Role of Media in Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan: Journalists' Perception

Mian Ahmad Hanan
University of Lahore, Lahore.
Noshina Saleem
University of the Punjab, Lahore.
Aniqa Ali
University of the Punjab, Lahore.
Sahifa Mukhtar
University of the Punjab, Lahore.

ABSTRACT

The study analyzes the perception of Journalists' regarding role of Pakistani media in strengthening democracy. It was also aimed to identify the factors which undermined the role of media in strengthening democracy. In this study survey was conducted from 82 print and electronic media journalists of Pakistan. For qualitative purpose 5 senior journalists associated with print and electronic media of Pakistan were interviewed to have insights in the role of media in strengthening democracy in the country. This study concludes that Pakistani media is not playing a significant role in strengthening democracy in the country. It also reveals that Journalists' are satisfied with media's role in creating awareness and providing information to public and act as a watchdog to government policies. In addition, majority respondents are not pleased with media's role as an agenda setter for upholding the principles of democracy and offering as civic forum for the people of Pakistan. Moreover, it also indicates that there is no difference between the perception of senior and junior journalists' regarding media's role in strengthening democracy in Pakistan. In addition study also reveals that there is no difference found between the senior and juniors, and high and low salaried journalists' regarding ownership influence on their work routines and professionalism. Therefore, this study busted the myth that the senior and high salaried journalists' are less influenced by the ownership.
Key Words: democracy, journalists' perception, media ownership, journalists' working
conditions
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Introduction

Democracy is a popular political notion in today's world, fair and free elections are the prerequisite of democracy and rule of the law, protection and freedom of human rights and supremacy of the constitution are important elements in true democratic system. Pakistan is one of those countries where democracy has been

the slogan but true democracy never existed here as Pakistan has faced prolonged military regimes and transitory democracy due to the interests of the different groups in Pakistan. Media in Pakistan however has developed in the last decade and has emerged as a very powerful and influential tool in socio-political matters. Importance and power of Media can never be denied in democracies; media policies, media content and media persons have a direct or indirect influence on the audience. Media in Pakistan is playing a role of a political actor now-a-days. Under various governments' media in Pakistan faced restrictions. Almost all modern states allow freedom of expression but still there are certain limits/restrictions imposed. As far as Constitution of Pakistan is concerned, about Freedom of Expression, article 19 states that

> Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defense of Pakistan or any part thereof friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, [commission of] or incitement to an offence. (Constitution of Pakistan, Article 19)

Mass Media and Democracy are always related to each other. Media is a mirror of the society and how democratic a society is, can be represented through media. Opinion leaders influence the public opinion regarding political leaders and political system of any country. Hence, media has an influential role in strengthening democracy. However, few would deny that the role of media is influenced by the factors, pertaining to the characteristic of media institutions themselves, for example the policies designed by ownership of media, its financiers, and most importantly working conditions of journalists, who are largely the shareholders of media conglomerates in any country determine the kind of media prevalent in the country. Countries where media is controlled by state, are naturally very conservative, and thus cannot perform their various roles due to official censorship and regulating laws. States where media is largely owned by private agencies and groups are less under the influence of government and it is more citizens oriented. Yet private ownership has one disadvantage that it may promote and lead to hegemony of unilateral views and ideas.

The basic Objective of this study is to investigate the role of Pakistani media in strengthening democracy and to identify the factors which undermine the role of the media in strengthening democracy.

