Implications of New Media Technologies on Political Ideologies in Pakistan

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Abstract

The general public in Pakistan uses new media technologies such as wikis, blogs, and several social media platforms for social connection, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc. Social media is widely recognized as a medium for exchanging ideas, opinions, and political awareness, among other things. This research paper investigates the implications of new media technologies on political ideologies in Pakistan. The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach to examine public perceptions and behaviors toward new media platforms and their impact on political engagement, communication, and information dissemination. The study quantifies and evaluates how new media technology affects the political system. The research was conducted using the survey method. The population of the study consisted of 200 respondents. A questionnaire was distributed among the targeted audience, and the survey results were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Several key findings emerge through the analysis of survey data. Firstly, there is a high level of adoption and engagement with new media technologies among the Pakistani population, highlighting their significance as channels for political communication. These new media technologies significantly impact transferable changes to the nation's political structure and political mobilization.

Respondents believe these platforms have increased political participation and facilitated discussions on government policies and political issues. However, challenges such as maintaining constructive discourse and ensuring the accuracy of information persist. Overall, the research underscores the multifaceted impact of new media technologies on political ideologies in Pakistan, emphasizing the need for informed policy and media practices to promote transparency, inclusivity, and democratic political processes.

Keywords: *New Media, Technologies, Politics, Pakistan*

Introduction

The newest type of media, called new media, has many features. It has several channels and apps for communicating, exchanging images and videos, sound and picture sharing, fast distribution, global connectivity, and direct association. It is important for all periods of people groupings since it is also the least expensive rapid global access. Its use is growing rapidly and gradually everywhere in the world. The foundation of this inquiry is how new experiences affect students' political maturity. Students play a vital role in the development and progress of any country. Social media is now essential for kids in every aspect of life and prepares them for engagement in essential political activities. Online resources have a diverse range of effects on Americans' lives. In addition, this endeavor addresses several common issues, including economics, public policy, government officials, elections, guidance, family, prosperity, news and events, web evaluation, online searches and activities, and public technique, development, media, and media usage. Social media platforms like Facebook, Skype, Twitter, YouTube, and MySpace may have lately evolved as amazing levelers in the world of technology (Turow & Couldry, 2018).

Social media refers to web-based programs that facilitate data sharing, group building, conversation, and profile creation, as well as websites that enable the construction of user profiles and display user relationships. A collection of information technologies that enable networking and engagement, social media is sometimes referred to as "social media sites." However, the growth and use of social media have been greatly aided by Web 2.0 technology (Boyd, 2008).

The phrase "new media" refers to the swift advancements that, starting in the 1980s, gave rise to a distinct worldwide phenomenon. They offer a schema that simplifies the word "new media" into a few digestible parts. The schema speaks of novel textual experiences, novel world representations, novel connections between subjects (users and consumers) and media technologies, novel understandings of the interplay between embodiment, identity, and community, novel conceptions of the relationship between the biological body and technological media, and novel organizational and production strategies. The elements above may be found in computer-mediated communications, novel distribution and consumption methods, virtual worlds, and various changes and disruptions to traditional media (Lister et al., 2008).

Online networking is quickly developing in Pakistan. Many individuals have their records on web-based networking media destinations like Twitter and Facebook. It enables Pakistani youth to engage with youngsters the whole way across the world and to keep up social associations with individuals from different nations. Online social networking sites are becoming very popular in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, affecting many individuals' professional and social lives. Besides internet-based life destinations, Facebook clients are expanding in Pakistan every day. Most Facebook clients in Pakistan are young (Eijaz, 2013).

Social media is a technology that enables individuals to communicate and exchange information, concepts, thoughts, and other things over the internet, mobile phones, and other devices. Social

media is heavily used for propaganda, news and information dissemination, and political and social initiatives. People are moving from traditional to social media due to the ease of access and the sharp rise in usage. Social networking site income generation has become an industry due to the growing percentage of social media users. Technology has made it possible for people to communicate socially on several platforms and exchange a wide range of information, which has significantly influenced the average person's attitudes, actions, and decision-making. Today, many political parties and social movements use social media to achieve their campaigns and goals (Chaudhary et al., 2021).

