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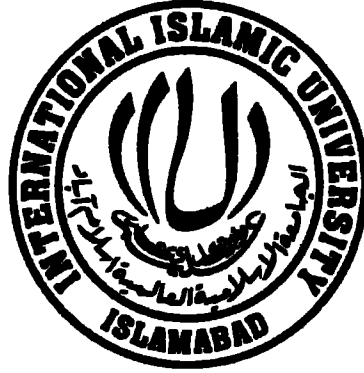
DEMOCRATIC ROLE PERFORMANCE OF NEWS MEDIA IN PAKISTAN: ANALYSIS OF PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Researcher

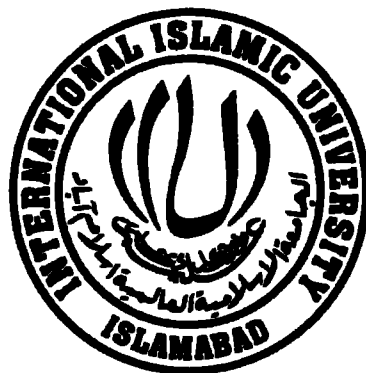Yasmin

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Democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan:

Analysis of print and electronic media

By

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A thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Ph.D. Media and
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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family, friends and colleagues. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears. My ssiblings have never left my side and are very special. I also dedicate this dissertation to my many friends, colleagues and class fellows who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done, especially Nadira Khanum for helping me in literature review and data analysis.

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ABSTRACT

To strengthen democracy in a country, media plays an indispensable role. It is not only essential for the political system of the country but has a key role in developing the democratic culture in the societies at large. Media engrains the perception of political leaders and the political system in the consciousness of the public. It highlights and identifies the problems in the society and serves as a "medium of deliberation". In democracy, it is foremost important for the media to play the role of watchdog. It is proven that media cannot operate in isolation. The important factor here is to evaluate that how exactly media is performing. For this purpose, current study applied the news performance criteria developed by European scholars to evaluate democratic role of news media (De Vreese, Esser, & Hopmann, 2017; Snyder & Strömberg, 2010). The indicators through which news performance was evaluated includes game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting, political balance, personalization and accountability. The European studies are evident that normative role of the media is to inform the citizens and hold political elites accountable in front of public. The indicators selected for this study were useful because they were covering almost all the major practices of news media. the prevalence or ignorance of them indicates the role media is playing for democracy.

To achieve the results leading media groups (both print and electronic media) were contently analyzed for elections 2018, and the protest by Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). The results of the study revealed that accountability (which is considered as a major element in democratic media) was not the focus of the media during the reporting of election 2018, and PDM protest. Political balance was the only positive contribution of Pakistan's news media towards citizenry while personalization, negativity and interpretative reporting were prevalent frames in news media. Hard news and electronic media had more personalization as compared to the print media.

Results of this study to some extent supports the findings of existing literature. The literature indicated that news is most of the time balanced. It rarely support the political figures openly until and unless system asks them to do so. Furthermore, according to the studies the events which are inherently negative tends to have negative coverage. Results of current study indicated that coverage of PDM was negative as compared to elections. Electronic media was more personalized as compared to print; the results of the study were also in line with the literature. The level of accountability in news media of Pakistan was very less but the literature is evident that mostly news media failed to hold power elites accountable.

In a democratic country media is entitled to focus more on issues and problems of the public but results indicated that media focused more on apparat factors like personalization, negativity, game framing. It indicates that the coverage doesn't support the democratic norms.

One of the major finding of the study indicated that media type is the only factor that determines democratic role performance of news media. The focus of Pakistan's news media revealed that it works against the normative democratic values of the country. Instead, the prevalence of political balance in the news coverage indicates that the system could have less influence on the limited content which was coded for the study. The researcher predicted that if news media of Pakistan focuses more on thematic and investigative reporting than content, it might have minimal personalization, negativity, exaggeration and sensational elements.

Keywords: Democratic role performance, news media, Pakistan, framing, sensationalization, negativity

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Overview

In an ideal form of representative democracy, information is readily available to the citizenry. Mass media in such scenario serves as a vehicle between governed and governors (Dumitrescu & Mughan, 2010). In a pioneer work, Gurevitch and Blumler (1990) identified a number of functions of media in a democratic society. Functions includes surveillance of social and political developments, provide platform for a variety of debates, holding politicians accountable, highlighting the most relevant public issues and to involve citizenry in the political processes.

For a well-informed citizenry, it is necessary to have access to multiple sources of information. Democracy is better served by the plurality of mass media where a large number of information sources are available to the general public, so that they can make better political choices (Dumitrescu & Mughan, 2010).

In this study, the researcher investigates the democratic role of news media in Pakistan. For this purpose, leading media outlets were content analyzed by borrowing the criteria of analyzing democratic performance from different scholars. The study revealed that print media has more personalization, interpretation, negativity as compared to that of electronic media while electronic media has more game framing. Furthermore, study also indicated that hard news has more negativity when compared with soft news. Major finding of the study worth mentioning here concludes that media type is the significant predictor of democratic role performance for both the cases i.e., elections 2018, and Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) protest.

Before discussing the democratic role performance, the political history of Pakistan is presented for a better perspective.

1.2 Political History of Pakistan

The political history of Pakistan is characterized by the introduction of various forms of political systems including parliamentary, presidential, dictatorial and semi-dictatorial regimes. According to Shah (2018) the first phase of the political history of Pakistan was

marked as "struggling democracy" (1947-1958). The second phase (1958-1971) and third phase (1971-1988) were titled as years of development with direct military involvement and years of socialism respectively. The fourth phase of political history (1988-1999) was called as years of controlled democracy with high presidential powers. However, the period from 1999-2008 was highlighted as the period of enlightened moderation. The last phase (2008-present) has been mentioned as the period of successful democratic transitions. A brief discussion on each of these phases is presented here.

1.2.1 First Democratic Phase from 1947 to 1958

1947 to 1958 was marked in literature as the first democratic phase in the political history of Pakistan. In this phase Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah wanted to have a "secular democratic" (p.29) form of government in Pakistan (Munir, 1980). During his interview with Reuters in 1946, Jinnah explained:

"The new state would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people and members of the new nation having equal rights of citizenship regardless of their religion, caste or creed" (Munir, 1980 p. 29).

On September 11, 1948, just after the year of the establishment of Pakistan, Jinnah died due to serious illness. After Jinnah, Khawaja Nazimuddin became the second Governor General of Pakistan while Liaquat Ali Khan continued his services as the Prime Minister of Pakistan (Jalal, 1994).

In March 1949, Objective Resolution was passed by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. The resolution presented was according to the views of Jinnah which were expressed publicly. After this resolution, Ulema, the religious elite of the state, got more power and religious riots started to occur, demanding to consider Ahmadis (a religious sect) as minority. Furthermore, they also demanded not to give major positions to Ahmadis in the state and this deteriorated the situation further as a result of which massive killing of Ahmadis started. For this reason, the Council of Action was formulated and Prime Minister ordered to arrest the agitating Ulema. After the arrest of these Ulemas, the situation became worse and martial law was declared General Ayub Khan. October 24, 1954, to April 12, 1955, was the period of extreme political crisis in Pakistan as Ghulam Muhammad, the Governor-General of Pakistan, dissolved the constituent assembly.

In April 1955, second Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was established in which the first Constitution of Pakistan was formulated. The constitution of 1956 provided more powers to the Governor General of Pakistan. According to the constitution, he/she can appoint prime minister and had authority to dissolve the assembly. Constitution of 1956 worked for two and a half years (Munir, 1980).

According to Kiran (2012), in the second constituent assembly, minor political parties achieved majority of the seats. Not a signal party was in a position to form an independent government. So, it was required to formulate a coalition government. Sikandar Mirza worked as acting Governor General of Pakistan for the period of two months when Ghulam Muhammad went on leave. Sikandar Mirza became the confirmed governor general just after the retirement of Ghulam Muhammad (as cited in Javaid & Latif, 2017). Javaid and Latif called this phase (from 1947-1958) as manipulations in democracy.

1.2.2 First Dictatorial Phase from 1958 to 1971

According to Malik (2008), in the first dictatorial phase Sikandar Mirza worked in collaboration with General Ayub Khan and declared martial law on October 7, 1958. Basic Democracies Order was introduced by Ayub Khan in 1958. This order was named in literature as the system of "representational dictatorship". As the constitution gave more powers to the President Ayub Khan, he tried to change the constitution to establish the secular form of government in Pakistan. He also wanted to remove the word "Islamic" from the name "Islamic Republic of Pakistan", though the first amendment reversed the actions taken by General Ayub (Munir, 1949, p. 115).

In the elections of 1965, Ayub Khan became the President of Pakistan. It was argued that due to the Basic Democracies Order, he had more powers to influence and manipulate the elections. Quraishi (2005) explained that in 1967, Zulifkar Ali Bhutto established his own political party and promised the people of Pakistan to provide basic rights. The former Air Chief Asghar Khan joined Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Both leaders worked to demolish the rule of Ayub Khan and his centralized political system. Sheikh Mujibur Rehman of Pakistani Awami League was prisoned by Ayub Khan because of Indian conspiracy allegations.

The leaders of East Pakistan presented six points' agenda, demanding autonomous constitution, tax, trade and foreign policy. Ayub Khan called all the political leaders for round

table conference, but the discussions failed and on March 25, 1969, all the powers were transferred to General Yahya Khan due to the high public opposition of Ayub Khan's government. In 1970, Yahya Khan was ordered to hold general elections but at the same time General Yahya passed LFO (Legal Framework Order) so that no civil government can challenge the powers of military. In the elections of 1970, Awani League of Mujibur Rehman of East Pakistan acquired 167 seats out of 169 and in West Pakistan PPP won majority seats i.e., 81 (Noman, 1989; Shafqat, 2019).

Soon after the elections, General Yahya wanted to hold the power in East Pakistan whereas Rehman wanted to have the power because of acquiring majority of the seats. On the other hand, Bhutto was not in favor to accept the rule of minorities. So, a serious political crackdown started in the country. In March 1971, Rehman was arrested and military crackdown of the party started in East Pakistan. War erupted and Pakistan was on the brink of civil war, though some called it already, and followed by an increase in bloodshed with every passing day. Indian government interfered, provided financial and technical support to the people of East Pakistan in the form of Mukti Bahini. Pakistan's government found it difficult to control the situation and thus decided to let go of the eastern part of the state. On December 16, 1971, East Pakistan became an independent state i.e., Bangladesh. The people of West Pakistan blamed military generals, Indians and the UN for their humiliating defeat (Nawaz, 2008).

1.2.3 Second Democratic phase from 1971 to 1977

1971 to 1977 is marked in literature as the second democratic phase of the political history of Pakistan. Niaz (2018) explained that after the separation of East Pakistan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and his political party PPP took control of the government from December 20, 1971, to August 14, 1973. During this period, he was controlling the government affairs as interim martial law administrator. This was the first ever civil military administration in Pakistan. From 1973 to July 1977, there was a parliamentary system of government operated under the constitution of Pakistan. When Bhutto assumed power, he implemented the policy of nationalism by retiring many military officers and imposing control over bureaucracy. He makes an effort to separate military from the political system of Pakistan. Bhutto introduced many land and industrial reforms to satisfy the common people because he promised to provide basic needs to the citizenry. He replaced General Gul Hassan Khan and opted for General Tikka Khan as the Army Chief of Pakistan. After the retirement of General Tikka Khan, Bhutto

selected General Zia-ul-Haq as Army Chief of Pakistan although he was junior from his colleagues who were the candidates of the said post and designation.

1.2.4 Second Dictatorial phase from 1977 to 1988

In the second military phase of the political history of Pakistan, Bhutto selected General Zia as the Army Chief of Pakistan because of his apolitical nature. The main reason was to bring the country's situation to normal and continuing the legacy of Yahya Khan (Nawaz, 2008). It was thought that General Zia will not challenge the powers of Bhutto (Shafqat, 2019). In 1977, General Zia assumed power as he was completely aware of the political system of Pakistan. Bhutto was hanged to death because of some murder case. The period of Bhutto was considered as "break" in the military control of the country. General Zia made some amendments to the constitution of 1973, of Pakistan. 8th amendment was the result of it. The amendment gave more powers to the president and General Zia became the President of Pakistan after the referendum of 1984. During the referendum, he asked the public for the support of Islamization process in Pakistan. His slogan was "Islam is in Danger" (Malik, 2008, p.222). After the success in referendum, in 1985 General Zia conducted a non-party elections and Muhammad Khan Junejo was elected as the tenth Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Junejo worked for the peace agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan. On May 29, 1988, Zia dissolved national assembly due to the incident of Ojhri Camp in Rawalpindi and Junejo was sent to home. According to General Zia:

"The National Assembly has failed to make a move towards the Islamization objectives and could not provide protection to the life and property of the people of Pakistan" (as cited in Javaid & Latif, 2017).

The elections were expected in October 1988, but on August 17, 1988, General Zia's regime came to an end because of his death in plane crash (Noman, 1989).

1.2.5 Third Democratic Phase from 1988 to 1999

1988 to 1999 was marked as the third democratic phase in the political history of Pakistan. The phase started with the general elections of 1988, in which Benazir Bhutto came to the power after the death of General Zia. In general elections of October 1988, PPP won 92 seats out of 207. PPP had to formulate a coalition form of government. After 15 days of the

elections, Ghulam Ishaq Khan transferred power when PPP did an alliance with Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM). Nawaz Sharif become the Chief Minister of Punjab and challenged the writ of the Federal Government throughout the period, he was also the leader of opposition in National Assembly of Pakistan. General Mirza Aslam Baig was the Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto had good relations with army because Mirza avoided direct confrontation with the government (Ziring, 2003). Yasmeen (1994) argued that Benazir Bhutto made many compromises to maintain power. The military wanted her to step back from power because of government's attitude as it provided many chances for military to take over. The hidden agenda of the military was revealed when political alliance Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) was established under Nawaz Sharif to curb the absolute power of PPP in national assembly. In this way Benazir had to agree to the power sharing strategy. Kazimi (2009) argued that due to military domination, the democratic governments failed to serve the common people of Pakistan. The budget at that time was mainly consumed by defense and then was spent on development projects. Allegations of corruption led Benazir's government to an end as in 1990, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed the government due to military pressure.

In 1990, general elections were conducted and the IJI of Nawaz Sharif came to the power. He won 106 seats in national assembly while PPP secured only 45 seats. On November 6, 1990, he became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. As compared to PPP, IJI worked hard for the development of Pakistan and privatized the major public departments while also controlled the role of bureaucracy. The economy of the country also progressed during this time period. However, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan was insecure due to the progress and power flow of the Nawaz government and he considered this success as a fear to his presidency. The major clash appeared was due to the appointment of the army chief. As a result, the president dissolved the national assembly and dismissed Nawaz from his role in April 1993. Jalal (1994) stated that in May 1993, Supreme Court of Pakistan dismissed the decision of Ghulam Ishaq Khan and IJI resumed office again. While on the other hand, president disintegrated IJI this time and made it hard for Nawaz to deliver and run the government affairs. The situation created chaos and the economic condition of the country was getting worse. Gen. Abdul Waheed Kakar, the then Army Chief of Pakistan stepped in and announced general elections to held on October 6, 1993. In this election, coalition government was formed as there was no clear majority. PPP along with small political parties formulated government and Benazir resumed the office of Prime Minister of Pakistan on October 19, 1993 (Yasmeen, 1994).

In general elections of 1997, Nawaz Sharif gained 2/3rd majority and worked against the 8th amendment. He brought 13th amendment in the constitution of 1973 and reverse the power of president to dismiss the national assembly and made parliament more sovereign. Due to actions like forcefully made General Jahangir Karamt, a four star military general, to resign etc., the relationship between military and Nawaz disturbed. The situation led to the fourth military rule in Pakistan in October 1999 (Shafqat, 2019).

Literature called 1988-1999 as the era of non-democratic actions, selfish political leaders and weak political party systems in Pakistan (Zaidi, 1999, November 06).

1.2.6 Third Military Phase from 1999 to 2007

In the third military phase of the political history of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif removed the Army Chief of Pakistan from power and desired to have General Ziauddin as the next Army Chief of Pakistan. General Musharraf stepped in and dissolved all the provincial assemblies along with the national assembly when Nawaz tried to remove him from his designation when he was on an international visit. General Musharraf dissolved the constitution of the country and assumed power as the Chief Executive of Pakistan. During this period Tarrar was the president and the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered Musharraf to hold elections within next three years. In 2001, Musharraf took Tarrar out of power and continued his services as Army Chief of Pakistan. In April 2002, he held referendum and was selected as the President of Pakistan for the term of next five years (Times, 2018, June 1).

Niaz (2018) explained that the government had to face many challenges like conflicts in Middle East, Afghanistan crisis, War on Terror etc. Pakistan acted as a front line state against War on Terror. In July 2007, Lal Masjid incident occurred. The conflict with the Supreme Court of Pakistan was the major challenge for the government, as Musharraf forced to stop the Chief Justice of Pakistan to work. The Supreme Court of Pakistan was the first to express the opinion against the military rule while some hidden facts indicated that major political parties were in support of Musharraf to be re-elected. In November 2007, Musharraf issued Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) and ordered judges to take new oath as per PCO. However, already against the government, the judges refused to accept the PCO, also the reaction of the public was very negative in this matter. On November 30, 2007, Musharraf took oath as the Civil President of Pakistan (Shafqat, 2019).

The political actions of the military leader made him isolated. Musharraf changed Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali due to the dissatisfaction and appointed Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain as the temporary prime minister. On August 20, 2004, Shaukat Aziz presumed the office of Prime Minister of Pakistan after winning the by-elections. During this period media achieved more liberty and in 2008, peaceful elections were held and PPP won. It is argued that this arrangement was pre-decided as the US wanted to restore the civilian government in Pakistan. This was a power sharing agreement that made Benazir Bhutto came back to Pakistan from self-exile (Javaid & Latif, 2017).

1.3 Present Democratic Era: 2008-2021

2008 to 2021 is marked in literature as the current democratic era of Pakistan's political history. This era witnessed the transitions of three consecutive smooth democratic governments in Pakistan. After the nine years of military rule, in 2008, few days after the end of military rule Benazir Bhutto was assassinated during the election campaign (Hussain, 2008). Zardari became the President of Pakistan in the later part of 2008. He remained in power till 2013. It was the civilian government but the influence of military on internal security and foreign affairs was always there. After the rule of PPP, Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) won the majority of the seats and Nawaz Sharif became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The term continued till July 2017. It is argued that the end of Sharif rule was soft military coup. He was stepped out of office due to Panama scandal and his involvement in corruption related cases. As a result, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi from PML(N) became the Prime Minister of Pakistan (Niaz, 2018).

The third smooth democratic transition occurred when elections of 2018, were held and PTI came to power after securing the majority of seats. On August 17, 2018, Imran Khan took the oath and became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. It is argued that due to its anti-corruption slogan PTI secured government not only in the federal but at the provincial level as well (Mamoon et al., 2017). Shackle (2018) wrote an article in The Guardian and argued that evidence indicated that the elections of 2018, were manipulated by the military to make it favorable for Imran Khan to win. Even before the elections, opposition and other political parties make allegations that he is being backed by the military. It was also argued in the article that Imran is being used by the military as a puppet to fulfill their own desires for example article mentioned that "the military's apparent support for Khan and the PTI is most likely down to a desire to keep Sharif out of power, rather than any special liking for Khan".

According to The News, (2019, September 14) it is difficult to analyze the first hundred days of the PTI government due to its short duration. In the initial speech of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said that Pakistan will work for the common people but the government failed to serve the common people of Pakistan. It was argued that when IK was assuming power, he made many promises and criticized the previous practices but after resuming the power he himself practiced the same traditions practiced by the previous governments. According to South Asian Voices, (2019, July 4) as far as the economic performance of the country is concerned. Khan promised not to take a loan from International Monetary Fund (IMF). He considered it as a bad practice of previous governments but contrary to what he said before, just after resuming power he stepped into IMF and took the loan, as a result inflation increased. Dawn (2020, January 25) published a survey at this time about the inflation and the economic situation of the state. According to the survey, 99% of the people were disturbed due to the high prices while 61% of the people argued that the economy of the country is going in the wrong direction. According to polls by Gallup Pakistan, (2020, March 1) 66% of the people are not satisfied with the performance of PTI government while 59% of people believe that PTI government's performance is worse than the previous governments.

These and related figures showed that the PTI government till 2020 (after two years of its tenure) seems not to satisfy the common people and government also failed to provide relief.

"It does not, at this stage, appear that the PTI government has the wisdom or ability to deliver on its promise of meaningful change and address the existential challenges that Pakistan faces" (Niaz, 2018, p. 16).

The condensed summary of political history of Pakistan is presented above. It is worth mentioning here the summary of democratic events in Pakistan along with role of media. Jinnah the first political leader of the country struggled to strengthen the democracy but in reality, Pakistan has witnessed different forms of government i.e., presidential, parliamentary, military rule and democracy. All the political parties in Pakistan put an effort to sustain the democratic culture but due to the lack of democratic norms it could not be achieved. It happened because of the political conflicts between political parties. From 1988, till 2013, PPP and PML(N) ruled the country as a dominant political party. It happened because both political parties paid no attention to the rights of citizenry. Furthermore, the failure of democracy is due to the autocratic attitude of those in power.

Since independence Pakistan has experienced three constitutions 1956, 1962 and 1973. It also includes two acting constitutional arrangements (in 1947 and 1972), and two foremost attempts of constitutional engineering (in 1985 and in 2002). Political parties use to gain power to full fill their agenda rather to protect the rights of common people. Furthermore, in democracy free, fair and regular elections are considered by scholar as foremost important but the Pakistan's history in this regard is not well defined. Almost every time after elections the losing party blame winning one with allegations of rigging in elections and many times it proved to be the right. The culture of collation government in Pakistan had damaged the democratic culture. Another reason for the failure of democracy in Pakistan is the gap and lack of communication between civil or military leaders with general public (Bibi et. al. 2018).

