



ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF MEDIA AND ITS SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN PAKISTAN

*Noureen Zahra
M.Phil. Scholar
Riphah International University
Islamabad - Pakistan
noreenzahra0014@gmail.com*

*Hajra Ali Afsar
M.Phil. Scholar
Riphah International University
Islamabad – Pakistan*

*Kashif Zaheer
Senior Lecturer
Riphah International University
Islamabad – Pakistan*

Abstract

The aim of this research paper is to access problems and challenges of Media Sustainability because the international agencies and the developed world focus on the media sustainability. Media plays significant part in the progress and evolvment of country. The basic aim of this study is to provide insight about media sustainability, the perspectives of different stakeholders on electronic media sustainability and to investigate the issues and challenges faced by industry in Pakistan. TV was selected as a universe from electronic media as television is a most popular and important medium for communication. Simple random probability sampling has used. For that purpose we used electronic media to check the issues and challenges of media sustainability. The facts have gathered from focus group discussion, in depth interviews and target populations are stakeholders of electronic media of twin cities of Pakistan (Rawalpindi and Islamabad). For the purpose of analysis we use qualitative approach technique that is thematic analysis by using Nvivo software.

Key Words: Electronic Media, Media Sustainability, Stakeholders of Electronic media, Free Speech, Professional Journalism



INTRODUCTION

In 1947, there were only three radio stations in Pakistan in the following locations Lahore, Peshawar and Dhaka. These radio station were under the Indian government and after the inception of Pakistan, these radio station were named as Radio Pakistan with the same equipment and staff. It was one of the most powerful media at that time and its outreach was one of the strongest in context of narrative building, lobbying and information. (Nawaz 1983). Another institution was established by the federal government of Pakistan named as Pakistan broad Casting Corporation in 20th Dec 1972to ensure the compliance of state policy and outreach. (Aslam Khan Khattak, 2006).

In Pakistan, electronic media was state controlled as it was in the other regional countries of South Asia. The concept of private TV channels was very limited and multimedia news outlets were not vibrant and active. The beginning of 21st century bought a tremendous global revolution that created impact on the existing media setting of Pakistan. The government realized that the changing international media environment and the process of globalization is going to have an impact on Pakistan's media as well. Hurdles in the free flow of information cannot be created easily any more as internet had transformed the ways of communication but it can be regulated. So in the year 2002, government allowed the private sector to set up of wireless and TV stations. Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) was created by Government =of Pakistan in 2002. Basically it is a licensing and regulatory authority having jurisdiction all over electronic media in Pakistan. (Media Manager's Companion Series, 2003).PEMRA was also works to line up the requirements of international, regional and local regulatory measures. This newly build institution was also empowered to facilitate license to give license for opening new non-public channels and conjointly regulate the electronic media within the non-public sector. PEMRA emerged as regulatory authority and started imposing fines to those channels who were violating the rules and regulations of the state. There was trend of giving the new first and fake/manipulated news also became prominent due this race of news channels.

As discussed earlier, since the inception of Pakistan, Electronic media remained controlled due to its nature of adopted regulations from the colonial legacy. After radio outlets, Pakistan Television was launched in 1964 and transferred to color transmission after 12 years later. People's approach to various sources of material was limited and they could not keep well-informed with the quickly rising development everywhere. The government was set to open up electronic media to the non-public sector within the country. Pakistan media shows speedy growth and also the range of TV channels have mushroom growth from simply 3 state-run channels in 2000 to eighty-nine within 2012.These newly opened media outlets were given freedom in their content and freedom of speech was given to the public on these media channels. These developments can't be imagined before 2000 as it was completely new phenomena for the major strata of population. Though the



radio segment has not got parallel growth but they somehow managed to survive in this new era of technology by adopting the requirements of virtual world. It is necessary to understand that, private media segment is a corporate entity and extremely controlled by the proprietorship arrangement. To multiply their wealth media corporations and ensure sustainability, media outlets rely on advertisements, sponsorships, government adds and affiliation with political parties is also one of the major source of earnings. These media outlets do have significant role in narrative building in terms of politics and society. (Muazzam Ali Research and Publication Centre, 2009).

