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TV Talk Shows in Pakistan: Politically Engaged or Politically Skeptic?

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Abstract: *The present research explores the political content of TV talk shows under the theoretical frameworks of framing and cultivation analysis. The content analysis of systematically selected 100 programs of five top rated serious and five comedy talk shows broadcast on Pakistani TV Channels during October-December 2019 were analyzed to detect the tropes of political engagement and political skepticism. The research established that days of the week, duration of the program, and the program's genre influenced the tropes of programs. The research concludes that serious talk shows contributed to political engagement, whereas comedy talk shows created more politically skeptical tropes.*

Introduction

The literature investigates the conflicting findings of previous studies on TV talk shows. According to the researchers, these talk shows increase both political engagement (Jones, 2005; McClintock, 2004; Paletz, 2002; Van Zoonen, 2005) and political skepticism (Bennet, 2003; Hart, 2000). So far, no study in media research has investigated the tropes of political engagement and political skepticism by analyzing or reconnoitering serious as well as comedy TV talk shows over a single time span. The current study is aimed at the locus described above and attempts to fill a gap in research on TV talk shows in this area.

In recent times, the popularity of TV talk shows has become well-established in Pakistan. People watch these programs to be informed by current happenings in Pakistan as well as around the globe. These programs discuss political, social, and religious issues on national and international scales, and they provide food for thought to their audiences. Tariq (2005), in his research has mentioned that the "creation and dissemination" of political news [talk] has always been the key element of Pakistani mass media, and as the result, it takes almost a lion's share of Pakistani media contents, leaving people been addicted to it. The mass media presents different stories, talk shows, and news regarding the political system and changes the views and perception of the public through its content. People are largely affected by the news and political talk shows. As Bilal *et al.* (2012) has pointed out that these shows helped in promoting participatory politics, revamp trust and hope in politics, and developing the democratic process. Therefore, the present research encompasses the TV talk shows to present the relationship between talk shows and political engagement and

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furthermore presents the relationship between these talk shows and political skepticism.

The appearance of TV talk shows in Pakistan materialized in the late 1960s when talk shows were started in 1969 on Pakistan Television (PTV) from Islamabad, capital of Pakistan. Historically, the genre of these talk shows was serious and satirical in its gist. Later, serious talk shows on PTV exchanged by comedy talk shows like *Show Time*, *Studio Dhai*, *Studio Poney Teen*, *Yes Sir No Sir*, *Loose Talk*, *Moin Akhtar Show*, etc. Besides, the format of these programs was also changed, the essential elements of the audience was excluded in these talks shows, but they also got popularity in their times.

After the emergence of Private TV Channels in Pakistan in the 2000s, viewers were introduced to some talk shows like 50 minutes by Abdul Rauf on Geo News, a Private TV channel. The element of the audience was again included. That program also got high viewership. Other private and public channels started different talk shows with the same format, but the element of the audience is extricated from these talk shows to some extent now. Even then, these shows have been successful in maintaining their popularity. In these talk shows, whether serious or comedy, viewers find the content quite thoughtful. From providing the analysis or entertainment to their viewers, they also provide the words for discussion to their viewers in their daily lives. On the level of format, these shows can be categorized as discussion shows or current affairs programs because the essential item, i.e., 'audience', are excluded from these shows.

On the other side, comedy talk shows started on private TV channels like "Hasb-e-Haal" on Dunya News TV Channel in January 2009. It is followed by "Khabarnak" on Geo News in 2010, Khabardar on Express News in 2015, and Khabarzar on Aap News in 2018, in all these programs, we can observe the segment of the audience. Although the audience is shown, their participation in the program is minimal or sometimes on 'zero level'. Therefore, the researcher intends to focus only on the content of these programs.

Political Engagement Versus Political Skepticism

Political engagement is the opposite of political skepticism. Political skepticism is also relevant for an improved understanding of political engagement. Therefore, the present research explores the tropes of political engagement as well as political skepticism in the TV Talk shows broadcast on Pakistani TV channels. Critical comment has long suggested that the media contributes negatively to the political debate and cause, resulting in a cynical audience. Some even have said, "Television gives us a feeling of political ill" (Hart, 1999; Postman, 1985; Putnam, 1995). Early tests showed that consumption of the television news led to suspicion, inefficiency, and skepticism (Robinson,1976), but Miller and Reese (1982) found that media dependency helped to build a sense of effectiveness and politics. It is understandable that this contradiction persists in the assessment of media content.

The negative political humor in comedy shows can contribute to skepticism, and political skepticism may also be the result of the program's structural limitations. Scholars remember that hosts generally have minimal knowledge about public relations, candidates' softball concerns, and programs make appeals to reach a wider audience (Depke, 1992; Hollander, 1996). Though comedy talks show mainly aim at highlighting those in the entertainment industry, they also point humorous criticism on politicians, political campaigns, and jokes monologue proposals. Public satire shows often deliver policy and political critiques, and hosts are often engaged in satirical political commentary with actors, authors, and musicians as allies. It is of interest that political knowledge can be gained by looking at these modern media content or shows.