Literature Review

Democracy has been defined differently for different cultural and social contexts of different communities of the world. However the relationship between Media

and democracy has always been a point in debates. Democracy is generally a system of accountable and representative government that affords citizens choices and participation in the way they are governed and relate to the distribution of power within the system and the ground rules governing this process (Robinson and White, 1998). Abdellatif (2003), while defining the linkage between good governance and democracy, and good governance and economic development, expresses deep concern that there exists a dilemma in the conceptual explanation of many social sciences terms like democracy, good governance and development. He says that it is because these terms are differently and conflictingly defined by different actors like scholars, governments, development assistant agencies who define and analyze these terms within their interests and scope of work. Beetham (1992) maintains that democracy is a mode of decision making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control and the most democratic of arrangement is that where all the members of the society enjoy equal rights to take part in decision making directly – one that is to say which realizes to the greatest conceivable degree the principles of popular control and equality in its exercise. Kendall (2003) maintains that in international discourse, democracy is widely accepted as leading to increased development and equality, decreased violence especially one perpetrated by the state within the state, and increased civic engagements.

Media and Democracy

Media and democracy have strong association. Countries which are strong democracies always have strong and free media. Camara (2008) has conducted an in-depth study on the symbiotic relationship of the role of mass media and the amelioration of political culture with special reference to West Africa's struggle for democratic governance. He concludes that a free and democratic society is not possible without an independent, free and responsible media and active civil society. Saeed (2009) argues that the maturing of mass democracy in most societies has gone hand-in-hand with development of mass communication as an important player in the organization of public life and opinion formation on issues significant to the masses. To better understand how free press enhance democracy, we need to look at various and distinct role of media, namely, media as source of information, media as a watchdog, media as a civic forum and media as an agenda setter. Norris (2006) measures how press freedom affects democracy, good governance and human development and concludes that there is a strong relation between the critical role of the free press, as one of the major components of democracy and good governance. Media in all countries serves as a watchdog, as a source of information, a civic forum and an agenda setter.

Norman (2005) says that both democracy and human rights pursue a common agenda, and it is "only within a democracy that human rights standards or norms are transcended such that the values articulated by these norms or standards are genuine rights." In addition, it is only in a well-functioning democracy that

individual citizens have access to mechanisms to ensure the implementation of their rights.

Elections remain central to broader strategies for promoting democracy (Bjornlund, 2005). Various studies link democracy to both greater and lower quality of governance. According to Abdellatif (2003) for many political scientists, democracies allow the public to oust inept, inefficient and crooked governments and also allow people to reelect and keep efficient, successful regimes, thus making the quality of governance on the average higher in the long run. Cueller (2009) in Social Cohesion and Democracy, defines social cohesion as people's relationships and interactions in society. Social cohesion results from democratic efforts to establish social balance, economic dynamism, with the goals of founding a system of equality, sustaining the impulses of uncontrolled economic growth and avoiding social fractures. He further says that while democratic spirit aims to safeguard public well being through the power of people, the logic of social cohesion is to ensure the well being that allows the power of the people to exist. Sawant (2003) maintains that media is essential for shaping of a free society, society should also realize that they have a 'stake' in their free and responsible functioning and this should be kept in mind while society 'fashions' mechanisms for their monitoring. He further states unequivocally that to consider freedom of media as freedom from the control of government is not only 'constrictive' but also misguiding of the forces that are far more real and effective in practice to restrict the freedom of the media. Saeed (2009) has also expressed deep concern regarding how the content of media gets manipulated and changed by private ownership even where media is not controlled by the government and can be termed as an open media. She says that media conglomerates are shifting away from their role of public service model of journalism. Saeed (2009) agrees with Herman and Chomsky (1988), and Herman and Mc Chesney (1997) as saying that this manipulation of public to 'manufacturing consent', is a great menace to democracies.

Milan (2009) has extensively worked on how community media can become a tool for development. She shows four ways in which the framework of community media can be and should be designed so that they work as voice to the voiceless. Referring to the finances of media she says that media is most often guided by its donors who further have their own interests. Today's media corporations mostly thrive on advertisements as their source of revenue. Referring to this Saeed (2009) the fight is not for more press freedom but fight against its 'commodification'. Communication today has increasingly become a capitalistic mode of production and reproduction.

