruption. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) are two anti-corruption authorities that operate at the federal level. Meanwhile, four anti-corruption organizations operate at the province level and investigate cases of corruption in the public sector. Accountability Courts manages cases that NAB sends to them and operates under NAO-1999. The Central and Provincial Courts, which operate in accordance with the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1958, receive cases from FIA and ACEs. Along with other agencies like the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA), Public Accounts Committees (PACs), Judicial Commission, and Election Commission of Pakistan, there are additional authorities like the State Bank of Pakistan and Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan that keep an eye out for financial irregularities and corrupt business practices. As a result, Pakistan has a complex system of laws and authorities that deal with corruption. (Ahmed, 2020).

There have been many accountability procedures used since 1949 in Pakistan. The Public and Representative Offices Disqualification Act (PRODA), which Liaquat Ali Khan implemented as Pakistan's first prime minister, has been in effect since August 14, 1947. In order to target opposition, PRODA is seen as Black law. PRODA was later repealed by a new Act called The Public Office Disqualification Order by Gen. Ayub Khan (PODO). It eventually became an Elective Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO). Many political opponents were the targets of the orders. The Parliament and Provincial Assemblies Act and the Holders of Representative Offices Act (HPOA) were both passed by Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1976 (Disqualification for Membership). In contrast to earlier statutes, no cases were ever registered under this act. The anti-corruption legislation was issued by Gen. Zia ul-Haq. In 1990, Ghulam Ishaq Khan replaced Benazir Bhutto as prime minister after she was accused of corruption. Numerous cases were

brought against Nawaz Sharif and his family when Benazir Bhutto assumed power for a second time in 1993. During his administration, Farooq Leghari introduced the Ehtesab (Accountability) Ordinance in 1996 and established the Ehtesab Commission, which was presided over by Ghulam Mujaddid Mirza, the chief justice of the Lahore High Court. The Ehtesab Act was put into effect by Nawaz Sharif in 1997, and the Ehtesab Cell was established; in 1998, it was renamed the Ehtesab Bureau. The Benazir Bhutto family was the target of the Act. In addition to establishing the National Accountability Bureau, General Pervez Musharraf replaced the Ehtesab Act of 1997 with the National Accountability Bureau Ordinance. Before the 2002 general election, he strengthened the   NAB and used it against politicians and powerful businessmen. The Panama Leaks prompted Nawaz Sharif's disqualification when he was selected as Pakistan's prime minister for a third time in 2013. Similarly Imran Khan, the former prime minister used NAB to target the PPP and PML-N when he first took office in 2018 (Bukhari, 2022).

Pakistan has created a large number of organizations and laws based mostly on legal accountability. Both military and civilian administrations have used corruption as a pretext to target officials and political opponents since the 1950s. The particularistic and non-institutionalized mindset of the ruling class in Pakistan also hindered the NAB's ability to act as a legal body of accountability. As a result, the ruling class uses laws as "anti-graft watchdogs" to safeguard their unwavering interests. Targeting forces to work against them was their favorite task. Along with favoring the politicians and bureaucrats who support them, the governing elites also shield them from accountability campaigns. Consequently, there has been no discernible progress in the accountability process concerning transparency, integrity, and efficacy. There are several flaws, defects, loopholes, and limitations in Pakistan's accountability system. Procedures for accountability are not followed consistently, and their implicit goals of gaining credibility are

killed by political intimidation. This leads to poor leadership, cronyism, and nepotism permeating society and government at all levels. The selective, prejudiced, and discriminating ways in which various organizations have approached accountability systems have undermined public trust in the state's institutions (Shah , Abbas, & Qayyum, 2023).

Critics view the prior attempts to reform the National Accountability Ordinance 1999 (NAO) as a political ploy to shield the ruling Coalesces shortcomings, even though they appeared commendable. The accountability bill was passed by parliament in May 2022, marking the first significant step performed under the PDM (Pakistan Democratic Movement). The bill included changes to the manner of arrest, the common law remand term and bail requirements, the court-mandated production of evidence, and the taxing of individuals outside the NAB's jurisdiction, among other things. President returned bill, saying it was hurriedly and frivolously drafted. The president's rejection of those changes made them seem useless, even though they are implemented nationwide and benefit the ruling class as well as individuals who were previously tried and accused under NAO 1999. Thus, Pakistan's accountability journey started in 1947 and is currently embodied in the NAB Ordinance 1999. The need for a strong accountability mechanism to be implemented in light of the adherence of laws, international treaties, and constitutional rights is often brought up (Lughmani, Abdullah, & Khan, 2022).

According to studies, the poor and disenfranchised masses rarely works directly with the government to resolve governance problems in fragile, violent, and conflict-ridden environments since these conditions make the interaction between the citizenry and the state difficult. In that instance, citizens force themselves to interact with intermediaries, which also includes public officials. These middlemen establish their importance in Pakistan and actively facilitate state-

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citizen engagement by creating and maintaining external community networks, bringing communities together to foster mutuality, and speaking the language of public authorities. Under the constraints of discrimination based on class, religion, or ethic, intermediaries engage in accountability agreements in this way to attain high security and autonomy. In order to alleviate the suffering of the impoverished and oppressed, intermediaries uphold the oppressive system through fostering interpersonal accountability links (Loureiro, Pracha, Ahmed, Khan, & Ali, 2021).

Perception is the act of being aware of something, usually via the use of senses. Perception is defined in Latin as the process of using the intellect or senses to understand and influence reality. Making sense of the world through the senses is what it entails (Aque, 2007).

Rather than being the outcome of interaction with the exception of the action in the scenario, perception is the result of third-person observation. Making observations on any given scenario is all that is required. Action and perception are therefore not connected. Perception plays an observational role that includes the crucial social components of cognition. Information about a specific object that the individual perceives is lacking in perception. We are limited to seeing what a person does; we are unable to understand their intentions. Therefore, perception requires additional cognitive tools or supplements of some kind. Direct perception, on the other hand, only refers to what we see when someone else performs an action. On the other hand, indirect perception occurs frequently; for example, when something is perceived through a mirror. We are indirectly viewing someone else since we can directly see their mirror image, which is their image. The conclusion is that, in contrast to indirect perception, direct perception is limited to the perception of the object itself. All perceptions are considered direct; for example, when we look into a mirror,

we are looking directly at the image of the mirror. The difference between perception and something added to perception—rather than direct and indirect perception—is the main area of interest. An example would be an interpretation that goes beyond what is actually experienced (Gallagher, 2008).

For the past 20 years, philosophers have frequently maintained that perceptions support beliefs. This implies more than just that something may be acceptable if perception leads to belief. Accordingly, perception can be thought of as something like to a premise from which a conclusion might be reached by combining it with any other premise. Alternatively, it is viewed as evidence in favor of a claim that forms a person's belief. It is important to take into account that perceptions also have propositional contents if we accept the philosophical theory that claims perceptions validate beliefs. Heck refuted the idea that perceptions include the propositional contents necessary to support beliefs by introducing what he terms a conceptualization—a relationship between belief and perception that, in his view, exists and serves to support a belief without providing any evidence. Furthermore, reliabilist theories contend that belief justification results from a reliable process; however, this kind of justification is not what one imagines when one assumes that perception carries propositional content; rather, it is associated with a different kind of justification in which mental states can influence one another due to relationships between their representational contents. Similarly, Gluer (2009) argued that propositions are the contents of perception that describe how something seems by considering the requirement that content exist for perceptions to serve as a justification (Gauker, 2012).

The plural of the Latin word medium, which means middle, is media. Media is referred to as a communication tool for information delivery. Radio and newspapers are included. Media

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outlets include television, magazines, blogs, and websites all fall under this category (Michelle, 2021).

By definition, a medium is an intermediary way, agency, or tool—a material or conduit that facilitates the transmission of information or effects. We use media instead of in-person interactions when we wish to communicate with others in an indirect manner. The world is not being shown through the media in an easy-to-understand manner. These serve as the only channels for the indirect transmission of world representations and images. By giving us only certain glimpses of the world rather than exposing us to it directly, it acts as an intermediary. The phrase "media" referred to the entire range of contemporary communication channels, including radio, television, film, photography, advertising, newspapers, magazines, recorded music, video games, and the internet. Programs, movies, pictures, and webpages are examples of media texts that are conveyed through various communication channels. Media texts frequently combine multiple languages or modes of communication, including written language, spoken language, and visual pictures. Because of their broad audience reach, a number of these communication channels are referred to as mass media. The proliferation of media technology, globalization and commercialization, specialized audiences, and the increase in interaction are all elements that have changed how young people encounter media on a daily basis (Buckingham, 2003).

Many theorists point out how pervasive media is in today's culture. The media permeate every aspect of modern life. Media devices are used by people for communication, entertainment, and education. Life without media is unimaginable. Media is heavily ingrained in people's everyday lives. Signs that can be read designate media. These signs support the production of

meanings and knowledge by cognitive systems. These signs have been technologically engraved and can also be exhibited, saved, transmitted, and altered (Herzig & ABmann, 2014).

The phrase media usage has several different meanings, including exposure to, consumption of, and appropriation of media. The use of digital platforms like websites, smartphones, email, and social networks is growing daily, while consumption of traditional media like newspapers, television, radio, etc. is moderately dropping. Both mediums have different natures. The internet serves as a platform for increased engagement, democracy, and openness (Celebi, 2016).

A television is an audio-visual medium with a strong ability to sway those who watch it. Its persuasive style sets it apart from other forms of media. It has a ton of educational, informative, and entertaining value. Marshal McLuhan asserts that television is a cold medium that conveys content in a nice and subdued manner while having a profound effect on viewers. When things are presented subtly and indirectly, they pierce people's minds deeply. Television does affect politics because it improves the perception of leadership. It has the power to impact leadership potential while bolstering some leadership profiles and earning them respect, which would not be feasible otherwise because of insufficient political consciousness. A fundamental component of political systems is television. It is important in the run-up to, during, and aftermath of elections. In developing nations, it has raised people's political consciousness (Yousaf, 2009).

Television in particular is seen as an important socializing tool for adolescents in the mass media. The emergence of new media technologies and their convergence have a significant impact on how people use the media. The media that children use is tailored to their personalities and satisfies their social and personal requirements. They select the material that best meets their

unique demands. The internet is currently the most popular mass medium. By 2006, it was utilized by over a billion people globally. Since the year 2000, the number of users has increased by 114%. Mass media messages play a significant role in contemporaneous youth's lives as socializing agents. Young people's attitudes, behaviors, and worldviews are influenced by how they use media and the context in which it is presented (Chan & Fang, 2007).