The tendency of inconsistency is also observed in the findings of past studies of TV Talk shows. Khan (2013) conducted research on "Talk shows" and concluded that talk shows inject harmful ideas into people's lives. "The level of interests in television channels and their impact on the personal aspirations of young people" have been carried out by Aleena (2006). The research concluded that the higher the level of interest in TV shows, the greater the effect on viewer's

personal expectations. The role of talk shows in raising consciousness, and political norms is addressed by Naz et al, (2014). The study shows that talk shows, in particular, not only increase political consciousness but also confusion. In his article, Ahmad (2016) noted that political talk shows have a strong impact on youth in terms of political performance.

A lot of work has been done into the democratic impact of political comedy programs (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006; 2008; Xenos & Becker, 2009; LaMarre, Landreville, & Spotlight, 2008). Moy et al. (2005) found that a nominee can be judged in the mind of a person when that nominee is present in a comedy show. Becker (2012) found, after exposure to satirical jokes the audiences develop negative feelings towards satirized politicians. The economy, politics, and popular perception of comedy are said to be influenced. Nadeem et al. (2012) argued that numerous television talk shows impact a huge community with fun and light parodies. Zooren et al. (2009) talk about comedy talk shows and political types of performers. The researchers concluded that comedy TV talk shows not only provide entertainment but also provide receptive voters to their representatives and the political system.

Political Information and Democratic Processes

Political engagement of citizens in a political system strengthens the democratic process. Weakened political engagement leads to political skepticism and gripes democracy in any society. Political information from media to citizens enhances democratic norms and values. Scholars have recommended that getting political information from television instills citizens to participate actively and competently for better functioning of democracy (Hart, 1999; Postman, 1985; Putman, 2000; Schudson, 1997). Apropos, to sustain a healthy and flourishing democracy, citizens must know about political happenings and actively create, communicate and participate in a political community. Otherwise, there will be the risk of low voter turn-out (Casper & Bass, 1998; Waldman, 2001), and citizen who vote will be mostly uninformed when they approach polls (Converse, 1974; Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1991),

resulting in the wrong selection of candidates in elections. Therefore, it is pertinent to come to the true significance of TV talk shows and their impact on the citizens to predict the prospect of democracy in Pakistan.

The following hypothesis is also going to be tested to infer the empirical evidence to predict the engrossment of Talk Shows in the democratic process of Pakistan.

H1: *Comedy Talk Shows have many tropes of political Skepticism as compared to Political Engagement on Pakistani TV Channels*

Political Nature of TV Talk Shows

The political nature of television talk shows is more likely to impact some viewers than others (Baum, 2002a; Cooper & Bates, 2003; Young, 2003). Viewers with lesser interest and understanding would be more influenced by political satire as they are amused by the content of comedy. Viewers with less experience in politics are less likely to vote against messages incompatible with their perceptions or best interests (Baum, 2002b).

The critical problem for Gerbner was that TV succeeded so well in shaping the social reality that popular opinion grew to "uniform stereotypes, exploitable fears and resistance to substantive change" (1969, p.178). There has also been criticism of the ideas of uniform messages and non-selective viewing. As originally stated, the theory of culture suggested that, based on the narrative constructs of broadcasting, the world on TV was identical across the programs, uniting a cultured TV reality (Gerbner, 1969; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994).

Many studies of cultivation (Morgan & Shanahan, 1997) have provided evidence of a small but persistent relationship between television viewing and beliefs about the social world that is similar to or plausibly implied by the images shown in television programs. Nonetheless, it is still unclear how this process occurs. Shrurn and O'Guinn offer one possibility based on the 'bin model' of memory (Wyer & Srull, 1989). This model suggests that the human memory resembles a file cabinet. When new information about a topic is acquired, a copy of

that information is placed at the front of the file. If asked to make a judgment about a particular topic, a person will use the information which is most accessible. Two factors, among others, contribute to the greater accessibility of information: frequent and recent. When a person retrieves information about the topic, the contents of the file are searched from the front to the back. Thus, information that has frequently been repeated and recently acquired has the best chance of being remembered. A person who regularly watches a large amount of television programming that presents a consistent view of a topic might group many television images at the beginning of the file. When asked to make a judgment about social reality, these images may be the most accessible. Consequently, the person might base his or her judgment of social reality on them. Therefore, the present study will be based on the bin model of memory presented by Wyer and Srull (1989). The present study assists the media industry in designing and producing better programs to support the democratic system, political processes and to attract more young audiences.

