

Prime Time News Bulletins: Exploring the Status of PEMRA Code of Ethics

Abstract: *Media ethics is a debatable issue among scholars and researchers. This study has examined the media ethics being practiced by Pakistani media outlets through a comparative analysis of defamatory, violence, indecency, hate speech and privacy in the news bulletins (9 pm) of three private news channels i.e. Geo news, ARY news and 24 news over a period of three months. The study also examines if the code of conduct enacted by the Private Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) had any relevance to these channels. Using the content analysis research technique, the researchers found that each news channel carried indecent, defamatory, violent, hate speech and privacy content in its nine pm news bulletins. ARY news had more instances of defamatory. It was revealed that PEMRA's code of conduct had little relevance to these channels as they were found involved in an overt breach of its regulations.*

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Key Words: Code of Conduct, PEMRA, News Bulletins, Electronic Media

Introduction

In days when Pakistan's broadcast media was restricted to state-run Pakistan Television (PTV) which would operate till twelve at night, complex issues such as Media Ethics never surfaced since the content aired on PTV was restricted as per state policy and in accordance with norms and moralities of Pakistani society. However, during General Musharraf's regime, Pakistani media underwent an evolution, albeit a tragic transformation, when the government pulled private investors into the broadcasting sphere. With this, the year 2002 witnessed a rapidly burgeoning Pakistani media industry followed by the opening of scores of private television

channels and FM radio channels. Alongside facilitating private broadcast media, the government of Pakistan also established the Private Electronic Media Regulatory authority, hereinafter referred to as PEMRA, in the year 2002. It was mandated to facilitate and regulate the establishment and operation of all broadcast media.

Although the expansion of private media did enhance the TV channels in Pakistan yet, it badly affected program content in terms of quality and morality. A clumsy competition started among channels, with every channel trying to establish its efficiency, rapidness and superiority over others. All private news channels engaged

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themselves in a haphazard race, in a helter-skelter attempt to report a story earlier than some else has reported, to run a ticker faster on their channel before some other channel does it, and to get the maximum number of viewership. In a blind attempt to report first and faster, many times, wrong facts were reported, and misleading figures were quoted since the reporters would not care to cross check the facts as they were ordered to run the breaking news first of all.

Alongside reporting, a negative trend was noticed in current affairs programs and talk shows. The news anchor or program host would try to provoke the setting guests mostly from contradicting schools of thought, involving them in acrimonious exchange of dialogues, sensationalizing the program in the process to achieve a wider audience. Another unethical factor that made its way with private media expansion was the infiltration of foreign content, namely the Indian content. With Indian soaps being run on private entertainment channels, the Indian film news and Hollywood stories would be broadcasted in the Primetime news bulletins of news channels, including the 9 PM news bulletins.

Though for regulating broadcast media, PEMRA promulgated a set of regulations and code of conduct for private TV channels, which were made mandatory for all to follow in letter and spirit. However, given the weak enforcement of PEMRA's code of conduct, private TV channels never completely followed its regulations. This poor monitoring and implementation of PEMRA's code of conduct have resulted in TV channels brazenly broadcasting vulgar content, including trailers of Indian and Hollywood films, songs, and sensual advertisements, without caring about the society's cultural norms and moral practices. The channels have incorporated obscene content in prime time news bulletins and television programs when families mostly sit down to watch television.

PEMRA being a media regulatory authority, plays a role in maximizing the effective practice of media ethics in private channels. In pursuit of this regulatory body has established a code of conduct, which bounds the media outlets to follow these instructions. If they don't, then PEMRA punishes the organization according to

its own policy. It involves financial plenty, bans, suspension of licenses etc. But, is this enough in order to control these ethical anomalies in News Channels? Do these media outlets strictly follow the ethical codes? Does the implementation of these ethical codes face hindrance?

Statement of Problem

PEMRA, as a regulatory media authority, holds the responsibility of ensuring the media ethics on the private news channels of Pakistan. The manifesto and policy of PEMRA clearly share the code of ethics which has the strict rules of ethical broadcasting along with punishments for the media persons and outlets breaking the ethical code of conduct. But still, news channels don't follow the boundaries and continue to break these rules. The researcher intended to establish whether the code of conduct promulgated by PEMRA for private news channels has been effective in ensuring ethical news media. The study examined the prime time news bulletins of 9 pm for three months under the light of PEMRA's ethical directives.