The online media environment known as Matisse in Tokyo is where the term "social media" first appeared in 1994. The early years of the commercial internet saw the introduction and development of social media platforms. Social media has become the most important internet application as a result of the substantial growth in both the number of platforms and active users over time. The word "social media" in literature refers to a variety of online platforms, including blogs, business networks, collaborative projects, social networks, forums, microblogs, photo sharing, social bookmarking, social gaming, video sharing, and virtual worlds. Thus, the range of social media platforms and their uses is equally wide and varied. While the phrase "social media" initially arose in 1994, computer-supported social networks, or CSSNs, were the subject of the first recognized definition of the word in 1996. Subsequently, terms such online social networks, social networking sites, virtual communities, social networks, social networking services, and social media were employed in study. Although there was some variety in the words, they could be divided into three groups: VC, SN, and SM. It is also important to keep in mind that while using various names, each of these definitions is based on the same idea. Prior to 2010, social media was frequently used as a connecting tool for people with similar interests. It is now regarded as a platform for producing and disseminating user-generated content as of 2010 (Aichner, Grunfelder, Maurer, & Jegeni, 2021).

Social media platforms enable users to share, discuss, produce, and edit user-generated content. They do this by utilizing mobile and web-based technology. The widespread use of social media indicates that we live in a new era of communication. Social media platforms nowadays provide a very broad range of features and are really functional. Certain websites, like Facebook, cater to a broad audience, whilst other websites, like LinkedIn, are built on professional networks. Meanwhile, shared images and videos are the main focus of sites like Myspace, YouTube, Flickr, and others. Furthermore, weblogs gained popularity after their late 1990 debut due to their ease of creation and upkeep. Both common folks and celebrities have weblogs. With more t han 100 million blogs in the blogosphere today, connections are a more significant source of public opinion. Corporate communication has become more democratic as a result of the rise of social media. Identity, conversations, sharing, presence, connections, reputation, and groups are among the seven functional blocks of social media. Every block relates to a distinct aspect of the experience and ramifications of social media users. These building elements are merely a means to understand how social media functions at various levels; they are not mutually exclusive or present in every social media activity (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Pakistan has 37 million active social media users as of February 28, 2020, accounting for 17% of the country's total population. The country's social media user base is constantly expanding (Ahmed, Aleem, & Khan, 2021). Unquestionably, social media revolutionized the communication industry and has emerged as a crucial political instrument all over the world. The internet and social media have both had a big impact on how people interact with one another and participate in politics. Politicians (candidates, government employees, and political parties) now have a home on social media where they may simply establish a presence and begin digital engagement. On

digital channels, campaigns can run and political news can spread quickly (Sadiq, Mohd. Zain , & Ajis , 2018).

Term the reach of the media influence is larger because it encompassed a variety of factors. There is no question that we are continually exposed to media messages, either directly or indirectly, and that this has an ongoing impact on us. Media influenced effects are things that occur to us as a result of media exposure or usage. After exposure, some consequences manifest right away, while others take time. Some effects last for a time, while others only last a few seconds. Both positive and negative effects are possible. The public, society, and institutions can all be impacted by media messages. There are six main categories of media effects: affective, attitudinal, behavioral, belief, cognitive, and psychological. Media consumption has a cognitive effect when it affects a person's thought processes. When media exposure alters a person's perception of an object or an event, it is said to have a media belief effect. Media messages have an attitude-altering impact on how someone evaluates and judges things. When messages affect a person's feelings or emotions, this is known as an affective effect. The message in the media has psychological consequences on how a person's body reacts to stimuli. The person's actions are the focus of behavioral impacts (Potter, 2012).

Conditional media effects models contend that individual differences, such as temperament, gender, developmental stage, and social context variables like parents and peers, can increase or decrease the impact of media on cognitions, emotions, attitudes, physiology, behavior, and beliefs. Each of these variables is regarded as a moderator that alters the degree and direction of an effect on the result. Three categories of indirect impacts of media usage exist. The first uses media as a mediator between variables that affect individuals differently and the consequences of

media use; in this case, the mediator merely connects independent and dependent variables. For example, adults who exhibit high levels of thrill seeking are more likely to use violent media, which has led to their aggressive conduct. When media use is viewed as a mediator, the second kind of indirect media effect refers to the mental and psychological processes that occur. For example, when people see stimulating news items, they tend to draw in viewers or cause physiological arousal, which in turn triggers their memory of or attitude toward new information. According to the third category of indirect impacts of media consumption, certain media effects, including the second-order effect, are caused by moderators. The finest example of this is how an adult's usage of media increases their closeness to their friends (mediating media effect) and influences how they evaluate the quality of those connections (second-order media effect). Additionally, transactional models pertaining to media effects posited that the outcomes of media consumption also impact media consumption. An example of this is how adults who watch violent media may become more aggressive, which encourages them to watch more violent media (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013).

1.2   Problem Statement

Even though there had been a lot of researches on the use of social media and electronic media, there were few studies that compared the two types of media users and their sense of political accountability. Additionally people's knowledge and perceptions of political accountability had received very little attention, especially if we focused on the City of Mansehra. Consequently, the goal of the current study was to evaluate the levels of knowledge and perception about the political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city. Study further explored the influence of media use on perception of political accountability.

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1.3   Objectives of the Study

- To explore the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Pakistan.

- To explore the peoples' perception of political accountability in Pakistan.

- To analyze the influence of media on perceptions of political accountability in Pakistan.

1.4   Significance of the Study

Political Accountability is the key to overcoming the generational issues of the present. In states with weak rule of law and undemocratic institutions, there is a significant risk of civil war, bloodshed, and terrorism. Democracy, status, and Accountable government are the three fundamental human aspirations. For human rights, peace, and development, political accountability and democratic governance are vital. The world today is demanding the government supports the betterment of society as a whole (United Nations [UN], 2011).

The dissemination of information, news, and events throughout the globe is inexorable. Things can be heard and seen in every living room even before the government takes any action. In today's society, media has an impact on people's political, economic, and social life. One's opinions, perceptions, and beliefs about the world around them were shaped by the information they got from the media (Saboor, Ali, & Ahmed, 2022).

In Pakistan, the effects of the media were seen as being more direct, proactive, and open than in years past. It highlighted the political blunders and wrong turns the government has made. Periodically, it informed the public of how the government is performing. Social media in Pakistan taught the fundamentals of politics to people from all walks of life. Social media therefore played a crucial role in shaping how people viewed politics (Saboor et al., 2022).

So Political accountability is also a pressing concern in Pakistan and is essential to the betterment of society overall. Through shaping public perception and knowledge, traditional and digital media played a critical role in advancing political accountability. Therefore, this study is very helpful in revealing the public's understanding and perception of political accountability in Mansehra city as well as the impact of the media on that perception. Furthermore, the study may aid in strengthening the media's role in Mansehra city's development of a more open and accountable political culture.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Related Literature

Conventionally the term political accountability is gleaned from assigned individuals' responsibilities of public office perform the specified task on citizens' behalf. Hence discerning the democratic society from despotic one where rulers informs and justifies their actions to one ruled (Bellour, 2002). Political accountability assures that each state subject has equal rights and obligations, such that they are well-informed and capable of evaluating the each other's' actions taken and their justification. Political accountability differs somewhat from moral and legal responsibility. Authorities can be looked into and held responsible for activities that may not have violated the law. They may occasionally be held responsible for their poor decisions if they don't keep the promises they made prior to elections. In accordance with laws that were created with both side' assent, citizens are also accountable for their acts in front of authorities (C.Schmitter, 2008).

There are two main meanings of accountability: first, it refers to the requirement that individuals in positions of authority demonstrate that they have used their authority and fulfilled their duties; second, it can refer to the measures taken to ensure that the people to whom authority and responsibilities are assigned are in compliance with the arrangements established by the body that is delegating the authority. Election-based processes hold governments in democracies responsible to the people. Political accountability restrains the exercise of political power and penalizes its misuse. Voters will be held accountable if they are able to discern whether the actions of the government serve their interests and penalize them suitably. As a result, incumbents who represent the interests of the people are reelected; in the alternative, they unquestionably lose

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elections. For others, accountability relates to answerability and enforcement; sanctions are regarded as an essential component of accountability, meaning that accountability cannot occur without penalizing incorrect actions or results. Institutions exist that give citizens ways to be held accountable. A number of macro factors, including political culture, the nature of the social structure, the labor market, and the character attributes of elected officials, influence accountability. The majority of academics also view election-taking as a mechanism that people utilize, similar to how accountability works (Markowski, 2006).

The majority of earlier researches on African politics indicated that voting was the primary way by which African individuals held their officials responsible. It was also cleared that politicians' performance can be enhanced by knowing how the government operates. Even though the majority of studies disregarded the ways in which voters held representatives accountable outside of election contexts, representatives' everyday interactions with their constituents serve as crucial mechanisms that frequently facilitate accountability. Through unwritten laws and customs that required leaders to uphold the highest moral standards in the society, community solidarity groups in China keep politicians responsible. Senegalese urban residents used moral piety discourse to pressure local administrations to pick up trash and pay good salaries to sanitation personnel. In India, a range of official and informal entities, including village councils, NGOs, and political brokers, function as middlemen and exert pressure on the government to provide social services. In order to demand public services, a number of problem-solving networks, leaders, brokers, and social events were used in Argentina. In a similar vein, people in Botswana participate in customary public gatherings called kgotlas in order to validated the authority of the representatives and make their concerns heard (Paller, 2019).

Globally, there is a rapidly intensifying crisis of legitimacy that defines the interaction between people and the institutions that shape their lives. People in the north and south are becoming more and more enlightened about governments that prioritize corruption, act insensitively toward the concerns of the underprivileged, and lack empathy for elected officials and bureaucrats. In the meanwhile, state responsiveness and good governance—that is, how to involve citizens in making demands of the state—are on the agenda. Traditional forms of representation are being reexamined, and new, more democratic systems that let people participate in making decisions that impact their lives are being proposed. According to the UN declarations states must further the participation of poorest people in the process of decision making, besides promoting human rights and the efforts to fight poverty. There is an emergence of new accountability models that concerned with the role of citizens in monitoring and enforcing for their rights as well such as multi-stakeholders' accountability concepts in India using public hearing and monitoring mechanisms to hold corporations and governments accountable when addressing industrial development issue (Gaventa, 2002).

Social scientists had highlighted the ways in which democratic accountability and openness can help limit political corruption. In the article, the researcher made the case that citizens' ability to effectively supervise government officials depended on their ability to accurately perceive corruption, which in turn depends on their level of political literacy. Research of eleven Latin American nations with varying levels of corruption showed that those with greater knowledge have more accurate perceptions. It is further found that in order to lessen corruption via accountability mechanisms it is dire need that citizens should monitor the elected officials and for this they must have sense of the severity of the corruption problem. Additional better informed Latin Americans

can better hold politicians accountable. Citizens need to be politically aware providing them with the correct perceptions of reality for monitoring corruption (Arnold J. R., 2012).

Studies of several decades on public opinion argued that the American voters are lamentably uninformed about politics and so are unable to meet the democratic imperatives. According to the Vincent Hutchings in the prevalence of right political conditions, voters are wonderfully well informed regarding issues they are concerned about and then can utilize that knowledge to hold politicians accountable. Other political scientist also confirmed the non-involvement and isolation of American public due to individual and environmental factors led to limited attentive electorate. Hutchings stated that when politician and media addressed issue then voters got involved in it. When media informed public about responsiveness of elected officials then voters also monitor and pay attention to it (Hutchings, 2005).