Undeniably, press can function properly as its role in strengthening democracy if the working condition of journalists is free and fair. Freedom House Survey and Press Freedom Index who annually measure press freedom of different countries in the world take journalistic working conditions as one of the significant components in their measurement of press freedom. Journalists working conditions include their wages, incidents of harassment and physical threats. As far as

relationship of media and democracy in Pakistan is concerned, Islam (2001) maintains that in reality Pakistan has never seen a true democratic government since its inception because journalists and media organizations are facing various kinds of direct and indirect threats from state and non-actors.

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the role of Pakistani media in strengthening democracy. It aimed to look at Pakistani media from two aspects, firstly, how does media through its content support and enhance democratic traditions and secondly, how democratic media institutions themselves are. In this study qualitative in-depth interviews and quantitative survey techniques were employed to validate the hypotheses and research questions. The survey was conducted from 82 journalists from Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Five senior journalists were interviewed for in-depth qualitative study. The professionals who were   interviewed are: *Ejaz Haider* a senior journalist (29 years work experience) at Friday Times, a weekly newspaper from Lahore, *Anwar ul Hasan* has been working for PTV for over more than a decade, *Anjum Niaz* is a freelance writer (20 years experience)**,** *Zahid Hussein* started fortnightly magazine in 1970s (correspondent for Times of London for more than 25 years) and *Talat Hussein* (22 years experience as reporter and anchorperson).The basic purpose of the interviews was to gather the opinion of the experts on the role of Pakistani media in democracy. To evaluate role of media in strengthening democracy the questions asked in questionnaire were composed of the following factors (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Key Variables

Media as an agenda setter	Through its role as an agenda setter media makes people concern, a government concern and vice versa. Media as a civic forum**:** Through its role as a civic forum, media takes up the important issues of public, bring them in limelight, and apprise government so that they can take the appropriate action
Media as a source of information	This is one of the basic roles of media that is to inform the public and to keep them aware of the happenings around.
Media as a watchdog	Journalists through their camera lens keep everything transparent. Media is ubiquitous and omnipotent. Journalists and reporters investigate and probe into issues.
Governance	Governance is the performance of government whether it is addressing or serving people or not.
Human development	Human development refers to creating an environment in which human can develop to their full potential and can lead productive and progressive lives. Human development, in

	contemporary sense is more than the level of income. It is vast notion which entails equity, security and etc.
Participation	Participation refers to the inclusion of people's opinion and their say.
Pluralism	It refers to the environment in which all kind of dissenting voices are heard and are embraced.
Social cohesion	It refers to the environment in which people despite of their social, ethnic, religious or other differences, have a sense of belonging to one community and that community or nation is their most valued and preferred identity.
Human rights	Human rights are rights endowed by United Nations Declaration of Human Right which should be the preamble of every constitution.
Rule of law	Rule of law makes sure that there is nobody above the law and that there is law and order in the society.
Free and fair elections	Free and fair elections means elections which are free from the intrusion of government or any political party and are transparent.
Finances	Finances of media refers to the funding of media to keep the system running like from advertisements, sponsorships etc.
Ownership	Ownership refers to the people who own the media enterprise, could be a family or group.
Journalists' working conditions	It implies to the environment in which journalist work, their wages, if they face any intimidation from government or non-state agencies, the risks factor is also involved.

Results and Analysis

H1: Pakistani media is not playing a significant role in strengthening democracy in the country?

Table 2 indicates that Pakistani media is not playing strong role in strengthening democracy in the country. The finding validates the hypothesis. Majority of journalists'46 (56.10%) out of 82 were dissatisfied with the role of Pakistani media in providing a civic forum and an agenda for strengthening democratic values in Pakistan.

H2: Senior journalists have different perception than their joiners regarding media's role in strengthening democracy in Pakistan?

Table 1 indicates that there is no difference between the perception of senior and junior journalists' regarding media's role in strengthen democracy in Pakistan. Therefore, findings rejected this hypothesis [t(80)= -.515, p= .608].

H3: Senior journalists are less influenced by the media owners than joiners?