The current study tends to explore the ethical irregularities in Pakistani News TV channels under the nose of the regulatory body reasons for hindrance in the process of implementation of ethical media practices. It also investigates if Pakistani Private Media channels follow the code of ethics enacted by PEMRA.

Research Question

- RQ 1:** Which of the private news channels, i.e. Geo TV, 24 News and ARY News, shows more unethical content as per the selected five variables?
- RQ 2:** Why do unethical irregularities still occur in private TV news channels under the presence of the PEMRA code of ethics?
- RQ 3:** What are the causes of ethical irregularities and why do the ethical codes in media still await implementation?
- RQ 4:** What are the solutions which can overcome the ethical irregularities in the media landscape of Pakistan?

Literature Review

Ethics are the general rules of conduct that define principles of morality and give a line of action in certain situations. Philosophers have given guidelines of ethics for analyzing the behavior over a period of time but they do not give magic answers in every situation, for there is no perfect answer to every problem as the problems vary from society to society.

[Gordon \(2012\)](#) concluded that Media organizations, in response to the increasing criticism from the public, have encouraged their workers to become more concerned with the moral codes and values of media. He refers to the importance of media ethics in today's era, as nobody can ignore the ethical values of media as it is the need of the hour and is considered as the yardstick in determining the reputation and quality of the work of the particular media organization. He further emphasized the social responsibility of the media workers in the restoration of ethical media values.

[Adam, Craft & Cohen \(2004\)](#) argued that the purposes of journalism and business are seen to be at odds and that the corporations must encourage ethical practices and promote responsible media in order for ethical media to exist. These authors imply the social responsibility of the corporate and elite section of the society to promote and support the cause of media ethics.

[Newton et al. \(2004\)](#) found that media owners are also blamed for preferring the market interest to ethical media goals. They further added that people would trust a properly self-regulated media without having the need for lawsuits. This media would report the truth through internal accountability. Certain scholars and experts have argued that internal accountability and self-regulation can bring out the better implementation of ethical media in a proper way.

Despite the presence of the proper code of ethics, external control and legislation, many media organizations and professionals do not follow it. Many times, a code of ethics proves highly ineffective. Clifford [Christians \(1985\)](#), in his work enforcing media codes, argues that the

code of ethics fails because of a lack of consequences for breaking ethical codes.

Moreover, the media academicians and scholars also state that media ethics have very less effect on the media professionals and are ignored. [Boeyink \(1994\)](#) also discusses the effectiveness of the code of ethics through in-depth interviews with various journalists and concludes that journalists are aware of the media code of ethics but they do not perform it. All the journalists admitted that codes of ethics were not specifically consulted when an ethical dilemma arose.

In Pakistan, a research-famous Editor of Herald Magazine argues that he has never seen a code of ethics in his media organization Dawn. He concludes that in Pakistan code of media ethics is absent and is not implemented up to desired media standards. ([Sadruddin, 2012](#))

Research Methodology

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The data was collected and the content analysis research method was used. The collected data was then presented in front of the media experts, including PEMRA officials, media academicians and journalists.

The process of data collection for this study includes primary sources i.e. PEMRA official documents and critical monitoring of the 9 pm prime time news bulletins of mentioned three channels for three months from July 2020 to September 2020. The researcher selected these mentioned three months on the basis of data availability of 9 pm bulletins as most of the news channels upload their news bulletins on social media for some duration of time. The researcher downloaded all 9 pm bulletins of the mentioned channels of the mentioned months, keeping in view the selected variables. Furthermore, the secondary sources used are books, research papers, research articles, websites, and online journals.

The data analysis process was carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and results were extracted using a cross-tabulation mechanism.

Population

The population of this research comprises news bulletins of three private news channels i.e. Geo News, 24 NEWS and ARY NEWS. These channels were selected due to their support and affiliation with some political parties. And supporting any party and giving them due coverage comes under the violation of the code of conduct.

Sample Size

The sample size consists of Primetime news Bulletins of three private news channels i.e. Geo News, 24 News and ARY News, over the time period of three months, July 2020 to September 2020, which were selected on the basis of data availability. These channels upload their prime time news bulletins on social media for some duration of time. The researcher took advantage of social media for the collection of data.

In the second phase of the research for in-depth interviews, the purposive sampling technique was adopted for discussion with panelists. The purposive technique was used to

fulfill the purpose of the researcher by interviewing suitable and related panelists. The panelists were based on gender equality.