Methods

The present research applied content analysis to analyze the content of TV talk shows of Pakistani channels. According to Weber (1990), content analysis is a "research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text" (p.9). This concise definition captures the essence of content analysis very well, although it may be worth adding that text is not the only content that might be 'subjected to analysis'. (Transcripts of) oral communications, as well as visual communications, could also be subjected to this type of analysis. This study, however, limits its scope to the content analysis of verbal communication of the host and the guests in TV talk shows.

Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as beyond making valid inferences from text, most content analysis "seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner" (p.14.). In other words, content analysis endeavors to analyze text in a systematic, empirical manner that is made sufficiently explicit to permit replication. Generally, this means that content analysis proceeds based on instructions that enumerate explicit categories. Consequently, Babbie (2004) has described content analysis as "essentially a coding operation" (p. 318).

Therefore, in the present research, content analysis technique was used to detect the tropes of political engagement and political skepticism in five top rated serious as well as five comedy TV talk shows in Pakistan. The top-rated five serious talk shows based on viewership rated by Media Logic Pakistan (2018): (1-Program: Capital Talk,Host: Hamid Mir, TV: Channel: Geo News), (2-Program: Off the Record, Host: Kashif Abbassi, TV: Channel: ARY News), (3-Program: The Reporters, Host: Ehtisham Ameer, TV: Channel: ARY News), (4-Program: On the front with Kamran Shahid, Host: Kamran Shahid, TV: Channel: Dunya News) and (5-Program: Nadeem Malik Live, Host: Nadeem Malik, TV: Channel: SAAMA News). The top-rated five comedy talk shows based on viewership rated by Media Logic Pakistan (2018): (1-Program: Hasb e Haal, Host: Junaid Saleem, Sohail Ahmed, TV: Channel: Dunya News), (2-Program: Mazaaq Raat, Host: Vasay Chaudhry, TV: Channel: Dunya News), (3-Program: Khabadar Naqalo say hoshiaayar, Host: Aftab Iqbal, TV: Channel: Express-News), (4-Program: Khabar Naak, Host: Ayesha Jahanzeib, TV: Channel: Geo News) and (5-Program: Siasi Theatre, Host: Syed Wasi Shah, TV: Channel: Express-News).

In the study of Abelman (1994), the episode is the sampling unit, Abelman randomly selected 30 episodes between February and April 1992. Douglas and Olson (1995) used content analysis in their experimental study, in their study 308, students saw episodes from 13 television comedies and filled up the questionnaire. Harmon (1989), and Carrol (1989) used purposive sampling technique to analyze the content of the program. Greenberg et al. (1997) took 10 episodes of each program in their study. Therefore, in the present study, every episode of the program was the sampling unit, and 10 episodes of each program were randomly selected from October 2019 to December 2019. The sample size for content analysis was 100 TV talk shows for the present study. The days of *week*, *program*, *genre*

and *duration of program* were taken as independent variables for the present study

For coding the data, according to coding protocol, five students having their M. Phil degrees in the discipline of Mass Communication were hired. There were three sessions for training the coders. After three sessions, a chunk of two programs (one serious and one comedy) was given to each coder to fill the coding sheet (see Appendix A). The inter-coder reliability was 95% in the present research. For inter-coder reliability, the modified version of Holsti's Scot's pi as applied by Shrikhande (2003) in her study was adopted in present research;

The coefficient is calculated as:

Percent of agreement = Total correct – Total incorrect/ Total number measured = 877-23/900=.95. The inter-coder reliability is 95% in

the present research. After getting the inter-coder reliability, each student coded the 20 episodes (10 serious talk shows and ten comedy talk shows).

A seven-point 11-item semantic scale was constructed to measure the program's tropes (*Political Engagement* and *Political Skepticism*). Then scores of items from point 1 to point three merged into a single category, so in the case of point 5 to point seven merged into the category of 3. Whereas, neutral score on point 4 is taken as neutral category 2. Therefore, every program that got 22 score on semantic scale was considered a neutral program. Every program having less than 22 scores was considered politically engaging, and every program having more than 22 scores on semantic score was considered politically skeptical.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1. Impact of Days of Week on the Stance of Talks Shows on Pakistani TV Channels

	N	M	SD	SE	95% CIM		Minimum	Maximum
					LB	UB		
Sunday	5	21.4000	8.61974	3.85487	10.6972	32.1028	11.00	28.00
Monday	36	19.2222	7.29035	1.21506	16.7555	21.6889	11.00	33.00
Tuesday	28	21.8214	7.09749	1.34130	19.0693	24.5735	11.00	33.00
Wednesday	3	33.0000	.00000	.00000	33.0000	33.0000	33.00	33.00
Thursday	19	24.5263	6.65306	1.52632	21.3196	27.7330	11.00	33.00
Friday	9	25.3333	7.41620	2.47207	19.6327	31.0339	15.00	33.00
Total	100	22.0300	7.53370	.75337	20.5352	23.5248	11.00	33.00