The fragile history of democracy in Pakistan has faced many challenges. The role of mass media can never be undermined. At the time of independence Pakistan inherited few Newspapers and Radio stations but they never experienced independence. Many efforts were done to limit the freedom of media like Press and Publication ordinance (PPO) and Revised Press and Publication ordinance (RPPO) during the military rule of Gen. Zia ul Haq. But during the Nawaz's regime the tug of war between Jung group and government never ended. Gen. Musharraf put an effort to liberalize the media industry in Pakistan and established Press Council of Pakistan Ordinance (PCPO). The mushroom growth of media is not the sign of absolute media freedom. In August 2010, President Zardari on is visit to UK experienced "show throwing". Two channels broadcasted the message i.e., ARY and Geo but later they experienced closure of channels. Media played a constructive role in restoration of judiciary in 2007-2009. Furthermore, the brief history of mass media in Pakistan is mentioned below.

1.4 Media in Pakistan

1.4.1 Overview of Media

Pakistan is a fragile form of democracy. Since its independence in 1947, there had been a transition from democracy to dictatorship and vice versa. Before 2002, mass media was under state control and there was only a single state owned television channel that was the sole source of information for the public. In 2002 General Musharraf's dictatorial regime provided new avenues for market oriented media channels and it was the period

of mushroomed growth of media organizations. The growth of market oriented news organizations gave birth to critical media debates. Once Musharraf left the power, media grew with same notion. After Musharraf's regime, Pakistan is experiencing the democratic government till date (Gul, Obaid & Ali, 2017; Pintak, Bowe & Nazir, 2018). Volmer (2013) argued that Pakistan's media was the mouthpiece of government and is now converted into a more matured form (as cited in Pintak, Bowe & Nazir, 2018).

1.4.2 History of Media

When Pakistan got independence there was no proper structure of mass media. The Peshawar Radio Station was working but it was only operated to give instructions to farmers regarding agriculture development and procedures. The few newspapers were operating in the same manner as they were operating before independence but their offices were transferred to Karachi. Imroz started its publication during the Ayub regime and soon attained reputable and leading position in the media industry as it employed qualified and trained staff. Similarly, Kohistan was introduced in 1953 in Rawalpindi. Till 1957 media was free in Pakistan. After that military takeover the newspapers and news agencies like Pakistan Press International (PPI) and Associated Press of Pakistan (APP). National Press Trust was established in 1964. The aim of the trust was to provide financial help to the newspapers which were facing financial crisis in the last few years and as a result it took control of almost 60% of newspapers in Pakistan. Through the Press and Publication Ordinance of 1960, and 1963, government regulated the functioning of media (Hassan & Khurshid, 1997).

In 1961, journalists demanded to revise the press laws but even after the revision of the law in 1963, no relaxation was provided. It is argued that till 1970s Pakistan had 117 daily newspapers with 992 other publications. At the time of the independence, Pakistan had three radio stations in Dhaka, Lahore and Peshawar respectively (Nawaz, 1983). In 1973, these radio stations came under the designation of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC). In the same year PBC increased its transmission to far flung areas of Pakistan. In 1970's, number of radio stations increased to nine, which were covering almost 80% of the population. Similarly, Pakistan Television Corporation had five broadcasting centers which covered 67.8% of Pakistan's population. During the period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the media was even more controlled as PTV and PBC were shifted directly to the government cadre. During and after

the war of 1965, newspapers, radio and television were considered mouth-piece of government (Yusuf, 1993).

With the emergence of Press and Publications Ordinance (RPPO) and the liberalization of media in the Musharraf era, there was a mushroom growth of media in Pakistan. Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) was established in 2002, to regulate electronic media and issued number of licenses to private television and radio stations. The growth of TV channels increased its number from three state owned channels to almost ninety channels (having six terrestrial channels). Radio stations increased from one national broadcaster to 100 private broadcasters. This boom in the media industry brought concentration of ownership. TV viewership increased to 80% of all the media outlets. All the facts mentioned above indicated that the structure of the media industry in Pakistan drastically changed during this period (Gul, Obaid & Ali, 2017).

The media in Pakistan had never been absolutely free because the government censorship had always been there to restrict the critical voice of journalists and citizenry. Waqas and Khattak (2017) identified few challenges of media and democracy in Pakistan. First, these scholars argued that the media of Pakistan failed to produce informed citizens because of unawareness regarding the form of democracy, distorted political culture and legal pluralism. Furthermore, it is explained that democracy in Pakistan is a combination of two different systems, one is secularism and the other is Islamist system. It is a country having multiple ideologies. Democracy is a form of government that gives equal opportunity for diverse ideologies to participate in the voting process and elect the true representative. Due to this unawareness of the true form of democracy among the general public, they are not able to select the true representative. Waqas and Khattak (2017) explained another reason for the fragile democracy in Pakistan and that is the distorted political culture. These authors explained that Pakistan is a segmented society and every segment of the community has its own political leaders and they wish them to be elected without knowing the performance of the political leaders. Also, democracy is having a rule of law but in Pakistan, according to Waqas and Khattak there is a different legal system for those in power and public. This legal pluralism halted the real practices of democracy in Pakistan.

Heil (2008) quoted the interview of the journalist Aasma Sherazi, 'free media emerges out of democracy, but here, in Pakistan, democracy is emerging out of free media' (as cited in Khan, 2009). In contemporary times media is changing its role into a dynamic one. Khan (2009) argues that media in Pakistan was not autonomous and was considered as a maintainer of status quo in

the democratic regimes. As there were only two major political parties in the country, PPP and PMLN, and these parties attained power on an alternate basis. So, media under these regimes was suppressed to great measures (Khan, 2009).

The long march of 2014 was staged by the leaders of two political parties, Imran Khan from Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) and Tahir-ul-Qadri from Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT). Media played a vital role in the success of this long march. This protest was staged after 12 years of the establishment of market oriented media in Pakistan. The protest was supported by live coverage, talk shows and news packages. While covering protest, media has been "simplifying, polarizing, personalizing, intensifying, concretizing and accentuating the political crisis" in Pakistan (Abbas, 2015, p.49). Qadeer, Shehzad and Chishti (2017) argued that discourses in print media of Pakistan had personalized the coverage of political leaders and distort their real image in the eyes of the public. It is analyzed that media follow their own perspective about the political event and issues to change the opinions of the readers and viewers accordingly.

Siraj and Hussain (2017) critically evaluated the autonomy of journalists in Pakistan. The main argument of the study supported the view that journalists in Pakistan have been unable to exercise the autonomy to select the news and information. In this scenario, the sensitive decisions regarding news selection and broadcasting lies in the hands of editorial management. Contemporary media in Pakistan is dependent upon advertising revenue, as a result of which the gatekeepers use to serve those in power. So, journalistic autonomy is restricted by political, social, economic and concentrated ownership of media in Pakistan.

Furthermore, media freedom was halted by different political regimes in Pakistan throughout the history. Existing scholarship is evident that whenever political leaders feel threatened by the coverage, they try to restrict the media coverage. During 1947 the media including news agencies were under the government control. In military regime of General Ayub and Yahya Khan different laws were implemented to halt the freedom of media and become the mouthpiece of government. The history called these as draconian laws. In 1973, during Butto's era PTV and PBC were shifted under the direct government control. In 2001, General Musharraf liberalized media and promote the media to operate as private entity. In this way the media growth increased to triple fold. Scholars are of the view that even after the growth of polarized media, the absolute freedom was given to media. In critical situation when political leaders feel threat, they censor the media for a while and sometimes it results in closure of media.

1.4.3 Statistics and Figures

According to the Annual Report (2018) of PEMRA, there were 88 TV channels and 209 radio stations in the country. While in 2019, PEMRA issued 48 more licenses to TV channels and the number increased to 136. The sale of newspapers decreased in the year 2018 and 2019 up-to 15-20%. Furthermore, The News, leading newspaper of Pakistan, published a performance report of PEMRA (2019, February 25). The statistics in that report indicated that PEMRA has issued 88 TV licenses to satellite TV, 37 of them were entertainment channels, 26 were news channels of national cadre while 18 were regional, 14 educational, 01 health, 01 sports 01 Agricultural in nature. Pakistan Press Foundation (2009) explained that there were 3000 estimated newspapers in Pakistan (as cited in Siraj, 2019).

The above mentioned facts indicated that the mass media of Pakistan is polarized with different political leaning. The current study is analyzing democratic role performance of news media. For this purpose, different media organizing were selected to analyze the democratic performance.

1.5 Profiles of Media Outlets Under Investigation

The following profiles of media are selected for the analysis of democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan. The selected media outlets includes Dawn, Daily Dunya, Geo news and Express news. These four media outlets were selected because they represent the major media groups of Pakistan and are having different political leaning as well.

1.5.1 Profiles of Print Media

1.5.1.1 Dawn. According to Infoasaid Online, Dawn is a leading English newspaper in Pakistan. Dawn belongs to Dawn Media Group. The newspaper was founded in 1941 (before independence) by Muhammad Ali Jinnah which was weekly in nature, later in 1944, the newspaper started its daily publication as well. In 1947, they started their local editions. It is considered an elite influential English daily. The group owns Dawn TV, City FM 89 and four magazines including Herald, The Star, Spider and Aurora.

Dawn was established with the aim that it will truly reflect the viewpoints of Hindu, Muslims and All India Muslim League. When in 1944, Dawn became a daily newspaper, Pothan Joseph, the first editor of the Dawn resigned to become the information officer. Altaf Husain became his successor and reported the news related to the independence movement with his continuous efforts. He openly supported the nationalist Muslim tone throughout his

editorial policy. Even after the independence, it continued to publish from Delhi for news weeks after it started its daily publications from Karachi, state's new capital. Due to the ownership controversies, in 1951, under the headship of Haroon, Dawn started its own publication with the name of Herald (daily English newspaper). After the public protest the decision was reversed and Dawn started its usual publication (Media Ownership Monitors Pakistan). Furthermore, in 1959, Dawn was attacked by military ruler General Ayub Khan due to its support for Fatima Jinnah in the presidential elections. In 1970s, during Prime Minister Zulifqar Ali Bhutto's regime, Dawn's editor was imprisoned (Media Ownership Monitors Pakistan).

According to Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, since 2005, Dawn has adopted the pro-democratic editorial policy. During the times of major ethnic and religious conflicts in Pakistan Dawn supported the civilian system over the military one. After 'Dawn Leaks' in October 2016, the group faced extreme pressure from the government as the administration wanted to curb the editorial policy of the group. The government also put efforts to ban the advertisements of the newspaper and pressurized them to operate according to the need and wants of the government.

1.5.1.2 Daily Dunya. Daily Dunya is relatively new in the media landscape of Pakistan. On September 03rd, 2012 Daily Dunya was launched. Mian Amer Mahmood owns the Dunya media group which is a project of Punjab Group of Colleges. The Group owns Dunya News and Lahore News HD (Dunya News, 2020). In a short period, the newspaper received high popularity among readers.

1.5.2 Profiles of Electronic Media

1.5.2.1 Geo News. According to Jang Media Group, the first newspaper of the Jang group was published in 1939 in Delhi. The group operates both in print and electronic media. Geo TV belongs to the Jang group. The group has top ranking newspapers, channels and magazines. The newspapers include Daily Awaz, Daily Waqt, Daily Awam, The Pakistan Times and The News. However, the news channel includes Geo News, Geo Entertainment, Geo Super, Geo Kahani and Geo Tez, while Jang group also owns two magazines.

Jang media group has significantly grown in both print and electronic media due to cross media ownership. The group owns 7 dailies, 2 weekly magazines, 6 TV channels, 5 international channels and 2 radio stations with online channels as well. Jang group with its all media outlets secured almost half of the overall revenue of Pakistan's media for the year 2017-

2018 (Gallup 2018). Gul, Obaid and Ali (2017) argued that Jang Group belongs to the "right wing" (p.47).

According to the corporate profile of Geo TV, Geo TV started its test transmission in May 2002, and broadcasted its regular transmission on October 1, 2002. It's the most popular private Urdu television channel and is ranked as the second South Asian Urdu news channel. It has the widest distribution and largest viewership around the country. Geo News started its independent news channel in 2005.

Most of the time there is a confrontation between Geo News and the government. In 2007, the broadcast of the channel was suspended by Military General Pervez Musharraf. In 2009, the channel was banned by the civilian government as well (Infoasaid, 2012).

Geo News is owned by an independent media corporation having 75% shares of Mir Shakeel Ur Rahman while 5% shares are held by Mansoor Rahman who serves as an Executive of Jang Group. Mir Shakeel Ur Rahman and his family own 100% of the ownership shares (Media Ownership Monitor, Pakistan).

1.5.2.2 Express News. According to Express media group, Express news belongs to Lakson Group, and its newspaper was founded on September 3, 1998. It is a widely circulated Urdu newspaper of Pakistan. Lakson Group is UK based media company with many international linkages. The group claims to have the second largest readership in the country. In 2011, it earned 11% of the revenue and the revenue decreased in 2017-2018 to 9%. Overall revenue of both dailies of Lakson group earned 12% of the advertising revenue. The group has 2 dailies, 1 weekly and 2 TV channels (Media Ownership Monitors, 2019).

Express News is an Urdu language television channel founded on January 01, 2008. It is owned by Lakson Group which is considered as third largest media group in Pakistan. Lakson Group has ownership shares of four brothers Amin Muhammad Lakhani, Sultan Ali Lakhani, Iqbal Lakhani and Zulfiqar Ali Lakhani. Sultan Ali Lakhani and his son Bilal Ali Lakhani mostly holds control of Express media group while other family businesses are run by the other three brothers (Media Ownership Monitor, 2019).

1.6 Problem Statement

In a democratic setup, news media is entrusted to produce informed citizenry. Through critical reflections on important issues, news media help people to know how the government is functioning. Common people get critical awareness about the role government is playing

through media and keep a check on the government accountable to the voters and thus have informed public opinion. In Pakistan, democracy has been in disarray since its inception. Among other reasons, the general lack of interest among the public and administration in deliberative democracy is a key factor that provides an opportunity to military dictators and political figures to exploit the system and dissuade common people to stand for democracy. In this regard, news media can play a crucial role to strengthen democratic culture in the country by plying its role as watchdog. Though no relevant scholarship is available to examine the democratic performance of news media in Pakistan, elsewhere, studies show that the media shy away from its normative role due to the considerations of profit maximization, sensationalism, negativity, personalization etc. In this context, it is important to analyze how and to what extent the Pakistani news media is playing its democratic role.

1.7 Significance

Though researchers have examined the democratic role performance of news media in different countries and produced valuable insights, the scholarship was largely scattered around various concepts and approaches. De Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) put an effort to knit these scholarly arguments together to provide a comprehensive framework for the analysis of news media. The composite framework developed had six different indicators i.e., game framing, political balance, interpretative reporting, negativity, personalization and accountability. This composite framework will apply an empirical approach to provide a comprehensive account of the democratic role of news media.

Moreover, the available scholarship is mainly conducted in the West, so there is a need to analyze the news media content in a fragile democracy of Pakistan. This study will help analyze whether news media has been engaging in serious political debates or the news outlets are just filling the news cycle. The contribution of this study will not only add to the scholarship on the democratic role of news media but also offer practical strategies for journalists to play a constructive role in strengthening democracy in Pakistan.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to analyze the democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan. The study identified few indicators of democratic role performance (game framing, negativity, political balance, investigative reporting, personalization and accountability) keeping in view the literature (De Vreese, Esser and Hopmann, 2017). Furthermore, the study

also analyzes the influence of media type on democratic role performance of news media. keeping in view above aims the study identified following objectives:

1. To analyze how and to what extent Pakistan news media performs its democratic role while reporting different political issues and events.

2. To analyze what factors, get more salience by Pakistan's news media while reporting on various political events and issues.

3. To determine the relationship between the democratic role performance of Pakistan's news media and the types of news, type of media, placement of news and topic of the news.

4. To analyze the differences and similarities between the print and electronic news media in terms of performance of the democratic role of Pakistan's news media.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Politics and media are inter-connected elements in any democratic setup. In democracy certain political functions are supposed to be performed by media for the wider interest of the nation. The literature below mentioned few functions of media performed in a democratic country i.e., provides information to the public about political actors, provides information for the scrutiny of political representatives especially in times of elections, holding power elites accountable, give voice to marginal sectors of society etc. This chapter focused on the previous studies related to the area of democracy, media and democracy, the democratic performance of media and the major variables of the study. The study aims to investigate the democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan.

2.1 Historical Context

The term democracy first appeared in city state of Athens. It appeared as political and philosophical thought. Cleisthenes is called as father of modern democracy as he was an Athens philosopher and introduced the term in 508-707 BC (McGilchrist, 2019). This democracy took the form of direct democracy and had two distinctive features: the citizens are randomly selected for the different government positions and legislative assembly had all the citizens of Athens. Spartan Ecclesia was the assembly having the common citizens met once in a month to discuss different issues and problems of common people in 700 BC. The voting was also done to elect the leader. It was done through loud announcement (Boring, 1979).

During the middle ages, Europe was ruled by feudal lords or clergy. In this system there was a proper assembly system and small part of the population was the part of it. The proper elections were also done to select the leaders (Fladmark & Heyerdahl, 2015). In 1265, the first representative assembly was introduced in England. In Parliament grievances of the common people were address and discussed. Monarch was responsible to call the meeting of parliament. Furthermore, scholars linked political fragmentation and emergence of representative democracy (Dahl, 2020). David Stasavage a political scholar argued that Roman empire collapsed because the empire was conquered by Germanic Tribe which leads to creation of small groups. Those groups were politically independent but were weak in nature (Stasavage, 2016). In 1628, the Parliament of England passed Petition of Right and in 1647 (after civil war) the concept of political parties emerged (Searing, 1988).

John Locke introduced the concept of liberal democracy. The author was of the view that it's the responsibility of government to protect the rights and property of common citizen

but if they fail to do so, the citizen have right to revolt. Scholars argued that Locke's thoughts largely influenced American Revolution and French Revolution (Locke, 2013).

Furthermore, in 1707, Great Britain established first parliament but Monarch was still the figurehead. At that time parliament was only elected by the male property owners and in 1780 they were only 3% of population (Andrew, 1989).

In 1787, United States Constitution was adopted after American Revolution. The constitution is oldest and is still active. The constitution protected the rights of common but the voting issues along with slavery issues were not addressed. In 1789's presidential election only 6% people were eligible to vote. The Bill of Rights in 1791, is considered as first amendment in US constitution (Acks, 2019). The French Revolution of 1789, brought many political and social changes in the system and was the basis of liberal democracy as well. Gradually other the property owners, common people were given authority to vote and elect their representative. In 1893, New Zealand became the first colony who gave women right to vote (Nohlen, Grotz & Hartmann, 2001).

In 20th century, after world war I the political and geographical changes occurred all around the world. In 1920, the democratic rules moved all around but aftereffects of Great Depression, brought one men rule (Dictatorship) in Europe, Latin America and Asia. Dictatorship also flourished in Nazi Germany, Portugal, Spain and Italy. Furthermore, non-democratic rule spread around Brazil, Cuba, China, Japan and Baltics. World war II brought the reversal of democratic rule in most part of the world (Payne, 2006). In 1970 and 1980's the dictatorial rule in Spain, Portugal and south America is altered with civil rule in the country. According to Freedom House in 1972, there were 40 democracies around the world and in 2007, the number increased to 123 (Boatright & Sperling, 2019). In 2008, the German Parliament gave every child the right to vote since its birth but it is being practiced by their parents until child themselves claims for it (Wall, 2014).

2.2 Democracy: An Overview

Democracy is "rule by the people" (p.1) beliefs in autonomy, freedom, self-determination of the general public and those in power (Lakoff, 2018). According to De Tocqueville, democracy is based on the concept of equality of people. It can be achieved in two ways: first is when inferior people who wish to raise their status to the level of superior people and in the second case: inferior people cannot raise their status to the level of superior people but diminishes the level of superior to make them equal to inferior ones. In a democratic

setup there is the sovereignty of people, freedom while having no religious differences and dictatorship of majority (Zoeram, Yusoff & Soltani, 2012).

Harrison and Boyd (2018) defined democracy as government of majority and has two distinctive forms, one is defensive democracy and second is citizen or republican democracy. In defensive form of government citizenry is protect by rule of law and is also protected from the malpractices of the state. While in the second type of democracy, public is aware enough and also active to get its due rights from the state. It is a type of direct form of government where citizens are involved in government affairs. Furthermore, Harrison and Boyd (2018) listed down few components of democracy i.e., equality of citizen, constitution and elected representatives.

Literature is evident that democracy works best in collaboration with mass media. Media serves as a bridge to exchange the information between citizenry and elected representatives. The literature mentioned below provides few insights into the role of media in democracy.

2.3 Media and Democracy

In his pioneer study of Press and Democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville (1831) argues that press is the eye: searching for the secrets of "political designs". In a political process, it makes leaders accountable to the citizenry and plays the role of inter-mediator (Tocqueville 1969, p. 94–95). The studies concluded that in the area of media and democracy there have been two main perspectives. One is democratization through the media and the second one is the democratization of media itself (Zhao & Hackett, 2005). Voltmer and Rownsley (2009) explored that this relationship is difficult to identify because rigorous evidences are missing (as cited in Jebril, Stetka & Loveless, 2013).

Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1998) argued that democracy meets some essential conditions i.e., meaningful competition between political parties with regular intervals without use of force, political participation of all the groups of society through free and fair elections and freedom of expression, presence of democratic institutions and liberty of the press. In true sense democracy expects media to serve the public by providing them information about political actors, political ideas and interpretations of the actions of political actors. However, the discussion about democracy and media performance is generally focused on political

journalism (Benson, 2008; Graber, 2003; Gurevitch & Blumler, 1990; Norris, 2001; Stromback, 2005). Due to the commercialization of the mass media, news supply increased. As a result, the quality of news decreased, which has a negative impact on the political life in general. For example, sensationalized news has a negative impact on the political life of the public and political actors (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997).

Curran (2011) in his book Media and Democracy explained that eighteenth and nineteenth-century media was highly politicized. Since then media has transformed from highly politicized to an entertained one. The bulk of news channels begin to operate in society. At that time there was a re-conception of the media's democratic role. Politics was being represented through drama, films, cartoons, satirical talk shows etc. The practices in the contemporary media are more or less the same. The relationship between the media and citizenry is mainly explained in the literature through media logic.