Problem Statement

In Pakistan falsification, manipulation, state control, censorship and financial sustainability are the major issues and challenges of news channels. It is believed that, they are not portraying the reality and working for certain intended benefits. It is also believed that, PEMRA don't have capacity to keep eye on all these private channels. Media claims themselves as fourth pillar of the state and major partner in policy issues outreach. Therefore, there is dire need to investigate the issues and challenges of media in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Media

Every society is a fusion of different values, ethics, practices and norms that varies from other culture. So, in the case with media cultural context has major responsibility. The media outlets and regulators are responsible to ensure the cultural norms in all productions and outreach plans (Merrill, 1986). No media framework in the global world is requirement free. Then again, the essence and degree of command on media varies from different domains. (Weaver, 1985).

Media is one of the most useful and striking medium to spread education and information. It a way of dissemination of latest news, events and ceremonies taking place and developments in the society. Electronic media has a long history of struggle and efforts for its rights. Electronic media now plays vital role in everyday life. Rana (2012) opines that arrival of fresh information and communication tools has been marked a striking idea in the history of transmission. Along with the positive aspects, electronic media has also negative impacts on society. Electronic media also spread awareness regarding issues in the society, rather economic, political or social because almost everybody has access to some sort of electronic media.

It is also important to note that the evolution of media has taken place through facing several hurdles throughout the history. Efforts made by the governments have been limited to encountering media channels that have developed and damaged state's security. In case of Pakistan, it is also clear that electronic media has also faced obstacles in its way. However, role of the media have not represented suitable optimistic image of Pakistan's culture, like peaceable & affectionate individuals, friendly society. A large number of hurtful pictures of violent clashes and unauthentic



news and sharing it without references are main challenges in Pakistan and worldwide media as well. This has compelled global horror of the Pakistani public and challenged countrywide security as people suppose what they saw or listened is correct.

Now research has shown various inappropriate half-truths, on the name of liberty of expression and speaking, problems with policy-making process and spread of information without confirmation (Bhargava, 2004). Events in one region of the world these days have reached no time the entire world; this fast movement of knowledge is associated with quick media technology and digitalization. The media may suggest that through the flow of information and opinion, it performs a vital role in shifting and replacing knowledge, opinions and culture of various countries. By conducting ethics and ethical values, media communication will decrease misconduct and social weaknesses. Contrastingly, with the progress of media, offences, insecurity and community liabilities are increased. Electronic media itself needs progress and development; conversely, it should also have a system of checks and balances to discourage misinformation or dissemination of half truths. For broader understanding, electronic media is divided into three major categories.

- 1- Television
- 2- Radio
- 3- Social Networking and Modern Appliances

1- Television

Particularly television and computers have become popular in the last couple of years in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Television has intended to be seen by the absentminded viewers, that is why lighting tricks, display visual aid, linguistic, speech features and apparel, all square measure preserved as that means creating semiotic assets (Lorenzo-Dus., 2009). In a fashionable television nation, violence has been turning into a tool to exert pressure. According to Basu, TV has a huge influence on shaping the opinion of the public at large. This can be justified by the public fact that during 1988- 1991, the public of us preferred military involvement as a solution to arrest the tensions.

To gain traction and high ratings TV channels are always busy introducing new ways. Sometimes media managers show a lack of professionalism because of their academic background as some of them are oblivious to broadcasting. Undoubtedly, due to numerous cases of the channels' siding and unreal tiers, its fairness has converted unclear. As this is a well-acknowledged fact that agenda framing and agenda cutting strategies of media houses are based upon their prejudices so they spread news accordingly. A half-truth is consistently risky for a person who does not know the past and explanation of the real problem. The unfair fascination with occasions, happenings, mishaps, and revelation creates misperception and getting more. In order to gain viewership, media



houses use to adopt dramatic tools for attraction. It is a well-evident fact that coverage of issues on television is not always bad but the beauty of media lies in how magnificently television channels cover real issues based upon.

Entertainment networks generate responsiveness and occasionally alleged any association without proof, verifying it on TV networks by amplification or staging. This produces psychological anomie and restlessness in the community. There is an incident of a case in which the example of people violence in Afghanistan in 2001 has a noticeable event, unending footage of rebellious prospects persisted leading over several TV stations that not exclusively aided extremist's cause but additionally became sensible ranking. TV channels usually practice framing with program settings to evidence that the problems are presenting necessary and right content (McCombs, 2004). Papacharissi, 2008 argued in map-out arguments mutually create the frame in which broadcasting "chooses certain features of seeming actuality& sorts it more outstanding to authenticate his particular description". Let's take the example of 9/11 after which the media used to declare Muslims as terrorists with overemphasis. Many Television stations lined up the event of the 9/11 attacks in haste which indicates that speedily violence has erupted therefore this instance has verified that framing has become a widespread conception within communication science. Construction of a structure revolves around collaboration amongst totally diverse actors over the way to structure a problem in news (Stromback, 2014).

