

Political communication: satirical talk shows dimensions



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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the program of study leading to the award of MS entitled "Political communication: satirical talk shows dimensions" is entirely my own work, that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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Certificate of Approval

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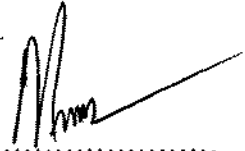
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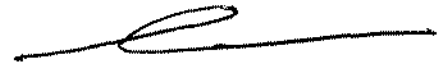
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore and analyze the effectiveness of what happens when the "news" is presented in an amusing format? Programs like "Hasb-e-haal", "khabar Nak", "Hum sab umeed se hain" , and "Mazaq raat" are the result of the merging of several entertainment programming trends, notably the news satire format and the talk show format. As Pakistani audience has been losing interest in the traditional sources of news. Therefore they have shown themselves willing to consume news information from different sources. And these programs are the most interesting new sources of news. Because these programs have the potential to become important sources of news, entertainment and information therefore it is important to see their possible effects on general public. Survey methodology has been used as a research design for this study. Questions of the research have been analyzed and interpreted using frequencies and cross tabulation in SPSS. The results shows that audience of satirical talk shows in Pakistan have accepted satire as a legitimate and credible source of political news dissemination and are affective in generating political interest among its audience. The results shows that satire effects on interpersonal content of its audience, successful in image construction of political and media celebrities and qualifies on ethical benchmark of the media.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Topic

As we know Media have become as important as food and clothing in almost every country of the world. We now believe that Media have capacity to teach, persuade, frame, and change political interest and participation of its audience through the use of variety of programs. It has great impact on social and political aspects of the society. Our society has a huge variety of media channels and all are trying to compete with each other to attract more viewers and masses and to generate more and more money. Electronic media has become a most important tool of mass media and has great influence on the audience's opinions, political affiliations, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, behavior, emotions, and lifestyle.

We know that the boundaries between politics, entertainment and information are now blending together. Therefore satire is the product of merging of many entertainment programs especially news satire and talk show format and also satirical talk shows usually possess both interview and comedic components to it. As humor have capacity to generate positive approach towards politics therefore the use of comedy have progressed rapidly and viewers have opportunities to engage in many types of satirical programming. Therefore satire has become an important element of Pakistani culture, diffusing into its social and political life.

This thesis will explore the impacts of satirical programs on public in the Pakistani context. After reading a large amount of literature on satire and its impacts on American public and politics, researcher realized that there is no significant research on the same issue in the Pakistani context. The influence of satirical shows on Pakistani public have been ignored, especially regarding the

use of these programs by audience as an important means of becoming informed about modern politics.

To discuss further the satirical programming, first there is the question what is satire? "Satire's are those programs of media which uses techniques of irony, humor, exaggeration, and parody to discuss or criticize the political affairs and other issues of the society" (Owen, 2009). The diversification of mass media has redirected traditional means of information dissemination and gives its audience more views than ever before. The creativity of producers endures to support the growth of satire.

The audience-centered nature of humor suggests a rhetorical perspective which insights into how humor affects its audiences. This research provides a great deal of the liberalizing force of satirical programs for the Pakistani political environment so far, and where it will lead in the near future. The nature of political satire has transformed and is changing both the media content and public opinion. Satirical talk shows offers a great blend of reality, humor, and politics served with sides of entertainment which makes these programs very popular and major source of news among its audience. Satirical shows possess special relationship with their viewer and that they have significant impact on political perceptions, knowledge and engagement of its viewer about the public affairs.

Viewers of satirical talk shows believe that it possess capacity to satisfy the audience need of pleasure, and awareness in a humorous and light way, allowing them to take daily happenings in lighter amount rather the bombardment of information that is being offered by other sources of hard news formats. The change in the media setting allows its viewers to have more choices to watch favorite program and as a result apolitical viewer can tune into entertainment programs in the form of satirical talk shows and gets political information as a byproduct.

Originally, satirical talk shows were lacking political content. But as the need for news has grown with the passage of time, therefore it gives birth to dedicated Media channels. Now audience can watch latest news and events in any form they want and all this is because of the advent of privately owned channels which gives viewers an excess of news format choices.

Mass media content is a socially made product and it is not a reflection of an impartial reality. We now live in a world where we receive a variety of mediated content daily which makes us information-oriented and information-reliant and have become an “information society.”

Political environment of Pakistan always remain hot with various political and social issues, therefore political news get more coverage in Pakistani media than any other sort of news. Also serious current affairs talk shows includes politician as their guest and are asked to discuss on area of ongoing issues. In this way, viewers attain the knowledge as well as the explanation and analysis of current issues. But these serious political talk shows have limited audience because most of the viewer shows lack of interest in these programs. But on the other hand humorous and comedy based political talk shows have gain much importance with the passage of time in Pakistan. Some present examples of satirical shows in Pakistan include “Hasb-e-Haal”, “Khabar Nak”, “Hum Sab Umeed Se Hain”, “Mazaq-Raat”, and “Banana News Network (BNN).”

The influence of satire on younger generation of the society is also of great importance. Usually from an early age, younger generation shows their disinterest in political news which leads to the belief that this is the main reason for decreased levels of political engagement in the form of voting. This disinterest in traditional news may have given rise to non-traditional news followers. Because the news media have extended into many formats and therefore fractured into variety of different audiences. Satirical programming is of great influence to voters, which is more recognizable towards its audience who turn to this nature of programming to gather political information. Now

audiences can get their political information and knowledge through entertainment programs and these changes in audience's attitudes have blurred the difference between political and nonpolitical media content.

Satire has been theorized as a powerful tool in civic and political arrangement. Satirical programming is an important part of political discourse in Western society for some time and a part of universal art for centuries. But in Pakistan this genre is new because the boom of privatization of media takes place in the past decade. Before that, citizens of Pakistan consist only one state owned television channel i.e. Pakistan Television (PTV), therefore viewers does not have variety of content on electronic media.

Satire aims to convince its audience by using the playful or the stinging fashion to address the subject or content. Therefore there is huge difference in messages presented in such shows than those presented on serious political talk shows or other sources of traditional. The messages presented in these programs are ambiguous in nature and in fact complex because some issues and political news are so sensitive to openly talk about in media. Therefore these programs shield and cover such sensitive issues in perfect camouflage of humor and comedy. In order to report sensitive contemporary social and political issues, the use of satire proves itself very useful. Because it gives freedom to raise questions about these serious issues which otherwise will be hard to cater. Entertainment television in the form of political satire can be used for political discussion. Such programs also throws light on the personal traits and sins made by the politicians, which otherwise cannot be discusses in traditional news format. Therefore these satirical programs are now considered as the "watchdogs" of political figures and issues (ElGabry, 2014).

The escalation and popularity of these shows raise questions concerning the nature of the impacts of satire upon its audience especially regarding the ethics. We know that Media have some

commitments towards its audience and it should follow the code of ethics and the presentation of the political or other content should be based on basic ethical benchmarks of the media like balance and truth and fairness. So it is the duty of the media organizations to broadcast the content which has no violation of code and rules prescribed by PEMRA. As far as the ethics of satirical programming is concerned, this research will explore the degree to which these programs are following or violating the basic ethical conduct provided by the PEMRA. The responsibility of media is much more in Pakistan than any other country of the world because the recent abrupt privatization of channels did not provide a chance to Media authorities to develop and implement proper code of ethics. Though the written material possesses all the ethical benchmarks which a media organization should have to follow but there's lack of proper check and balance in media organization. The aim to discuss the ethical perspective of these programs is actually based on the history of satire in Pakistan. As Pakistani private media is new and not so mature and the race between the private media channels to get more and more viewership may affect the content of these programs. This research will explore if these factors hinder the proper production of satirical content in perspective of ethics.

