

YAŞAR UNIVERSITY
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COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

MASTER'S THESIS



**MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN PAKISTAN AND CENSORSHIP
THROUGH VIEWERS' COMPLAINTS TO PEMRA**

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Izmir, 2016

TEXT OF OATH

I honestly declare that my study titled as “Media landscape in Pakistan and censorship through viewers’ complaints to PEMRA” submitted as Master’s thesis has been written and produced only by me without having any assistance opposing scientific traditions and ethics, and not any other but only those sources that are provided in the bibliography are the references I have benefited from. I also confirm that my institution and all individuals that have directly or indirectly helped me to prepare this thesis are acknowledged and that this thesis has been not submitted as an examination document at any other institution.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this thesis is to explore Pakistani mainstream media landscape and different aspects of Pakistani society that help informing a range of extended forms of mass media representing millions of Pakistani people and their ideologies. Like any other country in the World, mass media in Pakistan also has the aptitude of communicating millions of people while discussing and portraying their status in quo that are observable in media contents. Radio, television, cinema and newspaper are major mainstream media platforms that reach and communicate with Pakistani people on daily basis and therefore the content provided especially through these mediums matters the most.

This thesis has its aim to understand the relationship between Pakistani mainstream media and its interaction with Pakistani people not only through media content but their feedback against certain type of media content(s) as well. The study investigates the nature of certain type of media content(s) that have the tendency to offend Pakistani mainstream media audiences and its effect on them. Objective of this research is to explore the relationship between certain type of media content that Pakistani audiences find offensive and their demand to censor/ban it and PEMRA's (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) role in this process as a regulatory institution.

In order to attain answers of research questions, qualitative content analysis has been applied as the scientific approach. This analysis has been carried out on 153 complaints submitted to PEMRA by Pakistani audiences against certain types of broadcasted media content(s) during October, November & December 2015. Findings of this content analysis support the conclusion of this study in light of literary review.

Keywords: Pakistan, censorship, mainstream media, Pakistani ideology, mass media communication.

ÖZET

Bu tezin odaklandığı nokta milyonlarca Pakistanlıyı ve onların ideolojilerini temsil eden kitle iletişı araçlarının yardımıyla Pakistan'daki ana akım medya ortamını ve Pakistan toplumun farklı yönlerini araştırmaktır. Dünyadaki diđer her hangi bir ülkede olduđu gibi Pakistan'daki kitle iletiřim araçları da milyonlarca insana tartıřabilecekleri bir iletiřim ortamı sađlarken,dünya görüşlerini de göz önüne sürer. Radyo, televizyon, sinema ve gazeteler Pakistan halkıyla günlük bazda iletiřim kuran ana akım medya platformlarıdır ve bu nedenle özellikle bu medya araçlarıyla sađlanan içerik büyük önem arz eder.

Bu tezin amacı Pakistan'daki ana akım medya ile bunların Pakistanlılarla olan etkileřimini sadece medya içeriđi bađlamında deđil aynı zamanda belirli tipteki medya içeriđine verdikleri geri bildirimler üzerinden anlamaktır.Çalıřma Pakistan'daki ana akım medya izleyenlerini rahatsız eden belirli türdeki medya içeriđini ve bunların izleyenler üzerindeki etkilerini inceler. Arařtırmanın hedefi Pakistanlı izleyenlerin rahatsız edici buldukları medya içeriđi ile bunların sansürlenmesiniistemeleri ve PEMRA (Pakistan Elektronik Medya Düzenleme Kurumu)'nun düzenleyici bir kuruluř olarak bu süreçteki rolünü arařtırmaktır.

Arařtırma sorularının yanıtlarını bulmak üzere, bilimsel yöntem olarak nitel içerik analizi uygulanmıřtır. Bu analiz Pakistanlı izleyicilerin Ekim, Kasım ve Aralık 2015 aylarında PEMRA'ya gönderdiđi belirli tipteki yayın içeriđine dair 153 řikayet üzerinden gerçekteřtirilmiřtir. İçerik analizinin sonuçları tez çalıřmasında yürütölen literatür arařtırmasını sonuçlarını desteklemektedir..

Anahtar sözcükler: Pakistan, sansür, ana akım medya, Pakistan ideolojisi, kitlesel iletiřim

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INTRODUCTION

The well-known state of irony and rhetoric in the World as an independent country since 14th August 1947, Islamic Republic of Pakistan has its place among other developing countries on the Earth. Based on its gross national income per capita per year which is less than \$11,905, Pakistan lies on the struggling line towards its improving future (Institute, 2014). With multiple ethnic groups and languages, Pakistan lies among big names of Asian continent. With **192,531,100** Pakistan is on number 6 in the World ranking where the population of this country holds 2.57% of world population (Worldometers, 2014). Pakistan has several cores/layers of ethnicity, culture and religion but like most other countries domination of one in all of these categories is quite expected. The social niceties and friendly appearance while following social norms, actually represents the real life of majority population in Pakistan (Rasool, 2014). After 69 years of independence, Pakistan's social and political norms shape this unique society in a unique way.

The unique composition of any society on the canvas of mass media represents not only its political but socio-cultural norms as well. Flow of information through various mediums is distinctive in itself and at the same time member of the whole global network. The management of people as democracy including the media which are free of influences, legislative and judicial powers are the 'fourth power' which checks the government on behalf of society in Liberal Theory attributes a critical role (Demirsoy, Dikener & Karakoç2013:1).

Mass media coverage with free flow of content in a country does not only reach wide range of intended audience as part of its nature, but also demonstrates democratic approach of that particular country while reflecting native ideology. Mainstream media¹ with its several extensions plays vital role to enhance communication(s) in a society and helps in advancement of creative ideas. If mass media and its essential presence in a society refer to concept of advancement, then one may find that version of advancement with liberty of expression because such liberty gives birth to plurality of perception. Linda Jean Kenix explains that as an essential characteristic of human beings for the

¹Mainstream media: Television, radio, print media, cinema.

sake of development, plurality of perspectives refers to mutual understanding of the differences and similarities (Kenix, 2011:1).

PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) was founded according to PEMRA ordinance in 2002 where the mandate of this regulatory body is to control and manage the data flow of electronic media content (broadcasting media) in Pakistan including radio and television (PEMRA, 2002). The presence of this institution does not represent only state regulations but also responsibility to take the complaints and requests made by Pakistani people if they are offended/annoyed by certain type of media content(s). Moreover, perception of certain media content as offensive does not only imply to local/national media broadcast, but integration of international media content and expectations of Pakistani audiences from it refer to place of international media in Pakistan. As discussed by Ashwini Ambekar the developing world in the past used their culture and customs as a reason of implementing media censorship with the argument that media and the Western culture are accountable for harming its people and their ancient traditions (Ambekar, 2008).

Thesis Outline

There are four chapters in total where each chapter contains specific content as follows:

The first chapter facilitates the reader with historical background of Pakistan, its mainstream media layout with operational institutions and their responsibilities.

Second chapter covers the concept of censorship with its definitions, detailed literary understanding and international implementation. Furthermore, the chapter explores existence of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media with its sociopolitical aspects. Pakistani mainstream media regulations and effects of mass media communications on Pakistani society are also part of this chapter.

Third chapter focuses on research hypotheses in form of qualitative content analysis together with research methodology and data collection process.

Conclusion of this thesis discusses the findings of this research with reference to implemented theories and analyzed data. Comparison of the findings of this study with another relevant research is also part of this chapter. This final chapter also suggests future research work as scientific development on this particular subject of social science.

Research Approach

The approach in this study is to compare and analyze the complaints submitted to PEMRA by Pakistani people against certain type of media content(s). Intention to carry out such research is to seek and understand the relationship between different aspects of Pakistani society and the concept of censorship. Television, radio, cinema and newspaper are few mainstream mediums of mass media communication that reach out and communicate with millions of Pakistani people on daily basis, but their impact on Pakistani population and then response of these people is something to be explored in reference with communication theories.

As said by John Berger “The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe (Berger, 1972:8).” This research examines what are those beliefs that Pakistani people practice and also seek/expect in media content. Perceiving media content in accordance to various norms of Pakistani society may lead to either subjective or objective opinion(s) of individuals. Therefore, in order to analyze the response of Pakistani mainstream media consumers to certain media content(s) is achieved through qualitative content analysis of complaints registered to PEMRA by Pakistani audience in the selected time period (namely last 3 months of the year 2015).

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between ideology of Pakistani mainstream media audiences and their expectations from mainstream media content broadcasted in Pakistan which lead to research questions:

- What are those aspects of Pakistani society that formulate ideology of Pakistani audiences/mainstream media consumers?

- What do Pakistani audiences seek/expect within national and international media content?
- What possible features of certain media content can offend Pakistani audiences and lead them to officially complain?
- What is the nature of certain mainstream media content(s) that offends Pakistani audiences and how do they respond to it?

In this study answers driven by the above mentioned questions inspect various issues in reference to the concept of media censorship and regulatory theories relevant to it in Pakistan.

Methodology

The research is divided in two major parts. Firstly, the concept of censorship is explained with its brief historical background and literary definitions. General understanding of this phenomenon within media with reference to relevant theories and publications is provided as well so that the reader can have proper prerequisite. Although a lot of researchers have worked on the concept of censorship, but in this particular study this concept and its practice in regards to Pakistani mainstream media are explored in light of few specific works. W. Philips Davison's (Davison, 1983:8) theory of 'third person effect' has been provided to understand the relationship between certain media content and its impact on Pakistani audiences. Theory of 'self-esteem motive' by Scott David Williams (William, 2002:497) also guides readers of this study to understand the relation between third person effect and existence of media censorship in Pakistan. The theory presented by Elisabeth Noelle Neumann (Davie. G, 2010) titled as 'spiral of science' helps to learn reasons of self-censorship among Pakistani mainstream media consumers. Self-censorship, its two types and their further subdivisions as presented by Philip Cook & Conrad Heilmann (Cook & Heilmann, 2010:14) assist to understand internal and external causes of self-censorship in Pakistani mainstream media audiences. Furthermore, mass media in Pakistan in reference to its impact on Pakistani population and censorship is explained and few examples of already censored/banned mediated content are given as well.

In order to seek answers to a/m questions, qualitative content analysis method is used to understand the demand and existence of media censorship in Pakistan. Qualitative content analysis focuses on the features of language as communication with concentration on the content or contextual meaning of the text (Shannon, 2005:1278). As proposed by Jim Macnamara content analysis is utilized to investigate a broad range of 'texts' for instance transcripts of interviews and discussions in social research on the story and form of films, TV programs and the editorial and advertising content of print media (Macnamara, 2005:1). Qualitative content analysis can be understood through words of Yan Zhang & Barbara M. Wildemuth that have explained its functionality which is to identify important themes/categories within a body of content and to enrich the description of the social reality created by those themes/categories as they are lived out under certain circumstances (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005:11).

Secondly, this research includes qualitative content analysis based on major sample of 153 complaints (annex 1, 2 & 3) that Pakistani people submitted to PEMRA against certain media content(s) during October, November & December 2015. However, due to massive data, 45 complaints (15 complaints from each month) through further sampling were selected as analysis data out of 153 complaints from the mentioned time period. These complaints were selected on the basis of thematic and textual relationship among themselves. All complaints are acquired from PEMRA's official website where complaints database is published and is publically available in chronological order. Analyses of these complaints are not only based on the interpretation of their text but they are also enlightened by literary review, which will help the reader to understand the atmosphere of Pakistani mainstream media, its audiences with their demands and PEMRA's role in all this process.

Findings of this content analysis are based on textual study of submitted complaints during the mentioned time period and relation of their contexts with the demand of censorship.

Significance of this study

To understand Pakistani society through its mainstream media and its audiences, this study helps the readers and researchers to explore mass media communication and its effects on Pakistani people as well as media production. Moreover, this study is expected to shed light on *weltanschauung*² of contemporary Pakistani society through genuine complaints sent to Pakistan Electronic Media Regularity Authority by Pakistani people.



² Weltanschauung: A word in German language which refers to the World view of an individual or a group.

CHAPTER 1

PAKISTAN: POLITICAL & MEDIA LANDSCAPE

1.1. Islamic Republic of Pakistan: An overview of its history and media

1.2. Historical Background

1.2.1. The beginning

On August 14, 1947 the last viceroy, *Lord Mountbatten* of British India handed over the official government authority to *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* and attended the ceremony of newly formed national assembly of Pakistan in Karachi. This was the time when Mohammad Ali Jinnah was appointed as first governor general of Pakistan representing *Muslim League* party (Qadeer, 2006:1). This political party had Pakistani government where different leaders like *Liaquat Ali Khan* (1896 – 1951), *Sir Khawaja Nazimuddin* (1894 – 1964), *Muhammad Ali Bogra* (1909 – 1963) and *Chaudhry Muhammad Ali* (1905 – 1980) were nominated as Prime ministers till September 12, 1956 (Zaheer, 2012). Unfortunately, Muslim League couldn't provide a stable government to this newly formed nation due to 'kaleidoscopic politics' therefore the pressure on elections in coming years was increased (1958/1957), interestingly *Awami League* was expected to get maximum votes from Eastern Pakistan where as *Muslim League* was expecting majority votes in Western Pakistan. However President *Sikander Mirza* and the 'oligarchy' wanted neither party to have the authority therefore he proclaimed martial law through *General Ayub Khan* on October 17, 1958, whose regime with American alliance lasted till 1969 (Kamran, 2008:45,46).

1.2.2. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto regime

In political history of Pakistan PPP (*Pakistan People's Party*) is a big name, a social democratic political party which was founded by *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto* in 1967. During 1970s this ruling party adopted the concept of Islamic Socialism which was actually expressed by liberal scholars of that time. Omar Noman who has been an economic consultant of the U.N and the World Bank, discusses in his book that instead

of deriving the theory from Quran (like fundamentalists do), PPP introduced the different interpretation of modern Muslim world which of course opposed the conventional theories. But, phrases and text of Quran were used as references which supported the authority and approval of reforming socialist platform (Noman, 2009:108). Such unique way at that time obviously gave PPP the chance to make their place in Pakistani society while making way for their political campaign. The representation of Islam in a different way was first time introduced as a medium of revolution, since socialism refers to the change in modern time. Therefore, first time in the history of Pakistan Islam was presented to its followers with such characteristic of it. Islamic preaching leads to the concept of equality while socialism is the modern technique to achieve this certain goal (Omar, 2009:111). Clever strategy to win peoples' hearts and minds led PPP in a new direction where they were successful in achieving certain objectives in Pakistani society. Where three of their major achievements were:

- a) PPP successfully clarified the distinction between reforming socialism and communism.
- b) It appealed to wide cross social groups who believed in egalitarian society and change as one of the major elements of Islam.
- c) This prevented all conservative religious parties to monopolize Islam as a source of mass appeal.

Access to the core of Pakistani society was hard to earn but *Bhutto* knew it was possible only by introducing a better social system based on liberty and religion of Pakistani people. It was not hard to understand the history of subcontinent where people from any faith were deeply in contact with their religious practices and values. Actually, *Bhutto* had this idea from the history of Pakistan that people of this nation were in a direct relation with their religious convictions. Therefore, by keeping the concept of *MUSAWAAT* (equality) as preached by prophet Mohammad, the revolutionary socialist idea was proposed by PPP in order to reform and gain place in Pakistani society (Noman, 2009:34). Religion has always been a crucial part in Pakistan's history where not only people lived their lives through certain religious believes but also on constitutional level it has had its importance quite prominent. Paradox in this regard has

its own existence where an intriguing example within Pakistan refers to the *Ahmadiyya* sect. Followed by its founder *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908)*, the *Ahmadiyya* community members do follow the preaching of *Quran* but don't believe that Mohammed was the last prophet sent by God. Originally from Northern India in late 19th century, the community moved to Pakistan in 1947. Due to constant conflict and pressure from Majority Pakistani *Sunni Muslim* population and their representatives (religious scholars), *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto* introduced the second amendment in constitution which declared *Ahmadiyya* followers non-Muslims (News, 2010).

The development/expansion of *Bhutto* regime was not possible without international development in regard to both connections and business. Subsequently, better and global approach was adopted by PPP in order to overcome any other obstacles on their way to rule Pakistan completely. 1973 was the time when Arabian part of the world started to dominate due to raise in oil prices and the influence of Saudi Arabia was quite clear in *Bhutto's* foreign policy. Pakistani military was the most advanced in Muslim world at that time which led to the subsequent out come in form of military trainings to Arabs by Pakistan army while immigration and exportation of Pakistani labor class into growing Gulf economies. Not only that, but *Bhutto* also persuaded the financial help from Arab world for nuclear power since he was looking for the discouraging element for India after the embarrassment of 1965 in Kashmir and surrender of 90,000 Pakistani troops as prisoners of Indian army in Bangladesh (Noman, 2009:109). Slowly the growth in Pakistan became visible not only on domestic but international level as well where PPP was encouraging the schema of *Bhutto* expectedly. However this whole trail led PPP to a new direction where it became a burden and indignity in form of contradiction in itself. In 1974 an Islamic summit held in Lahore, Pakistan where leaders from different Islamic countries participated and rewarded the appreciation that Pakistan was emerging bigger from Muslim world. According to the writer the association with Arabic countries became the agenda of PPP unconsciously which led to the awakening of fundamentalist dark shade of PPP (Noman, 2009:110).

In order to back his policies and party, *Bhutto* started to accuse other aspects within Pakistani society as hurdles which did not let people to understand his strategy.

This tug of war between PPP and other political parties (opposition) of Pakistan went on. According to Bhutto, the opposition could not understand the relation between Islam and socialism. In order to emphasize on this subject, PPP came up with strict implementations where they banned alcohol, gambling and night clubs as well as replacing Sunday with Friday as the official weekly holiday due to the significance of Friday in Islam. However the impact went opposite to the expected results and PPP administration became weak since they were then perceived as a pathetic group seeking power (Omar, 2009:110). Rising conflict between people of Pakistan and PPP gave birth to a new issue where society was doubtful about its leader and opposition parties played their role well enough to provoke such an issue. Confidant of the win, *Bhutto* called early elections in March 1977 and as expected PPP won in most of the big cities even before the votes were cast (expected results) but it was all result of rigging. Consequently, this became a solid reason for the opposition to mobilize the mass movement against PPP. This movement went quite successful and the government of PPP which was built on bureaucrats and businessmen was highly endangered. The opposition wanted to involve the army as an equator in order to restore balance and hand over the power from one civilian government to another civilian government but the unthinkable happened! The army took over the entire state and executed *Bhutto* in 1979 under the command of *General Zia-ul-Haq* where *Bhutto* became a terrifying example for all other socialists (Niesewand, 1979).

1.2.3. The Zia-ul-Haq era

After Bhutto regime, that was time for Pakistan to seek a true leader who could lead the nation towards prosperous path furnished with Islamic knowledge and ideology. Ruled by army, Pakistan was under strict Sharia laws where the ultimate goal of *General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq* was to establish a pure Islamic state with implementations. “In 1977 when power passed from civil government to the hands of General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq who had unequivocal fundamentalist sympathies, a comprehensive programme of ‘Islamization’ was enforced on Pakistan by using the state power (Ahmed, 2009:150). Islam became more practicing for Pakistani people where it was taught and perceived as the way of life, but the blurred difference was probably thin

enough to understand whether lives of Pakistani nation were dedicated to practice Islam or to protect it? This question was possibly not raised or it was never discussed because Pakistan began to support and lead a different way of life where Islam was considered as a caste and Pakistani people were its protectors (better to say only protectors). Early 1980s was the time when Pakistan was economically sponsored by Saudi Arabia and trained by The USA to be on front line of Jihad and fight in neighbor country Afghanistan against enemy of Islam (Soviet Union). Without any doubt on the agenda, the holy fighters which included Afghans and young people from several Middle East countries were trained with fundamentalist approach which was depicted and described as an aggressive opinion to defend Islam against Soviet Union's intervention (Ishtiaq, 2009:150).

Ironically, the base of Pakistan was set on completely different ideology and faith in solidarity by its founder *Muhammad Ali Jinnah*. With a prosperous and unorthodox approach three days before Pakistan was declared officially a separate county from India, on 11 August 1947 *Muhammad Ali Jinnah* proposed his vision of Pakistan on progressive values by addressing the constituent assembly in Karachi. He clearly explained that religious faith had nothing to do with state business. Keeping in mind the principle of equal citizens of the state he addressed with two big religious groups of that time and said "Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in political sense as citizens of the state (Jillani, 2013)."

The vision of *Jinnah* for Pakistan was entirely different from what Pakistan later transformed into and without its realization the nation continued its journey consisting different ideology constructed on complex fusion of social and religious norms. After the death of *Jinnah* the first constitution of Pakistan was adopted in 1956 with commitment to all laws in accordance of Islam. However this didn't go operational since the government was overthrown by military coup in October 1958. Later the second constitution was given in 1962 by *General Ayub Khan* which was not really different from the first one but the third constitution of 1973 took further steps in describing the Islamic identity of Pakistani people. In that third constitution not only the president was

obliged to be a Muslim like previous two constitutions, but the prime minister too. Furthermore it obliged them both to take an oath on testifying their faith in finality of Prophet Mohammad's mission. In addition to all these rules, in 1974 the declaration of *Admadis* as non-Muslims was perceived as step towards purer Islamic identity of Pakistan by orthodox Muslims and the *Zia* regime as Islamic way of life (Religions, 2008). This faith in practicing and implementing the religion became more of Pakistani ideology where somehow the entire nation headed towards search of perfect Islam and Islamic society. In order to demonstrate true love for Islam *General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq (1977-88)* came up with different and firm Islamic strategy where he announced his mission quite clearly: "I consider the establishment of an Islamic order a prerequisite for the country." He was determined to establish social order in all sectors of life including administration, judiciary, banking, trade, education, agriculture industry and foreign affairs regulated in accordance with Islamic principles. The *Hudood Ordinance* was announced and imposed by him in 1979. This ordinance actually included punishments laid down in Quran and Sunnah for the offences of adultery (death by stoning), fornication (100 lashes), false accusation of adultery (80 lashes), drinking alcohol (80 lashes), theft (cutting off of right hand), highway robbery (in case of only robbery, cutting of the hands and feet). For robbery with murder (death by sword or death by hanging) (Imran, 2005:87). *Zia* regime was clearly in favor of Muslims where the sole purpose was to make Pakistan as a model Islamic state by implying Islamic rules and regulations. However the definition of a Pakistani was now centered on religious faith which actually was clearly a different approach from what Pakistan was founded on in 1947. That was not all, but gender discrimination started to emerge as part of new Islamic laws introduced by this government where another issue was born on serious level. In 1984 a new law of evidence was emerged into the court of law which reduced the evidence of a female witness to half in worth with male witness. Later in 1986 the establishment of *Sharia* (Islamic law) courts as complement to *Hudood Ordinance* (limits), included the *Zina Ordinance* (adultery and rape) but the instituted processes and procedures greatly weakened the legal position of women. Interestingly, under the *Zina Ordinance*, the evidence of the victim was not admitted nor was that of any other woman. To prove that adultery and rape, the traditional requirement of four male

witnesses was required. Moreover section 375 of previous constitution protected girls under fourteen by providing even their own consent of sexual intercourse with them would constitute that as rape but this protection was not included in *Zina Ordinance* (DAWN Magazine , 2011). The impact of such discriminated laws against women appeared in form of protest against this government and Pakistani educated women who had awareness of what was going wrong, started to claim their rights. In 1980 two female lawyers and well known women's rights activists *Asma Jahangir and Hina Jilani* claimed against such gender biased laws that result several victims who could not receive justice because they were unable to provide required number of male witnesses according to *Zina Ordinance*. This was not the only conflict between *Zia-ul-Haq's* government and women but also in 1980 a circular was issued to all government offices, suggesting and imposing female employees to wear proper Muslim dress with compulsion of *Chador* (loose cloth covering the head). Leading Muslim theologians hostile to female influence in society were brought to national television to justify various restrictions on women (Neier, 2012:255). Discrimination of women in accordance to *Hudood Ordinance* introduced by Zia government actually provoked violence in the name of religion. An example of such unfortunate practice that actually got encouragement due to *Hudood Ordinance* and exists in present Pakistan is Karo-Kari (honor killing) where family members can murder another family member (mostly female victims) because the victim is considered as shame and dishonor for the family by engaging in unlawful pre-marital or extra-marital relation. Moreover the police or any other legal authority will not intervene since it is considered as family matter where usually it ends up by paying fine or mutual agreement of both parties (Khan, 2012).

Particularly, Zia regime draw a big line and defined *Sunni Muslims* as real Pakistani where other religions and Muslim sects were threaten of constitutive laws. In 1974 after declaration of *Ahmadis* as non-Muslims, the distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims and their rights in state went on separate ways and continued in such manner as true Pakistani nationality was dependant on correct faith in Islam. Further in 1983-84 General Zia-ul-Haq imposed new restrictions on *Ahmadis* not to use the same Islamic system for their worship (different mosques and different preaching places). The hate against non-Muslims and other religions continued in form of other restraints in

1985 when non-Muslims were not allowed to vote for general seats and non-Muslims could vote only for non-Muslim candidates. The hate increased in 1984 when law of blasphemy was passed according to which disrespect to Islam and Prophet Muhammad was considered as serious crime and so in result many non-Muslims (mostly Christians) were accused and punished accordingly (The Persecution.org (Religious Persecution of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community), 2006). This certain type of ideology continued even in post Zia era where vulnerability of other religions or Muslim sects remain the same. According to the annual report of *Human Rights Commission Pakistan* the law of blasphemy introduced in 1984 encouraged killings and harassing of citizens from other religions and faiths (Pakistan H. R., 2009).

Islamic radicalization does not only belong to Pakistan though it became part of the society and grew with the passage of time from Soviet involvement in Afghanistan in 1979. That intervention didn't only give America a fair chance to fight against and defeat its greatest rival, but it also fueled fundamentalism by sponsorship and support to *Jihad* (Holy War). Enormous military help from The US welcomed Muslim warriors to participate in Afghanistan Jihad (Taylor, 2014). However, the execution of such idea required both physiological and economical support. Therefore, the framework was extended in accordance to unique way where *CIA* gave millions of dollars to *University of Nebraska* to produce textbooks as syllabus of *Madrasas* (Islamic preaching schools) of Afghanistan where killing other human beings was portrayed entertaining and morally justified (Tharoor, 2014). Overall in the history of Pakistan *Zia* regime has its own importance in either ways where it opened and closed several ports of dramatic changes on the nation.

1.2.4. Recovery of civilian government

General Zia-ul-Haq died in a plane crash in 1988 after which *Benazir Bhutto* (daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto) won the general elections by majority votes. However she was exiled from the country on charges of corruption in 1990 which gave the opportunity to opposition party whose leader *Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif* started to govern Pakistan. Once again after the exile of *Benazir Bhutto*, *Sharif* came in power second time during 1997 (AP, Associated Press, 2013). *Sharif* introduced Fifteenth

Amendment in constitution and proposed to make the inflexible *Sharia* as supreme law of the state. Later, in October 1999 his government was overthrown by *General Pervez Musharraf* on charges of a scheme to sack the general for political purposes (Bennett-Jones, 2013).

1.2.5. General Musharraf & war on terror

Like other parts of the world, Pakistan also suffered from the tragic attacks of 11 September 2001 at New York City and Pentagon. However, the tragedy occurred in a different way in Pakistan than America. The impact of these attacks was not only on The USA or American society but the consequences affected the entire Muslim world as well. *General Pervez Musharraf* who served Pakistan as its tenth president (2001-2008) had modernist approach, but was influenced and pressured by The USA and other nations to change the path for Pakistan (BBC News, 2014). However, when Pakistan joined the war on terror it brought the greatest conflict with fundamentalism in the history of Pakistan where Pakistan paid huge price with the lives of its civilians and troops (Waterman, 2013). Indeed it was a big step for Pakistan to take against the same people who they used to trust at but the new democratic approach and being ally of The US that was a tough decision for Pakistan to make. Pakistan where majority population is consisting of Muslims has quite compound relation with religion and its practices.

In 2001 when Pakistan joined the war on terror in Afghanistan under pressure of The USA and other nations, it actually started a chain of direct conflict between the Pakistani state and fundamentalists (previously known as Holy warriors). Since 2002 with abduction and execution of foreigners in Pakistan as well as multiple acts of brutal killings that cause death of thousands of human lives (civil and security) including the assassination of *Benazir Bhutto* on 27 December 2007, Pakistan seems to be trapped in a situation in which the country has to control Islamic fundamentalism alone as *Ahmed* puts it (Ahmed, 2009:167,175). Once Ahmed's text on Pakistan is read, one may think that Pakistan was left alone by all other nations that forced it to get involve into the war against terrorism. From last 68 years Pakistan as a country has been on a bumpy path where politics has emerged into religion completely and the nation lives through complex value systems that are actually result of both politics and religion. The right

way to live their lives in accordance to Islam which is the dominant religion in Pakistan, people's ideology has been affected and shaped in presence of fundamentalism which actually was partially introduced by the governments and rest of it grew within the society after supporting Afghanistan Jihad.

1.3. Media and its operations in Pakistan

Media has its significant importance in construction and transformation of Pakistani society since independence 1947. Even though at that time only press media was the available medium but it participated not only as daily life's component but also as platform which brought huge awareness to the people in form of fight against colonialism. As time goes by media has grown in Pakistan with its different forms and extensions where it has provided new and better ways of information as well as ways to pose questions regarding our social, ethical and political life style. However, there has always been a strong bond between the governance and media regulatory authorities in Pakistan since its powerful and effective nature can play a vital role for or against any government.

After the independence print media played its role for long time in the history of Pakistani media where it facilitated the nation with news, entertainment and politics. According to *Center of Civic Education Pakistan* the contemporary press media in Pakistan covers all four provinces including *Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* and *Balochistan* in following order:

Table 2.2 Print media circulation in Pakistan

| All 4 Provinces | Dailies | Weeklies | Fortnightlies | Monthlies |
|-----------------|---------|----------|---------------|-----------|
| Total | 151 | 15 | 7 | 68 |

Since Urdu is the national language in Pakistan it works on mass level in print media with bigger scale where English as the secondary language is more important medium in policy makers of Pakistan. Other local languages like Sindhi, Punjabi, and Pashto have also minor level distribution on regional level ((CCE), 2010, S. 4-5).

Distribution and consumption of print media (particularly newspapers) is based on percentage of urban and rural areas of Pakistan where print media is still the largest medium of communication to reach millions around Pakistan. Based on statistics, 60% of urban and 36% of rural population in Pakistan reads newspapers. Moreover, with the growing internet facility has provided Pakistani people to read online as well. The conservative and largest Urdu language news paper *Daily Jang* claims 800,000 copy sales nationwide on daily basis, large English language dailies like *DAWN* with 130,000 and *The News* with 140,000 copy sales contribute as major stake holders of print media in Pakistan (Yusuf, 2013).

Electronic media³ has its significant role in history of Pakistan in regard to construction and transformation of a Muslim society. In 1964 *Pakistan Television (PTV)* started to broadcast with black and white screen effects from Lahore studios and twelve years later the transmission was available in color screen as well. Later in 21st century in March 2002 *Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA)* was designed in order to provide license and regulate private media in Pakistan. In 2007, PEMRA amendment act was passed where the task of media regulation in multi ethnic society was declared where priority was to make free flow of information in presence of transparency. This act included rules and regulations of PEMRA to secure Pakistani ideology, social and cultural standards also discouraging biased trends while providing the fair share to stake holders in business. Moreover in federal and provincial capitals, council of complaints with representatives was present to restore and listen to public complaints against any media content or broadcaster violating any ethnic code (Naveed, 2011). Pakistan Television has its own scope in society but as seen in many other countries private sector of Pakistani media has reached enormous level of expansion where PEMRA has the job to categories and provide license to these television, radio and internet protocol broadcasting channels. Categories of issued licenses are in following numbers and order:

³Electronic media: is broadcast or storage media that takes advantage of electronic technology like television, radio, internet etc. This term is often used in contrast with print media. (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/electronic-media.html>)

Table 2.3 Number of licenses issued by PEMRA to private broadcasting channels

| Satellite T.V Channels | International T.V Channels | F.M Radio Licenses | Cable T.V Distribution Operators | Multimedia Channels Distribution System (MMDS) | Internet Protocol T.V (IPTV) | Mobile T.V License |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 67 | 29 | 116 | 2168 | 6 | 2 | 2 |

Satellite channels in Pakistan provide a wide range of quality programmes which include news, sports and entertainment in both Urdu and English language. Some of popular channels are GEO T.V, ARY T.V, Dawn News and AAJ T.V. Covering the international market Pakistan allows various channels from other countries and continents to provide required content. Prominently among these channels include BBC, CNN, Sky News, HBO, Cartoon Network, Ten Sports, ESPN, Fox News, Al Jazeera and range of Star Channels. Radio channels in Pakistan provide various topics to broadcast about mainly attracting the regional public and frequencies including education, health, civic information and economics. In category of non-commercial radio license, many Pakistani universities have the ability to broadcast in order to teach (research) and provide jobs of electronic media to skillful university students (Naveed, 2011).