Result & Findings

In order to calculate the level of violence, indecency, defamatory, privacy and hate speech in the prime time news bulletins, 9 PM news bulletins of three private TV news channels i.e. Geo News, ARY News and 24 News were monitored over a period of three months from first July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

The variables selected to monitor were violence, indecency, defamatory, privacy and hate speech in 9 PM news bulletins. Source, type of content and date of each variable was noted; findings were recorded in separate tables for three channels.

For analysis, the collected data was entered in the SPSS data field and each variable was analyzed against the channels. The resulting bar charts and tables provided comparative analysis. The findings and results are depicted separately in detail in the form of graphs and tables.

Table 1. Analyzed Data of Geo News, ARY News and 24 News

Variables	Geo news	ARY news	24 news
Violence	31 (10.19%)	58 (10.88%)	36 (21.42%)
Indecency	27 (8.88%)	37 (6.94%)	17 (10.11%)
Defamation	192 (63.12%)	359 (67.35%)	92 (54.76%)
Privacy	14 (4.60%)	14 (2.64%)	09 (4.76%)
Hate speech	40 (13.14%)	65 (12.19%)	15 (8.92%)

Table 1 indicates the level of violence, indecency, defamation, privacy and hates speech on GEO NEWS. According to table 1, geo news has the highest cases of defamation. The total cases of defamation that are reported in three selected months are 192 cases. 63.12 percent of defamation cases are reported. The second number is hate speech, where 40 cases were reported during the analysis of geo news, which is 13.15 percent of the total analysis of geo news. On the third number, violence is reported. A total of 31 cases were reported during analysis, which is 10.19 percent of the total analysis. Indecencies that are reported are 27 cases during three months, which is 8.88 percent. During analysis, the least number of violations that were reported

were privacy. A total of 14 cases were reported during the analysis of geo news in the selected three months. Violation of privacy is 4.60 percent of the total analysis.

Table 1 shows the level of violations of 5 variables, which are defamation, violence, hate speech, privacy and hate speech. ARY news violated the defamation for three months. A total of 359 cases were reported for violating the code of conduct, which is 67.35 percent of the total analysis. In the second number, the above-mentioned channel has violated the hate speech and a total of 65 cases were reported which is 12.19 percent of the total analysis. On the third number, the ARY news violated the violent

content and 58 cases were reported during the analysis of bulletins. In the above table, 10.88 percent of cases were violations of violence. On the fourth number above mentioned channel has violated indecency. During analysis, 37 cases were reported on the violation of violence, which is 10.88 percent of the total percentage. Privacy is on the last number, which is violated in 9 PM news bulletins. A total of 14 cases were reported of violations of privacy during analysis. The above table shows that 2.64 percent of the cases were violations of privacy.

Table 1 shows the complete table of the violations that were recorded during the analysis of the 9 PM bulletins. Like others channels, 24 news also violated defamation mostly. During the analysis of bulletins, 92 cases were reported in 9 PM bulletins, which were 54.76 percent of the total analysis. On the second number, 24 news violated violence and 36 cases were reported during the analysis of three months bulletins. Violence content was 21.42 percent recorded. After analyzing the data, it was clear that indecency was recorded on number third where 17 cases were recorded and it was 10.11 percent of the total percentage. Same like others, hate speech were recorded on number fourth where 15 cases were reported and it consists of 8.92 percent. During analysis, 8 cases of privacy were recorded during three months' bulletins. The 24 news violated violent content 8 times in the whole three months.

In the comparative analysis of the three channels, defamation cases are more reported in the analysis of ARY news. Total of 359 cases were reported in three months' bulletins where they had violated the code of conduct. Similarly, in GEO news bulletins analysis, 192 cases were reported which is less than ARY news. According to the graph and analysis data, 92 cases were reported of defamation in 24 News bulletins. According to data, ARY news violated the code of conduct while geo is on the second number in violating the code of conduct. According to the data, 92 cases were reported in the analysis of 24 News. It is the least number of defamation cases that were analyzed in three months' bulletins.

Now comparing the ratio of violence cases that were reported during analysis, starting from ARY News, during analysis it is clear that 58

cases were reported. The highest cases of violence were reported in the analysis of ARY News. 24 News is in the second position in violation of violence content. The least number of violence content is reported in the analysis of GEO news. Total of 31 cases of violence were reported in the analysis of GEO News.