Media logic is a strategy used by media organizations to create relationships with the mass public, on which they are dependent for their economic survival. Neuman (1986) argued that in most of the viewers' life, politics play only a marginal role. So, they only consume easy and quick information rather than the most salient one. Furthermore, Voltmer (2006) explored that the way in which politics is represented today in an era of infotainment media which blurs the line between information and entertainment. Furthermore, the author argued that media depends upon high ranking politicians for news stories and thus media consider them as a reliable source of information. Media show loyalty to the political actors in order to get access to exclusive sources of stories. Representation of politics as a story creates interest not only for the political experts but common people as well. The role of media changes with the situation, many times media exposes political scandals and report malpractices in political system to get the public support and sometimes they become part of a lobby, in favor or against any certain political issue or group, consist of political elites (Voltmer, 2006).

Putnam (1995) argued that in Western democracies mass media is blamed for creating political crisis. The researcher argues that predominance of political entertainment in television is responsible for citizens' less interest in the political processes, especially in voting turnout. Patterson (1998) further argues that the confrontational style of political coverage is more common during elections in different states. It gives an image of game shows, whereas actually policy debates are missing. According to Cappella and Jamieson (1997), the quality of political news is decreasing day by day which has left a negative impact on the political life of

politicians. The media is providing just a small amount of news that is actually based on serious policy discussions (Patterson, 2003). Poor media content, lack of factual and good journalism, misinterpretation of public opinion polls and other bad practices are some of the factors responsible for losing public interest towards politics (Albeak, 2014).

Representation of politics in media is a highly debated area in literature because most of the media content is based on political events and issues. Most of the literature in the area covers the representation of politicians, their policies, events associated with them, their personal and family affairs and their relationship with the citizenry.

2.4 Representing Politics in Media

Representation of politics is mainly covered and discussed under the umbrella of political communication. Political communication deals with the system of interaction between mass media, political elites and audiences. Each of the actor in this process is involved in receiving, interpreting and production of political messages. All three components are dependent upon the performance of each other. Media and politicians are consistently interacting with each other in a complex web of interactions, they negotiate over the aims and objectives of production and "ultimately controls public agenda" (Voltmer, 2006, p.6).

Larry Sabato is an American scholar who has divided the field of political communication into three basic ages. These ages are divided from the perspective of American journalism. The first age is called lapdog journalism. This era started in 1940 and concluded in 1966 approximately. In the lapdog era, journalists in America were subservient to the government Asthey were not allowed to discuss anything against the government. Sabato explained that after 1966, journalists started to produce investigative reports because they realized that it's time to go beyond the umbrella of government and serve the citizenry by playing the role of watchdog. This was the phase when major scandals of government were highlighted in the mainstream media. The phase lasted from 1966 to 1974. The third phase was from 1974, onwards and called as "junkyard dog journalism". Sabato argued:

"It has become a spectacle without equal in modern American politics: the news media, print and broadcast, go after a wounded politician like sharks in a feeding frenzy. Public officials and many other observers see journalists as rude, arrogant

and cynical, given to exaggeration, harassment, sensationalism and gross insensitivity" (as cited in Barnett, 2002, p. 404).

The next phase of political journalism is discussed by Barnett (2002) as the "age of contempt". The author considers this age as the most destructive age in the history of media. In this age, there was no obligation for journalists to be impartial (Barnett, 2002, p.405).

Political communication has undergone many changes with the passage of time. Politicians had never put an effort to communicate with the citizenry in the past as they are putting efforts in contemporary times (Brants & Voltmer, 2011). Political communication has two dimensions: first one is horizontal dimension where the relationship between politicians and journalists are discussed, the second one is the vertical dimension where the relationship between citizens and politicians are focused. There is a symbiotic relationship between both dimensions. In horizontal dimension politicians and journalists work together to achieve their goals. Politicians need media to get public support and media need politicians as an authentic source of information about political happenings. In vertical dimension or decentralized dimension of political communication media and political elites are on one hand and citizenry on the other hand. In this dimension citizenry challenges the legitimacy of those in power and politicians work with media to provide selected information to citizenry. So, in this dimension citizenry get alternate political sphere to get information and become involved in political processes (Brants & Voltmer, 2011).

Politics is no more an independent field but it is dependent upon media for the exchange of ideas to general public. "Media is no more external to politics" (Voltmer & Sorensen, 2019, p. 39). Media transformed the institutional structure and process of decision making. The author explained two factors of media dependency, one is well established political parties and the second is well developed system of voters. Both of these factors are visible in established democracies whereas these factors lack in transitional democratic countries (Voltmer & Sorensen, 2019). Political communication scholars argued that in developed democracies there is an increase in the trend of political trivialization which leads to negativity in news and less use of sound bites by politicians (as cited in Bennett, 2003; Farnsworth & Lichter, 2007). Later, there is a rise in interpretative journalism trend which focuses more on issues rather than solutions (Esser & Matthes, 2013).

Furthermore, Esser and Matthes (2013) argued that the boundaries between politics and entertainment are blurred down today.

> *"Key boundaries that previously shaped the political communication field seem to be dissolving for example, between 'political' and 'nonpolitical' genres, between matters of 'public' and 'private' concern, between 'quality' and 'tabloid' approaches to politics, between journalists serving audiences as 'informers' and as 'entertainers', and between 'mass' and 'specialist', 'general' and 'attentive' audiences" (as cited in Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999, p. 225)*

The advent of online media empowered citizens and strengthened them to pressurize the political elites via different sources. Online media gave an alternative platform to those who had limited access to mainstream media organizations (Voltmer & Sorensen, 2019). It indicates that politics is mediatized not only by media organizations and political elites but by common people as well.

Stromback and Esser (2014) defined mediatized politics as "the process whereby culture and society becomes dependent on media and their logic" while discussing politics (as cited in Hjarvard, 2013). The definition concludes that media becomes an integral part of the political system. Another study explained that political parties have changed their internal structure along with media demands to get intended coverage of their political activities (Voltmer & Sorensen, 2019).

The literature mentioned above provided the logical explanation that media and politicians are inter-connected in any political system. As in democratic states, citizens play a crucial role either in the selection of representatives or in monitoring the actions of political elites and this is made possible by the role media plays in making them informed electorates. Many studies are conducted to explore the role of media in any democratic setup, below is a detailed explanation of the literature that shed light on the democratic role performance of media.

2.5 Democratic Role Performance

The studies on media performance and democracy argued that it's the responsibility of media to provide information to the citizens for the selection of their representatives and hence

play the role of watchdog (Shehata & Stromback, 2014; Obiora & Chukwuma, 2017). Media is considered as a mirror of society, it make power holders accountable to the citizenry by providing the citizens information regarding their government representatives and their activities (De Castello, 2014; Obiora & Chukwuma, 2017; Nai, 2019). Literature is evident that democracy and journalism have a similar historical background as both the concepts emerged at almost the same time period.

McNair (2009) argued that democracy and journalism almost have the same historical background which is dated back around four hundred years ago. At that time, the concept of democratic societies emerged around the world. The concept of news and news correspondents as a source of newsworthy information was introduced in some parts of the world. At that time journalists were the people who predicted bourgeois revolutions of Europe. Furthermore, the author explained that birth of political journalism can be traced back to seventeenth century after the English Civil War. Political journalism had the same facets i.e., critical, independent and adversarial of modern political journalism. Journalism played a distinctive role in the promotion and sovereignty of the democratic system of governments (as cited in Conboy, 2004).

Democracy and independent media are closely linked. Voltmer and Sorensen (2019) explained that when systems are going through transition from authoritarian to a democratic one, it is necessary to consider the independence of mass media as a determinant factor. For the effectiveness of democratic system, it is compulsory to have independent mass media. Strömbäck and Van Aelst (2013) explained that in contemporary times, politics is dependent upon media logic. It is argued that political parties adapt to media logic for the effective communication of their messages. The adaptation is rendered in two ways, one is organizational adaption where structural changes are made at the party level for example hiring of professional staff and the second one is communication adaptation where the political parties communicate messages through their highly professional staff for effective communication with citizenry. Barnett and Entman (2001) had similar argument as of Strömbäck and Van Aelst in this regard. Political leaders in a democratic system develop targeted messages with the help of highly professionalize PR members and spin doctors. They are working behind the scene for a successful public political campaign.

Barnett (2002) thoroughly studied the link between political journalism and democracy. Barnett argues that print media cover politics in detail and with more depth. The emergence of

broadcast media gave birth to scandalize news about politics. Broadcast journalism highlight scandals and misconducts of politicians in a dramatized way. As a result, mistrust on political representatives increased. McQuail (2003) argued that in a democratic country it is the responsibility of mass media to hold political leaders accountable, while it is the responsibility of the government not to restrict the freedom of media and audience for publicizing their respective content. It is also considered a challenge for democratic systems to protect the right of both (as cited in Barnett, 2007). Furthermore, scholars explored that in a democratic system it's the responsibility of journalists to provide information to citizens so that they could decide whom to vote (McNair, 2009). Political parties use mass media to make their position strong to compete well.

Whereas another study has a contrasting opinion to that of Voltmer and Sorensen (2019). Ullah (2009) argued that most of the scholars consider free media as a luxury for developing and underdeveloped countries because developing countries have limited resources and unprofessional party system and leaders so, it's difficult for them to manage the free media. Scholars argued that whatever type of democracy is being practiced in the country, media has to perform certain functions.

The studies on media performance and democracy are mostly conducted in developed democracies having a strong political and economic system. Studies are of the view that "news media should provide information, analysis and context for scrutiny of power holders" (McQuail, 1992, p. 08). Another study highlighted that it is the prime responsibility of media to play a watchdog role to produce well informed citizens (Shehata & Stromback, 2014; Obiora & Chukwuma, 2017). Media is considered as a mirror of society, it makes power holders accountable to the citizenry so that citizen can have information regarding their government representatives which further help them to select their representatives (De Castello, 2014; Obiora & Chukwuma, 2017; Nai, 2019).

According to Cappella and Jamieson (1997) new quality is no more a major consideration for news organizations. The bad practices of media are losing public interest towards politics Albeak, 2014). These practices are strengthened with the advent of social media because of fewer regulations. Meyer (2002) explored that media democracy in the recent internet age is being converted to mediocracy (as cited in Esser & Matthes, 2013). For them getting public attention is more important as compared to focus on news content.

Over time news media is driven by the needs of consumers, not by the need and want of politicians. It gives birth to populist media culture. When media is given authority to decide themselves what to cover and what not to; leads to simplification, negative and dramatized representation of political news (Esser & Matthes, 2013). Furthermore, it is argued that politics is personalized in nature where media focuses more on political personalities as compared to issues and events.

The way politics is represented in media, it poses a challenge to the functions of democracy in any country. The negative coverage about the institution and political actors rapidly influences the attitude of masses towards political institutions and political actors. Dissatisfaction with political actors lead to less engagement of citizens in the political process. Negative media coverage about politicians not only affects the credibility of politicians but also affects the credibility of news itself (Esser & Matthes, 2013).

Normative theories argue that mass media in a democratic country have to provide information to citizenry about politics, social affairs, and information to elect the representatives and communication of citizen's opinions to power elites. In broader terms, these functions are watchdog functions, thus to provide a platform for public debates, issues and problems of the citizenry must be part of media contents.

2.5.1 Watchdog Function

Media is the essential component of the political system. It is called as "fourth estate" (Voltmer, 2006, p. 6) or the "fourth power" (Ripolles et. al., 2014, p. 26). It is the main source of information for the common people as they are an active and most important part of the political system in any country because in the later stage, they have the power to elect political representatives based on the information that media provided (Ripolles et. al., 2014). Scholars called media a stage where politics is represented. Voltmer (2006) argued that media in a democratic setup must act as a watchdog of society. This role of media is more important than any other role. As it protects the rights of the citizenry from any sort of abuse of power by the elected representatives, so it is called a control function of media.

The main task of mass media is to monitor the activities of government and political elites, look at injustices, abuse of power and identify the errors which are being exercised by these political players. Media also alerts the citizenry about the misconducts of those in power,

defends the rights of the public. It reveals the hidden agenda of power elites and political leaders (Ripolles et. al., 2014). This role empowers mass media. Obiora and Chukwuma (2017) studied the Nigerian press and quoted the clause from the constitution which focuses on the accountability of government as a major function of mass media.

"The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of government to the people" (Obiora and Chukwuma, 2017, p. 128)

The watchdog function of the media is not protected by the constitution of most of the countries. Furthermore, the authors explained a justified reason for the said matter that media is expected to uncover the cases of corruption and wrongdoings of the members from the executive, legislature and judiciary (three estates). It monitors the government and holds three estates accountable to the public (as cited in Akinfeleye, 2003).

According to Voltmer (2006) the relationship between media and government is complex in newly established democracies in various ways. In newly established democracies, there are economic problems and institutional problems. The major problem is the relationship between media and government, if one of them is weak the other one cannot operate strongly. So, the watchdog role of media depends upon the level of democracy that is being exercised in a particular country. Nai (2019) listed down three influences that hinder the watchdog role of media. The first influence is external pressure from the social and political structure of the society. When mass media is willing to be the critical voice of the public, it is directly related to media freedom in the country. Government can also influence the content of media by enforcing different rules and regulations which in some cases discourages the media to play its role as the watchdog. According to Nai, the second influence is marketization. On the one hand, it increases the competition but on the other hand it reduces the time and budget for news content production which leads to the less investigative reporting on the media. In market-oriented media, profit is important as compared to newsworthiness.

The third influence is the pressure to create "information with entertainment values" (Nai, 2019, p. 5).

"In recent decades a shift toward "infotainment journalism," "soft news," and a preference for "hype" over substance, leading "to the news becoming entertainment programs" (Nai, 2019, p. 5).

Furthermore, De Castello (2014) explored the watchdog role of media and explained that pressures exerted on journalists affect the functioning of media. The study was conducted in Spanish setting. According to the research findings of the study, there are political and economic pressures on Spanish journalists. The study argued that when political leaders are friends of owners of news organizations and also the media owners are the advocates of the same political and economic ideology as that of political elites, it leads to have more influence on the news because it moves from owner to lower level editors and then to journalists for implementation. In this way watchdog function of media is compromised. Another study on a similar context was conducted by Obiora and Chukwuma (2017). The study focuses on the new media, press and watchdog role of media in Nigerian settings. The constitution of Nigeria protects the watchdog role of the press. In this context, investigative journalism was considered a vital part of watchdog function of media because it explains the "facts behind the facts" (p.126).

With the advent of new media, citizens can openly criticize and oppose the government policies which was otherwise difficult for the citizens to raise their voice via mainstream media. Due to the market and organizational pressures, some of the critical views of citizens about the government policies and functions were not covered by news media, now it is possible due to new media because it gives voice to the voiceless. It benefited the journalists to report the misconducts of those in government through new media without any fear and restrictions or limitations of news organizations. In this way watchdog role of media in an era of news media becomes more effective.

Polarized media sources lead to negativity and personalization in the political news coverage (as cited in Lengauer, Esser, & Berganza, 2012). Social media has strengthened this practice because it has fewer restriction. Journalistic, politicians and common people use to target each other through negative publicity in order to damage the credibility of competing political parties or political ideologies and thus it may minimize the watchdog role of media though to a minimum extent. Literature is also evident that the watchdog role of media works sometimes but not every time (Nai, 2019).

Watchdog role of the media is somehow linked with information role of mass media in democracy. The below mentioned is the second function of the mass media which is to provide information and platform for public debates. It helps citizens to have better insights into current happenings.

2.5.2 Information and Debate

Media is a key source of information for the citizenry. It strengthens public knowledge by providing information about news and current affairs. Scholars have identified three sources of information, the first one is own experience, the second one is interpersonal communication and the third one is media (Shehata & Strömbäck, 2014). Mass media is considered a public sphere. In this sphere, the public communicate their messages to policymakers and politicians with the help of media programs like talk shows, roadshows and news. McNair (2009) explained that in contemporary world of modern media, it allows the citizenry to communicate their views via letters to editors, emails and social media. Media is a kind of public spheres where public discussed political issues and give their views about political and public issues and communicate them to those in power.

Media supplies information on various topics. It benefits citizens to acquire information on many aspects of politics. Several studies have been conducted to analyze the awareness of citizens about political issues and events. Media provides access to the citizenry on national and international politics (as cited in Shehata & Strömbäck, 2014). Ullah called mass media as "day-to-day parliament of the people" and the author considers it as even more powerful than parliament itself. It provides a platform for public debates to generate discussion about politics and policies of the government. Sometimes these debates are not very beneficial for politicians because they might explain the negative side of any political issue or event, policies of government and sometimes politicians themselves. Due to this fear sometimes, politicians do not want to communicate directly with the public, they use to ignore the media. Most of the time politicians have fear of losing vote bank. On the other hand, these debates provide useful information to the general public, the electorates for the better political decision making of the public (Ullah, 2009).

Dumitrescu and Mughan (2010) argued that in democratic settings media must provide contrasting and varied views about politics to allow citizens to choose their representatives wisely. The author argues that there are two ways of information "first is media pluralism and

second is non-partisan news coverage" (Dumitrescu and Mughan, 2010, p. 478). Media pluralism deals with plural sources of information for the public while non-partisan media deals with free and fair information. Citizens must be introduced to various sides of political issues and events for a better understanding of the issue that they later applies for a fair selection of representatives to sort out these political riddles. Strömbäck and Van Aelst (2013) argued that during the times of elections, mass media is used by political leaders as a publicity agent, they tries to maximize the positive coverage of their political parties for getting a large number of votes and minimize the negative coverage. In parliamentary settings, political actors use mass media to strengthen their position in parliament. Political parties use mass media and adapt their logic so that internal conflicts of parties cannot be communicated to the general public. The information provided to public by these political parties and media therefore formulate the public opinion accordingly. Similarly, the negative coverage by the media creates mistrust on politicians and the political system by the voters (Barnett, 2002).

Livingstone and Lunt (1994) provided critical arguments about media and democracy. According to the authors, mass media is a forum provided to the public for critical debates, but it can only happen when there is some institutional support to these forums. The media supports the voice of the general public but the principle of argumentation and dialogue has changed to some extent. So, it must be analyzed that how well mass media expresses the plural arguments of the public.

Furthermore, another study conducted by Shehata and Stromback (2014) has identified two levels to analyze the information role of media. At micro level, information role of media is analyzed from individual citizen's perspective and in the other level which is macro level, it deals with the individual citizen at societal level for whom media is considered as a source of political information. The author argues that in modern times politics is mediated but it is difficult to understand the extent of information role for individual citizens. The results of the study revealed that media is an important source of political news but it is difficult to determine its extent because the media environment is continuously changing, information sources are getting mixed. The convergence of media forms makes it difficult for citizens to differentiate between information sources and the origin of information because the boundaries are blurred. Shehata and Stromback explained that it is important to analyze that which source is considered important by citizens and identify either it is social media sites or traditional media.

Information role of the media is considered important by many scholars mentioned above. In any democratic society, citizens are of prime importance. So, it is also the responsibility of the media to communicate the voice of common people to those in power. The literature mentioned below provides scholarly insights into this function of media.

2.5.3 Voice of the people

Ismaeli (2015) argued that media and journalists play the role of mediators between citizens and those in power. In a democratic system, media has to give voice to marginalized groups of the society which are otherwise not considered as powerful members of the society. Furthermore, McNair (2011) explained that in a democratic country government must be supervised by people in a way that media give citizenry access to the public sphere where debates are generated and the consensus is built and is then communicated to the government (as cited in Ismaeli, 2015).

Welzel and Inglehart (2008) argued that in a narrow political system, masses are not considered as a part of democracy. Elites' viewpoints matter and they don't believe that the policies of masses can influence the effectiveness of democracy and the democratic process. In the electoral democracy, ordinary citizens play an important role. The authors explained that in democracy, power is sifted from those who govern to ordinary citizens. The policies formulated reflect public opinion. Voltmer (2010) discussed government accountability and citizen engagement, explored that democratic government exists in a web of inter-connected institutions and the public is the most important element of the democratic system. Voltmer identified few elements of political culture in any country i.e., government has an interest in public life and affairs, public willingness to participate in the political process, cognitive mobilization and support of the public for the democracy either in its existed form or ideal one. If the citizens are not interested to participate in the democratic political process then it will have a serious threat to democracy.

Soler and Marce (2018) explored that many times mainstream media cannot reflect the voice of the people. In the contemporary world of globalization and networking, the citizenry has alternate options to express their viewpoint other than mainstream media. The concept of citizen journalism has also added life to it. Ismaeli (2015) is of the similar views of Soler and Marce as he argued that in the countries having diverse political parties and diverse public opinion public have explored new ways to communicate their voices to the government via the

internet and modern technologies. So, the new media gives voice to the voiceless and expression of their opinion without any restriction.

Further studies on the democratic role performance of media explored that in the democratic country, government elites, political leaders and citizens are dependent upon mass media for information. Loveless (2008) conducted the study in European settings and explored that when societies are encountering transition from old to new political setups like in the time of crisis or moving from authoritarian regime to democracy, media is considered as a vital source of information. The author conducted a survey of six European countries for a period of one year and concluded that mass media was citizen's prime source of information. The researcher called it as purposive use of media. Another study was conducted by Camaj (2014) having similar findings. The study was conducted in Kosovo. The study focuses on the influence of media content on institutional trust. Political trust is directly related to priming of "institutional honesty and efficiency". Results of the study revealed that economic performance is directly correlated with institutional trust while political performance is not correlated with institutional trust in Kosovo. Furthermore, in the case of social media, political performance is directly correlated to political trust. In social media, politicians are closely associated with citizens and they set the agenda according to the desires of citizens due to the frequent communication. The positive coverage of media about the institutions either it is political, economic or social, has a positive influence over the audience and hence the trust over institutions increases respectively.