Table 1b. ANOVA

Tropes	SoS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	864.644	5	172.929	3.419	.007
Within Groups	4754.266	94	50.577		
Total	5618.910	99			

Table 1c. Dependent Variable:Tropes

Tukey HSD						
(I) Day of Week	(J) Day of Week	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI	
					LB	UB
	Monday	2.17778	3.39417	.987	-7.6970	12.0526
	Tuesday	-.42143	3.45279	1.000	-10.4668	9.6239
Sunday	Wednesday	-11.60000	5.19370	.233	-26.7103	3.5103
	Thursday	-3.12632	3.57455	.952	-13.5259	7.2733
	Friday	-3.93333	3.96676	.920	-15.4740	7.6073
Monday	Sunday	-2.17778	3.39417	.987	-12.0526	7.6970
	Tuesday	-2.59921	1.79200	.696	-7.8127	2.6143

Tukey HSD

(I) Day of Week	(J) Day of Week	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI LB	95% CI UB
	Wednesday	-13.77778[*]	4.27364	.021	-26.2113	-1.3443
	Thursday	-5.30409	2.01665	.100	-11.1712	.5630
	Friday	-6.11111	2.65040	.202	-13.8220	1.5998
	Sunday	.42143	3.45279	1.000	-9.6239	10.4668
	Monday	2.59921	1.79200	.696	-2.6143	7.8127
Tuesday	Wednesday	-11.17857	4.32035	.111	-23.7480	1.3908
	Thursday	-2.70489	2.11383	.795	-8.8548	3.4450
	Friday	-3.51190	2.72507	.790	-11.4401	4.4163
	Sunday	11.60000	5.19370	.233	-3.5103	26.7103
	Monday	13.77778[*]	4.27364	.021	1.3443	26.2113
Wednesday	Tuesday	11.17857	4.32035	.111	-1.3908	23.7480
	Thursday	8.47368	4.41826	.398	-4.3806	21.3279
	Friday	7.66667	4.74118	.589	-6.1271	21.4604
	Sunday	3.12632	3.57455	.952	-7.2733	13.5259
	Monday	5.30409	2.01665	.100	-.5630	11.1712
Thursday	Tuesday	2.70489	2.11383	.795	-3.4450	8.8548
	Wednesday	-8.47368	4.41826	.398	-21.3279	4.3806
	Friday	-.80702	2.87779	1.000	-9.1795	7.5655
	Sunday	3.93333	3.96676	.920	-7.6073	15.4740
	Monday	6.11111	2.65040	.202	-1.5998	13.8220
Friday	Tuesday	3.51190	2.72507	.790	-4.4163	11.4401
	Wednesday	-7.66667	4.74118	.589	-21.4604	6.1271
	Thursday	.80702	2.87779	1.000	-7.5655	9.1795

Table 1 reports the findings of ANOVA to examine the effect of day of Talk Show on program's tropes which were categorized into six groups regarding days (Group 1: *Sunday*; Group 2: *Monday*; Group 3: *Tuesday*; Group 4: *Wednesday*; Group 5: *Thursday*; Group 6: *Friday*). In view of *Talk Shows* broadcast by TV channels in Pakistan, the statistical variance at p < .05 was observed: F (5,94) = 3.419, p = 007. The significant gap in the mean scores between the groups was strong given their statistical importance. Calculated with eta squared, the impact size was .15. The statistical difference at p < .05 was witnessed in tropes of *Talk Shows* shown by TV Channels in Pakistan: F (5, 94) =

3.419, p = .007. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was high. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .15. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 4 (M =33.00, SD = .000) was significantly different from Group 2 (M = 19.22, SD = 7.29). The table explains that days of week in which talk shows shown on TV channels extremely caused effect on *Talk Shows'* tropes. Those *Talk Shows* which were shown on *Wednesday* had the strongest tendencies of *Political Skepticism* as compared to talk shows shown on *Monday*, which had the strongest tendencies of *Political Engagement*.

Table 2. Impact of Program on the Stance of Talks Shows on Pakistani TV Channels

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI for Mean LB	95% CI for Mean UB	Minimum	Maximum
Capital Talk	10	28.1000	2.60128	.82260	26.2392	29.9608	25.00	33.00
Off the Record	10	21.5000	3.47211	1.09798	19.0162	23.9838	16.00	28.00
The Reporters	10	12.0000	1.15470	.36515	11.1740	12.8260	11.00	14.00