In the comparison of indecency cases that were reported during analysis, 37 cases were reported in 9 PM bulletins of ARY News, which are more than GEO and 24 News. 27 cases were reported in the analysis of GEO News, which is on the second number. Similarly, 17 cases were reported in the analysis of 24 News, which is the least number of cases among the selected channels.

In the comparative analysis, 14 cases of privacy were reported in the analysis of GEO and ARY News comparatively. Both channels violated the code of conduct 14 times in three months duration. 24 News violated 8 times, which is the least number among the three selected channels.

ARY News also violated the hate speech content more than the rest of the two channels. 65 cases were reported in the analysis, which is more than GEO and 24 News. 40 cases were reported in the analysis of geo news and 15 cases were reported in the analysis of 24 News.

1-Journalistic PEMRA Code of Conduct in Respondent Views

- As discussed in the constitution of Pakistan
- It is a sense of journalist
- There is no single definition of a code of conduct
- Code of conduct varies from culture to culture
- It is a minefield for journalist
- Code of conduct are the national interest
- There are no hard and fast rules for ethics
- Code of conduct is a subjective term
- Code of conduct includes many elements like defamation, balance stories and authentic sources.
- Delay system in transmissions is one of the codes of conduct

- Code of conduct are the Do's and don'ts for electronic media

Finding 1: The respondents defined the code of conduct from their own perspective and stated that it is a subjective term and there is no single definition of code of conduct and it varies from society to society. The majority of the respondents concluded that the code of conduct of one society couldn't be applicable in other societies.

2-Status of PEMRA Code of Conduct Followed in Media Organizations

- Media organizations make mistakes deliberately or mistakenly in violating the code of conduct
- Sometimes code of conduct is followed in our media organizations
- Nobody follows the code of conduct to its spirit as practiced in media organizations
- In our media organizations, 20 to 30 percent code of conduct is followed
- Mostly PEMRA code of conduct is followed

Finding 2: Most of the respondents agreed that the PEMRA code of conduct is ignored and some organizations deliberately violate the code of conduct. On the other side, some respondents were little satisfied that sometimes the code of conduct is followed. The views of respondents were based on the experiences that they had faced while watching the television. The majority of the respondents agreed that mostly the code of conduct is ignored.

3-Results of Ignoring the PEMRA Code of Conduct and its Impact on Society

- Violence content harmed children's mental health
- Family environment disturbed through violation of code of conduct.
- A chain of campaigns started against the PEMRA
- Media organizations got public sympathy
- Violation of the code of conduct created instability in society

- Allegations of competitors started by violating the code of conduct.

Finding 3: The respondents pointed out that violations of the code of conduct directly targeted our society, which created instability in our society. The aim of the regulatory body was to control and regulate the media to keep the ethical environment in society, which vanished through violations. The respondents added that the family environment was totally disturbed by violating the code of conduct. Most of the respondents agreed that instability in society and irregularities are the causes of ignoring the code of conduct.

4-Hindrances in the implementation process of the code of conduct

- There is a lack of intention to implement a code of conduct
- There are no basic Rules for punishment
- Owners also played a role of hindrance in the implementation of the code of conduct.
- Organizations and their unions played their role in making hindrances
- Favoritism of PEMRA is one of the hindrances in the implementation process
- Unawareness of the code of conduct is a part of hindrance
- No such punishment rules were defined by PEMRA, which made the process of implementation more complicated
- The lack of professional people in PEMRA is one of the hindrances

Finding 4: The respondents pointed out many reasons that are making hindrances in the implementation process. The respondents pointed out that the lack of intention of code of conduct by PEMRA and the lack of basic clear rules for punishment played the role of hindrance in implementing such a code of conduct. Most of the respondents declared the favoritism of PEMRA as the main hindrance in the implementation process that there are no such rules for punishments and PEMRA does favor their loved ones which are mostly the big groups of media.

5-Implementation Process can be made more Effective

- Implementable code of conduct
- Clear guidelines for do's and don'ts
- Professional people should be the part of PEMRA
- PEMRA should be an autonomous body
- PEMRA should be unbiased
- Professional journalists should be made part of the PEMRA board from electronic media.
- The procedure for hearing complaints should be professional.