Many factors contribute to the rise of satirical programs in Pakistan, first there is failure of trust and status of the mainstream news because the audience feels that the news presented to them by the media authorities which works only for the specific interest of their political and party affiliation and when the credibility of the news is questioned then viewers tend to tune out from hard news and seek news from other sources. In addition to this, numbers of channels also contribute to the fragmentation of the TV viewing. Also the main reason of the success of the satirical programs is that they rely heavily on the political news as their major content resulting in

a growing proportion of audience which now considers comedy shows as a source of news from which they get information and entertainment at the same time.

According to the theory of Political socialization which is used in this study and it is stated that political socialization results in individuals who attain knowledge about the working of political system. This knowledge of political values and ideology leads the citizen to participate in civic and political life. So the researcher in this study used this theory to know about the patterns of political engagement by audience of satirical talk shows. As this research is about the possible effects of satirical talk shows on audience perceptions of political knowledge, values and political beliefs.

Consuming mocking humor indirectly urges political participation of its audience through interpersonal talk about politics and that interpersonal political communication is activated by exposure to satirical programs. These programs urge its audience to engage in political activities. While this political mobilization is directly linked with some basic features of interpersonal political communication which includes discussion frequency and network scope. The interactions among the audience of satirical talk shows are not just limited to their familiar network but also with strangers and virtual associates and these programs also draw greater level of political engagement. Therefore the audience of satirical programs may engage in political interpersonal talk in more useful and in cognitive pattern.

Satire can be used as a tool of social and political change because political satire influences public perceptions and images of politician, media celebrities and politics. Also relationship between the televised political satire and civic involvement is escalating day by day. Therefore many political elites are now realizing the potential of political satire and using this tool to influence new demographics.

1.2 Problem Statement

Many research studies have been conducted to observe the impact of satirical content on viewers in different states but this study aims to explore the role of political comedy shows in political socialization and also to analyze the relationship and effectiveness of fun and humor of satirical talk shows in Pakistan.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Following are the main objectives that the study aims to achieve:

- Audience's utilization of satirical programs to get political information.
- Find out the favorite genre of political talk shows of the audience.
- To explore the role of satirical shows in political awareness among the viewers.
- The purpose of this study is to find out whether there is a growing acceptance in society for satirical talk shows in Pakistan.
- To explore extent of credibility and legitimacy of these programs in audience opinions.
- To find out the extent of the following of basic ethical standards of media by satirical programs.
- To explore the relationship of satirical programs and interpersonal talk about their content with audience friends, family and colleagues.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The research will try to add new dimensions to existing literature about media representations of new trends of satirical talk shows and will also examine association between exposure of these programs and their effects on audiences' political participation, political interests, and on political socialization. This research will also provide some insights about the acceptance of these programs as legitimate and credible source of news. Further, there is very little researches have been done in the Pakistani context and this research will provide a new outlook and data on this issue. Therefore this study will help the upcoming researchers and intellectuals to develop a strong research on the basis of this one. It also provided information about the attitudes of the masses towards the possible effects of these kinds of political programs.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of the Related Literature

Soft-news programming has become more dominant from the past few years and includes several types of programs like cable newsmagazine shows, entertainment and tabloid news talk shows and satirical talk shows. These programs focus more on sensationalism, drama, personalities and human interest themes rather than public affairs matters when compared to hard news (Baumgartner, 2006). But exposure to satirical and comedy based political programs contribute to political learning of its audience as an “incidental by-product” because satirical programs sometimes yield in political knowledge as a surplus advantage. And also it is because of these programs that youth may have started to engage in politics who otherwise were less likely to follow traditional news pattern.

Satirical talk shows format is the product of merging of many entertainment programs especially news satire and talk show format. The satirical talk shows usually possess both interview and comedic components to it. Satirical talk shows are considered as liberal programs. And because of advent of these programs political spectrum is also changing in liberal and democratic way (Larris, 2005). As satirical programs’ audience is younger, educated, and liberal. Therefore, younger audience has been showing their lack of interest in traditional news outlets and turning towards comedy based political talk shows in order to gratify their needs regarding political knowledge.

The boundaries between politics, entertainment and information are now blending together. Political participation is essential for the proper working of society. And satire is capable of keeping the audience active, alert and interested in political activities where traditional means of

political participation appears to flop (Matsa, 2010). Satirical shows have the power to impact and form audiences' perceptions of political subjects. Therefore, Greek public have replaced the traditional news outlets with new satirical programming. Studies have shown that there is stronger correlation between audiences' political participation and consumption of satirical talk shows. While this correlation can either be positive or negative. Audience turn to these programs in order to not only to be entertained but also to be politically informed. Political participation is essential for the proper working of society. However, political participation has changed through time and emergence of satire can be considered as new development in political participation.

Viewership of humor based political programs may tend to increase political participation levels. And satire has taken as a political fixture in the media and it is emerging as a way to intensify youth participation in the politics (Stewart, 2007). Viewership of satirical talk shows increased the political participation because younger audiences enhance their political knowledge with "soft news" programming and utilization of this type of "soft news" is different from utilization of traditional "hard news" because satire has the capacity to shift viewers' discourse about politics.

Consuming sarcastic humor indirectly urge political participation through the channel of interpersonal talk about politics and that interpersonal political communication is activated by exposure to late night comedy programs. These programs urge its audience to engage in political activities. While this political mobilization is directly linked with some basic features of interpersonal political communication including discussion frequency and network scope (Lee, 2012). The interactions among the audience of satirical talk shows are not just limited to their familiar network but also with strangers and virtual associates and these programs also draw greater level of political engagement from highly educated people. The audience of satirical programs may engage in political interpersonal talk in more useful and in cognitive pattern.

While on the other hand exposure to political comedy is related with cynicism in politics. Humor based political programs can turn any political mistake by politicians into humorous punch lines. Humor has the power to make any message, campaign, process or product more memorable and therefore these shows are considered as more persuasive and memorable because presented in comedic style (Francis, 2006). But politics is a serious matter and when it is discussed satirically then it may create negative impact on its audience understanding of politics and leading them towards political mistrust.

Different type of satire can influence on audience differently. Therefore, there is different kind of cognitive processing required to interpret different types of satire. Some satires are complex and cause difficulty to interpret its actual meaning while some lead its audience to process its humor in a biased way. There are two of the most distinct and popular types of satire, and these are juvenalian and horatian satire. These types are opposite to each other in terms of their techniques (Landreville, 2014). Horatian satire stays in the hands of the message recipient where juvenalian satire stays in the hands of the message producers. Satire overall have a large purpose than only to generate laughter. Different forms of satire has lower the audience's motivation to think about the issues and entering in a world where sarcasm, parody, and satire may have much influence on democracy rather than the facts and relevant truths.

While contrary to that view, political comedy stimulate political interest in viewers and that interest lead them to get more information through other sources of hard news. It is very possible that exposure to satirical programs does not lead its audience towards cynicism but rather to skepticism which is measured healthy for democracy (Lewis, 2009). Skepticism is described as audience's openness towards additional information. Skeptical audiences seek political information either to confirm or disconfirm the accuracy of previously received information from satirical shows.

Different people have different attitudes towards satirical talk shows, as some are highly mobilized by consuming these kinds of political programs while highly educated individuals are not evenly politically mobilized by satirical talk shows.

