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A Critical Evaluation of Political Incorrectness in Pakistani Political Discourse



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Abstract: This study examines instances of political incorrectness in the context of contemporary Pakistani politics. It investigates the strategies employed by certain Pakistani politicians and political activists to advance their political objectives with political incorrectness. The research population consists of individuals from the online community on Twitter, specifically political activists and politicians. The data collection process was conducted by the researchers, ensuring accuracy and reliability and then was carefully examined and analyzed in detail with the help of the three-dimensional model devised by Norman Fairclough (2015). The research methodology used was descriptive and qualitative, focusing on providing a clear understanding of the subject. The findings of the study highlight that utilizing political incorrectness can be an effective means of belittling, ridiculing, and mocking political adversaries. Additionally, it revealed that political incorrectness could sway less educated individuals in the desired direction. This strategy proves to be quite shrewd, allowing political parties to accomplish their desired political objectives by defaming opponents.

Key Words: Political incorrectness, Critical discourse analysis, Twitter, Political discourse

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Introduction

Language is a complex and dynamic system that allows individuals to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others. It is a defining characteristic of human beings and is essential for social interaction. If we talk about discourse, it refers to the use of spoken or written language to convey meaning in a particular social context. It encompasses a range of communicative practices, including conversation, debate, argumentation, and storytelling, and is shaped by various factors such as culture, power dynamics, and social norms.

In academic contexts, discourse analysis is a field of study that examines the use of language at the social level and how it forms and reflects social construction and power relations. Discourse analysis can be applied to a wide range of contexts, including politics, media, education, and everyday

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conversation. Furthermore, the methodology employed in scrutinizing language as a social practice is commonly referred to as Critical Discourse Analysis. As articulated by Van Dijk (1998), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a discipline devoted to the examination and interpretation of written and spoken texts, with the intention of revealing the origins of power, dominance, inequality, and bias embedded within them. CDA seeks to discern the mechanisms through which these elements are sustained and propagated within particular social, political, and historical frameworks. In simpler terms, CDA aims to critically investigate how social inequality is expressed. communicated, formed and justified through the use of language.

Before jumping to Political Incorrectness, we need to re-look that what is Political Correctness. Political correctness is a phenomenon where moral and religious values are becoming more prominent and take precedence over broader often guidelines and rules governing social behaviour. However, it raises questions about what these guidelines and rules actually are. How are they suggested, developed, adhered to, and enforced by politicians and other individuals in society? Currently, political correctness is deeply ingrained in a specific socio-historical context, namely the political discussions within Western societies. Political correctness sometimes can stigmatize certain values while promoting norms based on the perspectives of specific societies. It leads us to question whether it will develop, and if so, how it will evolve towards a more inclusive and open-minded perspective. The objective of adhering to principles of political correctness is to combat societal biases by limiting language and behaviours that have the potential to discrimination cause harm or to marginalized groups. Advocates of political correctness often draw inspiration from postmodernism and critical theory, and they frequently engage in critical examination of the concept of universal truth and dependency on scientific rationality. On the other hand, our topic of concern is Political Incorrectness is the attitude or policy carried out by someone who intentionally offends or upsets a person or a group of people in a society in order to have an advantage in his own favour. The current Pakistani political unrest is fostering multiple internal and external conflicts. No doubt extremism and intolerance of diversity and dissent have grown.

This paper encompasses a few of the Pakistani Politicians who go on to proceed with their political agendas by launching their 'Political Incorrectness' approach.

Significance

No doubt modern societies and politics are succumbed to immorality and mortifying attitudes. The extent to which decency and civility are decaying is a worrying point. In these low times, a study has been conducted that investigates emerging wickedness and immorality in Pakistani politics. Moral values indeed have a significant impact on everyone's life. They contribute to leading a respectful and fulfilling existence. Values like honesty, loyalty, respect, empathy. compassion, and courage provide individuals with a sense of positivity and guide their thoughts and actions. Moral values serve as the fundamental building blocks of one's character, helping to distinguish between right and wrong. Moreover, these values are often regarded as universal, as people from diverse cultures and backgrounds generally agree upon them. This study highlights the discourse of political incorrectness in Pakistani Politics. It aims to expose the agendas behind such a degrading discourse. All the factors that incorporate political incorrectness are discussed at great lengths. The driving force behind these factors is also unveiled.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of our study are:

- to highlight political incorrectness in the discourse of Pakistani Politics
- to bring out hidden motives from the discourse infused with political incorrectness.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions of our study:

- What Politically Incorrect statements are being used in Pakistani Politics?
- What is the purpose of political incorrectness in the discourse of Pakistan's Politics?