Finding 5: The respondents figured out many suggestions for making the implementation process smoothly. The respondents added that PEMRA should introduce implementable and clear guidelines for media organizations, which is only possible by making the professional people part of the PEMRA. Most of the respondents suggested that PEMRA should be autonomous and free from any interference and the implementation process will become more effective if PEMRA act as unbiased.

6-GEO, ARY and 24-news Status of following Code of Conduct

- These channels often ignored the code of conduct
- They followed the code of conduct to their own perspective and organizations policy
- News channels give more importance to business
- These channels are not balanced while covering news
- Biased channels have affiliations with political parties

Finding 6: The respondents argued that mentioned channels are not following the code of conduct because these channels followed the code of conduct to their own perspective and give importance to their businesses and most of the channels are biased and have some affiliation with political parties. Most of the respondents agreed that biasedness insisted on these channels for violating the code of conduct.

7-Respondents Experiences of Violations of the Code of Conduct on TV

- Ayesha Gulalai's allegations about Imran Khan
- Interview of SANTHIA RICHI by Muhammad Malik
- Most violations of the code of conduct occurred in talk shows
- Violations occurred in covering Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)
- Antigovernment personalities are targeted to damage their image
- Antigovernment elements were countered by having affiliations
- Violations of privacy

Finding 7: All of the respondents experienced the violation of the code of conduct and most of them were political content in which the ratios of defamatory statements were high. Some channels were targeting the oppositions and also countering antigovernment elements.

8-Reasons for Ignoring the Code of Conduct

- News channels having affiliations and supported the political parties
- Controlling the bigger groups is not an easy task for PEMRA
- Pressure groups are one of the reasons for ignoring the code of conduct
- Financial aid is the weak point of News channels and one of the reasons for ignoring the code of conduct.
- Agenda based content violated the code of conduct.

Finding 8: The first reason for ignoring the code of conduct is having an affiliation and support of political parties and pressure groups. Most of the respondents reacted that channels having agenda based content and controlling the bigger groups is not an easy task for PEMRA, which are the basic reasons for ignoring the code of conduct.

9-Journalist's Individual Spirit Towards Code of Conduct

- Some individual journalists consistently promote hatred while covering news and events

- Individually journalist does not follow the code of conduct Due to organizational policies
- A journalist should implement self-gatekeeping while filing a story

Finding 9: Most of the respondents agreed that the organization's policies do not allow an individual journalist to follow the code of conduct but to report an event according to the organization's policies to get more ratings.

10-Tools that help Media Practitioners in Following the Code of Conduct

- Training is necessary for heads of organizations
- Training for journalists is mandatory
- An awareness campaign should be started on a priority basis
- It is the need of the hour to update our system and policies for reporting events or happenings
- A journalist should be made professionally skilled
- Refreshers courses should be arranged for journalists on the implementation of the code of conduct
- A journalist should ensure self-responsibility while reporting the news or events

Finding 10: the majority of the respondents suggested the trainings and refresher courses on code of conduct for journalists as well as for heads of organizations because the heads of organizations have decision power and control of overall situation and content, while journalists report the news and event.

11-PEMRA Role in Implementation Code of Conduct

- PEMRA has been failed in the implementation of its own code of conduct
- PEMRA's role is not failed but needs to be more effective

Finding 11: Most of the respondents reacted that PEMRA has failed in the implementation of its own code of conduct. The respondents argued

that it is the duty of PEMRA to implement its own code of conduct and regulate the electronic media inside the country. On the other hand, some of the respondents argued that PEMRA is not failed in the implementation of the code of conduct but PEMRA needs to improve the implementation process more effectively.

12-Media Policies and PEMRA Code of Conduct

- Needs for sessions and trainings for making policies and code of conduct
- There should be a chain of consensus between organizations and PEMRA
- Lack of coordination between organizations and PEMRA
- PEMRA code of conduct and organizations policies both are biased

Finding 12: Most of the respondents reacted during interviews that media organizations' policies are contradicted with PEMRA code of conduct because of a lack of coordination between media organizations and PEMRA. There is a need for the chain of consensus between organizations and PEMRA to resolve the issue. Some of the respondents argued that PEMRA's code of conduct and organization's policies both are biased and made for their own interests.