Robinson, et al. (2009) concluded the study on media performance in wartimes. The study analyzed the coverage of UK during Iraq invasion 2003. The study focuses on three models i.e., elite driven model, independent model and Oppositional model. The elite model is defined as the one where media supports government policies and actions. Media serves military forces and supports them the most. In the independent model, the negotiated coverage is rendered because they believe in journalistic professional commitments and objectivity in news coverage. The third one is oppositional model, in this model media coverage is critical in nature. It opposes the actions and policies of government as well as power elites, but it is argued that it does not commonly happened in times of war. In case of any type of coverage, mass media has three roles i.e., supportive, negotiated and oppositional. Results of the study revealed that in the case of Iraq invasion, media was supportive of government policies, quoting official sources and broadcasting patriotic messages. In the second stage of the war when British troops

entered the war, mass media followed the supportive role and reported the event with the frame "Our Boys". In the later stage of the war, when causalities increased then media followed an oppositional role and the coverage of media was thus event driven.

Wessler and Rinke (2014) conducted a comparative study on the performance of television in three types of democracy i.e., Germany, Russia and United States. In this paper, they proposed a model of television performance which has three dimensions i.e., Input Dimension, Throughput and Output Dimension. Input dimension is based on information. It is more related to "openness of debates". It suggests that public debates both in the political and civic sense should be open to media organizations. Indicators of input dimension are 1: political news shared should be higher as compared to entertainment and other soft news 2: diverse political topics must be discussed 3: oppositional parties must be given public voice. In the second dimension of throughput dimension, there are two more divisions: one is Debate and other is Sophistication. In Debate dimension, there are two further variables 1: existing of oppositional views 2: responsiveness of each other called as "responsiveness utterance". The second division is Sophistication; it is getting justification from the people involved in political debates and making those justifications public. Last one is output dimension, explained as consequences, it is the coverage of decision making by politicians. The first hypothesis of the study was formulated to establish the relationship between the level of democracy and deliberativeness. Results revealed that Russia is a case of defective democracy and deliberativeness. Deliberativeness in Russian newscast is less than that of United States and Germany. The second assumption of the study was that the public service channels are at high level of democracy as compared to commercial ones. The assumption of the study proved to be true. Public service broadcasters have high level of deliberativeness, commercial news telecasts were placed in the second position and state controlled were last in number. When it comes to comparison of in-depth shows and fact centered shows: CNN's Anderson Cooper 360° was ranked high and PBS's News Hour was ranked 4th.

Trappel and Maniglio (2009) conducted a study on media for democracy. In this study, Media Democracy Monitor (MDM) was presented. MDM is a model to basically analyze the media and democracy relationship. MDM is divided in three components: freedom, equality and control, all of these variables have two dimensions, one is structural dimension and the other is performance dimension. Freedom has two structural and three performance dimensions. Structural dimensions include 1: distribution and availability of news to general public, 2: news media consumption patterns, it is to calculate the news reaches as to how many

numbers of people were included into its reachability. The performance dimension of freedom has three divisions, 1: internal newsroom democracy (involving journalists in decision making) 2: internal news influence rules and policies: (interference of management to editorial decisions) 3: organizational rules against external influence on the news (pressure from external parties on editorial decisions). The second variable of the MDM model is "equality". Its structural dimension is more related to concentration patterns of news media, content diversity and code of ethics developed at regional and national levels. Performance dimensions have two indictors: level of self-regulation (does media follow any type of regulations either formulated internally or externally) and participation (access of general public's opinion to news organizations). "Control" is last variable of MDM model, control is a more critical dimension called as a watchdog. Structural dimensions is related with the watchdog role while the performance dimension is more related to journalistic accountability. Countries under investigation were Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Switzerland. Results of the study revealed that democracy within organization is low. So, there is gap between democracy for the public and internal democracy. Newsroom and management are not separate entities. Investigated journalism, it is also found, is not practiced as media organizations cut down their expenses. Netherland is ranked high in freedom and equality. Germany, Switzerland and Portugal are ranked in between. Germany scored well in the watchdog role of media, Switzerland scored low in freedom/information and Portugal has low score in equality. Lithuania is low in all the mentioned dimensions of MDM.

Schmidt (2002) conducted a study to analyze the relationship between political performance and the type of democracy. The study explores the political performance of majoritarian and non-majoritarian governments, hybrid regimes, democracies having a small or large number of veto players, parliamentary and presidential government, representative and referendum democracy and partial democracy. It is argued that British countries follow majoritarian democracy, they easily get policies approved, they don't have to wait for implementation of those policies so the performance of majoritarian democracies is much better than those in minority., In contrast to this, non-majoritarian democracies are best at integrating opponents and different political parties to establish strong position but they cannot work on policy matters as they don't have majority to amend or reform policies in the parliament. Their policymaking and implementation efforts don't work to get required results. Hybrid regimes are those where the majoritarian and non-majoritarian system of democracies work together. It is argued hybrid systems work more effectively in integration, policy

formulation, its implementation and cooperation as compared to pure form of democracy. The debate between the performance of parliamentary and presidential democracy is not new. Most of the time in literature, it is argued that the parliamentary system performs less as compared to presidential system. In parliamentary regimes, government is dependent upon the support of the majority of the members whereas it is not the case with presidential system of government. The study argued that a partial form of government is considered as worst form of government. Partial democracies have three types, first one is exclusive democracy where adults are excluded from participation on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion etc. second is domain or enclave democracy where the veto players like military, guerilla forces take control over the system and exclude democratically elected leadership and the third type is illiberal democracy where public authorities disregard rule of law and different institutions like the judiciary. It is concluded that the type of democracy is strongly related to political performance.

Esser and Matthes (2013) explained the representation of politics over the media. It is argued that in the contemporary world of media and technology, politics lost its autonomous power. Politics is more dependent upon media for the communication of messages and publicity of their policies and activities. Media logics provide structure for politics to be shaped. Many times, political actors use mass media at the individual level, they stage their political events, publicize their own actions or it can be done to hurt the sentiments of opposing political parties. Hence, politics is multi layered structure while media is now more self-determined. Both of these concepts influence the sovereignty of nation states where traditional political actors suffered a lot. Furthermore, it is explained that public support for traditional political parties decreased, voters' turnout also decreased but the media is growing enormously. There is wide range of media channels with wide range of views. In this scenario, media is not playing a democratic role. They are producing content in a way that audiences are becoming passive and consumers of media as corporate organizations. In the most ideal form of democracy, its main function is accountability and responsiveness. It is the responsibility of media to provide accurate and reliable information to citizens which helps them in times of selection of their political representatives and for the scrutiny of political actors. It's a long term debate that either media is fulfilling these functions or not. Critics of media democracy argued that democracy in some of the developed countries are forced to be deformed by mass media as they find "pleasure in interfering with political processes" (p. 198). Meyer (2002) argued that the concept of media democracy is soon to be changed into "Mediacracies" in which information for citizens and traditional form of political parties will be deteriorating into unpredictable forms (as cited in

Esser & Matthes, 2013). Esser and Matthes (2013) explained that in terms of "telecracy" (counter form of mediocracy) where political actors are beneficiaries of mediated politics (p. 198). In concluding remarks author provided a solution to the challenges. It is explained by McQuail (2007, p. 276) as:

> *"It will involve the combined efforts of active citizens, politicians who take a*
> *wider view of their responsibilities, and journalists and other media people*
> *who recognize a professional and institutional task of informing citizens"*
> *(cited in Esser & Matthes, 2013).*

Stromback and Esser (2014) studied reshaping of politics through media. The author argued that in recent times, media has become more commercialized, interpretative critical to political parties and political leaders. Thus media focuses more on strategic game framing as a result of which the audience become fragmented and they are no more loyal to political parties. But instead, they become more critical because of media pluralism. In their study, the authors supported the arguments given by Jarren (2008) that democracy has become media democracy in the last decade (as cited in Stromback & Esser, 2014). The author mentioned four dimensions of mediatized representation of the politics. In first dimension, media is a most important source of information, in second dimension media is dependent upon the political institutions for their content and communication, third dimension is the content of media about politics as is guided by political logic and fourth dimension is based on the political institutions as guided by political logic. These four dimensions are named as an information source, media autonomy, media practice and political practice respectively. Kepplinger (2008) explained that there are three aspects of transformation in media environment: "loss of autonomy, shift of power and shift of functions" (p. 384). Loss of autonomy deals with reasons of political institutions to achieve their goals. The shift of power deals with decision making options for political and media institutions as they are more decentralized whereas shift of function deals with political actors who are given extra tasks for the survival of political parties over the media (as cited in Stromback & Esser, 2014). Due to the dependence of politics on the media and vice versa, the environment of mediated politics has been changed. The structure of democracy, structure of political communication and the relationship between politics, media and citizens has been altered largely. The author has serious doubts that digital media will transform the whole phenomenon of political communication at large because the role of news media as an institution will be transformed. Stromback and Esser (2014) conducted another study on

politics, media and democracy. The study mainly explained the literature and importance of mediated political communication from different scholar's perspective.

McNair (2009) studied democracy and journalism. McNair criticized the ideal role of democracy and media as according to the author media become market oriented. It is largely influenced by advertisers, the rise of infotainment has largely decreased public participation in a developed democratic system. Lewis, Inthorn and Wahl-Jorgensen (2005) argued that media cannot be blamed for creating distrust over the political system. The way the general public is represented in the media actually matters. They are represented as consumers in the media who lost their interest as an active participant in the political processes of the state. Therefore, "news is part of the problem rather than part of the solution" (as cited in McNair, 2009, p. 246).

Ullah (2009) conducted a study on free media, democracy and third world countries. The author explained that in third world countries there are group rivalries, less educated public, poor economic and political system and lack of technological advancement. Western scholars considered free media as a luxury for third world countries but Ullah argued that in this scenario media can play a good role in the development of society and the democratic system at large. Media can highlight the malpractices of those in government and expose their reality in front of the citizenry. In this way, media can serve democracy. It can provide information for the political and societal education of the citizens so that they can choose their representatives and make informed choices based on the enlightenment provided by the media.

Few studies have been conducted on mass media, new media and its relationship with democracy. Eijaz (2013) conducted a study on the impact of new media on the politics of Pakistan. According to the author, internet has changed the political environment and supported the democratization of information. In this internet era, citizen is more informed than ever before. As far as Pakistan is concerned, mobilization for the political gains has increased recently. The PTI protest of 2014 was considered by the author as an internet protest where youth was mobilized through internet. The author has concluded that the actual influence of the internet on politics is less as compared to the general perception of the people is that it has. Mangi, Soomro and Malik (2018) studied democracy and internet in Pakistan. According to the study, internet is growing rapidly in Pakistan but the country lacks cyber laws and regulations. The study was based on a survey of university students from all of the provinces. The results of the study revealed that social media is an effective tool of education in democratic countries. Likewise, it promotes democratic culture and values in Pakistan. As far as the general

perception is concerned, the experience of youth with the democratic system has never been good and most of them can't express their viewpoints openly over the internet. It happened because they experienced undemocratic practices at the institutional and state level at large.

Gul, Obaid and Ali (2017) discussed media liberalization as a challenge to democracy in Pakistan. It is argued that Pakistan had a mixed form of government throughout history, most of the time there has been a transition from dictatorship to democracy. During the dictatorial regimes, there were only state owned media that advocate the opinion of those in power. In 2002, rapid growth of media has started in Pakistan due to the liberalization policies of Musharraf's regime. The authors explained that the liberalization policy of media was targeted to achieve the agenda for getting foreign aid. In this way, Musharraf adopted the neo liberal model of developed nations. The rapid growth of media increased media concentration, market competition, unequal distribution of wealth and uninformed citizens and marketization. It gives birth to big media conglomerates in Pakistan. The groups include Jang group, Nawa-i-waqat group, Dawn media group, Express media group, daily Times group and ARY group. The narratives represented over the media regarding any government or political policy are more or less similar. Smaller media groups were not able to operate in this concentrated environment so they become part of the media giants.

The studies on democracy and media performance conducted by scholars in Pakistan are very few in number. The studies focused on the role of social media in democracy and democratic practices. Gul, Obaid and Ali (2017) linked the liberalization of mainstream media with democracy. The author is of the view that it's a major challenge for the democracy as liberalized media operate differently in different situations. Which sometimes support the government system but most of the times in Pakistan threats the system as well. Eijaz (2013) argued that social media democratized the information. The information which is not allowed to be broadcasted and published through mainstream media are spread to common people through social media. PTI Long March 2014 is the example of it. Mangi, Soomro and Malik (2018) are of the similar views that social media promotes democratic values in Pakistan.

The above mentioned studies researcher found are linking the democracy with media. The studies indicated a major Gap that studies conducted on the topic has limited scope. The studies conducted in western settings focused both the mainstream media and social media. Voltmer (2006) is of the view that patterns of political coverage has changed from simple stories to entertained ones. The stories without the entertainment factors create no interest. As the

polarized media provided option to public for choosing their favorite content. Furthermore, according to the scholars currently politics is presented as a game to create the interest (Aalberg, De Vreese & Strömbäck, 2016). Personalized coverage of their favorite political leaders create the interest of the common people (Van Aelst, Sheafer & Hubé, 2016). These sorts of studies were not widely focused by the scholars in Pakistan. So, current study tried to focus this gap to better judge the role of democratic media performance.

Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) conducted a study on media performance. The study has the following dimensions: Game Framing, Interpretative Reporting, Negativity, Political Balance, Hard and Soft news and Personalization. All these dimensions indicate how mass media is reporting politics in different situations but they mainly focus on media coverage in times of election. Game framing is defined as "media covers politics as a game: one loses and other wins". On the other hand, interpretative reporting is more concerned with the representation of journalists' opinions and analysis as main news. The third media performance indicator "Negativity" is defined as news is overloaded with politicians' misconduct, political failures, allegations etc. Negativity in news analyzes the overall tone and language used in news stories. Whereas personalization is more concerned with individualistic coverage of any event and issue. Hard and soft news was contently analyzed with the frequency of occurrence. The last indictor of democratic role performance analyzed here is "Political Balance". It is defined as all political parties and leaders must have equal coverage on media (Vreese, Esser & Hopmann, 2017, p. 03).

The core argument of the literature mentioned above revealed that although plural sources of media provide public with the wide range of narratives on a single topic but it inducted few negative practices in the field of journalism. Due to the plural and alternate sources of the information, public is being dis-informed in a way that personalization, negativity and game framing is being promoted to have more viewership. Though, alternate media provided a platform for public debates but the literature is evident that the credibility of news decreased with such alternations. The current study under investigation adopted the standardized operational definitions of Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) to analyze the democratic role of news media in Pakistan. Below is a detailed review of the indicators included in this study for a better understanding.

2.6 Indicators of Democratic Role Performance

The study derived six exclusive indicators of democratic role performance from literature (Aelst, Sheafer & Stanyer, 2012; Hopmann, Van Aelst & Legnante, 2012; Aalberg, Stromback & De Vreese, 2012; Salgado & Stromback, 2012; Jacobs & Schillemans, 2016). Indicators under investigation are personalization, political balance, game framing, interpretative reporting, negativity, and accountability.

Personalization is a widespread concept discussed in political communication. It is defined differently by different scholars. Balmas and Sheafer (2015) defined personalization of politics when individual characteristics are focused more on news coverage than party affiliations and group loyalties. Aelst, Sheafer and Stanyer (2012) attempt to develop a standardized operational definition of the concept. They divided personalization into two forms i.e., individualization and privatization. Individualization is more concerned with the political activities of politicians rather than focusing on their party politics while privatization deals with the personal life of politicians like their family affairs. The literature on personalization mainly focuses on self-personalization dimension (McGregor, 2018; Metz, Kruikemeier & Lecheler, 2020). It is debated that self-personalization is the most common form of personalization over social media, these personalized social media messages tend to create more reliance on politicians. Facebook is the common social networking site for common people, so it is argued that through Facebook, politicians communicate with common people to enhance their political image, independent of any influence like there is no party influence, no organizational influence etc. Common people get more emotionally attached to politicians when they are communicating with them on social media.

Personalization was studied in the election campaign of Germany in 2009 and United Kingdom in 2010. The results of the study revealed that prominent politicians were personalized in 90% of the news stories (Bacha, Langer & Merkle, 2014). Campus (2010) conducted a study to explore the mediatized politics in Italy and France. The study compared the construction of personalized leadership in both countries i.e., Berlusconi of Italy and Sarkozy of France. Berlusconi and Sarkozy are considered as media constructed leadership as both leaders used media to have personalized coverage of their daily life events. They promoted themselves as visionary leaders and presented themselves as being there to solve all the problems of the general public.

Van Aelst, Sheafer and Hubé (2016) provided the detailed work on personalization and the comparative study was conducted having 16 different countries. The personalization was accessed through general visibility and concentrated visibility. The results of the study indicated that general visibility of individual politician is more common in televised news as compared to the newspaper news but the visibility is not significant. Further it was noticed that newspaper provide more attention to individual politicians as compared to institutions while televised news provide main attention to political institutions. The study also found out that the difference of personalized news between Newspaper, TV and online is not significant. The study indicated that online news doesn't changes its form (Benson et al. 2012). In concentrated visibility it was found that commercial media is more personalized as compared to public news media. Further the federalized and the country with more TV channels tend to have more personalized coverage and focus on national leaders increased.

It is deduced from above literature that personalization is commonly linked with hard news because it personalizes the acts of politicians while they are in any political event or are involved in political speeches. The selection of words in electronic media are more sensationalized which leads to personalize politicians more as compared to print media. This argument from literature leads to the hypotheses of the study.

The second indicator of the study is political balance. Political bias and political balance are two different and exclusive terms but it is hard to find exclusive literature on them to define them separately (Starkey, 2007). Hopmann, Van Aelst and Legnante (2012) attempted to operationalize the concept of "balance". There are two main dimensions of political balance, one is the political system perspective and the other is media routine perspective. It is argued that balance is to give equal space and time to political parties, political actors and prominent political leaders on mass media but it is the government that decides the boundaries of balanced news coverage. On the other hand, biased coverage is defined opposite to it.

Furthermore, Wahl-Jorgensen et. al. (2017) studied political balance from the perspective of "impartiality as balance". The study analyzed BBC news coverage. It is argued that when media is impartial and is not taking the side of any of the political personality or political party, then the coverage is said to be balanced in terms of impartiality. Lo, King, Chen and Huang (2009) discussed Taiwan's perspective of political balance. The author argued that media coverage of presidential elections was highly influenced by the ruling party. During these elections, media provided favorable coverage to ruling party elites while unfavorable and less coverage to other parties. The party influence tends to create biased news coverage.

Hopmann, Van Aelst and Salgado (2016) studied political balance from the perspective of visibility and impartiality. The difference was analyzed between public and commercial media outlets. It was indicated that although the public media outlets are more balanced as compared to commercial ones but the difference is very less. Further it was discussed that when media market is competitive then media use to be more balanced. Overall, the study revealed that coverage is mostly dependent upon the system within which they operates and it also depends upon the expectations of public and voter perception. Furthermore, political parties are not apparently given the different kind of treatment.

The third indicator of democratic role performance is game framing. Few studies consider strategy and game frame as single frame i.e., strategic game frame (Dimitroval & Kostadinova, 2013; Pedersen, 2012; Pingree, Hill & McLeod, 2013; Schmuck, Heiss, Matthes, Engesser & Esser, 2017) while the second school of through consider both of these frames as two exclusive frames (Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2012). Before going any further in the understanding of these two types of frames, Gitlin (1980) explained that frame is "principles of selection and emphasis".

Definition of the game framing varies in the literature. In the historical studies, it was defined as who is ahead and who is behind (Fallows, 1997; Patterson, 1993) while some others called it as horse race journalism. Aalberg, Strömbäck and De Vreese (2012) developed standardized operationalization of both frames i.e., game and strategy to bring more clarity in literature. The game frame is more related to horse race journalism than strategy frame. In which the focus of media is on winners and losers and is most commonly related to the use of sports language to describe political events. The strategy frame is more related to politicians' styles, actions, motives and party goals. It is an indirect form of information. In this frame, the information provided is may be substantive or might completely divert attention to other issues.

Dunaway and Lawrence (2015) discussed game frame from media ownership, campaign news and electoral context's perspective. The author explained that prevalence of game framing is not considered a good indicator of democracy. Game framing is more prominent in the large chain and geographically dispersed newspapers. In the time of election when there is close competition between the different political parties, the prevalence of game framing increases while the study concludes that ownership structures have less contribution towards game framing. In US context, election coverage uses more game schemas. When a country is close to elections or is going through some political conflict, media frame news as a

game. The author called game framing as "cynical" coverage (Lawrence, 2000, p.111). This cynical coverage creates public mistrust in mainstream media; however, the effect is less in tabloid newspapers (Hopmann, Shehata & Strömbäck, 2015).

Aalberg, De Vreese and Strömbäck (2016) argued that game framing it not a common phenomenon in media but depends upon the type of news which is being covered. Study found out that media frame news as game when news topic is about political parties and democracy while in policy related topics mostly strategic frames are used. The study also found the elite newspapers use game framing more as compared to mass market newspapers. The study concluded that in normal times game framing is not much practiced by media organizations.

The above argument indicated that level of game framing varies with the type of media i.e., electronic and print media. Whereas the literature also indicated that as the media type varies, the type of news i.e., hard and soft also have influence in game framing. This argument drives toward hypothesis of the study.

Another indicator of the democratic role performance is interpretative reporting. With the passage of time journalism has changed from descriptive to interpretative but there is a lack of conceptual clarity among these two. The studies conducted on this area cannot be compared due to the lack of standardized operationalization and conceptualization of the concept. Salgado and Strömbäck (2012) attempted to develop a standardized operationalization of the term. There are two main dimensions of interpretive reporting, one is content related and the other is format related operationalization. It is explained that descriptive journalism is based on who, when, what, where and verifiable fact-based news. On the other hand, interpretive journalism focuses on "why" and is not mainly fact based. Interpretive journalism is based on the overt commentary, value laden and is called journalism of opinions. Furthermore, it is explained that interpretive journalism is the inclusion of journalistic voice to news stories, journalistic explanations, speculations and evaluations. It is beyond verifiable facts. It is concluded that interpretive journalism is more about journalists' own analysis and explanation about current happenings. Zheng and Ren (2018) studied interpretative reporting and re-contextualization in the context of Chinese media. The study revealed that in Chinese media, the direct quotes of interpreters are mentioned in inverted commas. It indicates that the words inside inverted commas are not main news but are opinionated. Furthermore, the purpose of interpretation is to explain or re-contextualize the political discourses, which many times help readers to understand the discourse.