Since 1995 internet has become one of the fastest growing industries in Pakistan which has undoubtedly revolutionized electronic media. However in 1997 the proper body of internet distribution and legislation *Internet Service Provider Association of Pakistan* (ISPAK) was developed with the duty to provide internet services to distributors for professional, infrastructural and private purposes. International undersea cable connections in Pakistan are through PTCL and Trans World, which are two major mainstream internet distributors. On domestic front PTCL, Wateen, Mobilink and Multinet are responsible internet providers. According to ISPAK survey 25 million are estimated number of internet users in Pakistan and 15 million are mobile internet users

(Pakistan I. S., 2014). Internet in Pakistan has grown fast among other Asian countries with increasing number of professional private usage. In Pakistan internet penetration 16%, smart phone purchase and usage penetration 10%, 11% internet browsing is through mobile internet, 12% of these internet consumers have formal financial services and only 9% have mobile banking accounts (The Express Tribune, 2013).



CHAPTER2

CENSORSHIP AND MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATION

2.1. Censorship: History and definition

Culture of any country is based on its ideology and values within its boundaries but the combination of several other layers like thoughts and practices shape a nation. The formation and transformation of countries have always a strong bond with their cultures. Expression of ideas and thoughts in various ways allow us to explore the social and cultural norms in better ways. However, the right to express feelings and thoughts also require law and enforcement in order to keep fair balance in all aspects of life. Whether in past or in present, the power of human mind teaches us to investigate and question our own skills while living our lives and moving forward.

Mette Newth (a famous Norwegian author) has written on censorship and its history in detail with examples and references to several ancient civilizations. However in this paper the main focus is on her research on early examples and implication of censorship through various times.

According to the author censorship has always followed free expression of people like a shadow throughout history. For example in ancient China censorship was considered as the reasonable tool for regulating moral and political life of Chinese inhabitants. However the term censorship can be traced from the office of censor which was established in Rome in 443 BC (Newth, 2010). When it comes to censorship and consequences of expressing freely then one famous case of *Socrates*⁴ from history can't be neglected as Newth explains it in her text. He was sentenced to drink poison in 399 BC for preaching his unorthodox religious studies to the youth of that time.

While discussing the censorship in 19th and most of 20th century, the author has put light on censorship in libraries. In this regard the author claims that public libraries were supposed as 'benevolent guardians of literature' for youth and young readers. As a

⁴ Socrates [469-399 B.C]: Was a Greek philosopher famous for his work in pedagogy, epistemology and ethics. (<http://www.ancientgreece.com/s/People/Socrates/>)

consequence that allowed teachers and librarians to censor wide range of books that according to them contained ‘morally destructive and offensive literature.’

When it comes to filtering of ideas and thoughts then in media studies the concept of censorship weighs quite importantly in this regard. Censorship⁵ has been defined vastly by different scholars in accordance to its nature and effects on different mediums of expressions. As elaborated by Nicole Moore, it is official inspection of different media forms like books, journals, radio, films, theater and music before their release (publication) to ensure that they do not offend legal proscriptions instituted by government (Moore, 2013:46). It would not be wrong to say that censorship is mostly understood as suppression of different media forms but it also indicates towards prohibition of media content under certain circumstances where it turns into a weapon against weak⁶! The relationship between censorship and society fluctuates depending on constitutional changes with change in authorities (governments). Intermingling with cultural, social and religious norms, censorship makes its place within our social space where it reflects on presence of contradiction in different societies. Contradiction becomes inevitable when social, cultural and religious ideologies are misinterpreted and blended in a chaotic way. Helen Freshwater has done her research in order to redefine the term censorship where she has clarified that censorship is a process that is realized with the relationships between censorious agents rather than series of actions taken out by some distinct authority (Freshwater, 2011:1). After reading Freshwater’s text one can understand that in order to understand censorship and its operations one must seek the reasons that develop this concept in different forms of media. Since it is not a natural function which operates on its own therefore we can consider it collaborative work where state and nation both work mutually to keep cultural, social and religious balance in multiple media forms.

Censorship operates in accordance to its nature where utilization of power/authority defines socio cultural, religious and political boundaries of that country. As discussed by Gary T. Marx, it (censorship) assumes the ideas and forms of expression as threat to individual, organizational and societal norms as defined by those

⁵ Censorship: The act to suppress any medium of communication in order to filter the content.

⁶ Weak: Someone who can’t resist against a powerful individual or system/government for his/her rights.

in power or those who are involved in moral movement which turns out to be a must prohibition (Marx, 2002). Such authority gives the right to governmental and non-governmental organizations (such as religious groups); to boycott and prohibit certain media content that offends the ruling ideology. However, censorship on certain medium varies according to the nature of that particular medium of communication. For example internet as 'many to many' communication method which makes everyone a publisher, is far more difficult to ban or censor as compare to newspaper and national television with 'one to many' communication technique (Marx, 2002:2.4). Although state censorship usually has its great influence but different forms of media like internet provides the possibility for both sender/producer and receiver/audience to have communication flow in alternative ways apart from main stream media. Moreover, the nature of censored content makes it more demanding and increases the curiosity among buyers and sellers of black market where individuals risk to do business of such material because sometimes the illegitimate political censorship occur in the name of national security due to fear of discovery, as Gary T. Marx puts it.

2.2. Literary review of censorship

As result of various censorious agents, censorship signifies its considerably firm nature to support concern(s) of an individual or a group of people to block certain mediated content. However, literature explains extensions of censorship in regard to various human and environmental factors. In 1983 W. Philips Davison proposed "third person effect theory", according to which 'people tend to believe that other people are more influenced by mass media messages than they themselves are and such perception may lead to behavioral or attitudinal outcomes in form of support to censorship of media content for instance (Davison, 1983:8).' Fascinatingly, the perception of other people in a way that encourages one to believe that he/she is less influenced by mass media reveals the human desire to choose censorship. As the theory suggests that outcome of such effect can be attitudinal or behavioral than one may ask, if this effect can only be result of mass media message(s) or it can also take place due to non mediated forms of communications for example individuals with their perception influenced by their personal experiences and verbal communication with other? This question has been

answered and discussed by Bengt Johansson according to whom the desire to evaluate one's self in more favorable terms than others is also perception of third person and it can be referred as 'self enhancement'. This perceptual attribute of third person actually refers to this individual desire as a result of mass media and its biased content which is 'anti-social media'(Johansson, 2005:82). Interestingly the concept of self enhancement has its nature reversed to third person effect since people experiencing self enhancement and its major characteristic as self esteem are influenced by 'pro-social messages' that communicate with wider range of audience whether the message is a public service announcement, anti-drunk driving or car seatbelt advertising campaign and this kind of perception is known as 'reversed third person effect or first person effect' as K. Neuwirth, E. Frederick & C. Mayo put it (K. Neuwirth, 2002:350).

Censoring mass media content or blocking its broadcast refers to the conventional way, but such practice on individual level by oppressing opinions and ideas opens further doors to explore and discuss this phenomenon. As explained by Davie. G, in 1974 Elisabeth Noelle Neumann proposed the theory named as 'spiral of silence' according to which people remain silent when they feel their views are opposed by majority, but such individuals will discuss and share their opinion more publicly if they have the certainty that their opinion is closer to the opinion of majority. However, the reasons of such silence are:

- Fear of isolation when the group or public realizes that the individual has a different opinion from existing state of affairs.
- Fear of retaliation or more extreme isolation with fear of greater harm (loss of a precious or valued entity).

Due to inner created fear the oppressed opinion holder suffers through 'spiral effect' and mass media strengthens this effect by providing medium to the opinion of majority people (Davie. G, 2010). In order to understand the spiral effect one may consider the example of an individual who wouldn't dare to oppose his/her boss/superior at work who supports different political party and its agenda because this individual wouldn't prefer to be sacked or alienated among other staff members because of different political preferences.

The connection between third person effect, first person effect and the spiral effect can help one to understand the loop of behavioral and attitudinal changes in relation to perception of mass media content that have strong bond with censorship. Hernando Rojas elaborates that media censorship gets promotion due to exaggerated expectations of media effects on others and such perceptual approach regardless of different ideologies portrays negative message of media content to its observant. Moreover, third person effect can definitely alter attitudinal and behavioral perception on individual level with reference to spiral of silence which restricts people to act on social level. Such change results the increase in desire of ban/censorship of effective communication (Hernando Rojas, 1996:168). For instance the hypotheses of Hernando's research suggest that:

- People will judge media messages in general to have a greater impact on others than on themselves.
- People will perceive pornography and violence on television to have greater impact on others than on themselves.
- The extent of gap between first and third person effects for specific media forms will be positively related to censorship on those particular media forms.

When it comes to censorship on community level then one may think how come a group of people have the right to control information and idea? This questioned has been raised and discussed by Stuart Hannabuss & Mary Allard. According to the authors censorship refers to 'accountability' and 'self regulation' and these terms are commonly used by media in particular publishers that practice them but such action doesn't prove the practice of censorship right for instance on commercial level, big organizations that are responsible of marketing and sales, actually exclude certain content and even groups of people from sharing platforms due to lacking factor of 'commodification of information' in their message(Allard & Hannabuss, 2001:83). Removal of a certain published text from libraries due to a state law for instance can also refer to extension/implementation of state censorship. As defined by McMenemy "censorship is an affront to a democratic nation and something that library associations across the world attempt to combat through their ethical policies, adhered to by members" and this

concept of self-censorship has been explained in this regard by the author in more detail with reference to The United Kingdom where a *Local Government Law Act 1988* stated that “a local authority shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of homosexuality.” However this certain legislation led to a massive confusion among librarians on purchase and resulting effects of certain text on gay and lesbian community in The UK. Moreover this turned into self-censorship in many cases where librarians thought certain content had to be restricted from libraries in order to follow this particular act of law (McMenemy, 2009:86,87).

Self-censorship refers to the understanding of one oppressing his/her own opinion or idea due to anti- status quo nature of that particular thought. Moreover, self-censorship plays a vital role when it comes to the practice of censorship on individual level. In literature self-censorship is divided in two parts with its further subdivision. According to Philip Cook & Conrad Heilmann there are two types of self-censorship ‘private’ and ‘public’. In public self censorship the censor is usually a public agent such as government or a regulation body and censees are private individuals and small organizations. In contrast, private self censorship refers to the idea where censor and censee is the same agent since the process of censorship involves restriction on expressive attitudes within certain individuals. However, if private self censorship refers to the suspension of one’s own ideas then it can be result of to two sources: ‘proxy’ and ‘self-constraint’. Private self censorship as a result to internalization of some external force like rules or norms of an external source is called as ‘private self censorship by proxy’. On the other hand the private self censorship which is developed due to individual suppression on idea(s) in presence of some private ideology refers to ‘private self censorship by self constraint’ (Cook & Heilmann, 2010:14).

Referring back to the concept of self enhancement with its characteristic of self esteem, Scott David Williams has discussed role play of self-esteem in strengthening of self-censorship. According to William ‘self-esteem motive’ is the primary cause of self censorship since it creates fear of criticism in minds of creators and they censor/block their ideas. Self esteem motive/self enhancement motive urges individuals to follow praising feedback and avoid ‘unflattering’ feedback, but many creators perceive

feedback of their creative products as self relevant feedback which leads them to think and produce in accordance to favorable approach. However, as suggestion to reduce self-censorship people should prepare themselves to receive criticism and try to eradicate certain feedback that causes defensiveness within the creators of opinions/ideas (William, 2002:497). One may interpret and discuss William's work as a direct reference to ego factor in human psychology since self esteem and ego may work as team to counter the ability of an individual to receive criticism. As solution to this problem Kristin D. Neff suggests that self compassion provides one more stability and emotional confidence than self esteem and ego fades away from our conscious into subconscious (Neff, 2011:2).

2.3. Paradox: Western view on censorship in East and business

When it comes to Pakistan in regards of international perception then the usual understanding of Pakistan on international level refers to the concept of ethnocentrism where the portrayal of Pakistan by new media (internet) is questionable. Claiming *Google* as one of such international platforms where Pakistan has been represented in an unpleasant way, Nosheen Abbas discusses this by posing question:

“Have you ever tried searching Google for images of Pakistan? You'll be hard-pressed to find any pictures that depict the progressive and modern aspects of our country. But if you just type in the word Pakistan, you'll be flooded by a collection of frightening pictures (excluding some seductive shots of 'Miss Pakistan'): kids holding guns, bomb blasts and violence will inundate your computer screen” (Abbas, 2009). She further explains the perception of other countries about Pakistan and people of Pakistan by sharing two conversations that she had with a foreign journalist and an author and their gratifying views on Pakistan and people of Pakistan, but she summarizes her conclusion with the hope by saying “If only others were as eager to revisit their perceptions of Pakistan.” Media has the tendency to shape ideas and inform people on a massive level which indicates both mainstream and social media forms with their various extensions. Television in The USA is popular for attracting millions of viewers around the world for variety of its television shows that address a fair range of social,

political and cultural contexts. An American television series *Homeland*⁷ became center of attention of news media and Pakistani officials when this suspense and thriller television series portrayed Pakistan and Pakistani security forces as host for terrorist groups and their activities in 2014 in its 4th season (Smith J. , 2014). As a critique and fiction writer, Shah expresses her point of view on this particular incident by saying “Whenever a Western movie contains a connection to Pakistan, we watch it in a sadomasochistic way, eager and nervous to see how the West observes us. We look to see if we come across to you as monsters, and then to see what our new, monstrous face looks like. Again and again, we see a refracted, distorted image of our homeland staring back at us. We know we have monsters among us, but this isn’t what we look like to ourselves” (Shah, 2014).

So how exactly do Western countries or their representatives perceive Eastern nations? Media plays a vital role not only for better intercultural communications but also in regards to business opportunities and integrations. In which way West and East work through media in order to build communication and financial bridges? At least nine Middle Eastern and North African states use American & Canadian built technologies to control and filter the access to internet data in their countries. ISP⁸s in Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, Sudan and Tunisia use the filtering solutions made in Western countries, to block massive internet content including websites with ‘skeptical’ views of Islam, atheist and secular speech, sex, LGBT and dating. Interestingly the lists of such websites are managed and designed by Western companies and their representatives (York, 2011).

⁷Homeland: American suspense and thriller television series, originally broadcasted through SHOWTIME channel discusses the story of a CIA agent who operates worldwide with her colleagues on various operations to hunt terrorists. Homeland is now in its fifth season.
(<http://www.sho.com/sho/homeland/about>)

⁸ Internet Service provider (ISP): Is the company that provides internet access, usually for a fee on monthly basis.

2.4. Censorship in Pakistani media

2.4.1. BBC report on censorship in Pakistani media

With enormous population and strong political influence, Pakistani media (both print and e-media) works under consistent vigilance and surveillance of government. A detailed annual report of *BBC* on Pakistani media shows both historical and present frameworks and their operations (Yusuf & Schoemaker, September 2013). According to this report, historically state censorship in Pakistan was introduced in form of Press and Publication ordinance which was passed by *General Ayub Khan* in 1960 and that actually gave the authority to the government to censor and control several media institutions. In 1964 this regime converted the biggest publishing institution of Pakistan PPL (Progressive Paper Limited) into National Trust Press media group whose agenda was to gain access to different newspapers that supported successful activities and results of military government also the government increased its control over quota system⁹ in private publishing and newspaper distribution. Under the same military controlled government in 1964 PTV (Pakistan Television Corporation) was established and by 1974 it started to broadcast in big cities like Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Quetta and Peshawar. Two big media institutions of that time were PTV and Radio Pakistan which were under state control. It was achieved by portraying the state's identity as country with various cultures and unified by the Islamic faith. The report also covers *General Zia-ul-Haq* (1977-88) regime which gave the control of Ministry of Information and Education to the religious political party *Jamaat-e-Islami* to make sure Urdu (national language) broadcasting domination with help of influenced journalists. Any content which was published by privately owned newspapers was censored if it referred to military interference in politics (Yusuf & Schoemaker, September 2013).

The BBC report has also mentioned 1990s as the 'decade of democracy' for people of Pakistan since the media coverage and its distribution was completely different as compare to history of media in Pakistan. In late 1990s there were seven

⁹ Quota System: A legislated system giving authority and freedom to limited private publishing groups to print freely. Since there were only few private publishing companies in Pakistan during 1964.

international satellites broadcasting channels from The USA, China and Europe that allowed Pakistani people to consume independent news through international platforms like BBC and CNN. Pakistani media started to work liberally as a result of 2002 ordinance passed by *General Pervez Musharraf*. Since 2002 the loosening of license control over privately owned cable television channels has definitely increased number of cable/satellite T.V consumers and by the end of 2009 PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory authority) has stated 8 million household cable television users with 2,346 licenses issued to local cable television systems (PAS, 2010). Due to such help, the broadcast media spread with great volume in form of privately owned satellite television channels distributed through cable networks. Between 2002 and 2010, 89 television channels were launched and 26 foreign channels were granted broadcasting rights. Meanwhile on radio, 138 licenses were granted. In 2002 another key institution in Pakistani media history was introduced in the form of a regulatory body, PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) to control this newly liberalized media division.

It is believed that both military and civilian governments have influenced Pakistani media long enough through bribing media houses and individual journalists via what is known as *colloquially* or in Pakistan as *lifafa* (envelope) culture. Censorship and regulations are the strong weapons that governments have been using against privately owned media, post in *General Musharraf's* regime. Though media was so called “liberated” during Musharraf’s administration, but media contents were openly censored that were critical to the military or general’s actions. Nationwide blocks on news channels and seizure of radio station’s equipment are prominent examples of government influence on private media¹⁰. Moreover, channel owners agree to the fact that they have to bribe cable television operators in order to bring in their channels and also favorable placement among the operator’s channels listing. Cable operators play a vital role in regards to gate keepers since PEMRA also use them to censor content on

¹⁰ In 2007 during the state of Emergency declared by President *Pervez Musharraf* all news channels were banned except PTV (Pakistan Television Corporation) which is run by state. As a result of ban TV channels like *Geo News* added video steaming on their website but it wasn’t enough for more than 100,000 logons so the channel had to extend server capacity to 500,000 simultaneous logons. (<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1107/p01s02-wosc.html>)

privately owned television channels. These operators block selectively channels that broadcast politically sensitive content. For example in 2010 PEMRA ordered cable T.V operators to block broadcast of GEO News and ARY T.V after they broadcasted footage of a protest in Birmingham UK where a shoe was thrown at President *Asif Ali Zardari* and when cable operators refused to obey the command then Pro Zardari activists attacked work place of these channels (Greenslade, 2010). The influence on media does not represent the government's authority only but on local level, political parties also put pressure on cable operators to block channels/broadcast that are critical to their policies or demand to cover more of opposition political parties and their issues. One of the statements from the chairman of cable operators' association *Khalid Arain* explains the situation when he said "we feel the political pressure but we have to work in localities (parties) so we comply with their requests."

2.5. Censorship as chess board of Pakistani politics

The constant intermingling of politics and free media pushes the boundaries for both media producers and censorious agents. Seeking the possibilities of survival, both politics and media production come up with new events that become news themselves which definitely attracts audience in both positive and negative way. The eager to learn and share through media and its various forms, allows consumers to enrich the field with their contribution. Meanwhile the censorship authorities try to do their job sincerely since the code they follow gives them the right to differentiate between right and wrong, but under political influence though. The most shocking and interesting event as an example can be 12 hours ban on broadcast of general election on 18 February 2008 where PEMRA actually defined that particular censorship as appropriateness of election by censoring the coverage (Watch, 2008). The reality of political parties in Pakistan was unveiled however with the help of social media on 21 February 2008 when a civilian posted video on YouTube that showed rigging during general election in biggest city of Pakistan (Karachi). In that particular video a woman who was responsible for conducting polling, was marking several ballots in favor of one particular party (MQM) by herself (Saeed1583, 2008). MQM (Muttahida Qaumi Movement or United National Movement) is known for its violence and terrorist acts in and outside Pakistan which

was also recognized by Canadian government in 2007 when a man named as *Mohammed Kashif Omer* was deported from Canada due to his belonging and strong relations with this particular political party (Post, 2007). The video was recorded from a hidden mobile device to keep the people unaware of camera lens due to which the angle of recording is not like a usual camera recording. This act of citizen journalism later faced censorship when after the distribution of this video on web, on February 22, 2008 Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) banned YouTube access (Graiss, 2008). Huma Yousuf as a Pakistani journalist has written a lot about political influence on media in Pakistan. As explained by her the fuel of YouTube ban debate increased few weeks later when Pakistani government officially banned the video sharing website after a claim according to which YouTube hosted blasphemous content. Nothing was mentioned about the rigging video but instead of that the government explained Danish cartoons that showed the character of Prophet Muhammad and a Dutch film that portrayed Islam negatively (Yousuf, 2009). While criticizing the regulatory authorities in Pakistan, Huma explained that Western world has provided new media as a tool to their people that have reoriented people's communication and participation skills by making them producers on their own. However, the perception of new media in developing countries like Pakistan is different where access to information is preferred than participation and the credit goes to all the harassment that Pakistani government and regulatory authorities have imposed on their population.

2.6. Censorious Agents

In the field of mass media, high expectations of consumers in form of content demand and supply come along as natural attribute of its nature. However, these expectations may vary from time to time and they do fluctuate in accordance to different social and cultural norms. When it comes to classification of mediated content as an offence to culture or religion then people are involved in this manner to considerable extent. Being a Pakistani research scholar Raza Rahman Khan Qazi discusses mass media and its impact on Pakistani society where his narration in regard to media applications and their implication in Pakistan, help us to understand the censorious agents within Pakistan. He elaborates that mass media plays its role to increase social

mobility of individualism and groups. However the mobility is directly in relation with geography, economy, psychology and occupation. Emphasizing on social norms Qazi explains further where he has mentioned that, as a way of understanding the matrix of social institutions allows one to analyze the impact of mass media on Pakistani social traditions as primary components of social system because the influence of media in Pakistan does not support the tradition of family as domain of primary socialization. Rather it shows the changing trend in Pakistani society where the contemporary social life (especially in big cities) is quite different from such tradition. In order to represent and explain the effect of mass media on Pakistani society, Qazi has mentioned two provinces in particular. According to him the mass media in Pakistan does not represent the traditional social system, particularly of Khyber Pakhtunkwa formerly known as North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan which are two of the traditional provinces of Pakistan. Considering feminism as effected (by media) social attribute in Pakistan Qazi explains further more where he thinks on one side the media portrayals have empowered feminism by providing awareness and knowledge of self confidence but this facility comes in with a huge conflict with traditional family values that end up in forms of hate against men, increment of gender gaps, depressing compassions and materialism. Summarizing his critique Qazi's portrayal of Pakistani mass media suggests that mass media in Pakistan has helped a lot to centralize the traditional political powers but failed to support the countrywide democratic forces. Therefore, one can say that Pakistani media could not play its expected role to provide the people with political awareness and facilitate them with their political rights and participation (Qazi, 2004).

2.7. Entertainment media and censorship

In 2013 a group of five students and one assistant professor of University of Lahore, Pakistan designed a questionnaire about questions related to mass media entertainment and access to different media contents in Pakistan and gave it to 200 participants from different cities. The method in this descriptive study for data collection was non probability convenience sampling where facts were collected and evaluated. The results however in this study are based on particularly designed questionnaire and facts from different sources.

According to this survey Pakistani people from all age groups (12 and above) prefer internet and television mostly for the sake of entertainment through mass media and seek Pakistani trends in form of entertainment or informative content. The feel of offence is also visible in survey which suggests that media (social media in particular) has the tendency to spoil the younger generation of Pakistan so; government should ban all kinds of contents that promote vulgarity, controversy or unnecessary argument among Pakistani people. As a recommendation of participants, regulatory authorities are supposed make sure that on television and internet (which are two major sources of mass media in Pakistan) content should be neither communicated nor accessible if it threatens Pakistani values or ethics. Considering religion as core element of Pakistani society, according to participants all types of mediums like radio, television and cinema that contain Islamic content should be promoted and broadcasted. For further recommendations participants said that media should not be biased and should spread the true information only in order to gain people's trust. Moreover, the print media including showbiz should stay within the cultural limits of Pakistan. In this survey social media has been considered to be reason for wasting time particularly for younger generation where participants recommended that social media websites that are more in access of youth should be available from 7pm to 9pm so students should be able to devote their time for better and productive activities (Amaima Yawar Khan, 2013).

A literary review of a journal used as reference in this study shows a different perspective of Pakistani people where Western media and its expansion in Muslim countries like Pakistan, has been considered as invasion on Muslim values and ideologies (Akbar, 2009). The growth of electronic media in Pakistan can be imagined with the facts of Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (ISPAK) where according to last update in October 2014 there are 25 million internet users where 15 million of whom use internet on mobile devices (ISPAK, 2014). Majority of the people who answered the questionnaire think that Pakistani media is highly influenced by India and Western countries and therefore it does not represent or promote Pakistani values and Islamic culture. In fact it brings harm to Pakistani ethics and ideologies, but Indian media (Bollywood in particular) has always been considered as national and cultural threat to Pakistan. The ban on Indian films and T.V shows in Pakistan was in 2013

which reopened the doors for old discussion to decide if it is ethical to promote Indian cinema and T.V in Pakistan or not? Since they go against Muslim ideologies and Pakistani culture therefore it remains an open debate between two edgy neighbor countries. In Lahore High Court judge *Khalid Mahmood Khan* ruled that Indian films and T.V shows should be classified as negative production and should not be traded between two countries based trade regime with wrong message (s). The long ban on Indian media in Pakistan since 1965 (first war between Pakistan and India) was lifted in 2006 during *General Musharraf* regime, but in 2013 these High Court orders found once again Indian media responsible for intervention in Pakistani culture and society (Bhushan, 2013).

The ban on Indian media doesn't only refers to Pakistan's issue with Bollywood but it poses the question as well that why it becomes necessary for Pakistan to censor Indian media content or in which way it brings harm to Pakistani culture and society? In 2012 an Indian movie with the plot on secret agent, who fails the plan of Pakistani intelligence to blow up Delhi with nuclear bomb, was banned by Pakistan Film Censors Board. *Agent Vinod* (movie title) was banned in Islamabad after declaring it anti-Pakistan content where an Indian agent makes the evil plan of Pakistani secret agency *ISI* to detonate Indian capital with nuclear bomb unsuccessful by dodging through Pakistani spies and agents. A solid reason for the popularity of Indian cinema in Pakistan is the increase of Islamization¹¹ within the country which has remarkable effects on Pakistani cinema culture. According to the secretary of Pakistan Film Producers Association *Jalaluddin Hassan*, in 2001 only 15 movies were produced and number of cinemas has fallen from 1000 during late 1980s to 230. Invasion of Indian cinema on Pakistani cinemas and culture was elaborated by him when he said "What do you expect from Indian film? Their leaders have been saying we do not need to wage a war on Pakistan. We will defeat them culturally" (Child, 2012).

2.7.1. Bollywood (Indian cinema) and Pakistan

Though Indian mediated content provokes censorship/ban in Pakistani society, it also coins few reasonable questions in one's mind. For instance: How come Indian

¹¹Islamization: Social shift towards Islam as trend or due to imposition.

movies are popular in Pakistan and if they really are then to what extent do they pose threat to Pakistani cinema? Inescapably, these questions are being discussed on mass media¹² forums and platforms and have gained international media attention as well. *Deutsche Welle* a Germany based international broadcasting¹³ company has covered this topic in a way to seek the connection between India and Pakistan through cinema and its effects of both sides of the border. The editor of the news has reported on the release of an Indian movie ‘*Bajrangi Bhaijan*’ in both countries (India & Pakistan) and its success in both countries since the movie actually focuses more on common culture and history than on war and political conflicts between two countries (Shams, 2015). According to the editor the movie has broken the record of Indian cinema for not making typical anti-Pakistan movie but probably the same reason also doesn’t allow it to be in the list of blockbusters. Another Pakistani author and social scientist gave her reviews on this particular movie explaining that the film didn’t say Indians and Pakistani are the same; it only reminded us of our geographical closeness, which in so many years, has proved to be both a benefit and a curse. Pakistan’s best friend is China, but Pakistani people still watch Bollywood movies, not Chinese films (Siddiqa, 2015). As a suggestion for better political and social dialogue between two countries she further added that “It requires humanism rather than bland and blatant nationalism to treat each other with respect” (Siddiqa, 2015). However while giving his review to DW (Deutsche Welle) on this topic, an Indian blogger and social critique ShivamVij put some light on the business aspect of BollyWood being praised in Pakistan. According to Shivam it is important to consider that Pakistan is the sixth largest market for Bollywood movies. It means that Bollywood has reasonable financial reasons for not making xenophobic anti-Pakistan films anymore. The links of Pakistani artists with Bollywood industry also play vital role in bringing audiences of both countries together (Shams, 2015). After going through such reviews one can say that Indian cinema has both cultural and economical reasons to stay and grow within Pakistani society.

¹² Mass Media: Large scale communication through various mediums of communication like radio, television/satellite, internet etc.

¹³ International Broadcasting: This type of broadcasting is aimed to reach wide range of audience on international scale than on domestic level. Radio, satellite and internet are some of popular means used by contemporary media companies around the world in order to achieve this particular task.

With all considerable and common sociocultural norms between Pakistan and India, Bollywood as a massive movie production institution has its dominance over Pakistani society because of strong business approach and effective influence. This does not only allow Pakistani people to gain access to Indian movies on big screen by lifting the many years ban on Indian movies in Pakistan, but it also affects the Pakistani cinema since Indian movies have significantly attracted Pakistani people in a way that closes door for Pakistan's on film industry as claimed by Pakistani film producer Syed Noor "We must save Pakistan cinema" (Rehman, 2014).

2.8. Social media with and around us

Interaction and communication among people both domestically and internationally has been changed with the usage of cyberspace through various tools of social media and its applications. The history of social media and its websites in particular goes back to 1997 with the launch of SixDegrees.com which allowed its users to create profiles and make friend list to share personal information with others online (Ellison, 2007:214). Popularity of social media websites around the world within one last decade can be observed with new applications and the increase their usage among people in different societies via new gadgets (smart phones, tablet computers etc). As defined by Dewing social media is "Wide range of internet based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges contribute user-created content or join online communities. This kind of commonly known internet services include: blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, social network sites, status update services, virtual world content and media sharing sites" (Dewing, 2012:1). While talking about the characteristics of social media the author has majorly divided the very concept of social media on two major attributes 'collaboration' and 'discussion'. The fact that by default sometimes on some specific social media platforms (websites) the uploaded data persistently stays online, leads to the understanding of content usage and its worth in online space, as the author puts it. Moreover the access to social media in regards to internet availability matters when it comes to the usage/consumption. In case of social media the feature of its content to be remediated and easily findable through search tools online, makes it unique in itself. According to the author the nature of social media is

really interesting where it is uncertain who exactly is going to read the posted content just as sometimes the identity and motive of the person who posts the content online is not clear.

As the uniqueness of social media enriches its various websites, so is the its growth that has become more or less as an asset from individual/personal usage to professional/industrial usage where companies and organizations use social media to place their products in market in an efficient way and reach wider range of customers/people (Dewing, 2012:3). By summarizing his view on social media the author mentioned that the massive structure of social media does not only allow its users to interact in cyber space but also it has and it is changing the way people communicate to each other. Since the relationship between social media and our prosperous societies does not have a very long history, therefore the transformation in human societies and cultures as well as the need to provide personal information on social media is still something to understand and work on. Where social media provides a fair share of entertainment and everyday communication as its facilities, it also increases the scope of business and professional communication and connections. In her article based on social media as the enhancing element for networking Baker has emphasized on *Twitter*¹⁴ as a case study which helps many professionals to interact with other professionals and expand their connections. With the strong believe in social media and its unique nature of international communication, the author has explained possible role of social media networking in academics and researchers. By using *Twitter* as one of the famous social networking websites and the concept of regular microblogging¹⁵, the writer believes that such practices can help young scientists and researchers to build their careers and expand it by creating virtual network and embracing information, advice and new up to date opportunities (Baker, 2015).

According to the author job searching and recruitment both have improved with the help of *Twitter* and its posts being retweeted¹⁶ where sometimes not desirable

¹⁴ Twitter: A social media website famous for its unique user generated content with limit of 140 characters for each post.

¹⁵Microblogging: The act to post brief entries on a blog or social media website. (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/microblogging?s=t>)

¹⁶Retweet: The act of tweeting another contact's tweet on Twitter.

candidates contact the responsible tweet posting companies but at least the message gets spread quickly on a bigger scale to help the recruitment teams. Social media websites like *Twitter* in the professional world can also help new employees to learn about the company and his/her future boss and colleagues if they are active on *Twitter*. Their tweets in form of response to some on going online conversation can tell the future employee to have an understanding of his/her future work or work place, as the author puts it. Another aspect of *Twitter* which has been discussed by the writer is participants and their acceptance in online space among other participants/users. The reason to search job is actually intension to increase the connection with professionals than to find the desired job only. No matter if the person is a professor, doctor or an undergrad student, communication and flow of valuable professional data among users never differentiates which actually refers to the free flow of data on internet and social media in particular (Baker, 2015). As conclusion of her article the author claims that as compare to any other social platform, *Twitter* actually provides the opportunity to its users to look for multidisciplinary new connections which can lead to new ways of learning and sharing interests and information. As a suggestion for *Twitter* users or future users who want to have academic or professional circle on twitter, the author has recommended that one should find the reason how *Twitter* can be useful and meaningful to a person through the daily life time constraints.

The primary objective of social media to provide a friendly environment to its users on cyber space to connect with other people has also been questioned by social critiques as source of making social media user less social in real life! The plugged in environment¹⁷ around us in our daily routine life, highly affected by social media and its application has been discussed by Scott Matteson. Whether it is an elevator, train station, queue in a grocery shop or at a doctor's clinic, it won't be unusual to observe most of the people around us deeply bonded and busy with their mobile devices of different types (smart phone or tablet computer) or in worst case scenario in a restaurant among friends or couples giving more time to their electronic gadgets than to people around them (Matteson, 2014). The author has also mentioned a term 'phubbing' in the same manner

¹⁷Plugged in environment: is an environment where almost everyone is busy in using mobile device(s)/gadget(s) to perform some internet or entertainment relevant task.

which refers to the unconscious behavior of ignoring other people in a social gathering while paying more attention to your mobile phone.