According to Walter Lippmann, we should forego the intuition that people govern. In contrast the populace might also support or criticize those who actually rule them through their sporadic mobilization as a majority. Political communication in the modern world resembled Lippmann's idea more. Political information efforts on television and in newspapers were considered to complement one another. Print media was still a major source of information for most people, although uneducated viewers tended to turn to television for their knowledge. Newspapers emphasized the policy differences among the major political parties, while television provides a detailed look at elected officials as personalities. Television served as a link, educating young people and immigrants about the political landscape in the United States. News reading was claimed to be a trait of politically engaged citizens. For the less sluggish audience, television news was reportedly one of the highlights. Newspaper material was in-depth and valuable not only for

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those who were more involved in politics, but also for those who had briefly become politically active in search of information (Chaffee & Kanihan, 1997).

A study evaluated how media implemented political responsibility as a fundamental democratic value and how mediatization impacts changed the ways accountability was practiced and portrayed. The objective of the empirical study was to analyze news coverage of two national industrial crises that occurred in Sweden between 1980 and 1982, namely the fall of the shipbuilding sector and the crisis in the automobile industry (2008–2001). The study was based on content analyses of morning tabloids, evening newspapers, and regional and local newspapers. It was cleared from the study that the automobile crisis received more press attention than the shipbuilding issue because the press viewed the automobile crisis as important political news, but there was a reduction in news items where actors were held accountable. The study also found that the mediatization of political accountability was conditioned by structural factors and changes in political life, and that this mediatization process was not a straightforward one with definite outcomes (Djerf-Pierre, Ekstrom, Hakansson, & Johansson, 2014).

Investigating how local and national newspapers affected local political accountability was the basis of this research study. Local media were supposed to track local government performance, but national press also played a role in bringing local policy issues to the attention of readers across the country. The Synder and Stromberg approach was used in the study to build the variable that would be used to calculate the market share of local newspapers in Japan's administrative regions. According to a study, local newspapers' growing market share led to lower local public works spending, which showed that the system for holding politicians accountable had improved. Furthermore, when a national newspaper brought up the subject of wasteful public

works, the local newspaper's effect on accountability rose. Additional research indicated that national newspapers served as agenda-setters and, via enhancing local newspapers, also promoted local political responsibility (Yazaki, 2017).

The study intended to investigate how the Chinese government responded to information it received about malicious actors through the media. The 364 instances of dishonest agents from 2009 to 2014 that garnered significant media coverage were examined in the study. According to research, Chinese local agents have a tendency to downplay their problems in order to avoid being disciplined by superiors. As a result, authoritarian governments have been forced to accept media coverage of state agents' difficulties. As a result, the media served as a neutral third party to oversee and hold government actors accountable. The study also showed that in China, media coverage has a certain degree of legitimacy, and the government responds to some of the issues revealed by the media by punishing state agents. It was also clear that the government's response to media coverage was conditional because it could be motivated by priorities, publicity, or even both. As a result of public pressure, the popularity of any uncovered issue affects the government's response (Zhou & Cai, 2020).

In a research paper, the function of the media as a bulwark of democracy in post-transformation Central and Eastern European nations was examined. The study specifically addressed the problem of political corruption, which was thought to be one of the most obvious problems the new democracies were facing. The research was based on a survey that was carried out in eight CEE nations in 2012 and involved field interviews with investigative journalists, frequency analysis of media prominence on corruption, and trends in prosecution of corruption in the Czech Republic. The results of both studies showed that the media operated best as a watchdog

and an enforcer of accountability when other accountability institutions supported it by building a network of players who cooperated with one another to prevent political corruption (Capell & Stetka, 2018).

The media was mostly used to inform the public about politics. The qualifications and efforts of politicians served as the foundation for this political data, which improved political selection and, in turn, state policy and welfare. As a result, the media's prolonged, intense emphasis improved the process of political accountability. Numerous survey studies had shown that better policy outcomes were associated with increased media activity, which involved informing voters. The media spurred politicians to take action and solve issues (Stromberg, 2015).

The foundation of the study was determining how the media affected citizens' trust in political institutions. The study paper argued that moderate mass media had an impact on citizens' choices on the operation of political institutions and the outcomes they created. A preference-perception model was established in study work based on the influence of media framing on political opinions. A model was used to explain how media coverage shaped people's perceptions of political reality, and how socialization within political culture shaped people's political preferences and levels of political confidence. The study's findings showed that, far from undermining political democracies, some media outlets were seen as a danger to public trust when they expressed opinions that the public found objectionable. Regarding political inclinations, each person had a distinct level of confidence. Furthermore, as political realities change, media coverage affected public perception (Floss, 2008).

The goal of the study was to evaluate the role of the news media in implementing various types of accountability, including political, legal, and professional responsibility during times of

crisis. The claim was made that accountability demands were not procedural since they depend on the social actors who define events, how they call attention to wrongdoings, and how they assign blame for perceived issues. The study took into account a case of extreme violence involving the hijacking of the 174 Bus line in Rio de Janeiro on June 12, 2000, which was reported by the media for 4 hours. According to research, when actors assisted a dispute's framing and public discourse through the news media, it significantly contributed to the activation of political accountability. Additionally, news media's contradictory function in cultures where democracy was developing might encouraged accountability procedures that just served as façade, but it might also be useful in fostering public aspirations for democratic innovation (Maia, 2009).

Since voters need information about politicians in order to hold them accountable, news coverage has a significant impact on electoral accountability. Information is a specific attribute of the political agency paradigm, according to the constitution's framers, and it also improves accountability. Findings in the US instance indicated that local congressmen's actions were covered more extensively in areas where there was a good fit between newspaper markets and congressional districts. Therefore, as a result of extensive press coverage, voters were better informed and more likely to participate in elections. Additionally, politicians become more receptive and proactive in pursuing the interests of their constituents as a result of increased media coverage (Synder Jr & Stromberg, 2010).

Media data was being used by a growing body of literature to describe how people thought and behaved. To answer the question of whether media coverage affected voting intentions, empirical analysis was conducted by combining 14 years of human-coded data from major German media with results from the German Politbarometer survey from February 1998 to December 2012.

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According to the findings, voter political preferences were not the only thing that media coverage had an impact on; it also had a significant impact on voter intentions. Media therefore had a special responsibility in a democracy (Dewenter, Linder, & Thomas, 2019).

Studies had been done to examine Swedish newspapers at three different time periods, including 1961, 1981, and 2001, encompassing three Swedish municipalities. They had proven that inspection is a part of literature, investigation, and also discloses political wrongdoings came across in local media. Other types of examination were connected to routine news reporting, and the survey also revealed that one-third of 1500 pieces containing political material (Ekstrom, Johansson, & Larsson, 2006).

African media, which served as an avenue for political education, has a favorable impact on democratization. It also served as a forum for public involvement and a watchdog for promoting political responsibility, although some critics decried the media as being reckless, self-serving, unaccountable, and a threat to the viability of democratic processes (Tettey, 2015).

Data on public food distribution by the Indian government in response to food shortages was gathered between 1958 and 1992, and media, political, and economic development were correlated. There was evidence to back up the claim that higher levels of literacy, voting participation, and newspaper readership result in more responsive government. Additionally, it was found that governments in less wealthy states tended to be much more responsive than governments in wealthier states (Besley & Burgess, 2001).

In democracies, the function of the media was crucial because it informed the public about the actions, judgments, and performance of elected officials. According to Robert Dahl, there are seven prerequisites for democracy's existence, and one of them is the availability of an independent

source of information. The press covered all of the president's actions and misdeeds, including his international travels, his position during crises, and his routine activities. Presidents worked hard and produced records that were satisfactory as a result. In order to prevent any electoral issues, legislators work very hard and paid close attention to known preferences of both attentive and uninterested individuals. They were kept under observation by the rivals, activists, and journalists who either helped them succeed or fail. When it comes to deciding whether to maintain or replace a representative in the next election, individuals can use the information provided by the media (Arnold R. , 2002).

Actors can be prompted by the media to consider their actions, and media coverage of such behavior might spurred the official accountability procedure. As a result, it served as a channel for openness and informal accountability. Quantitative and qualitative investigation had been carried out in Dutch public sector organizations to examine the aforementioned responsibilities of the media. Findings showed that the media played an indirect role in public accountability, either by encouraging proactive self-criticism in government agencies or by calling up the formal accountability demands from MPs (Jacobs & Schillemans, 2016).

Two years ago, the development of graphical web browsers led to the expansion of multimedia and the emergence of a global internet. By using historical data, it is possible to hold speeches accountable for engaging the audience. Today's mass media encourages viewers to actively investigate their political surroundings rather than passively absorbing it. For users who want to compare their own observations with others during live debate, news media is an essential route. Instead than relying on the opinions of the punditocracy, such interactivity offers direct access and useful freedom. Along with it, the government's records and statistics can encourage

active citizenship, which in turn encourages the accountability for the majority of voters today. Voters having extensive access to basic information may change the way that checks and balances are implemented (Jacques & Ratzan, 1997).

The goal of the research was to investigate and analyze the potential uses of visual technology to recreate historical events that could impact public and political accountability debates. By accessing the case study descriptions in terms of the analytical framework, the study entailed the comparative comparison of two cases. Additionally, research examined the debates over political accountability using three different forms of empirical data from two Dutch cases, including a fire at a detention facility and sunset grooves. Two national newspapers and the television news at eight o'clock were the sources for the first set of empirical data. The second inquiry was based on the written records of political entities like municipal councils and the parliament. Thirdly, 13 stakeholders, including top civil authorities, investigators, and producers, participated in semi-structured in-depth interviews. Despite the study's findings that the re-creation of events by visual technologies had a significant impact on public and political accountability discussions, it had also been shown that the use of visuals to represent the re-construction of events suppressed the impact of written reports and the logical arguments that support them (Bekkers & Moody, 2014).

The intention of the study was to determine, on individual basis, if more accountable media increased interest in politics throughout East Africa while taking into consideration audience characteristics such as social position and level of education. 1395 residents from 15 regions in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda were selected for the study using the stratified multistage cluster sampling method. The findings of the research indicated that social standing did not necessarily

mattered at every point in the analysis. It was further demonstrated that media accountability increased political interest, particularly when education was taken into account, at the individual level and across all areas (Jr, 2010).

The study tried to determine the relationship between media freedom and corruption that has taken into account both horizontal and vertical accountability (political system, judicial independence, civil society, and electoral competitiveness). Nation served as the study's unit of analysis. The information was qualitatively gathered from 133 countries, which roughly corresponded to every part of the world. In addition, the dependent variable incorporated corruption, and the independent variable was taken into consideration. The dependent variable's data was taken from the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, and the media freedom data was taken from the Freedom House Media Freedom Index for the years 2004 to 2008. There was a significant inverse link between media freedom and corruption, meaning that as media freedom increased, corruption decreased. It was further argued that when paired with strong institutions of horizontal accountability, media freedom exerted a significant influence on corruption. It was also clear that this association was stronger in presidential systems than in parliamentarian ones, and that influence increased with judicial independence (Camaj, 2012).