On the Front	10	16.4000	6.09554	1.92758	12.0395	20.7605	11.00	28.00
Nadeem Malik Live	10	12.1000	1.91195	.60461	10.7323	13.4677	11.00	16.00
Hasb-e-Haal	10	27.0000	4.61880	1.46059	23.6959	30.3041	17.00	33.00
Mazak Raat	10	22.2000	6.05163	1.91369	17.8709	26.5291	15.00	33.00
Khabarnaak	10	24.6000	4.24788	1.34330	21.5613	27.6387	15.00	28.00
Khabardar	10	25.8000	7.03641	2.22511	20.7665	30.8335	15.00	33.00
Siasi Theatre	10	30.6000	2.79682	.88443	28.5993	32.6007	26.00	33.00
Total	100	22.0300	7.53370	.75337	20.5352	23.5248	11.00	33.00

Table 2b. ANOVA

Tropes	SoS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3870.210	9	430.023	22.132	.000
Within Groups	1748.700	90	19.430		
Total	5618.910	99			

Table 2c. Dependent Variable: Tropes

Tukey HSD

(I) Programs	(J) Programs	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI	
					LB	UB
Capital Talk	Off the Record	6.60000*	1.97129	.037	.2043	12.9957
	The Reporters	16.10000*	1.97129	.000	9.7043	22.4957
	On the Front	11.70000*	1.97129	.000	5.3043	18.0957
	Nadeem Malik Live	16.00000*	1.97129	.000	9.6043	22.3957
	Hasb-e-Haal	1.10000	1.97129	1.000	-5.2957	7.4957
	Mazak Raat	5.90000	1.97129	.096	-.4957	12.2957
	Khabarnaak	3.50000	1.97129	.748	-2.8957	9.8957
	Khabardar	2.30000	1.97129	.976	-4.0957	8.6957
	Siasi Theatre	-2.50000	1.97129	.958	-8.8957	3.8957
Off the Record	Capital Talk	-6.60000*	1.97129	.037	-12.9957	-.2043
	The Reporters	9.50000*	1.97129	.000	3.1043	15.8957
	On the Front	5.10000	1.97129	.239	-1.2957	11.4957
	Nadeem Malik Live	9.40000*	1.97129	.000	3.0043	15.7957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-5.50000	1.97129	.156	-11.8957	.8957
	Mazak Raat	-.70000	1.97129	1.000	-7.0957	5.6957
	Khabarnaak	-3.10000	1.97129	.858	-9.4957	3.2957
	Khabardar	-4.30000	1.97129	.477	-10.6957	2.0957
	Siasi Theatre	-9.10000*	1.97129	.001	-15.4957	-2.7043
The Reporters	Capital Talk	-16.10000*	1.97129	.000	-22.4957	-9.7043
	Off the Record	-9.50000*	1.97129	.000	-15.8957	-3.1043
	On the Front	-4.40000	1.97129	.443	-10.7957	1.9957
	Nadeem Malik Live	-.10000	1.97129	1.000	-6.4957	6.2957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-15.00000*	1.97129	.000	-21.3957	-8.6043
	Mazak Raat	-10.20000*	1.97129	.000	-16.5957	-3.8043
	Khabarnaak	-12.60000*	1.97129	.000	-18.9957	-6.2043
	Khabardar	-13.80000*	1.97129	.000	-20.1957	-7.4043