Table 1 indicates that there is no difference between the senior and junior levels journalists' regarding ownership influence on their work routines and professionalism. l freedom. Therefore, findings rejected this hypothesis [t(80)= -1.846, p= .608].

H4: High salaried journalists are less influenced by the media owners than low salaried journalists?

Table 1 indicates that there is no difference between high and low salaried journalists' regarding ownership influence on their professional actives [t(80)= .099, p= .069]. Therefore, findings rejected the hypothesis.

Table 1: Statistical Analysis

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Statistics	Hypotheses Results
H2: Senior journalists have different perception than their Junior regarding media's role in strengthening democracy in Pakistan?					
Senior Experience > = 16 Years	44	2.98	.698	t(80)= -.515, p= .608	Rejected
Junior Experience <= 15 Years	38	3.05	.613		
H3: Senior journalists are less influenced by the media owners than Junior?					
Senior Experience > = 16 Years	44	1.95	.776	t(80)= -1.846, p= .608	Rejected
Junior Experience <= 15 Years	38	2.29	.867		
H4: High salaried journalists are less influenced by the media owners than low salaried journalists?					
Salary >= 51000	44	3.39	.813	t(80)= .099, p= .069	Rejected
Salary<= 50000	38	3.37	.819		

Table 2: Media and Democracy in Pakistan: Journalists' Perception

	Scale				
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Total**
Media Role in Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan					
Overall Perception	15(18.30%)	31(37.80%)	16(19.51%)	20(24.40%)	82 (100%)
	46(56.10%)		36(43.90%)		
Factors					
Media as an agenda setter	15(18.29%)	30 (36.58%)	20(24.39%)	17(20.73%)	82 (100%)
	45 (54.87%)		37 (45.12%)		
A civic forum	16(19.51%)	38(46.34%)	10(12.19%)	18 (21.95%)	82 (100%)
	54(65.85%)		28(34.15%)		
Source of information	10(12.19%)	7(8.54%)	30(36.58%)	35(42.68%)	82 (100%)
	17(20.73%)		65(79.27%)		
Media as Watchdog	4(4.88%)	16(19.51%)	29(35.36%)	33(40.24%)	82 (100%)
	20(24.4%)		62(75.61%)		

RQ1: What is the role of media in strengthening democracy?

The aim was to look at the role of media in Pakistan in strengthening democracy. It looked at Media in Pakistan from two perspectives, firstly, is it strengthening democratic traditions in the country, and secondly, it took cognizance of the factors which undermine the role of media in strengthening democracy in the country. Various researchers (Norris, 2006; Camara, 2008; Saeed, 2009) have outlined four roles of media, media as a source of information, as a watchdog, as a civic forum and as an agenda setter; and how media, when it is free and independent promotes democratic traditions in any country. So in this research top notch media professionals were interviewed and asked to evaluate and rate media according to these four roles.

The table 2 indicates that majority of Journalists' 46(56.10%) out of 82 were not satisfied with the role of media in strengthening democracy in Pakistan. While, Journalists' responded that they were satisfied with their role in creating awareness and providing information to public and act as a watchdog to government policies. In addition, majority respondents were not happy with media's role as an agenda setter for upholding the principles of democracy and offering as civic forum for the people of in Pakistan (See Table 2).

Media as an agenda setter

Researchers tried to find out that how media professionals perceive about the role of media as agenda setter in enhancing governance and promoting human development, both of which are key elements of strong democracy. Majority of the interviewees criticized the role of media in *enhancing governance*. Ejaz Haider said that the numbers promoting regressive tendencies in media are more than
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those promoting progressive tendencies. He also said that media was increasing radicalization and conservatism in the society. According to Anwar-ul-Hasan, acceding with Ejaz Haider, media usually does not take cognizance of state's interest so it is not making the governance strong. Anjum Niaz categorically said "our reporters are not trained and expert in reporting governance related issues. However, Zahid Hussein quoted the example of the media's role in the restoration of Chief Justice in 2008. Talat Hussein has also appreciated the role of media in governance by saying that media has created a platform for debate regarding governance, people are more conceptually aware of what governance is even though the situation of Pakistan is more chaotic now than before, but media is raising awareness and openly debating issues of governance, and in the long run this will bring a good change.