As social media allows its users to create profiles on multiple websites to share their personal information, it also reveals the concept of one being owner of some particular social media website profile and its exhibition to everyone else online. Comparing the owners of such profiles with 'curator', Hogan discusses the presentation of self on social media in his text. As discussed by the author curators of these social media profiles decide to post relevant information for the intended audience with reference to idea of exhibition of his/her own self by mediating the experience of viewer (s) on social media. Moreover according to the author these curators perform the actions of filtering, ordering and searching of the content through their profiles on social media in order to manage the display (Hogan, 2010:381).

2.9. Mass media and its impact on Pakistani identity

In every prosperous society mass media plays its role to a certain extent in order to evolve and grow in accordance with the religious, social, cultural and political environment. Importance of media and its various mediums as extensions of mankind has been discussed by Mrshall McLuhan where he discusses that:

“The "content" of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph. If it is asked, "What is the content of speech?" it is necessary to say, "It is an actual process of thought, which is in itself nonverbal." An abstract painting represents direct manifestation of creative thought processes as they might appear in computer designs. What we are considering here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the "message" of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs (McLuhan, 1964: 26).”

Perhaps one can understand from McLuhan's text that the message of any medium highly depends on social norms in accordance to geography which formulates the perception/understanding of people. As people perceive media in accordance to their

ideology and its growth reflects people's understanding, therefore media has tendency to shape or at least mirror such framework of life. Like many other countries the media in Pakistan also portrays nationalism in order to provide national level communication while following the state standards. The idea of nationalism has been defined by Sabir where he explains it as "a feeling of belonging among the individuals of a nation and it is based on the religion, language, and ethnic origins" (Sabir, 2011:17). Pakistan as a country is a result of 'Two Nation Theory' which refers to the idea that Muslims of subcontinent are a separate nation with Islamic ideology which was the basic philosophy of Muslims of subcontinent to have a separate country from British influenced India, therefore according to the founder of Pakistan (Muhammad Ali Jinnah) these Muslims were completely different from Hindus (majority population of India that follows Hindu religion) (Abdul Majid, 2014: 186). Even though Pakistan was found as one nation with one Islamic ideology, it struggles through various hurdles of provincial conflicts towards prosperity. Gulshan Majeed discusses this issue by classifying these conflicts in four categories (Majeed, 2010:52):

1. Ethnic conflict on religious ground: As the author elaborates, after the death of *Muhammad Ali Jinnah* (founder of Pakistan) and Prime Minister *Liaquat Ali Khan*, the ruling authorities/political parties have always been unable to provide strong democratic political system with equal representation of different ethnic groups in Pakistan. In order to strengthen their foundation, governing authorities (both civilian and military) have 'exploited' difference between various religious identities. For instance "the differences between Shia and Sunni (Shia and Sunni have differences over the performance of different rituals of Islam) preclude any possibility of the acceptance by the entire nation of a truly religious state with a single religious ideology."

2. Ethnic conflict on the basis of language: "The politics of Pakistan is basically the politics of linguistic groups." Since Pakistan is country of multi language ethnic groups, therefore value of linguistic also portrays the diversity of Pakistani culture. Being a multilingual state, Pakistan represents various provincial identities where Pakhtuns speak Pashto, Sindhi people speak Sindhi, Balochi people speak Balochi and Punjabi people speak Punjabi. Among these provincial languages Urdu is the national language and English is the official language of state. Language issue became

critical as threat for the virtue of state when Bengalis (population of East Pakistan) were denied with the demand to consider Bengali as national language alongside Urdu. This linguistic political argument led to the gory separation of East Pakistan in 1971. Even though Pakhtuns, Sindhi, Balochi and Punjabi people live and interact in the same country but there has always been presence of dominance against each other language wise. As part of such linguistic politics, political leaders of these provinces always give preference to provincial language over national language. For instance in early 1970s *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto* became the Prime Minister of Pakistan and in 1972 he declared Sindhi Language Bill according to which Sindhi became the only official language of Sindh province and as part of that bill all ‘provincial government servants’ had to learn Sindhi within three months (Ghosh T. , 2003:100-103).

3. Ethnic conflict on the basis of territoriality: As *Majeed* puts it, the iniquitous distribution of wealth and natural resources among all provinces of Pakistan by NFC¹⁸ (National Finance Commission) creates the sense of alienation among ‘deprived’ ethnic groups. Pakistan is enriched with natural resources that definitely help in order to generate wealth and establish the country. However the allotment of advantages gained by these resources among four provinces is questionable. A good example to understand this inequality can be *Balochistan* whose extensive natural gas connections all over Pakistan have provided energy to enrich and sustain both industrial and agricultural sectors, but still Balochistan remains the least developed province in Pakistan (Siddiqi, 2015: 57,58).

4. Ethnic conflict on the basis of caste: According to the author, the Biradary System¹⁹ in Pakistan is deep rooted as it shapes and provokes the caste base conflicts among Pakistani people in different provinces where most of its presence is visible during the political elections. Prejudice networking (‘Biradirism’) among people of any province for the sake of social resources (social security and political power) actually shapes voting behavior during elections which ends up forming political parties with same mentality in both urban and rural setup in Pakistan (Adnan Nasir, 2015:704).

¹⁸ NFC: A planned economic program in accordance to the constitution of Pakistan which controls financial imbalance and manage the financial resources of all four provinces.

¹⁹Biradary Sytem: Biased support to one’s own kith and kin in all possible manners without concern about the consequences.

Sabir claims that 1960s was time of print media domination in Pakistan as mass media form therefore it played its role in generating public awareness when it came to national integrity and solidarity, but unfortunately media could not play its role at all to cover national interests due to governmental influence (Sabir, 2011: 23). This governmental influence on mainstream media (print) has also been mentioned by Kukreja where she claims that Pakistani government controls its media economically and by monitoring advertising industry which also includes military ‘intimidation and infiltration’ on media channels via its spies (Kukreja, 2014: 148-150).

The sense of nationalism in Pakistani media has always been present, but in early 1970s it went to a whole different level during East Pakistan (Bangladesh) separation when radio Pakistan played its role by encouraging disintegration. Sagar explains the role of Pakistani mass media in early 1970s when radio and press media in West Pakistan portrayed completely wrong picture of the situation on East Pakistan and India and did ‘disservice’ to Pakistani people. According to the author the mass media made people of Pakistan live in the ‘vacuum’ created by censorship and provocative version of events by painting ‘unreal and rosy picture of the events’ with most in favor to West Pakistan (Sagar, 1997: 281-284).

Another type of visible and existing media (main stream) in Pakistan refers to orthodox Muslim ideology. Zafarullah Khan names this sort of media as ‘Jihad Media’ where he the word Jihad refers to holy war in the name of God. Moreover, *Khan* has mentioned a report, published by Council of Islamic Ideology²⁰ and the council gave recommendations for integration of Islamic ethos into Pakistani media in form of film censor board with promotion of Islamic way of life and instructions for print media to check indecent content before printing it (Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 2010). While doing his research on ‘Jihad Media’, Khan has posed two quite valuable questions in his report based on his experience where he asked students of Srinagar University and Media School in Jammu, Kashmir “if they ever had seen *Majalla Al-Da’waa*²¹? They

²⁰ CII: The Council of Islamic Ideology is a constitutional body that advises the legislature whether or not a certain law is repugnant to Islam, namely to the Quran and Sunna. (<http://cii.gov.pk/aboutcii/Introduction.aspx>)

²¹ *Majalla Al-Da’waa*: A pro Jihad piece of literature dedicated to Jihad in Kashmir. (http://www.aiou.edu.pk/gmj/understanding_jihad_print_media.asp)

replied what is that?” After receiving such reply the author felt it necessary to think who are the real consumers of those publications? Pakistani society? In late 2015 the cleric (Mulana Abdul Aziz) of Lal Masjid²² (Red Mosque) continued his campaign to suggest and introduce *Sharia law*²³ to the Supreme Court of Pakistan and in his address he also complaint about both electronic and print media of Pakistan where he said “What we find on TV screens and in print form is not what Islam teaches, the media need to be told the role and responsibilities Islam demands from them (Ali, 2015).” The war on terror that Pakistan has been fighting for many years has its simultaneous different version through media in form of infiltration of Islamic ideologies allowing radical extremist groups and conservative right wing parties to exploit Pakistani mainstream media and gain attention of larger group of audience (Jawaid, 2014).

Pakistani mainstream media has always had governmental influence whether state television or private satellite television channels operating under state’s regulations. Introducing PEMRA, *General Pervez Musharraf*²⁴ provided and promised free flow of content on Pakistani mainstream media however all private television channels avoided discussing legitimacy and legality of *Musharraf* regime even with their vital characteristic of revenue generation far better than state owned television (Naqvi, 2010: 112).

2.10. Regulatory System and implementations

One way to understand and discover Pakistani sociocultural norms is to be familiar with the legitimate rules and regulation of Pakistani mainstream media that can present one the true picture of media existence and its functions in presences of Pakistani ideology. In order to seek such information it is possible to pay attention to some of the specific rules defined and declared by Ministry of Information, Broadcasting

²²Lal Masjid: is a mosque located in capital city Islamabad and is also famous for the standoff between students of this institution and Pakistan military due to violent acts in 2007.

²³ Sharia Law: Law and order in accordance to Quran and Sunah.

²⁴ General Pervez Musharraf: was a retired army chief of staff and 10th president of Pakistan (2001-2008).

and National Heritage²⁵ (MoIB) in the form of code of conduct for Pakistani electronic media:

Following are official rules for the regulatory authority of electronic media in Pakistan. This code of conduct was published in the gazette ²⁶of Pakistan on 19th August, 2015. However below are only those rules that define legal broadcasting, content approval and prohibition as instructed to PEMRA from this ministry:

2.10.1. Fundamental principles: The broadcasting license shall ensure that no content is aired which:

- a. Is against the Islamic values, ideology of Pakistan or founding fathers of the nations including Quaid-e-Azam and Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal.
- b. Contains anything indecent, obscene or pornographic.
- c. Contains aspersion against the judiciary or armed forces of Pakistan.
- d. Depicts behavior such as smoking, alcohol consumption, narcotics and drug abuse as glamorous or desirable: Provided that where showing of smoking, alcohol consumption, narcotics and drug use is necessary for dramatic or educational purposes, a clear warning as to injurious effects of the same shall also be shown simultaneously.
- e. Re-enactment of any sex crime shall not be allowed.

2.10.2. Advertisements: It would be the responsibility of the licensee that:

- a. Advertisements of any alcohol beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs or narcotics shall not be aired.
- b. Advertisements of lotteries, gambling or betting as prohibited under Pakistan Panel Code (Act XLV of 1860) or any other law for the time being in force shall not be aired (Ministry of Information, Broadcasting and Heritage, 2015).

²⁵MoIB: is a ministry as part of Government of Pakistan and responsible for the release of government information, media content and non-scientific government data to general public (<http://nationalheritage.gov.pk/>).

²⁶Gazette: is an official government journal consisting lists of government appointments and promotions, bankruptcies etc (<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/gazette?s=t>).

Not entirely but to some extent one can construe the standards of PEMRA and expected media content as above mentioned rules signify the nature and context of expected media production in Pakistan.

2.11. Pakistani Media Sociology

When it comes to the mainstream media in Pakistan then definitely press media plays its fair role as one of the vital mediums reaching millions of Pakistani people around the country. However, this contribution in accordance to press regulations in Pakistan represents nature of press media and its extensions that communicate and discuss many Pakistani ideological aspects. Newspapers in Pakistan in both Urdu (national language) and English languages and their circulation has been discussed by Syed Abdul Siraj where according to him newspaper circulation in Pakistan follows by a good number of four million where Urdu newspapers dominate the press distribution with *Jang* (war in English) which is the largest newspaper and then *Nawa-e-Waqt*. When comes to newspapers in English language in Pakistan *The News*, *Dawn* and *Business Recorder* are popular ones. However due to low literacy rate and unaffordable price for mass newspaper consumers in Pakistan, newspapers in English belong to elites²⁷ who are considered to be the leaders and opinion makers²⁸. These can be valid reasons due to which per capita newspaper circulation in Pakistan with 40.56 per 1000 people is among lowest in the world (Nation Master, 2000). Siraj believes that due to shortage of regional press in number people of rural areas are always unable to reach local news as well as their presence in Pakistani news become almost unattainable. This fact is observable with vast distribution in big cities like Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi when compared with the rural areas and small cities of Pakistan (Siraj, 2008).

The role of mainstream media in Pakistan to inform its people/viewers comes with the responsibility of authentic content particularly in regards to news media. As discussed by Sajjad Ahmad Paracha the exaggerated news reports of media during the time of war on terror in Pakistan must increase controversy and opposing claims

²⁷Elite: Rich and educated people.

²⁸Leaders & opinion makers: are those authoritative individuals that gain power with votes of illiterate population.

regarding the confirmation and objectivity in the mind of the audience. If the media is responsible for spreading exaggerated news then there will be no originality, but there will be only bogus news, which insults the objectivity of the news and promotes subjectivity (Dr.Sajjad Ahmad Paracha, 2013: 59,60). The subjectivity of news media in Pakistan and its defamation due to exaggerated and false news may refer to the concept of fortress journalism²⁹ where Pakistani news media refuses to cope with authentic updates from news world but works with and according to its own framework only. For instance back in 2010 two of Pakistani leading newspapers in English language *The News* and *The Express Tribune* admitted and apologized for publishing a news based on a hoax related to *WikiLeaks*³⁰ which alleged Indian spies were supporting militant (armed anti-government) activities in Pakistan and US diplomats considered that incompetency of Indian army (Smith, 2010).

One may think why would the news media of a country like Pakistan which is busy in war on terror would practice fortress journalism? If terrorists have their plans to execute then so do the journalists with their pens to elaborate the truth. In the case of Pakistani journalism and its operational behavior the famous American newspaper *New York Times*'s columnist *Mohammed Hanif* elaborates in his words that "The truth is that we do have a cunning and heartless enemy: Our brothers in faith and our fellow citizens. Some of them have automatic weapons and suicide vests; others have pens and TV shows, and rewrite history even as it happening (HANIF, 2016)." Such perception of news media among people of Pakistan may provide the space for them to shift their attention towards fairer and unbiased news media platform without suspicion. While comparing Pakistani mainstream media and the concept of micro blogging³¹ on web with reference to online journalism, a Pakistani journalist and human & gender rights activist Farahnaz Zahidi claimed that micro blogging has provided Pakistani individuals (journalists) with conscious a free space to express their intellectual opinions in creative

²⁹Fortress Journalism: refers to the concept where journalists work according to the fortress mindset of protecting their journalist institutions (newspaper, news channel etc) regardless of productivity and quality of mediated content.

³⁰WikiLeaks: specializes in the analysis and publication of large datasets of censored or otherwise restricted official materials involving war, spying and corruption. (<https://wikileaks.org/What-is-Wikileaks.html>)

³¹Micro Blogging: The practice of making short and frequent textual posts like on Twitter.

ways since social media provides such possibilities without any sort of discrimination (Rafi, 2014).

So how exactly does Pakistani mainstream news media operate and what are the dynamics of it that can help one to understand the news media hegemony in Pakistan? If not entirely but a glimpse of it can be seen with news media coverage in Pakistan because apparently not everyone seems to be pleased with its performance. On October 27th 2013 a protest took place in Islamabad where a group of people demonstrated against the injustice with people of Balochistan (a Pakistani Province) who are believed to be in possession of different security agencies (tribal armed groups). This particular protest also indicated that mainstream media intentionally didn't give any coverage to this issue since it is considered to be controlled by government and political parties (The Express Tribune, 2013).

Following are some cases of banned mainstream media content(s) in Pakistan:

1) In July 2013 PEMRA banned a particular commercial of 'Josh' (Strength) condom on all television channels in Pakistan. The plot of commercial in which a newly married female model takes good care of her husband and a neighbor couple feels jealous because of that while the husband of this model suggests his neighbor to also use 'Josh' (condom) to stay happy, was objectionable to PEMRA. As PEMRA's spokesman *Fakharuddin Mughal* said "The airing of such immoral advertisement on Pakistani channels during the holy month of Ramazan warrants serious action, such content is sheer disregard for our socio-cultural and religious values." However the female model completely disagreed with PEMRA's opinion declared it neither 'immoral' nor 'vulgar' (Ghosh P. , 2013).

2) After two years PEMRA again banned a different commercial of the same condom brand 'Josh' calling it 'immoral' in September 2015. This time the plot introduced two men going to the same shop one after another, but the second man asks for bigger packet of 'Josh' with a hand gesture to show big. Once again the same spokesperson of PEMRA *Fakharuddin Mughal* addressed to news media and said on behalf of PEMRA "the agency had received scores of complaints against the telecast of an objectionable and indecent advertisement of contraceptive." Moreover he claimed

that “PEMRA, in its directive has pointed out that the advertisement is generally being perceived as indecent, immoral and in sheer disregard to our socio-cultural and religious norms.” On the other hand according to United Nations, one third of Pakistani individuals don’t have access to contraceptive methods (AFP, 2015).

3) In 2013 Lahore High Court banned the screening of Indian movies and television content in the country after the termination of ban Indian media content since 2006. Court Justice *Khalid Mahmood Khan* ruled that Indian mediated content should be considered in ‘negative list’ of media production and shouldn’t cross Pakistani border. Despite the success of Indian cinema in Pakistan another Pakistani media individual *Mubashir Lucman* intended that movies for instance that are shot in only India and are sponsored by an Indian shouldn’t be screened in the country (Bhushan, 2013).

4) August 2010 people of Pakistan experienced ban on a particular news broadcast which showed shoes thrown at the president of Pakistan that time *Asif Ali Zardari* in Birmingham, England during his visit. Only two news channels GEO News and ARY News broadcasted the news but later their telecast was blocked. Some cable television operated refused to follow the ban but their offices were attacked by armed pro-Zardari activists. Moreover newspaper like ‘Jang’ (War) and The News that published the news were burned later on (Greenslade, 2010).

5) On 22nd March 2014 the readers of *New York Times* in Pakistan were faced with an odd situation when both hardcopies (print form) and softcopies (on web) of the daily newspaper had more than quarter of the page blank. This blank space outside Pakistan was actually published with the extracts of Times reporter Carlotta Gall’s new book with its details on ‘the relationship between Pakistani state and militant Islamist outfits.’ Two month later Pakistani readers experienced the same censor/ban when review on ‘Pakistan’s blasphemy laws’ was published (Saeed, 2014).

6) Before printing the *International New York Times* edition, an email was sent to the NY Times printer’s office from its partner in Pakistan stating “We are compelled to remove the article appearing on front page and page 2 of the INYT’s Saturday Jan. 2-3 2016 as it contains comments on the Quran and Prophet Muhammad that can cause serious offence to our readers.” As result the *International New York Times* for Asia had blank space and the distinction between the normal edition and Asia

edition became clear when Time's correspondent in Pakistan *Salman Masood* posted the following comparative photos on *Twitter*:



Figure 2.1. INYT edition. Taken by Salman Masood (2016, January 2). Acquired from

https://twitter.com/salmanmasood/status/683214671961288706/photo/1?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw (2016, May 30).



Figure 2.2. NYT Asia edition. Taken by Salman Masood (2016, January 2).

Acquired from

https://twitter.com/salmanmasood/status/683212729646211072/photo/1?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw (2016, May 30).

The international edition published an article of Times Magazine piece by *Joshua Hammer* discussing the murders and threats to the secular bloggers of Bangladesh that wrote criticism against Islamic fundamentalism, but the Asian edition of same newspaper had blank page instead (Sullivan, 2016).

CHAPTER 3

QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS SUBMITTED TO PAKISTAN ELECTRONIC MEDIA REGULATORY AUTHORITY (PEMRA)

3.1. Introduction

Censorship in Pakistani mainstream media has its place not only in the form of state regulation but it refers to the idea of demand and supply where people of Pakistan anticipate in the process of deciding the rights and wrongs of media content. In this qualitative content analysis the aim is to seek the relationship between different aspects of Pakistani society and the concept of censorship. Using the complaint database of PEMRA the aim of this research is to a) analyze the demand of ban/censorship, b) seek the relationship between certain media content(s) and complaint(s) against it, c) investigate the common features in all complaints.

3.2. Methodology

In order to investigate research aims, 153 complaints (see annex 1, 2 & 3) submitted by Pakistani people against certain media content³² are employed as research data. To analyze the data in a precise manner, complaints from October 2015, November 2015 & December 2015 are utilized as major data sample.

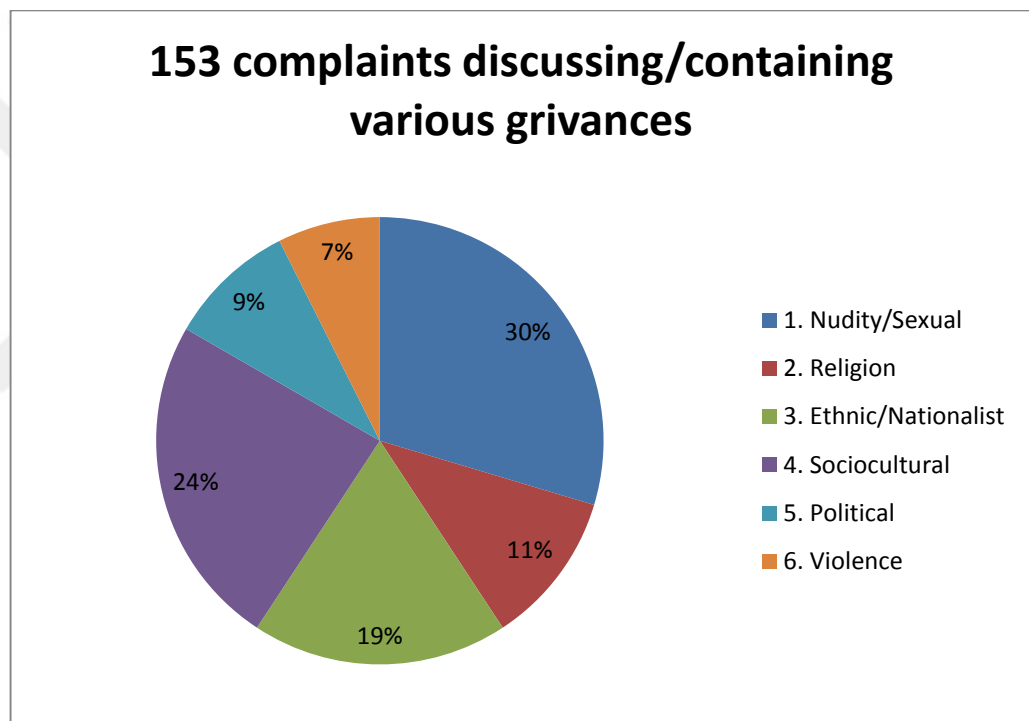
Due to qualitative nature of this content analysis similarities and differences between complaints and their context with major sampling data and further sampled data are being discussed in the *results* (3.3). In order to attain research aims, the results of this content analysis elaborate available texts of complaints and their relationship with the concept of censorship by selecting 15 complaints from each month (that means 45 in total) in form of 15 groups where each group includes 3 complaints (1 from each month) as further data sampling and their comparison with each other. The selection criteria of these 45 complaints is based on the context they represent e.g.; one complaint from each month which discusses one or more categories similar to other two complaints selected

³² Media content: Message of certain medium and the way that message has been conveyed. For example commercial, television drama or some show with an aim to deliver a message to its viewers.

among it are compared with each other with reference to their context and certain topics as part of different themes of this analysis. Moreover, the radial cycle *Diagram 2.5* provides visual explanation of this analysis and its research data with its connection to the demand of censorship in Pakistani electronic mainstream media.

3.3. Results

Pie chart 2.4 Percentage of different grievances in 153 complaints submitted to PEMRA



Pie chart 2.4 refers to the quantitative overview of all 153 complaints (annex 1, 2 & 3) submitted to PEMRA in October, November and December 2015 by Pakistani people including various grievances against certain types of media contents. These 153 complaints are the major sample of qualitative content analysis in this study. However, due to massive data of complaints, those complaints which were registered against same broadcasting channel, same media person or similar media content and were more than 2 in number, were considered as analytical data for this research. The coding procedure in this particular content analysis is based on similarity of context among complaints and repetition of certain terms that refer to the context. In chart 2.4, on the right hand side

the numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6) with different categories represent various subject matters as messages/contexts of these complaints. Each number representing certain type of context is in following order:

1. Means those complaints in which the grievance is against sexually attractive media content that offended the complainants.
2. Refers to complaints in which the complainants perceived certain type of media content(s) religiously offensive.
3. Covers all those complaints in which the complainants felt certain type of media content(s) opposing/offending Pakistani identity or a certain type of ethnic group in Pakistan.
4. Contains all those grievances in which the complainants found certain mediated content(s) offending Pakistani social and cultural norms.
5. Points out those complaints in which the context was highly political and the complainants were offended due to inappropriate political media content(s).
6. Gives reference to those complaints in which audiences found certain type of media content(s) violent on Pakistani nationwide television channels.

Contexts with various types in these complaints have helped to divide and categorize these complaints in proper manner (as provided on p56) for QCA³³ in this thesis. With 30% (pie chart 2.4) of total, the majority complaints are against sexually attractive media content(s) that offended Pakistani mainstream media audiences during the mentioned time period. Their grievances and such majority of complaints can be understood with help of coding of the complaints discussing this matter. Following are the key phrases and terms (codes) as part of the textual analysis of those complaints that represent 30% of total:

Nudity, cheap, vulgar/vulgarity, shameful/shameless, sex, rape, make commercial without lady, obscenity, dancing of young girls, child abuse,

³³QCA: stands for qualitative content analysis.

inappropriate, indecent, kissing and intimidating scenes, naked women, bad environment, vulgar dress.

11% (pie chart 2.4) of all complaints are against religiously offensive mediated content(s). All complaints submitted to PEMRA in this regard were relating to Islam only. Complainants seemed to be offended by certain type of media content(s) that was either against Islamic values or the content(s) was coverage of another religion. Following codes can help to understand complaints in this manner:

Hinduism, Jewish ideology, Bhagwan + Hanuman (both are names for gods in Hindu religion), Thank God we are Muslims, Islamic values, Islamic country, Islamic teaching, In the name of God and Prophet, Non-Islamic culture/thinking, Fatwa, Haram, Muslim country.

Mainstream media content(s) in Pakistan seemed to offend national identity/ethnicity of Pakistani audiences more than their religion since complaints in this regard represent 19% (pie chart 2.4) of all. Given below are the codes to understand the grievances in this regard:

Exploiting Pakistani ideology, international reputation, Pakistani content on Pakistani channels, Indian representatives, Anti-Pakistan agents, Hindi language instead of Urdu, Enemies of Pakistan, racism, disrespectful content, hurting sentiments, reputation of Pakistan among neighbor countries, Indian channels or Pakistan?, Indian songs, Insulted Gujjar (a provincial tribe), Indian dramas, illiterate milk sellers, boycott Indian dramas and channels.

The second biggest concern of Pakistani audiences seemed to be certain type of media content(s) that violates Pakistani social and cultural norms. With 24% (pie chart 2.4) of all complaints, Pakistani people have shown their expectations from media content(s) in regards to Pakistani culture and society. Below are the codes involving these complaints:

Misleading, playing with careers, not watchable with family, against social norms, against our laws, spoiling our youth and traditional values, spoil our children, children are not supposed to see, Western countries content, stop showing Indian culture, destroying our youth, moral behaviors, street language, swear words, respectful family values, can't watch with a nephew or niece around, unethical language.

With 9% (pie chart 2.4) complaints against political media content(s), Pakistan mainstream media consumers felt offended less by such media content(s) as compare to previously mentioned complaints. The codes in this regard are given below:

Election campaign against the law, pathetic remarks about an elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, campaign against elected government, campaign in PTI (opposition political party) favor, it runs propaganda, they have shown picture and played audio of Altaf Hussain, continuously flaunting CM (chief minister) Sindh as Wadaa Saain (supreme leader), false and premature allegations broadcasted.

Pakistani mainstream media audiences seemed to be offended least by violent mediated content(s) on television. 7% (pie chart 2.4) of the total complaints cover grievances in this regard. Codes related to these complaints are as below:

Reenactment program, rape, criminal ideas to our youth, media ethics, panic in our family, theft, we have to design SOP (standard operation procedure) for all news channels, violence promotion, hate speech, threatening to kill, source of disturbance and ill feelings.

With access to 153 complaints (annex 1, 2 & 3) from last three months (October, November & December) of 2015, 6 categories of complaints based on codes were created. These categories were Nudity/Sexual, Religion, Ethnic/Nationalist, Sociocultural, Political and Violence. Following are structural details of each category:

1. **Nudity/Sexual:** This theme refers to all those complaints that were in reference to certain media content which offended some people due to partial exposure to female body, clothing style and sexual attraction.

2. **Religion:** In this theme the complaints are in reference to religious perspective. The complaints in this particular category refer to that media content which offended some people because it was either against Islamic values or the content referred to some propaganda in reference to another religion.

3. **Ethnic/Nationalist:** All four provinces of Pakistan represent different ethnicities where the major ones are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun and Balochi. However, this category includes those complaints in which people got offended either due to that media content which was against their ethnicity or it was perceived against Pakistani identity, which means the content that represented non-Pakistani material(s) was not easily acceptable for some people.

4. **Sociocultural:** Just like any other society in the World, Pakistan has its own ideology and cultural values. This category refers to all those complaints that contain media content which was offensive to some people because it was either against their social and cultural values or was presenting another culture/society.

5. **Political:** The political theme includes those complaints in which people have complained about that media content which was either against the ruling government or it was supportive to opposition political party(ies) and certain political individuals.

6. **Violence:** In this theme the complaints refer to that media content which offended some people because according to them it included hate speech, violence and criminal provocation.

Diagram 2.5: All six categories and their relation with media censorship in Pakistan



Diagram 2.5 shows connection between all six categories and their central aim to ban/censor certain media content in Pakistani electronic media. All these six categories that are driven by coding procedure represent the text of collective data of 153 complaints (annex 1, 2 & 3) submitted to PEMRA by Pakistani people in the months of October, November and December 2015.

Each category of this content analysis represents particular context of the content it contains. Censorship is the central idea affected and approached through various aspects of Pakistani society in form of six different categories/themes. One can interpret this central idea by reading through these complaints. Following is the detailed analysis of complaints with all 15 groups in their categorical order where complaint number and months are stated according to the following pattern:

From left to right

C.1.1, C.1.2, C.1.3 (C stands for complaint, 1 stands for October 2015 and 1, 2, 3...15 represent complaint numbers)

C.2.1, C.2.2, C.2.3 (C stands for complaint, 2 stands for November 2015 and 1, 2, 3...15 represent complaint numbers)

C.3.1, C.3.2, C.3.3 (C stands for complaint, 3 stands for December 2015 and 1, 2, 3...15 represent complaint numbers)

C.1.1: “Dear Sir/ Ma'am, I hope this finds you well. As of lately I have had a chance to catch a glimpse of Cartoon Network with my 3-years' old. It was disgusting to see a cartoon character say to another, "Stop being a dick". It was on Saturday, 17th October, 2015 in the morning time. Moreover, the cartoon "Oggy and the cockroaches" features frequent kissing and a sort intimidating scenes, which I would never want my kid to watch at this age. This is a very little that I saw but I'm sure there must be other shows with inappropriate content. Please have a check. It is my humble request. Cartoon Network shouldn't be airing everything that the Western countries show. We surely have a different cultural norms and it's our duty to respect it. Showing a kid something that I've mentioned earlier should be considered a crime.”

C.2.1: “Please look into matter regarding the vulgar cartoon scenes, which are harmful for children mental health. Scenes like kissing etc. What lesson our children are getting from it? Please make some editing or do something else.”

C.3.1: “Express news is showing adult content in their ads, on their website. Remove adult ads.”

Analysis: All three complaints from October, November and December have raised common issue in regards to first category of this content analysis which is *Nudity\Sexual*. First two complaints are against the famous *Cartoon Network* which is a satellite television channel and famous for its content for kids around the World. One can also observe the perception of the West in East by reading the first complaint where the complainant has suggested that cartoons shouldn't represent\broadcast Western

culture and has also signified such broadcast as crime. A crime against Pakistani cultural norms as explained by the individual who has claimed not only cartoons with kissing scenes as inappropriate content, but also Western culture. In this manner does Pakistan represent a country where kissing is a taboo? If yes then should Pakistan have its own cartoons? Declaring certain media content like cartoons and kissing scenes as Western culture, puts light on the mentality of television viewers and their perception of international media content in Pakistan. In both (first & second) complaints offended viewers have declared the content inappropriate because of *kissing scenes* in cartoons and the particular adjective *vulgar* (in 2nd complaint) explains the feelings of viewer and their annoyance.

The third complaint is against a Pakistani news channel, but the context of complaint is similar to other two previous complaints. Even though the exact commercial is not mentioned in the complaint or the source is not given, but the individual has mentioned it as *adult content* with suggestion of ban on all other commercials as well of similar kind. However, all three complaints have common ground in the name of sexually attractive media content which was considered objectionable due to its contrary nature to Pakistani culture and social customs.