Humor may generate positive approach towards politics. As the use of comedy has progressed rapidly therefore viewers have opportunities to engage in many types of satirical programming. The rise in the popularity of such programs leads to the notion that they can influence its audience's political mobility, interest and knowledge (Xenos, 2013). Satirical programs can be considered as effective media platform to support politics and humor can generates diversion from actual message, therefore this diversion increases the odds of message acceptance.

Satire can be used as a tool of social and political change because political satire influences public perceptions and images of politician, media celebrities and politics. Therefore relationship between the televised political satire and civic involvement is escalating day by day. Therefore many political elites are now realizing the potential of political satire and using this tool to influence new demographics (Mckenzie, 2006). Satire can affects political knowledge and civic involvement of its audience and that satire may have become the new medium of political dialogue and criticism.

Viewers of political comedy programs form their political views and opinion that is consisted with their political beliefs. Therefore satirical programs plays significant role in political socialization of its audience (Waisanen, 2009). Just like the audience of satirical talk shows, comedy figures or hosts of these programs are also linked with their specific political affiliation. Therefore the selection of programs depends on the political affiliation of its audience.

Political entertainment media have potential effects on political socialization. The consumption of these programs complements the use of traditional news. These programs are sought by its viewers

as a source of their political gratification, affecting political socialization. But some people turn towards these programs for entertainment purpose but also get political information as their by product (Schwmir, 2010). Satirical programs not only entertain their audience but also politically inform them in light and humorous way. Therefore, satirical media content may impacts full variety of effects from knowledge to perceptions from political engagement to political socialization. People often look towards comedy and satire to release their tensions which may have become an important social function of political humor.

As discussed earlier, exposure to satirical programing influence on political knowledge, political participation and interest. By expanding this notion, media reliance may also be taken as key element in this regard. While reliance is the degree to which media outlets are used to find about political world. And also importance of media sources decides the degree of media reliance, the more important the media outlet is to one's life, the more influence it has on political socialization (Johnson, 2013). Satirical shows may also increase positive democratic beliefs rather than sour its audience about politics and government. Moreover, these programs ignite political interest in its audience and those who rely heavily on these programs for political information are also political active. Reliance on satirical programing may help in enhancing positive political attributes more so than any other media.

Parody and image construction of political and media personalities have great impact on political socialization. Satirical programming uses political figures, their characters, campaigns and also their physical shortcomings as subject of humor for their respective audience and viewers who tune into these programs are much likely to agree with these satirical representations and humor presented rather than utilize energy to evaluate or discredit the source (A.Haller, 2011). Therefore viewers may utilize much of their cognitive energy in order to understand the oddness present

between these humorous representations and the actual content. As comedy is not a monolithic entity, therefore these programs incorporate different types of comedy in order to affect political socialization of its audience.

With the passage of time, the viewers of political humor have grown which represents the acceptance of these satirical programs as legitimate form of political discussion (Becker, 2012). As discussed earlier that politically inattentive audience may engage in viewership of these satirical programing. Therefore when making political decisions, they barely hold strong biased preferences and are much likely to trust on heuristic judgments drawn from these programs because these programs may be the only source of their political information.

Like political socialization, satirical programing may also effects on political interest and trust in government. There is positive relation between exposure of satirical programing and political trust. Therefore, exposure to satirical programing strongly connected to higher level of political interest. Satirical programing acts as supplement to traditional news, rather than its replacement because audiences who tune into satirical programing are also paying much attention towards traditional news (B.Becker, 2011). Therefore viewing satirical programing may relate to generate one's feelings of political interest and efficacy.

Satirical programing may possess capacity to teach, persuade, frame, and change political interest and participation of its audience. Therefore, it is plausible that satirical programing during an election can shape audiences' thinking of the political candidate or of any political campaign (Feldman, 2008). From the past decade, there's been a massive desertion of audience from traditional news to satirical programing and the audience of satirical programing is more politically motivated than the audience of traditional news. The patterns of news consumption of viewer are changing with the passage of time just as the boundaries between these two kinds of programing.

Political entertainment is divided into two dimensions in which viewers expect the content primarily political or politics is secondary. Satire is different from traditional news format because it effects on political participation. Viewing political entertainment has positive effect on efficacy. Political efficacy is the belief in one's own feeling that social and political change is possible (Hoffman, 2011). But both traditional news and satire have showed that a positive and significant effect present on political participation of its audience. Therefore, viewing satire and traditional news may equally affect political participation.

There is increasing concern in the effects of political entertainment programs on citizen's traits of political competency and commitment. Individuals who have less need for humor are not keen in watching regular news in the form of political entertainment formats (Hollander, 2013). Political comedy may not only be effective with respect to political traits like social trust and political participation. Different people have different opinions about satirical talk shows. Some might see it as appropriate way to discuss about politics and other serious issues while others find it as invalid. Therefore there may have negative effects of political humor on political participation and social trust among people who have less need of political humor and also among those who consider it as an inappropriate way of talking about politics.

Witty messages may often be perceived as convincing depending upon their nature of structure and observed reliability of the source. When satirical content is of desirable nature then the content is taken as more persuasive for its audience (Boria, 2010). Sometimes audiences challenge the reliability and credibility of the political information they get through satirical programs. Therefore the relevant behavioral outcomes is being persuaded by the mockery and witticisms of political comedy presented in these shows. As these shows are liberal in their orientation, therefore information given by these programs sometimes perceived as highly partisan. Viewers may see a

strong difference between political comedy and traditional news, even if critical assessments of the media persist, this difference cannot be overlooked. Further, viewers' assessment of the show may also shape more direct political effects.

Political knowledge is an essential element of citizenship because it helps to increase the worth of political discourse on public concerns. It allows citizens to engage in political actions effectively, which make the democratic system functions responsibly. The relationship between political participation and satirical programs could have associations for the health of the democratic system (Kaufmann, 2011). Satirical programs may also have potential to narrow the knowledge gap between those who do not watch traditional news programs and news junkies. Also previous researches have shown that variables like political participation and political interest are positively related to political knowledge of its audience. Therefore satirical programing may have direct effect on this notion, as satire is considered to have influence on political knowledge of its audience.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In this research the effects of satirical talk shows on television channels has been studied with the reference to "political socialization theory."

2.3 Political Socialization

Political socialization theory by Almond and Vebra states that it is the diffusion of political culture from generation to generation in a given society. While some of the scholars stated¹ that it is the product of interconnecting macro and micro level phenomena. Political socialization at macro level deals with the notion of how do polities and political entities convey beliefs, attitudes, opinions, behaviors and values to the mass public. While on individual or micro level, it establishes the notion that the processes and ways through which an individual participate in politics and political learning, making strong relationships towards political setting in which he/she lives. Therefore, political socialization results in individuals who attain knowledge about the working of political system. This knowledge of political values and ideology leads the citizen to participate in civic and political life.

So the researcher in this study used this theory to know about the patterns of political engagement by audience of satirical talk shows. As this research is about the possible effects of satirical talk shows on audience perceptions of political knowledge, values and political beliefs. And mass media is key component of this study because audience expose to these kinds of programs through mass media channels. And political socialization theory gives the conception that polities and political entities transmits established patterns of laws and norms, thoughts and actions, and political beliefs by the use of agencies or agents like family, political institutions, educational systems, community and religious organizations and most importantly through “mass media”.²

¹ Retrieved on December 18, 2014, from https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=zdOxZEB1eqoC&pg=PA11&lpg=PA11&dq=shapiro+political+socialization&source=bl&ots=wjFRJNE6fR&sig=r-e7_5G9vKkc_x7x2lJQdDvapaUc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=wWkOVaugJsfePeG3gdAG&ved=0CDkO6AEwBO#v=onepage&q=shapiro%20political%20socialization&f=false

² Retrieved on December 23, 2014, from <http://gaz.sagepub.com/content/73/4/302.abstract>

This means that political socialization indicates the strong relationship between media exposure and how this exposure leads its audience to develop their own political orientations and practices.