Research Objective

1. To investigate, quantify, and evaluate how new media technology affects the political system in Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. Does new media provide an excellent platform for the general public to engage in political activism?
2. Does the public's increased political consciousness stem from modern media?
3. Is the media likely a primary information source for forming political understanding?

Literature review

New media is becoming more and more popular every day. It had an impact on our political structure. Our younger generation makes up the majority of new media consumers. People utilized it for amusement. The younger generation has grown more politically mature as a result of entertainment. People used it to monitor political developments.

According to Murray (2005), viewers often satiate their informational demands by turning to Pakistan's rapidly expanding television network, which has a high degree of independence from electronic media. The importance of social media relies on how it is utilized, as socializing is its primary purpose. The fact that the internet has made planning events, donating money, and obtaining information simpler suggests that it influences politics.

Lister et al. (2009) stated that new media are becoming essential to the current digital system. The emergence of new media and politics has led to three developments: the globalization of political communication, global political communication, and global communication politics. The new social order has influenced new media and political systems. Modern media has changed the social, economic, global, industrial, and cultural systems.

According to Salman et al. (2011), conventional media have faced challenges from emerging new media. For instance, they impact print newspaper circulation, particularly in the USA. The impact of new media on traditional media is still under control in Malaysia. Despite the existence of online newspapers, advertising revenues are still drawn to Malaysian newspapers—the two

support one another. Despite having online editions, the traditional media has not fully embraced the new technology. If there is a decline in circulation, it will be because the younger generation favors new media over conventional internet content since it is more engaging. Additionally, there are television networks with an internet presence.

Khan et al. (2011) discussed that one cannot avoid the influence of modern media. High media exposure has a statistically significant detrimental impact on young university students' discontent with their bodies in developing nations like Pakistan.

Brenner (2013) states that people are using new media websites more frequently and becoming more interested in social media. Students use Facebook and YouTube, the two new media platforms, most frequently. According to the research, Facebook users are more reliable than users of other social media platforms, and they also utilize social networking sites to participate in political activities. Additionally, MySpace users typically take some time to verify and evaluate strangers before putting their faith in them.

Sundar and Limperos (2013) address recent requests for conceptual and methodological improvements in the study of emerging media from uses-and-gratifications academics. Observing that research on Internet usage has produced a list of satisfactions that are strikingly similar to those from older media, it points out two measurement artifacts: (1) gratifications are conceptualized and operationalized too broadly, missing the nuanced gratifications from newer media and (2) measures intended for older media are used to capture gratifications from newer media.

Kurfi (2015) described social media as any technology that enables individuals to communicate and exchange information, concepts, thoughts, and other things over the internet, mobile phones, and other devices. Social media is heavily used for propaganda, news and information dissemination, and political and social initiatives. People are moving from traditional to social media due to the ease of access and the sharp rise in usage. Social networking site income generation has become an industry due to the growing percentage of social media users. The public may now communicate socially on several platforms thanks to technological advancements, and this information exchange significantly influences the attitudes, habits, and decision-making of the average person.

Horst (2020) explained that the process of objectification, assimilation, and conversion—by which new media technologies become a commonplace and acceptable aspect of daily life—is how the "moral economy of the household" is articulated. Media in the bedroom has been a regular alteration in the home structure during the last few decades. In response to the rapid changes brought about by the convergence of new media platforms and the media ecology, as well as the life stages and shifts related to the makeup and power dynamics within the household, parents in Silicon Valley teach their kids segmentation techniques.

Ghani et al. (2020) state that in Pakistan, social media is popular, especially among youth., as an important source of information. Students use new media according to their interests to find information. So, social media has a good impact on students' behavior.

According to Lee (2020), social media platforms have emerged as a crucial media avenue for political campaigns. Social science research is beginning to show how social networking sites influence political engagement. However, the impact of social network site usage determinants on voter engagement, attitude, and confidence has received less attention. The study's findings demonstrate that the three factors influencing the use of social networking sites on voters' engagement in politics influence voters' attitudes about voting and their trust in the outcomes of their choices. More precisely, the "need to belong" and the "perceived ease of use" of social networking sites contribute to users' increased political activity, attitude toward voting, and confidence in their voting choices.