In response to media's role in *promoting human development*, four of the experts replied in negation. Their responses revolved around the point that media's focus was more on the political news and news of the day and that whatever human development news is shown has lot of 'sensationalism' factor and is not result oriented. Other than that, Anwar ul Hasan and Ejaz Haider also raised the point that human development news and program were not being shown in the prime time slot which clearly tells how much importance they are given by the media. Talat Hussein though agreed with other respondents that human development issue is not the prime focus of media, however, also reasoned that this issue form the sub-subject of the larger issue of politics and governance, about which media is concerned. If politics is stabilized, then policies will be stabilized too. He said that, talking about developing FATA region is redundant if FATA is not stabilized. Overall it can be concluded that respondents have more negative opinion about media role in highlighting governance related issues and promoting human development. They considered that Pakistan's media role as an agenda setter in promoting governance and human development is not up to the mark.

Media in Pakistan as a civic forum

Out of five respondents, two said that media's role as a civic forum in promoting *participation* was positive. Ejaz Haider quoted the example of Women Protection bill in which media openly debated on the issue and helped the legislature. He also said that many channels had Doha style debate program in which audience participated too. Anwar ul Hasan also agrees with Ejaz Haider that media has done very well in promoting participation and gave example of his show, Sach tou yeh hai, which is one of the longest talk show on media, said that it brought the common man perspective and also said that our media was reflectives of people's voice. However, Zahid Hussein, Anjum Niaz and Talat Hussein said that the media hadn't shown much effort there. Anjum Niaz has castigated that our reporters don't even know what civic journalism is. Zahid Hussein said that the media had failed to mobilize people and whatever participation was, it was limited to few people who kept appearing on same channels. Talat Hussien raises a strong point

saying that media in Pakistan, is urban based so it has urban bias. The structures of media are located in only the main cities of the country, and participation is ensured by proximity so our media cannot ensure larger participation.

Coming to *pluralism*, three of the five experts appreciated the role of media in promoting pluralism. Anjum Niaz remarked that the role was encouraging and liberal in presenting various views. Agreeing with her, Talat Hussein and Anwar ul Hasan said that many issues were previously taboos but now they are discussed and diverging views are also given. Talat Hussien said that media the only platform where people of opposing views could sit and debate. Now Madrassah children can sit with students of LUMS in studio, while this is not possible anywhere. However, Ejaz haider and Zahid Hussein have contradicting views about this. Ejaz Haider is of the view that media is run by people who come from this society and our society is no more a pluralist society. He further comments what we have is a cacophony of voices rather than a pluralist society. He supported his claim by giving example of the assassination of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer who was gunned down by his own guard because he believed that the latter had committed blasphemy. He also gave the example of the murder of Christian Minister of Culture and then of Ghamdi, a religious scholar who had to flee from the country as he faced intimidation from people who did not agree with his interpretation. According to Ejaz Haider, in such an alarming situation we cannot say that media has done much in creating a pluralist society. Affirming Haider, Zahid Hussein condemned the media for making our society more intolerant.

With regard to media increasing *social cohesion*, only Anjum Niaz and Talat Hussein appreciated it. According to Talat Hussein unity in diversity is our model of media and that if you appreciate diversity, then you would acknowledge that our media is increasing social cohesion. Ejaz Haider said that society was fragmented and media alone could not act as glue. Anwar ul Hasan agreed with Haider, saying that our society was fragmented more than ever and there was a pressing need for social cohesion now.

Majority was of the opinion that media's role as a civic forum in promoting participation and pluralism and increasing social cohesion was not up to the mark and needed to be addressed.