As cities grown, the governance networks that new regionalism endorsed become increasingly important for metropolitan policymaking. The goal of the project was to investigate how media coverage of governance networks affected democratic legitimacy and accountability. In addition to polling residents about their opinions, the study had tried content analysis of newspaper coverage of metropolitan policy making in four European metropolises (Zurich, Berlin, Paris, and London). Studies supported the notion that major newspapers adequately report on

governmental and non-governmental players, as well as governance processes. It was also shown that media content correlated with citizens' views of democracy's legitimacy, degree of trust in the government, and degree of contentment with it. The argument went on to say that under modern regionalism, and especially in governance networks, communicational magnitude was essential to maintaining democratic quality (Christmann, Kubler, Hasler, Marcinkowksi, & Schemer, 2014).

It was cleared from numerous surveys that were carried out in the US between 2004 and 2008 that a major issue facing US news media was the fabrication of stories. However, almost 80% of surveys confirmed that the media played an important role in democracy as a watchdog between the public and the government. The study also came to the conclusion that biased media caused incumbents to act dishonestly, confusing voters' perceptions of incumbent success (Adachi & Hizen, 2014).

The objective of the investigation was to determine how much media interaction had widened political engagement in Africa. Further investigation was done on how the media portrayed the collective viewpoint of the populace. Additionally, it aimed to understand how interactive media, by conveying public opinion, affected the behavior of policy-makers and accountability mechanisms. There were three portions to the paper. The first one emphasized Kenya's policy and legal framework for interactive media. The history of broadcast media and interactive programs was eclipsed by the second phase. The interaction between interactive media and public opinion in Kenya was taken into consideration in the third and final segment. The endeavor's findings suggested that the rise and convergence of various digital communication channels, coupled with the development of electronic media, facilitated popular participation in political discourse (Mitullah, Mudhai, & Mwangi, 2015).

In the era of greater media options, a relatively tiny demographic section known as news junkies were more capable of holding political officials responsible in addition to agitating the quiet with their noise. News junkies now have access to a wealth of political knowledge thanks to the evolving media landscape, which helped them be more active citizens. Even if news addicts consumed a lot of information, overall news consumption was unchanged. Additionally, cable television and entertainment lovers had stopped watching the news (Prior, 2017).

The study's foundation was an analysis of how the media functioned in Nigeria as a watchdog to ensure that the government was held accountable to the voters. The study looked into how well citizens were informed by the media about their legal entitlement to demand greater political accountability from the government. According to the study's quantitative research methodology, 196 out of 200 respondents from the Ado-Odo-Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State were surveyed for data. According to the study, 74% of respondents agreed that the media covered government operations. Additionally, it was asserted that social debates, as opposed to current affairs shows, were more likely to focus on in-depth discussions of government operations (Amodu, Yartey, Ekanem, Oresanya, & Afolabi, 2016).

There is widespread recognition of the media's role in promoting democratic principles, sound governance, and sustainable development. The study's foundation was an assessment of the media's influence during the 2019 Nigerian general election. Additional research was conducted to examine the role that Nigeria's media played in promoting democratic values and good administration. The research methodology used for the study was qualitative, meaning that secondary sources such books, journals, government publications, historical records, texts, and the internet were used to collect data. Democratic Participant Theory added relevance to the research.

Given that the media was seen as an essential resource for chances, it helped citizens participate in the political and governmental processes. According to research, the Nigerian media might played a very effective role in promoting responsible and excellent governance if it adhered to journalistic norms. In particular, promoting good governance and accountability in government greatly depended on the media abiding by the universal principles of the profession. It was also suggested that the media was a key component of democracy and that citizens played a significant role as stakeholders in the democratic process (Msughter, 2019).

The goal of the study was to determine what role social media played in fostering political transparency in Nigeria. The study focused in particular on the function of social media, notably Facebook and Twitter, in fostering political accountability. The research project was based on a qualitative case study and information gathered through a theme case analysis that was directly related to the public's courage in Nigeria to deal with abuse of power by disseminating information via social media. According to study results, social media encouraged political responsibility. Users could speak up and handled problems on their own thanks to this platform. Additionally, it provided a platform for reporting instances of abuse of authority. Furthermore, social media bridged the communication gap between politicians and the general public, expanding the scope of political accountability beyond just elections. Study results clearly showed that social media is an effective instrument for promoting accountability and openness. It sped up the political accountability procedure, transforming Nigeria's accountability norms in the process (Usman, Bashir, & Bello, 2020).

Did the news media had a consistent impact on how people perceived politics? The work under research was based on a comparison of social media and conventional media on perceptions

of corruption. Numerous studies in the literature have focused on investigating the influence of media on trust levels regarding institutions as well as the polarization of political values. Researchers postulated that social media, as opposed to traditional media, has a greater impact on how people perceived political corruption. The study went on to speculate that social media exacerbates political polarization more than traditional media does. Researchers also asserted that, in comparison to traditional news consumers, social media users had a larger impression of corruption among both supporters and opponents. 78,000 respondents to a poll on the European Quality of Government Index conducted in 21 EU member states provided data for the researchers to evaluate the hypothesis. According to study findings, persons who mostly got their news from social media were more likely to perceive corruption than those who primarily got their news from conventional media. Findings supported the second hypothesis as well: social media exacerbated divided attitudes about corruption. The third hypothesis was likewise validated by findings (Charron & Annoni, 2021).

Several academicians argued that media influenced politicians' agenda-setting, issue framing, prioritization, and policy-setting processes. It was also feasible for skilled policymakers to abuse the media in the sense that the media raised the topics that the policymakers want them to be discussed. Therefore, it was crucial to consider whether or not media influenced public policy. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine how much Kenyan policymakers were influenced by the media. In order to understand how policy makers used the media and how media coverage of issues affected their decision-making or actions, the study adopted the semi-structured interviews approach of public officials and posed questions. 33 civil service policymakers in total were interviewed for the study. According to study results, officials frequently used the media. It was significantly greater than the general population. Although there

were many sources of news, the majority of respondents indicated that print media was their primary source. It had also been discovered that the media was a good issue-provoker, even when the problem was already on the agenda for public policy. Media not only affected policy substance but also made policy-makers more aware of issues, which led to policy changes. Therefore, media not only attracted policymakers' attention but also had an impact on them (Irwin & Kiereini, 2021).

The paper focused on four case studies to examine how various user kinds such as internal opposition, external actors, or state regime types and capacities affected the various effects of American social media platforms. Research indicated that in weakly authoritarian nations, social media platforms helped dissidents organize and communicate freely, whereas in strongly authoritarian ones, they were utilized as a weapon to stifle or manipulate information published on various social media platforms. Social media could undermined democratic institutions in strong liberal democracies by disseminating false information and fake news, but it could also had radicalizing impacts in weak liberal democracies by encouraging the ascent of populist leaders. In liberal democracies across the world, the malevolent use of various social media features—such as filters, bubbles, echo chambers, a lack of fact-checking, the free flow of information, and automatic recommendation algorithms had led to the erosion of democratic institutions and ideals (Schleffer & Miller, 2021).

The revolution in communication sources brought about by the digitalization of communication had also altered how people viewed and responded to the social and political processes going on around them. The study's foundation was preliminary research on how politicians used social media to build cordial relationships with the people. Through the moderating effect of political slogans, the study assessed the effects of social media on the

interaction between politicians and citizens. The study used a quantitative analysis methodology, wherein social media users with a cross-sectional time horizon were surveyed utilizing a questionnaire as an instrument to collect data. Three hundred individuals completed the questionnaire. The convenient method of sampling was employed in the study to gather data from two cities in Pakistan. Smart PLS 3 has been utilized in order to evaluate this idea. Three political parties' (PML-N, PPP, and PTI) catchphrases, i.e. the moderator effect, were evaluated separately. The study's findings showed that social media had a strong, beneficial impact on the interactions between politicians and the public as well as on the relationship between social media and politics (Fatema, Yanbin, & Fugui, 2022).

The study's goal was to look into politicians' subjective opinions on the media's influence over politics and how it influenced the media's perception of politicians' contentment with democracy. Researchers had postulated, based on earlier studies, that politicians have seen the media's power and news media's role as public informants adversely. Thus, their opinion of politicians affected their happiness with democracy either directly or indirectly. Structural Equation Model (SEM) based on comparative survey data collected from politicians of seven democracies (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland) was used in the research to examine the validity of the aforementioned link. Research results showed that politicians' contentment with democracy's operation was significantly influenced by how they view the media's role as a public informant. It was also maintained that this effect was constant across these nations. As a result, SEM offered a compelling explanation for why politicians disparage traditional media and choose social media as a means of engaging with voters. Research findings also highlighted the dangers of media-driven democracy (Maurer, 2023).

Increased public awareness and media attention, according to a plethora of research, made legislators more watchful and enhanced their professional opportunities. Previous studies had indicated that legislative activity had a visibility-enhancing effect; however, the results vary depending on the political context and research design. A study was done to see whether lawmakers who were good newsmakers gain more from speaking in parliament or if taking the parliamentary floor helped legislators who were not as good news makers. In order to determine whether media visibility and political activity were related, research had been done. To explore the relationship between lawmakers' media visibility and their speechmaking, a special combination of data comprising 600000 news appearances and 850000 speeches from MPs in the UK (2000-2015) and Norway (2000-2016) was provided. According to a study, the speeches that members of the UK and Norway gave were positively correlated with their media appearances. This correlation varied depending on the group of representatives; senior MPs and members of the ruling party gained more from their active participation on the parliamentary floor (Yildirim , Thesen, Jennings, & Vries, 2023).

Free and independent media were essential for an effective, responsive, transparent, and accountable government. By ensuring free and fair elections, it contributed significantly to the dissemination of correct information and the advancement of the rule of law. With regard to the Panama Papers, WikiLeaks, and Paradise Leaks, independent media on a global scale educated the public about politicians' corruption and raised awareness among citizens (Amin, Rehman, & Bajwa, 2021).

The purpose of the article was to assess how much the media affected voters' choices. The study's sample was selected from Pakistan's rural and urban areas, based on the assumption that

media influence is lower in the former than the latter. Using a standardized questionnaire, the study gathered data from 100 respondents, equally represented on both sides, using the convenient sampling technique. According to the study's findings, media was pervasively present in our culture, yet a major barrier to achieving its full potential was a lack of trust and accessibility. People in rural areas primarily obtained their information from the media, which was heavily consumed by those with a greater interest in politics. It was also discovered that people in rural areas mostly rely on their families and peer groups for information, and that print media played a limited role because of low literacy rates and low levels of interest. In contrast to people in urban areas, who voted primarily on the basis of performance and policy, most voters in rural areas based their decisions on the platform and personality of the candidate; these voters' preferences were not influenced by the media, but rather by interpersonal relationships and differences. Therefore, it could be said that those who were more politically knowledgeable tended to vote sensibly. As a result, the media could inform the public and had a lasting impact on decision-making (Javaid & Elahi, 2014).