Literature Review

There has been a limited number of theoretical or practical work done concerning 'Political Incorrectness' in some political discourse. Jessica Gantt's work 'Donald Trump's "Political Incorrectness": Neoliberalism as Frontstage Racism on Social Media' falls under the category of the best example. The triumph of Donald Trump's campaign for the 2016 United States presidential election went against many traditional beliefs regarding persuasive rhetoric His informal and unconventional style of communication challenged the norms of political discourse (McNair, 2017). and journalists Scholars alike have characterized his communication style as unburdened by the constraints of political correctness (Paulhus, 2017). Trump even deplored the culture of political correctness in the United States by saying, "The US has become so politically correct as a country that we can't even walk. We can't think properly. We can't do any Thing" (Milbank, 2015). According to various sources (Phillips, 2017), right-wing populist movements in Europe have gained popularity by expressing considered ideas that are politically incorrect, particularly when discussing social identity, Islam, and immigration. These

movements have found appeal even within intellectual and academic circles. as demonstrated by the rise of the "Intellectual Dark Web" - a group of intellectuals, professors, and journalists who challenge the prevailing political and academic norms on contentious issues (Weiss, 2018). Some studies suggest that this politically incorrect communication resonate may with individuals who perceive it as a display of honesty and authenticity (Schroeder, & Gino, 2018).

underlying The principle behind politically incorrect statements lies in their potential to contribute to the establishment of a reputation characterized by unabashed honesty, intellectual bravery, and moral uprightness. However, it is unscientific to draw causal connections based solely on a limited set of observations and the benefit of hindsight. Adhering to the avoidance of expressing politically incorrect views can provide leaders with a kind of reputational advantage (Van Boven, 2000). Nevertheless, if followers are aware of societal norms that discourage the expression of such views, a leader's politically correct statements might not effectively convince sceptical followers of their true values. Therefore, it becomes crucial for building trust in leadership that followers possess knowledge of a leader's privately held convictions.

Within the field of communication research, the repercussions of verbal aggression have been extensively scrutinized (Avtgis, 2006). Studies conducted by Cole and McCroskey (2003) have illustrated a correlation between the source of verbal aggression and how recipients evaluate the credibility and appeal of said source, both in a supervisor-follower setting and in informal interactions. Similarly, Infante et al. (1992) discovered that individuals initiating verbal aggression during one-on-one conversations were perceived as less credible and attributed fewer valid arguments.

Furthermore, when a politically incorrect leader possesses values that contradict those

of their employees, it can have a negative impact on their perception of the leader's integrity. However, while employees may disagree with the politically incorrect leader's values, they are less likely to suspect the leader of deliberately misrepresenting their convictions. Expressing politically incorrect opinions may alleviate suspicions of deceit, similar to revelations about immoral behaviour. When immoral behaviour is denied, onlookers often suspect dishonesty, whereas admitting to such behaviour leads to fewer suspicions of deception. A similar pattern may apply to political incorrectness. By openly acknowledging the possession of politically incorrect opinions, leaders may signal an unwavering commitment to forthrightness and veracity (Morris, 2001). This signalling of truthfulness can positively impact how the leader's integrity is perceived. particularly regarding the alignment between privately held and publicly expressed attitudes and values. In simpler terms, leaders who make politically incorrect statements may earn a reputation for "walking the talk," "saying what they mean and meaning what they say," and being a "straight shooter" - attributes that leaders expressing politically correct views may find challenging to achieve (Ishida, 2015).