Tukey HSD						
(I) Programs	(J) Programs	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI	
					LB	UB
On the Front	Siasi Theatre	-18.60000[*]	1.97129	.000	-24.9957	-12.2043
	Capital Talk	-11.70000[*]	1.97129	.000	-18.0957	-5.3043
	Off the Record	-5.10000	1.97129	.239	-11.4957	1.2957
	The Reporters	4.40000	1.97129	.443	-1.9957	10.7957
	Nadeem Malik Live	4.30000	1.97129	.477	-2.0957	10.6957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-10.60000[*]	1.97129	.000	-16.9957	-4.2043
	Mazak Raat	-5.80000	1.97129	.109	-12.1957	.5957
	Khabarnaak	-8.20000[*]	1.97129	.003	-14.5957	-1.8043
	Khabardar	-9.40000[*]	1.97129	.000	-15.7957	-3.0043
Nadeem Malik Live	Siasi Theatre	-14.20000[*]	1.97129	.000	-20.5957	-7.8043
	Capital Talk	-16.00000[*]	1.97129	.000	-22.3957	-9.6043
	Off the Record	-9.40000[*]	1.97129	.000	-15.7957	-3.0043
	The Reporters	.10000	1.97129	1.000	-6.2957	6.4957
	On the Front	-4.30000	1.97129	.477	-10.6957	2.0957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-14.90000[*]	1.97129	.000	-21.2957	-8.5043
	Mazak Raat	-10.10000[*]	1.97129	.000	-16.4957	-3.7043
	Khabarnaak	-12.50000[*]	1.97129	.000	-18.8957	-6.1043
	Khabardar	-13.70000[*]	1.97129	.000	-20.0957	-7.3043
Hasb-e-Haal	Siasi Theatre	-18.50000[*]	1.97129	.000	-24.8957	-12.1043
	Capital Talk	-1.10000	1.97129	1.000	-7.4957	5.2957
	Off the Record	5.50000	1.97129	.156	-.8957	11.8957
	The Reporters	15.00000[*]	1.97129	.000	8.6043	21.3957
	On the Front	10.60000[*]	1.97129	.000	4.2043	16.9957
	Nadeem Malik Live	14.90000[*]	1.97129	.000	8.5043	21.2957
	Mazak Raat	4.80000	1.97129	.318	-1.5957	11.1957
	Khabarnaak	2.40000	1.97129	.968	-3.9957	8.7957
	Khabardar	1.20000	1.97129	1.000	-5.1957	7.5957
Mazzak Raat	Siasi Theatre	-3.60000	1.97129	.717	-9.9957	2.7957
	Capital Talk	-5.90000	1.97129	.096	-12.2957	.4957
	Off the Record	.70000	1.97129	1.000	-5.6957	7.0957
	The Reporters	10.20000[*]	1.97129	.000	3.8043	16.5957
	On the Front	5.80000	1.97129	.109	-.5957	12.1957
	Nadeem Malik Live	10.10000[*]	1.97129	.000	3.7043	16.4957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-4.80000	1.97129	.318	-11.1957	1.5957
	Khabarnaak	-2.40000	1.97129	.968	-8.7957	3.9957
	Khabardar	-3.60000	1.97129	.717	-9.9957	2.7957
Khabarnaak	Siasi Theatre	-8.40000[*]	1.97129	.002	-14.7957	-2.0043
	Capital Talk	-3.50000	1.97129	.748	-9.8957	2.8957
	Off the Record	3.10000	1.97129	.858	-3.2957	9.4957
	The Reporters	12.60000[*]	1.97129	.000	6.2043	18.9957
	On the Front	8.20000[*]	1.97129	.003	1.8043	14.5957
	Nadeem Malik Live	12.50000[*]	1.97129	.000	6.1043	18.8957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-2.40000	1.97129	.968	-8.7957	3.9957

Tukey HSD

(I) Programs	(J) Programs	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI LB	UB
Khabardar	Mazak Raat	2.40000	1.97129	.968	-3.9957	8.7957
	Khabardar	-1.20000	1.97129	1.000	-7.5957	5.1957
	Siasi Theatre	-6.00000	1.97129	.085	-12.3957	.3957
	Capital Talk	-2.30000	1.97129	.976	-8.6957	4.0957
	Off the Record	4.30000	1.97129	.477	-2.0957	10.6957
	The Reporters	13.80000*	1.97129	.000	7.4043	20.1957
	On the Front	9.40000*	1.97129	.000	3.0043	15.7957
	Nadeem Malik Live	13.70000*	1.97129	.000	7.3043	20.0957
	Hasb-e-Haal	-1.20000	1.97129	1.000	-7.5957	5.1957
	Mazak Raat	3.60000	1.97129	.717	-2.7957	9.9957
	Khabarnaak	1.20000	1.97129	1.000	-5.1957	7.5957
	Siasi Theatre	-4.80000	1.97129	.318	-11.1957	1.5957
	Capital Talk	2.50000	1.97129	.958	-3.8957	8.8957
	Off the Record	9.10000*	1.97129	.001	2.7043	15.4957
	The Reporters	18.60000*	1.97129	.000	12.2043	24.9957
	On the Front	14.20000*	1.97129	.000	7.8043	20.5957
Siasi Theatre	Nadeem Malik Live	18.50000*	1.97129	.000	12.1043	24.8957
	Hasb-e-Haal	3.60000	1.97129	.717	-2.7957	9.9957
	Mazak Raat	8.40000*	1.97129	.002	2.0043	14.7957
	Khabarnaak	6.00000	1.97129	.085	-.3957	12.3957
	Khabardar	4.80000	1.97129	.318	-1.5957	11.1957

Table 2 reports the findings of ANOVA to examine the effect of Talk Show on program's tropes which were categorized into ten groups regarding *Talk Shows* (Group 1: *Capital Talk*; Group 2: *Off the Record*; Group 3: *The Reporters*; Group 4: *On the Front*; Group 5: *Nadeem Malik Live*; Group 6: *Hasb-e-Haal*; Group 7: *Mazak Raat*; Group 8: *Khabarnak*; Group 9: *Khabardar*, Group 10: *Siasi Theatre*). The statistical difference at p < .05 was witnessed in tropes of *Talk Shows* shown by TV Channels in Pakistan: $F_{(9, 90)} = 22.132$, $p = .000$. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was high. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .68. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($M = 28.10$, $SD = 2.60$) was significantly different from Group 2 ($M = 21.50$, $SD = 3.47$), Group 3 ($M = 12.00$, $SD = 1.15$), Group 4 ($M = 16.40$, $SD = 6.10$), Group 5 ($M = 12.10$, $SD = 1.91$). The table explains that *Capital Talk* mostly presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *Off the Record*, *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, *Nadeem Malik Live*. The *Talk Shows*; *Off the Record*, *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, *Nadeem Malik Live* presented the tropes of *Political Engagement*. Group 2 ($M = 21.50$, $SD = 3.47$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 12.00$, $SD = 1.15$) and Group 5 ($M = 12.10$, $SD = 1.91$). The table explains that *Off the Record* less presented the tropes of *Political Engagement* as compared to *The Reporters* and *Nadeem Malik Live*. Group 6 ($M = 27.00$, $SD = 4.69$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 12.00$, $SD = 1.15$), Group 4 ($M = 16.40$, $SD = 6.10$) and Group 5 ($M = 12.10$, $SD = 1.91$).