Study's objectives included examining the role of the media in promoting political awareness, forming public opinion, and the necessity of the media in democratic systems, as well as the freedom of the media to report on political parties and gave them the proper guidance in advocating for human rights and power. The study's methodology, which involved conducting a poll of 450 male and female respondents aged 18 to 60, was based on the agenda-setting and gatekeeping theory. The results of the study demonstrated that media played a significant role in advancing democracy. Urban educated communities were drawn to the media as a source of political information, opinion formation, and proximity to the political process. Additionally, it

was verified that the media audited political parties and served as a watchdog for advancing democracy (Safdar, Shabir, Javed, & Imran, 2015).

The political culture of power and governance in Pakistan had changed as a result of electronic media. Thanks to audio-visual reporting, even illiterate individuals can now follow what is happening in real time. There are several periodicals, radio stations, and news channels available to the general audience. It ended up being the best weapon for creating and overthrowing governments. Political culture was impacted by media through socialization. It influenced how people think and behave in politics. The media significantly shaped public opinion on national and international issues in both developed and developing nations (Ahmad & Tariq, 2019).

A research study looked at how voters used electronic media during the 2008 elections and how that affected their choices. Interviews were conducted with 400 registered voters from Lahore's urban and suburban areas (200 men and 200 women). According to the study, voters watched enough political content. While women with minimal education occasionally watched television to get political information, younger male residents preferred to watch more political programming on television than on radio (Yaser, Mahsud, & Chaudhry, 2011).

With the backing of agenda-setting and framing theory, research attempted to examine the role played by the English press in examining, identifying, and analyzing the issues relating to governmental institutions including the National Accountability Bureau, Public Account Committee, and Federal Investigation Bureau. The study used content analysis to get data even though it was based on purposive sampling. According to research findings, print media in Pakistan had a significant impact on enhancing the accountability process, which led to the creation of independent institutions for accountability (Yasin, Iftikhar, & Riaz, 2022).

Social media has transformed the political conversation in Pakistan. Politicians are now interacting with the public on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Additionally, political accountability has increased during the past few years. Youth in Pakistan now have a better understanding of the political system thanks to social media. Youth participation in politics and use of social media has expanded, strengthening the country's democratic structure (Batool & Yasir, 2020).

Researchers had looked into how traditional and non-traditional media, as well as interpersonal interactions with people like parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and religious leaders, affected young people's voting behavior. Results indicated that parents had an impact on young people's voting behavior, although this relationship was fading over time due to changes in information and knowledge sources. In the study, it was discovered that television was the most popular method of information for young people, but that they were gradually switching to alternative forms of media to learn about politics (Y & Shabir, 2017).

Study carried out to investigate the relationship between general election voting behavior, media, and education, more specifically secondary education. Using a multi-stage sample technique, registered voters in 10 divisions of Punjab were surveyed. The results of research demonstrated the significant relationship between media exposure, education, and voting behavior. Voters with greater levels of education were more influenced by the media, whereas voters with lower levels of education were more influenced by interpersonal interactions. Additionally, voters with a master's degree outnumber those with an elementary or secondary education. Compared to students with higher education degrees, students with primary education were significantly more impacted by interpersonal communication (Sarwar, Haq, Mukhtar, & Shahzad, 2020).

Young people's involvement in politics through print, electronic, and internet media was well known. The media had helped those in Pakistan who had never before been seen active in politics have a stronger political voice and representation. Compared to traditional media viewers, social media users were better informed about political topics. Studies showed that Facebook was the most widely used site for political engagement, and Pakistan's political parties used it extensively for election campaigns (Saboor et al,. 2022).

On November 3, 2007, the Pakistani government inquired into the connection between political activism and social media use in three universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The findings indicated that the internet helped to spread awareness among Pakistani students and supported freedom of expression and democracy. Similar research was conducted in Gilgit Baltistan with a focus on the contribution of social media on openness and responsible governance. It was discovered that the widespread use of social media facilitated the dissemination of information regarding political misconduct and corruption. Social media contributed to good governance and openness (Sadiq, Mohd. Zain , & Ajis , 2018).

Both traditional and new media were sources of knowledge and served as a conduit between the public and the government. The public's awareness of government duties and responsibility has increased thanks to the media. The means by which the government was held accountable for decisions and policies that affected the lives of the general population were developed by the news, discussion programs, and social networking sites. The performance of the government and the representative political system was monitored by the media. It linked the government and the social world (Ullah & Shah, 2018).

Survey study of graduate students from higher education institutions was conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan, A persuasive correlation between media consumption, political awareness, and youth political engagement in KP and GB was reported. Additionally, it became clear that discussion shows and commercials in electronic media impacted viewer perception. While running political campaigns, it affected young people's conduct. The media played a major part in encouraging people to cast ballots. The public's perception of political parties was shaped by it. It aided politicians in organizing citizens for political causes. Youth were politically engaged as a result (Tahir, Rehman, & Rehman, 2019).

The study sought to examine how social media might affected how accountable politicians were. The study used a cross-sectional survey methodology and a stratified-purposive sampling technique to got a sample of 120 professionals, both male and female, from the Gujranwala city population. In addition, the study's strata were based on profession and gender. Research findings showed that there was no correlation between social media and accountability and that using social media could not decide public accountability (Faizullah, Aslam, & Saeed, 2021).

The purpose of the study was to determine how the media affected political accountability. A structured questionnaire was utilized to collect data from students at Government College No. 1 in D.I. Khan and Gomal University in D.I. Khan as part of the study's quantitative survey methodology. Political accountability and the independent variable (media) were shown to be significantly correlated. According to study, social media, in particular Facebook and Twitter, significantly contributed to youth political engagement and awareness. While print and electronic media were also useful in revealing dishonest officials, businesspeople, and politicians, supporting political accountability. Additionally, social media and the internet had a significant impact on

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Pakistanis' social and political lives while serving as effective check on corruption and as strong agents of political accountability (Saleem, Khan, & Kanwal, 2023).

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 KAP Model

The influence of the media on Pakistani citizens' perceptions of political accountability was covered under the KAP model.

Numerous types of research had theoretically been used to establish and predict the significance of actions and practices connected to attitudes and knowledge. There are many theories of knowledge that were proposed to explain the mechanisms of actions and changes in practices. Some of these theories included knowledge utilization theory, which was based on various knowledge uses, diffusion theory, which described the spread of knowledge as innovation, and implementation theory, which was centered on socio-political aspects of knowledge. Similar to this, knowledge transfer theory was founded on the transfer of knowledge in terms of technology, policy, and learning. Additionally, behavioral theories like the Theory of Reasoned Action were used to investigate the relationship between a person's actions and attitude and his actual behavior (Pan & Pan, 2020).

The learning theory by Bandura (1976) and the diffusion of innovation theory by Roger (1995) were the two theories that gave rise to the KAP model. In any social system, according to Roger, a person's adoption of innovation must pass through four stages: knowledge acquisition, persuasion, decision-making, and confirmation. Prior research had discovered a relationship between knowledge, attitude, and practice. Knowledge and skills were required for behavioral
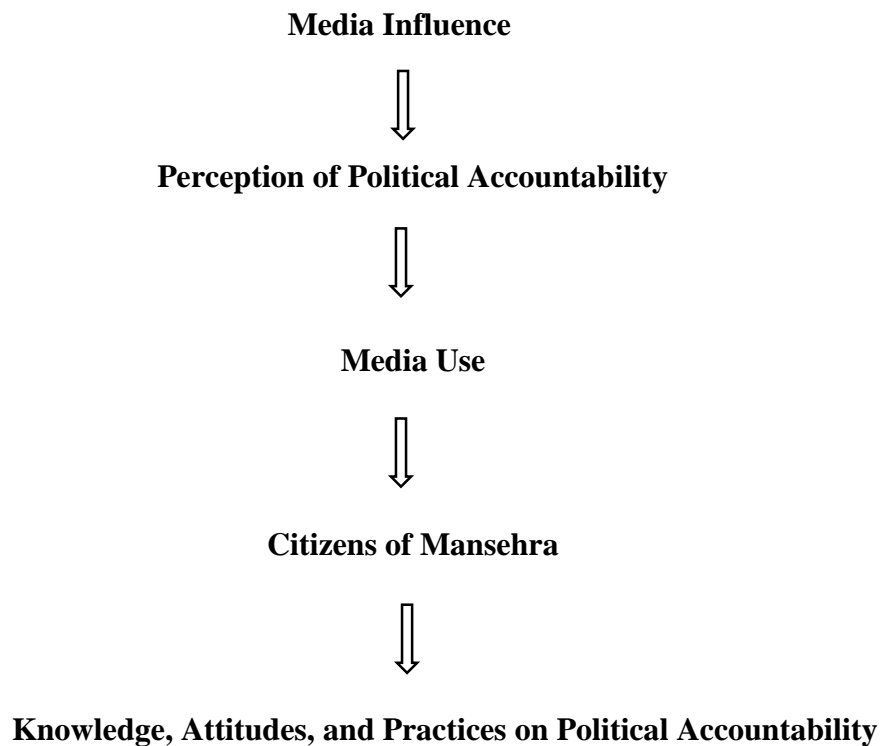
change, according to research on the knowledge-practice relationship. The KAP Model is useful for identifying knowledge gaps, attitude obstacles, and patterns of practice that could improve comprehension and behavior related to a problem of interest (Liao, Nguyen, & Sasaki, 2022).

Since the 1950s, the KAP survey approach had been used in all areas of population research and family planning. These surveys, also known as knowledge, attitude, and practice surveys, are increasingly frequently used to gather information about health-related behaviors and methods of obtaining care. The main goal of KAP is to gather information on what people know, believe, or believe about, and do, or practice, in relation to the issue of investigation. Data may be obtained quantitatively, qualitatively, or both ways in KAP investigations using self-administered or respondent-administered semi-structured or structured questionnaires. These inquiries are easy to undertake and don't require a large expense. These are also simple to plan, execute, analyze, and understand. The findings of the study provide information needed to develop successful programs or assess the effectiveness of any initiatives. The fundamental procedures for a KAP study are as follows: topic selection, target population selection, questionnaire design, instrument scoring system development, and instrument validation (Andrade, Menon, Ameen, & Praharaj, 2020).

2.2.2 Main Theoretical Concepts

For the purpose of study KAP model was developed for political accountability where ontology designated the knowledge of public/citizens on political accountability, the knowledge that is shaped or shaped by certain value denoted as axiology and the way concept of political accountability was known through practice and behavior is denoted as epistemology. The dimensions of KAP were elucidated as follows:

- Knowledge (Understanding): It referred to Mansehra city citizen's knowledge and understanding of political accountability as represented by media.

- Attitude (Value): It dealt with willingness and awareness aspect of citizens on political accountability whether they were concerned or not concerned.

- Practice (Behavior): it dealt with the action part of the citizens i.e. whether or not they followed the media narrative on political accountability.

Media Influence

⇓

Perception of Political Accountability

⇓

Media Use

⇓

Citizens of Mansehra

⇓

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on Political Accountability

2.3   Research Questions

RQ1. What were the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city?