C.1.2: Translated from Urdu to English: 1) Why in the commercial of ‘Gillette Shaving Gel the One eye of devil has been shown? 2) Why in the commercial of Dairy Milk Chocolate, elderly guy is shown singing in a vulgar romantic way? 3) Why in one biscuit advertisement the husband touches hand of his wife and she replies ‘what are you doing? The child would see us.’ All these three advertisements should be banned.

C.2.2: “I m going to make a complaint against TV commercials of Lux Soap, Veet cream and Cadbury Dairy milk chocolate. The commercials related to these products are very fahash (indecent) that we can’t watch. There is no need of such commercials for marketing these branded products. You can make commercials without a lady.”

C.3.2: “Please take serious action against ads of *Vaseline body lotion, Nivea body lotion, Enchanteur body lotion* running nowadays. Very cheap & extreme vulgar

ads. For God sake, what the hell you guys are doing if you can't stop them. Please ban these ads if you guys have authority and ethics. Shame on these ad making agencies. Where is so called PEMRA??? Where is censor board..?? No creativity, no decent work only naked women and vulgarity. Please for God sake. Do some justice with your seat and responsibilities. Read my complaint carefully and act upon this as soon as possible for the betterment of our society otherwise shame on you and your whole team."

Analysis:



Figure 3. Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate commercial. Acquired from <http://myipedia.blogspot.com.tr/2015/10/cadbury-dairy-milk-antakshari-tvc-2015.html> (2016, March 10).



Figure 3.1. Lux Soap commercial. Acquired from www.google.com (2016, March 10).



Figure 3.2. Veet (hair removal cream) commercial. Acquired from www.web.pk (2016, March 10).

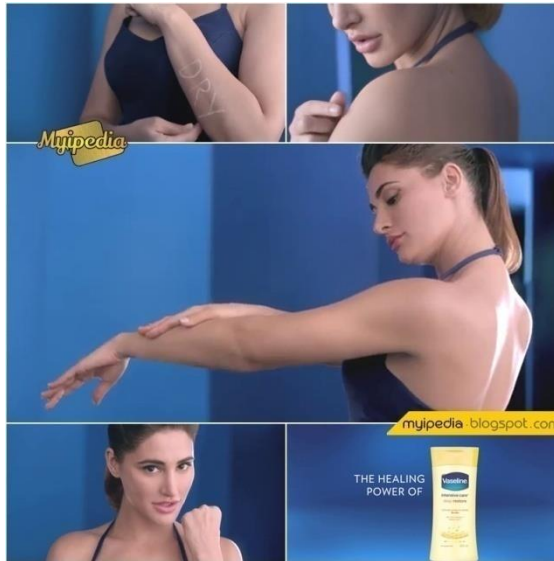


Figure 3.3. Vaseline body lotion commercial (screenshots). Acquired from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vbj99FpanEs> (2016, March 10).



Figure 3.4. Nivea body lotion commercial (a). Acquired from www.nivea.in (2016, March 10).



Figure 3.5. Enchanteur body lotion commercial (screenshot). Acquired from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvmYNczklpY> (2016, March 10)

All three complainants refer to the same issue of nudity or sexually attractiveness which made these commercials offensive to them. In first complaint actually the individual has asked three questions in regards to three different television commercials. The devil's eye as mentioned in first question in complaint against *Gillette*, refers to annoyance of the complainant may be due to religious faith or another cultural aspect, but it is not certain because of unavailability of the source of this commercial in the complaint which makes it hard to track down. The complaint regarding *Dairy Milk Chocolate* is common between first and second complainant where an elderly man is considered 'vulgar' and 'indecent' because of singing a romantic song to his wife sitting next to him in the car (*figure 3*). In order to understand the objection of these two complainants one should learn the plot of this particular commercial:

Plot of Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate commercial: During the busy hours of traffic on a usual day, at a traffic signal a car with young boys and girls in it stops. They

are busy playing *Antakshari*³⁴ while next to them an elderly couple waits for the traffic light in their car. This couple can also hear these youngsters because they are singing aloud. As part of the game, a contestant has to sing a song with the last consonant of the previous song, but the participator is unable to remember any relevant song and the rivals start the countdown for his elimination. Meanwhile, in the other car with elderly couple, the couple shares *Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate*. As the man bites the chocolate, he starts to sing a romantic song for his wife out loud with the same consonant which was required in the car next to his car. Later they all start to sing the same song together in joy and the people around them find this interesting which leads to the monologue of the commercial and it claims ‘strangers become yours when you try some sweet/dessert.’

Vulgarity and indecency is a subjective matter but it affects decision making when it come to decide rights and wrongs in certain regard as it is observable in first and second complaint. However, reasonable investigation in this regard would be definitions of vulgarity and indecency in accordance to Pakistani perspective which appears to contain broad range of filters. Second complaint has similar theme like the first one where the individual has mentioned commercials of three different products by their names and has referred the commercials as *indecent* content. Moreover, the second complainant has left a strong impression of his/her personality by declaring that female models are unnecessary to make commercials in order to reach people in market. One can have the social and cultural glimpse of Pakistan as a country by decoding such thought which is against such commercials and products as shown in *figure 3.1 & 3.2*.

The second complaint is against commercials of *LUX* beauty soap and *Veet* which is a hair removal cream and from production perspective it sounds bizarre not to include any female model in those commercials that promote beauty products! This state of complexity between viewer, product and the producer poses an interesting question: If men models present these beauty products instead of female models, would that be acceptable in Pakistani society? This can even open new doors of conversation regarding

³⁴Antakshari: is a famous game in Subcontinent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal) spoken (singing) in which each contestant has to sing a song in Hindi or local language with the last consonant of the verse sung by previous contestant.

gender issues, but why does female body opposes Pakistani viewers? Is it because of religious norms, social norms, cultural norms or all of them in a compound form as one? Perhaps gender and its relevant questions are yet to be explored through sociocultural norms in Pakistani mainstream media.

Third complaint among other two shows more aggressive tone in it since the language is informal and impatient. While discussing three commercials of skin beauty products, the complaint shows similarity with others where the adjective *vulgar* has been used again like the first complaint in order to explain the media content which was offensive due to its content exposing woman body. The subject of female body in commercials is one of the sexually provocative core concerns raised in these complaints even to that level where a husband touches had of his wife in one biscuit commercial as mentioned in the first complaint. However, the selection of female body in skin beauty products ads as mentioned by the complainant (all three body smoothening lotions) seems to be a wrong decision according to Pakistani viewer perspective. One can observe the aggressiveness in the complaint by observing the direct questions that have been asked about PEMRA and censor board and their responsibilities as if these regulatory authorities are doing something against Pakistani social and cultural norms.

The term ‘naked women’ as mentioned by the third complainant and as visible in *figure 3.3, 3.4 & 3.5* gives the opportunity to understand the perception of **naked** in Pakistani mainstream media with reference to these commercials and complaints against them. Anger and intolerance due to exposure to female body in ads is actually something which explains acceptance of nude body to a certain level in Pakistan and this certain level is hard to measure. In order to summaries the anger, the person has asked PEMRA to take action against these ads because that would be better for Pakistani society as the complainant claims it.

C.1.3: “Disrespectful content. The content which has being telecasted in the morning show promotes dancing of young girls as young as 5, encouraging them to move their bodies is a contempt and disregard of Islamic values. Today is Friday, a holy day, secondly it is also 24th of Zilhaj (Islamic month), a day commemorated as the day of Mubahila when Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) went for an encounter with the

Christians of Najran. This day is a landmark day in the history of Islam. The entire event is narrated in Surah Al-Imran (Surah 3) Ayat 61. The program ‘Subah Saweray Samaa k sath’ (Early morning with Samaa) dated Friday, October 9, 2015 is disrespectful against the Islamic teachings and values and hence I will register my complaint against it. PEMRA should have a code on morning shows and make all morning shows respect the Islamic dates. Samaa must be penalized for such act.”

C.2.3: “We accept that our dramas and shows with major issues of our society. But on the other hand these dramas are promoting non-Islamic culture in our homes. The language tones, dress culture and the topics of dramas are really frustrating our moral behaviors. These dramas are also promoting non-Islamic thinking where there is already Islam. Please make the dramas so that our society copies the Islamic values instead of non-Islamic culture. Thanks.”

C.3.3: “*Nestle Fruita* (juice) advertisement shows some student gives bribe to teacher then he (the teacher) accepts it. Sir you know bribe is Haram and prohibited in our religion and worst for all societies. So please take notice and ban such advertisement. Take notice and put heavy penalties on such culprits who are spreading such things in our society.”

Analysis: Islamic religion and its ideology is the common concern in all three complaints where the complainants were offended due to non Islamic media content. In first complaint the complainant condemned 5 years old girls dancing on television in morning show since he\she claims that it is against Islamic values. The seriousness of complainant’s concern can easily be seen where reference from Quran has been given to prove that Friday in particular (the day when young dancing girls were broadcasted) is a special day for Muslims. 24thZil Hajj was religiously a holy date due to which such dancing activity on television was really offensive to the complainant where he\she suggested that all channels should telecast while keeping Islamic valuable dates in mind.

Unlike the first complainant, the second complaint is combination of two categories of this content analysis that are *religion & sociocultural*. The individual claims that Pakistani television dramas discuss social problems but simultaneously these

dramas are promoting non-Islamic thinking and culture. As suggestion the complainant has asked to produce dramas with Islamic content. Third complaint refers to the plot of a fruit juice commercial where a student offers his teacher the juice (product) in response to no punishment. According to the complainant this was just not juice but bribery and it is *Haram* in Islam. Furthermore this person has also asked the authorities to ‘put heavy penalties’ on people (producers & management) that are responsible for broadcasting such non-Islamic content in a society like Pakistan which according to the complainant is an Islamic society.

These complaints also refer to the understanding of Pakistan as a society in the hearts and minds of Pakistani main stream media viewers. Islam as the core of Pakistani society and way of life even in the form of mass communication is quite visible and a demand of these viewers from regulatory authority like PEMRA not to be disregarded.

C.1.4: “Please be informed that the Cartoon Network shown in our area is coming from India, DISH TV logo is clearly visible in the lower right corner, all the BHAGWAN (God in Hindi language) related cartoons are on air all the times, e.g. return of Hanuman (a Hindu God of power) etc, also the language is Hindi. It's the main reason behind the total spoil of our children mindset as Alhamdulillah (thanks to God) we are Muslims and teach our children the Islamic values BUT this Indian Cartoon Network is ruining their concepts, language is also too bad and since children can relate many words of Urdu with Hindi, they pick up things. Since we live in Pakistan (Alhamdulillah) and not in India, we are not supposed to see these things or teach our children Bhagwaans and SurKshetra³⁵ and blah blah at any time. It is requested to take necessary action and get this channel either shifted to the original Cartoon Network or blocked and the operator be punished as per the PEMRA rules, thank you.”

C.2.4: “Cartoon Network is being aired from India and source is Dish TV³⁶, all day long Hinduism is promoted and Bhagwaan (God in Hindi language) is shown, superstition stories based on the Hindu religion, the worst Hindi language is spoken by

³⁵ Sur Kshetra: is a singing competition between talented Pakistani and Indian singers.

³⁶ Dish TV: is Indian DTH (direct to home) satellite television channel with its entertainment content. (<http://www.dishtv.in/>)

the characters in an intolerable accent serious action is required in this regard, the channel needs to be banned and a hefty fine must be imposed on the cable operator, as well as it should be guaranteed that this channel won't be aired, ever again. Old complaint no: 77625 dated: 04 Oct 2015 NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN EVEN AFTER A MONTH.”

C.3.4: “The poster of Dilwale (Indian movie) by Hum TV displayed around the city Karachi is truly vulgar and shameful. We live in a Muslim country and we still have respectful family values. Such a poster displayed in the middle of the road when you're waiting for the signal to open, with your family or the rickshaw or bus driver, is only a source of disturbance and ill feelings. It causes me to feel really insecure and such a poster is not at all suitable when travelling with children. I sincerely request the authorities to take immediate actions against such promotion of lewdness in the city and prevent future measures of promotion of such despicable acts. The posters displayed over the country should be regulated by the authorities of PEMRA keeping in view that respectable families live in this country and still have family values that are considered important and modesty is a huge factor in our upbringing.”³⁷

³⁷ There were 5 more complaints against promotion of the same movie in Pakistani mainstream media.

Analysis:

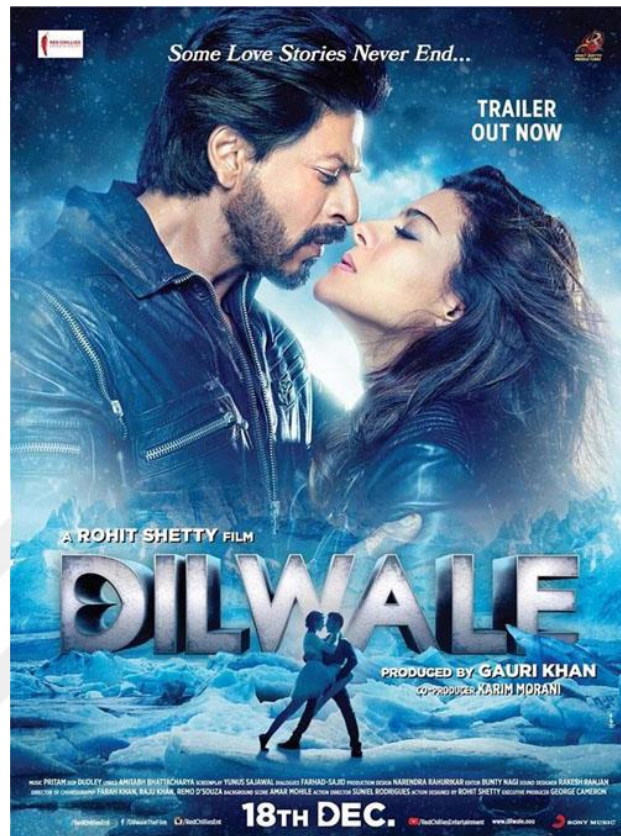


Figure 3.6. Dilwale movie poster. Acquired from

<http://www.odedara.com/dilwale-first-look-movie-poster/> (2016, March 10)

In all three complaints the common issues that are been raised, discuss four categories of this content analysis and that are *nudity*, *religion*, *ethnic\nationalist* and *sociocultural*. However first two complaints have been submitted by the same person in both months of October and November 2015. The complainant has complained that *Cartoon Network*³⁸ in Pakistan is actually Indian version of the original American channel and the content is against Islamic and Pakistani ideology. According to the complainant these cartoons contain content that promotes Hindu religion, its several gods and precisely Hindi language. All these aspects offend Islamic values and Pakistani culture since they represent different religion and different cultural values as the complainant explains it. The content has been interpreted as disturbance for the mindset

³⁸ Cartoon Network: is an American cable and satellite television channel.

of Pakistani children that would learn about Hindu culture and Hindi language instead of Islam and Urdu. Ban imposition on such content is strongly requested by the complainant.

The third complaint highlights religious, sociocultural and nudity\sexual aspects. However, this complaint includes an interesting part in it where the complainant has argued that promotional posters of the Indian movie *Dilwale* as shown in *figure 3.6* around Karachi is not acceptable and is considered ‘shameful’. The interesting part in it is that PEMRA is not responsible for print media and has no authority to prohibit or allow the flow of print content. Interestingly, the complainant has suggested that ‘posters should be regulated by the authorities of PEMRA’. This might mean that the Pakistani mainstream media viewers trust PEMRA and its code of conduct to that certain extent where they want to have it implicated even on print media as well. In order to express his\her feelings strong adjective like *vulgar* has been used by the complainant. Both religious and cultural values are been combined in this complaint since the complainant claims that in an Islamic country like Pakistan there are certain family values that cannot host such disturbance. The individual also claims that this movie poster makes him *insecure* while travelling with his family in the city. Insecurity of an individual from a movie poster can refer to either lack of exposure to international media or conservative sociocultural norms that alienates\excludes any other type of content than local as immediate actions against authorities have been suggested by the complainant in regard to this movie poster. Moreover, the individual has claimed that ‘modesty is huge factor in our upbringing’ but, surprisingly this modesty doesn’t allow content from international media platforms like Indian cinema. One may think: Does this modesty filter content from India only or it doesn’t allow any external media content but Pakistani?

C.1.5: My complaint is against ARY Digital’s ‘Jawani Phir Nahi Ani’ (Young age won’t come back), Geo’s ‘Manto’ and Hum TV’s ‘Na Mloom Afrad’ (Unknown People). Don’t we have any well known celebrity to make film on or do we have no

other topics than vulgar topics? Mehwish Hayat's item songs³⁹ in 'Na MaloomAfrad' and 'Jawani Phir Nahi Ani' are not watchable. Advertising of 'shameless' movies is also on peak. Now even news channels on TV are not watchable with families. We have biographies of well known people and it is possible to make movies on them. Furthermore, there should be ban on such vulgar movies because film production should be on good topics so Pakistan as a country would have good image.

C.2.5: "We have known for a very long time that the emotional content of films, television programs and specially News (Rumor or fake) can affect your psychological health. It can do this by directly affecting your mood, and your mood can then affect many aspects of your thinking and behavior. If the news generates negative mood experiences (e.g. anxiety, sadness, anger, disgust).even children mind capture negativity which is dangerous for our new generation. Freedom does mean to say any or everything online which is bad for all individual even children as well. They publish all kinds of news for the sake of getting ranking. We have to design SOP⁴⁰ for all news channel and control all rumor and unauthentic news.Especially news related to abused children, rape with girls and other sensitive issues. If news are not authentic than legally action should be taken against news channels. All news channels should portray positive image of Pakistan instead of bad news. In abroad not a single channel shows report like this."

C.3.5: "Sir this complaint is about Indian dramas. Which are being aired On A-Plus. These dramas contain bad environment, plz see the ad of *Veet Cream* on A-Plus. Cream is good but you see we are in an Islamic country and we are Muslims. Sir we cannot see these ads with our family or if any nephew or niece is around. We feel so embarrassed, plz sir do avoid these ads but if necessary do realize our surroundings. Take care of our environment and family atmosphere plz."

Analysis: Pakistan as a country and its cultural values and bad effects of media content on Pakistani people are been discussed in all three complaints. First complaint is against three Pakistani movies which according to the complainant don't represent

³⁹ Item song: also known as item number is actually originated from Indian cinema which refers to musical performance as part of the movie's plot including beautiful woman dancing and entertaining men.

⁴⁰ SOP: stands for Standard Operating Procedure. (<http://www.internetslang.com/SOP-meaning-definition.asp>)

Pakistan since they contain '*vulgar & shameless*' content. Promotional trailers on television channels have been also mentioned as a 'shameful' act at its maximum rate of presentation. Apparently, the complainant has issue with the nature of content in these movies since this individual has mentioned 'item song' (as explained above) and perhaps its nature to attract men in particular can be the reason of this complaint. Including news channels, the content on television has been described as 'not watchable with families' which refers to the cultural norms of Pakistani society and people living in it. Unacceptable content in this regard refers to such content which is not watchable with family members, but does that give an idea about life in a usual Pakistani family where television is supposed to show the content approved by Pakistani sociocultural norms?, Does that refer to the concept that in Pakistan television is something watchable only with family due to more\increasing number of family members? Or does it give the clue that same content is watchable without family if possible?

Second complainant has complained about news channels that broadcast news without any authenticity just for the sake of media ratings. According to the complainant such news provokes stress and anxiety in society especially among youth. This also shows the concern of this individual towards future of Pakistan where he\she has mentioned about youth. However, one can also discuss it as keeping the youth or future of Pakistan in dark and not aware. News about serious crimes like felonies should only be telecasted after certainty and firm source as demanded by the complainant. Interestingly, the word 'sensitive' has been used in second complaint which referred to the news about physical abuse in different regards (children, women) but does it mean sensitivity of news content should be defined in accordance to sexual or physical abusiveness only?

First two complainants have suggested that Pakistani media should play its part to portray positive image of Pakistan in order to build good reputation among other countries in the World. However, this concept also provides the space for new questions about Pakistani reputation on World level through media. For instance in second complaint the complainant has claimed that "In abroad not a single channel shows report like this" so does that mean Pakistani viewers want to have news broadcasting format

which does not belong to Pakistan? If yes then is it not possible that an international news format would violate Pakistani sociocultural or religious norms? If news channels or movies in Pakistani show only what Pakistani sociocultural or religious norms allow them to show then don't they give a hint of self-censorship? By hiding facts and taboos about Pakistani society in news or production of biographies instead of entertaining movies (as suggested in first complaint), what exactly does Pakistan represent on international media platforms?

The third complaint discusses two types of media contents including Indian dramas and commercial for hair removal cream exposing female body as mentioned in group 2 complaints. The complainant has claimed that Indian dramas represent 'bad environment' which is a strong adjective and has been referred as harmful subject to Islamic and Pakistani family values. However the complaint against Indian dramas has been tagged along commercial of *Veet* (hair removal cream) where the individual has pointed out these both types of media content as embarrassment for Pakistani individuals that watch television among their family members. Interestingly, the complainant accepts that he\she has no problem with the product, but only its presentation in commercial. The suggestion to broadcast media content according to the religious and family values of Pakistan refers to the first complaint where that complainant has demanded alike. Moreover, in third complaint the word 'sir' has been used to address the concerned person of PEMRA which also reflects the conceptualization of authoritative figures in the minds of Pakistani mainstream media viewers. It depicts the male dominance in Pakistani society where help is asked not from female but male. Perhaps this also tells that majority decision makers and authoritative people in Pakistan are men. When it comes to mainstream media then all these three complaints suggest that necessary filters before broadcasting media content are required that follow religious, social and cultural norms of Pakistan.

C.1.6: "My Complaint is regarding to the Whole ARY Group Especially ARY Zindagi. They are working on the Jewish Ideology by broadcasting TV shows/Dramas based on Jewish Thinking. Evidence is given in the given link:

<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x37dcp9> Try to scrutinize each & everything that is broadcasting and exploiting the Pakistan's Identity/Ideology.”

C.2.6: “We don't want Indian programs on our TV channels. Are they legally permitted to show Indian programs? Especially GEO, ARY Digital and EXPRESS. About GEO it looks Indian channel, not Pakistani. Most of the time these channels telecast Indian programs, especially their religious activities. We don't want any Indian program on our TV channels. Please ban all Indian programs and even Indian commercials from Pakistani channels.”

C.3.6: “As the viewers do not want to watch Indian dramas, but still A-Plus is doing that crime, so we the viewers ask you to please issue that kind of notice which assures not to show Indian dramas at Pakistani channels and strongest action must be taken against those who break the rules. Thanks, also I suggest that we should boycott Indian dramas and channels. I want PEMRA to take an action against cable operator that they could not allow Indian channels to be shown in Pakistan. Kindly stop showing Indian Star Plus⁴¹ and whatever the other channels are "stop showing Indian culture".”

⁴¹ Star Plus: is an Indian television satellite channel.

Analysis:



Figure 3.7. Aashiqui Drama (KirazMevsimi) objected scene (screenshot).
Acquired from <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x37dcp9>(2016, March 10).

One theme of this content analysis which makes a strong bond between all these three complaints is ethnic\nationalist where perception of international media content and response of Pakistani viewers to it is observable. Concerned individual in first complaint has complained against a particular private television channel in Pakistan for broadcasting a drama named as *Aashiqui* (show your love) and has claimed that this particular drama promotes ‘Jewish ideology’. Actually drama *Aashiqui* is Urdu dubbed version of Turkish drama serial named as *Kiraz Mevsimi*⁴²(cherry season). However, complainant has given the URL⁴³ of particular scene in the drama which was most objectionable to him\her as shown in *figure 3.7*. There are two aspects of this drama clip that can possibly help one to understand this complaint. First, the certain but misinterpreted belief that kissing in television dramas represent Jews\Judaism and second the belief that such content is ‘exploiting’ Pakistani ideology. Following the first complaint one can imply that Pakistani television viewers need and like to watch media content through the lens of Pakistani and only Pakistani perspective which does not allow a man kissing a woman in the plot of a romantic drama serial. Moreover, Jews\Judaism in reference to this particular complaint refers to certain religious

⁴²Kiraz Mevsimi: is a Turkish drama serial with romantic theme and is has been broadcasted through FOX TV. (<http://www.kirazmevsimi.tv.tr/>)

⁴³ URL: stands for Uniform Resource Locator which refers to a hyperlink and its certain location on web.

opposition which is used to label any sort of unwanted media content which threatens 'Pakistani ideology' even without doing any research like the way this complainant has claimed.

Does 'Jewish ideology' in this complaint mean perception of Western (American & European) mainstream media in Pakistan? Or does it refer to misunderstanding of contemporary Turkey in Pakistan? It won't be completely wrong to say that first complaint is quite attention-grabbing since the complained content is actually contrary to what has been identified by the complainant and the reason behind it leads to various blurred queries.

Like first complaint, second complaint also discusses two particular themes of this analysis that are religion and ethnic/nationalist. However, in second complaint the focus of the complainant is on Indian media content including all types of mainstream media where no certain category of media content has been mentioned by the complainant, but unacceptable attitude towards Indian media content is quite evident. A direct question 'are they legally permitted' has been asked in the complaint which depicts unhappiness and shock experienced by the complainant after watching the content. By naming three different private television channels in Pakistan, the individual has complained that these channels intentionally broadcast 'Indian programs' especially those that contain religious content. The complainant has shown his/her concern and its intensity by suggesting 'ban' on Indian programs and even on Indian commercials running on Pakistani channels. One can imagine the strength of the context of this complaint by thinking whether it is the religious difference between people of Pakistan and India which provokes such hate or does this refer to politically rocky relationship between these two neighbor countries since 1947?

Containing similar kind of context like the first complaint, in third complaint the complainant has argued about television dramas that represent other cultures than Pakistani. Center of entire complaint are 'Indian dramas' that according to the complainant are unacceptable by Pakistani viewers to watch since the individual has used the word 'we' to show solidarity to his/her faith in anti-India media in Pakistani. It also shows that this individual believes he/she is not alone but many other Pakistani

television viewers agree on the same agenda. Such confidence on complaint against international media content and particularly Indian media content ties the knot between second and third complaint where complainants are certain that Pakistani mainstream media followers don't want Indian content on their televisions. This evidence is visible by observing the text in both complaints where these individuals have used words like 'ban' and 'boycott' against Indian media content. Third complainant has named an Indian television channel *Star Plus*⁴⁴ as an example for showing Indian culture in Pakistan and has asked PEMRA to not allow Pakistani cable operators for broadcasting such Indian channels in Pakistan.

After analyzing these complaints one may ask: How international media content whether Indian or Turkish may blend into Pakistani mainstream media?

C.1.7: "I have been observing that Samaa TV is promoting racism by continuously flaunting CM Sindhas Wadaa Saain (supreme leader), Saatvaa Aasmaan p saain (leader on 7th sky), Saain kaa dimaagh (brain of a leader), Saain to Saain Saain ki Assembly b Saain (supreme leader isn't alone but his assembly is supreme as well) and all such derogatory terms against Sindh and Sindhis. Please take an action against them as they are hurting sentiments of millions of Sindhi Pakistanis. I have never seen this TV channel using any such terms for Mohajrs or against MQM (political party), because I know that some of the MQM activists are working in this TV channel. Please take a stern action against this blatant racism and ignorant attitude of Samaa TV. Please dictate them the code of conduct which should dictate that they shouldn't hurt the sentiments of 2nd largest ethnicity of Pakistan, I.e Sindhis."

C.2.7: "On November 6th Geo's program 'Khabarnaak' has insulted Gujjar tribe, According to Pakistan's laws all citizens are equal in status, this program has represented them as illiterate milk sellers which is far from reality as Gujjar tribe has produced excellent people including Chaudhary Rehmat Ali⁴⁵, Army Generals, Shaheeds

⁴⁴ Star Plus: is entertainment based Indian television channel which is a project of 21st Century Fox Star India. (<http://www.hotstar.com/channels/star-plus>)

⁴⁵Chaudhary Rehmat Ali: Was a Muslim nationalist who proposed the name PAKISTAN for the separate country for Muslims of South Asia.

(martyrs), Nishaan-e-Haider⁴⁶, Politicians, Great Poets, Engineers, Doctors, Athletes so how can represented by just a milk sellers. This program has resulted great anger in Gujjar community. Such programs must be banned or have some limitations, and must not insult/ hurt any group, cast or sect on ethnic basis or other basis and the anchors/producers must be in limits.”⁴⁷

C.3.7: “As the viewers do not want to watch Indian dramas, but still A-Plus is doing that crime, so we the viewers ask you to please issue that kind of notice which assures not to show Indian dramas at Pakistani channels and strongest action must be taken against those who break the rules. Thanks, also I suggest that we should boycott Indian dramas and channels. I want PEMRA to take an action against cable operator that they could not allow Indian channels to be shown in Pakistan. Kindly stop showing Indian *Star Plus* (Indian television channel) and whatever the other channels are "stop showing Indian culture".”

Analysis: All three complainants have argued about that kind of media content which had offended either their ethnic or national identity. In first complaint the individual has mentioned one private television channel and has claimed that the channel promotes racism. The attention of first complaint is towards Chief Minister of Sindh which is Pakistan’s second biggest province population wise after Punjab. According to the complainant the channel has been intentionally mocking the CM with reference to Sindhi ethnicity. Usage of certain offensive phrases with reference to Sindhi language as mentioned in the complaint have hurt the feelings and emotions of millions of Sindhi people as the individual puts it. Moreover, the complainant has claimed that such behavior of channels is biased since it has been observed only against Sindhis. The

⁴⁶Nishaan-e-Haider: is Pakistan’s highest military gallantry award.

⁴⁷There were 30 more complaints submitted against the same show and same issue.

individual has also mentioned Mohajirs⁴⁸ as an ethnicity and MQM⁴⁹ as a political group in Pakistan, but not been discussed by media like Sindhis.

According to the complainant this particular television channel is accused of employing MQM activists and therefore it doesn't flaunt Mohajirs or MQM like it does Sindhis. Being part of the '2nd largest ethnicity of Pakistan' the individual has asked PEMRA to 'dictate' the set of rules to this channel that respect all ethnicities in Pakistan equally.

Like first complaint, in second complaint the complainant has protested against one particular television show which runs on private Pakistani channel and in this show the comedians had made fun of Gujjars⁵⁰. The complaint is actually against certain portrayal of Gujjars in that show as 'illiterate milk sellers' which caused the annoyance among people of this ethnic group. According to the complainant, such depiction of Gujjars is 'far from reality' because this ethnicity is responsible for providing honorable individuals to Pakistan. The complainant has mentioned Gujjars as army generals, martyrs, politicians, poet, engineers, doctors and athletes that have contributed in Pakistani society by playing their roles. Such contrast between the depiction by complainant and that television shows respect towards ethnic groups in Pakistan as well as possible disputes caused by such behavior. Perhaps one can understand the intensity of this matter by observing strict suggestion of 'ban' on this television program by the complainants as it refers to multiple complaints made by several people against such ethnic discrimination.

Unlike first two complaints, the third complaint refers to the defensive attitude of complainant towards Pakistani mainstream media where the individual has complained against Indian programs and content running on Pakistani channels. Seriousness of the concerned complainant is observable with his/her text like 'boycott Indian dramas and channels' and 'stop showing Indian culture'. In this regard the individual has claimed

⁴⁸Mohajir: is an ethnicity in Pakistan which refers to the migrants that migrated from India to Pakistan during the time of partition between two countries.

⁴⁹Muttahida Qaumi Movement (United National Movement): is a political party with majority Mohajir followers and its headquarters based in Sindh, Pakistan.

⁵⁰Gujjar: is an ethnic group originated in Eastern Pakistan and Western India where Punjabi language is most commonly spoken among national languages of both countries.

that Indian media content shouldn't be aired on Pakistani channels which includes all types but the person has especially highlighted Indian dramas. It is interesting to see offensive tone used by the complainant in order to defend Pakistani identity in form of Pakistani mainstream media and not accepting Indian mediated content. However, this complex scenario of opposing international media content poses worth brainstorming question like: Is it possible to culturally invade another country through introducing different cultural values of another country through media? If yes, then to what extent India and Pakistan differ from each other culturally? Since both countries were one before 1947.

C.1.8: “The program of this channel "Living on the Edge" is promoting vulgarity among young generation. There should be a rule about which kind of language we can use on the screen. But the video which I saw was totally against our laws. Kindly help us so we can watch program easily. I think we should make a law about language, because the video which I saw, the girl used totally vulgar and Bazari language.”

C.2.8: “There is a new ad, added on GEO News about bubble gum; ad is of "Hilal fresh up Elachi". That ad is too much objectionable and plz ban that add.”

C.3.8: “The lady in ad about Vaseline, which is being shown during drama "SANGAT" at 08PM on Thursday on HUM -TV wears a vulgar dress. I am 60 years old man really feel ashamed in presence of my wife and mother. Please Sir, these vulgar ads and items should be stopped.”

Analysis:



Figure 3.8. Hilal Fresh up Elachi TVC (screenshots). Acquired from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gawMf2Qta4o> (2016, March 10).

In all three complaints the complainants have been offended due to sexually attractive/provocative content, but there are minor differences between all three of them as well. The first complaint is against a reality television show *Living on the edge* where the individual has complained that this particular show promotes ‘vulgarity’ among Pakistani youth. Claimed objection regarding this show is in reference to the language used by participants in it. However two important parts of this complaint as mentioned by the complainant are language law and a girl using slang and abusive language on television. Firstly, the complainant has mentioned that language used in this television show is ‘against our laws’ which is a vague statement since ‘our laws’ as text doesn’t

comply with any particular type of law that one can think of. ‘Our laws’ is quite a general term which may refer to social, cultural or religious norms. Therefore it is not certain according to which Pakistani laws the language is inappropriate.