The table explains that *Hasb-e-Haal* mostly presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, *Nadeem Malik Live*, which were aligned to *Political Engagement*. Group 7 ($M = 22.20$, $SD = 6.05$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 12.00$, $SD = 1.15$) and Group 5 ($M = 12.10$, $SD = 1.91$). The table explains that *Mazak Raat* slightly

presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *The Reporters* and *Nadeem Malik Live*, which were associated to *Political Engagement*. Group 8 (*M* = 24.60, *SD* = 4.25) was significantly different from Group 3 (*M* = 12.00, *SD* = 1.15), Group 4 (*M* = 16.40, *SD* = 6.10) and Group 5 (*M* = 12.10, *SD* = 1.91).

The table explains that *Khabarnaak* moderately presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, and *Nadeem Malik Live* were which associated with *Political Engagement*. Group 9 (*M* = 25.80, *SD* = 7.04) was significantly different from Group 3 (*M* = 12.00, *SD* = 1.15), Group 4 (*M* = 16.40, *SD* = 6.10) and Group 5 (*M* = 12.10, *SD* = 1.91). The table explains that *Khabardar*

moderately presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, and *Nadeem Malik Live* were which associated with *Political Engagement*. Group 10 (*M* = 30.60, *SD* = 2.80) was significantly different from Group 2 (*M* = 21.50, *SD* = 3.47), Group 3 (*M* = 12.00, *SD* = 1.15), Group 4 (*M* = 16.40, *SD* = 6.10), Group 5 (*M* = 12.10, *SD* = 1.91) and Group 7 (*M* = 22.20, *SD* = 6.05). The table explains that *Siasi Theatre* mostly presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism* as compared to *The Reporters*, *On the Front*, and *Nadeem Malik Live* were which are associated to *Political Engagement*. The program *Siasi Theatre* was also significantly different from Mazak Raat, which slightly presented the tropes of *Political Skepticism*.

Table 3. Impact of Impact of Genre on the Stance of Talks Shows on Pakistani TV Channels

	Genre	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Tropes	Serious	50	18.0200	7.03487	.99488
	Comedy	50	26.0400	5.68909	.80456

Table 3b. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Tropes	Equal variances assumed	6.407	.013	-6.268	98	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.268	93.891	.000

Table 3c. Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		MD	Std. Error Difference	95% CI of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Tropes	Equal variances assumed	-8.02000	1.27949	-10.55911	-5.48089
	Equal variances not assumed	-8.02000	1.27949	-10.56050	-5.47950

Table 3 reports that an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores of tropes in students on nature of talk shows. There was significance difference of scores of tropes of talk shows for *Serious Talk Shows* (*M* = 18.02, *SD* = 7.03) and *Comedy Talk Shows*, *M* = 26.04, *SD* = 5.69; *t* (93.891) = -6.268, *p* = .000 (two-tailed). The

magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = -8.02000, 95 % CI: -10.56050 to -5.47950) was medium (eta squared = .07). The table explains that *Comedy Talk Shows* presented mostly tropes of Political Skepticism as compared to *Serious Talk Show* which were mostly aligned to *Political Engagement*.

Table 4. Impact of Duration of Program on the Stance of Talks Shows on Pakistani TV Channels

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% CI for Mean LB	95% CI for Mean UB	Minimum	Maximum
21-30 minutes	16	26.2500	7.04746	1.76186	22.4947	30.0053	13.00	33.00
31-40minutes	71	22.0000	7.18729	.85297	20.2988	23.7012	11.00	33.00
more than 40 minutes	13	17.0000	7.32575	2.03180	12.5731	21.4269	11.00	29.00
Total	100	22.0300	7.53370	.75337	20.5352	23.5248	11.00	33.00

Table 4b. ANOVA

Tropes	SoS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	613.910	2	306.955	5.949	.004
Within Groups	5005.000	97	51.598		
Total	5618.910	99			