In literature objectivity and interpretative reporting are discussed side by side. A study was conducted by Morris (2007) to investigate the concept of slanted objectivity. The advent of polarized media system gave birth to partisan news coverage. It results in fragmentation of audiences. The study was conducted in US settings. Morris explained that citizenry wishes to see their opponent political party in a bad light for example Democrats wishes to see Republicans in a bad light. It shows that partisan identification is linked with perceived media bias. The coverage of Fox News influence the voters to vote for George W. Bush, they were likely to criticize John Kerry. Swing voters are the one who decides the outcome of presidential elections. Fox News coverage was more inclined towards Republicans however, CNN was inclined towards Democrats. It was concluded that polarized sources of news had an influence on individual fragmentation. Similar nature of the study was conducted by Lawrence, Molyneux, Coddington and Holton (2014). The focus of the study was social media. The research explored journalists' use of Twitter to get news stories or just to post their own opinion about the current happenings so, social media stories are most of the time interpretative in nature (Akpan et. al., 2012).

A longitudinal study was conducted by Esser and Umbricht (2014) to investigate the level of interpretative journalism over time in six western democracies including United States, Germany, France, Great Britain, Switzerland and Italy. The study, which was comparative in nature, explored that interpretative and opinionated news is mixed with objective news reporting. Mass media changed from contextualized, fact based hard news to more interpretative and opinionated news stories in these states. The content analysis of newspapers was conducted to know that how, with the passage of time, news writing styles changed. The data of newspapers were investigated from 1960 to 2000. The three basic models were mentioned in the study, the first was 'Anglo-American' model that includes United States and Great Britain, the second model was the 'Corporatist-Germanic' model that includes Germany and Switzerland, the third one was 'Polarized' and 'Mediterranean' model that includes France and Italy. The twelve media outlets were investigated in this research, two newspapers were taken from each of the country in which one was national and the second one was regional. Results of the study revealed that France and Italy were least balanced and doesn't separate news from opinion. Anglo-American model was more adherent to the norms of facticity. Transparency was operationalized as the use of direct quotes in news stories while authenticity was operationalized as the amount of identified sources with names in news stories. 1960 US media used direct quotes and sources more as compared to the other countries but this trend

changed later on in 2000. The corporatist model used least direct quotes and sources. Opinionated news stories appeared more in the polarized media model and were least in US newspapers. Information mixed with opinions was a prominent factor in US press. Information mix with interpretation was present in all six countries that indicated a homogenous trend. It was concluded that with the passage of time media becomes more inclined to interpretative and opinionated news.

Literature has explored that it is hard for the readers to distinguish between interpretative and objective news reports. The journalistic explanations, analysis and interpretations are being presented as the main news without any demarcation (Santana and Hopp, 2020). A research study was conducted in the United States to investigate biasness in the news media. Results revealed that two-third of news channels were taking side of the political parties while covering political and social issues (Gottfried, Stocking & Grieco, 2018). Studies have reconnoitered the fact that it is hard to find purely objective media, as the media organizations which are supposed to be objective have some elements of subjectivity and interpretation.

Salgado, Strömbäck and Aalberg (2016) the study indicated that most commonly interpretation of the news is presented in opinionated news but 29% of the regular news includes interpretation. In France and United states half of the regular news had journalist interpretation while Portugal and Spain has less level of journalistic interpretation. In Sweden and Great Britain overt commentaries were mainly used with value laden words. The study concludes that level of interpretative journalism depends upon the type of channel that either it is commercial, public, elite or mass markets.

The above literature indicated that interpretative reporting is more opinionated and use value laden words. It is argued in literature that print media is practicing interpretative reporting more as compared to other media types, whereas the placement of interpretative news is also different as compared to factual based news. This argument is reflected in hypothesis of the study.

The fifth indicator of the study is negativity. In literature, negativity is mainly explained in terms of sensational, exaggerated and negative tonality in news. Soroka and McAdams (2015) explained that negative news attracts the viewers' attention more as compared to the positive news. The author identified that negative news is not considered as a good sign for democracy but the market oriented media organizations are more interested to sell negative news to generate profit. Most of the time media itself is not negative in nature but is reporting

the rivals in a negative light. Stockmann (2011) explored that marketized news media tends to exert pressure on weak media outlets to change their reporting style which tends to increase the prevalence of negative news in the media environment.

Literature has provided the standardized operationalization of negativity. Lengauer, Esser and Berganza (2011) divided negativity into two parts where one is frame related negativity and the other is actor related negativity. Both of the indictors of negativity are studied from the perspective of "overall tone" and "confrontation". Negativity is when media focuses on the misconduct of political leaders, provide pessimistic outlook, highlight incapability, criticizing and put allegations on the political party and political personalities. Uzuegbunam and Udeze (2013) argued that media "overhype" the news to get its viewership (p. 71), which results in the negative coverage of the events and issues.

Guggenheim, Kwak and Campbell (2011) explored non-traditional television programs and their relationship with distrust of politicians, media mistrust and systematic cynicism. The study analyzed three types of nontraditional programs i.e., comedy talk show use, satirical news use, cable opinion news. The results of the study revealed that satirical news was not positively related to media mistrust. Satirical news was only related to systematic cynicism. It is argued that these shows were commonly related more with the apparent characteristics of political personality, while policy discussions were absent. The discussions about government and the public were missing as well. These shows just represent politics in the form of jokes which had a vital impact on political mistrust.

Conde, Calderón, Pascual (2016) studied negativity in the political news of Spain. The main purpose of the study was to investigate how negatively politics is represented in different mediums. Ten Spanish news media outlets were contently analyzed. Negativity in news was measured through four types of variables i.e., tonality, conflict, incapability and unfavourability. Tonality can both be negative and positive. Negative tonality was defined as the stories related to political failure, crisis and disappointment, on the other hand positive tonality was defined as success, improvement, achievement, gain and hope. The conflict had two dimensions, one is conflict centeredness and the other is consensus. The conflict centeredness dimension includes the stories related to dispute, controversies and disagreements whereas the consensus dimension include news stories related to the political agreement. The third variable of the study, incapability, has both positive and negative dimensions i.e., competence and incapability. Incapability includes all the news stories related to media critique of incapability and incompetence, whereas competence includes news stories related to

capability and commendation. The last variable of the study was unfavourability, it has both negative and positive dimensions i.e., favorability and unfavourability. Favorability is when in news and opinion, media takes side of the politicians, favoring their policies and stances whereas unfavourability is opposite to it. Results of the study revealed that the level of negativity in Spanish media is lower as compared to European countries. The news about politics was not positive but was neither negative in Spanish media. So, it was concluded that somehow news media in Spain represented politics in a balanced way. This study has contrasting results than that of Guggenheim, Kwak and Campbell (2011).

Hellmann (2020) analyzed visuals of tabloid and broadsheet newspapers in the African context. The study was conducted during the chaos in Somalia and Congo. The author argued that media during the crisis used the frame of "Failed State" (p. 1). Results of the study revealed that tabloid newspaper of Africa were pessimist in nature as compared to a broadsheet newspaper. The tabloid newspapers used the 'failed state' frame more as compared to broadsheets. Tabloids were highlighting instability, chaos and economic destruction in their news coverage of the crisis as compared to broadsheets. Broadsheet newspapers used positive visualized frames. The study operationalized pessimism as "negative framing of event" while optimism as a positive aspect of the story or can be the neutral tone of the event.

Ridout and Smith (2008) explored that negative media campaigns of politicians get more viewership as compared to positive ones (as cited in Pedersen, 2014). For more viewership media use game framing strategies in which political leaders are presented as sports players (Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2012). Pedersen (2014) argued that whenever media does not cover the political actors or do not give repeated coverage to them especially during election times, politicians use to pay the media organizations for having repeated coverage of themselves and their party and to be present in the news media. It is evident in literature that those media organizations with less subscription tend to have more negativity in news (Arango-Kure, Garz & Rott, 2014).

Esser, Engesser and Matthes (2016) studied that negativity is commonly associated with the topic of news. The results of the study indicated that the topics like political scandals, quality of governance, functioning of democracy, crime and judiciary which are ninherently negative tend to have negative media coverage. The study found that Austrian news was covering many topics like political scandals, misconduct and corruption. So, it ranks high in negativity index. Immigration related topics were negatively discussed in Swedish news, Norwegian news and Swiss news. Furthermore, it was also discussed that opinionated news

such as columns and commentaries were more negative in nature around all 16 countries. The study concluded with the fact that online news were comparatively less negative then offline news.

The last indicator of the democratic role performance for this study is accountability. Accountability is considered a key element of democracy. It deals with the performance of those in power. Bovens (2005, p. 184) called mass media as informal "accountee" in the democratic setup. Furthermore, it is argued that political accountability is not a linear process rather it depends upon the media and the journalists that how they interpret the whole process. Sometimes they think that political leaders are involved in the crisis, misconduct etc. so they hold politicians accountable in front of the public, in either way they ignore the performance of politicians (Djerf-Pierre et al., 2014). When media works on the principle of political accountability, the public use to have more interest in politics and political process. The public interest is independent of education and social status (Kalyango, 2010).

Aytimur and Bruns (2019) linked the informed public with the process of accountability. They argued that when public is highly informed, they can hold politicians accountable. The information can be achieved both through public gatherings and the media. However, the study didn't consider media as the only source to produce informed citizenry. Citizenry also expresses their thoughts and feelings in elections and while selecting electorates. There have been other studies that shed light on the relationship between leadership and accountability. This study concluded that when there is large circulation and subscription of newspapers, the level of accountability is higher. Whereas those media groups which are more profit oriented were less focused on the accountability of politicians. The canvas size of the voters had no relationship with the political accountability (Bruns & Himmler, 2014).

This fact is evident in the literature that citizenry can't hold power elites accountable on their own but it is the media, non-governmental organizations and opposing political parties who can make it for the public. They can highlight their scandals in front of the public. Hamid (2012) studied political accountability and explored that when the citizens don't have consensus over a single political party, then a coalition government is formed. In coalition government, public cannot accurately identify who is responsible for what. They cannot ask politicians for their actions individually. Another study considers media bias as a major factor to distort political accountability. When media is biased (providing favorable or unfavorable discourse) public can't identify the performance of the incumbent government. The

relationship between voters and the incumbent government depends upon the level of media bias (Adachi & Hizen, 2014).

Bertelli (2016) identified few key elements for holding the politicians or policymakers accountable. First is the "answerability" of the past performance of political leaders (p.4). The second is "identifiability" (p.4), it is the responsibility of the voters to identify political leaders accurately as whose actions can be held accountable. Identifying the right person is key to accountability. The third is information level of the citizens. If the citizens are well informed then they can be in a better position to evaluate the performance of the power holders. The last element of accountability is to "sanction politicians at ballot box" (p.4).

Housley (2002) explained that the media conduct special interviews of politicians to hold them accountable. The main purpose of these kinds of interviews is to evaluate the fulfillment of public commitments. Tileaga (2010) explored that during interviews with journalists, politicians explain their major accomplishments, public commitments, their stakes and position on certain issues. The study concluded that it's not the media, which is searching for the information, it's the politicians who are searching for the opportunity to explain their own viewpoint in front of the public. It is indicated in literature that level of accountability in most of the countries is not a prominent element as media have their own political leaning and supports the party in power. Furthermore, the accountability also varies type of news. This argument leads to the hypotheses of the study.

The literature mentioned above provided insights into the ideal and expected role of media in a democratic setup. Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) have the major contribution in literature as their study provided standardized operational definitions of the key concepts used in political communication and the study also tested those definitions while analyzing the democratic performance of mass media. However, the study of Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) is limited to western settings.

As far as the democratic role of media is concerned, scholars have explored that with the growth of different media forms, from print to new media, the quality of the news decreased (Dunaway & Lawrence, 2015; Stockmann, 2011; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). It happens most of the time because media owners become the part of political system for personal gains or many times political parties own the media organizations. In this way, journalistic norms are compromised and ideologies of the politicians are reflected in the news (De Castello, 2014; Esser & Matthes, 2013). But the fact is that democracy can't operate independently. Media is

required for the part and parcel of news between politicians and public (Strömbäck & Van Aelst 2013; Voltmer & Sorensen, 2019).

Furthermore, studies explored that to flourish true democratic norms in the society there must be the accountability of the power elites. Its the responsibility of mass media to serve the public by providing them factual information about politics, help them to choose political leaders and provide interpretation and analysis of events (Benson, 2008; Graber, 2003; Gurevitch & Blumler, 1990; Norris, 2000; Stromback, 2005). With the passage of time above mentioned functions of mass media seems to be depleted because of the competition and concept of 'rate racing' among media to cover the news first, which give birth to exaggerated and sensationalized news (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study applied framing theory, as it helped in identifying different frames used by different TV channels and newspapers in Pakistan while covering different political news. It helped to identify the difference in the news coverage of the same event or issue by different media channels or newspapers.

3.1 Framing Theory

Frames are used to represent politics, political actors, institutions etc. in certain ways. These frames are embedded in the cognition of the media owners, news content and sometimes in the mind of common people (Matthes, 2012). Political parties, political actors, political elites, activists, lobbyists and other powerful people tend to develop frames in news media and public discourses (Benford & Snow, 2000; Gerhards & Rucht, 1992; Hänggli & Kriesi, 2010) to achieve desired objectives. Many studies had been conducted to analyze input and output frames for this reason. On the other hand, social movement's scholars and theorists defined framing as a "strategy for social movements to mobilize both participants and the public". The successful frame analysis identifies problems, its solution and tactics to motivate the general public for targeted action (Snow & Benford, 1992, p. 17).

These frames have an audience effect as well. Frames present news or information about any event in a specific way as described by organization owners, power elites and the influential personalities involved in news. Media organizations use to repeat them again and again to get public attention and to inculcate them in the minds of the people to think about the issue or incident in certain way as it is presented in news stories (Entman, Matthes, & Pellicano 2009). It could work both positively and negatively. According to Druckman (2001), framing occurs when a speaker on media put more emphasis on a subset of news information and as a result audience considers it as important while developing their opinion. It is evident from studies that news framing can increase or decrease the importance/ salience of an issue (Vreese, 2004; Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko, 2011; Matthes, 2008).

However, the general public does not blindly follow the news media frames. There are a number of factors that determine the influence of media frames. According to Matthes (2008) the frames continuously included in the agenda are likely to have more impact on people. This effect is minimized when competing frames are present (Chong & Druckman, 2007). In modern democracies, there has always been a struggle between political elites and journalists' preferences. The frames with weaker logic and argument tend to have less influence, while

strong frames with convincing logic and emotional appeals like fear or anger tend to have a strong influence amongst audiences (Chong & Druckman, 2007). The most important framing effect depends on the credibility of news and sources (Druckman, 2001; Matthes, 2008).

With the advancement in technology, TV and commercialization increased the focus to cover politics from different perspectives like as strategic game (Andersen & Thorson, 1989). This approach allowed the journalist to follow hardcore deadlines on the one hand and on the other hand, requires fewer resources as compared to investigative stories. So, it is easy for journalists to practice this approach to cover politics as a strategic game (Fallows, 1997). Furthermore,

"The proliferation of polling also allows news media to cover the state of the horse race quickly and efficiently, and news organizations have consequently become among the most important commissioners in the polling business" (Brettschneider, 1997; Sonck & Loosveldt, 2008, p. 164).

In addition to this, polling allowed news media to have more objectivity because it is no more relying on journalist perception of political news events only (Lavrakas & Traugott, 2000). Furthermore, literature is evident that the news stories about candidate's failure, success or background, tend to have more audience's attention (Iyengar et al., 2004).

Iyengar (1990, 1991, 1996) in his study explored that news stories can be divided into two frames, Episodic and Thematic. The author analyzed news reports about the poverty concerns of USA. He found that there were two categories of news. The first category framed news of poverty as a social/ collective outcome (thematic frame) on the other hand second category was poverty in terms of the specific victim (episodic frame). Iyengar further defined episodic frames, when news story is covered from particular stances, for example, illegal immigrant, homeless person etc. they are specific illustrations of issue or event. On the other hand, thematic frames are broader and they focus more on abstract and contextualized coverage of the issues. According to Park (2012) thematic frame coverage of news focuses more on the background and reason of the event. While episodic frames focus more on occurrences, they are usually sensational, vivid, or provocative images.

The study under investigation evaluates the democratic performance of news media in Pakistan while covering different political issues and events. It focuses on the way different political issues and events, political actors, power elites and institutions are presented in news, either they are personalized or are covered through game framing etc. The study used framing

theory as a background to have better insights about frames presented in the news content while covering general elections 2018 and PDM protest in Pakistan.

3.2 News Performance from Normative Theory's Perspective

Normative theory are linked with citizen's expectation regarding the role they play for the support of democracy and societal values (McQuail, 2010). The media is entrusted to control the information, which is considered as a key role in support of democratic values in the country. According to the scholars public has provided this role to the media to hold power elites accountable in front of them and support the public agenda through constructive coverage on public issues and problems (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2003). Schudson (2008) argued that it's the moral responsibility of the media to protect democracy.

Wolff (2013) explained that the normative theories of democracy and media provides the ideal perspective which is most of the time not completely achievable. These theories provided the ideal situation in order to aspire common people to achieve acceptable standards for the media.

Keeping in the mind short comings of the normative theories of media, Western democracies put an effort to provide the workable solution based upon the libertarian theory of media. They posits that media should be a medium to exchange arguments, evidences and opinions in order to have a check on powerful and to make an informed decision. Further, scholars argued that state owned media will hamper the news and will not be able to expose those with whom they are closely working. As in this situation media becomes the mouthpiece of government (Scammell, 2000). In polarized media system, libertarian theory will create a competition and will motivate media to create the content which will motivate public to read and follow. In this way competition will expose those involved in false and sensationalized news (Biagi, 2014). Fenton (2011) and Dawes (2013) argued that in history it is noticed that libertarian media most of the times tend to trigger anti-democratic practices. Another scholar negate this opinion and argued that

"the role the media have played over the years in exposing journalistic scandals is proof that the media marketplace is free and competitive enough to ensure that the truth generally prevails" (Bettig & Hall, 2012, pp. 16–17)

The discussion about the normative theories of the press by different scholars concludes that in a democracy media's role is to provide a sphere for public debates. It can't be achieved without the freedom of media. The scholars suggested a workable

solution that is theory of social democracy. This theory deals with limited involvement of the government. Their role will only be limited to the formulation of the regulations but those which doesn't curtail the press freedom and media. It's the responsibility of the media to limit the role of government as prescribed by rules (Davis, 2016).

3.3 Research Questions

The study have following research questions:

RQ1: What are the salient features of democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan in the coverage of elections 2018 and PDM protests?

RQ2: To what extent the attributes of democratic role performance are correlated with each other?

RQ3: Whether do the characteristics like media type, news type, topic of the news story and placement of the news story influence the democratic role performance of news media?

RQ4: How and to what extent, the characteristics like media type, news type, topic of the news story and placement of the news story differ in terms of their association with the attributes of the democratic role performance including game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting, personalization and political balance.

3.4 Hypotheses

Based upon the literature following hypothesis are derived:

3.4.1 Framing of Elections 2018

H1: The use of (a) game framing and (b) personalization is higher in hard news as compared to soft news while reporting elections 2018

H2: The use of (a) game framing (b) personalization (c) political balance and (d) interpretative reporting is higher in electronic media as compared to print media.

H3: Non-prominent news stories have greater amount of interpretation as compared to prominent news stories.

H4: Print media focuses less on accountability of political actors as compared to electronic media

H5: News related to events have more (a) game framing, (b) personalization and (c) negativity as compared to news related to process

3.4.2 Framing PDM protests

H6: Print media has more game framing as compared to electronic media.

H7: Negativity is more prominent in hard news as compared to soft news

H8: Level of interpretative reporting is significantly different with media type, news type, topic and placement of news

H9: There is significant difference in mean scores of prominent and non- prominent news while reporting PDM protest

H10: Level of (a) game framing, (b) personalization and (c) negativity is higher in news related to hard news and news related to events as compared to soft news and news related to process

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To analyze the democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan, the researcher applied framing theory as theoretical framework. Through quantitative content analysis, the study developed the relationship of type of news, type of media, placement of news and topic of the news with the democratic role performance indicators. As the study is post-positivist in nature (Davis & Baran, 2015), it employs a census approach to accurately measure the relationship between variables and generalize the results at the later stage of the study.

4.1 Content Analysis

Macnamara (2005) discussed content analysis as the best method for the analysis of media content. Neuendorf (2002) considered it as "messages centered methodology" (as cited in Macnamara, 2005). While Neuman (1997) explained that it's an analysis of "content of text". Here content is words, symbols, pictures, themes and messages which are communicated to the public whereas the text is anything in written, spoken or visual form which serves as a medium of communication (p. 272–273). Quantitative content analysis is a suitable method to analyze the frequencies of certain texts presented in news media content (Parry, 2019).

Neuendorf (2001) defined content analysis as:

> *"summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-inter-subjectivity, a prior design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented" (as cited in Spence, 2004).*

Content analysis was used to analyze the news stories of newspapers and TV channels. The content analysis had been used by many scholars in the literature to analyze political news and to evaluate the role that media is performing for democracy. The way politics is represented over media reflects the democratic norms of the society as it is considered the fourth pillar of state. The major variables of the study were analyzed in literature via content analysis (Bacha, Langer and Merkle, 2014; Conde, Calderón & Pascual, 2016; Hopmann, Van Aelst & Legnante, 2011; Pedersen, 2012; Esser & Umbricht, 2014).

Quantitative content analysis was considered as an appropriate method for data collection due to several considerations. Firstly, the aim of the study was to analyze the text i.e., content in the case of television, it is only possible through content analysis. Secondly, the

method provides unobtrusive means to analyze the media content. Thirdly, it can allow the quantification of the data that is easy to statistically analyze according to the coding procedure.

For quantitative content analysis, four media outlets were selected i.e., newspapers include Daily Dunya (Urdu) and Dawn (English) while TV Channel includes Express and Geo news. The study focuses to analyze the diverse media content so, the media outlets mentioned above are representing major media groups of Pakistan. The selected media are having different political leanings. Both print and electronic media were focused to study a broader spectrum of Pakistan's media. Furthermore, this selection of the different media outlets actually provides a deeper understanding of the fact that why a single news item is presented differently in different news media outlets.