Mass media is a powerful means of political socialization, affecting political behaviors and attitudes of voters and non-voters.³ As political participation is at the heart of political socialization and that mass media plays significant role in that participation therefore researcher used this theory because researcher wants to see the role of satire in political communication process and how satirical talk shows influence political participation of its audience.

Further political socialization also deals with individual's personal growth in which developing individual attains his/her own beliefs, views about politics and also political affiliation. Most citizens form their views about politics and government based on what they see on media. Media is considered as a powerful tool for political and social change. This is the reason that political socialization regard media as the strongest agent among its other agencies like family, educational and religious institutions, peer groups and also political organizations. Mass media sets the agenda in the minds of its audience. It shapes views and opinions about different issues of the society including politics. The type of media content determines the change in views and opinions.

The responsibility of media is much more in Pakistan⁴ than any other country of the world because the recent abrupt privatization of channels did not provide a chance to Media authorities to develop and implement proper code of ethics. Though the written material possesses all the ethical benchmarks which a media organization should have to follow but there's lack of proper check and balance in media organization. Media gives rise to plenty of news and entertainment genre

³ Retrieved on December 26, 2014, from <http://quizlet.com/15329751/political-socialization-flash-cards/>

⁴ Retrieved on January 01, 2015, from <http://www.cssforum.com.pk/css-compulsory-subjects/essay/essays/51591-essay-media-plz-check-guide.html>

including satire. The researcher wants to investigate the impact of satire on Pakistani society by using political socialization theory.

2.4 Research Questions

RQ1: Is there growing acceptance for satirical talk shows in Pakistani society?

RQ2: Does exposure to satirical talk shows has any relationship with political socialization (awareness) and political participation?

RQ3: Does regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer?

RQ4: How does exposure to satirical programing influence political interest (agenda) of its audience?

RQ5: How far satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons or other celebrities for their audience?

RQ6: Does satirical talk shows qualifies on the ethical benchmark of media?

2.5 Hypotheses

H1: There is growing acceptance for satirical talk shows in Pakistani society.

H2: Exposure to satirical talk shows has strong relationship with political participation.

H3: Satirical programs influence on political interest of its audience.

H4: Regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer.

H5: Satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience.

H6: Satirical talk shows qualify on basic ethical benchmark of media.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The present research is non-experimental i.e. quantitative methodology was applied which involve surveys from educated people. According to Babbie Earl⁵ “Quantitative methodology emphasizes objective measurements of data collected through questionnaires, polls and surveys.”

Survey⁶ methodology was selected because it was most suitable for this topic, also because the cost of surveys are reasonable, large amount of data could be collected with very less expenses and also from variety of people. As many variables had to be examined, so survey was most suitable. Survey was conducted by using questionnaires.

3.2 Population

The population of the study includes general public of Islamabad including University students.

3.3 Sample Size

First, pretest was conducted with a sample of 10 persons from Islamabad to check the reliability and validity of questionnaire. Using convenience sampling method, the sample was then derived from the people of Islamabad. The total of 220 surveys was handed out among the participants but 200 were included in the research.

⁵ Retrieved on January 12, 2015, from <http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&sid=615867>

⁶ In survey research, the researcher chose a sample of respondents from a population and administers a standardized questionnaire to them. Survey can be in a written format or it can be an online questionnaire, a face-to-face interview, or a telephone interview. Using surveys, it is possible to collect data from large or small populations. Retrieved on January 15, 2015, from <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=68>

3.4 Sampling Method

Using convenience sampling method, the sample is derived from the people of Islamabad. “Convenience sampling is non-probability sampling⁷ and the selection of participants is done on the basis of their ease of volunteering and availability to the researcher.”

3.5 Instrument/Questionnaire

Questionnaire of the study includes some basic questions about the participants and twenty two questions about the research. The final questionnaire comprised of 22 questions related to hypotheses. Besides that, questions related to demographics were also included in questionnaire.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data is entered into the SPSS format. To find out the results, cross tabulation correlation coefficient and frequency tables were used.

3.7 Variables

Seven key variables are used in this study, which are following:

1. Exposure
2. Acceptance
3. Political Participation
4. Interpersonal Talk
5. Political Interest (agenda)
6. Image Construction

⁷ Retrieved on January 16, 2015, from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/convenience-sampling.html>

7. Ethical Benchmarks

3.8 Conceptual Definitions of the Key Variables

1. Exposure

Exposure⁸ is the condition of being open to something. Therefore exposure to satirical talk shows refers to the viewership of satirical programs which means that audiences engage in watching satirical talk shows on television.

2. Acceptance

The term acceptance⁹ refers to the process of being received as valid, or suitable. Therefore acceptance of satirical programs means that it is considered as adequate and valid format to discuss about politics by its audience.

3. Political Participation

Political participation¹⁰ can be defined as those actions of peoples by which they seek to impact or support government and politics. It ranges from attending a rally to voting, and sending a letter to political representative. Media plays an important role in political participation of its audience.

4. Interpersonal Talk

Interpersonal talk is an exchange of information, ideas, opinions and feelings between two or more people.¹¹ As media is the source of information, entertainment, and news. Therefore people engage

⁸ Retrieved on January 16, 2015, from <http://www.learnersdictionary.com/definition/exposure>

⁹ Retrieved on January 17, 2015, from https://www.google.com.pk/?gws_rd=ssl#q=acceptance+definition

¹⁰ Retrieved on January 18, 2015, from <http://www2.fiu.edu/~milch002/CPO3643/outlines/participation.htm>

¹¹ Retrieved on January 19, 2015, from <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/interpersonal-communication.html>

in interpersonal talk using media content as their topic of discussion. Therefore audiences also engage in interpersonal talk after watching satirical talk shows.

5. Political Interest (Agenda)

Political interest¹² or agenda is actually a set of political concerns and policies, pursued by a person or group. A person's political affiliation, his/her political attitude and beliefs also comes under the notion of political interest. Media is considered as powerful tool for setting of political agenda or forming political interest in its audience.

6. Image Construction

Image construction by satirical programs is actually comic imitation of the style of a specific politician, media person or of any media celebrity to point out certain serious issue of the society.¹³

7. Ethical Benchmarks

Some basic ethical benchmarks of media are:

- a) Truthfulness: Means content presented by the media should be true.¹⁴
- b) Clarity: Content should be clear without ambiguity.
- c) Fairness: It should be fair.
- d) Balanced: It should be balanced.
- e) Be accountable: Media person should be accountable to its audience.

¹² Retrieved on January 21, 2015, from <http://www.wiscgeek.com/what-is-a-political-agenda.htm>

¹³ Retrieved on January 29, 2015, from <https://www.momentmag.com/how-does-satire-influence-politics/>

¹⁴ Retrieved on February 08, 2015, from <http://www.ndsu.edu/pubweb/~rcollins/431ethics/codes.htm>

3.9 Operational Definitions of the Variables

1. Exposure

In this study the researcher used the variable Exposure to satirical talk shows and operationalize it in two dimensions as how often do they (participants) watch satirical programs and which satirical program they watch including “Hasb-e-Haal”, “Hum sab umeed se hain”, “Khabar naak”, “Banana News network (BNN)”, and “Mazaq raat.”