RQ2.   What was the perception of political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city?

RQ3.   Whether and to what extent the type of media use (traditional vs. new media) influenced the perception of political accountability in Mansehra city?

3. METHODOLOGY

The process of solving problems using fundamentals like procedures, techniques, and tools, etc. is referred to as methodology (Ishak & Alias, 2005)

3.1   Research Design

The study followed and cross-sectional research design and was quantitative in nature. Furthermore this study employed survey method.

3.2   Population

Citizens of Mansehra city came under the population of the work. As per 2017 census done by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics the total population of Mansehra city was 978157.

Mansehra city was selected for the study primarily because it is the home town of the researcher and it made data collection easier. Moreover in Mansehra city political scenarios have also shifted as a result of social media's explosive growth; PTI won the election and the PMLN lost.

3.3   Sampling

Due to limited budgetary and administrative resources, study used the purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling selects respondents that are grouped according to the research goal. Using Taro Yamane calculator the sample size of population was 399.8364 (rounded off to 400) including both males and females of voting age i.e. above 18 years and they had presence on social media. News and current affairs were part of the media content being studied.

3.4   Tool of Data Collection

Instrument of this work was questionnaire. Questionnaire included three sections. First section of it will dealt with measuring the levels of knowledge about political accountability

amongst the citizens of Mansehra city and second section of questionnaire dealt with accessing the understanding of people on political accountability and their opinion about political accountability in Pakistan. Third section of questionnaire evaluated the influence of both traditional and social media usage on perception of political accountability.

3.5   Data Collection (Procedure)

For the purpose of study data collected from primary sources via questionnaire.

3.6   Technique for Data Analysis and Interpretation

To make sense of the data that had been obtained, SPSS software was used.

3.7   Conceptualization of the Key Variables

Key variables of this thesis included political accountability as dependent variable and media (traditional & social) usage as an independent variable.

Conventionally the term 'Political Accountability' is gleaned from assigned individuals' responsibilities of public office perform the specified task on citizens' behalf. Hence discerning the democratic society from despotic one where rulers informs and justifies their actions to one ruled (Bellour, 2002).

Political accountability is a play that functions as a management system, with the public acting as the principal agency and giving policymakers (an agent) a certain set of instruments to use in order to achieve intended goals. This terminology was used to understand the connection between subjects in two groups. In this situation, one is strongly persuaded to inform others of their acts and to prepare for the predetermined punishments that others will impose on them (A.Gusev, 2020)

Political accountability assures that each state subject has equal rights and obligations, such that they are well-informed and capable of evaluating the each other's' actions taken and their justification (C.Schmitter, 2008).

Print, radio, TV, cable, satellites, and billboards are all considered as traditional media. These are the old-style advertising platforms (Cruz, 2021).

Web-based communication channels like blogs, wikis, social networking, social bookmarking, virtual worlds, and social media are referred to as new media. It includes the Five C's-communication, collaboration, convergence, community, and creativity as its five main characteristics (Friedman & Friedman , 2008).

The act of perceiving something involves becoming aware of it, typically through the use of senses. Latin defines perception as the method of making sense of and affecting reality through the intellect or senses. It involves making sense of the world through the senses (Aque, 2007).

3.8   Operationalization of the Key Variables

The study aimed at exploring the knowledge and perception of political accountability i.e. to what level do people understand the political accountability actually is.

For the purpose of this study traditional media was restricted to newspaper, television, radio and new media was limited to social media use.

For the purposes of this study, we were interested in assessing the general public's knowledge and understanding of political accountability specifically, whether they could define it and what it meant. Did they know Pakistan's laws governing political accountability? What were their viewpoint on it (positive or negative) and did Pakistan had political accountability (yes/no)?

3.9   Implications of Research

The study had previously gotten little attention, especially in the Mansehra city. Therefore, the study contributed something unique to the body of material that already existed. It described the Mansehra city residents' perceptions of and experiences with media use, in addition to their levels of knowledge on political accountability. The study's conclusions may help strengthen the media's role in raising public awareness and influencing how the Mansehra city views political accountability.

4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

what is your gender?
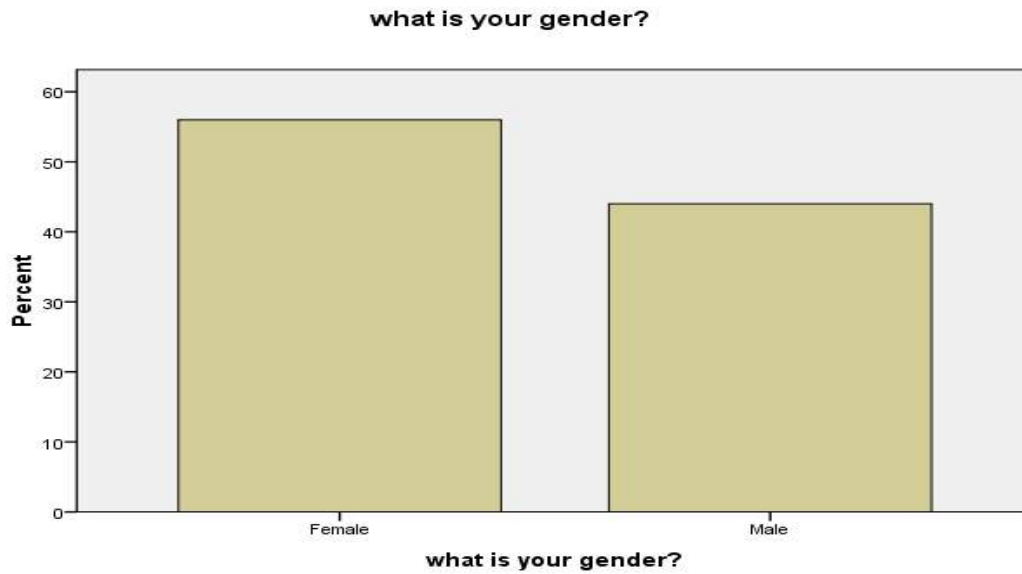
Bar chart one indicated the gender of the respondents. It showed that 56% respondents were Females while 44% respondents were males making total of 400 respondents.