Secondly, the individual has argued that ‘the girl used totally vulgar and Bazari language’ where the word Bazari from Urdu language refers to indecent street\slang language. This shows the concern of this individual in regards to adult\abusive language spoken on Pakistani television and viewed by millions of people. However, emphasize on gender also opens the door to new debate where one may ask gender relevant questions. For instance if a boy had used similar language instead of girl, would that be still objectionable or not? Or if the girl’s voice had been replaced by censor beep, would that make any difference in the opinions of Pakistani viewers?

The second complaint is short in length but it has quite direct message for PEMRA where the complainant has objected on one particular TVC⁵¹ which promotes a bubble-gum. As shown in *figure3.8*, the commercial involves a female model doing catwalk⁵². According to the plot of this commercial a female model with fashionable clothes (exposing her body) and shoes walks into a village while chewing this particular bubble-gum. Her glamour is so updated for all villagers that they cannot handle it and everyone gazes upon her as if she belongs to a whole different place. The censorship request on this commercial made by the complainant defining it ‘too much objectionable’ is understandable in reference to first theme of this content analysis which is nudity\sexual. Interestingly, the commercial is supposed to be funny because the entire plot is full of humor, but certainly not for the viewers like this individual. Like first complaint in this complaint as well indecency has its own place and definition where in a funny commercial with female model doing catwalk can be found sexually provocative.

Third complaint among previous complaints also discusses the same matter of sexually provocative media content. The complainant has accused a particular television

⁵¹ TVC: stands for television commercial where the commercial is based on three rules that are engagement, communication and persuasion.

⁵² Catwalk: is a certain type of walk that models perform on a specially designed runway in fashion shows.

drama for casting the same girl who also worked for the *Vaseline* commercial as model and due to her character exposing her body in the *Vaseline* commercial she is not acceptable to be watched in television dramas as the complainant refers. There is some clue though about the individual in this complaint since he has mentioned that “I am 60 years old man” and he has also explained that in presence of his wife and mother he feels ‘ashamed’ while watching this particular model wearing ‘vulgar clothes’ in this drama. In 2015 *Nargis Fakhri*⁵³ was introduced as model in the *Vaseline* commercial where Pakistani television serial drama *Sangat*’s cast does not include her as it is visible in the following *figure 3.9* with comparison between leading character of the drama serial *Sangat* and *Nargis Fakhri* in *Vaseline* commercial. This comparison between these two models unfolds the fact that the complainant has been either mistaken about both girls or the girl in *Vaseline* commercial dominates the imagery in his mind for some reason. It would be strange to say so however after doing research on both media contents (*Vaseline* commercial and T.V drama *Sangat*) it is also not entirely wrong to say that the complainant has given preference to remember the girl from *Vaseline* commercial due to which he confuses her with other models/actresses in television drama *Sangat*.

⁵³NargisFakhri: is an American model and actress. (<http://www.nargisfakhri.com/about/biography>)

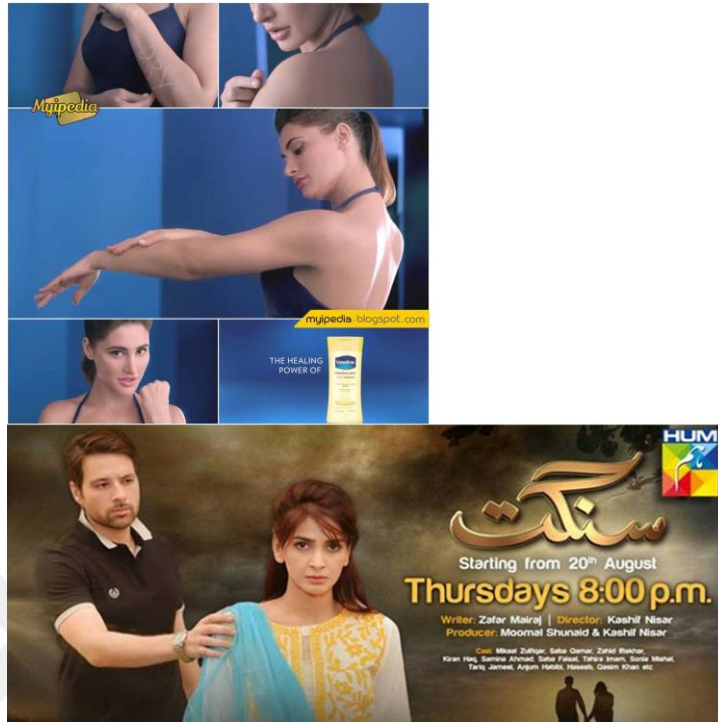


Figure 3.9. Comparison female model in the commercial with another actress in T.V drama *Sangat*. (2016, March 10).

C.1.9: “This channel is misguiding thousands of people by cheap investigative programs and playing with the careers of thousands of people on Pakistan. Take very strict actions against them and BAN them ASAP.”

C.2.9: “Excessive abusive language used by Sami Ibrahim, Arif Bhatti, Rauf Klasra, Asad Kharal and Sheikh Rasheed on ARY live shows almost every day. Also Sheikh Rasheed on Samaa TV. These people should be banned from news channels.”

C.3.9: “Abusive language was used during program and the anchor person didn’t even try to stop them which is absolutely against the ethical values. The link of the program is also attached. <http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?402528-quot-Tum-Begairat-Ho-Hina-Rabbani-Khar-Zardari-ki-quot-Intense-fight-b-w-Jamshed-Dasti-and-PPP-s-Somoro> the regulatory authority should take serious action against anchor person and guests who used such unethical language during program. Strict action should be taken against such TV channels and programs.”

Analysis: All above mentioned complaints have discussed and raised sociocultural grievances where these complainants believe that provided media content is unethical. First complainant has claimed that a private television channel in Pakistan is responsible for broadcasting investigative programs and by doing so this channel is ‘playing with the careers of thousands’. The adjective ‘cheap’ has been used by the complainant in order to describe the standard of content in these investigative programs. However, ‘cheap’ in this complaint doesn’t refer to an inexpensive item but to embarrassing quality of media content. Therefore, according to this individual this television channel is responsible for spoiling the time of thousands of Pakistani viewers that watch these investigative programs instead of doing any other productive activity. The concern with ‘careers of thousands’ and quality of media content reflects the context of this complaint where this individual as member of Pakistani society believes that such programs bring harm to Pakistani people. One can also observe the intensity of this complaint by noticing the ‘ASAP⁵⁴ ban’ as request made by the complainant to PEMRA. However, the complaint is ambiguous as well where the complainant hasn’t mentioned any particular name of the program since declaring all investigative programs ‘cheap’ from production point of view seems strange. Moreover, if not investigative programs then what else should this channel come up with? No suggestion in this regard has been given by the complainant.

Second complaint is against three anchormen that are also journalists and one politician as guest on their talk shows. As mentioned by their names in the complaint *Sami Ibrahim, Arif Bhatti and Rauf Klasra* are anchormen and journalists where as *Sheikh Rasheed* is a politician who participated in political talk shows of these anchormen. The argument made by complainant of this complaint is in regards to usage of ‘abusive language’ by these individuals during live talk shows on television. According to the complainant presence of these people on news channels is objectionable due to their language tone and regularity of their shows has become source of annoyance. One can understand the strength of the context of this complaint where the complainant has suggested PEMRA to ‘ban’ all these individuals from appearing on news channels. However, this suggestion also provides the possibility of learning what

⁵⁴ ASAP: stands for as soon as possible.

exactly is abusive to Pakistani viewers. Is it literally cursive language? Or opposing the contemporary government and its officials or discussing sociocultural taboos in Pakistan from journalism point of view also abusive? Banning journalists from political talk show may also compromise the standard of such political shows. If freedom of speech refers to the concept of free flow of information and knowledge with dialogue then it also refers to its nature which varies from border to border.

Like second complaint, third complainant has also argued about indecent language tone in one particular television show where politicians are invited to debate and discuss current affairs of Pakistani politics. The given URL in complaint leads to a political talk show Sawal Yeh Hai (The question is) which runs on a private television channel. In the video one politician is accusing another female politician to have physical relationship with the chair person of PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party) which is one of the influential political parties in Pakistan. According to the complainant the anchor did a poor job and didn't stop these individuals to avoid such tone. This can be interpreted offensive in gender manner as well where a male verbally attacked a female and the anchorman as another male individual didn't do anything about it even when he had the authority to do so. Moreover, the complainant has declared it against 'ethical values' which explains the concern of this person in regards to viewers and certain filters on television. Since political talk shows include debate and discussion among different politicians of both ruling government and opposition parties they have the tendency to increase heat which sometimes leads to exchange of aggressive words. However, all three complainants of these complaints have claimed that it is PEMRA's duty to not regulate such content which opposes social and cultural norms of language and their limits.

C.1.10: Translated from Urdu to English: Compliant is against Ary News reenactment program 'JurmBoltaHai' (crime speaks). I have also given the link <http://arytube.tv/horrible-fate-of-relations-with-sisters-friend/>. TV news channels and these other programs in the name of entertainment are actually giving ideas about how to plan terrorist activities, how to rape strangers and our own people and how to commit felony. In the name of 'Truth' our media is actually giving criminal ideas to our young

innocent brains (youth) and such programs are the reason for increase in crime ratio. It is my request to stop them and stop vulgarity based crime programs as well. It is my appeal to the Supreme Court to pay attention and stop these programs that are teaching Pakistani people ways through reenactment programs how to rape and romance. There should be no concession at all.

C.2.10: “Program ‘Off the Record⁵⁵’ dated either 30 October or 2nd November hosted by Kashif Abbasi, studio guest Fawad Chaudhary. Mr Fawad Choudhary used a word “chut chalaky” which is very offensive, bad language and a swear word and did not apologize for it. Shiekh Rasheed has also been using the street language and swears words all the time but there was no action taken against him or the channel. The pity is that at the prime time whichever channel you switch to Shiekh Rasheed is there with his foul mouth. It is really unfair the time given to Shiekh Rasheed by all channels. A very unfair distribution of the prime time. There should be check on foul mouthed people especially at the prime time on SAMAA⁵⁶ and ARY News. Shiekh Rasheed and Fawad Choudhary should be served with legal notice.”

C.3.10: “Asslam Allykum (Hello), It is to complain against the HUM TV, because the word Divorce "Talaq" is being used very much in their dramas, This word is hurting those who suffer from this damn and some people get this in their mind and use in real life, Please ban this word not only on Hum TV but on other Pakistani TV channels as well. Thanks Same.”

Analysis: All complaints in this group commonly discuss sociocultural theme of this content analysis which explores those complaints in which certain media content was offensive to the complainants due to its nature contrary to Pakistani social and cultural norms. The first complaint however has wider scope since it covers three different themes of this analysis which are nudity\sexual, sociocultural and violence. Since first complaint is translated from Urdu to English therefore the aim is interpret it

⁵⁵ OFF the Record: is a political talk show in which Pakistani political sphere and its impacts are discussed by the host *Kashif Abbasi* in presence of three guests and their comments and views.
(https://www.facebook.com/OTRPK/timeline?ref=page_internal)

⁵⁶Samaa: is Pakistan’s first private satellite news channel that provides live transmission simultaneously from five cities of Pakistan which include Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Quetta and Peshawar.
(<http://www.samaa.tv/en/>)

as close to Urdu language as possible for obvious reasons. The complaint is against a particular reenactment⁵⁷ program and certain news that cover various crimes. According to the complainant such news and programs give ideas to youth of Pakistan about severe crimes and terrorist plots and their execution. In particular the individual has mentioned ‘rape’ relevant reenactment programs as source to spoil ‘innocent brains’ and encouragement for them to commit such felony.

The complainant has claimed that such programs are also the reason of increment in crime rate which overthrows peace and stability in society and the complainant has described the nature of such content ‘vulgar’ and has appealed Supreme Court of Pakistan in his\her complaint to stop showing such programs because according to this individual these programs are teaching Pakistani youth ‘how to rape and romance’. Intensity of this complaint can be measured with strict suggestion of ‘no concession’ by the complainant. However, the context of this complaint also raises question regarding filtration of news and its broadcasting. One may ask if news about rape is ‘vulgar’ and shouldn’t be shown or told then how Pakistani mainstream media can educate massive population about such sensitive issue or should such news be not broadcasted at all? Vulgarity seems to be the most important and catchy aspect of media content which Pakistani viewers perceive in an unacceptable way in regards to their sociocultural norms and media has to follow these norms regardless of the news content.

The second complainant has argued about language used in one particular political talk show by the guest *Fawad Chaudhary* who happens to be a political commentator. According to the complainant this guest used ‘swear word’ in his conversation and he should have apologized for this act but he didn’t. Another individual who has been mentioned by the complainant in this complaint is *Shiekh Rasheed* and he is a politician. As the complainant puts this person is a ‘foul mouthed’ and he covers most of the prime time on television by showing up on various television channels in different shows. The complainant doesn’t have problem with format of these political shows, but the language tone used in these shows is the main concern since he\she has described it as ‘unfair distribution’ of prime time by letting such politicians

⁵⁷ Reenactment: is a certain program format in which actors perform and redo the act according to chronological order of actions (both good and bad) in a real time story.

speak whatever they want to say without any filtration. However, unethical or swear language does vary from person to person as matter of subjective opinion for example the Urdu language slang mentioned in this complaint '*ChutChalaky*' refers to *mean\selfish cleverness*, but the complainant has declared it as 'very offensive'. This reflects the certain level of being restricted by social or cultural norms where language may become offensive based on subjective definition of swear vocabulary.

As mentioned by the second complainant, unfair distribution of prime time on television by covering or broadcasting certain politician(s) becomes the cause of complaint but it also gives reference to two different types of interpretations. Firstly, viewers get bored after watching or listening to the same views of familiar faces and they don't want to experience the same in future. Secondly, certain viewers may not want to watch or hear certain politicians due to political reasons. For instance it is probable that the complainant in second complaint doesn't want to watch *Sheikh Rasheed* on television as follower of opposition political party.

Third complaint is short in length as compare to previous two complaints, but the message provides glimpse of the personality of this complainant. The complainant has argued about one particular private television channel in Pakistan in regards to the content in its dramas. According to the complainant, these dramas are accused of integrating the concept of 'divorce' in their plot a lot which needs to be banned\filtered by the authorities. The given reason for such suggestion by this individual is the context of *divorce*. As the complainant puts it, the word 'divorce' in plots of these dramas hurts the feelings of those who have 'suffered from this damn'. Such a keen perception of a single term in television dramas and suggestion to ban\cancel it on all Pakistani channels, gives the idea of personal experience of this individual. Perhaps in this complaint the individual had experienced divorce beforehand which has affected his\her life and for personal reasons this individual doesn't accept to watch or even hear this particular term on mainstream media.

Furthermore, third complaint and interpretation of 'divorce' by the complainant also give idea to one about Pakistani society and its ideology. One can understand the perception and sensitivity of the word divorce and the act itself as taboo in Pakistan

where sociocultural norms don't accept this right of an individual to separate his\herself legally from their partner. So much so that Pakistani people wouldn't even mind to censor the word divorce from the plot of media content such as television drams. The fact that all these three complaints have common ground due to social and cultural norms of Pakistan with their strict boundaries, gives the opportunity to understand and study integration of contemporary mainstream media into Pakistani society. Apparently these boundaries have thick and tall walls that won't let any sort of mediated change to climb over or go through them.

C.1.11: “Advertisement of a biscuit (Special) is vulgarity. Every advertisement for children product has an aim to attract children but this advertisement has nothing for children and TV channels are promoting vulgarity and western culture. You should take notice and take necessary action against TV channels and the sensor board which passed this advertisement. PEMRA should strictly ban advertisements like this (Special). PEMRA should make it clear that Pakistan is an Islamic country and no channel has right to promote vulgarity.”

C.2.11: “Cartoon Network and Nick channels⁵⁸: Vulgar, promoting Hindu culture, Mohammad.Iqbal.Khan@faysalbank.com. Please ban these channels on cables.”

C.3.11: “Today on 20 Dec 2015 Express News E paper published an advertisement of Telecom Company named as JAZZ. Kindly guide me is this according to the law of PEMRA or press. There is a lot of bullshit we look on electronic media and no one is here to take it serious. Please check it out and show some sense of responsibility. Thanks regard Mirza Yasir. Take some serious action i.e. FIR against both newspaper and JAZZ. Fine according PEMRA rules and sorry remarks on newspaper with equal space of advertising.”

⁵⁸ Nickelodeon: or Nick broadcast is related to American version of kids channel, providing entertaining content in India and neighboring countries. (<http://www.nickindia.com/>)

Analysis:



Figure 4. Special Biscuit commercial (screenshots). Acquired from <https://advertistan.wordpress.com/2015/09/20/mayfair-special-har-rishta-chahay-kuch-special/> (2016, March 10).



Figure 4.1. JAZZ (telecommunication company) print advertisement. Taken by The Tribune Express (2015, December 20). Acquired from <http://tribune.com.pk/story/1013245/urdu-newspaper-ad-featuring-nargis-fakhri-sparks-outrage-on-social-media/> (2016, March 10).

Nudity\sexual which is first theme of this content analysis connects all these three complaints where these individuals have argued about certain media content which was offensive due to its provocative nature as all complainants put it. The first complaint is diverse in nature since it covers three different themes of this analysis which are nudity\sexual, religion and sociocultural. Complainant has mentioned one commercial of a particular product in which a family has been shown as visible in figure 4. Apparently the complainant has problem with the plot of this commercial and in order to understand the complaint one must have clue about the plot of this particular commercial:

Plot of Mayfair Special biscuit commercial: A family consisting three members a married couple and younger brother of the married man are sitting on a couch in their house. The boy (younger brother) is busy showing photos of his family members to his sister in law from their family photo album. The man asks his younger brother: “don’t you want to do your school homework?” And the boy replies “I did that long ago brother.” Actually the man wants his younger brother to go somewhere else in the house so he would be able to spend time with his wife. In second attempt, the man opens a diary and pretends as if he is reading something and he asks his younger brother: “go

bring my contacts\reading glasses from the drawer” and by obeying his elder brother the boy leaves the couch and goes to another room. Meanwhile, the man slides closer to his wife on the couch and touches her hand, but she says: “what are you doing? He (his younger brother) will be here soon” and the man replies “no he won’t.” The kid opens the drawer in another room to get the glasses but she seems to be extremely happy after what he finds out in the drawer. The man shows a pack of *Special* biscuit to his wife and she understands that why the boy won’t come back. On the other hand the boy starts to eat and enjoy biscuits while the wife smiles and lies down her head on the shoulder of her husband and both feel better now. The voice over then conveys the slogan of the product with the image of this couple: “Every relationship requires something special, *Mayfair Special*.”

The complainant though has argued about several things in the plot of this commercial in order to explain his\her objection. According to the complainant this commercial is ‘vulgar’ and the commercial was supposed to be ‘for children’ since it promotes ‘children product’. Moreover, the complainant has accused the plot of ‘promoting Western culture’ which is a very attention-grabbing part of this entire allegation. Furthermore, the complainant has asked PEMRA to take action against ‘T.V channels and sensor board which passed this advertisement’ because according to this individual “Pakistan is an Islamic country and no channel has the right to promote vulgarity.” In order to analyze this complaint it is necessary to discuss its various parts one by one that can lead to the context of grievance.

Firstly, the matter of media content being vulgar in this complaint refers to the acceptance level of how romance is presented in Pakistani television commercials. Important to notice here is the fact that in this particular ad the focus is on a married couple since the woman in commercial has been shown wearing marriage ring on her finger and if a married couple appears ‘vulgar’ to Pakistani viewers then one can imagine what kind of reaction one can expect if an unmarried couple acting in the same manner would be shown in any commercial (*figure 4*). Secondly, the complainant has claimed this commercial to be supposedly for kids and the product for kids as well which doesn’t make any logical sense since in the commercial the entire family is

consuming *these* biscuits which includes a married couple as well among the young boy. The packing of *these* biscuits also doesn't contain any text stating anything specific about children as it is shown in the commercial.

Somehow the complainant has witnessed 'Western culture' in this commercial, but the atmosphere created in the ad is a typical Pakistani family environment including the dress, language and music. It is difficult to find out how the complainant reached to the conclusion of promotion of vulgarity and Western culture. Such interpretation of marriage and the relationship between a man and a woman with restrictions explains mindset of this complainant. One part of this complaint however reveals bigger picture of whole context where the complainant has suggested PEMRA to take action against television channels and has asked to ban\ censor such commercials because 'Pakistan is an Islamic county'. This also gives one the understanding that the religious (Islamic) values have played a vital role in formation of this individual's expectations from Pakistani mainstream media and regulatory authorities like PEMRA.

Close in nature to the first complaint, second complaint also discusses two different themes of this analysis which are nudity\sexual and sociocultural. The complaint is short in length but it is unique in itself since the complainant has mentioned his professional e-mail ID in it. Media content which has been argued about is from two different satellite television channels *cartoon Network & Nick*. Both channels are responsible for broadcasting entertainment content for kids, but according to the complainant these channels are 'vulgar' and 'promoting Hindu culture'. No precise program or cartoon has been mentioned by this individual, but he has requested PEMRA to 'ban' these channels. Vulgarity in this complaint hasn't been explained with a proper source or reference therefore it is hard to guess in which regard these channels are believed to be vulgar by Khan. However, this certain objection on these two channels and specifically opposition of Khan against 'Hindu culture' reveals two aspects of this complaint.

Firstly, these two channels are viewed in Pakistan through Indian broadcasting satellite and perhaps that is one of reasons why Khan has declared it vulgar because this refers to certain rocky\not smooth relationship between India and Pakistan since 1947.

Secondly, opposing Hindu culture shows Khan's nationalist loyalty to Pakistani identity and his commitment to oppose Hindu (majorly followed & practiced religion in India) culture even in cartoons shows his intolerance to Indian mainstream media content. Moreover, Khan's religious belief has probably played a vital role in such perception of Hindu culture and Indian channels which one can easily figure out after paying attention to Khan's profession. Khan works for a bank in Pakistan which promotes Islamic banking and is originated from Bahrain which is an Islamic country in Middle East. Perhaps one can consider this emerging connection between Khan's perception of Indian channels and his religious belief that are contrary to each other as key factor for of this complaint.

Like previous two complaints, third complaint also discusses the first theme of this analysis which is nudity\sexual and like second complaint in this complaint the complainant has mentioned his name as well. In this complaint *MirzaYasir* has argued about print advertisement of a telecom company in Pakistan. According to Yasir on December 20th 2015 Express (a news agency) published this particular ad of *Jazz* (a telecom company in Pakistan) in its electronic newspaper. Further explanation of his objection on this particular ad the fury of Yasir is quite visible in this complaint where he hasn't hesitated to use slang language by declaring everyday content on Pakistani electronic media as 'bullshit'. He has also claimed that 'no one is here to take it serious' which refers to his call on responsible authoritative individuals of PEMRA. On the other hand he doesn't seem to be aware of the fact that PEMRA is not responsible for print media content. This may bring into account that whenever censorship in any kind of media is in question, people like Yasir think/know PEMRA as the content controller\gate keeper.

From a viewer perspective one can understand the point that Yasir has tried to raise in his complaint after looking at the ad which has been mentioned in this complaint and is also visible in above provided *figure 4.1*. Semiotics can play a major role in this regard to understand and analyze this particular complaint. Connotative meaning of the *figure 4.1* refers to Yasir's complaint where the reader of this newspaper may get distracted by the curves of female body while reading the news since exposure to female

body and its perception may varies from one society to another in accordance to different ideologies. After considering this complaint it is possible to imagine that Pakistan print media differs from rest of the world when it comes to female figure and its placement in content. On the other hand the denotative meaning of the *figure 4.1* introduces a female model with a smart phone in her hand according to marketing strategy and places the ad on the front page of news paper to reach maximum number of intended audience.

C.1.12: “Dear Sir! Yesterday dated: 2015-10-11 at 08:30 on ARY news Sami Ibrahim has passed on really shameful, disgusting, hateful, pathetic remarks about an elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan You can see a glimpse of this recording at link <https://twitter.com/Muqadas86/status/652907876181245952> Sir this channel is not only using such remarks first time but also involved in heinous campaign against elected govt. So it is kindly requested that please take notice of this and ban Sami Ibrahim and ARY channel Best Regards, Faisal Rafique Address: Mårdstigen 2, Lgh 1201, 17075, Solna, Sweden.”⁵⁹

C.2.12⁶⁰: “Columnist Hassan Nisar regularly promotes violence and incitement to murder against political leaders, particularly the Prime Minister’s family, on the show named "Meray Mutabiq" on Geo News shown during Prime Time at 7:00 P.M. In yesterday's show i.e. 29 Nov 2015 he used these words regarding the treatment to be meted out to these leaders: 'Tezab ka ghysl (bath with poison), 3 shifts mein Jallad kam karein (work fast in three shifts), tez panjon waley janwaron sey unn ko bhanbora jaey (they should be attacked by animals with sharp nails)' etc. In a previous show, he advocated physically eliminating the Sharif family. He takes some kind of perverted sadistic pleasure in this language on nationwide television. There is a clear law against hate speech and incitement to murder. I fail to understand why no action has been being taken against this columnist. I strongly advise strong criminal action against Hassan Nisar under the criminal laws in vogue. Regards Zahid Rafique, Lahore.”

⁵⁹ There were 46 more complaints against the same media individual regarding same issue.

⁶⁰ The English translation of Urdu phrases has been done by the research author.

C.3.12: “I heard on news channels and read in news papers that honorable judge of Lahore High Court has ordered media not to publish or on air mention any news of MQM’s chief Mr. *Altaf Hussain* and even his name is not to be mentioned. It was strictly followed by all until 5th December 2015 from the 5th of December 2015 when an FIR was launched against him all the channels are broadcasting his name in their news bulletins and in different programs. My suggestion is to retain all channels newspapers not to publish or broadcast any news related to MQM’s chief in honor of decision of LHC.”

Analysis: All three complaints in this group have their focus on politically offensive content of Pakistani mainstream media and these complaints are categorized within the fifth category of this analysis which deals with political complaints. The first complaint is interesting not only because of its context but also its content since the complainant has not only mentioned his name but has also given his address. *Faisal Rafique* has complained against *Sami Ibrahim* who is a Pakistani political analyst and anchorperson and according to Rafique this particular anchorman insulted Prime Minister of Pakistan in his show on the date as mentioned in the complaint. After giving the URL of a clip from that particular show Rafique has argued that the channel which broadcasts Sami Ibrahim’s show conducts similar activities against the ‘elected government’. The prominent factor of this complaint that supports the complainant’s argument is the strong language used by the journalist in absence of political filters and perhaps that is what annoyed the complainant most. Intensity of this complaint and the hate against Sami Ibrahim after passing strict remarks against PM *Nawaz Sharif* can be observed with number of complaints against Ibrahim that exceed to 47 including this complaint.

In the second example the complainant has also mentioned his name while discussing two interrelated themes which are political and violence. Coincidentally, the last names of first and second complainant are same. It is hard to say if there is any relation between these two individuals or not since the first one is lives in Solna (Sweden) while the second one lives in Lahore (Pakistan). *Zahid Rafique* though has

complained against a Pakistani well-known individual named as *Hassan Nisar*⁶¹ for his harsh remarks against politicians in particular Prime Minister of Pakistan and his family during a political talk show named as *Meray Mutabiq* (*according to me* in English). Zahid has claimed that Nisar ‘promotes violence’ on nation-wide television and ‘incitement to murder politicians’ and he has also claimed that Nisar perhaps find some ‘pleasure’ by using such language. In this complaint Zahid has also quoted Nisar where Nisar has given few harsh suggestions to deal with these politicians that according to him are damaging and are harmful to Pakistan. Zahid has not simply asked PEMRA to ban Hasan Nisar attending TV programs but to take criminal action against him on the base of the law against hate speech on television. He has also underlined that this criminal action should be “strong”. Referencing a law in a complaint can be taken as good education level of complainant. From the content we can assume that Zahid is pro Sharif and he cannot take any criticism against him while he can go as far as jailing a journalist for his hard criticism.

The defensive tone towards *Sharif* regime and non-tolerant attitude towards anti government mediated content makes a strong bond not only between first and second complaint, but also between *Faisal Rafique & Zahid Rafique*.

Unlike first two complaints, the third complaint is against publishing and broadcasting identity and relevant news of a particular politician as the complainant has given reference of Lahore High Court (LHC) which instructed the media not to do so. That particular and controversial politician’s name is *Altaf Hussain* who happens to be the chair person of MQM (*Muttahida Qaumi Movement* or *United National Movement* in English). According to the complainant Lahore High Court passed the orders to mainstream media in Pakistan not to publish or broadcast any relevant news about Hussain or his party but all media both electronic and print followed this law until December 5th 2015. On this particular date an FIR⁶² (First Information Report) was registered against Hussain and all news channels started to broadcast and talk about him

⁶¹Hassan Nisar: is a Pakistani journalist, political analyst and a columnist.
(https://www.facebook.com/hassan.nisar/info/?tab=page_info)

⁶² FIR: stands for first information report which refers to the first complaint that police registers when it gets information about some offensive act and criminal.

in their shows as the complainant puts it. The complainant has requested PEMRA to 'retain' all television channels and newspapers to follow the orders of Lahore High Court which is odd since PEMRA is not responsible for print media. However, the complainant seems to be happy with the decision of Lahore High Court for not permitting mainstream media to publish or broadcast about Hussain or his party which also shows complainant's political preference and makes one curious to know why Hussain and his party are that controversial that they are not even officially mentionable by Pakistani media.

C.1.13: Translated from Urdu to English: My complaint is against Samaa News's program 'Interrogation' since it is more like Indian movies with full of action and vulgarity. One boy is a target killer; he kills the girl and her father and escapes easily. Every time when I turn on the news I watch such kind of sex or rape based programs and as a female citizen of Pakistan, I get angry afterwards thinking is there no one monitoring such content? Our Pakistani media is giving free advice how to get girls, how to rape someone, how does rape happen, how to misbehave with parents, brothers and sisters. Ban reenactment program on Samaa TV.

C.2.13: "During his program on 8th November 2015, Dr. ShahidMasood⁶³ issued fatwa⁶⁴ in his show that whoever is calling him Qayamat Masood is committing "Blasphemy" and if He (Dr Shahid Masood) airs his / her photo on his show, he/she will be killed. Such act of an anchor who has no authority to issue fatwa during his show and instigate violence is such a way that he is directly threatening to kill. There are many critiques& viewers of the TV One & his show and they may be affected and their lives are in danger after his direct life threats. PEMRA is requested to immediately suspend license/ban Shahid Masood and TV One, register FIR against Shahid Masood and thoroughly investigate this very serious issue as he has resembled this to assassination of

⁶³ Dr. ShahidMasood: is a political analyst, writer and television host.

⁶⁴ Fatwa: usually to indicate that a death sentence has been dealt to someone or some group of people. (<http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/understanding-islam/legal-rulings/44-what-is-a-fatwa.html>)

former Governor Punjab Salman Taseer in his show. This may also be kept on record, if anyone is harmed or killed as a consequence of this statement by Dr Shahid Masood.⁶⁵

C.3.13: “In a program "Jurm Bolta Hai" ARY News on December 03, 2015 at 7:30PM, Reporter of the program encouraged police officials to physically hit the accused. He asked the accused to demonstrate how accused abused a nine years old girl. He actually showed the visuals of the 9 year old victim and her family. He investigated the accused. Additionally in the reenactment, ARY News used a girl to act as she was abused by her brother in law. This is against the law. Action shall be taken against such reporters who violate human rights. Please ban all such programs and take action against the management of ARY News for airing such undesirable programs.”

Analysis: The sixth theme of this analysis which is violence creates a strong bond between all these three complaints. In all these complaints the complainants have complained against different news channels in Pakistan and have claimed that these channels broadcast violent content. As the first complaint elaborates, the complainant has not only submitted the complaint but has also disclosed her gender by say “as a female citizen of Pakistan” which helps to analyze this complaint from female interpretation of mainstream media in Pakistan. The lady has complained against a particular television reenactment program and its content. In order to clarify her opinion regarding television violence and its promotion she has also given an example from one of the plots of this program in which a boy murders a girl and her father and flees successfully. However, the complainant has compared this particular program with Indian cinema by declaring it ‘full of action and vulgar’ which reflects her perception of Indian movies and quality of their content according to her point of view. As mentioned by the complainant ‘action’ which may refer to various crimes, is part of the this reenactment program since it tells the story of both criminal(s) and the victim(s), but the specific adjective ‘vulgar’ used by her in this complaint increases suspicion in regards to her interpretation.

⁶⁵There were 10 more complaints submitted to PEMRA against the same media individual regarding same problem.

According to the complainant she has declared programs with such format as ‘vulgar’ because their plots include crimes like ‘sex or rape’ and this bothers her as female citizen of Pakistan. In fact she has claimed that she gets angry when she watches such program because ‘Pakistani media’ gives suggestion to Pakistani people about committing such crimes and she has demanded PEMRA to censor this program. Such a strong reaction and abrupt change in viewer’s feelings spots light on both the controversial content of this program and the viewer who has suffered through it. It clearly questions whether the reenactment programs violate Pakistani sociocultural norms that don’t allow sharing such news\content or as female members of Pakistani society, Pakistani women refuse to have them on their televisions since these programs intimidate them psychologically. Moreover, the comparison by this woman of disliked television content with Indian cinema shows her solidarity with Pakistani nationalistic approach where she does not only reject the reenactment program exposing sexually intimidating news, but also Indian movies that are indecent according to her.