13-Harsh Decision of PEMRA on Violations

- PEMRA can take harsh decisions by punishing news channels on violations
- Punishment of PEMRA Depends on PEMRA's will
- PEMRA Can close and off-air the channels on violations
- PEMRA Can cancel and suspends the license of electronic media on violations of the code of conduct
- There is no punishment for favorite channels of PEMRA

Finding 13: The respondents argued that PEMRA has the authority and power, which includes harsh decisions on violations of the code of conduct and even can, suspends and cancel the license of news channels. Most of the respondents reacted that PEMRA does favoritism while

punishing the news channels, which shows PEMRA's biasedness.

Discussion and Conclusion

Major Findings

- Code of conduct is a subjective term and the code of conduct of one society is not applicable in another society.
- Some media organizations deliberately violate the code of conduct
- In case ignoring the code of conduct, everybody will start to defame opponents without proof and evidence
- Favoritism of PEMRA is one of the main hindrances in the implementation process that there are no such rules for punishments
- PEMRA should be autonomous and free from any interference
- Most of the News channels have agenda based content and controlling the bigger groups is not an easy task for PEMRA
- Organizations policies do not allow an individual journalist to follow the code of conduct but to report an event according to the organization's policies to get more ratings
- Lack of coordination between media organizations and PEMRA
- PEMRA has been failed in the implementation of its own code of conduct

In this study, five variables were selected from the code of conduct which are violence, defamation, hate speech, indecency and privacy. Three channels were selected which are GEO News, ARY News and 24 News. Three months of bulletins were monitored for each channel and data were recorded on a daily basis. Findings 1, 2 and 3 are related to research question 1. The result indicates that ARY News has the most instances of defamation in its news bulletins as compared to GEO News and 24 News. ARY News has 359 cases of defamation, while GEO News has 192 cases and 24 News has only 92 cases in their News bulletins. Defamatory in this research study is interpreted as wrong statements intended to malign a person or organization. A bar graph was used to analyze the level of defamatory on each news channel i.e. Geo News, ARY News and 24 News. The result indicates that ARY news had

the most instances of defamatory statements in its prime time news bulletins compared to Geo News and 24 News. According to the findings, ARY News has 359 cases of defamation while GEO News has 192 cases and 24 News has only 92 cases in their News bulletins. Examining the total number of defamatory on each channel over three months period, the results reveal that ARY news has the highest number of defamatory statements as compared to ARY News and 24 News. Hence in light of these findings, it can be stated that ARY News has the highest level of defamatory statements in its prime time news bulletins as compared to Geo News and 24 News, which stand second and third to ARY news, respectively, in this regard.

Similarly, ARY News also violated the hate speech content more than the rest of the two channels. 65 cases were reported in the analysis, which is more than GEO and 24 News. 40 cases were reported in the analysis of geo news and 15 cases were reported in the analysis of 24 News. Hence in light of these findings, it can be stated that ARY News has the highest level of hate speech content in its prime time news bulletins as compared to Geo News and 24 News, which stand second and third in ARY news, respectively, in this regard.

Indecency in this research study is interpreted as indecent verbal statements. A bar graph was used to analyze the level of indecency on each news channel i.e. ARY News, Geo News and 24 News. The result indicates that ARY News has the most instances of indecency in its prime time news bulletins compared to Geo News and 24 News. 37 cases were reported in 9 PM bulletins of ARY News, which are more than GEO and 24 News. 27 cases were reported in the analysis of GEO News, which is the second number. Similarly, 17 cases were reported in the analysis of 24 News, which is the least number of cases among the selected channels.

Hence in the light of these findings, it can be stated that ARY News has the highest level of indecency in its prime time news bulletins compared to Geo News and 24 News.

Privacy in this research is interpreted as the private life of the person. A bar graph was used to analyze the level of privacy on each news channel i.e. ARY News, Geo News and 24 News.

The result indicates that 14 cases of privacy were reported during the analysis of ARY News and Geo News, respectively. Both channels have the most instances of privacy as compared to 24 News. 24 News violated 8 times, which is the least number among the three selected channels.