Electronic media is marginalized to a limited sphere of society and specific stakeholders to protect their identity. This thing promotes polarization of humanity. All these proceedings and actions in the country are not impressive but because negative publicity& debate are regularly announced hence prediction of criminalities results in the destruction of uniqueness. Without any doubt, it can be concluded that the media works for the service of their honours rather than the public. (Khan, 2010). This is responsible to take away the hope and trust of the masses because everything even sensitive matters appears doubtful. It depicts that responsible reporting and impartiality have been discarded & rumours can scarcely be detached from facts.

2- Radio

As there are multiple sources of transmission of information and a message to the audiences, radio is one of the sources to transmit sound or messages through waves (Sambe, 2008). Radio is a device which utilizes electromagnetic waves in course of transmission of information (Idebi, 2008). According to Apuke (2014), radio is not different from others and according to him, it is a medium for communication.

Radio became one of the popular ways used by people to send music and disseminate their point of view and information through the air to various parts of the world. The emergence of the radio as a means of communication dates back to the 19th century after the invention of the electric



telegraph by Samuel Morse. According to Bittner (1989), Guglielmo Marconi's invention is based on the fact that electromagnetic impulses can be transmitted without the use of wires. In 1866 signals were transferred from the US to the UK bereft of wire. Sambe (2008) aforementioned that, in 1988, Heinrich Hertz, performing arts magnetism philosophy projected previous by a British human James Clark Maxwell, created primary wireless impressions. In this regard, musical programs, comedies and other pieces of drama constituted the package of entertainment (Vakkai, 2011).

3- Social Networking and Modern Appliances

With the advancement of Information technology, the proliferation of social media has increased. So the transmission of both good and bad news start to take place at regional and international level. This is further facilitated by the usage of electronic gadgets. This has changed the lifestyle of society as a whole (C, 2012). The use of wireless devices i.e. laptops and mobile phones facilitate and encourage the thinking of people through social media. This thing facilitates the unchecked sharing of information without authenticity. Such types of transmission are responsible for creating disorder in societies. It can be said that digital platform has grown into part of routine life. Now the universe can be regarded as a global village because interaction through social media has become a tool for abrupt sharing of information and sometimes serious perceptions can be built. Though, the advantage of numerical code communications is that they have been disseminated & spread automatically (Stromback, 2014).

MySpace.com perpetually distributes marvellous moments of colleagues' life and YouTube unleashes the ability of standard folks. Undoubtedly, communal networking has become vital in the routine lives of various folks. But, largely users of social media square measure teens, normal eighteen to thirty-five years (Sheet, 2017). Masses have a wide association and their collaboration around the world has become abate. Someone has interpreted any case on societal media and dangerous insights have been designed. Victimization cybernetic technology, notably the new quality of social media like live streaming video, permits workers to come up with contented and punctually transfer it that has so risky.

Now living in another country, one can easily tweet regarding the safety condition except showing any concern to laws, someone sitting in the US easily talks about Trump's strategies with impunity, though, their metadata help states to realize the condition. This is how media has changed the lives and opinions of the masses at large. However content and data increase therefore quick creating intellect of the practice of massive knowledge (Fuchs, 2015). Most times it became difficult to trace media users because of their high collaboration. The improvement in the sector of media increased the ability of non-state actors to manipulate their plans with efficacy.