4.2 Census Approach

Lavrakas (2008) explained that census is a method of data collection in which every member of the population participates in the process of data collection. The author considered it an appropriate method for data collection because for this research study, data of the print and electronic media was collected from each of the days selected for the study of both the cases i.e., elections 2018, and PDM protest.

Census was selected as the method of data collection because it provided detailed information about everyday media coverage related to elections 2018, and PDM protest. Furthermore, the media coverage of elections lasted almost one month before and one month after the elections 2018. If the sample was selected out of these two months, the data would be very limited and it was not possible to achieve appropriate results. Same is the case with the PDM protest, at the time of data collection the month selected had most of the protest happened and the coverage of one protest lasted for few days only. So, the researcher considered census method as appropriate to analyze the media coverage of both cases. If sample was selected as the coverage research had very limited number of news and would have a limited news perspective as in elections every news item was important.

In the case of newspapers, the front, back and national pages of both Urdu and English newspapers were analyzed. Furthermore, the 9 pm news bulletin of TV channels was considered for data analysis. As the study analyses the two specific cases i.e., elections 2018, and PDM protest so, the news related to both of these cases were analyzed only. The political news is a form of hard news and are mostly published in front, back and national pages of the newspapers because of the prominence of news item. Same is the case with television, prime

time news bulletin discusses the most important happenings of the day. In case of the Urdu newspaper, there were large number of news related to elections and PDM so only three columned news were selected for data analysis.

4.2.1 Time Duration

Content of the mentioned newspapers and TV channels were analyzed for three months, two months for elections 2018, and one month for PDM protest. For elections 2018 data from June 25, 2018, to August 24, 2018, was analyzed and for PDM protest November 22, 2020, to December 21, 2020 was analyzed. This time duration was selected because elections are the major political event in democratic countries and the duration of two months includes the time before and after elections, in this way the researcher can have better insights into changing news frames over time. On the other hand, PDM protest was analyzed for one month in which most of the protest were staged during the period of data collection.

The duration mentioned was worth analyzing because it encompasses election times, which is the most important event in the democratic process and the coverage in this critical period is different and require to follow democratic norms more. This is because in normal settings, media generally follow the democratic norms to some extent but in the critical period due to ratings, they forget the norms and try to maximize the coverage with sensational and personalized coverage.

4.3 Unit of Observation

Sedgwick (2014) explained that the unit which is directly being observed is the unit of observation while Kumar (2018) argues that it is the "unit in which measurement is done" (p. 77).

News bulletin of 9pm and three columned news stories of front, back and national pages of newspapers were unit of observation. Primetime news bulletin includes all the major news stories of the day while front, back and national pages of the newspapers include most important stories which are mostly political in nature. In the newspaper, the entire news story was a unit of observation because the variable under investigation cannot be appropriately measured by analyzing one or two stating paragraphs. For this purpose three months were required to code the complete dat.

The holistic Coding method was used to analyze the complete text on the whole and identifying the specific code used in the data. Onwuegbuzie, Frels and Hwang (2016) argued

that holistic coding is when "the data corpus as a whole and identify the basic themes or issues in the data" (p. 13").

4.4 Variables

In this study type of news, placement of news and topic of the event are independent variable while democratic role performance is dependent variable.

Independent Variable		Dependent Variable
Type of News		**Democratic Role Performance**
Type of media		1: Game Framing 2: Negativity 3: Personalization 4: Political Balance 5: Interpretative reporting 6: Accountability
Placement of the News		
Topic of the news		
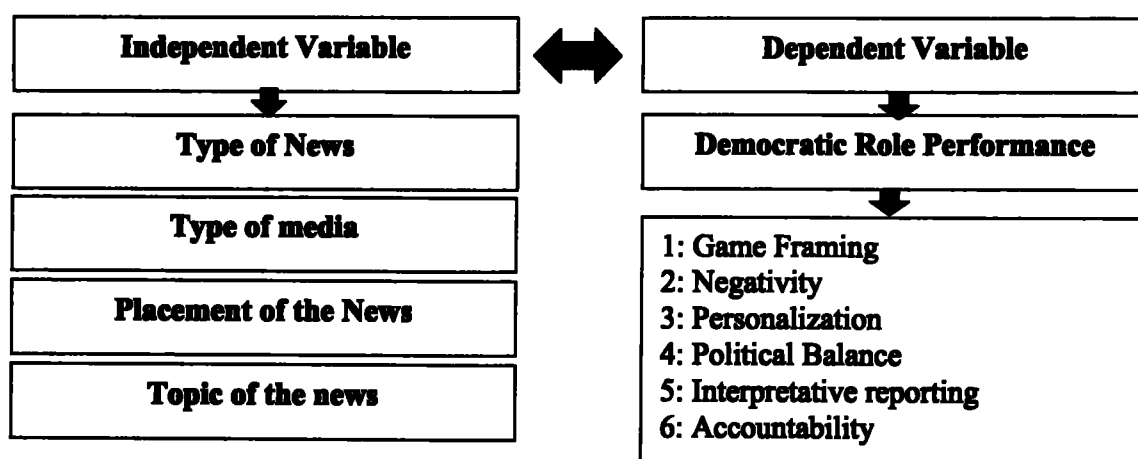
4.5 Conceptual Definitions

Conceptualization of dependent and independent variables are as follows:

4.5.1 Game Framing

Game framing is when media covers politics as a game: one loses and another wins. In this type of framing, they used sports language like political leaders are referred as Captains etc. (Aalberg, Vreese & Stromback, 2017).

4.5.2 Negativity

Negativity is indicated by the overall tone of the news story in pessimistic outlook and it focuses more on confrontation style (Lengauer et. al. 2011).

4.5.3 Personalization

Personalization is when politicians are presented as individual actors. It is more individualized coverage of events or issues (Aelst, Sheafer, & Hube, 2017).

4.5.4 Political Balance

Political balance is when all the political parties are given equal coverage in terms of time and space (Hopmann, Aelst & Legnante, 2012).

4.5.5 Interpretative Reporting

Interpretative journalism or reporting is more when journalist has great control over news. Journalists' analysis is presented as main news. This type of journalism is more descriptive, not fact focused and is most of the time value laden (Salgado & Stromback, 2012).

4.5.6 Accountability

Accountability is when the media holds political elites and policy makers accountable in front of the public. The media informs the public regarding different policies so that citizen can evaluate their performance at large (Snyder & Strömberg, 2010).

4.5.7 Type of the News

The news story is a reported account of an event. It is broadly divided into 'Hard' news and 'Soft' news (Lehman-Wilzig and Seletzky, 2010).

4.5.8 Type of the Media

Media is a term usually used to transmit messages via any medium whereas mass media is to disseminate the messages to the larger audiences/ viewers at once. It is broadly divided into print media, electronic or broadcast media and news media (Dominick, 2010). In this study, media is broadly divided into print media and electronic media in which newspapers and television were analyzed.

4.5.9 Placement of the News

Placement of news is referred to as how prominently or non-prominently news stories were adjusted in front and back page of newspaper (Pew Research center, 19989). Collins dictionary defined the concept of placement "placement of something or someone is the act of putting them in a particular place or position" and particularly placement of news. For this study placement of news is referred to as the place where news story was placed like in the front page or back page of the newspaper and in the case of electronic media, news story was placed in which number in the news bulletin such as it could be in 4th, or 5th position.

4.5.10 Topic of the News

The topic of news refers to the basic theme or subject of the news story (Dominick, 2010).

4.6 Operational Definitions

The data for the study was accessed using the following operational definitions:

4.6.1 Game Framing

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as game framing:

   1: Use of sports language

   2: Stories having impression of election win or lose

   3: Use of sensational language

   4: News stories containing opinion polls

4.6.2 Negativity

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as negativity:

   1: Overall tone of the story, either it is negative or not

   2: The overall pessimistic outlook of the story

   3: News story reports conflict between the parties involved and are exposed in news story

   4: News stories exposing incapability and misconduct of political leaders

   5: News story which is critical towards a specific political actor.

4.6.3 Interpretative Reporting

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as interpretative reporting:

   1: Labeling of news story

   2: Amount or share of journalistic analysis and interpretation in news story

   3: Providing journalistic reasoning behind the happening

   4: Journalistic speculations about upcoming events and their consequences

   5: Journalistic contextualization

   6: Overt journalistic commentaries

4.6.4 Political Balance

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as political balance:

1: Visibility (which political personality, political party or organization is appearing in the news story and to what extent)

- Political actors

- Institutions

- Political party

2: Favorability (political perspective or stances favorable or unfavorable)

4.6.5 Personalization

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as personalization:

1: Politician's characteristics include following sub-frames:

- Political competence

- Leadership

- Credibility

- Morality

- Candidates' appearance

2. Personal life of politician include the following sub-frames:

- Family life

- Leisure time

- Love life

4.6.6 Accountability

The news story having the below characteristics were considered as accountability:

1: Non- concealment of sensitive information

2: Dissenting anti-establishment perspective

3: Highlighting undemocratic behavior

4.6.7 Type of the News

Type of the news is divided in to hard and soft news

1. Hard news are those news stories based upon recent happenings regarding politics, which will be obsoleted if not reported timely.

2. Soft news are those news stories which are not time bound and can mostly cover the lighter side of politics.

4.6.8 Type of the Media

Media is divided in to two i.e., electronic media and print media

1. Electronic media here refers and focuses only on TV

2. Print media in this study refers to newspapers

4.6.9 Placement of the News

Placement of the news refers to the place where news is broadcasted or published. It is divided into prominent and non-prominent news. The news broadcasted/published in top stories of TV news bulletin or front page of a newspaper are referred to as prominent. While broadcasted/published in later stories of TV news bulletin or back of national pages of the newspaper are referred as non-prominent news.

1. **For Print Media:** Front page was coded prominent, back and national page was coded as non-prominent

2. **For Electronic Media:** News story was coded prominent if it was placed in 1-5th number in news bulletin while non-prominent was coded if the news item is placed in 6-10 news stories.

4.6.10 Topic of the News

Topic is related to the broad theme of the news story. It is divided into two i.e., process and event.

1. The process includes all the news stories related to the process of elections and preparations of the elections like printing of the ballot papers etc. while in case of PDM protest it refers to the news stories related to the formation of the PDM, planning for the protest etc.

2. Events include day to day affairs related to elections and PDM protest for example casting vote, coverage of political campaigns, press conferences etc.

4.7 Measurement and Coding Procedure

To investigate the democratic role performance presented in the study, the measurement and coding procedures were deduced from the literature (Aalberg, Vreese & Stromback, 2017; Kumar at. el. 2017; Aelst, Sheafer, Hube, 2017; Hopmann, Aelst & Legnante, 2012; Salgado & Stromback, 2012; Sevenans et. al., 2015; Franklin, 2005; Van Dijk, 1995). There are total six variables. These six variables have both positive and negative aspects of democratic role performance.

The six variables for the study were finalized, defined conceptually and operationally with the help of literature. As the coding scheme is adopted from the literature where few variables i.e., game framing, interpretative journalism, personalization and accountability had 0-1 coding scheme (1=yes/ present and 0=no/absent) while negativity had been coded with positive, negative and neutral (-1=negative, 0=neutral/ balanced, +1= positive). On the other hand, the political balance had different codes ranging from 0 to 5 as per visibility of the institutions, political actors and political parties while favorability also had codes from 1-4 (favorable, unfavorable, ambivalent and neutral). The detailed coding scheme is provided in Appendix I.

The similar kind of measurement scale 0-1 and -1, 0, +1, is evident from literature (Salgado & Strömbäck, 2012; An & Gower, 2009; De Fortuny, De Smedt, Martens & Daelemans, 2012; Baumgartner & Bonafont 2015; Metz, Kruikemeier & Lecheler, 2019; Hallin & Mellado, 2018; Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2012; Holtz-Bacha, Langer & Merkle, 2014; Bashatah, 2017).

4.7.1 Recoding Variables

As the coding scheme was adopted from the literature, it is a diverse coding schemes as per the demand and requirement of the data. The researcher transformed the data through SPSS recoding command to bring uniformity in all the variables. Entire data was recoded to a uniform scheme i.e., 0-1 (no-yes). -1, 0, + 1 coding scheme makes it difficult for the researcher to compute the attributes of variables because the positive and negative values had canceled each other and the results with this coding scheme were not appropriate.

4.7.2 Training of the Coders

Two code the data two coder were selected. The coder had the graduate level of the study and were already coded the data of post graduate researchers. Coders selected had background of mass media because the coder with other background might affect the reliability.

The coders were initially given data of one week data. The data was based on previous elections of Pakistan and news were randomly selected. The news stories included both print and electronic media. The code book was similar of this study but data was different. This procedure was repeated three times on different data of elections. Once they completely understood the coding scheme, two weeks of the news from elections 2018 and one week from PDM was provided to check the reliability. Training procedure lasted for two weeks for three hours daily.

4.8 Intercoder Reliability

The study used Fretwurst Lotus (2013) to check the inter coder reliability. the average value of standardized lotus was 0.68 which is satisfactory. Furthermore, level of agreement was also calculated to get reliable value for two coders.

Table 1

Intercoder Reliability

Indicators		PDM			Elections		
		Standardized Lotus Coefficient	Percentage of agreement	Correlation coefficient	Standardized Lotus Coefficient	Percentage of agreement	Correlation coefficient
Game framing	Yes	0.62	0.91	0.64	0.60	0.91	0.64
	No	0.62	0.91	0.61	0.62	0.91	0.61
Negativity	Yes	0.63	0.91	0.64	0.63	0.91	0.64
	No	0.67	0.93	0.62	0.67	0.93	0.62
Interpretative reporting	Yes	0.70	0.94	0.63	0.68	0.91	0.63
	No	0.64	0.91	0.70	0.64	0.91	0.70
Game framing	Yes	0.78	0.98	0.32	0.75	0.98	0.32
	No	0.81	0.97	0.10	0.81	0.92	0.10
Personalization	Yes	0.62	0.91	0.68	0.62	0.91	0.68
	No	0.67	0.93	0.60	0.67	0.93	0.60
Accountability	Yes	0.73	0.96	0.41	0.77	0.96	0.41
	No	0.72	0.95	0.77	0.72	0.95	0.77
Average		0.68	0.93	0.56	0.68	0.92	0.56

*Fretwurst Lotus was applied to get α value between two coders. The N for Elections was 70 and for PDM 50 news stories. The average value of α is 0.68 for both cases.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

RQ1: What are the salient features of democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan in the coverage of elections 2018 and PDM protests?

Table 2 summarizes the key features of the democratic role performance of news media while reporting elections 2018, and PDM protest. **The total number of stories coded in elections is 1942 and for PDM it was 257. Furthermore, the total number of stories for both cases was 2199. The complete story was coded. Frames were identified based on each paragraph.** The results indicate that few features highlighted by media are similar in coverage of both cases for example political balance scored high in both cases. While personalization was the second key highlighted feature in elections 2018, and for PDM it is negativity. So, few similarities and differences exist in the coverage of both events.

Table 2

Key Feature of Election 2018 and PDM Protest

Events	Total Stories coded	Game Framing N (%)	Negativity N (%)	Interpretative Reporting N (%)	Political Balance N (%)	Personaliz- ation N (%)	Total Occurrence N (%)	p
Elections 2018	1942	977 14.8 %	1069 16.3 %	1259 19.1%	**1918** **29.2%**	1335 20.6%	6558 100%	.002
PDM	257	298 14.3%	471 22.5%	346 16.6%	**517** **24.7%**	458 21.9%	2090 100%	.011
Total	2199	1275 14.7%	1540 17.8%	1605 18.6%	**2435** **28.2%**	1793 20.7%	8648 100%	.000

Political balance is the most prevalent feature of the media while reporting both the events as it indicates that overall, 28.2% of news stories were politically balanced. The second prominent feature of both events was personalization. The number of personalized stories were more common in PDM protest as compared to elections 2018. The third feature was interpretative reporting which was 18.6%. Results indicated that interpretative stories were more common in election coverage as compared to PDM protest i.e., 19.1% and 16.6% respectively. The fourth prevalent feature was negativity which was present in 17.8% of news stories. News stories on PDM were more negative as compared to that of elections 2018. In

PDM protest, negativity was the second most common feature of the coverage which was 22.5% of the news stories.

Table 3 summarizes the key similarities and differences of media coverage while reporting elections 2018, and PDM protest. The results revealed that there is a significant difference in coverage of elections 2018, and PDM protest for negativity, interpretative reporting and personalization having p-value of 0.000<0.005. While the difference in game framing is not significant but is very weak having the p-value of 0.049>0.005. In case of political balance, the value of critical alpha indicates no difference as the p-value is much higher when compared with significance level i.e., 0.197>0.005.

Table 3

Similarities and Difference in Coverage of PDM Protest and Elections 2018

Attributes	Elections Mean score (SD)	PDM Mean score (SD)	T	df	p
Game Framing	.62 (.48)	.57 (.49)	-1.97	526	.049
Negativity	.55 (.49)	.89 (.30)	12.92	526	.000
Interpretative Reporting	.43(.49)	.66 (.47)	7.57	526	.000
Political Balance	.99 (.09)	.98 (.13)	-1.29	526	.197
Personalization	.72 (.44)	.87 (.33)	5.81	526	.000
Total Coded Stories	1942	2199			

The negative t value for game framing and political balance for coverage of election 2018, and PDM protest indicated similarities in news coverage.

Overall results conclude that there is significant difference among both cases for negativity, interpretative reporting and personalization while game framing and political balance achieved similar coverage for both cases but is not significant because of the high value of critical alpha (p>0.005).

RQ2: To what extent the attributes of democratic role performance are correlated with each other?

Table 4 summarizes the correlation of different attributes of democratic role performance in case of elections 2018. Results indicated that negativity is moderately correlated with game framing. Furthermore, personalization is also moderately correlated with game framing and negativity respectively as the value ranges from 0.58 to 0.63 which are significant as well.

Table 4

Pearson Correlation Between the Attributes of Democratic Role Performance for Elections 2018

Attributes	Total no. of Stories coded (N)	Game Framing	Negativity	Interpretative Reporting	Political balance	Personaliz- ation
Game framing		-				
Negativity		.57**	-			
Interpretative Reporting	1942	-.33	-.06	-		
Political Balance		.49*	.43*	-.03	-	
Personalization		.63**	.58*	-.14	.13	-

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 4 also indicated political balance has a low correlation with game framing and negativity whereas negatively correlated with interpretative reporting. Interpretative reporting is also negatively correlated with personalization having a very low correlation value i.e., -0.14. It indicated that if all of the democratic role performance attributes increases, the level of interpretative reporting decrease and vice versa in case of elections 2018.

Table 5 summarizes the correlation of the attributes of democratic role performance in case of PDM protest. Results indicated that personalization is positively correlated with game framing, negativity and political balance which are significant but are having low to moderate correlation. Negativity is moderately correlated with game framing having the value of 0.52 whereas game framing has low level of correlation with personalization i.e., 0.31 but is significant. Personalization is moderately corelated with negativity and political balance i.e.,

0.62 and 0.65 respectively. In case of the PDM interpretative reporting is not significantly correlated with any other attribute of democratic role performance.

Table 5

Pearson Correlation of Attributes of Democratic Role Performance for PDM Protest

Attributes	Total no. of Stories coded (N)	Game Framing	Negativity	Interpretative Reporting	Political balance	Personaliz-ation
Game framing		-				
Negativity		.52**	-			
Interpretative Reporting	257	-.17	-.23	-		
Political Balance		.64	.58	-.04	-	
Personalization		.31*	.62**	-.41	.65**	-

*p < .05. **p < .01.

RQ3: Whether do the characteristics like media type, news type, topic of the news story and placement of the news story influence the democratic role performance of news media?

Table 6 summarizes the predictor variables which influence the democratic role performance of media for elections 2018. The results revealed that in case of elections 2018, media type and placement of news are significant predictors of the democratic role performance. It indicates that the democratic role of the news media changes with media type and placement of news in case of elections 2018.

Table 6

Regression analysis of Elections 2018

Attributes	β	B	SE	p	95% CI	R²
Media Type	0.09	.03	.00	.000	(.01, .05)	
News Type	-.00	.00	.01	.757	(-.02, .03)	.04
Topic	-.00	.00	.00	.774	(-.01, .01)	
Placement of News	0.18	-.06	.00	.000	(-.08, -.05)	

Table 6 indicates the impact of media type, news type, topic of news and placement of news on democratic role performance of media during elections 2018. The R^2 value of .04

revealed that predictors explained 40% variance in the outcome variable with F (4, 1937) = 21.60, $p > .005$. The finding revealed that media type ($\beta = .09$, $p > .000$) and placement of news ($\beta = .18$, $p > .000$) positively predicted democratic role performance in case of elections. While news type ($\beta = -.007$, $p < 0.757$) and topic of news story ($\beta = -.00$, $p < .774$) is not predicting democratic role performance in case of elections 2018.

Table 7 summarizes the predictor variables for the case of PDM protest. The results revealed that media type and topic of the news are significant predictors of democratic role performance for PDM protest.

The R^2 value of .39 revealed that predictors explained 39% variance in the outcome variable with F (4, 522) = 24.70, $p > .000$. The finding revealed that media type ($\beta = .28$, $p > .000$) and topic of the news story ($\beta = .19$, $p > .000$) positively and significantly predicted democratic role performance in case of PDM protest. While news type ($\beta = -.06$, $p < .131$) and placement of news ($\beta = -.08$, $p > .034$) are not predicting the democratic role performance of news media in case of PDM protest.

Table 7

Regression analysis of PDM Protest

Attributes	β	B	SE	p	95% CI	R^2
Media Type	.28	.08	.01	.000	(-.01, .15)	
News Type	-.06	-.10	.07	.131	(-.55, .38)	.39
Topic	.19	-.01	.00	.000	(-.05, .03)	
Placement of News	-.08	-.02	.01	.034	(-.24, -.06)	

Overall results revealed that media type is a strong predictor of democratic role performance for both the cases i.e., elections 2018, and PDM protest. On the other hand, for elections 2018, placement of news is the strong predictor and for PDM protest, topic of the news story is strongly predicting role performance of news media in Pakistan.