what is your age?
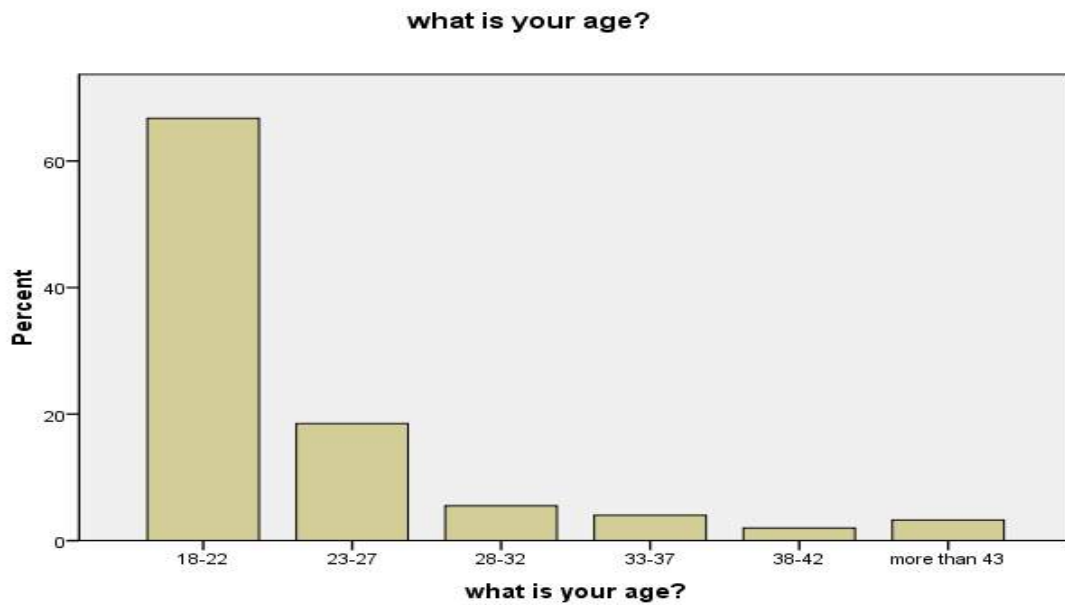
Bar chart two indicated the age of the respondents. It showed that 66.8% respondents were between age of 18-22, 18.5% respondents were between the ages of 23-27 while respondents of age 28-32 were of 5.5%. Similarly 4% respondents were between ages of 33-37. Moreover bar chart two showed that respondents of age 38-42 and more than 43 years are of 2% and 3.3% respectively.
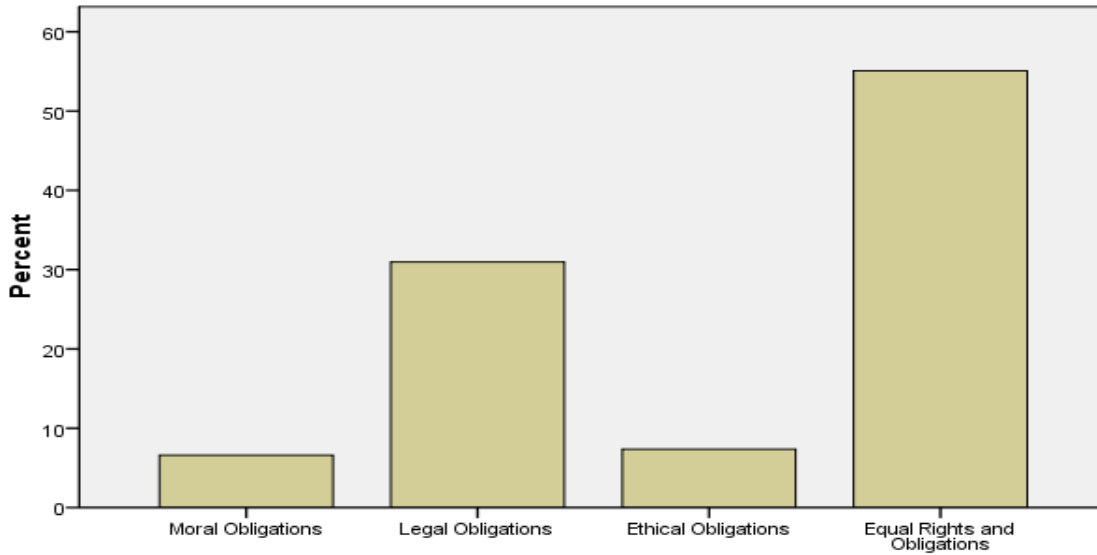
what is your education
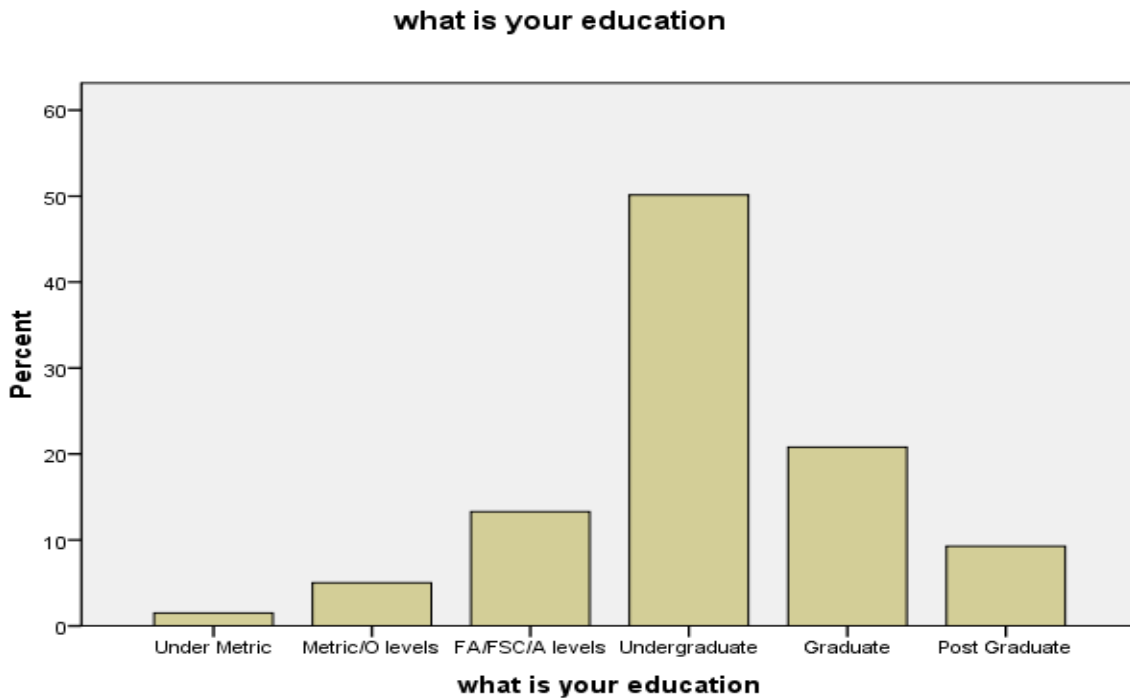
Bar Chart three indicated the education level of the respondents. It showed that 1.5% respondents were under metric while 5% respondents were of metric/O levels. 13.2% respondents were of FA/FSC/A levels. Similarly 50% respondents were undergraduate, and 20.8% were graduated. Bar chart three also showed that 9.2% were post-graduated.
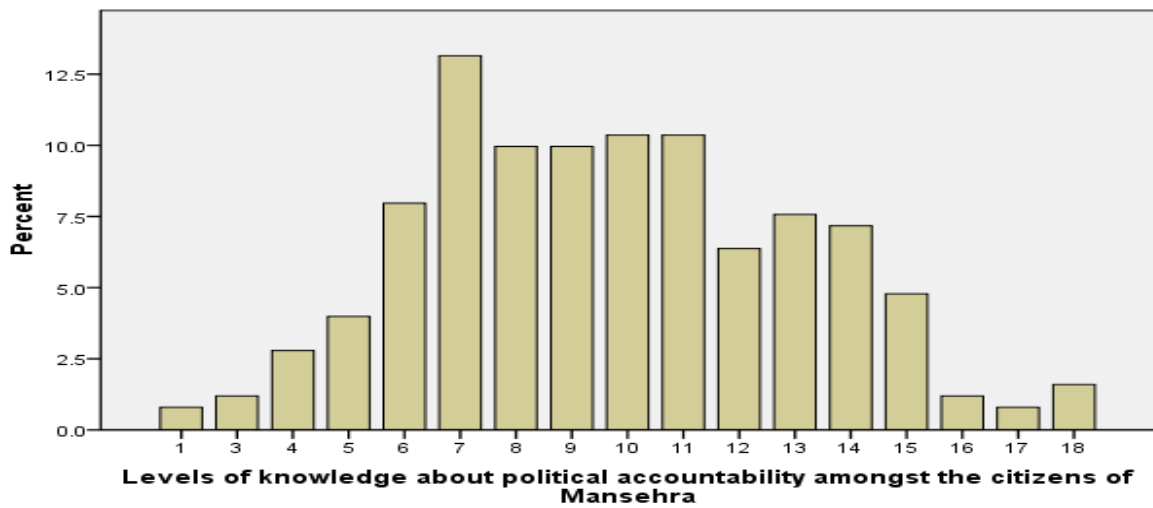
Bar chart four indicated the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra. It was noted that out of 400 respondents 251 (62.8%) respondents answered the eighteen questions based on measuring the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city. Responses of those eighteen questions were divided into three groups such as group 0-5 indicated the low level of knowledge, group 6-11 indicated the average level of knowledge while group consists of 12-18 responses indicated the high level of knowledge. Thus the bar chart showed that 22 (5.6%) respondents had low level of knowledge, while 155 (38.6%) respondents had average level of knowledge and 74 (18.6%) respondents had high level of knowledge respectively.
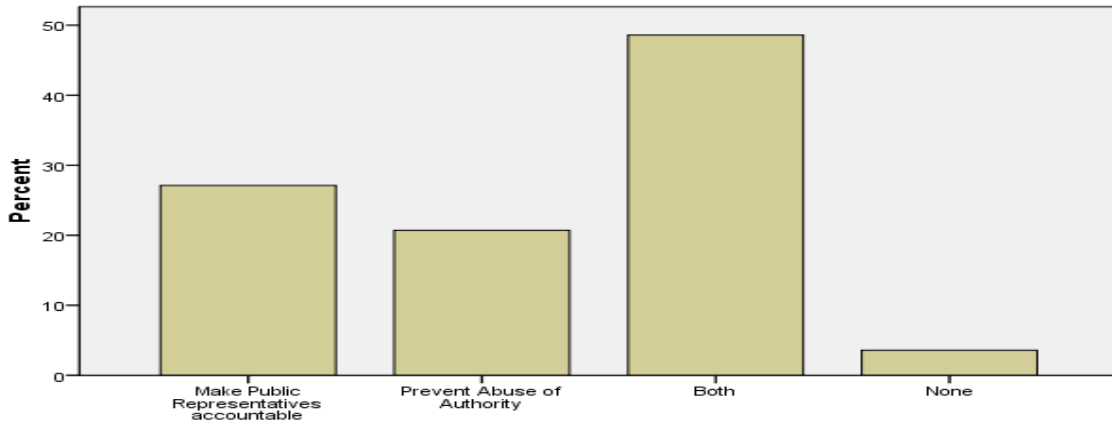
In your opinion what does political accountability assures?

Bar chart five showed that 6.5% respondents said that political accountability assures moral obligations, 30.5% respondents answered that political accountability assures legal obligations, while 7.2% respondents said it assures ethical obligations. Similarly chart five showed that 54.2% respondents believed that political accountability assures equal rights and obligations.

In your opinion what is the goal of political accountability?

In your opinion what is the goal of political accountability?

Bar chart six showed that 26.5% respondents said that the goal of political accountability is making public representatives accountable, 20.2% responses showed that it prevent the abuse of authority while 47% respondents answered that the goal of political accountability is to make public representatives accountable and also it prevent the abuse of authority. Similarly 3.5% respondents chose none answer of the asked question.

What do you think political accountability is vital for?
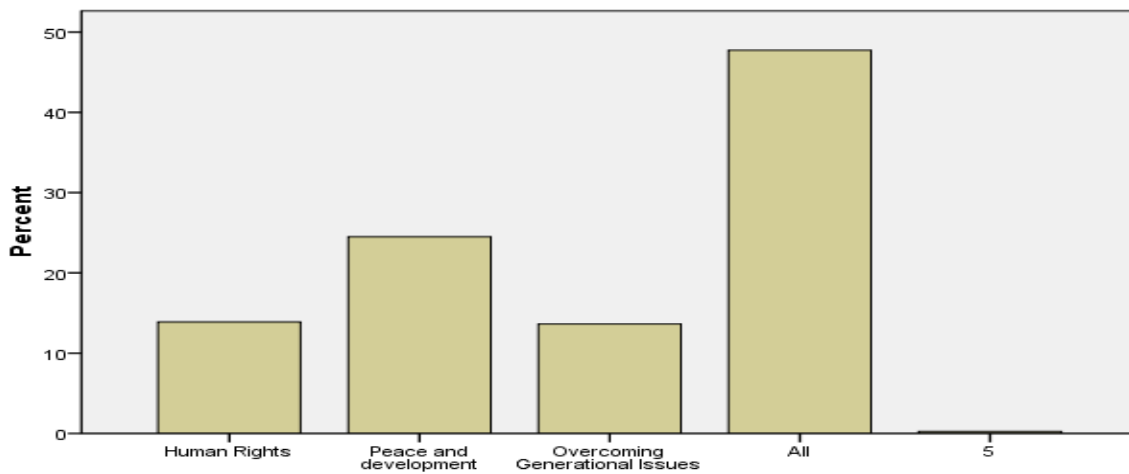
What do you think political accountability is vital for?

Bar chart seven showed that 13.8% respondents said that political accountability is vital for protecting human rights. 24.2% respondents answered that it is vital for peace and development while 13.5% respondents responded that it is vital for overcoming generational issues. Similarly 47.2% respondents said that it is vital for all of these.

4.1   Answering Research Questions

Peception about Political Accountability
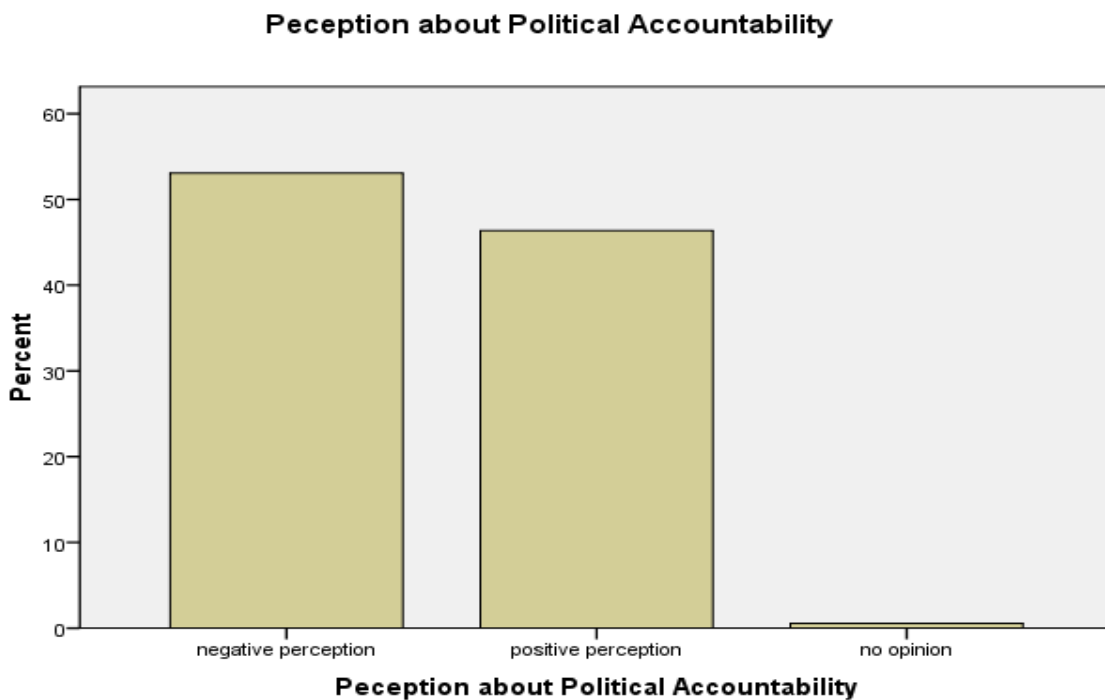
Bar chart eight showed that 53.5% respondents had negative perception about political accountability in Pakistan while 46% positively perceived political accountability. Similarly 0.5% respondents maintained no opinion about it.