Zhuravskaya et al. (2020) discussed how social media and the Internet impact political results. The researchers examined empirical data from the current literature on political economy, with a particular emphasis on studies that consider characteristics that set social media and the internet apart from conventional offline media, such as their low entry barriers and dependence on user-generated material. The researchers argued over the key findings about how social media, in particular, and the internet, in general, affect political polarization, xenophobia, street protests, voting, and the conduct of politicians. The researchers highlight unresolved questions about how social media and the Internet impact politics in democracies and autocracies.

Research Methodology

The research was conducted using the survey method. The study population consisted of 200 respondents, who were selected through random sampling. To find out the perceptions and influences of new media technologies and their impact on political ideologies, a point-five Likert scale questionnaire comprised 12 questions was used. The questionnaire was designed to determine the impact of new media technologies on its users from different angles of political involvement. The questionnaire was distributed among the targeted audience of two hundred (200) respondents; 100 were male and 100 were female, respectively, i.e., 50% male and 50% female respondents, suggesting an equal distribution of gender with an equal number of males and females in the population. The overwhelming population consisted of adults aged 20–50. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences is used for the data analysis and interpretation. The demographic characteristics of the participants are as follows:

Demographical Variables

1.   Gender

Male	50.00%
Female	50.00%

2.   Age Group

20-30	54.00%
30-40	32.00%
40-50	14.00%

Data Analysis

Table 1: **Do you use various new media technologies, such as social media platforms, blogs, wikis, etc., regularly?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	186	00	14
%	93%	00%	07%

The table presents responses to a question about the regular usage of various new media technologies, such as social media platforms, blogs, wikis, etc. According to the results, 93% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating a strong majority use new media technologies regularly. 0% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting that none of the respondents indicated they do not use new media technologies. 7% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about using new media technologies. Overall, the table shows that most respondents use new media technologies regularly, with very few expressing a lack of usage or neutrality.

Table 2: **Do you agree that the use of new media platforms increased the political participation of the general public?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
F	0	14	08	60	118
%	0%	07%	04%	30%	59%

The table presents responses to a question regarding the impact of new media platforms on the political participation of the general public. 59% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, suggesting a substantial majority strongly supported the idea. 30% of the respondents agreed with the statement, indicating that a significant portion supported the idea that new media platforms increased political participation. 4% of the respondents were neutral, meaning they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. 7% disagreed, indicating that a small portion of respondents held this viewpoint, and 0% strongly disagreed, suggesting that none strongly disagreed with the notion that new media platforms increased political participation. Overall, the table illustrates that a significant majority of respondents perceive that using new media platforms has increased political participation among the general public, with very few expressing disagreement or neutrality.

Table 3: **Do Pakistanis utilize new media platforms to communicate and obtain political information?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
F	12	18	10	40	120
%	6%	9%	05%	20%	60%

The table presents responses to Pakistani people's belief in using new media platforms for communication and obtaining political information. According to the results, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed with the belief, suggesting a substantial majority strongly supported the idea. 20% of the respondents agreed with the belief, indicating that a significant portion supported the idea that Pakistanis utilize new media platforms for communication and obtaining political information. 5% of the respondents were neutral, meaning they neither agreed nor disagreed with the belief. 9% of the respondents disagree, suggesting that a slightly larger portion holds this viewpoint, and 6% strongly disagree, indicating a small portion of respondents strongly disagree with the belief. Overall, the table illustrates that most respondents believe that Pakistanis utilize new media platforms for communication and obtaining political information, with very few expressing disagreement or neutrality.

Table 4: **Do you agree that Pakistanis use various new media platforms to discuss government and political issues with others?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
F	10	18	16	44	112
%	5%	9%	08%	22%	56%

Table 4 presents responses to a question regarding the belief that Pakistanis use various new media platforms to discuss government and political issues with others. The results of the table depict that 56% of the respondents strongly agreed with the belief, suggesting a substantial majority strongly support the idea. 22% of the respondents agreed with the belief, indicating that a significant portion supported the idea that Pakistanis use new media platforms for discussing government and political issues. 8 % were neutral, meaning they neither agreed nor disagreed. 9% of the respondents disagree, suggesting that a slightly larger portion holds this viewpoint, and 5% strongly disagree, indicating a small portion of respondents strongly disagree with the belief. Overall, the table illustrates that most respondents believe that Pakistanis use various new media platforms to discuss government and political issues with others, with very few expressing disagreement or neutrality.