RQ4: How and to what extent, the characteristics like media type, news type, topic of the news story and placement of the news story differ in terms of their association with the attributes of the democratic role performance including game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting, personalization and political balance?

Following tables and hypotheses indicate the difference in level of game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting, personalization and political balance due to news type, media type, topics and placement of news while reporting elections 2018, and PDM protest.

5.1 Coverage of Elections 2018

H1: The use of (a) game framing and (b) personalization is higher in hard news as compared to soft news while reporting elections 2018.

All the hypothesis under the coverage of elections used t-test because it simply compare the mean scores. The hypothesis compare occurrence of frame certain. So, research found the t-test as suitable test to compare means.

Table 8

Differences in Game Framing and Personalization with News for Elections 2018

	News Type	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Hard News	.49	.50	.000	-3.48
	Soft News	.64	.48		
Personalization	Hard News	.68	.46	.000	-2.98
	Soft News	.79	.40		

The first part of table 8 indicates the differences of game framing in type of news i.e., hard and soft news. There is a significant difference in the mean of hard news that is 0.49 (SD=0.50) in relation to that of the soft news 0.64 (SD=0.48) while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). It means that game framing varies with the type of news in which soft news has a higher level of game framing as compared to hard news while reporting elections 2018.

Table 8 indicated that hard news (M=0.68, SD=0.46) is less personalized than soft news (M=0.79, SD=0.40). The value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005) indicates the significant difference in the level of personalization between hard and soft news.

H2: The use of (a) game framing (b) personalization (c) political imbalance and (d) interpretative reporting is higher in electronic media as compared to print media.

Table 9 indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean of print media that is 0.41 (SD=0.49) in relation to that of the electronic media 0.61 (SD=0.48) while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). It means that game framing varies with the type of media. Electronic media has a higher level of game framing as compared to print media.

Table 9

Differences in Game Framing, Personalization, Political Balance and Interpretative reporting with Media Type for Elections 2018

	Media Type	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Print Media	.41	.49	.000	-8.85
	Electronic Media	.61	.48		
Personalization	Print Media	.65	.47	.000	-3.75
	Electronic Media	.73	.44		
Political Balance	Print Media	.99	.11	.523	-.63
	Electronic Media	.99	.10		
Interpretative Reporting	Print Media	.69	.46	.000	4.02
	Electronic Media	.60	.48		

Results revealed that electronic media (M=0.73, SD=0.44) has a higher level of personalization as compared to that of print media (M=0.65, SD=0.47). The value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005) indicates the significant difference in the level of personalization between print and electronic media.

In the case of political balance, there is no significant difference in the mean of print media that is 0.99 (SD=0.11) in relation to that of the electronic media 0.99 (SD=0.10) while the value of critical alpha is 0.523 which is more than 0.005 (p>0.005). It means that political balance doesn't vary with the type of media.

In case of interpretative reporting, results revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean of print media that is 0.69 (SD=0.46) in relation to that of the electronic media 0.60 (SD=0.48) while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). It means that interpretative reporting varies with the type of media. Print media has more interpretative reporting as compared to electronic media.

Overall results indicated that game framing and personalization is higher in electronic media as compared to print media while both the media types are politically balanced. On the other hand, interpretative reporting is higher in print media as compared to electronic media for elections 2018. Hypothesis 2 is not fully supported.

H3: Prominent news stories have greater amount of interpretation as compared to non-prominent news stories.

There is a significant difference in the mean of prominent news that is 0.71 in relation to that of non-prominent news 0.59 while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). Results indicated that prominent news tends to have a higher level of interpretative reporting as compared to that of non-prominent while reporting elections 2018. So, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Table 10

Differences in Interpretative Reporting with placement of news for Elections 2018

	Placement	Mean	SD	p	t
Interpretative Reporting	Prominent	.71	.45	.000	5.38
	Non-prominent	.59	.49		

H4: Print media focuses less on accountability of political actors as compared to electronic media

Table 11 summarizes the differences that exist between print and electronic media with respect to accountability. Results revealed that the mean of accountability is very less which indicates that coverage of elections 2018, focused less on accountability of political actors. When this smaller mean was compared, it revealed that electronic media focuses more on accountability with a mean score of 0.03 (SD=0.12) as compared to print media with a mean of 0.02 (SD=0.12). Although the mean difference is less but is significant.

Table 11

Differences in Accountability with Type of Media for Elections 2018

	Media Type	Mean	SD	p	t
Accountability	Print Media	0.02	.12	.002	-1.51
	Electronic Media	0.03	.15		

H5: News related to process have more (a) game framing, (b) personalization and (c) negativity as compared to news related to events

Elections 2018 indicates the difference in the level of game framing with respect to the topic of the news story. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of news about events that is 0.49 (SD=0.50) in relation to that of the news related to process 0.52 (SD=0.50) while the value of critical alpha is 0.254 which is more than 0.005 (p>0.005). The means score of news about process has more game framing as compared to events but is not significant for elections 2018.

Table 12

Differences in Game Framing, Personalization, Political Balance and Interpretative reporting with Media Type for Elections 2018

	Topic	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Event	.49	.50	.256	-1.13
	Process	.52	.50		
Personalization	Event	.54	.49	.000	-8.84
	Process	.76	.42		
Negativity	Event	.52	.50	.083	-1.73
	Process	.56	.49		

The value of critical alpha is 0.083 between negativity and topic of news is higher than 0.005 (p>0.005) which is very weak. Furthermore, news related to events of elections (M=0.52, SD=0.50) and process of elections 2018, (M=0.56, SD=0.49) has significant mean difference. Results indicate news related to process have more negativity as compared to events but difference is not significant.

Table 12 indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean of news about events that is 0.54 (SD=0.49) in relation to that of the news about process 0.76 (SD=0.42) while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). Results indicated that news related to events is less personalized as compared to that of process.

Overall results indicated that news about process of the elections 2018 has more negativity, game framing and personalization as compared to the news about events. So, hypothesis 5 is accepted.

5.2 Coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Protest

All the hypothesis under the coverage of PDM used t-test because it simply compare the mean scores. The hypothesis compare occurrence of frame certain. So, research found the t-test as suitable test to compare means.

H6: Print media has more game framing as compared to electronic media.

The p-value of game framing with media type is 0.000<0.005 and shows the strong variance between variables. Print media has a mean score of 0.43 (SD=0.49) while the mean of electronic media is 0.75 (SD=0.43). It revealed that for PDM protest print media has a higher level of game framing as compared to electronic media. Hypothesis 6 is accepted.

Table 13

Differences in Game Framing with Media Type for PDM Protest

	Media Type	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Print Media	.43	.49	.000	-7.91
	Electronic Media	.75	.43		

H7: Negativity is more prominent in hard news as compared to soft news

Results revealed that hard news has a higher level of negativity as compared to soft news. The mean scores of hard news (M=0.90, SD=0.50) and soft news (M=0.50, SD=0.57) indicated a clear difference in the level of negativity while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005) and shows the difference is highly significant. Hypothesis 7 is accepted.

Table 14

Differences in Negativity with Media Type, News types and Topic of News for PDM Protest

	News Type	Mean	SD	p	t
Negativity	Hard News	.90	.30	.010	2.57
	Soft News	.50	.57		

H8: Level of interpretative reporting is significantly different with media type, news type, topic and placement of news

Table 15 summarizes the differences of interpretative reporting with media type, news type, topic and placement of news in case of PDM protest. The results revealed that the level of interpretative reporting is significantly different with media type, topic and placement of news with 0.000, 0.006 and 0.004 respectively. The value of critical alpha for news type is 0.509 which is higher than 0.005 (p>0.005) indicates that the difference is not significant. Hypothesis 8 is not strongly supported.

Table 15

Differences in Interpretative Reporting with Media Type, News Types and Topic of News for PDM Protest

	Interpretative Reporting	Mean	SD	p	t
Media Type	Print Media	.58	.49	.000	-4.25
	Electronic Media	.76	.43		
News Type	Hard News	.66	.47	.509	.66
	Soft News	.50	.57		
Topic of News	Event	.61	.48	.006	-2.74
	Process	.81	.39		
Placement of News	Prominent	.70	.45	.004	2.88
	Non-prominent	.57	.49		

H9: There is significant difference in mean scores of prominent and non-prominent news while reporting PDM protest

Prominent news has a higher level of game framing with a mean score 0.60 (SD=0.49) as compared to non-prominent news having a mean score 0.51 (SD=0.51) while media reporting PDM protest. The value of critical alpha for placement of news is .056>0.005 that indicates that the difference exists but is not significant.

In case of placement of news, prominent news (M=0.90, SD=0.30) are more negative while reporting PDM protest as compared to non-prominent news (M=0.89, SD=0.31). The value of critical alpha for placement of news is 0.820>0.005 that indicates that the difference exists but is not significant.

The results revealed that level of interpretative reporting has a significant difference with the placement of news with value of critical alpha 0.004 (p>0.005). Prominent news (M=0.70, SD=0.45) has slightly higher mean score as compared to non-prominent news (M=0.57, SD=0.49).

For political balance, prominent news (M=0.99, SD=0.10) has a slightly higher mean score as compared to non-prominent news (M=0.97, SD=0.18). The value of critical alpha is 0.085 which is higher than 0.005 (p>0.005) that indicates that this difference is not significant.

Table 16

Differences in Game Framing, Negativity, Political Balance, Interpretative Reporting and Personalization with Placement of News for PDM Protest

	Placement	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Prominent	.60	.49	.056	1.91
	Non-prominent	.51	.50		
Negativity	Prominent	.90	.30	.820	.22
	Non-prominent	.89	.31		
Interpretative Reporting	Prominent	.70	.45	.004	2.88
	Non-prominent	.57	.49		
Political Balance	Prominent	.99	.10	.085 *	1.72
	Non-prominent	.97	.18		
Personalization	Prominent	.89	.30	.000	2.26
	Non-prominent	.82	.38		

Table 16 indicated that prominent news (M=0.89, SD=0.309) are more personalized as compared to non-prominent news (M=0.82, SD=0.383). The mean score of prominent news is higher than non-prominent news while this difference is significant as it has 0.000<0.005 value of critical alpha.

Overall results indicated that the difference between prominent news and non-prominent news exists but is not significant except for personalization and interpretative reporting. Hypothesis 9 is not complete accepted.

H10: Level of (a) game framing, (b) personalization and (c) negativity is higher in news related to hard news and news related to events as compared to soft news and news related to process

Table 17 summarized the differences in the level of game framing, negativity and personalization with news type. Hard news (M=0.57, SD=0.496) has more game framing as compared to soft news (M=0.25, SD=0.500) with value of critical alpha 0.202 (p>0.005). On the other hand, results revealed that hard news has a higher level of negativity as compared to soft news. The mean scores of hard news (M=0.90, SD=0.50) and soft news (M=0.50, SD=0.57) indicated a clear difference in level of negativity while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005) shows the difference is highly significant.

In case of the personalization, soft news has a higher mean score that is 1.00 (SD=0.00) as compared to hard news that is 0.87 (SD=0.33). The value of critical alpha for news type is 0.0.67 which is much higher than 0.005 (p>0.005) which indicates the means difference between hard and soft news which is not significant.

Overall results for news type indicated that game framing and negativity is higher in hard news as compared to the soft news while reporting PDM protest while personalization is higher in soft news.

Table 17

Differences in Game framing, Negativity and Personalization with Type of News PDM Protest

	Placement	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Hard News	.57	.49	.202	1.27
	Soft News	.25	.50		
Negativity	Hard News	.90	.30	.010	2.57
	Soft News	.50	.57		
Personalization	Hard News	.87	.33	.067	-.77
	Soft News	1.00	.00		

Table 18 summarized the differences in level of game framing, negativity and personalization with the topic of the news. The p-value of game framing with topic of news is 0.000<0.005 that shows the significant difference between variables. News related to events of PDM protest has a mean score of 0.63 (SD=0.48) while the mean of news related to process is 0.31 (SD=0.46).

Table 18 shows that negativity differs with the topic of the news in case of PDM protest news coverage. There is a significant difference in the mean of news about events that is 0.95 (SD=0.21) in relation to that of the news about process 0.73 (SD=0.44) while the value of critical alpha is 0.000 which is less than 0.005 (p<0.005). It means that negativity differs with the topic of the news while reporting PDM protest. Results revealed that news about process is less negative as compared to events. On the other hand, for personalization topic of news has a high alpha value that is 0.275 (p>0.005). While the news related to events has a higher level of personalization with a mean score 0.91 and news related to process has a mean score of 0.87.

Table 18

Differences in Game framing, Negativity and Personalization with Topic of News PDM Protest

	Placement	Mean	SD	p	t
Game Framing	Event	.63	.48	.000	4.56
	Process	.31	.46		
Negativity	Event	.95	.21	.000	5.98
	Process	.73	.44		
Personalization	Event	.91	.28	.275	1.09
	Process	.87	.34		

Overall results indicated that news related to events has a higher level of game framing, negativity and personalization but the difference is not significant for personalization. Hypothesis 10 is accepted.

Overall, the results indicated that political balance was the prominent element in both the cases. Hopmann, Van Aelst and Salgado (2016) also found out that most of the stories were politically balanced. The TV channels and Newspapers selected for the study were belongs to commercial media outlets but they were politically balanced. PDM was the political protest so inherently the vent was negative and coverage of the media was also negative as compared to elections. Results of the study are in lined with Esser, Engesser and Matthes (2016). Furthermore, it was noticed that personalization in electronic media was a common element as compared to the print media. Results of the study are justified by Van Aelst, Sheafer and Hubé, N. (2016).

The above mentioned results accessed in Pakistan's settings and results are noteworthy because they are justified by the cited literature.

6. DISCUSSION

The study intended to explore the democratic role performance of news media in Pakistan. To measure the democratic role, a criterion comprised of six variables was developed from literature. These variables include game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting, political balance, personalization and accountability (Vreese, Esser and Hopmann, 2017; Djerf-Pierre et al., 2014). These variables were used in literature variously to analyze the framing of politics during different political events. For this study, two political events were studied which include elections 2018, and protest of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). In any democratic country, elections are considered a major political event that is covered by all the media outlets especially the national one and sometimes by international as well. On the other hand, PDM protest was launched by all the opposition parties around the country in 2020 and onwards. The literature argues that peaceful political protests are the beauty of a democratic setup.

Moreover, the studies about media and its role in democracy have flooded the literature (McNair 2009; Ullah, 2009, Strömbäck & Van Aelst, 2013; Shehata & Stromback, 2014; Obiora & Chukwuma, 2017; De Castello, 2014; Nai, 2019). The studies identified that the key function of the media in a democracy is to hold power elites accountable in front of the public which is not otherwise possible for the public to make them accountable (Aytimur & Bruns, 2019) along with the other functions of media. Keeping in view the literature's evidence, the results of the current study revealed the following:

The first research question addressed the key elements of democratic role performance highlighted in elections 2018, and PDM protest, the question also addresses the similarities and differences that exist between both the cases. The results indicated that the stories were politically balanced for both the cases whereas, personalization, interpretative reporting and negativity were the other most highlighted elements. PDM protest is more negative as compared to the elections 2018, whereas personalization was more prominent in elections 2018. However, accountability was the neglected element in Pakistan's news media. For any democratic setup, accountability is considered as the foremost important element (Aytimur & Bruns, 2019) but it was not justified in media coverage of elections and PDM protest. In a true sense both events, especially elections 2018, required the accountability of the previous political leaders so that the public can evaluate them but it was not focused. It indicates a lack of investigative reporting and to many extent media was focusing the sensationalized and negative elements to get more viewership and readership. Strömbäck and Van Aelst (2013)

rightly argued that the advent of electronic media gives birth to more negative coverage. In electronic media they have to fill the 24-hour space so, media becomes the part of horse race to acquire more ratings (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). The results of the study are in line with Strömbäck and Van Aelst (2013) and Cappella and Jamieson (1997).

Furthermore, when the level of negativity was compared between both the cases, study revealed that elections had less negativity as compared to the PDM Protest. The finding is in line with the finding of Strömbäck and Van Aelst (2013). Personalization was also more prominent in PDM protest as compared to elections 2018. Campus's (2010) results are justified because for both cases prominent political leaders were presented as visionary ones who will serve the country once the target is achieved.

The first research question also addressed the similarities and differences in coverage of elections 2018, and PDM protest. The level of negativity, interpretative reporting and personalization were significantly different in both cases whereas political balance and game framing were similar. It indicated that in case of Pakistan's media, the level of negativity, interpretative reporting and personalization were influenced by the event and its nature but political balance and game framing were not event driven. The study didn't significantly support the finding of Van Aelst & De Swert (2009) about the influence of events on news coverage because few of the attributes of democratic role performance are not event driven.

The second research question addressed the relationship between the attributes of democratic role performance of both the events i.e., elections 2018, and PDM protest. Results revealed that negativity and personalization had a significant positive relationship. In literature personalization and negativity were not closely linked. Most of the studies in the literature discuss both of the attributes separately (Qadeer, Shehzad and Chishti, 2017; Campus, 2010; Strömbäck and Van Aelst, 2013) but Vliegenthart (2011) somehow linked media's negative elements with personalization, elements include exaggeration and sensationalism. The results supported Vliegenthart's (2011) argument by indicating the relationship between both attributes of democratic role performance.

Another major focus of the study was addressed by research question 3, which indicates the predictors of democratic role performance. Results revealed that media type is the only strong predictor of democratic role performance for both cases. In case of the election, placement of the news was a strong predictor while for PDM it's the topic of the news. Results indicated that media's democratic role is somehow different in print and electronic media.

Furthermore, the fourth question compared the means scores of indicators of democratic role performance with media type, news type, the topic of the news and placement of news story separately for elections 2018, and PDM protest. Results of the study indicated the significant difference exists in the level of game framing, negativity, political balance, interpretative reporting and personalization due to independent variables i.e., media type, news type, topic of the news and placement of the news but it cannot be identified in this study that why variations exist. According to the results, it seems that these variations depend upon the time, situation, type of the news event and the actors involved. In times of elections, there was more interpretative reporting as compared to PDM protest because it involved a lot of speculations about election results. Moreover, during elections 2018 the news was more opinionated as compared to PDM protest. As the PDM was protesting against the government so the nature of the event was negative that's why coverage was more negative in nature as compared to elections 2018. With the type of the media, either its electronic media or print media, the nature of the coverage differs.

Qadeer, Shehzad and Chishti (2017) explained that print media tends to have a high level of personalization but the results of this study are contrary because study has found that in both cases electronic media is more personalized as compared to print media. It's because in live coverage both the events involved prominent political leaders of Pakistan so their speeches were highlighted as main news in political campaigns during elections and PDM protest but in case of print media news was more event focused rather than personality focused. Furthermore, the results of the study are not in line with Lo et al. (2009) that media's political affiliations influence its coverage. In case of the elections 2018 ruling party achieved less coverage while another emerging political party was highlighted more and later got elected. It indicates that not every time the ruling party has an influence on the media content but sometimes the opponent party invests more and achieved higher level of coverage.

The electronic media and prominent news had more game framing as compared to print and non-prominent news. The results of this study justified Lawrence's (2000) argument that when the country is going through critical times, media tends to have a higher level of game framing but in case of the media type i.e., electronic or print media this study is silent. Electronic media is a visual medium and is most viewed in Pakistan as well so, media organizations in order to make news interesting included the elements of game framing to attract larger viewers. The researcher had found that the line between factual information and

entertainment was not clearly defined in the news media of Pakistan (Curran, 2011; Voltmer; 2006; Esser & Matthes; 2013; Nai, 2019; Guggenheim, Kwak & Campbell; 2011).

Barnett (2002) argues that print media covers events in detail as compared to electronic media because they use to highlight negative elements and sensationalized more. Results indicated that electronic media had more game framing, negativity, interpretative reporting and is more personalized as well for both the cases under investigation. The results of the study justify the core arguments of Barnett (2002).

Comparing political journalism by Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (2017) is the major inspiration of this study. It was a comparative study based upon the analysis of 16 countries. According to the results from European countries it was indicated that personalization is more common in commercial news organization and in Televised news (Van Aelst, Sheafer and Hubé, 2016). Results from the current study found the similar results that televised news was more personalized but as far as commercial and public media is concerned, the current study only covers commercial media organization was this is the limitation of the study. The study also indicated that as PDM was a protest and was inherently a negative topic so the prevalence of negativity was higher in PDM as compared to elections. Esser, Engesser and Matthes (2016) also associated negativity with the topic of news.

Moreover, political balance was practiced in Pakistan's news media throughout and was the most occurring as well as prevalent news indicator. Hopmann, Van Aelst and Salgado (2016) compared the political balance between public and commercial media but scholars are of the view that the difference of political balance is very less and not significant. They also discussed that apparently political parties and institutions are not given special kind of treatment. Prevalence of political balance in Pakistan's media indicate similar results. Game framing was more common in elections. Aalberg, De Vreese and Strömbäck (2016) also argued in similar way that it is not common phenomenon in media but depends upon the type of news which is being covered. The news topic about political parties and democracy use more game framing. The researcher is of the view that in Pakistan prevalence of game framing was more common because the prominent political party was headed by a sportsman. So, even in political campaigns before elections the use of game framing was the common element. Furthermore, interpretative reporting in print media was labelled, to indicate that its opinionated but it doesn't happen to every news story. One of the common factors of interpretative reporting was use of speculations. As PDM was a political protest not speculation was required as such but in case of election speculations was more common that who will win the elections of 2018.

Interpretative reporting was not most prevalent in Pakistan's news media as the focus of study was regular news stories not opinioned ones but the value laden words were used in news stories. Salgado, Strömbäck and Aalberg (2016) mentioned that in regular news occurrence of interpretative reporting is less. Study also indicated that in Sweden and Great Britain overt commentaries were mainly used with value laden words. The results of the study are in line with Salgado, Strömbäck and Aalberg (2016).