Table 4c. Post Hoc Tests

Dependent Variable: Tropes

Tukey HSD

(I) Duration_of_Progrm	(J) Duration_of_Progrm	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI LB	95% CI UB
21-30 minutes	31-40minutes	4.25000	1.98786	.088	-.4816	8.9816
	more than 40 minutes	9.25000*	2.68215	.002	2.8659	15.6341
31-40minutes	21-30 minutes	-4.25000	1.98786	.088	-8.9816	.4816
	more than 40 minutes	5.00000	2.16698	.059	-.1579	10.1579
more than 40 minutes	21-30 minutes	-9.25000*	2.68215	.002	-15.6341	-2.8659
	31-40minutes	-5.00000	2.16698	.059	-10.1579	.1579

Table 4 reports the findings of ANOVA to examine the effect of Program's Timings on Talk Show's tropes which were categorized into three groups based on timings (Group 1: 21-30 minutes; Group 2: 31-40 minutes; Group 3: more than 40 minutes). The statistical difference at p < .05 was witnessed in tropes of *Talk Shows* shown by TV Channels in Pakistan due to the program's timings: $F (2, 97) = 5.949$, $p = .004$. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was medium. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .10. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($M = 26.25$, $SD = 7.05$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M = 17.00$, $SD = 7.33$). The table explains that talk shows 21-30 minutes duration had more tendencies of *Political Skepticism* as compared talk shows having the duration of more than 40 minutes. The *Talk Shows* more than 40 minutes duration had more tendencies of *Political Engagement*.

The findings of the study strongly approve the research hypothesis, *H1: Comedy Talk Shows have many tropes of political Skepticism as compared to Political Engagement on Pakistani TV Channels.*

The study pledges that days of the week on which talk shows are broadcast on television networks have had a significant impact on the tropes of Talk Shows. Those Talk Shows seen on Wednesday have the strongest political skepticism leanings compared to Monday's talk shows with the strongest political engagement tendencies. Capital Talk on Geo News mostly addressed the tropes of political skepticism as opposed to Nadeem Malik Live on Samma.

Mazzaq Raat on Express news often portrayed the stereotypes of political skepticism in comedy Talk Shows as opposed to other comedy talk shows.

The present study acknowledges past studies of Bennet (2003) and Hart (2000) that the *Comedy*

Talk Shows presented mostly tropes of Political Skepticism as compared to *Serious Talk Show* which is mostly aligned to *Political Engagement*. The finding supports the past studies who claim that *Serious Talk Shows* enhance *Political Engagement* (Jones, 2005; McClintock, 2004; Paletz, 2002; Van Zoonen; 2005).

Conclusion

The study concludes that the presentation of issues in the talks shows determines viewers' perceptions. The research recognizes that 21-30 minutes long TV talk shows have more political skepticism propensities, while the TVtalk shows of more than 40-minutes duration have more political engagement dispositions. The study also concludes that comedy talk shows presented on Pakistani TV channels are displaying the tropes of political skepticism, while serious talk shows are exhibiting the tropes of political engagement. The research clarifies that there are several tendencies of political skepticism among the audiences of comedy talk shows and that consumers of serious talk shows have greater tendencies of political engagement. So, it can be inferred that serious talk shows enhance Pakistan's political culture as compared to comedy talk shows.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Coding Sheet for Content Analysis of TV Talk Shows

Date of coding: _____ Name of coder: _____

Sampling information [ID#: _____] Aired: Month: __ __ Date: __ __ Year: _ _ _ _

1-Day of week:

(1.) Sunday _____ [1] (2.) Monday _____ [2] (3.) Tuesday _____ [3] (4.) Wednesday _____ [4]

(5.) Thursday _____ [5] (6.) Friday _____ [6] (7.) Saturday _____ [7]

2- GENRE: (Serious, Comedy)

3. Duration of program? _____ [1] 30 minutes_____ [2] One hour_____ [3] 90 minutes

_____ [4] Two hours _____ [5] Other (How long in minutes? __ __ __)

4. Tropes of Political Engagement vs. Political Skepticism

Political Engagement		Political Skepticism
a)	Straight Forward	— — — — — — —	Complicated
b)	Simple to comprehend	— — — — — — —	Difficult to comprehend
c)	Understanding of the Political Issue	— — — — — — —	Misunderstanding of the Political Issue
d)	Given solution of the problem	— — — — — — —	Given no solution of the problem
e)	Public officials care much	— — — — — — —	Public officials care less
f)	Public officials have pretty touch with the public	— — — — — — —	Public officials lose touch with the public
g)	Politicians care public opinion	— — — — — — —	Politician do not care public opinion
h)	Politician are interested in public problems	— — — — — — —	Politician are interested in public votes
i)	Politicians are servants of public	— — — — — — —	Politicians are masters of public
J)	Whoever gets elected does whatever people want to do	— — — — — — —	Whoever gets elected does whatever he/she wants to do anyway
k)	Public have the political power	— — — — — — —	A few people have all the political power