Table 5: **Do you use various new media platforms for political activities?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
f	154	30	16
%	77%	15%	08%

The table presents responses to a question regarding using various new media platforms for political activities. According to the results, 77% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating a significant majority use various new media platforms for political activities. 15% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting a minority do not use new media platforms for political activities. 8% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about using new media platforms for political activities. Overall, the table illustrates that most respondents use various new media platforms for political activities, with a minority either not using them for such purposes or being neutral.

Table 6: **Is political debate on social media platforms constructive?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
f	108	28	64
%	54%	14%	32%

The table presents responses to a question regarding the perception of whether political debate on social media platforms is constructive. The results indicate that 54% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a majority perceive political debate on social media platforms as constructive. 14% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting a minority does not perceive political debate on social media platforms as constructive. 32% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether political debate on social media platforms is constructive. Overall, the table illustrates that most respondents believe that political debate on social media platforms is constructive, with a minority holding the opposite view and a significant portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 7: **Is political discussion on different new media platforms informative?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
f	148	18	34
%	74%	09%	17%

Table 7 presents responses to whether political discussion on different new media platforms is informative. 74% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a significant majority perceive political discussion on different new media platforms as informative. 9% of the

respondents answered "No," suggesting a minority do not perceive political discussion on different new media platforms as informative. 17% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether political discussion on different new media platforms is informative. Overall, the table illustrates that many respondents believe that political discussion on different new media platforms is informative, with a minority holding the opposite view and a notable portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 8: **Do you believe digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well aware of government policies?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	138	36	26
%	69%	18%	13%

The table presents responses to a question regarding the belief that digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well-informed about government policies. The table results showed that 69% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating a significant majority believe that digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well aware of government policies. 18% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting a minority do not believe digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well aware of government policies. 13% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well aware of government policies. Overall, the table illustrates that a substantial majority of respondents believe that digital media plays a significant role in disseminating awareness and keeping its users well informed about government policies, with a minority holding the opposite view and a notable portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 9: **Do you think new media technologies have helped bring new voices into political discussion?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	174	14	12
%	87%	07%	06%

The table presents responses to a question regarding the belief that new media technologies have helped to bring new voices into political discussion. According to the survey results, 87% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a vast majority believe that new media technologies have helped to bring new voices into a political discussion. 7% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting a small minority do not believe that new media technologies have helped to bring new voices into a political discussion. 6% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether new media technologies have helped to bring new voices into political discussion. Overall, the table illustrates that most respondents believe that new media technologies have played a role in bringing new voices into political discussion, with a minority holding the opposite view and a small portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 10: **Do you think new media platforms have exposed the policies of various political parties?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	172	08	20
%	86%	04%	10%

The table presents responses to a question regarding the belief that new media platforms have exposed various political parties' policies. The results depict that 86% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a vast majority believe that new media platforms have exposed various political parties' policies. 4% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting that a small minority do not believe that new media platforms have exposed various political party policies. 10% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether new media platforms have exposed various political parties' policies. Overall, the table illustrates that a significant majority of respondents believe that new media platforms have played a role in exposing various political parties' policies, with a minority holding the opposite view and a notable portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 11: **Do you believe the nation's political landscape has improved due to new media technologies?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	130	38	32
%	65%	19%	16%

The table presents responses to whether the nation's political landscape has improved due to new media technologies. According to the results, 65% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a majority believe that the nation's political landscape has improved due to new media technologies. 19% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting that a minority do not believe that the nation's political landscape has improved due to new media technologies. 16% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether the nation's political landscape has improved due to new media technologies. Overall, the table illustrates that a significant majority of respondents believe that new media technologies have positively impacted the nation's political landscape, with a minority holding the opposite view and a notable portion being neutral or undecided.