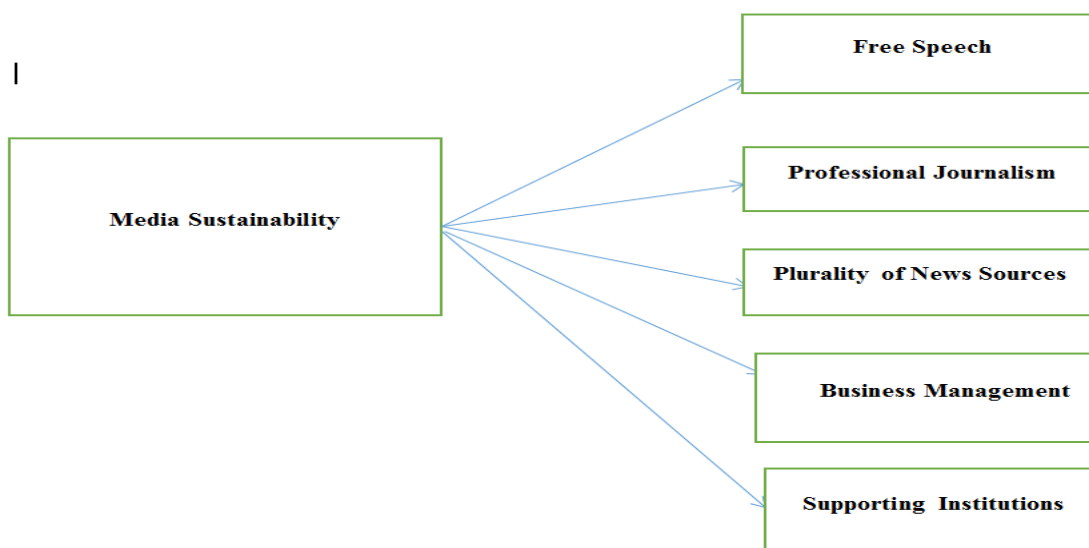


Administration and national security agencies such as the armed and law enforcement also need to orient themselves using new technologies to cope with changing trends using new networking technologies. In this context, it can be concluded that national security revolves around the use of modern media tactics. There exist a huge difference between the conventional and modern concept of security and this paradigm shift is because of change in modern technologies. So to cope with the situation governments should also consider unconventional ways. Essentially, regional battles have declined with the tip of the conflict, and later intrastate problems like political wars grasped the realm's consideration presently emphasis requires erased to skills of extremists, offenders and rebels (Brooks, 2013).

Issues of media sustainability:

International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) is an internationally recognized body measuring media and are established in 1968. IREX measures media sustainability through five broader factors containing Free Speech, Professional Journalism, Plurality of News Sources, Business Management, and Supporting Institutions.

As this study focuses on issues and challenges of media sustainability in Pakistan, these are the basic dimensions on which IREX puts emphasis.



Media Sustainability



There has a wide-ranged contract that the governing bodies of sustainability prerequisites to be identified public consideration then it leads to supportable development rules and practices. Broadcasting has played an important role to meet this aspect of development. However, reporters usually complain that expressions of stability and sustainable development have imprecise, disjointed not clear. This controversial point of view among journalists shows that there is a lack of research in front of sustainability. (Fischer, Daniel, Haucke, Franziska, Sundermann Anna 2017).

Lindenfeld et al., 2014 said that to deal with this controversy there should be a close relationship and communication of ideas about sustainability among investigators and social shareholders. Broader sense, stability interaction is linked to “presenting an appreciative of the world that is of the connection amongst homo sapiens and their surroundings, into social discourse” (Godemann and Michelsen, 2011, p. 6) According to Castrechini et al., (2014) the Press has wide certified to be a vital conveying occasion for all social systems. The media system has represented the field of public speaking and shaped this discourse for an identical period by suggesting that of choice and clarification (Anderson, et al 2009). Contrary, these scenery observers after the sphere of property knowledge pressure that the function of Mass media within the construction of general thinking and understanding of logical phenomena not ignored (Sumi, 2007, p. 74). Hence, intense analysis of the unit is needed to know property communication within the media (Bourassa et al., 2013).

Measurements of Media Sustainability

1- Free Speech & Social Media

A civil right is worldwide acknowledged as the basis of human liberties, which are guarded by a multitude of provincial and transnational agreements, contracts, and outlines. Furthermore, freedom of expression is the guarantee to populaces to contribute efficiently to the working of democracy. Sun (2014) has a point of view about the democratic society that free voice not only authorizes the administrator to completely enhance the power of variability of ideas but also boosts the approval of the sort of varied views.

Currently, the world's self-governing governments face few threats associated with freedom of expression. Likewise, Chaudary (2014) said the major challenge has to make sure stability amid the dissemination of autonomy of speech in the protection of law and order, harmony and safe keeping within a republic that holds multiplicity in terms of visions, trusts, and principles. Unsurprisingly, though in the greatest liberal republics of the world comparable to America, freedom of speech is limited. Those restraints are created on the practices that make us believe there is no similar thing as entire autonomy of communication as an unchecked usage of that independence might certainly lead to disorder & chaos. Generally, not neither acknowledged as an unrestricted right, all republics have established a few methods of boundaries on association



through the independence of voice. Van (2015) has printed an article in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy; restrictions on the free will of communication are enacted predominantly when the liberty of speaking clashes with various morals and might focus on lawful sanction. Similar to different democracies, Pakistan guarantees freedom of speech with particular limits in terms of faith and national interest. This piece of writing aims to study the present situation and evolving developments of freedom of expression in our country. It also plans to search for the key issues and actors that play a spirited role in defining the subject paradigm.