2. Acceptance

The second variable of the study is acceptance of satirical talk shows. Researcher operationalized it in three dimensions as participants consider satire as a legitimate way of evaluating and criticizing the political peers and media celebrities, ethically satire is not objectionable and that satire is a credible source of news and information.

3. Political participation

The researcher operationalized the variable of political participation in four different dimensions as they have attended any political seminar, rally or jalsa recently, or they have called in any political programs to express their opinion, they regularly like, comment or joined any political page on social media including Facebook, and Twitter and according to them watching satirical programs is a political act.

4. Interpersonal Talk

Researcher operationalized the variable in three dimensions which includes discussion of the participants about the content of satirical talk shows with their friends, family and colleagues. And

if they engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk show or they criticize the content of satirical talk shows with friends, colleagues and family.

5. Political Interest (Agenda)

Researcher in this study operationalized the variable Political interest in two ways as if the participants think that satirical programs influence on political agenda (interest) of its audience and also satirical talk shows are successful in generating political interest among its audience.

6. Image Construction

Image Construction was operationalized in following three dimensions as participants think that parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical and they feel uncomfortable when they see parody of political figures that they like. It also included some examples from different television satire programs.

7. Ethical Benchmarks

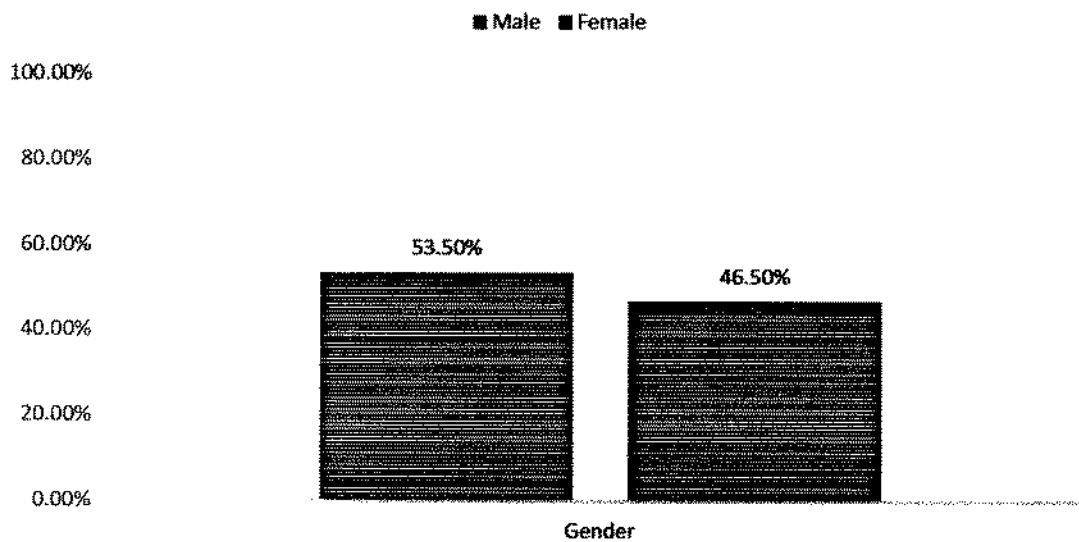
This variable operationalized as if the participants think that satirical programs uses appropriate language, cover both sides of the story, and that satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness.

Chapter 4

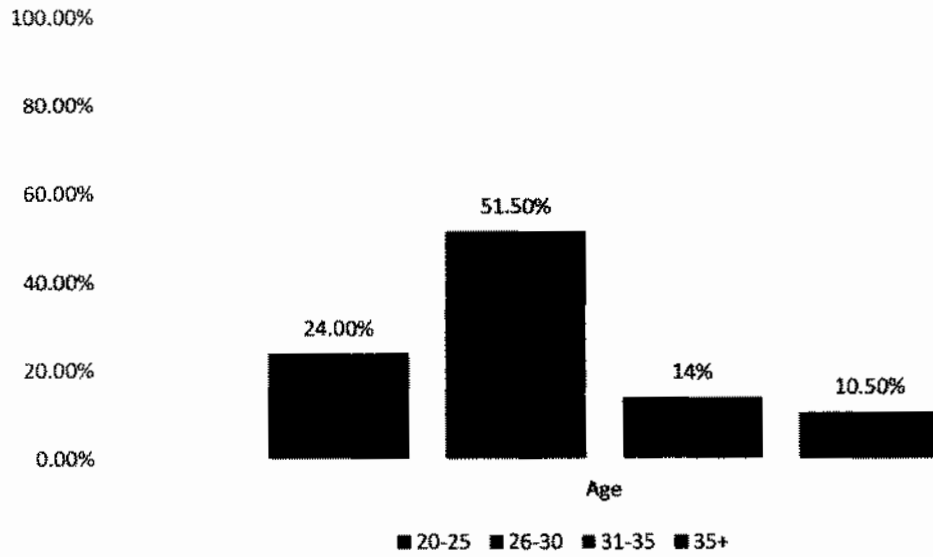
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The research had basically seven variables which were tested through several questions in the questionnaire. The results of the variables have been taken through the frequencies of the SPSS software. A total of 220 questionnaires were distributed amongst the target audience but only 200 were found to be filled and valid. There were 53.5 % male respondents and 46.5% female respondents. Further, 24% respondents were between the ages of 20 and 25, 51% respondents were between the ages of 26 to 30 and 14% were between the age of 31 and 35. Lastly 10% respondents were above 35. As far as education is concerned, 10.5% respondents had an education between matriculations or below, 19.5% had an intermediate education, 34% respondents had done graduation, and finally 36% had an education between masters and above.

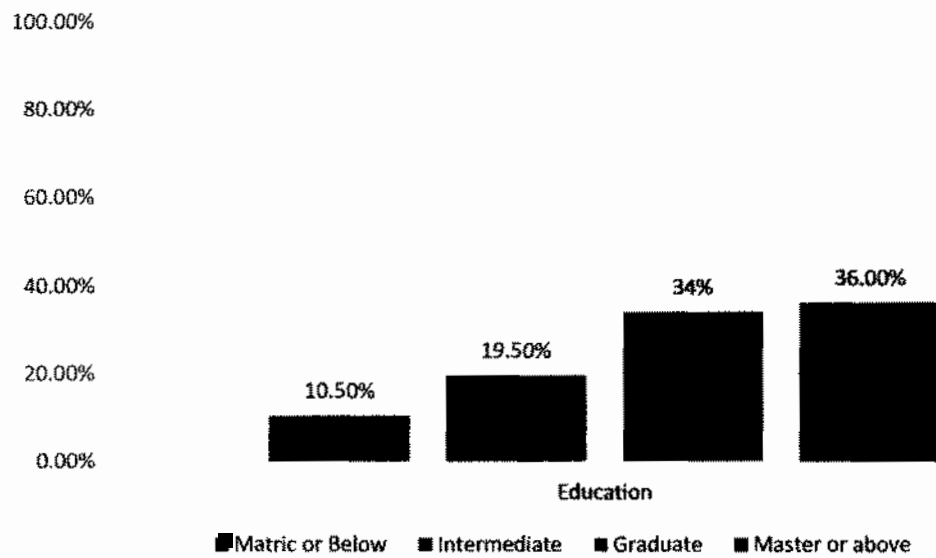
(FIG 4.1) GENDER PERCENTAGE



(FIG 4.2) Age Percentage



(FIG 4.3) Percentage of Education



4.1 Hypotheses Testing

H1: There is growing acceptance for satirical talk shows in Pakistani society.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents were asked questions in dimension of legitimacy, ethical and credibility of the source. Respondents were asked questions such as, satire is a legitimate way of evaluating and criticizing the political peers and media celebrities, ethically satire is not objectionable and lastly satire is a credible source of news and information. The results were drawn by taking frequencies with the help of SPSS software.