The second complaint discusses television violence in reference to a particular media person who issued Fatwa against his haters as the complainant puts it. According to the complainant *Dr Shahid Masood* issued Fatwa in his political talk show on television against anyone who had or would mock him by calling him Qayamat (judgment day) Masood because he declared it as act of ‘blasphemy’. Moreover, Masood declared that if he would disclose the photo of any individual in his program that person would be killed as the complainant puts it. The complainant has requested PEMRA ‘to immediately suspend license or ban Shahid Masood’ because as an anchor he has no authority to issue Fatwa against anyone and he promotes violence on television with such life threats. According to the complainant Masood has tried to compare the hate against him on media with the assassination of *Salman Taseer*⁶⁶. Allegations against Masood in this complaint and request to outlaw him on television, proves intensity of entire grievance of the second complainant. As part of the complaint the allegation to provoke violence by issuing Fatwa does explain understanding of

⁶⁶ Salman Taseer: was the former governor of Punjab province and he was assassinated by his own security guard because the security guard accused Taseer of committing blasphemy by saying bad words against Prophet Muhammad.

blasphemy and consequences in reference to it in Pakistani mainstream media space as well as among viewers. One may ask is it really possible for a political analyst to take law in his\her hands in order to avoid haters? If not then broadcasting of such threats on television viewers have what kind of effects? One way to understand the level of fear among viewers is this complaint where the individual has mentioned that his\her complaint should be kept as record if someone gets hurt due such regulation of blasphemy.

Like first two complaints, the third complainant has also argued about broadcasting violence on television in reference to a particular television show ‘Jurm Bolta Hai’ (*crime speaks* in English) on a private channel. The show’s format covers various criminal activities with in Pakistan and it includes reenactment visuals in order to explain the physical activity of crime. In this particular complaint the complainant has mentioned the case of a nine year old girl who was physically abused by her brother in law, but the complaint is not only against the coverage of this case but also violent interaction of the reporter of this show with the criminal during the entire program. According to the complainant the reporter disclosed visuals of the badly injured girl and her family and investigated the criminal while he insisted police officials to physically beat the criminal. Moreover, the television channel depicted this crime with actors in reenactment and showed how that nine year old girl was abused by her brother in law, as the complainant puts it. Complainant has asked PEMRA to take legal action against this particular news reporter and the management of this television channel as well.

The annoyance of complainant is quite visible in the text where the individual has requested PEMRA to ban\cancel this kind of crime news programs and has declared such media content ‘against the law’ and has accused the news reporter of violating ‘human rights’. There are three parts of this complaint that explain its offensive nature to this particular complainant. Firstly, coverage of such crimes where people get to know details of a crime in any part of Pakistan but with visuals in form of one to one interviews with victims or their family members, criminals and law & order officials. The complainant however doesn’t appreciate this way of reporting crime where visuals might have offended his\her feelings or sociocultural believes. Perhaps that is the sole

reason why the complainant has claimed it ‘against the law’ since it may sound inquisitive to one which law does the complainant refer to here. Physically injured or traumatized victims with their sad story should not be seen on television and their family members with sad expressions and feelings are few reasons that one may think of as offensive content to the complainant about.

Secondly, the insistence of news reporter to the police officials regarding hitting the criminal is also not appreciated by the complainant since the individual has declared it as violation of ‘human rights’. It also shows the concern of this individual about news reporter and vigilantly of such programs that cover crime reports, but it also refers to the perception of media individuals in hearts and minds of Pakistani mainstream media viewers. As the complainant has asked PEMRA to take serious action against this news reporter, the perception of news and news team members in accordance to Pakistani viewers and their sociocultural norms defines television viewership in Pakistan.

Thirdly, the reenactment of previously committed crimes has been inconvenient for the complainant and that can be understood with this individual’s objection on reenactment of crime news which actually is part of the program’s format. Such opposition to reenactment programs also becomes questionable in regards to media form where one may ask: if reenactment of crime news is not acceptable among Pakistani television viewers then do they prefer the details of crimes in published form through print media?

C.1.14: “Dear PEMRA pointed channel is showing nudity, vulgarity, abusive language and Hinduism or Hindu religious content etc. I am not against for importing international content but it is your responsibility to check all these things. If any drama or cartoon should be import then it could be necessary that importer should definitely re dub content in our national language and also edit vulgar or religious content.”

C.2.14: “As per PEMRA notice, all news channels are bound not to play Indian songs in any of their news. But all the channels are doing this rubbish thing time and time again. If there is a regulatory authority then it should make them answerable that why this cheap thing is happening. If there is not such kind of notice given to channels

then it should be regulated to all. As it is ridiculous thing. I along with my circle of friends and colleague condemn this activity by these news channels. Suggestion is quite simple, that PEMRA should take the notice of this activity.”

C.3.14: “Sir this complaint is about Indian dramas. Which are being aired On A-Plus. These dramas contain bad environment, plz see the ad of *Veet Cream* on A-Plus. Cream is good but you see we are in an Islamic country and we are Muslims. Sir we cannot see these ads with our family or if any nephew or niece is around. We feel so embarrassed, plz sir do avoid these ads but if necessary do realize our surroundings. Take care of our environment and family atmosphere plz.”

Analysis: International media content that happened to be offensive to these three complainants creates a bond between them. The similarity between these complaints in regards to media content can also be interpreted with reference to its origin since all of them are against Indian mainstream media content. The first complainant has accused a private Pakistani channel of broadcasting ‘nudity, vulgarity, abusive language, Hinduism or Hindu religious content’ which definitely offended this particular individual. It is important to note in this complaint the individual has mentioned that he\she is not against introducing international media content in Pakistan, but the complainant has also told PEMRA to set filters on such characteristics (as accused in complaint) of international media content. Another interesting point suggested is to dub the content into Urdu to avoid ‘vulgar or religious content’. We can easily assume that the complainant proposes censorship through dubbing.

In order to analyze this complaint it is better to divide it in two parts. Firstly, the allegation on this television channel of showing certain type of media content which is defined as nude, vulgar, abusive is interpretation of this individual in this complaint. This interpretation of media content from another country\continent on Pakistani mainstream media channels gives one the idea about this individual even if the identity is anonymous. Since nudity, vulgarity and abusive language has been labeled on certain media content by a Pakistani television viewer then does it mean it was not the same in the country of its origin or Pakistani viewers expect something else from international media? Moreover, declaration of Hinduism or Hindu religious content as offensive

reveals the religious argument of this complaint where apparently media content covering Hindu religion is not tolerable by Pakistani viewers. Perhaps, the anti-Hindu factor comes along national debate on Indo-Pak (India & Pakistan) relationship since majority population in India is Hindu and censorship on Hindu religion does refer somehow to anti-India factor.

Secondly, the demand of dubbed international media content refers to two concepts that can help to elaborate and interpret this complaint in a better way. One idea is the nationalist approach where this individual may prefer to receive international media content only in Urdu language due to maintenance of national identity of Pakistan and not allowing any foreign language to prevail over or become popular among Pakistani mainstream media consumers. Such defensive attitude may also refer to fear of cultural invasion through both audio and visuals of international media content. Second concept can be lack of information\knowledge of other languages (especially English) due to which the content loses its value and becomes hard to understand for Pakistani viewers. In this regard misinterpretation can be possible outcome of such media content which appears and sounds meaningless to Pakistani viewers.

Unlike first complaint, the second complainant has directly mentioned 'Indian songs' as main argument in his\her complaint. This individual has not mentioned any other international media content as offensive but only Indian in regards to 'Indian songs' particularly played on Pakistani news channels. According to the complainant all news channels 'are bound not play Indian songs' due to PEMRA's notice, but still usage of Indian songs on Pakistani news channels continues. By calling it a 'cheap' act, the individual has asked PEMRA to regulate such law if hasn't been done yet which wouldn't let these Pakistani channels making Indian songs part of their programs' formats. Declaring Indian songs running on Pakistani news channels as 'ridiculous' the complainant has condemned such broadcast along with his\her friends and colleagues as the complainant puts it. However, declaring Indian entertainment media content as 'rubbish, cheap and ridiculous' shows intensity of being offended and it also pushes one to learn the reason of such hate.

Since the complainant hasn't clarified any specific reason of disliking Indian songs therefore it is hard to assume any particular motive. One may question: is it that simple to ban/censor Indian song on Pakistani mainstream media platforms as the complainant has mentioned it a 'simple suggestion'? The opposition against Indian entertainment media content has to have strong reason(s) since these songs are easily understandable among Pakistani viewers which also gives reference to ironic historic bond between India and Pakistan and their sociocultural norms.

Like second complainant the third complainant has also explained his/her grievance with Indian media content and specifically this individual has mentioned Indian dramas. According to the complainant 'these dramas contain bad environment but what exactly is wrong with these dramas and the 'environment' shown in their plot is not clear since the individual hasn't mentioned anything specific regarding it. Moreover this individual has complained about advertisement (TVC) of a particular hair removal cream which according to the complainant is against Islamic ideology and PEMRA should consider the fact that Pakistan is an 'Islamic country'. The fact that such media content is not watchable with family members for instance nephew or niece makes this individual 'embarrassed' as the complainant puts it. Therefore the complainant has requested PEMRA to 'take care of family atmosphere' while permitting broadcast of any electronic media content. Interestingly, the individual has mentioned that 'cream is good' which means he/she has no issue with the product but only the commercial or presentation of this particular product on television.

However, one may find it interesting that this individual has complained against Indian dramas and hair removal cream commercial together without clearly distinguishing the nature of both types of media contents. It may refer to the idea that perhaps this individual perceives both of them in the same way due to his/her religious or sociocultural values through which this individual likes to watch television with family without experiencing any uncomfortable feelings.

C.1.15: Translated from Urdu to English: Reenactment programs from all channels should be banned since God has given you the authority so stop it. Reenactment programs depict sex, rape; vulgarity and theft so stop them and ban them.

Our national telecast is also broadcasted in neighbor countries. After watching they will say that there is no difference between us and people of Pakistan. *Ary Digital, Ary News, Samaa and Abb Takk* and all other channels that are showing reenactment programs should be banned. In the name of God and Prophet please stop these reenactment programs since they are destroying our youth.

C.2.15: Translated from Urdu to English: Hello sir/madam. Today morning from 10:40AM till 11:00AM GEO news has telecasted on Mumbai stock market. Also there was continues text line on the bottom of screen for updates. The market was only 350 points down/in loss, but can someone ask these people when Pakistani stock exchange increases or decreases 500 points then there is no update or any news: is this an Indian channel or Pakistani channel?

C.3.15: “What is PEMRA’s policy for commercial ads, especially the ads from Nivea Company are especially absurd. These must not be viewed on public, family channels. Please immediately put edit checks on these Nivea ads.”

Analysis: The first complainant has discussed various matters regarding this content analysis and therefore this particular complaint covers multiple themes of this analysis including nudity\sexual, religion, ethnic/nationalist and sociocultural. As a whole the complaint is actually against reenactment programs and their formats running on different private television channels in Pakistan. Suggesting ‘ban’ on reenactment programs on all channels this individual has given PEMRA official(s) the reason by saying “since God has given you the authority so stop it”. According to this individual such programs ‘depict sex, rape, vulgarity and theft’ and youth of Pakistan interprets such plots in these programs in wrong way and inevitably such programs become source of destruction. Perhaps in this complaint when the complainant claimed that these programs are “destroying our youth” he\she probably referred to the careers or psychology of young people in Pakistan. Moreover, by naming four different private television channels and claiming all others that broadcast such programs, this individual has requested PEMRA in the name of God and prophet (Muhammad) to ‘stop’ these reenactment shows.

If one interprets this individual's complaint according to sociocultural perspective then it becomes easier to understand why reenactments of various crimes that include physical (sexually provocative or violent) content have offended this complainant. In addition to sexual content of these programs the complainant has also mentioned theft which refers to those plots in these programs that can be misinterpreted by young people in Pakistan and can help them to commit similar crimes. However, such allegations and prohibition on the production of such crime reenactment programs can open new doors of conversation where one may ask banning\censoring such content may also refer to hiding the true face of vicious crimes around Pakistani youth and being unaware of such crimes may compromise their security. Moreover, the request to PEMRA and reminding the PEMRA officials of their duty in the name of God and prophet (Muhammad) gives the hint towards religious belief of this complainant where this person believes that his\her faith in religion would support the argument.

The second complaint in this group discusses the third theme\category of this analysis which is ethnic\nationalist where the complainant has argued about a private television channels in Pakistan for being biased in regards to its telecast. Providing the specific time of broadcast, this individual has complained that *GEO New* (Pakistani T.V channel) covered Mumbai (Indian city) stock market and showed the fall in stocks with details and this very information was disturbing to this complainant. The reason that this person has given in order to support his\her grievance is no coverage of Pakistani stock market by the same channel. According to the complainant in comparison to the coverage of Indian stock market, this channel doesn't cover or give any update about Pakistani stock market whether the stocks increase or decrease. In order to summarize the complaint this individual has asked a direct question stating "is this an Indian channel or Pakistani channel?"

One may interpret this complaint in different ways where the approach to unfold its context can be divided on nationalist and business basis. Through observation of the text of this argument, the complainant seems to be annoyed, but more important matter is to learn the reason of such annoyance. Such grievance also gives a blurry idea about this individual with reference to his\her occupation since the interest in such television

broadcast can lead either to a businessperson or someone who observes\follows the stock market due to some important reason(s). As part of this complaint analysis one may assert that this individual is perhaps a Pakistani industrialist who keeps his\her eye on stock market, but at the same time also pays attention to the content in regards to its origin because in this complaint the Indian coverage seems to bother this individual. Therefore it would not be wrong to question: is it the predictable political hate against India or is it an effort to create propaganda against this particular television channel which provoked this complainant?

Referring back to the first complaint, the third complainant also talks about the first theme of this analysis which is nudity/sexual. The complaint itself is not long in length, but the message is quite clear where the complainant has questioned advertisement policy of PEMRA and has asked “what is PEMRA’s policy for commercial ads?” Apparently one company’s commercials (Nivea) were offensive and ‘absurd’ as the complainant has mentioned. Moreover, the individual has claimed that such commercials “must not be viewed on public, family channels” which elaborates the argument. Since not one particular commercial/ad has been mentioned in the complaint but only name of the company therefore in order to analyze the complaint one may get reference from following images because these are few images from Nivea commercials/ads on Pakistani television channels during the time period of December 2015:



Figure 4.2. Nivea body lotion commercial (b). Acquired from www.nivea.in (2016, March 10).



Figure 4.3. Nivea body lotion commercial (c). Acquired from www.nivea.in (2016, March 10).

As visible in *figure 4.2 & 4.3* the same female model has represented Nivea products and in order to show effects of skin beauty products the model has shown her

skin which supports the claim of Nivea to provide smooth skin. However, connotation plays its vital role when it comes to interpretation of images and perhaps that is the complaint all about. The complainant has mentioned that family channels ‘must not’ telecast such commercials because general public of Pakistan should not be able to watch them.

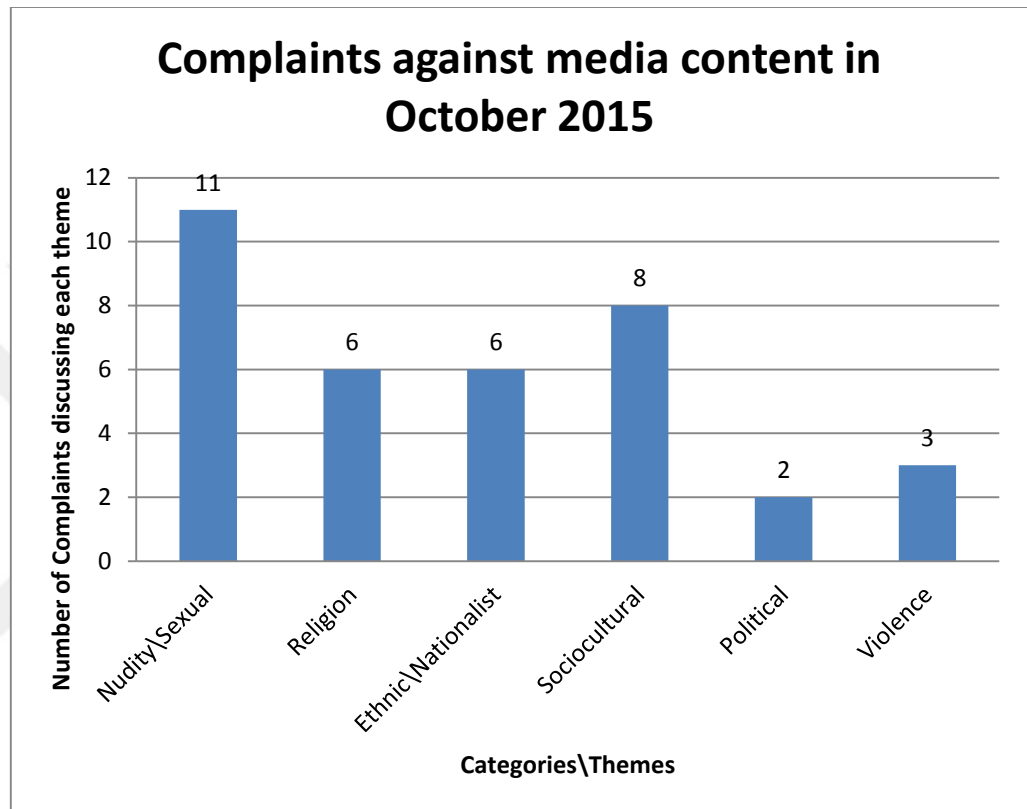
Watching the media content is one thing but watching it among family members is completely different experience in Pakistan if one interprets this particular complaint in the right way. Moreover, the request of third complainant to ‘put edit checks on Nivea ads’ makes a strong bond between third complaint and first complaint where complainants have asked to ban/censor certain media content that exposes female body. Consequently, one may ask the question: How is it possible to produce commercials for skin beauty products without exposing the skin and do Pakistani television viewers even want to have commercials regarding such products or not? Since the interesting point is that the complainant is not against the product but how it is being presented and promoted.

3.4. Discussion

All 45 complaints selected according to six different themes from the timespan of October, November and December 2015 for the sake of qualitative content analysis present a fair sample from 153 complaints in total (see annex 1, 2 & 3). In order to seek answers/clarifications of three primary goals of this analysis as mentioned in 3.1, 15 groups of complaints with their analyses play vital role to interpret these complaints and understand their context. The discussion of this content analysis is combination of statistics in form of bar graphs and their explanation with reference to literary works.

3.4.1. Statistical & Literary analysis of all 45 complaints month wise& combined

Graphic 2.6 October 2015 complaints



The given Graphic 2.6 covers those 15 complaints that were submitted only in the month of October 2015. Like any other bar graph the data is divided and displayed on x-axis (horizontal) and y-axis (vertical) of the chart where on x-axis are all six themes/categories of this content analysis and on y-axis are number of complaints in regards to coverage of each theme illustrating in form of columns.

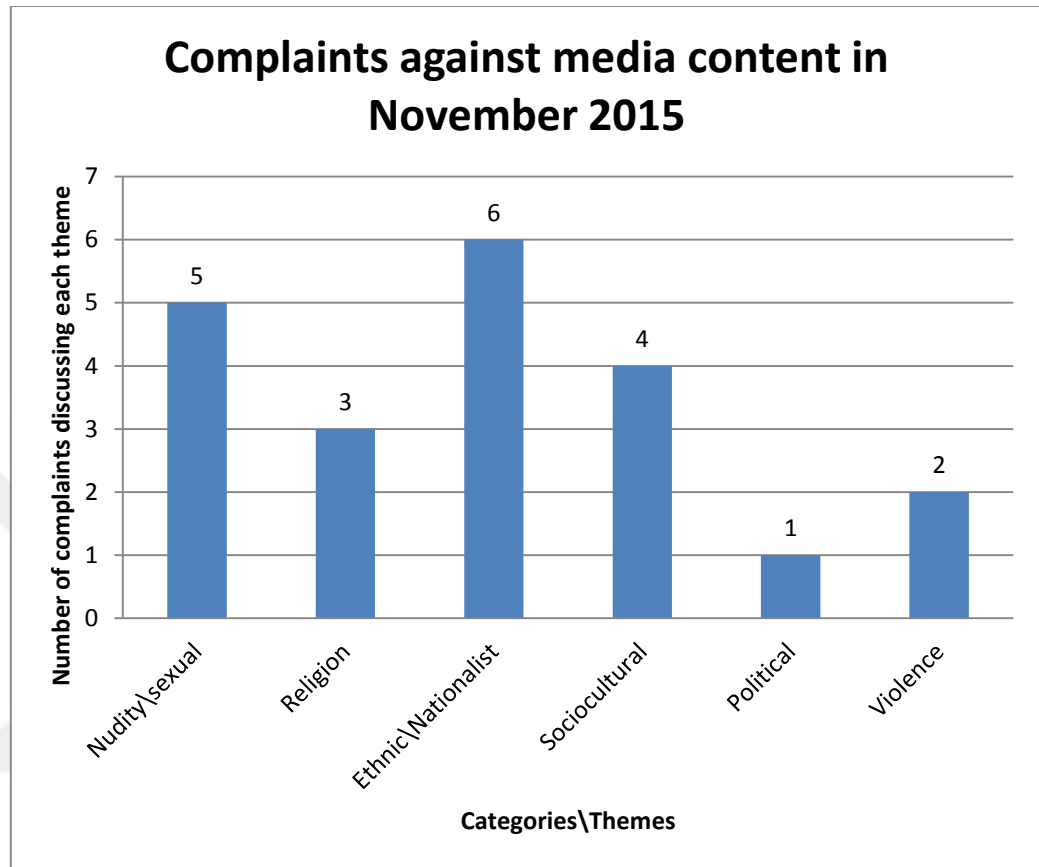
Representing the maximum amount of complaints as 11, the first theme shows majority complaints in which the most offending content is nude or sexually provocative. Once contents of the complaints are taken into consideration, we can also obtain data on what level or how much nudity offends the Pakistani viewer so he/she takes the initiative to write an official complaint.

Interestingly both second and third theme (religion, ethnic/nationalist) of this analysis display equal amount of complaints as 6 in which complainants showed their concern regarding religious belief and ethnic/national identity. Out of 6 complaints each, 4 complainants used religion and ethnic/nationalist reference together which may lead one to think that religion plays a vital role to define the Pakistani nationality.

The sociocultural norms of Pakistan that represent the fourth theme of this analysis as well as Pakistani population have fair share in these complaints where 8 complainants have argued about certain type of media content which according to them was harmful either to the Pakistani culture or society.

Politically the month of October in 2015 didn't receive many complaints as it can be seen in the graph which displays only 2 complaints in which the complainants had their grievances regarding Pakistani politics and politicians. As part of last and sixth theme of this analysis, complaints against violence on Pakistani mainstream media were not very different in number than Political. With the figure of 3 the complaints regarding violent media content cover sixth column of the given graph and statistically display the concern of Pakistani mainstream media consumers. The huge difference between the first category and last category of being discussed by Pakistani media consumers shows their perception and expectations from regulatory authority (PEMRA) for the concerned time span. After interpreting this particular graph and by looking at the difference between the complaints against nudity and violence one can assume that Pakistani people get more offended by sexually provocative content than watching violence on screen.

Graphic 2.7 November 2015 complaints



The Graphic 2.7 elaborates the data of 15 complaints from the month of November 2015 and their cohesion among each other in regards to six categories of this analysis. Unlike October 2015, the bar graph of November shows majority complaints discussing media content which offended Pakistani viewers' ethnic or national identity. Out of fifteen, six complaints in particular cover grievances about this matter. The first category/theme of this analysis (nudity/sexual) has second highest number of complaints in this bar graph. Almost half in comparison to the complaints of same theme in October 2015 with 5 complaints one can statistically interpret the annoyance of complainants in this regard. It may also refer to either more censorship by PEMRA on sexually offensive media content or less concern of Pakistani people in this regard as compare to previous month and more unease related to representation of Pakistan identity/reputation on mainstream media platforms. This curiosity may increase especially reminding

PEMRA's ban on media coverage of three particular organizations *Jamaatud Dawah*⁶⁷ (*JuD or Group of Invitees*), *Lashkar-e-Taiba*⁶⁸ (*LeT or Army of the Pure*) and *Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation*⁶⁹ (*FIF or Devoted to Humanity*) under UN Resolution 1267 on November 2nd 2015 on orders given by Ministry of Information, but confirmed by the directives in joint communiqué issued by Prime Minister *Nawaz Sharif* and American President *Barack Obama* during PM's trip to Washington DC (Ali K. , 2015).

With 4 in number the complaints in reference to socially or culturally offensive media content show their importance on the Graphic 2.7 which is half in comparison to the complaints of same theme in last month. Such decline can possibly raise questions regarding media production and PEMRA's involvement in accordance to demand of Pakistani social and cultural norms made by Pakistani people through complaints.

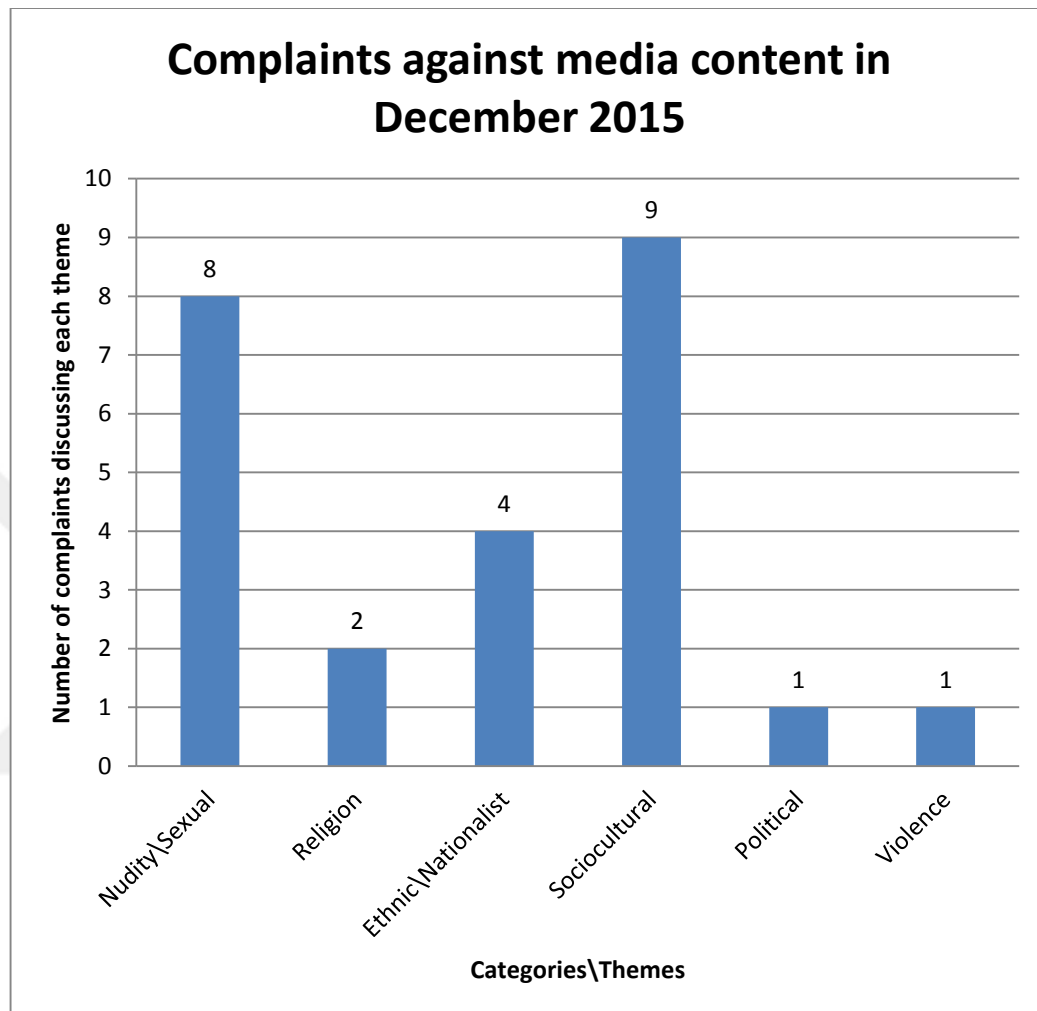
The complaints regarding religiously offensive media content have also shown decrease in comparison to the Graphic 2.6 where 3 complaints discussed this matter in November 2015 as visible in Graphic 2.7. It gives the idea not only about the proportion of religious concern among other complaints but also its importance since statistically it is close enough to sociocultural complaints (Graphic 2.7). One may assume from such proximity that Pakistani social and cultural norms have strong relation with religious (Islamic) belief. Like fall in other number of complaints in different themes of this analysis in comparison to October 2015 the complaints regarding political and violent media content on television have also shown significant decrease. As shown in graph 2.7 there were 2 complaints against violence on television where as only 1 complaint is representing politically offended complainant.

⁶⁷JUD: is an Islamic NGO in Pakistan but accused for running illegal Sharia court in bid cities like Lahore. (<http://in.reuters.com/article/pakistan-charity-jamaat-ud-dawah-idINKCN0XO17Z>)

⁶⁸LET: is an active terrorist organization in South Asia operating from Pakistan. (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3181925.stm)

⁶⁹FIF: is a Pakistani Islamic organization famous for its volunteer work. (<http://www.devotedtohumanity.com/en/page/about-us.php>)

Graphic 2.8 December 2015 complaints



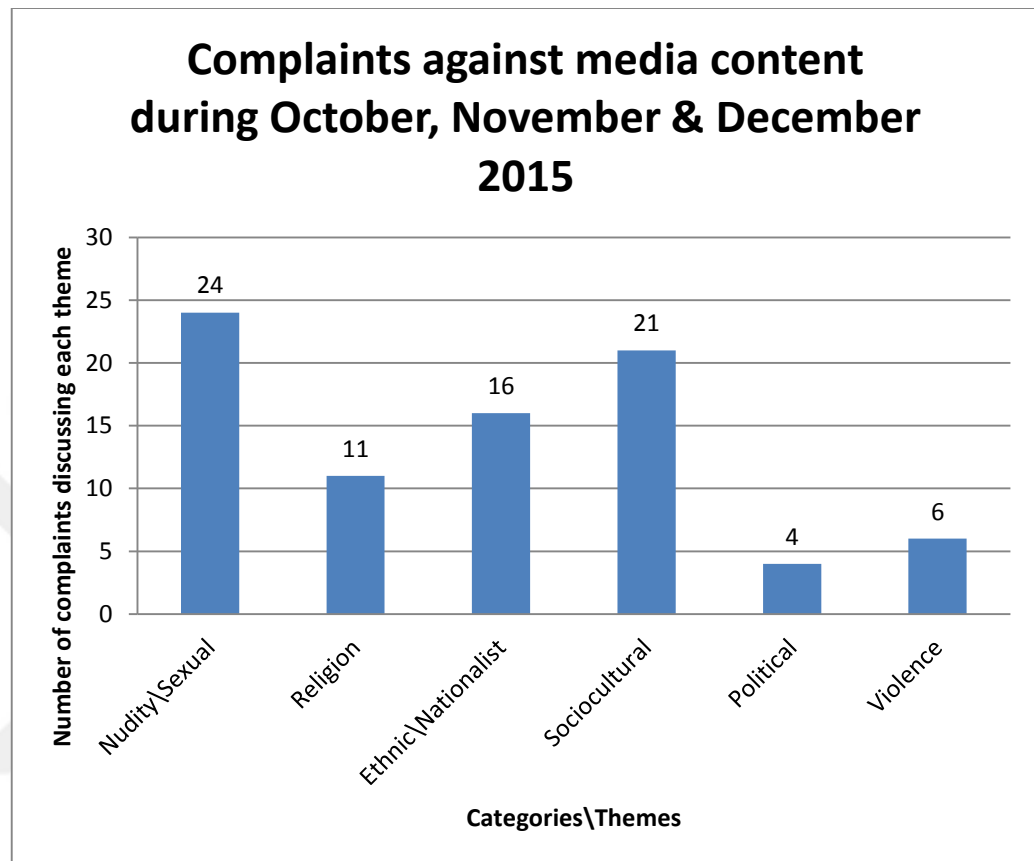
Pakistani electronic media content seemed offending social and cultural norms of the complainants in December 2015 the most since complaints regarding 4th theme of this analysis cover majority grievances as shown in Graphic 2.8. With 9 complaints in total about this category, complainants have shown their concern regarding the Pakistani sociocultural standards and the demand of their integral presence in Pakistani mainstream media. Second most discussed grievances regarding nudity/sexually provocative content with 8 complaints in total during the mentioned time period represent annoyance and concern of Pakistani viewers. The proximity between number of complaints from 1st and 4th theme of analysis may refer to a connection between them as discussed by a male Pakistani television viewer in C.3.8 who felt ‘ashamed’ watching television commercial with his mom and wife about *body lotion* starring a female model.

Taking its place as third notorious category in Graphic 2.8 the complaints regarding media content offending ethnicity/national identity of the viewers show 4 complaints in total. As part of C.3.5 & 6 the complainants have specifically argued about Indian television drama serials where the complainant of 5th complainant has accused these dramas of containing ‘bad environment’.