Table 12: **Do you believe that adopting new media technologies has improved political awareness among people?**

	Yes	No	Neutral
F	136	28	36
%	68%	14%	18%

Table 12 presents responses to whether adopting new media technologies has improved political awareness among people. According to the results, 68% of the respondents answered "Yes," indicating that a significant majority believe that adopting new media technologies has improved political awareness among people. 14% of the respondents answered "No," suggesting that a minority do not believe that adopting new media technologies has improved political awareness among people. 18% of the respondents were neutral or undecided about whether adopting new media technologies has improved political awareness among people. Overall, the table illustrates that a significant majority of respondents believe that adopting new media technologies has positively impacted political awareness among people, with a minority holding the opposite view and a notable portion being neutral or undecided.

Discussion

According to Table 1, 93% of the respondents regularly use various new media technologies, with only 7% being neutral or undecided. It indicates a high level of engagement with new media platforms among the respondents. Results from Table 2 indicate that a significant majority (89%) either agree or strongly agree that the use of new media platforms increased the political participation of the general public and suggests that most respondents perceive new media platforms as positively enhancing political engagement. The results of Table 3 illustrate that 80% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that Pakistanis utilize new media platforms to communicate and obtain political information. It reflects a widespread belief in the importance of new media for political communication. Results of Table 4 depict that a majority (78%) either agree or strongly agree that Pakistanis use various new media platforms to discuss government and political issues with others and indicate that new media platforms serve as significant channels for political discourse. According to Table 5, 77% of respondents use various new media platforms for political activities. It underscores the role of new media in facilitating political engagement among the surveyed population. Results of Table 6 reveal that a majority (54%) believe that political debate on social media platforms is constructive, and a notable portion (46%) either disagrees or is neutral. It suggests a degree of skepticism or uncertainty regarding the constructive nature of political discourse on social media.

According to the results of Table 7, a significant majority (83%) either agree or strongly agree that political discussion on different new media platforms is informative, which indicates that most respondents perceive new media platforms as valuable sources of political information. In contrast, the results of Table 8 indicate that the majority (82%) believe that digital media disseminates awareness and keeps its users well informed about government policies, indicating a widespread perception of digital media's role in promoting political awareness. The results of

Table 9 showed that a vast majority (93%) believe that new media technologies have helped to bring new voices into political discussion, underscoring their perceived role in enhancing inclusivity and diversity of voices in the political sphere and Tables 10-12 indicates that a significant majority of respondents hold positive views regarding the impact of new media platforms on political transparency, improvement of the political landscape, and enhancement of political awareness among people.

Conclusion:

The implications of new media technologies on political ideologies in Pakistan reveal a multifaceted landscape characterized by opportunities and challenges through an analysis of various tables illustrating public perceptions and behaviors toward new media platforms. The data indicate high adoption and engagement with new media technologies among Pakistanis. Most respondents regularly use various new media platforms, indicating their significance as political communication and information dissemination channels. The results also indicate a prevailing belief among respondents that using new media platforms has increased political participation among the general public and also suggests that these platforms have played a significant role in fostering greater political engagement and activism.

New media platforms are widely perceived as essential tools for communication and obtaining political information. Most respondents believe that Pakistanis utilize these platforms for political communication and to stay informed about government policies and political issues. New media platforms serve as significant channels for political discourse, with most respondents acknowledging their role in facilitating discussions on government policies and political issues. It indicates that these platforms have democratized political discourse and allowed diverse voices to be heard. Most respondents believe that new media technologies have improved transparency, exposed various political parties' policies, and enhanced political awareness among people. It underscores the perceived role of new media in promoting political transparency and accountability.

The implications of new media technologies on political ideologies in Pakistan are significant. While these technologies have expanded access to information, fostered political participation, and facilitated discourse, they also present challenges such as maintaining constructive dialogue and ensuring the accuracy and reliability of information. Overall, the data suggest a generally positive perception of the role of new media technologies in political engagement, information dissemination, and inclusivity. While there are areas of concern, such as skepticism about the constructive nature of the political debate on social media, the overall trend indicates that new media platforms are perceived as valuable tools for enhancing political participation, awareness, and transparency. These findings emphasize the importance of new media in shaping contemporary political discourse and suggest opportunities for leveraging these platforms to foster more informed and inclusive political environments. Moving forward, policymakers, media practitioners, and civil society need to harness the potential of new media technologies while addressing these challenges to promote informed, inclusive, and democratic political processes in Pakistan.

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