In this research, the violence is interpreted as visuals and verbal statements. A bar graph was used to analyze the level of violence on each news channel. i.e. ARY news, Geo News and 24 News. The result indicates that 58 cases of violence were reported during the analysis of ARY News. The highest cases of violence were reported in the analysis of ARY News. 24 News is in second position in violation of violence content. The least number of violence content is reported in the analysis of GEO news. A total of 31 cases of violence was reported in the analysis of GEO News. (Research question1)

Findings 5 and 14 are related to research question 2. The researcher found that PEMRA has failed in performing its due role by implementing the code of conduct. It is the duty of the PEMRA to implement its own code of conduct and regulate the media. The respondents argued that ethical irregularities in the media are the result of a lack of implementation of code of conduct. The respondents added that some organizations deliberately violated the code of conduct to achieve their own aims and agendas. (Research question2)

The findings 7, 9, 12, and 15 are related to research question 3. The respondents pointed out many reasons and causes of the ethical irregularities in media. In finding 7, the respondents pointed out that PEMRA has a lack of intentions for the implementation of its own code of conduct. There is also a lack of crystal and clear rules for the punishment of media organizations, where PEMRA take advantage and does favoritism among the News channels. Most of the channels are biased and have affiliations with some groups where they support each other. The biasedness insisted the news channels for violation of the code of conduct to achieve their aims and goals. The media organizations follow the code of conduct according to their own perspective, where they can get their benefits. The respondents pointed out another reason for ignoring the code of conduct that organizations

policies are one of the reasons for ignoring the code of conduct that organization does not allow an individual journalist to follow the code of conduct but to report an event or news from such an angle which suits the organization's policy and get ratings. The respondents also agreed that policies of the PEMRA and organizations are based on biasness, which are contradicted each other. The respondents added that media organization's policies are made in favor of organizations, while PEMRA's policy is also biased and has its own interest. This contradiction between the two policies is one of the causes of ethical irregularities. (Research question3)

The respondents suggested many solutions for resolving the issue of ethical irregularities in Pakistani media. The respondents suggested that PEMRA should introduce an implementable code of conduct for media organizations that is acceptable for the media, PEMRA and society. The PEMRA should involve the professional people in their bodies where they have experience in relevant fields and have challenging power for resolving issues. The PEMRA should be an autonomous body, which should be free from any interference. The autonomous body will work free from any pressure and interference to resolve the issues of electronic media. The implementation process of the code of conduct will be more effective if PEMRA act as unbiased. The media organizations should work as neutral and unbiased while reporting or covering the events and news. The organizations should have no personal agenda other than informing, educating and entertaining the viewers. The media organizations should be free from any pressure groups or the bigger groups which control the media organizations. There should be a chain of consensus between the media organizations and PEMRA while making the policies. There should be no contradiction between their policies. The respondents also suggested that there should be training sessions and refresher courses for journalists on the code of conduct as well as for the heads of media organizations, who have the decisions making power. (Research question4)

Conclusion

Media got a mushroom growth after 2002 when private electronic media allowed starting transmission in Pakistan. The government established authority for regulating electronic media under the name of the Private Electronic Media Regulatory Authority. PEMRA made a code of conduct for electronic media, in which dos and don'ts are mentioned for electronic media and media organizations are bounded to follow the code of conduct that is implemented by PEMRA. In practice, the media continuously ignored most of the elements of the code of conduct which is proved in content analysis of the prime time news bulletins. The panelists, in a detailed discussion, pointed out many reasons, hindrances and solutions to the issue from different angles. The panelists concluded that the PEMRA's code of conduct is a subjective term and every society has a different code of conduct and a general code of conduct is not applicable to every society as every society has its own norms and tradition. On the other hand, some media organizations deliberately violated the code of conduct to achieve their aims and agendas. Some pressure groups and affiliated parties with media also played a role in the violation of the code of conduct. In case of ignoring the code of conduct,

it directly targeted the society by creating instability, unsocial behavior and blaming the opponents for defaming without proof and evidence. Most of the news channels have their own agenda and are affiliated with some bigger groups or parties. Controlling these bigger groups is not an easy task for PEMRA and the affiliated channels continuously practice the violation of the code of conduct. PEMRA also did favoritism among the electronic media, which created hindrance in the implementation of the code of conduct. There is also a lack of such rules for the punishment of electronic media. PEMRA is a biased regulating body and political interference is a routine practice for PEMRA. Policies of the PEMRA and media organizations are contradicted with each other and policies on both sides are biased which have their own interests. The organization's policies do not allow an individual journalist to follow the code of conduct but the journalist has to report an event according to the organization's policies to get more ratings. There is a lack of coordination and consensus between PEMRA and media organizations for making policies and resolving their issues. PEMRA has been failed in performing its role in implementing the code of conduct as many news channels continuously ignored the code of conduct.

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