Media in Pakistan as a source of information

Media's role as a source of information in creating awareness among citizens regarding their rights is extensively lauded by the media persons in the study. Talat Hussein said that media had done a superb job in this. He said that media was not only telling people what their rights were but also why and how they were violated. It is more important so that one can get the justice. Zahid Hussein and Anwar ul Hasan said that because of electronic media incidents of human rights violation came up as they happen. Anjum Niaz though agreed with the rest but raised an interesting point that "media is making people aware of their rights, but

rulers should also know about people's right". However, Ejaz Haider disagreed saying there was too much information but no understanding of it among people.

Media in Pakistan as a watchdog

Four of the five experts agreed that media was *ensuring free and fair elections*. Ejaz Haider and Anwar ul Hasan said almost the same point that the old style of rigging of stuffing ballot boxes was no more possible simply because of the presence of camera. Anwar ul Hasan said that 2008 elections in Pakistan were by far the most transparent in the history of the country. Zahid Hussein talked about the recent rigging in Azad Jammu Kashmir election in 2011 and how it was exposed by the media. Talat Hussein agreed with the rest and said that the presence of media in electoral activity served as a check on rigging. Even though media is not present in every constituency but if rigging is found even in one, it can be painted as a case of rigging across the board. Secondly, debate before the elections about how constituencies are divided, how much money is being spent, and news on the performance of the current party in power increase people's awareness about how to use their vote. However, Anjum Niaz criticized that media could play a good role there but it haen't.

Coming to *rule of law*, again media was lauded for its role there. Ejaz Haider said that media was alert and people belonging to any income group could approach media. While Anwar ul Hasan and Zahid Huaaein agreed with each other that media was doing good there and took Chief Justice restoration movement in 2007 as a classic example of upholding of rule of law, but the latter said that media does not follow the rule of law for instance, they evade taxes. Talat Hussein said that media has created an enabling environment in which anybody that transgresses law and is caught by the media then he is a goner. Media cannot replace the responsibility of state to punish but can expose people and that's how it sets precedence. However, Anjum Niaz remarked that media played an excellent role in the restoration of Chief Justice of Pakistan but by and large it has failed.

Overall the role of media in Pakistan, as a watchdog was also spoken well of. Its role in promoting rule of law and ensuring free and fair elections was acknowledged.

Table 3: Factors Hampering Media in Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan

Factors	Scale					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	
Owners Influence	4(4.87%)	13 (15.85%)	47 (57.31%)	18 (21.95%)	82 (100%)	
	17 (20.73%)		65 (79.26%)			
Financier Influence	6(7.3%)	15(18.3%)	43(52.4%)	18 (22%)	82 (100%)	
	21(25.60%)		61(74.79%)			
Working Conditions	2(2.4%)	9 (10.97%)	60 (73.17%)		11 (13.41%)	82 (100%)
	11(13.41%)		71(86.58%)			

RQ2: To what extent the factors including media ownership, financiers and **Journalists' working conditions are hampering the role of Pakistani media in strengthening democracy in country?**

Media ownership

Table 3 reveals that the majority of respondents heavily castigated the role of *media ownership and financiers* in hampering the journalists' freedom in strengthening democracy in Pakistan (see Table 3). The qualitative analysis also affirms that the influence of these two factors is quite negative on the media. For instance, Ejaz Haider said that political affiliation of media owners influenced the way news was put out and the way coverage was done. Anwar ul Hasan also said that usually media owners had vested interests but not state's interest and private ownerships were monopolies, becoming harmful because they were being considered above law. Zahid Hussein debated the point that nowhere in the world owners were editors. All of the respondents also condoned the fact that media financiers dictated their conditions and policies to media as they have lot of leverage with them. Anjum Niaz said that a political affiliation of any media group was apparent in the news and content of newspaper or channel. However, Talat Hussein debated that media owners could not decidedly influence editorial policies. Media owners had to have credible media outlets for them for their business. If they don't have credibility, that means no ads for them. Owners might have political affiliation or they might have their horns against a party but then they also have to balance news.