Complaints against religiously offending media content are only 2 in number as seen in Graphic 2.8, which also refer to the understanding that during December 2015 Pakistani viewers found media content less anti-religion (anti-Islamic) as compared to previous two months (October & November 2015).

During the mentioned time period, complaints carrying grievances against political and violent media content seemed to bother Pakistani viewers the least as both themes cover 1 complaint each. In C.3.12 the complainant has shown disagreement with media coverage of a controversial politician which shows the attentiveness of mainstream media consumers in regards to political media content where as complaint of C.3.13 has pointed out the concern regarding reenactment programs on television by calling them ‘undesirable’ and ‘violation of human rights’.

Graphic 2.9 October, November & December 2015 complaints



Representing the majority amount of complaints (24) during the given time period, nudity and sexually provocative media content seemed to offend Pakistani mainstream media consumers the most as seen in Graphic 2.9. Most of the complaints in this regard are against female models or actresses and their part(s) in the mediated content as the complainants argued in the content. Such scenario unfolds some vital characteristics of Pakistani media atmosphere where women are perceived and perhaps presented in a particular way that shapes this paradox. As the report of *Global Media Monitoring* suggests in regards to Pakistan, analyzing media representation of women means analyzing their representation in that particular society. Deliberate and unintentional strengthening of social stereotypes about women in Pakistani society is part of Pakistani media (Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, ML Resources & Uks Research Center for Women and Media, 2005). One may interpret this report in reference to Pakistani mainstream media and female representation in accordance to

Pakistani stereotypes, but in order to understand so one has to know about these particular stereotypes. Apparently the place for women in Pakistani media as employees and artists defines its nature in light of sociocultural norms that don't accept female involvement in media productivity. Portrayal of women in Pakistani media has been well elaborated by Ahmed Rameez Ul Huda & Roshan Amber Ali as the authors explain 'media has objectified women' within its various extensions. The given treatment to women and their portrayal in this field expose them to 'sexual harassment'. Unfortunately, women are compared and perceived physically weaker than men; therefore they are not expected to defend themselves. Such treatment does not only suffocate them in their workplace but also in the show business as well. Their negative representation does not allow them to grow beyond stereotypes and change the negative image of woman despite all her personal efforts. This misrepresentation of women leads to the assumption that 'any woman involved in media is morally corrupt'. Such perception personally makes them target and victimize them (Huda & Ali, 2015:17,18).

If women in Pakistani media are victim of patriarchic norms then do Pakistani people prefer to have mainstream media according to *Sharia law* (Islamic law)? If not then what aspect(s) of Pakistani society or culture doesn't accept women in mainstream media? Perhaps answers to these questions can clarify representation of women in Pakistani mainstream media since 12 complaints out of 21 ban requests during October, November & December 2015 are against media content representing women.

Second most argued grievances including 13 ban/censorship requests during the mentioned time are with particular media content which offended social or cultural values of those complainants. With most complaints in this regard against sexually provocative content and its effects on Pakistani society via international media content refers not only to Pakistani sociocultural standards but also level of acceptance for unfamiliar mediated production. For instance representation of men and women in Pakistani advertisements and their acceptance among Pakistani audience can be understood through Shahzad Ali & Deeba Shahwar's research findings which suggest that female portrayal in most of the advertisements is 'unnecessary and needless'. Women are used as striking and eye catching part of the advertisement to capturing the attention of viewers (Shahwar, 2011:152). Such hypothesis refers to the interpretation of Pakistani viewers of women representation in Pakistani media content as well as demand

to expurgate relevant material. Besides, the proximity with number of complaints between nudity (24) and sociocultural (21) may refer to the bond between these two themes and their effect on Pakistani viewers. Simultaneously, the feeling of been affected by foreign customs and practices due to expansion of international mediated content in Pakistan can be understood through the explanation of Mazhar Hussain & Sawatia Ghazanfar where the authors have explained that Pakistani media is highly influenced by the neighboring country's cultural values spread by certain broadcast on Pakistani TV channels. Such invasion risks Pakistani culture (Ghazanfar, 2015:76).

With majority complaints against Indian media content, third most argued complaints are in relevance to ethnically/nationally offensive media content. Representing 16 complaints (as seen in Graphic 2.9) 6 complainants asked PEMRA to ban/censor the accordingly offensive electronic media broadcast. Interestingly, 5 out of these 6 (C.1.13, C.2.4, 6 & 11 and C.3.6) are against Indian media content. Perception of Indian media as a threat to national identity of Pakistani people and their ideology has been elaborated in a case study of a Pakistani city Layyah according to which Indian culture and its adoption in Pakistan is increasing gradually because Indian media provides such content(s) which attracts Pakistani audiences. Random expansion of cable television network in Pakistan is a great threat to national culture because cable operators present such contents which are 'against the culture of Islam and Pakistani culture'. Indian media contents are supposed to be 'replacing values of Pakistani culture'. Pakistani media is also following footsteps of Indian media in order to cope up with it while presenting pro-Indian culture content(s). Indian media has the tendency to not only disturb Pakistani social norms and values but also to provoke the sexual behavior among Pakistani youth (Malik Muhammad Sher Ali Juni, 2014:1124).

As this case study suggests, Indian media seems to overlap not only Pakistani media but cultural, social and religious values as well which bothers Pakistani viewers the most. However, in presence of all these accusations one may ask how different Indian culture is from Pakistani culture and if the difference is immense then who wishes to consume Indian mediated content in Pakistan? But finding the answers to these questions is subject to other researchers or future research.

The second theme (religion) of this analysis represents 11 complaints among other themes in Graphic 2.9. Out of these 11, 5 complainants asked PEMRA to ban/censor the mentioned media content with offended their religious belief. With majority population being Muslim, Pakistani mainstream media consumers expect Islamic regulations from regulatory authorities like PEMRA. In order to have a glimpse of Pakistani media and its expected (by Pakistani people) relation with Islam one may pay attention to pre-PEMRA era when state law passed a *Shariat Bill*⁷⁰ in order to declare and regulate law for the mainstream media in Pakistan according to which “The media would be banned from disseminating obscene, anti-Sharia, or otherwise Islamically objectionable material (Liard, 2007:317).” PEMRA came into existence (2002) later than such bill, but apparently people of Pakistan and their expectations from mainstream media regulatory authorities have not changed completely because the demand for censorship in reference to Islamic regulations refers to the desire of Pakistani audience for Sharia law. As result of a survey conducted in 2013, 84% Pakistani Muslims showed their support to have Sharia as official law in Pakistan (Pew Research Center, 2013). On the other hand the broadcast permitted by PEMRA happens to be anti-Sharia which seems not to keep the Pakistani viewers happy.

With 6 complaints and 5 ban requests, those complaints that offended Pakistani viewers due to violent content on mainstream media represent 5th most argued grievance among others on graph 2.9. The complaints in this category are against media individuals (anchormen, journalists, columnists etc) and reenactment programs that cover crime reports\plots. The accusation that these programs and foul language of media representatives promote violence than information, tells about the concern of Pakistani viewers and their demand to filter such content from the general broadcast. Moreover, the political influence on violence presented on Pakistani mainstream media was also part of some complaints that mentioned violent and abusive political shows being broadcasted. The relationship between violent content on television and Pakistani politics can also be observed with help of Graphic 2.9 which shows slight difference (4 political complaints and 6 violence complaints) between numbers of complaints

⁷⁰Shariat Bill: was a bill passed in Pakistani senate in 1990 to enforce Islamic law in Islamic Republic of Pakistan. (<http://tribune.com.pk/story/516152/nawaz-sharifs-shariat-bill/>)

representing both of these themes during the mentioned time period. However, one may ask whether censoring politicians or crime programs from television would normalize the broadcast according to desire of viewers.

3.5. Censorship on public demand

Out of fifteen complaints in October 2015, eight complainants have asked PEMRA to ban\censor the media content, but interestingly all those 8 complaints (C.1.1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13 & 15) are regarding nudity. The demand for censorship in this regard unveils and explains nature of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media and its viewership. So what exactly is censorship in Pakistani media? The basic idea to filter or block certain media content isn't different from rest of the media platforms in other parts of the World, but what makes censorship attention grabbing in case of Pakistan is demand/request made by media consumers (Pakistani population). As mentioned by Stuart Hannabuss & Mary Allard "censorship never dies, it changes its form" and the authors have also mentioned those kind of people that think society can face danger due to access to vast amount of information(Allard & Hannabuss, 2001:81). One can interpret Pakistani mainstream media in the same regard after observing the statistics in the Graphic 2.6 where the conventional concept of censorship is the same and PEMRA has the authority to control the data flow of electronic media, but the increasing demand of censorship made to PEMRA by its people of Pakistan shows new dynamics of censorship.

Moreover, self censorship as result of personal opinion and not state rules obligation in regards to maximum amount of complaints against sexual media content refers to the concept of private self censorship. As discussed by Philip Cook & Conrad Heilmann private self censorship gives the understanding of that kind of self censorship in which an individual bans/censors/suppresses feelings or ideas due to personal attitude without interference of any external or public censorship regime (Heilmann & Cook, 2013:194). Although PEMRA operates and regulates according to Pakistani rules, but the tolerance for new/different media content seems very hard to fill the gap between PEMRA and viewers expectations in Pakistan. Like Nitsa Ben-Ari has explained self

censorship in reference to both internal and external censorious agents and according to her apparently self-censorship shows its effectiveness in conservative societies that live their lives through strict norms like ‘the Orthodox community’, but it is effective enough in liberal societies as well (Ben-Ari, 2010:158,159).

After interpreting Graphic 2.7 the decrease in number of complaints in comparison to October 2015 perhaps refers to the fair change/shift in the perception of Pakistani mainstream media consumers towards media content and tolerance because the Graphic does refer to clear difference between these two months. Out of 15 complaints in November 2015, 7 complainants asked PEMRA to ban either the program/show or specific media personal. These ban requests are classified as follows:

- 1 complaint was against a bubblegum television commercial (as visible in image 1.9) where the complainant asked PEMRA to ban that particular ad which according to the complainant had sexually provocative content. (C.2.8)
- 3 complaints were submitted where complainants got offended due to Indian media content and argued that it was sexually indecent, religiously and culturally invasion on Pakistani society and demanded ban/censor on such content. (C.2.4, 6 & 11)
- 1 complaint with 30 similar grievances with same content, was against a particular television show which insulted a specific ethnic group and its people living in Pakistan (Gujjar tribe: as explained in the analysis of C.2.7) where the complainant asked PEMRA to ban that show.
- 1 complaint was registered against abusive language used by few journalists and a politician on a particular television channel during political talk shows and by naming all these individuals the complainant suggested PEMRA to ban all these people from television broadcast. (C.2.9)
- 1 complaint with 10 similar grievances was submitted against a particular journalist who according to the complainant issued Fatwa against his haters in a live television show and the complainant requested PEMRA to ban this individual on television. (C.2.13)

Majority complaints against Indian media content reflect the perception of Indian media among Pakistani people. However it also provides the possibility to question such

hate since both country share a long history with much in common, but the political and religious differences are there to create dissimilarity (Hashim, 2014). While discussing censorship and nationalism Susan D. Blum has mentioned that certain matters that require either freedom of expression or repression disclose much about that particular society, limitations of proper expression are like changeable cuisine, body images or religious ritual (D.Blum, 2010:1,2).

After interpreting Blum's text one can understand that even though Pakistan and India share a long history with a lot in common but the difference in regard to the limit of allowing Indian media content including entertainment media and Hindu rituals has less acceptance among Pakistani mainstream media consumers. This limit set by Pakistani people is apparently based on religious difference (Muslims and Hindus) between majority people of these two countries as it is verifiable with reference to the C.2.4, 6 & 11. With such majority of complaints in this regard the Graphic 2.7 helps to understand concern of Pakistani mainstream media consumers in reference to their ethnic/national identity where they show their unwillingness to compromise the desired status.

In November 2015 one complaint in particular which discusses the first theme of this analysis, is quite attention grabbing. C.2.2 included grievance against three particular television commercials as named by the complainant in reference to nudity/sexual. By declaring all those three commercials 'indecent' the complainant suggested PEMRA that female models should be excluded from commercials. The suggestion to exclude female body from media content actually opposes Laura Mulvey's theory of male gaze and according to this theory media is generally governed by men and due to this fact female body is considered/portrayed as an object through scopophilic⁷¹ point of view (Mulvey, 1975:808,809). Is it possible that the complainant is a female Pakistani with conventional believes who felt offended after watching these commercials? as visible in complaint analysis with *figure 3, 3.1 & 3.2* because if the complainant is a male individual then wouldn't the complaint take the argument to a step further where one may ask: Does male gaze vary in accordance to religious belief? If yes

⁷¹Scopophilia: is the sexual pleasure that one obtain by looking at another person's body. (<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/scopophilia?s=t>)

then do Pakistani men prefer to gaze female body with their naked eye (physical presence) rather than on screen through mainstream media?

In December 2015 out of 9 complaints against socially or culturally offensive media content, 4 complainants have suggested/requested PEMRA to ban/stop the mediated broadcast as mentioned in C.3.3, 6, 8 & 10. As mentioned by the complainant in 3rd complaint bribery is worst for all societies, for Pakistani society though the complainant considered it worst due to non-Islamic by calling it '*Haram* and prohibited' in accordance to Islamic values. Apart from ban request of the complainant one may pay attention to the interpretation of this individual who found bribery harmful to Pakistani society not because of constitutional law but due to its anti-Islamic nature which also refers to 2 other complaints submitted in December and those complainants also complained about anti-Islamic media content. Such interpretation of mediated content gives reference to the strong relationship between Pakistani social norms and Islam where Pakistani people expect Islamic approach of the mainstream media as well. However, mediated content producers may find media production according to pro-religious expectation(s) leading towards diminishing productivity. Edward W. Said mentioned about fusion of media production and Islam in his book where he said:

“The general state of Islamic world with its decline in productivity and well-being, including such phenomena as censorship, the relative absence of democracy, the dismaying prevalence of dictatorship, and fiercely repressive and authoritarian states some of whom practice and encourage terrorism, torture, genital mutilation seems backward and cruel; this includes such basically Islamic countries as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, and Algeria, among others (Said, 1997:15).”

Perhaps such complaint also gives one the idea about the unsaid conflict between Pakistani mainstream media producers and viewers due to Pakistani social norms apparently having Islamic influence. In C.3.6 the complainant has clearly mentioned that he/she is not interested in watching Indian media content on Pakistani channels and has asked PEMRA to 'stop showing Indian culture' which explains the context of complaint as well as gives reference to 3rd most argued theme ethnic/nationalist as seen in Graphic 2.8. The declaration of broadcasting Indian dramas on Pakistani television channel as 'crime' gives one the idea about intensity of the complaint. Being aware of the power of

media the complainant perceived Indian television dramas as cultural invasion in Pakistan and therefore said “stop showing Indian culture” and the cultural discount⁷² in this regard refers to differences between Indian media content and Pakistani sociocultural norms. Lion König has discussed about expected hazards in contemporary media due to cultural censorship where according to him the basic idea of citizenship is now revived and comes into the logical center, widening the idea to provide it with new qualities to deal with new challenges (König, 2013:13). By interpreting König’s concept of citizenship which refers to the life through sociocultural norms, one can recognize the possibility of Pakistani media authorities like PEMRA to face complaints from Pakistani viewers after broadcasting Indian content on Pakistani channels in presence of various disputes between these two countries.

C.3.8 covered grievance of a 60 year old Pakistani who felt ‘ashamed’ while watching with his mother and wife a particular female model in a television commercial and a specific drama serial, but another interesting component of complaint is the question how 60 year old Pakistani male felt ‘ashamed’? The misperception of two different women as one person (as analyzed in *figure 3.9*) may happen either due to repetitive telecast of one content only (either the commercial or the drama) or the sociocultural customs of that man influenced his psychology to overlap imagery of the model from the commercial over the actress of the drama serial and ask PEMRA to ‘stop’ such broadcast. We can assume that this man (the complainant) felt ashamed watching the television commercial or the drama serial with his wife and mother because of the strict norms of Pakistani society where female body is not expected to be exposed and if it happens then not viewed with family members.

The complainant in C.3.10 requested PEMRA to ban the word ‘divorce’ on all Pakistani television channels because according to that individual this particular word and its consequences become part of the real life of Pakistani people due to its access on nationwide television. Such demand of censorship not only for one’s self but for others as well reveals two aspects of this complaint. Firstly, one may assume that the complainant has experienced divorce in his\her personal life because the individual has

⁷² Cultural discount: The reduction in the value of a television program when sold or broadcasted in external market. (<http://www.booksites.net/download/chadwickbeech/Glossary.htm>)

mentioned that “this word is hurting those who suffer from this damn” and perhaps this is the reason for such demand with recommendation for other Pakistani people as well. The second possible aspect can be fear of experiencing divorce as a married person and losing the spouse while censoring the word not only for self but for the partner as well so he/she won't be able to watch/hear it either may provide a psychological comfort to the complainant. As Barry Jason Mauer has explained self-censor may occur due to good causes like politeness, but sometimes we practice it because we see someone else as a negative example and we fear to face the same consequences (Mauer, 2016).

As seen in Graphic 2.8 the second highest bar for the most complained category refers to nudity/sexual and out of 8 complaints in this manner, 2 complainants asked PEMRA to ban/censor the mentioned mediated content. However, out of these 2, 1 complainant has specifically questioned PEMRA's regulations in regard to censorship on Pakistani television channels where that individual has mentioned 3 different television commercials by naming the products in C.3.2. Visual elaboration of the grievance with image 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 can help one to understand the context of this particular complaint and claim of the complainant. Concerned about the society as stated in the complaint, the complainant asked PEMRA to ban all 3 commercials of body lotion. Some of the adjectives as ‘very cheap, vulgar, naked women’ stated in complaint can provide a glimpse of the rattling thoughts in the mind of this complainant and can elucidate the objection. Are those ads really sexually provocative? One may ask which Pakistani sociocultural norms condemn those body lotion commercials. The results of a survey conducted in Lahore, Pakistan on ethical issues in Pakistani advertising can interpret Pakistani sociocultural standards and peoples' expectations from regulatory authorities like PEMRA. According to this survey Pakistani men and women are offended by indecent language in advertisement at least, but the same people get offended the most by sexiest images in commercials due to their religious perception (Waheed Akhter, 2011:450,451).

In December 2015, it seems like the Pakistani viewers got offended from the political and violent content the least (Graphic 2.8). Calling it ‘against the law’ the complainant in C.3.13 has asked PEMRA to ban/censor all reenactment programs. The

violent nature of mediated content (as argued in detail in the complaint) irritated the complainant and the description of 13th complaint helps one to understand the magnitude of violence in the mentioned television reenactment program and behavior of media correspondent. Educating\informing people with enlightening content that can expand the awareness about various crimes in a society is one thing, but transformation of the same content into entertaining and violent plot differs from intellectual approach towards discussing crime on media platform. As David Bergstein elaborates, violence is part of the human nature and we should know it and admit its existence ‘if for no other reason than ensuring an informed public’. Unnecessary violence as source of entertainment though is not part of human nature. (Bergstein, 2014)

As discussion with details will continue in the following chapter here is brief view on the findings of QCA⁷³:

In this paper the qualitative content analysis suggests that most complainants during the mentioned time period were offended by nude or sexually provocative media content and most requests to ban/censor certain media content also belong to this particular category. Moreover, most of the grievances in this regard are against representation of female models, actresses and feminine individuals in Pakistani electronic media content. Female body and its personality are expected to be presented with either least or none exposure in Pakistani mainstream media as suggested in the content of these complaints. Many complaints against sexual media content also included religious and sociocultural aspects of Pakistani society as supportive reference to validate the grievances.

Most of the complaints in which Pakistani identity or nationality was offended were against Indian media content. As mentioned in C.1.13, C.2.4, 6 & 11 and C.3.6 the complainants have asked PEMRA to ban/censor the mentioned mediated content because of its Indian origin while considering it threat to Pakistani identity, sovereignty and sociocultural norms.

Pakistani viewers seemed to be least bothered by violent and politically offensive media content since the number of complaints regarding these two themes are quite low

⁷³QCA: stands for qualitative content analysis.

in comparison to other four categories. In fact no one asked/requested PEMRA to ban/sensor politically offensive mediated content however violent content with reference to reenactment programs had major contribution in number of complaints in that regard because such shows are perceived sexually provocative, violent, against Islamic values and Pakistani sociocultural norms by Pakistani audiences . With such difference between nature of complaints in these two themes, one can assume that Pakistani viewers can tolerate politically offensive broadcast without asking PEMRA to ban it (as mentioned in C.1.7), but this is not the same (as mentioned in C.1.15) when it comes to reenactment programs showing crimes (rape, theft, murder) committed in Pakistani cities.

CONCLUSION

In 399 BC mankind could have gained more if *Socrates* had not been sentenced to death as the verdict of censoring his unorthodox philosophy. The world has changed a lot since then and mankind has learnt to seek and gain knowledge in order to nourish the intellectual needs from all possible sources. The thirst for knowledge with advancement in research and archives has led mankind on the path that gives birth to the eager of seeking and gaining information beyond limits. Limits! Are there any limits in seeking and gaining knowledge? Who sets these limits? How do we define the criteria to set limits?

Mass media with its extensions does not only provide mankind various mediums to enhance communications and gain information, but it also makes available space for the concept of censorship. The distribution between the concept and its practice can be understood from censorship as an idea towards censoring as an action that has the ability to weaken a ruling/governing authority and moral regulations in a society (Bourke, 1956:57). If government and social norms are threaten by certain media content(s), the act of censoring may provide the possibility to discard such work of media, but one may think would that really discard it or provoke a vibe of insurgency?

In this study the analytical research approach has provided help in order to explore the relationship between Pakistani mainstream media content and expectations of its audiences from it with demand of censorship if offended. With glimpse of Pakistani historical background and its media landscape (as provided in chapter 1), the aim of this research was to investigate the existence of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media and its causes. Moreover, possible reasons of censorship demand against certain type of media content(s) made by Pakistani audiences to PEMRA and study of these complaints were also major component of this research. As provided in previous chapter, the findings of the qualitative content analysis in this thesis help one to understand nature of this study. Major findings are acquired through qualitative textual l

study of 45 complaints submitted to PEMRA against Pakistani mainstream media content(s) by its audiences from October, November & December 2015.

The three major findings of qualitative content analysis in this research suggest that:

1. Female body and its personality are expected to be presented with either least or none exposure in Pakistani mainstream media content(s) since many complaints against sexual media content also included religious and sociocultural aspects of Pakistani society as supportive reference to validate the grievances.

2. PEMRA is requested to ban/censor certain mediated content(s) because of its Indian origin because Pakistani audiences consider it threat to Pakistani identity, sovereignty and sociocultural norms.

3. Pakistani viewers can tolerate politically offensive broadcast without asking PEMRA to ban it in comparison to reenactment programs showing crimes (rape, theft, murder) committed in Pakistani cities because such shows are perceived sexually provocative, violent, against Islamic values and Pakistani sociocultural norms by Pakistani audiences.

After analyzing complaints against nudity the questions regarding these complainants, their mentality and Pakistani society may increase the curiosity in one's mind. As discussed by Caroline Tagnay & Jac SM Kee when sociocultural norms regarding sexuality are controlled by government and non-government authorities as protectors of public morality with support of 'religious or conservative groups', a feminist assessment of the gender regulations must defy these authoritarian bodies (Tagnay & Kee, 2013:117). Female oppression or sexism⁷⁴ in Pakistani mainstream media does not refer to state regulations or censorship policy only, but it also highlights the usual perception of Pakistani audiences that demand ban/censor on mediated content(s) that includes exposure to female body even in advertisements like hair removal creams and other cosmetics where intended audience is female population of Pakistan. Though all complaints submitted to PEMRA during the mentioned time period were anonymous, the patriarchal tone with censorship demand in regards to female body

⁷⁴Sexism: Attitudes or behavior based on traditional stereotypes of gender roles or ingrained and institutionalized prejudice against or hatred of women. (<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/sexism?s=t>)

and its exposure paints the landscape of contemporary Pakistani society. Interpretation of specific media content(s) as sexually provocative or nude and demand to ban/censor it due to its correlation with anti-Islamic values in Pakistani mainstream media refers to the grievances of Pakistani audience in their complaints, but one may ask if media should operate in accordance with religious values or not? Jeremy Stolow gives answer to this question by saying “The problem with the phrase ‘religion and media’ is that it is a pleonasm (Stolow, 2005:125).” The redundancy of religion to formulate mass media platforms of an entire country gives a fair and clear warning of putting more hurdles in the way of media production and free flow of information.

Two nations with a lot in common (even land before 1947) Pakistan and India represent religiously, politically and culturally controversial and rocky relationship. Both countries have fought 4 wars against each other since 1947 that have definitely played their role to pinch the old wound of partition from time to time (Hashim A. , 2014). Mass media and its extensions have the tendency to either make these relations better or worse and in both cases these two nations with millions of people with similar cultures but different religious identities depend strongly on their mainstream media platforms. Banning Indian media content in Pakistan in the name of religion and nationalism would definitely not enlighten its youth on whom not only the country’s future but international relations with other countries depend as well. Vandana Seth has mentioned about potential of media on both sides of borders by saying in both of these countries the media can work together by ‘indulging in a practice of role-reversals’ which gives the hint of main framework that can help to set up the necessary connections between India and Pakistan regarding negotiations in communication procedures (Seth, 2016:12). If media content can build bridges between these two countries and have the potential to nourish the corroded relationship on both sides, then people of both countries should welcome such diplomatic way of negotiation rather than considering it cultural or religious invasion.

As reenactment programs on television are supposed to make people aware of the dreadful criminal activities and suggest counter measurements, Pakistani audiences seem to interpret them as anti-Pakistani ideology by declaring them immoral. Reporting crime in an unconventional way is part of the format of such television programs, but the

whole purpose is to deliver the news. If Pakistani mainstream media consumers perceive such programs offensive and request PEMRA to ban them then how do they expect the government/state to allow free journalism and news coverage in Pakistan? In order to understand whether particular media content lacks ‘social importance’ or not, one should first investigate the interests promoted by that media as Mary B. Cook puts it (Cook, 1977:384). Perhaps sociocultural norms of Pakistani audiences provide them quite limited canvas to draw or perceive criminology and not support its coverage.

Like any other country, mass media landscape in Pakistanis also divided in accordance to its various extensions. However, it would be really interesting to observe whether this variation also divides media perception and audience behavior in Pakistan. Findings of a research conducted in order to discover the consequences of internet censorship in Pakistan have the tendency to illuminate the behavioral differences between mainstream media and internet consumers in Pakistan. This particular research covered the behavioral change of Pakistani internet users after the censorship on pornographic websites in 2011 and on YouTube in 2012 in Pakistan. The research findings suggested that after blocking pornographic websites ‘encrypted traffic⁷⁵’ increased where the users got access to desired content from alternative websites by switching to VPN⁷⁶ connections mainly. On the other hand shifting to VPN connections to gain access to YouTube or alternative video content providing websites started from the very day when the government imposed ban which showed rapid adaptation of internet users to circumvent advance ‘blocking mechanism’(Khattak, 2014:283).

By following the results of a/m research on behavioral changes of Pakistani internet users one can observe the approach to the concept of media censorship contrary to the Pakistani mainstream media audiences as seen in the complaints submitted to PEMRA. Apparently, the difference is not only between mainstream media and internet in the same country, but also the behavior of audiences towards censorship. Ironically, Pakistani internet users seek circumvention over ban/censor on pornographic content

⁷⁵Encrypted Traffic: refers to the idea when data flow on internet is strongly encoded and only content provider and intended receiver can understand it.
(http://blog.internetassociation.org/post/142636034488/encryption-secures-online-information-protects?gclid=COG109_Pnc0CFQbgGwodBFsDYg)

⁷⁶Virtual Private Network: can connect multiple sites over a large distance just like a Wide Area Network (WAN). VPNs are often used to extend intranets worldwide to disseminate information and news to a wide user base. (<http://whatismyipaddress.com/vpn>)

and YouTube through advance ways where as mainstream media consumers ask PEMRA to ban/censor any sort of national and international broadcast that exposes female body while declaring it immoral. Such difference in mediated contents and their perception in the same country refer to the complex society of Pakistan from which one can assume two understandings. Rather people in Pakistan pretend to live their lives according to the majority around them with conservative believes and demand censorship on mainstream media content(s) while bypassing blocking mechanisms on internet at personal level, or the internet users are very few in comparison to mainstream media audiences that represent/cover majority population of mass media consumers in Pakistan.

Presence of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media and its practice of censoring certain media content(s) reveals state policy and its implementation through regulatory authorizes like PEMRA. As discussed by Jukka Pietiläinen & Dmitry Strovsky free speech and print media are vital branches of a democracy and ‘popular support’ to them can assure the survival of that nation (Pietiläinen & Strovsky, 2010:53). Apart from political influence on Pakistani mainstream media the demand of censorship by Pakistani audiences promotes anti-democratic atmosphere for the contemporary mediums of expressions and communications. The cohesion of Pakistani media sociology with Pakistani ideology formed through Islamic values, sociocultural and political believes helps to formulate the system that monitors media content flow in a minute scrutinizing manner.

As seen in 45 complaints of Pakistani audiences from October, November & December 2015 the demand of censoring media content by declaring it anti-Islamic, pro-Indian or anti-Pakistani sociocultural norms refers to the concept of ‘private self-censorship by proxy’ where Pakistani audiences internalize external factors like religion and politics to suppress certain media content(s). Moreover, part of these complaints the suggestion to censor certain media content(s) for others reveals the relation between Pakistani audiences and ‘third person effect’ with high self-esteem however as suggested by literature self-compassion can possibly the best solution to avoid such effects. In all 153 complaints submitted to PEMRA during the stated time period, not even a single complaint was against censorship of any broadcasted media content and such behavioral

effect can refer to the ‘spiral of silence’ where Pakistani audiences do not bother to complain anti-censorship complaints since majority complaints are pro-censorship that lead to the suppression of their ideas(s) with fear of having different opinion and opposing the majority audiences. On the other hand absence of anti-censorship complaints may refer to the phenomenon of state censorship where PEMRA does not publish such complaints but only pro-censorship complaints intentionally in order to validate and justify censoring certain media content(s).

While exploring the answers to research questions and carrying out this study, the author of this thesis was baffled with more and new cases of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media sphere that refer to the Pakistani mainstream media landscape and its proximity with the concept of censorship. Two of those examples are worth paying attention to for the sake of accumulating information about contemporary Pakistani mainstream media hegemony and its audiences that demand and anticipate the practice of censoring certain media content(s) due to their religious, sociocultural and political believes. On May 21st2016 PEMRA banned all types of reenactment television telecast particularly coverage of crimes like ‘rape’ and ‘raid’ where according to PEMRA such decision was taken “to uphold the sanctity of the Holy month of Ramazan” as this Islamic month is expected to start within first week of June, 2016 (Sahi, 2016). Later on May 29th 2016 after making amendment on ban on all sorts of contraceptive commercials, PEMRA issued a ‘revised notice’ informing all television channels and radio stations not to broadcast any sort of contraceptive advertisement ‘during the prime time until 11pm (Ali, 2016).’ Though censoring certain type of media content(s) may prevent disagreement among Pakistani citizens but censorship of national and international media content in the name of religion, nationalism or culture definitely doesn’t make Pakistan a democratic country among rest of the World. Much needs to be done in order to save Pakistani media landscape and its audiences from specter of censorship with its complex layers.

PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) is considerably the gate keeper of electronic media content flow in the country and this regulatory body has very important job to perform since millions of Pakistani people expect PEMRA to

enlighten them with mediated content according to the morality and sociocultural norms of Pakistan. Media censorship and its practice as result of state regulations and its demand by Pakistani audiences challenge the very mandate of PEMRA which states “Ensure accountability, transparency and good governance by optimization the free flow of information (PEMRA, 2002).” Morality and ethics shaped through Pakistani ideology in regards to mainstream media content (under PEMRA’s supervision) refer to media production and its presentation according to limited framework beyond which the phenomenon of censorship awaits restricted mediated content.

Following up on this thesis, study in future can possibly be comparative content analysis of one to one interviews with some Pakistani mainstream media consumers and an online questionnaire given to some Pakistani nationals living abroad. Questions in both interviews and the questionnaire are supposed to be based on all six themes/categories developed in QCA of this research (Media landscape in Pakistan and censorship through viewers’ complaints to PEMRA) discussing the central idea of censorship in Pakistani mainstream media. Research aim should be the comparison of all answers given by participants in accordance to their perception of broadcasting media in Pakistan and their responses to it. The expectation from such comparative analysis is to investigate whether exposure and experience of foreign media content(s) changes the behavior of Pakistani mainstream media audiences in regards to the concept of censorship and if it does then to what extent does it differ from Pakistani audiences living in Pakistan and in regards to what particular media content(s) does it vary. If the proposed study is carried out then it would help to understand the behavioral change of Pakistani mainstream media audiences and their approach to the idea of media censorship in accordance to their geography.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Complaints to PEMRA from October 2015. Acquired from <http://58.65.182.183/complaints/index1.php?m=October&yy=2015> (2015, April 14)

1. Following complaints were registered against *Abb Takk*⁷⁷ channel and its sister channel *Apna Channel*⁷⁸ in the similar order:

- Translated from Urdu to English: It is a humble request when ever any speech or program is showed in English language then please show its Urdu translation simultaneously as well so that common men would be able to understand because majority people don't know English language. Thanks *Azeem Shafique* (in this particular complaint somehow the person added his name and PEMRA displayed it as well)

- “This channel is misguiding thousands of people by cheap investigative programs and playing with the careers of thousands of people on Pakistan. Take very strict actions against them and BAN them ASAP.”