Table 4.1: Frequency: Acceptance of satire in Pakistani society

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Satire is a legitimate way of evaluating and criticizing the political peers and media celebrities.	71.5	8.5	20
Ethically satire is not objectionable.	67	11	22
Satire is a credible source of news and information.	50.5	20.5	29

The results showed that 71.5% of the respondents think that satire is a legitimate way of evaluating and criticizing the political peers and media celebrities and only 20% disagreed with this statement while 8.5% respondents were remain neutral on the statement, 67% agreed with the statement that ethically satire is not objectionable and only 22% disagreed with it while 11% respondents were remain neutral on the statement. While on the last statement that satire is a credible source of news and information 50.5% agreed with the statement and only 29% respondents disagreed with it and others 20.5 remaining neutral. All this leads to the conclusion that there is growing acceptance for

satirical talk shows in Pakistani society because on all three statements more than 50% of the respondents have agreed upon hence the hypothesis was proven.

H2: Exposure to satirical talk shows has strong relationship with political participation.

To test this hypothesis, researcher had computed the statements of political participation like, I attended a political seminar/rally/jalsa recently, I called in political programs to express my opinion and I actively like, comment and join political pages on social media (Facebook, Twitter).

Then cross tabulation were applied between computed political participation and the statement, how often do you watch satirical talk shows.

Table 4.2 shows the cross tabulation of computed political participation and the question that was phrased to the sample, how often do you watch satirical talk shows.

Table 4.2: Cross Tabulation: Computed political participation & how often do you watch satirical talk shows.

		Computed political participation		
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
How often do you watch satirical talk shows	Regularly	9	47	50
	Often	8	22	25
	Sometime	4	15	20

Results (table 4.2) showed that 9 out of 200 respondents who were regular viewer of satirical talk shows agreed with the statement that exposure of satirical talk shows encourage political participation, 47 respondents were remained neutral while 50 respondents disagreed with the statement. Those respondents who watch satirical talk shows often, 8 were agreed with the statement, 22 remained neutral while 25 disagreed with the statement. And those who were sometimes engaged in watching satirical talk shows, 16 agreed with the statement, 5 remained neutral while 18 disagreed with the statement.

Further to check the relationship between variables, correlation was applied to find the relationship between how often do you watch satirical talk shows and computed political participation.

Table 4.3 shows the correlation of computed political participation variable and how often do you watch satirical talk shows.

Table 4.3: Correlation: Computed political participation & how often do you watch satirical talk shows.

		How often do you watch satirical talk shows?	Compute political participation
How often do you watch satirical talk shows?	Pearson Correlation	1	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	200	.363
	N		200
Compute political participation	Pearson Correlation	.065	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.363	200
	N	200	

Table 4.3 showed that there was very weak positive correlation between the two variables because “ $r = 0.065$ $n = 200$ $p = 0.363$.” Because significance lower than 0.5 indicates very weak relationship

which leads to the conclusion that the hypothesis “Exposure to satirical talk shows has strong relationship with political participation” had been disproved.

H3: Satirical programs influence on political interest of its audience.

To test this hypothesis, respondents were asked two questions such as, satirical programs influence on political agenda of its audience and satirical talk shows are successful in generating political interest among its audience. The results were drawn by taking frequencies of the two statements with the help of SPSS software.

Table 4.4: Frequencies: Satirical programs influence on political interest of its audience.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Satirical programs influence on political agenda of its audience.	69.5	14.5	16
Satirical talk shows are successful in generating political interest among its audience.	71	14	15

The results showed that 69.5% of the respondents were agreed that satirical programs influence on political agenda of its audience and only 16% disagreed with this statement while 14.5% respondents were remain neutral on the statement, similarly 71% respondents were agreed with the statement that satirical talk shows are successful in generating political interest among its audience and only 15% disagreed with the statement, while 14% respondents were remain neutral on the statement. All this leads to the conclusion that satirical programs influence on political interest of its audience because on all statements more than 60% of the respondents have agreed upon hence the hypothesis was proven.

H4: Regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents were asked questions in dimension of discussion and interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows. Respondents were asked questions such as, I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues and I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows. The results were drawn first by taking out frequencies of the two statements and then cross tabulation were applied between these two statements and statement of exposure to satirical talk shows because the hypotheses was about engagement of a regular viewer in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer.

Table 4.5: Regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues.	67.5	15.5	17
I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows.	48	27	25

The results of the frequencies showed that 67.5% of the respondents were agreed with the statement that I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues and only 17% disagreed with this statement while 15.5% respondents were remain neutral on the

statement. Similarly 48% agreed with the statement that I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows, and only 25% disagreed with it while 27% respondents were remain neutral on the statement. As far as exposure of satirical talk shows were concerned, 53% were regular viewer, 27.5% were often engaged in watching satirical talk shows while 19.5% were under the category of some time watching satirical talk shows. To find the results cross tabulation were applied as:

Table 4.6: Cross Tabulation: Exposure and I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues.

		I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues.		
How often do you watch satirical talk shows		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Regularly		80	16	10
Often		42	7	6
Sometimes		13	8	18

Results (table 4.6) showed that 80 out of 200 respondents who were regular viewer of satirical talk shows agreed with the statement that I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues and 16 respondents were remained neutral while 10 respondents disagreed with the statement. Those respondents who watch satirical talk shows often, 42 were agreed with the statement, 7 remained neutral while 6 disagreed with the statement. And those who were sometimes engaged in watching satirical talk shows, 13 agreed with the statement, 8 remained neutral while 18 disagreed with the statement. These results provided that a total of 40%

respondents who were regular viewer of satirical talk shows agreed with the statement and only 5% respondents were disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.7: Cross Tabulation: Exposure and I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows.

		I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows.		
How often do you watch satirical talk shows		Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Regularly		61	25	20
Often		25	14	16
Sometimes		10	15	14

Results (table 4.7) showed that 61 out of 200 respondents who were regular viewer of satirical talk shows agreed with the statement that I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows, 25 respondents were remained neutral while 20 respondents disagreed with the statement. Those respondents who watch satirical talk shows more often, 25 were agreed with the statement, 14 remained neutral while 16 disagreed with the statement. And those who were sometimes engaged in watching satirical talk shows, 10 agreed with the statement, 15 remained neutral while 14 disagreed with the statement. These results provided that 30.5% respondents who were regular viewer of satirical talk shows agreed with the statement and only 10% respondents were disagreed with the statement. All this leads to the conclusion that regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer because on both statements majority of respondents have agreed upon hence the hypothesis was proven.

H5: Satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents were asked questions in different dimensions and examples of image construction by satirical talk shows. Respondents were asked questions such as, I liked Azizi's (Hasb-e-Haal) parody of Molana Fazal-ul-Rehman, I liked Saba Qamar's (Hum sab umeed se hain) parody of Meera, I liked Banana News Network (BNN) parody of Imran Khan, parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical and last I feel uncomfortable when I see parody of political figures that I like. The results were drawn by taking frequencies of above statements with the help of SPSS software.