Moreover, literature has indicated that market oriented media develop the content to sell in front of the public for profit maximization. Pakistan has market oriented polarized form of media having the special focus to maximize profit. According to Morris (2007) polarized media promotes partisan news coverage. During the content analysis of this study, the researcher observed that political and party affiliations were explicitly seen in the news coverage. They tend to cover opposition leaders in a negative light. The results of the study supported Morris's arguments. Similarly, Van Aelst and De Swert (2009) rightly argued that politicians perform efficiently in front of the public to get positive coverage as compared to routine times. It was also observed during the election coverage of 2018 that politicians met common people, listen to their issues and promised them to solve the problems once they get elected. After the elections, media coverage switched towards routine matters with less focus on performance. Polarized, market oriented media tends to develop fragmented society but of polarized media opinion on single happening is important.

The polarized media give birth to fragmented public opinions as discussed by Stromback and Esser (2014). This phenomenon was observed in coverage of both the events i.e., elections 2018, and PDM protest. During elections 2018, the media supported their partisan agendas and the public was confused whom to vote and elect as their representatives. In case of PDM protest due to the divided media coverage public was also fragmented regarding their opinion about PDM protest that either the protest is right or wrong. The observations of the researcher are in line with Stromback and Esser's findings.

Literature is evident that when media is market oriented and is polarized having fragmented public, tends to promote negativity to attract the larger viewership or readership. Soroka and McAdams (2015) believe that negativity sells. During the coverage of PDM protest the prime time news focused mainly on argumentation between the opposition leaders (holding protests) and those in the government. Only negative, sensationalized, exaggerated words were picked up from the content and were highlighted. When there is a conflict among the different political parties, coverage tends to be negative as argued by Vliegenthart et al. (2011). This

happened because media has their political leanings like the common public. The public also wants to have negative news about opposition so, Soroka and McAdams rightly concluded that negativity sells more.

There is another side of Pakistan's media as well, which the researcher found worthy to discuss here, that is media autonomy. Very few studies critically evaluated media of Pakistan (Siraj and Hussain, 2017) and questioned the autonomy of the media. In literature, Pakistan's media is not considered autonomous. It indicates that the coverage provided to the public is highly influenced by government, ownership, market, media agenda and political leanings. Although it was not the focus of the study but the researcher believes that these factors influence democratic role performance which further can be explored at later studies.

When it comes to the democratic role performance of news media literature has widely discussed its attributes and roles. The first attribute of democratic role performance of this study was game framing. Game framing is called 'cynical' coverage of the event (Lawrence, 2000, p.111) on the other hand, Aalberg, Strömbäck and De Vreese (2011) considers it horse race journalism. It indicates that game framing is sensationalized and exaggerated in nature which is not a good sign for democracy. The second attribute was negativity. Stockmann (2011) explained that marketized pressures forced media to sell the news and negativity sells more. Uzuegbunam and Udeze (2013) argued that it is overhyped coverage of the event. Negativity in news doesn't produce informed citizens and prevalence of it is also not a constructive sign for democracy. The third attribute was interpretative reporting. Interpretative reporting has mixed arguments in the literature as some scholars consider it as a good sign for democracy because it provides a detailed explanation of the happenings so that the public can better understand news (Benson, 2008; Graber, 2003; Gurevitch & Blumler, 1990; Norris, 2000; Stromback, 2005) while few scholars are of the view that interpretations are good for democratic countries but it must be labelled and is placed separately as china's media use to do (Zheng & Ren, 2018). In the case of Pakistan labeling was done in most of the stories of print media as compared to electronic media, and their nameplate includes their status like an expert opinion, analysts etc. but it doesn't happen with all the news stories. The one common element which was more prevalent in elections and was less present in PDM protest was speculation which is not considered a good sign for democracy. Political balance was prevalent in the media of Pakistan not in terms of equal time but most of the time parties were given chance to respond and that is the good sign as the study has found. The fifth attribute of the democratic performance of this study was personalization. Dunaway and Lawrence (2015) explained that it helps media organizations to get more coverage

as it attracts audience attention. The self-focused coverage of the political personalities is focused by the media to get more viewership (McGregor, 2017; Metz, Kruikemeier & Lecheler, 2019). The finding of this study revealed that elections 2018, and PDM protest was focusing personalities more as compared to issues and events. So, the prevalence of personalization is not a constructive attribute of a democratic society. The last attribute was accountability. Literature is flooded with the fact that in democracy media must hold power elites accountable in front of the public. Bovens (2005, p. 184) argued that media is "accountee" of political leaders. Bertelli (2016) also focused on the answerability of the political elites in front of public and it's the responsibility of the media to evaluate their performance for the public to better select their representatives in a democracy. Accountability is considered as a most important element of democracy but in the content analyzed it was almost missing during both events.

Overall, the news media of Pakistan focuses on political balance which is a good sign. On the other hand, this one factor is dominated by the many other negativities in the news coverage i.e., the prevalence of negativity, interpretative reporting, personalization and some facets of game framing and absence of accountability as well. It gives the impression that news media in Pakistan for both the cases under investigation doesn't hold power elites accountable while focused more on negative and sensationalized elements. In democracy, the major focus of the media is to serve the public (Benson, 2008; Graber, 2003; Gurevitch & Blumler, 1990; Norris, 2000; Stromback, 2005). In developing and transitional democracies, due to political trivialization, negativity increases (as cited in Bennett, 2003; Farnsworth and Lichter, 2007). The current study found similar results. Voltmer (2016) argued that media must play the role of watchdog. In case of Pakistan, during the analysis of both the cases this function was missing. The study has found that media during elections 2018, and PDM protest just followed the routine perspective and the detailed, in-depth, and investigative reports were absent. Park (2012) had similar findings. The study indicates that many constructive efforts are required for the mass media of Pakistan to minimize the negativity and put an effort to serve the wider public of the country.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study analyzed the Pakistan news media content from the perspective of the democratic role they are performing. A major part of Pakistan's news media is based on political news. The study analyzed in detail the political news and identified the way news media report politics and identified the extent to which news media is contributing towards the democratic setup of the country.

The study found that the news media in Pakistan focused more on negative, personalized and sensational news while reporting elections and political protests. The upmarket media organizations of Pakistan tend to focus more on horse race journalism for high ratings and profit (Dunaway & Lawrence, 2015). Results also revealed that both print and electronic media had paid no heed to the accountability of the power holders during these political happenings. Accountability is considered of paramount importance, for any democratic country because through this public can better understand the performance of political leaders holding the power. It indicates that media in Pakistan is not free to openly report the malpractices of the power elites.

The scholars from United Kingdom highlighted the importance of accountability rendered through media. The study argued that accountability is the essence of democracy. It's the responsibility of media to inform public regarding the working to their political elites. Although the actual accountability was found only in 8.0 % of the news articles (Jacobs et al., (2022) but Denmark is comparatively in better position to hold power elites accountable and plays the role of watchdog (Skovsgaard et al., 2012). On the other hand, Flemish journalist use to produce negative, sensationalized news backed by the organizations in the verge of accountability (Raeymaeckers et al., 2012). The results of this study also indicated that the news related to accountability was less then 1% but the coverage of PDM especially was based on blaming each other for wrong doings as mentioned by Raeymaeckers et al., (2012) who considered it was negative news.

Interpretative reporting is a two way sword. Few scholars consider it as a valuable contribution towards democracy while others consider it as bad for the democratic setup. This study identified that in Pakistan, Interpretative reporting was highlighted attribute after political balance and personalization. The studies in literature indicated that it's the responsibility of the media organization to separate the journalistic opinion from actual news. This can be rendered through labeling. This study indicated that labeling was done in very few stories of print media but Televised news lacks it. On the other hand, it was found that use of value laden words was

the common phenomenon along with journalistic speculations regarding the results of elections 2018. Literature supports the use of interpretative reporting for the purpose to make news understandable for common people (Esser and Umbricht, 2014) but is subject to labeling of news for give public a clear image.

While reporting, politics personalization was the focus of the media. In elections 2018, political leaders were highly personalized and were framed as visionary leaders depends upon the political leanings of the media organizations but PDM protest was also highly personalized event of Pakistan's news media. Similarly, Political balance was the major contribution of the news media towards democratic setup. Results revealed that political balance was the key highlighted factor while covering either election 2018, or PDM protest. The frequency of the coverage was although different but the representation of political parties and leaders was balanced.

One of the major finding of the study identified that media type is the only predictor of democratic role performance. While news type, the topic of the news and placement of the news has no major predictable contribution towards democratic role performance of the news media in Pakistan. Furthermore, the nature of the event sometimes influenced the attributes of democratic role performance but didn't identify every time.

It is argued that in a democratic country, mass media is expected to serve the common people by providing information, scrutiny of the power holders, provide a place for the public debates and give voice to voiceless people (Curran, 2007; Obiora & Chukwuma (2017). All these must be accomplished by providing information that contains political balance, accountability of those in the government and few attributes of interpretative reporting while game framing, negativity, personalization must be avoided. In case of Pakistan (other than political balance and interpretative reporting to some extent) negativity, personalization and game framing were higher in level while accountability was almost missing in news media. It indicates that the media had not fully performed a democratic role while covering elections 2018, and PDM protest. Media intensified sensationalization, personalization, exaggeration and had more evidence of horse race journalism as well.

The author has identified that if news media of Pakistan focus on thematic news rather than routine or episodic news then the possibility for investigative reporting would increase. These news stories must focus to expose the wrongdoings of the power holder, the system's malpractices can also be identified along with other political and social issues. There is a dire need to shift the trend from routine news events to more investigative approaches to better serve the democratic role of news media.

7.1 Recommendations for Future Researches

Researcher has identified few limitations of the study and based upon them developed few recommendations for future studies as are mentioned below:

- Time constraints had limited the researcher to quantitatively analyze the news media of Pakistan but the authors recommend in-depth interviews of the media persons to identify the reasons that why news media in Pakistan is not focusing much on democratic attributes but rather work to generate profit.

- The study included text only for content analysis, for the wider perspective in electronic media visuals along with words or text can be included to better understand the level of sensationalization and visual exaggeration in news media.

- Separate studies for print and electronic media can also be concluded to have an in-depth analysis of democratic role performance.

- For this topic, longitudinal studies can also be conducted to study the democratic role performance of news so that more political events could be increased to have better insights. These studies should include both qualitative and quantitative studies.

- Future studies can be conducted to compare the critical and normal periods (non-critical) to analyze the difference in the coverage and for better evaluation of the democratic role of news media in Pakistan.

- It is recommended that there must be a strong mechanism for the evaluation of the media content nationally because media is of foremost importance for the viability of democracy in the country. Literature provides the evidence that if media practice the democratic norms, possibilities are there that country's democratic norms will also flourish.

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APPENDIX

Coding scheme and Operationalization of Variables

Codes	Variables	Coding Instructions
1.	**Game Framing**	
1a)	**Use of Sports Language**	This variable has two codes 1=yes or present while 0=No or absent. The coder should type 1 if the news story use sports related words like battle ground, politicians are referred as captain. Otherwise, coder should type 0.
1b)	**Stories having impression of election win or lose**	This variable has two codes 1=yes or present while 0=No or absent. The coder should type 1 if the news story deals with elections in which politicians, parties and other actors are involved. Furthermore, coder should type 1 if news story deals with or having the impression of winning and losing elections in general and debates about elections. Otherwise, coder should type 0.
1c)	**Use of sensational Language**	This variable has two codes 1=yes or present while 0=No or absent. The coder should type 1 if the news story use exaggerated, scandalous, exciting or shocking language at the expense of accuracy, in order to provoke public interest or excitement to explain any political scenario like national assembly or senate conflicts between politicians are explained as the ground is set on fire. Otherwise, coder should type 0.
1d)	**News Stories containing opinion polls**	This variable has two codes 1=yes or present while 0=No or absent. The coder should type 1 if the news story mentions opinion polls and the political standing " of politicians, parties and actors. Otherwise, coder should type 0.
2.	**Negativity**	
2a)	**Non-Directional Negativity (Overall Tone)**	

2aa)	**Level of negative tonality**	Negative tonality deals with framing of news story as political disaster, failure, cynicism, disappointment, neglect or rejection. While positive tonality referred as political success, achievement, improvement hope, accomplishment or problem solution. If the story doesn't belong to both of the above frames then it has to be coded as neutral. The variable has following codes: -1= Predominantly negative tonality 0= Balanced/ambivalent/not applicable +1= Predominantly positive tonality
2ab)	**Level of pessimistic outlook**	News stories with Optimistic outlook are referred as hopeful views, development or promising scenario. Optimistic outlook also referred to positive development in politics is possible and realistic. While pessimistic outlook is opposite to optimistic outlook. Pessimistic outlook are referred as hopeless views, critical development or non-promising scenario. It deals with negative development in politics is possible and realistic. If the story doesn't belong to both of the above frames then it has to be coded as neutral. The variable has following codes: -1= Predominantly pessimistic outlook 0= Balanced/ambivalent/not applicable +1= Predominantly optimistic outlook
2b)	**Directional Negativity (Confrontation)**	
2bb)	**Level of conflict-centeredness**	The conflict dimension refers to disagreement, dispute confrontation, clashing views or controversy. The consensus dimension is related with consonance, conformities, willingness,

		compromise, willing to cooperation, approval or reconciliation. If report does not reflect any of these frames then they have to be coded as 'not applicable'. The variable has following codes: −1 = Predominantly conflict centered 0 = Balanced/ambivalent/not applicable +1 = Predominantly consensus centered
2ba)	Level of incapability & misconduct	Misconduct or incapability refers to depiction of critique, criticism, allegation of misconduct, charge of wrongdoings, incompetence and insult. Capability in news is referred as competence of political actors. If the story does not reflect to capability or incapability then it has to be coded as 'not applicable'. The variable has following codes: -1= Predominantly incapability centered 0= Balanced/ambivalent/not applicable +1= Predominantly capability centered
2c)	Actor related negativity (Individual Tone)	
2ca)	Negativity towards political actors (institution or person)	This indicator deals with negative tone toward political actors. If the news story depicts misconduct, failure, crisis, frustration, critique, scandals, mistrust were coded as negative tone towards the actor. If the news story depicts victory, success, win, achievement, accomplishment, were coded as positive tone towards the actor. If the news story does not report any of the above-mentioned tone towards political actors then it has to be coded as neutral.

		The variable has following codes:
		-1 = Predominantly negative tone towards the actor
		0 = Balanced/ambivalent/neutral tone towards the actor
		+1 = Predominantly positive tone towards the actor
3. Interpretative Reporting		
3a)	**Labeling of news story**	This variable contains two codes 1=yes and 0=no. Coder have to type 0 if the journalistic analysis, explanation and analysis is not differentiated clear through any label, heading or word. Coder have to code the story as 1 if the main news is differentiated with journalistic analysis, explanation and analysis. The labels could be news analysis, commentary, anchors interview etc.
3b)	**Amount or share of journalistic analysis & interpretation in news story**	The amount of journalistic interpretation has four codes. 0= No interpretation 1: Peripheral amount of journalistic interpretation 2: Secondary amount of journalistic interpretation 3: Primary amount of journalistic interpretation Journalistic interpretation or explanations deals with journalistic analysis, commentary or explanation is presented as main news without any verifiable or factual support from any source. Primary amount of journalistic interpretation is classified as when news story solely focus on journalistic analysis, explanation or commentary. Secondary amount of journalistic interpretation is when there is balance between factual news and journalistic explanations or opinions. Peripheral amount of journalistic interpretation when there is little amount of journalistic analysis and explanations.

		The coder has to code 0 if there is not journalistic explanation, commentary or analysis.
3c)	**Providing journalistic reasoning behind the happening**	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. If the news story has journalistic commentary explains the reason behind the event or happening. If the coder finds one or more sentences in news stories having journalistic words which provides reasons behind happening, then coder has to type 1. It explains why something has happens. Coder has to type 0 if the news story has no explanation providing the reason behind happening.
3d)	**Journalistic speculations**	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. Coder should type 0 if the news story does not have any journalistic speculations about future happenings. Coder has to type 1 if the news story has journalistic speculations about upcoming events. The words like: this may happen in future, this party has clear chances to win the upcoming elections, this government policy will increase inflation in next 6 months to 50%.
3f)	**Journalistic contextualization**	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. Coder has to type 1 if journalistic explains overall context, past episodes, or background of current happenings. If their journalist doesn't provide any context or background of current happening, then coder has to type 0.
3g)	**Overt journalistic commentaries**	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. Overt commentary deals with journalistic expression or opinion like something is good or bad, true or false but it doesn't have any verifiable support. Value laden terms are also the part of overt commentary. Value laden terms referred as subjective words or contains the connotation which

		is not neutral. If the news story has overt commentary, value laden words the coder has to type 1. Otherwise, coder has to type 0.
4. Political Balance		
4a)	**Visibility** (which political personality, political party or organization is appearing in the news story)	
4aa)	Political Actor	In this variable coder has to identify which political actor is appearing in news story and in which way they are appearing for example (1) actors are mentioned in news story, (2) they are quoted and (3) they are showed in picture, quoted and mentioned (television: images, sound bites, newspaper: pictures and captions). The coder has to code the data with highest possible category for example if a political actor is mentioned and is quoted as well in news story coder has to type 2.
4ab)	Institutions	The coder has to count the number of political and government institution are mentioned in unit of analysis. 1: how many times institutions are mentioned in news story? This variable has 1-5 codes. The coder has to select the highest category within the unit of analysis. For example, if political or government institution are mentioned 4 times in unit of analysis they are to be coded as '4'.
4ac)	Political Party	The coder has to count the number of political parties is mentioned in unit of analysis.

		1: how many times political party is mentioned in news story? This variable has 1-5 codes. The coder has to select the highest category within the unit of analysis. For example, if political party is mentioned 4 times in unit of analysis they are to be coded as '4'.
4b)	Favorability	There are four codes for this variable: 1) Favorable 2) Unfavorable 3) Ambivalent 4) Neutral The coder has to type 1 or 2 i.e., favorable or unfavorable depends upon how political actor, organization or party is covered in news story. If political actors are presented in positive light they has to be coded as favorable. If they are presented in negative light they has to be coded as unfavorable. Coder has to type 3 (ambivalent) if coverage is negative or unfavorable but they are given chance respond. When the coverage is neither favorable unfavorable nor ambivalent then coder has to code it as neutral.
5. Personalization		
5a)	**Politician's Characteristics** (political characteristics are divided in two categories one is political and other is personal in nature, most of them have three codes and few have two codes)	
5aa)	Competence *or*	This variable has three codes: -1, 0, 1 1: Is competence is mentioned within unit of analysis from political context? For example, leader is not capable to hold the office. Competent= 1 Incompetent= -1

			Not mentioned= 0
			2: Is competence is mentioned within unit of analysis from personal context? For example, leader belong to poor family.
			Competent= 1
			Incompetent= -1
			Not mentioned= 0
5ab)	Leadership		This variable has two codes: 1=yes, 0=no.
			1: Is leadership is mentioned within unit of analysis from political context? For example, the leader doesn't relay his party members for party policy. (1=yes, 0=no)
			2: Is leadership is mentioned within unit of analysis from personal context? For example, he still leads his classmates group (1=yes, 0=no)
5ac)	Credibility		This variable has three codes: -1, 0, 1
			1: Is credibility is mentioned within unit of analysis from political context? For example, the leader failed to fulfill the promise of decreasing inflation.
			Credible= 1
			Incredible = -1
			Not mentioned=0
			2: Is credibility is mentioned within unit of analysis from personal context? For example, the leader is criticized for telling a lie with his family members and friends
			Credible= 1
			Incredible = -1
			Not mentioned=0
5ad)	Morality		This variable has three codes: -1, 0, 1
			1: Is morality is mentioned within unit of analysis from political context? For example, the leader is

		criticized for using government resource to get personal gains Morality= 1 Immorality= -1 Not mentioned= 0 2: Is morality is mentioned within unit of analysis from personal context? For example, the leader is caught red handed by the family for using drugs Morality= 1 Immorality= -1 Not mentioned= 0
5af)	Candidates appearance	This variable has two codes: 1=yes, 0=no 1: Is appearance is mentioned within unit of analysis from political context? For example, the news story about his appearance in EU summit (1=yes, 0=no) 2: Is appearance is mentioned within unit of analysis from personal context? For example, the leader won beauty contest (1=yes, 0=no)
5b	**Personal life of Politician**	
5ba)	Family life	This variable has following categories: 1: domestic life 2: past life (education, upbringing etc.) 3: biographical information 4: family relationship Each of the variables has to be coded within unit of analysis. Each of above categories are to be coded as per its presence or absence in news story (1=yes, 0=no)
5bb)	Leisure time	News about politicians hobbies, recreational activities, vacations etc. has to be coded within unit of analysis. Each of above categories are to be coded as per its presence or absence in news story (1=yes, 0=no)

5bc)	Love life	News about politicians marriage, divorce etc. has to be coded within unit of analysis. Each of above categories are to be coded as per its presence or absence in news story (1=yes, 0=no)
6. Accountability Accountability is when media held political actors responsible in front of public via critical coverage and media criticize policies of ruling party for not caring common people.		
6a)	**Non- concealment of sensitive information** (When media deeply investigate any matter and bring hidden facts in front of public)	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. If news about the above categories is present within the unit of analysis code has to type 1 otherwise coder has to type 0. It is the news about political actors or political institution in which hidden facts are revealed which is otherwise not available to common people for example investigative report on dead of Khadim Hussain Rizvi as his sudden dead is controversial issue yet.
6b)	**Dissenting anti-establishment perspective** (When media criticize politicians and political parties for wrong doings and misuse of financial resources)	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. If news about the above categories is present within the unit of analysis code has to type 1 otherwise coder has to type 0. It includes the news criticizing political actors, political parties for wrong doings. It also includes the news about misuse of financial resources like media criticized politicians for corruption.
6c)	**Highlighting undemocratic behaviors** (When media criticize political actors for undemocratic behavior)	This variable has two codes 1=yes, 0=no. If news about the above categories is present within the unit of analysis code has to type 1 otherwise coder has to type 0. It includes the news about political actors working against the rules and regulations of democracy or the actions which creates problems for democracy to excel. For example, countrywide protest by

		opponent party, dislocated the democratic ruling government or conflicts in national or provincial assemblies resultantly assemblies are dissolved.
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- Coding scheme and variables are adopted from McNair book Introduction to political communication and De Vreese, Esser and Hopmann (edited 2017) comparing political communication.