2- Professional Journalism

Media is thought to be a quarter stake of government nowadays, the presence of print media and the right to information is important for self-governing societies, skilled reporter perpetually thinks about the speech of the speechless, while not the liberty of journalists and appearance. The reporter outlined a way of investigating exploration, and literary vogue that goals to supply a facility to the overall community through the propagation and scrutiny of reports. Journalists don't bother to figure out conflict areas and turn out sensible content. Journalists in less developed areas or villages don't have enough salary packages (Memon, 2013). Broadcasters befitted simple targets of harsh bouts, killing, fears, and provocation as well as administration and legal cases by state establishments. Analyses show that journalists in developing countries are facing completely diverse challenges, completely different organizations conjointly functioning on the protection of journalists and problems associated with the journalist (Foster & Regina, 2008). Drevo (2017) did an investigation of 385 skilled reporters and discussion to determine the demographic, skilled, and social features, he explicit in new order government, journalists feel challenged particularly journalists belonging to realms and rustic areas. However, reporters in emerging countries where reporters have some liberty and skilled freedom through fine pay, feel proud of their job. Pakistani media establishments and journalists are typically thought of as dishonest because of the insight of the presence of prejudice and actuality beneath the effect of dishonest politically aware frontrunners. According to Manuel (2013), the bad insight has recognized the idea of media incredibleness and mistrust among the lots. Even this former Prime Minister of Pakistan has suspected media people of wrapping the corruption of former governments through their recognized programs and explicit that "publics have lost interest in pointless up-to-date matters spectacles" (Shabbir, 2020). With the appearance of digitalization, the conventions and allegations that the thought, media channels are unfair, is a theme of appreciable dialogue concerning the quality of Pakistani media, and this study is ready to research this issue among the new cohort of media persons. It's noted that notable Pakistani media retailers compromise their print media values daily by the victimization of their principles, and also the age of digitalization is strengthening the insight among the lots that journalists don't seem to be playing their moral duties and responsibilities properly (Ali, 2021). Media professionals ought to abide by the principles of ethics in playing their duties. However, reporters' political relations, cultural associations, and bias replicate in their description writings and demand analysis. They don't squeeze standards of



reporting, depict the news divisions in line with their edge of orientation, and examine the difficulties with their values and opinions.

3- The Plurality of News Sources

In the era of globalization, there is a huge influx of information in the virtual world and people are inclined to listen and get information on different aspects of the same news. Different news outlets use to interpret the same news with their expertise and knowledge. Voters grab foreign coverage of transmission to possess higher comprehension of international problems and developments (Smith, 2005). However obstacles ought to be faced by these ancient media organizations while giving coverage to the current external news. Several journalists acknowledge that they struggle with data burden, language obstacles, and doubled responsibility of online data (Van Leuven et al., 2009).

Contrastingly, case studies show that the journalist's community takes more interest and consults social media supplies within the contest of contravention news or media restrictions wherever they don't have immediate access to the news source, and study from the on-the-ground bases (Lotan et al., 2011).

4- Business Management

Now, the first aim of Pakistani media homes has been modified towards moneymaking rather than dissemination of reality with no force. The competition to hide breaking news has exchanged observer of reports authentication and supply confirmation (Ali, 2021). The dishonesty of reporters, notably journalists and photojournalists, is extremely common. They typically get money from legislators, administration, and administrative campaigners (Ahmad, 2011). Outside the realm of media management and political economy, enough literature exist within the general business discipline that addresses the ideas, practices, and problems in strategic or whole management. Media merchandise has distinctive characteristics that demand the revision of some generic ideas derived from non-media industries as a result of strategic choices (Chatterjee & Wernerfelt, 1991). Understanding the distinctive combination of those characteristics, they start by effectively examining media organizations as an associate economic establishment. Media merchandise, "cultural" output, holds sure potential that challenges the normal premise of theory. Most particularly, the quality and vagueness of media organizations in a very society proposes a tough task in assessing economic "efficiency" within the allocation of means. Though several media organizations operate to maximize profits, as a result of their visible role in a society, they even have to respond to the challenges posed by the society.