Table 4.8: Frequencies: Satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I liked Azizi's (Hasb-e-Haal) parody of Molana Fazal-ul-Rehman	71.5	5	23.5
I liked Saba Qamar's (Hum sab umeed se hain) parody of Meera.	75	10.5	14.5
I liked Banana News Network (BNN) parody of Imran Khan.	63.5	13	23.5
Parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical.	49	21.5	29.5
I feel uncomfortable when I see parody of political figures that I like.	54	16.5	29.5

The results showed that 71.5% of the respondents agreed on statement I liked Azizi's (Hasb-e-Haal) parody of Molana Fazal-ul-Rehman and only 23.5% disagreed with this statement while 5%

respondents were remain neutral on the statement. Similarly 75% agreed with the statement I liked Saba Qamar's (Hum sab umeed se hain) parody of Meera and only 14.5% disagreed with it while 11% respondents were remain neutral on the statement. While on the next statement, I liked Banana News Network (BNN) parody of Imran Khan 63.5% agreed with the statement and only 23.5% respondents disagreed with it and 13% remained neutral. 49% respondents agreed with the statement that parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical and 29.5% disagreed with it while 21.5% respondents were remained neutral on the statement. While on the last statement I feel uncomfortable when I see parody of political figures that I like 54% agreed with the statement and only 29.5% respondents disagreed with it and 16.5% remained neutral.

All this leads to the conclusion that satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience because on all five statements more than 50% of the respondents have agreed upon therefore the hypothesis was proven.

H6: Satirical talk shows qualify the ethical benchmark of media.

To test this hypothesis, the respondents were asked questions in four dimensions like the use of language by satirical programs, balance, fairness and appropriateness. For this purpose Respondents were asked questions such as satirical programs uses appropriate language, satirical programs always covers both sides of the story, satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness, and last satire is an appropriate way to talk about political and others serious issues of the society. The results were drawn by taking frequencies of all above statements with the help of SPSS software.

Table 4.9: Frequencies: Satirical talk shows qualify on basic ethical benchmark of media.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Satirical programs uses appropriate language.	31.5	36	32.5
Satirical programs always covers both sides of the story.	59	19	22
Satirical talk shows qualify on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness.	59.5	18.5	22
Satire is an appropriate way to talk about political and others serious issues of the society.	69	12.5	18.5

The results showed that 31.5% of the respondents agreed on statement that satirical programs use appropriate language and 32.5% disagreed with this statement while 36% respondents were remain neutral on the statement. Similarly 59% agreed with the statement that satirical programs always covers both sides of the story and only 22% disagreed with it while 19% respondents were remained neutral on the statement. While on the next statement that satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness 59.5% agreed with the statement and only 22% respondents disagreed with it and 18.5% remained neutral. 69% respondents agreed with the statement that satire is an appropriate way to talk about political and others serious issues of the society and 18.5% disagreed with it while 12.5% respondents were remained neutral on the statement.

All this leads to the conclusion that satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical benchmark of media because on all statements more than 50% of the respondents have agreed upon therefore the hypothesis was proven.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

The aim of the present research was to look at the influence of satirical talk shows on audience's political participation, political interest, interpersonal discussion and acceptance of these programs in terms of their legitimacy and credibility. The first hypothesis suggested that there is growing acceptance for satirical talk shows in Pakistani society. To test the hypothesis, respondents were asked questions in dimensions of legitimacy of the satirical programs, ethical acceptability and credibility of these programs. Majority of the respondents who watch satirical talk shows believed that satire is making its way in Pakistani society. They also believed that satire is legitimate way to talk about media and political celebrities, that ethically satire is not objectionable and satire is the credible source to discuss political affairs of Pakistan. This is all in accordance with the research done by Haller (2011) which suggested that viewers who tune into these programs are much likely to agree and accept these satirical representation and evaluation of media and political celebrities and humor presented rather than utilize energy to criticize or discredit the source. Therefore viewers utilize much of their cognitive energy in order to understand the oddness present in these humorous representations.

As far as the subject of credibility is concerned, the research of Boria (2010) also in lined with the present study which indicates that witty messages may often be perceived as convincing because of their nature of structure and observed reliability and credibility of the source. When satirical content is of desirable nature then the content is taken as more persuasive for its audience. Audience who accepted these programs as valid format probably would not challenge the reliability and credibility of the political information given by these programs.

The second hypothesis stated that exposure to satirical talk shows has strong relationship with political participation. To find the results, researcher had designed some specific questions which gave insights about the role of exposure of satirical talk shows possess on political participation of its audience, these includes that I attended a political seminar/rally/jalsa recently, I called in political programs to express my opinion and I actively like, comment and join political pages on social media (Facebook, Twitter). Results showed that that there was a significant difference in the attitude of the audience regarding political participation and exposure of satirical talk shows leading to the conclusion that exposure of satirical talk shows does not urge its audience to take part in politics and the hypothesis was disproved

Further this found data was contrary to the research done by western countries as Stewart's (2007) viewership of humor based political programs may tend to increase political participation levels. And satire has taken as a political fixture in the media and it is emerging as a way to intensify audience participation in the politics.

While on the other hand, Francis's (2006) exposure to political comedy is related with cynicism in politics. Humor based political programs can turn any political mistake by politicians into humorous punch lines. Therefore, these shows are considered as more persuasive and memorable and exposure to these sarcastic political shows are directly related towards the negative impact on its audience understanding of politics and therefore associated with political mistrust which results into lack of political participation of its audience. Given the conflicting circumstances, this specific notion of exposure and political participation has been disproved in case of Pakistani audience.

Third hypothesis stated that satirical programs influence on political interest of its audience. This hypothesis was tested on the basis of two important dimensions like satirical programs influence on political agenda of its audience and satirical talk shows are successful in generating political

interest among its audience. And results suggested that these satirical programs strongly influence on political agenda of its audience. Lewis's (2006) has also suggested that it is very possible that exposure to satirical programs does not lead to cynicism but rather to skepticism which is measured healthy for democracy. Skepticism is openness towards additional information, and skeptical audiences seek political information either to confirm or disconfirm the accuracy of previously received information. And that political comedy stimulates political interest in viewers and that interest leads them to get more information through other sources of hard news.

Similarly Xenos (2013) stated that rise in the popularity of such programs can influence its audience's political mobility, interest and knowledge. Satirical programs are effective media platform to support politics. And also humor generates diversion from actual message therefore this diversion increases the odds of message acceptance. And sometimes this use of humor may indirectly effect on the political interest of its audience. Johnson (2008) stated that exposure to satirical programing influence on political knowledge and interest and media reliance is a key element in this regard. The importance of media sources decides the degree of media reliance, the more important the media outlet is to one's life, the more influence it has on political attitudes and satirical shows increase positive political interest of its audience rather than sour its audience about politics. Moreover, these programs ignite political interest in its audience and reliance on satirical programing enhances positive political attributes more so than any other media.

The fourth hypothesis stated that regular viewer of satirical talk shows is more likely to engage in interpersonal talk about politics as compared to an irregular viewer. This hypothesis was testified in light of questions like I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues, I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows and I criticize what I have seen on satirical talk shows with my

friends and family. Results suggested that exposure of satirical talk shows effects on the frequency and subject of interpersonal discussion among its audience. The frequency of exposure plays an important role in that discussion. In line with this notion, the study done by Lee (2012) has suggested that Consuming satirical humor indirectly urge its audience to engage in interpersonal talk about politics. And interpersonal political communication is triggered by exposure to late night comedy programs. These programs urge its audience to engage in political activities. While this political mobilization is directly linked with some basic features of interpersonal political communication including discussion frequency and network scope. And the audiences of satirical talk shows engage in political interpersonal talk in more useful cognitive pattern. The interactions among the audience of satirical talk shows are not just limited to their familiar network but also with strangers and virtual associates and these programs also draw greater level of political engagement from highly educated people. Therefore this study also supports this notion in Pakistani context.