Coming to *financiers of media*, all the five respondents except Talat Hussien said that financiers had negative influence on the role of media. Ejaz Haider said that money gave leverage with the person being funded. Anwar ul Hasan and Zahid Hussein raised the same point that media agencies were dictated by corporate wsector and to keep sponsorship flowing media had to follow the

conditions laid out by them. However, Talat Hussein has opposing views. He said that advertisers did not influence the content of program. In certain exceptional rare cases they might manipulate but even then they cannot do much because it boils down to credibility and also other channels would run the news even if one channel does not. So advertisers generally do not and cannot influence media and selection is done pretty much independent of what advertisers want.

Overall the influence of media ownership, and financiers were seen as negative on the role of media in strengthening democracy. Saeed (2009) has in her study criticized media owners and financiers and reasoned that they have vested interests which are large enough to make people interests look small.

Journalist working conditions

Table 3 shows that working conditions for journalists' in Pakistan are not very friendly particularly in terms of life security. In addition, the wages discrepancy among senior and joiner journalists is also a point of concern of respondents.

The interview findings also validate this assumption. Experts said that journalists working conditions were unfair. They are not well paid. Zahid Hussein said that only selective numbers of people were paid and urdu newspapers did not pay at all. Hence journalists are usually on the payroll of a Minister or some politician and they get paid for praising them. Anwar ul Hasan said that when reporters were not well paid they resorted to sensationalism to sell their news. Anjum Niaz said that big barons lived in palaces while ordinary reporters still had to move around on their motorcycles. Talat Hussein said "life insurance is pathetic, there is no job security, journalists can get easily laid off and they face physical violence".

On the whole the working condition of journalists in Pakistan has been termed as unfair as they have very low wages, face risks and violence and have no job security. This situation forces them to resort to sensationalism and misusing their clout to get paid by those they cajole. Hence, journalists cannot work properly.

Conclusion

This study concludes that media is not effective in strengthening democracy in Pakistan. Despite, media is free and liberal in Pakistan; still it hasn't done much in enhancing democratic traditions in the country. While media's role as a source of information and watchdog has been appreciated, it is interesting that its role as an agenda setter and especially as a civic forum has been hugely castigated. Also it has been acknowledged that media owners and the financiers have negative influence on the role of media. Journalists working conditions are also not very conducive for them to work earnestly.

However, the overall analysis of views given by the respondents also shows that they have high hopes from media in Pakistan. As they discussed that Pakistan's media is still in the growing phase as it has hardly witnessed a decade to

its rise. However, its role has been vastly mooted ever since 2003. According to some, like Zahid Hussein, Pakistan's media has too much power but the people who have its reins do not have the training or experience to run it so the performance suffers. However, the likes of Talat Hussein are on the opposing camp and suggest that the end result should not be used as a yardstick to gauge media's contribution because the situation of the country is different now and that media is cultivating political consciousness among people that will have positive outcome on the long run.

Hence, media persons are recognizing the fact that media institutions have to be more democratic for them to be able to promote democracy in the country. While they hold government in power accountable, they should be ready for accountability too. Sawant (2003) also says that media though should be free from the reins of government but there should be some mechanism to regulate it. Media rules and regulations are not necessarily meant to curb the power of media. Rules and regulations help build code of ethics and also serve to make the role of media more sophisticated and refined.

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Biographical Note

Mian Ahmad Hanan is PhD: Communication & Culture, York University, Canada, Professor Communication Studies, Dean: Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lahore. Pakistan.

Noshina Saleem is PhD: Communication Studies, Post Doctorate: York University, Canada. Assistant Professor and In-charge Director: Institute of Communication, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Aniqa Ali is PhD scholars: University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Sahifa Mukhtar is PhD scholars: University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

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