5- Supporting Institutions and Electronic Media



Social building of a community that supports Web-based technologies and enhances the effectiveness and price of non-public interaction continue. Bruns (2008) stated that globally, the internet has been radically remodelled Internet-based technologies that aid the shared design community and increase the efficiency and price of non-public collaborations still arise. The Socialization features of virtual areas currently embody web-based technologies that have appeared as zone info distribution, cooperation, and communal development and delay (Suster, Alexander, and Kaplan, 2005).

Public means evolve from the social computer code, this is often an assortment of the net databases, facilities, and operations that assist teamwork, civic construction, involvement, & distribution (Junco, Heibergert, and Loken, 2010). Per Bryer and Zavatarro (2001) have outlined societal broadcasting, square measure technology which facilitates, social communication, changes cooperation, and modify negotiating with other shareholders.

Discussion

TV was selected as a universe from electronic media as television is the most popular and important medium for communication. Purposive sampling was used by selecting two leading private news channels of Pakistan that was GEO news and ARY news. Capital Talk (Muneeb Farooq) from GEO news and off the record (Maria Memon) from ARY was selected as the unit of analysis as the archives of these talk shows were easily available. In-depth interviews with professionals, CEOs, industry experts and policymakers will be conducted to validate indicators developed through a desk review. In this process, sub-dimensions will also be explored and documented. These sub-dimensions will be the base as items of the identified variables for quantitative research further studied by future researchers in the domain of sustainability. Four focused group discussions (FGDs) will be conducted, each comprising six to nine participants to get comprehensive 360-degree feedback. Out of these four FGDs, three will be homogeneous FGDs and one will be a heterogeneous FGD. Out of the three homogeneous FGDs, one will be from industry experts including policy makers and representatives of media consulting organizations / relevant NGOs and public sector organizations like PEMRA. The second FGD will be conducted by senior level employees of electronic media organizations. The last homogeneous FGD will comprise users/customers/consumers of these media organizations. These include students of mass communication department/governance and public policy, teachers and informed representatives of civil society. Fourth and last FGD will be heterogeneous and will include representatives of the above three homogenous FGDs. The literature review is conducted mainly to identify key indicators (variables) that constitute Media Sustainability in Pakistan. During the review, it is explored that IREX is measuring media sustainability globally since 1968 and is considered the most authentic source. Recently, IREX in collaboration with USAID researched media sustainability in Sri Lanka.



Conclusion

Media in Pakistan is booming and progressive compared to its past which gives all kinds of social and mental satisfaction to the gathering people. On the other hand, this expansion of media is pointless, especially, when there is a deficiency of access to data and tenets along with regulations to control media flexibility. Pakistan's print and electronic media are not pluralistic as they are for the most part confined to the significant urban areas and unmistakable individuals. For the foreseeable future, Pakistan's media sustainability is facing serious issues and challenges gained by the possession organization. There are massive media teams, which to a certain degree even have political associations. Politics handlers in each print and broadcast industry of media teams are powerful, in politics and society, which creates a undesirable consequences. When the media highlight the content by keeping their purposes in mind, then they don't see the welfare of the public. They try to create conflict among political parties and it is also automatically followed by the followers of the political parties. This results lack in financial sustainability, lack of visioning and derailing from the real vision of the media.

Policy Recommendations

- ❖ PEMRA ought to be created as a self-directed organization with a demonstrative administration board with the idea aimed at a good and modest media market. The target would be to confirm that the media replicates the range of view and notifies folks with correct supporting evidence and not a narrative.
- ❖ There is a dire need to adopt a cautious and comprehensive technique by the government while formulating media restrictive rules to confirm the economical sources of the media as the pillar of the democratic state. For this, it should consult media homes, freelance journalist bodies, civil rights teams, and opposition parties to confirm that the revised regulation mechanisms don't threaten freedom of media and expression.
- ❖ Pakistan's journalists would like coaching on the way to halt conflict. Online resources in crisis reportage and conflict-sensitive journalism are obtainable through media teams like the International analysis and Exchange Board (IREX).
- ❖ It is suggested that the PEMRA administration must draw policies against sensationalism and empower the freedom of speech within the limit of the constitution of the state.
- ❖ It is the need of the hour that safety coaching and risk awareness should become a part of the media development strategy in the Asian nations.
- ❖ Pakistan's journalists create a healthy pitch for additional skilled coaching in all told aspects of the sphere.
- ❖ It is recommended that there should be more emphasis on modernizing journalism education in our country with focus on financial sustainability of the media persons and institutions.



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