The fifth hypothesis was Satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience. This hypothesis was testified in light of questions like, I liked Azizi's (Hasb-e-Haal) parody of Molana Fazal-ul-Rehman, I liked Saba Qamar's (Hum sab umeed se hain) parody of Meera, I liked Banana News Network (BNN) parody of Imran Khan, parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical and last I feel uncomfortable when I see parody of political figures that I like. Results suggested that satirical shows are successful in constructing the images of political persons and other celebrities for their audience because on all five statements more than 50% of the respondents have agreed upon. People who tune into these kinds of programs are originally agreed and satisfied with kind of humor, mimicry, sarcasm image construction of media and political celebrities by these programs.

Therefore they find it attractive and amusing rather than stingy and odd. McKenzie (2006) has also stated that satire is used as a tool of social and political change. Political satire influence public perceptions and images of politician and politics. As relationship between the televised political satire and civic involvement is escalating day by day. Therefore many political elites are now realizing the potential of political satire and using this tool to influence new demographics. Audience of satirical talk shows finds the image construction of political and media elites fascinating and amusing. Same is true for Pakistani satirical audience.

Last hypothesis of the study stated that satirical talk shows qualify the ethical benchmark of media. To investigate this hypothesis, the respondents were asked questions in four dimensions like the use of language by satirical programs, balance, fairness and appropriateness. Questions included were satirical programs uses appropriate language, satirical programs always covers both sides of the story, satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness, and last satire is an appropriate way to talk about political and others serious issues of the society. The findings according to the audience of satirical talk shows suggested that satirical talk shows qualify on basic ethical benchmark of media. They showed a little concern about the type of language used by some programs but overall audience of satirical talk shows were satisfied with the ethical standards of these programs.

5.2 Conclusion

Political knowledge is fundamental for the proper functioning of society, through political interest and engagement a citizen can choose depends upon their own interests by selecting the political force that rule their world. As political engagement has altered through time and so too has its meaning transformed. And a new development of political news is the emergence of satirical shows. This thesis explored the part of satire in Pakistani politics and employed theory and methodologies given by the disciplines of communication and political science. Political socialization theory offered enlightenments for the reasons viewers choose to watch Pakistani satirical shows.

Pakistani viewers find these shows witty and entertaining as well as informative. Moreover satire is taken as legitimate and credible source of political news dissemination and way to socialize in the wider environment to involve in political conversation with friends, family and colleagues. These statements political socialization was confirmed by the survey's findings. And these findings lead to a deeper understanding of the how satire is perceived by audience.

Satirical shows offer a huge impact on the western culture in terms of political influence including voting preferences. The study of the same content in Pakistan is critical because the audiences are still new to such new format of satire that presents political information in a different style. The heavy utilization and viewership of satirical programs is personal preferences of the viewers. The majority of the sample audience in this research tune to satirical talk shows for entertainment and political news. Seeking news of the week is also a top reason why audiences watch satirical programs in Pakistan. And audience have found satirical shows as a great source of news mixed with fun and entertainment and trust the program as a legitimate source of news.

Almost 50% of respondents agree on five hypothesis of the study which includes that satire is successful in generating political interest, credible and legitimate source of news, have impact on the content of interpersonal discussion, and qualifies on ethical benchmark of media. The only dimension which was disproved by the research is that it has nothing to do with political participation in terms of involvement is media outlets and programs to share and express political opinions by its audience.

5.3 Limitations

These programs have been on air for almost more than a decade now but still there was no academic research regarding this phenomenon in Pakistan. This research is included as the introductory academic paper targeting the satirical comedy shows in Pakistan.

The political environment in Pakistan is changing very fast and the people insights about the news and comedy shows might be influenced by other major political events of the country. Research on such behaviors need to be revised and analyzed according to the existing political situation.

Moreover the results of this research could not be generalized because the sample was purposive to meet the deadline of the paper and the sample of this study was public of Islamabad, which is not representative of the general population of Pakistan. The lack of demographic diversity in the sample reduces the reliability of generalization.

5.4 Recommendations

Satirical programs' effects need to be studied during presidential elections to evaluate where the voters get their political information about political candidates and which format of news affect

them more and why. Studies should explore the ways how the government in Pakistan could use such programs to project its ideas to make use of the high viewership and popularity.

QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Zahra Sabir and I am doing MS in Media and Communication studies from International Islamic University, Islamabad. I am conducting a survey for my thesis and your participation would be really appreciated. The topic of my thesis is:

“Political Communication: Satirical talk shows dimensions”.

Satirical talk shows: those programs of media which uses irony, humor, exaggeration, and parody to discuss or criticize the political affairs and other issues of the society¹⁵.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Select your age group:

20-25years 26-30years 31-35 years 35 above

3. Education:

Matriculation or below Intermediate Graduation Masters or above

Answer the following question according to the following scale from 1 (Regularly) to 4 (sometimes).

1. How often do you watch satirical talk shows?

a. Regularly b. Very often c. often d. Sometimes

#	Statements	Regularly	Very often	Often	Sometimes
2.	I watch satirical talk show “Hasb-e-Haal”.				

¹⁵ Retrieved on December 31, 2014, from <http://literarydevices.net/satire/>

	Statements	Regularly	Very often	Often	Sometimes
	I watch satirical talk show "Hum sab umeed se hain".				
	I watch satirical talk show "Khabar Naak".				
	I watch satirical talk show "Banana News network (BNN)".				
	I watch satirical talk show "Mazaq Raat".				

Answer the following question according to the following scale from 1 (strongly agreed) to 5 (strongly disagreed).

Statements	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
2. Satire is a legitimate way of evaluating and criticizing the political peers and media celebrities.					
3. Ethically satire is not objectionable.					
4. Satire is a credible source of news and information.					
5. I attended a political seminar/rally/jalsa recently.					

	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
6. I called in political programs to express my opinion.					
7. I actively like, comment and join political pages on social media (Facebook, Twitter).					
8. Watching satirical programs is a political act.					
9. Satirical programs influence on political agenda (interest) of its audience.					
10. Satirical talk shows are successful in generating political interest among its audience.					
11. I discuss the content of satirical talk shows with my friends, family and colleagues.					
12. I engage in more interpersonal talk about content of satirical talk shows than content of serious political talk shows.					
13. I criticize what I have seen on satirical talk shows with my friends, colleagues and family.					
14. I liked Azizi's (Hasb-e-Haal) parody of Molana Fazal-ul-Rehman.					

	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
15. I liked Saba Qamar's (Hum sab umeed se hain) parody of Meera.					
16. I liked Banana News Network (BNN) parody of Imran Khan.					
17. Parody of political peers and media celebrities by satirical programs is ethical.					
18. I feel uncomfortable when I see parody of political figures that I like.					
19. Satirical programs uses appropriate language.					
20. Satirical programs always covers both sides of the story.					
21. Satirical talk shows qualifies on basic ethical standards of media like clarity, truthfulness and fairness.					
22. Satire is an appropriate way to talk about political and others serious issues of the society.					

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