Influence of Media use on perception about political accountability

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	1.348	4	.337	1.295	0.272
Within Groups	91.649	352	.260		
Total	92.997	356			

Table# 1

Table one showed that a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the influence of media use on perception about political accountability in both male and female of voting age i.e. above 18 years and having presence on social media. There was no significant influence of media use at the p>0.05 level for the two conditions [F (4, 352) =1.295, p=0.272 on perception about political accountability.

Influence of primary source of news on perception about political accountability

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	1.981	4	.495	1.915	0.107
Within Groups	90.791	351	.259		
Total	92.772	355			

Table# 2

Table two showed that a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the influence of primary source of news on perception about political accountability in both male and female of voting age i.e. above 18 years and having presence on social media. There was no significant influence of primary source of news at the p>0.05 level for the two conditions [F (4, 351) =1.915, p=0.107 on perception about political accountability.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Political accountability is not a novel phenomenon it is always existed in different form across every society. Political accountability is vital for overcoming generational issues of today. States with shoddy rule of law along with undemocratic institutions escalate the risk of civil war, bloodshed, and bloodshed in those states. Presently the three basic human aspirations are democracy, status and accountable government. Political accountability and democratic governance are key to human rights, peace and development. Contemporary era demands the government that bolsters the welfare of society as a whole. Although in literature there had been a lot of research on the influence of social media and electronic media use on political accountability but there were few studies that compared the two types of media users and their perception of political accountability. Moreover people's knowledge and perceptions of political accountability had received very little attention, especially if we focused on the Mansehra city. Consequently, the goal of the current study was to evaluate the levels of knowledge and perception about the political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city. Study further explored the influence of media use on perception of political accountability.

The study followed cross-sectional research design and is quantitative in nature. Furthermore this study employed survey method to collect data via questionnaire. Participants were categorized demographically by gender (female and male), age (18-22, 23-27, 28-32, 33-37, 38-42 and 43+) and education (under-metric, metric,/O levels, FA/FSS/A levels, undergraduate, graduate and post graduate). Participants were of voting age i.e. above 18 years and they had presence on social media as well. The Questionnaire included three sections of which first section of it dealt with measuring the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city and second section of questionnaire dealt with accessing the

understanding of people on political accountability and their opinion about political accountability in Pakistan. Third section of questionnaire evaluated the influence of both traditional and social media use on perception about political accountability.

Questionnaire got filled by 224 female and 176 male respondents making total of 400 responses. In study almost every renowned male and female institutes along with general public targeted for filling of questionnaire. Most of the institute and public cooperated in this regard but some of institutes' particularly higher secondary schools were reluctant to allow their students for filling. In addition to that some of respondents responded frivolously. Lastly teachers' attitude was highly applauded in data gathering.

RQ1. What were the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city?

It had been found that out of 400 respondents 251 (62.8%) respondents answered the eighteen questions based on measuring the levels of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city. Responses of those eighteen questions were divided into three groups such as group 0-5 indicated the low level of knowledge, group 6-11 indicated the average level of knowledge while group consists of 12-18 responses indicated the high level of knowledge. Thus based on division of respondents in groups it was established that 22 (5.6%) respondents had low level of knowledge, while 155 (38.6%) respondents had average level of knowledge and 74 (18.6%) respondents had high level of knowledge respectively (see bar chart four).

Studies on public opinion conducted over several decades have claimed that American voters were unable to uphold democratic ideals because they were sadly ignorant of politics. Voters

were incredibly knowledgeable about the issues that matter to them, and they could use this information to hold politicians responsible, according to Vincent Hutchings in the predominance of correct political conditions. Additional political scientists corroborated the American public's disengagement and seclusion as a result of personal and environmental circumstances that resulted in a small yet attentive electorate. According to Hutchings, people become involved in issues when politicians and the media talk about them. Voters watched and paid attention when the media informs the public about the responsiveness of elected leaders (Hutchings, 2005). Synder Jr & Stromberg studies found that in US due to extensive press coverage, voters were better informed and more likely to participate in elections. Additionally, politicians had become more receptive and proactive in pursuing the interests of their constituents as a result of increased media coverage (Synder Jr & Stromberg, 2010). It was evident that in India there was higher levels of literacy, voting participation, and newspaper readership that resulted in more responsive government (Besley & Burgess, 2001). In the era of greater media choices, a relatively tiny demographic section known as news junkies. News junkies now have access to a wealth of political knowledge thanks to the evolving media landscape, which helped them be more active citizens is more capable of holding political officials responsible in addition to agitating the quiet with their noise (Prior, 2017).

RQ2. What was the perception of political accountability amongst citizens of Mansehra city?

It had been found that 53.5% respondents had negative perception about political accountability in Pakistan while 46% positively perceived political accountability. Similarly 0.5% respondents maintained no opinion about it (see bar chart eight).

Research work on perception about political accountability across the globe had found that there was a rapidly intensifying crisis of legitimacy that defined the interaction between people and the institutions that shape their lives. People in the north and south are becoming more and more enlightened about governments that prioritize corruption, act insensitively toward the concerns of the underprivileged, and lack empathy for elected officials and bureaucrats. In the meanwhile, state responsiveness and good governance that was, how to involve citizens in making demands of the state were on the agenda. Traditional forms of representation were being reexamined, and new, more democratic systems that let people participate in making decisions that impacted their lives were being proposed. There was an emergence of new accountability models that concerned with the role of citizens in monitoring and enforcing for their rights as well such as multi-stakeholders' accountability concepts in India using public hearing and monitoring mechanisms to hold corporations and governments accountable when addressing industrial development issue (Gaventa, 2002). The majority of earlier research on African politics indicated that African individuals perceived voting as the way by which they could held their officials accountable. It was also clear that politicians' performance could be enhanced by knowing how the government operated. Even though the majority of studies disregarded the ways in which voters held representatives accountable outside of election contexts, but it was also understood that representatives' everyday interactions with their constituents served as crucial mechanisms that frequently facilitated accountability. In China the leaders who were following unwritten laws and customs to uphold the highest moral standards in the society thought as politically responsible. In India and Argentine political responsibility was considered as social servicing role of government achieved via village councils, NGOs, problem-solving networks, leaders, brokers, and social events (Paller, 2019).

RQ3.   Whether and to what extent the type of media use (traditional vs. new media) influenced perception of political accountability in Mansehra city?

The statistical results of the study that compared the influence of media use (traditional vs. new media) on perception about political accountability in both male and female of voting age i.e. above 18 years and having presence on social media revealed that there was no significant influence of media use on perception about political accountability at the p>0.05 level for the two conditions [F (4, 352) =1.295, p=0.272 (see table 1).

Previous work from literature demonstrated that the media was mostly used to inform the public about politics. Numerous survey studies had shown that better policy outcomes were associated with increased media activity, which involved informing voters. The qualifications and efforts of politicians served as the foundation for this political data, which improved political selection and, in turn, state policy and welfare. The media spurred politicians to take action and solve issues. As a result, the media's prolonged, intense emphasis improved the process of political accountability (Stromberg, 2015). Polling of 78000 respondents on the European Quality of Government Index conducted in 21 EU member states concluded that persons who mostly got their news from social media were more likely to perceive corruption than those who primarily got their news from conventional media. Study further inferred that social media exacerbated divided attitudes about corruption and in comparison to traditional news consumers, social media users had a larger impression of corruption among both supporters and opponents (Charron & Annoni, 2021). Almost 80% of surveys that were carried out in the US between 2004 and 2008 had confirmed that the media played an important role in democracy as a watchdog between the public and the government. The study also came to the conclusion that biased media caused incumbents

to act dishonestly, confusing voters' perceptions of incumbent success (Adachi & Hizen, 2014). The study paper argued that in Switzerland moderate mass media had an impact on citizens' choices on the operation of political institutions and the outcomes they created. Additionally study's findings showed that, far from undermining political democracies, some media outlets were seen as a danger to public trust when they expressed opinions that the public found objectionable. Regarding political inclinations, each person had a distinct level of confidence. Furthermore, as political realities changed, media coverage affected public perception (Floss, 2008). The empirical analysis of 14 years of human-coded data from major German media with results from the German Politbarometer survey from February 1998 to December 2012 had found that voter political preferences were not the only thing that media coverage had an impact on; it also had a significant impact on voter intentions (Dewenter, 2019).

5.1   Conclusion

From a global viewpoint, media had a significant impact on people's knowledge and view of politics in both developed and developing nations. The advent of digital and social media platforms had also brought about changes in how people viewed political accountability and how they learnt about politics. This study also investigated levels of knowledge, perception and media influence on perception about political accountability in Mansehra city. The study found that there was average level of knowledge about political accountability amongst the citizens of Mansehra city, followed by high level and low level of knowledge. Study also revealed that majority of the respondents had negative perception about political accountability in Pakistan followed by respondents that positively perceived political accountability. Similarly few respondents maintained no opinion about it. Furthermore it was inferred that there was no significant influence of media use on perception about political accountability.

5.2 Limitations

This study only covered the Mansehra city due to financial and administrative constraints. It was being conducted exclusively for academic purposes.

5.3 Recommendations

- On the basis of study's findings it was suggested that media, including both traditional and digital should prudent and constructive role in shaping, and educating the people about political accountability in district Mansehra city.

- Media should adopt more inclusive approach towards promoting participatory political culture where the opinions, concerns and demands of common people can be heard by people in authority thus fostering the political accountability.

- The government and political parties should ameliorate their transparency and responsiveness to the public and should address the concerns of people in Pakistan.

- Public must also show alacrity and get more active in acquiring and consuming reliable and diverse information sources and take part in the political processes and activities.

5.4 Suggestions for the Future Research

- Such survey studies must be conducted in other areas of country with wide spectrum to get better and more detailed insight of the matter.

- Although the evidence presented in this study focused on how the media shaped public perceptions of political accountability in a particular regional setting, cross-cultural research is still necessary to examine how the media shapes public perceptions of political accountability in other nations or cultural contexts.

- When researching the same subject, alternative approaches like policy analysis, social network analysis, or case studies may be taken into consideration.

- Such studies must be conducted using alternative methodology i.e. multi-methodology to get valuable insight of the issue.

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