- “Dear PEMRA pointed channels are showing nudity, vulgarity, abusive language and Hinduism or Hindu religious content etc. I am not against for importing international content but it is your responsibility to check all these things. If any drama or cartoon should be import then it could be necessary that importer should definitely re dub content in our national language and also edit vulgar or religious content.”

- “Complain against ABB TAK Host Ms Sana Faisal to get a quick, pure and faithful action against her act.” (the reason of complaint against this particular television person is not mentioned though)

- “Apna channel morning show http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x39lm6q_most-vulgar-dress-in-a-morning-show-of-apna-news-channel_news.”

2. Following complaints were registered against *Ary Digital*⁷⁹ television channel in same order:

⁷⁷Abb Takk: is Pakistani news broadcasting television channel which was launched on 19 April 2013. (<http://abbtakk.tv/en/>)

⁷⁸Apna Channel: is Pakistani satellite television channel which is broadcasted in Punjabi (provincial language) language with entertainment content. It was launched on 14 October 2004. (<http://apna.tv/>)

- “My Complaint is regarding to the Whole ARY Group Especially ARY Zindagi. They are working on the Jewish Ideology by broadcasting TV shows/Dramas based on Jewish Thinking. Evidence is given in the given link: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x37dcp9> Try to scrutinize each & everything that is broadcasting and exploiting the Pakistan's Identity/Ideology.”

- Translated from Urdu to English: 1) Why in the commercial of ‘Gillette Shaving Gel the One eye of devil has been shown? 2) Why in the commercial of Dairy Milk Chocolate, elderly guy is shown singing in a vulgar romantic way? 3) Why in one biscuit advertisement the husband touches hand of his wife and she replies ‘what are you doing? The child would see us.’ All these three advertisements should be banned.

- “Dear Sir! Yesterday dated: 2015-10-11 at 08:30 on ARY news Sami Ibrahim has passed on really shameful, disgusting, hateful, pathetic remarks about an elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan You can see a glimpse of this recording at link <https://twitter.com/Muqadas86/status/652907876181245952> Sir this channel is not only using such remarks first time but also involved in heinous campaign against elected govt. So it is kindly requested that please take notice of this and ban Sami Ibrahim and ARY channel Best Regards, Faisal Rafique Address: Mårdstigen 2, Lgh 1201, 17075, Solna, Sweden.” (same reason of complaint *46)

- My complaint is against Ary Digital’s ‘Jawani Phir Nahi Ani’ (Young age won’t come back), Geo’s ‘Manto’ and Hum TV’s ‘Na Mloom Afrad’ (Unknown People). Don’t we have any well known celebrity to make film on or do we have no other topics than vulgar topics? Mehwish Hayat’s item songs⁸⁰ in ‘Na Maloom Afrad’ and ‘Jawani Phir Nahi Ani’ are not watchable. Advertising of ‘shameless’ movies is also on peak. Now even news channels on TV are not watchable with families. We have biographies of well known people and it is possible to make movies on them. Furthermore, there should be ban on such vulgar movies because film production should be on good topics so Pakistan as a country would have good image.

⁷⁹Ary Digital: is supplementary channel of Ary Group and it was launched in 2000. The channel mostly broadcasts entertainment content. (<http://www.arydigital.tv/>)

⁸⁰ Item song: also known as item number is actually originated from Indian cinema which refers to musical performance as part of the movie’s plot including beautiful woman dancing and entertaining men.

- “Complaint about BIG BOSS. Very vulgar and anti cultural content in big boss. This is not a family show. Please take action on this content. Take notice about these types of programs and show the Pakistani content on Pakistani channels.” (Big Boss is an Indian reality show)

- “Dear Pemra : I am writing to inform you that ARY Digital is a family channel but now days it is showing very inappropriate TV program, which is 'Big boss' session 9. It is a Indian program/show & I can assure you that it is not a family show!! They use bad languages they show nudity and its very inappropriate. I am dissatisfied with your service plz Wake up for sake of Our Children! I feel very ashamed by watching these kinds of cheap inappropriate TV programs. Please make shortfall immediately action and to ensure that such things don't happen my job was to inform you Please look into these matters. Sincerely, Muhammad Usman.”

- “Vulgar DRAMA AASHIQEE⁸¹ Check the promo of drama it is very much vulgar and against the norms of our society I called your call centre but nobody attend call - it was only recordings "All agents are busy!!!" Pls edit / censor such dramas. It increases Fahashi⁸² / obscenity / vulgarity in our society PEMRA should be made powerful.”

3. Following complaints were made against Ary Musik⁸³ channel:

- “The program of this channel "Living on the Edge" is promoting vulgarity among young generation. There should be a rule about which kind of language we can use on the screen. But the video which I saw was totally against our laws. Kindly help us so we can watch program easily. I think we should make a law about language, because the video which I saw, the girl used totally vulgar and Bazari (street) language.”

- “I saw extremely vulgar clip (www.24newspk.com/video/whats-going-on-waqar-zaka-show/) about Waqar Zaka show on Ary MusiK in which he held a so called competition where boys have to undress themselves on each wrong answer from the girls in front of her. This channel is crossing all the limits and spoiling our youth and traditional values. And plz bound some channels which 80% showing Indian dramas

⁸¹Aashiqui: is a romantic TV drama originally from Turkey but it is also broadcasted in Pakistan with Urdu dubbing. (<https://www.facebook.com/aashiquionaryzindagi>)

⁸²Fahash: is word from Urdu language which means indecent.

⁸³Ary Musik: is Pakistani music channel which broadcasts in both Urdu and English language. Usually the content consists of different music genres and different type of TV shows. (<http://www.arymusik.tv/>)

&shows and have made themselves totally Indian representative and impacting on our culture. Stop this lobby and make rules for these anti Pakistan agents. Stop vulgar shows and bound the flood of Indian made dramas and shows up to some limit on our media.”

- “<http://www.zemtv.com/2015/09/16/famous-pakistani-tv-channel-cross-all-limits/> kindly watch this with your family once and then you might also find on this page having a complaint about this channel and its content, ban such dramas once and for all regulate the channels and abide them with rules.”

4. Following complaints were registered against Ary News⁸⁴ channel:

- Translated from Urdu to English: Compliant is against Ary News reenactment program ‘Jurm Bolta Hai’ (crime speaks). I have also given the link <http://arytube.tv/horrible-fate-of-relations-with-sisters-friend/>. TV news channels and these other programs in the name of entertainment are actually giving ideas about how to plan terrorist activities, how to rape strangers and our own people and how to commit felony. In the name of ‘Truth’ our media is actually giving criminal ideas to our young innocent brains (youth) and such programs are the reason for increase in crime ratio. It is my request to stop them and stop vulgarity based crime programs as well. It is my appeal to the Supreme Court to pay attention and stop these programs that are teaching Pakistani people ways through reenactment programs how to rape and romance. There should be no concession at all.

- “Take action against Ary before 1 day running campaign in PTI⁸⁵ favor take action against Ary ban Ary.”

- “In today's live program, a journalist named Sami Ibrahim abused Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Used words which are utter shame. No one has right to insult elected PM of Pakistan. Mr. Sami Ibrahim should be banned immediately and ARY News should be asked to apologize for airing such shameful content. It has become habit of ARY News to insult PM and Govt. Office Holders.” (complaint about same issue and same journalist * 45)

- “ARY is constantly violating the election campaigning deadline by running LIVE shows for one single political party. In a persistent and egregious

⁸⁴Ary News: Launched on 26 September 2004, it is a bilingual Pakistani news channels in both Urdu and English language. (<http://arynews.tv/en/>)

⁸⁵ PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is one of prominent political parties of Pakistan.

violation of media ethics it runs propaganda. Any channel should not be allowed to host one sided political shows with political leaders from one party once Election Commission has barred any political promotion.”

5. Following complaints were filed against Cartoon Network⁸⁶ and its content:

- “Please be informed that the Cartoon Network shown in our area is coming from India, DISH TV logo is clearly visible in the lower right corner, all the BHAGWAN (God in Hindi language) related cartoons are on air all the times, e.g. return of Hanuman (a Hindu God of power) etc, also the language is Hindi. It's the main reason behind the total spoil of our children mindset as Alhamdulillah (thanks to God) we are Muslims and teach our children the Islamic values BUT this Indian Cartoon Network is ruining their concepts, language is also too bad and since children can relate many words of Urdu with Hindi, they pick up things. Since we live in Pakistan (Alhamdulillah) and not in India, we are not supposed to see these things or teach our children Bhagwaans and Sur Kshetra (a singing competition between Pakistani and Indian singers) and blah blah at any time. It is requested to take necessary action and get this channel either shifted to the original Cartoon Network or blocked and the operator be punished as per the PEMRA rules, thank you.”

- “Dear Sir/ Ma'am, I hope this finds you well. As of lately I have had a chance to catch a glimpse of Cartoon Network with my 3-years' old. It was disgusting to see a cartoon character say to another, "Stop being a dick". It was on Saturday, 17th October, 2015 in the morning time. Moreover, the cartoon "Oggy and the cockroaches" features frequent kissing and a sort intimidating scenes, which I would never want my kid to watch at this age. This is a very little that I saw but I'm sure there must be other shows with inappropriate content. Please have a check. It is my humble request. Cartoon Network shouldn't be airing everything that the Western countries show. We surely have a different cultural norms and it's our duty to respect it. Showing a kid something that I've mentioned earlier should be considered a crime.”

⁸⁶ Cartoon Network: in Pakistan was launched on 2nd April 2004 from its headquarters in Karachi, Pakistan and it is also broadcasted in other Asian countries like Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Iran. (<http://www.cartoonnetworkasia.com/>)

6. Following complaints were made against Express News⁸⁷ channel and their certain broadcast:

- Translated from Urdu to English: Few days ago after the Mina incident (Hajj Stamped in Mecca), not only PEMRA's but government's warning was violated as well by Express News where they broadcasted an entire program and had detailed discussion about this incident. I hope PEMRA will take notice of it and will start an investigation in this manner against responsible people from the management of this program. There should be investigation against producers and anchor men of this program so that other channel owners and anchor men won't violate the law. Thanks.

- "TV is still giving Indian songs in news. If it is impossible then use only Pakistani songs instead of Indian songs."

- Translated from Urdu to English: Hello, my complaint is against Express news because even after courts' order, they have shown picture and have played audio of Altaf Hussain who is chair person of MQM (controversial political party in Pakistan). This all happen today during the break time of the TV program 'Shabbir to Dekhe Ga' (no matter what but Shabbir will see). Please make sure these channel people follow the court of law and don't show enemies of Pakistan. There are other channels as well who are involved in same activity. Moreover, please control the advertisements these channels are showing, many time we watch television with family and these channels show indecent and Indian commercials.

7. Following complaints were registered against Geo News⁸⁸ channel:

- "I have just watched today's 12pm bulletin of GEO News. They are giving only news of NA121 (an area for national election voting) and other one of Okara (city name) Election. Then they say PTI blame us. Why they are not giving News of PP141 (an area for national election voting) in news just because PTI have won that seat. Shame on GEO News for such biased news they should give all news."

- "Advertisement of a biscuit (Special) is vulgarity. Every advertisement for children product has an aim to attract children but this advertisement has nothing for children and TV channels are promoting vulgarity and western culture. You should take

⁸⁷ Express News: as daily Urdu newspaper was founded on 3rd September 1998, but its television channel was launched on 1st January 2008. (<http://www.express.pk/>)

⁸⁸ Geo News: is a private Pakistani news channel which was launched in 2002. (<http://www.geo.tv/>)

notice and take necessary action against TV channels and the sensor board which passed this advertisement. PEMRA should strictly ban advertisements like this (Special). PEMRA should make it clear that Pakistan is an Islamic country and no channel has right to promote vulgarity.”

- “Dear Sir, Yesterday Evening Geo News reported that there was an Bomb Blast in a Riyadh - Saudi Arabia whereas it Happened in Najran which is more than 800 km from Riyadh. The attack in Riyadh caused a Panic to our family members in Pakistan. Kindly tell these News channels not to report any news until it is 100% confirmed and also report the Source of their information. Thank you for your Understanding.”

8. Following complaints were filed against Samaa TV channel:

- “I have been observing that Samaa TV is promoting racism by continuously flaunting CM Sindh as Wadaa Saain (supreme leader), Saatvaa Aasmaan p saain (leader on 7th sky), Saain kaa dimaagh (brain of a leader), Saain to Saain Saain ki Assembly b Saain (supreme leader isn’t alone but his assembly is supreme as well) and all such derogatory terms against Sindh (Pakistani province) and Sindhis. Please take an action against them as they are hurting sentiments of millions of Sindhi Pakistanis. I have never seen this TV channel using any such terms for Mohajrs (refugees from partition time) or against MQM (political party), because I know that some of the MQM activists are working in this TV channel. Please take a stern action against this blatant racism and ignorant attitude of Samaa TV. Please dictate them the code of conduct which should dictate that they shouldn’t hurt the sentiments of 2nd largest ethnicity of Pakistan, I.e Sindhis.”

- “Disrespectful content. The content which has being telecasted in the morning show promotes dancing of young girls as young as 5, encouraging them to move their bodies is a contempt and disregard of Islamic values. Today is Friday, a holy day, secondly it is also 24th of Zilhaj (Islamic month), a day commemorated as the day of Mubahila when Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) went for an encounter with the Christians of Najran. This day is a landmark day in the history of Islam. The entire event is narrated in Surah Al-Imran (Surah 3) Ayat 61. The program ‘Subah Sawyeray Samaa k sath’ (Early morning with Samaa) dated Friday, October 9, 2015 is disrespectful against

the Islamic teachings and values and hence I will register my complaint against it. PEMRA should have a code on morning shows and make all morning shows respect the Islamic dates. Samaa must be penalized for such act.”

- Translated from Urdu to English: Reenactment programs from all channels should be banned since God has given you the authority so stop it. Reenactment programs depict sex, rape; vulgarity and theft so stop them and ban them. Our national telecast is also broadcasted in neighbor countries. After watching they will say that there is no difference between us and people of Pakistan. *Ary Digital, Ary News, Sama aand Abb Takk* (television channel names) and all other channels that are showing reenactment programs should be banned. In the name of God and Prophet please stop these reenactment programs since they are destroying our youth.

- Translated from Urdu to English: My complaint is against Samaa News’s program ‘Interrogation’ since it is more like Indian movies with full of action and vulgarity. One boy is a target killer; he kills the girl and her father and escapes easily. Every time when I turn on the news I watch such kind of sex or rape based programs and as a female citizen of Pakistan, I get angry afterwards thinking is there no one monitoring such content? Our Pakistani media is giving free advice how to get girls, how to rape someone, how does rape happen, how to misbehave with parents, brothers and sisters. Ban reenactment program on Samaa TV.

Annex 2: Complaints to PEMRA from November 2015. Acquired from <http://58.65.182.183/complaints/index1.php?m=November&yy=2015> (2015, April 14)

1. Following complaints were registered against ARY Digital channel:

- “We accept that our dramas and shows with major issues of our society. But on the other hand these dramas are promoting non-Islamic culture in our homes. The language tones, dress culture and the topics of dramas are really frustrating our moral behaviors. These dramas are also promoting non-Islamic thinking where there is already Islam. Please make the dramas so that our society copies the Islamic values instead of non-Islamic culture. Thanks.”

- “We don't want Indian programs on our TV channels. Are they legally permitted to show Indian programs? Especially GEO, ARY Digital and EXPRESS. About GEO it looks Indian channel, not Pakistani. Most of the time these channels telecast Indian programs, especially their religious activities. We don't want any Indian program on our TV channels. Please ban all Indian programs and even Indian commercials from Pakistani channels.”

2. Following complaints were made against ARY NEWS channel:

- “We have known for a very long time that the emotional content of films, television programs and specially News (Rumor or fake) can affect your psychological health. It can do this by directly affecting your mood, and your mood can then affect many aspects of your thinking and behavior. If the news generates negative mood experiences (e.g. anxiety, sadness, anger, disgust).even children mind capture negativity which is dangerous for our new generation. Freedom does mean to say any or everything online which is bad for all individual even children as well. They publish all kinds of news for the sake of getting ranking. We have to design SOP⁸⁹ for all news channel and control all rumor and unauthentic news. Especially news related to abused children, rape with girls and other sensitive issues. If news are not authentic than legally action should be taken against news channels. All news channels should portray positive image of Pakistan instead of bad news. In abroad not a single channel shows report like this.”

- “Program ‘Off the Record⁹⁰’ dated either 30 October or 2nd November hosted by Kashif Abbasi, studio guest Fawad Choudhary. Mr Fawad Choudhary used a word “chut chalaky” which is very offensive, bad language and a swear word and did not apologize for it. Shiekh Rasheed (a Pakistani politician) has also been using the street language and swears words all the time but there was no action taken against him or the channel. The pity is that at the prime time whichever channel you switch to Shiekh Rasheed is there with his foul mouth. It is really unfair the time given to Shiekh Rasheed by all channels. A very unfair distribution of the prime time. There should be

⁸⁹ SOP: stands for Standard Operating Procedure. (<http://www.internetslang.com/SOP-meaning-definition.asp>)

⁹⁰ OFF the Record: is a political talk show in which Pakistani political sphere and its impacts are discussed by the host *Kashif Abbasi* in presence of three guests and their comments and views. (https://www.facebook.com/OTRPK/timeline?ref=page_internal)

check on foul mouthed people especially at the prime time on SAMAA⁹¹ and ARY News. Shiekh Rasheed and Fawad Choudhary should be served with legal notice.”

- “Excessive abusive language used by Sami Ibrahim, Arif Bhatti, Rauf Klasra, Asad Kharal and Sheikh Rasheed on ARY live shows almost every day. Also Sheikh Rasheed on Samaa TV. These people should be banned from news channels.” (All these people are anchormen & politicians).

- “Pakistan Institute of Labor Education & Research (PILER) is a respectable and law abiding NGO, registered as a ‘not for profit’ company under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984. We have been immensely agonized, injured, harassed and humiliated by an illegal, unwarranted, false and premature allegations broadcasted on 92 NEWS HD⁹² TV Channel, dated 22 November 2015, at each hourly bulletin till 4.00 pm on next day. ARY News also release a similar type of news on Sunday from its reporter based in Larkana. We have suffered huge loss of reputation and integrity because of the false allegations. We request PEMRA to order the TV channels 92 and ARY News to take the following steps as a matter of urgency to resolve the issue: a. To broadcast in the next news bulletin of their channel, a full and complete retraction and apology, in terms to be approved by us, similar to that occupied by the defamatory broadcast complained of; b. To respond with an undertaking that 92 News TV and ARY News will not broadcast the defamatory content complained of, in respect of PILER, in future.”

3. Following complaints were filed against Cartoon Network:

- “Please look into matter regarding the vulgar cartoon scenes, which are harmful for children mental health. Scenes like, kissing etc. What lesson our children are getting from it? Please make some editing or do something else.”

- “Cartoon Network is being aired from India and source is Dish TV⁹³, all day long Hinduism is promoted and Bhagwaan (God in Hindi language) is shown, superstition stories based on the Hindu religion, the worst Hindi language is spoken by

⁹¹Samaa: is Pakistan’s first private satellite news channel that provides live transmission simultaneously from five cities of Pakistan which include Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Quetta and Peshawar. (<http://www.samaa.tv/en/>)

⁹² 92 News HD: is Pakistan’s first HD news channel with 24 hour transmission containing news bulletin, current affair, crime shows and religious programs as its content. (<http://92newshd.tv/live/>)

⁹³ Dish TV: is Indian DTH (direct to home) satellite television channel with its entertainment content. (<http://www.dishtv.in/>)

the characters in an intolerable accent serious action is required in this regard, the channel needs to be banned and a hefty fine must be imposed on the cable operator, as well as it should be guaranteed that this channel won't be aired, ever again. Old complaint no: 77625 dated: 04 Oct 2015 NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN EVEN AFTER A MONTH.”

- “Cartoon Network and Nick channels⁹⁴ (Indian): Vulgar, promoting Hindu culture, Mohammad.Iqbal.Khan@faysalbank.com. Please ban these channels on cables.”

4. Following complaints were made against Express News channel:

- “As per PEMRA notice, all news channels are bound not to play Indian songs in any of their news. But all the channels are doing this rubbish thing time and time again. If there is a regulatory authority then it should make them answerable that why this cheap thing is happening. If there is not such kind of notice given to channels then it should be regulated to all. As it is ridiculous thing. I along with my circle of friends and colleague condemn this activity by these news channels. Suggestion is quite simple, that PEMRA should take the notice of this activity.”

- “In a program of Express news ‘Khabardar’, I observed that the content of the program of 5th November is objectionable, since it is comedy program and actors make faces, do physical actions and deliver the dialog, in a particular episode I observed that the actors were being physical with the female actress and pointed on the very private part of the body of female in the section where they were playing a police station's role. I think that the content and dialog should be appropriate.”

5. Following complaints were made against GEO Entertainment⁹⁵ channel:

- “On November 6th Geo's program ‘Khabarnaak’ has insulted Gujjar tribe, According to Pakistan's laws all citizens are equal in status, this program has represented them as illiterate milk sellers which is far from reality as Gujjar tribe has produced excellent people including Chaudhary Rehmat Ali (a Muslim nationalist who proposed the name PAKISTAN for the separate country for Muslims of South Asia),

⁹⁴ Nickelodeon: or Nick broadcast is related to American version of kids channel, providing entertaining content in India and neighboring countries. (<http://www.nickindia.com/>)

⁹⁵ GEO Entertainment: or GEO Drama is a sister channel of GEO Network in Pakistan which provides entertainment content through satellite television. (<http://harpalgeo.tv/>)

Army Generals, Shaheeds (martyrs), Nishaan-e-Haider (Pakistan's highest military gallantry award) Politicians, Great Poets, Engineers, Doctors, Athletes so how can represented by just a milk sellers. This program has resulted great anger in Gujjar community. Such programs must be banned or have some limitations, and must not insult/ hurt any group, cast or sect on ethnic basis or other basis and the anchors/producers must be in limits.” (complaint for same content*30)

- “I m going to make a complaint against TV commercials of Lux Soap, Veet cream and Cadbury Dairy milk chocolate. The commercials related to these products are very fahash (indecent) that we can't watch. There is no need of such commercials for marketing these branded products. You can make commercials without a lady.”

- “I strongly condemn the advertisement of Q Mobile being aired on GEO News which depicts mockery of an individual lacking normal vocal abilities and stutters. This hurts the sentiments of people with such condition and I realize this, being a parent of such child. I hope my complaint is lodged efficiently and some effective measures are taken in this regard. Thank you. Kindly stop this advertisement from being aired. In future take into view the sentiments of all public being addressed.”

6. Following complaints were registered against GEO News channel:

- “As per PEMRA notice, all news channels are bound not to play Indian songs in any of their news. But all the channels are doing this rubbish thing time and time again. If there is a regulatory authority then it should make them answerable that why this cheap thing is happening. If there is not such kind of notice given to channels then it should be regulated to all. As it is ridiculous thing. I along with my circle of friends and colleagues condemn this activity by these news channels. Suggestion is quite simple, that PEMRA should take the notice of this activity.”

- “QAMAR TEA, advertisement shows a driver and a child. Driver says that he is driving from Karachi to Khybar (Northern Province), and child is listing to him, there is no role of child in the advertisement except that it is child waiter at a hotel, who serves tea to driver. Are you people blind? Is GEO news not screening advertisements before broadcasting them on air? There are some ethics to follow in the

society, GEO should earn money but follow some norms and ethics. Thank you. Geo should apologize and stop this advertisement.”

- Translated from Urdu to English: Hello sir/madam. Today morning from 10:40AM till 11:00AM GEO news has telecasted on Mumbai stock market. Also there was continues text line on the bottom of screen for updates. The market was only 350 points down/in loss, but can someone ask these people when Pakistani stock exchange increases or decreases 500 points then there is no update or any news: is this an Indian channel or Pakistani channel?

- “On Geo TV program ‘Report Card’ aired on 9th November 2015 panelist Hassan Nisar, Shahzad Chudhery and Imtiaz Alam very rigorously abused Hakeem Ul-Ummat (spiritual physician of Muslims) Dr Muhammad Iqbal. In their view now a days nation doesn’t need Teaching/Preaching of Dr. Alama Iqbal and there is no contribution of Alama Iqbal in creation of Pakistan. Please ask concerned staff to watch the program or transcript and take serious action against the Geo TV, producer of the program, Hassan Nisar, Shahzad Chudhery and Imtiaz Alam and ask them to apologies for such creepy views about great leader & poet. Impose ban on the above mentioned mean people who think by appearing on TV shows they are greater leaders/reformers than Hakeem Ul Umat Dr Muhammad Iqbal⁹⁶.”

- “Dear Sir, most respectfully. The GEO TV is not shown on dish. I am searching on the frequency 4140 v 27500 but our all village people receivers show no signal please tell me solution of this problem. I shall be very thankful. GEO is the best network of Pakistan please tell me accurate solution.”

- “There is a new ad, added on GEO News about bubble gum; ad is of "Hilal fresh up Elachi". That ad is too much objectionable and plz ban that add.”

- “Columnist Hassan Nisar regularly promotes violence and incitement to murder against political leaders, particularly the Prime Minister’s family, on the show named "Meray Mutabiq" on Geo News shown during Prime Time at 7:00 P.M. In yesterday's show i.e. 29 Nov 2015 he used these words regarding the treatment to be meted out to these leaders: "Tezab ka ghusl (bath with poison), 3 shifts mein Jallad kam

⁹⁶Dr Muhammad Iqbal: also known as Allama Iqbal, was a poet, philosopher and politician who was one of the important people in the movement to create a separate country for Muslims of south Asia.

karein (work fast in three shifts), tez panjon waley janwaron sey unn ko bhanbora jaeey (they should be attacked by animals with sharp nails)' etc. In a previous show, he advocated physically eliminating the Sharif family. He takes some kind of perverted sadistic pleasure in this language on nationwide television. There is a clear law against hate speech and incitement to murder. I fail to understand why no action has been being taken against this columnist. I strongly advise strong criminal action against Hassan Nisar under the criminal laws in vogue. Regards Zahid Rafique, Lahore.”

7. Following complaints were registered against News One⁹⁷ channel:

- “During his program on 8th November 2015, Dr. Shahid Masood⁹⁸ issued fatwa⁹⁹ in his show that whoever is calling him Qayamat (Doom’s Day) Masood is committing "Blasphemy" and if He (Dr Shahid Masood) airs his / her photo on his show, he/she will be killed. Such act of an anchor who has no authority to issue fatwa during his show and instigate violence is such a way that he is directly threatening to kill. There are many critiques & viewers of the TV One & his show and they may be affected and their lives are in danger after his direct life threats. PEMRA is requested to immediately suspend license/ban Shahid Masood and TV One, register FIR (first information report) against Shahid Masood and thoroughly investigate this very serious issue as he has resembled this to assassination of former Governor Punjab Salman Taseer in hi show. This may also be kept on record, if anyone is harmed or killed as a consequence of this statement by Dr Shahid Masood.” (The are 10 more complaints against same person for same reason as mentioned in this particular complaint)

Annex 3: Complaints to PEMRA from December 2015. Acquired from <http://58.65.182.183/complaints/index1.php?m=December&yy=2015> (2016, April 14)

1. Following complaints were registered against A Plus¹⁰⁰ channel:

- “Sir this complaint is about Indian dramas. Which are being aired On A-Plus. These dramas contain bad environment, plz see the ad of *Veet Cream* on A-Plus.

⁹⁷ News One: is a private Pakistani news channel with its broadcast in Urdu language and it was launched in 2007. (<http://www.newsone.tv/>)

⁹⁸ Dr. Shahid Masood: is a political analyst, writer and television host.

⁹⁹ Fatwa: usually to indicate that a death sentence has been dealt to someone or some group of people. (<http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/understanding-islam/legal-rulings/44-what-is-a-fatwa.html>)

¹⁰⁰ A Plus: is entertainment based Pakistani television in Urdu language. It Offers soaps, drama serials, game shows, comedy and music content. (<http://www.a-plus.tv/>)

Cream is good but you see we are in an Islamic country and we are Muslims. Sir we cannot see these ads with our family or if any nephew or niece is around. We feel so embarrassed, plz sir do avoid these ads but if necessary do realize our surroundings. Take care of our environment and family atmosphere plz.”

- “Please take serious action against ads of *Vaseline body lotion*, *Nivea body lotion*, *Enchanteur body lotion* running nowadays. Very cheap & extreme vulgar ads. For God sake, what the hell you guys are doing if you can’t stop them. Please ban these ads if you guys have authority and ethics. Shame on these ad making agencies. Where is so called PEMRA??? Where is censor board..?? No creativity, no decent work only naked women and vulgarity. Please for God sake. Do some justice with your seat and responsibilities. Read my complaint carefully and act upon this as soon as possible for the betterment of our society otherwise shame on you and your whole team.”

- “As the viewers do not want to watch Indian dramas, but still A-Plus is doing that crime, so we the viewers ask you to please issue that kind of notice which assures not to show Indian dramas at Pakistani channels and strongest action must be taken against those who break the rules. Thanks, also I suggest that we should boycott Indian dramas and channels. I want PEMRA to take an action against cable operator that they could not allow Indian channels to be shown in Pakistan. Kindly stop showing Indian *Star Plus* (Indian television channel) and whatever the other channels are "stop showing Indian culture".”

2. Following complaints were made against ARY News channel:

- “In a program "Jurm Bolta Hai" (crime speaks) ARY News on December 03, 2015 at 7:30PM, Reporter of the program encouraged police officials to physically hit the accused. He asked the accused to demonstrate how accused abused a nine years old girl. He actually showed the visuals of the 9 year old victim and her family. He investigated the accused. Additionally in the reenactment, ARY News used a girl to act as she was abused by her brother in law. This is against the law. Action shall be taken against such reporters who violate human rights. Please ban all such programs and take action against the management of ARY News for airing such undesirable programs.”

- “Abusive language was used during program and the anchor person didn’t even try to stop them which is absolutely against the ethical values. The link of

the program is also attached. <http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?402528-quot-Tum-Begairat-Ho-Hina-Rabbani-Khar-Zardari-ki-quot-Intense-fight-b-w-Jamshed-Dasti-and-PPP-s-Somoro>\ the regulatory authority should take serious action against anchor person and guests who used such unethical language during program. Strict action should be taken against such TV channels and programs.”

- “I heard on news channels and read in news papers that honorable judge of Lahore High Court has ordered media not to publish or on air mention any news of MQM’s chief Mr. *Altaf Hussain* and even his name is not to be mentioned. It was strictly followed by all until 5th December 2015 from the 5th of December 2015 when an FIR was launched against him all the channels are broadcasting his name in their news bulletins and in different programs. My suggestion is to retain all channels newspapers not to publish or broadcast any news related to MQM’s chief in honor of decision of LHC (Lahore High Court).”

3. Following complaints were registered against Express News channel:

- “Express news is showing adult content in their ads, on their website. Remove adult ads.”

- “*Nestle Fruita* (juice) advertisement shows some student gives bribe to teacher then he (the teacher) accepts it. Sir you know bribe is Haram and prohibited in our religion and worst for all societies. So please take notice and ban such advertisement. Take notice and put heavy penalties on such culprits who are spreading such things in our society.”

- “Today on 20 Dec 2015 Express News E paper published an advertisement of Telecom Company named as JAZZ. Kindly guide me is this according to the law of PEMRA or press. There is a lot of bullshit we look on electronic media and no one is here to take it serious. Please check it out and show some sense of responsibility. Thanks regard Mirza Yasir. Take some serious action i.e. FIR (first information report) against both newspaper and JAZZ. Fine according PEMRA rules and sorry remarks on newspaper with equal space of advertising.”

4. Following complaints were registered against HUM TV¹⁰¹ channel:

¹⁰¹ HUM TV: is Pakistani entertainment channel based in Karachi with its 24 hours transmission. It was launched on 17th January 2005. (<http://www.hum.tv/>)

- “The poster of Dilwale (Indian movie) by Hum TV displayed around the city Karachi is truly vulgar and shameful. We live in a Muslim country and we still have respectful family values. Such a poster displayed in the middle of the road when you're waiting for the signal to open, with your family or the rickshaw or bus driver, is only a source of disturbance and ill feelings. It causes me to feel really insecure and such a poster is not at all suitable when travelling with children. I sincerely request the authorities to take immediate actions against such promotion of lewdness in the city and prevent future measures of promotion of such despicable acts. The posters displayed over the country should be regulated by the authorities of PEMRA keeping in view that respectable families live in this country and still have family values that are considered important and modesty is a huge factor in our upbringing.” (complaint against promotion of same Indian movie*5)

- “What is PEMRA’s policy for commercial ads, especially the ads from Nivea Company are especially absurd. These must not be viewed on public, family channels. Please immediately put edit checks on these Nivea ads.”

- “Asslam Allykum (Hello), It is to complain against the HUM TV, because the word Divorce "Talaq" is being used very much in their dramas, This word is hurting those who suffer from this damn and some people get this in their mind and use in real life, Please ban this word not only on Hum TV but on other Pakistani TV channels as well. Thanks Same.”

- “The lady in ad about Vaseline, which is being shown during drama "SANGAT" at 08PM on Thursday on HUM -TV wears a vulgar dress. I am 60 years old man really feel ashamed in presence of my wife and mother. Please Sir, these vulgar ads and items should be stopped.”