If political incorrectness leads to an increase in perceived trustworthiness, it can serve as a delicate yet valuable tool for managerial communication. Some scholars argue that leaders deeply entrenched in political correctness may risk losing the trust of their followers. Ely, Meyerson, and Davidson (2006) contend that political correctness can create an environment in which people cautiously navigate sensitive issues and each other, resulting in misunderstandings, conflicts, and mistrust that ultimately undermine both managerial effectiveness and team dynamics.

Research Methodology

The data was thoroughly analyzed and described with detailed descriptions in this

study, which uses a descriptive and qualitative research methodology.

Target Population

This study is conducted on the material piled up from Twitter posts on political and public profiles having political discourse by the researcher itself. Social media has formed a virtual community where groups and profiles are formed on multiple ideas and common interests i.e., religious, political, social, etc., sharing no geographical boundaries. The population for this research is drawn from the online community and includes political activists and politicians.

Sampling

The non-probability sampling method is used in which each and every member does not have an equal chance to be selected. The data collection procedure from social media icons is random and data is collected manually in the form of images and screenshots from the tweets of users. Authentic data is collected for the analysis which is counter-verified via self-assessment.

Theoretical Framework

In the context of this study, the Fairclough 3D Modal, developed by Fairclough, is utilized. This model offers a comprehensive approach to analyzing discourse by incorporating three dimensions of understanding.

According to Fairclough, discourse can be viewed through three interconnected dimensions. First, it is seen as a language text, whether it is spoken or written. This dimension involves studying the linguistic aspects of the discourse, such as grammar, vocabulary, and rhetorical devices.

The second dimension emphasizes discourse as a practice that encompasses the production and interpretation of texts. This dimension focuses on understanding how discourse is created, circulated, and understood within specific contexts. It examines the social and cultural implications involved in the use and interpretation of discourse.

The third dimension regards discourse as a sociocultural practice. It acknowledges that discourse does not exist in isolation but is deeply embedded within broader sociocultural structures and practices. This dimension encourages an analysis of how linguistic practices reflect and influence social power dynamics, ideologies, and social norms.

Moreover, Fairclough suggests that discourse can be observed within various sociocultural practices at personal, institutional, and societal levels. This implies that discourse analysis can extend beyond individual conversations or texts and also explore broader social, institutional, and cultural contexts.

By employing the Fairclough 3D Modal, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of discourse, its linguistic elements, its production and interpretation practices, and its wider sociocultural implications. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of discourse that uncovers power relationships, ideologies, and societal norms that underlie and are shaped by language use.

Analysis of Data

Data has been analyzed with the title of excerpts using Fairclough 3D Modal as follows:



The account that made the comment belongs to Saeed Awan, who is a political activist. He was trolling a politician in his tweet without caring about the Holy Book. This shows his lack of political correctness and reminds us of his past actions. This tweet has not only harmed the individual involved but also reflects poorly on the respected political party. It is a morally reprehensible act, and such tactics should never be used in a democratic political system.

(پیلی ٹیکسی) Excerpt 2



PTI Punjab is unleashing its most brutal crowd-puller. Every time the woman is reburied when such comments are made. The moral standards established by one political party are being revised. However, this revision is also shaping our future. A future that appears to be dark and morally corrupt in the realm of politics. It is noted these days Pakistani Politics ceases to provide freedom of expression at almost every level.

(كانپيرڻانگ گئي، ير) Excerpt 3



Muhammad Arshad is a political worker who is backing his political party by using a harmful tool called political incorrectness. He is attacking a politician by purposefully mocking his verbal mistake. Mistakes can happen even at professional levels, but ridiculing them to prove someone as "incompetent" is a very unkind act. It is evident that politics has stooped to extremely low levels nowadays. Political workers often disregard important matters and spare no effort to fulfil their own objectives, disregarding ethical considerations.

Excerpt 4 (بجھے کیوں نکالا)



The name of the Twitter account who commented is Bibi. This account is emphasizing the act of seeking revenge. Instead of providing a protective shield, it has become a trend to defame political opponents. These comments may attract the public and achieve their desired outcome. However, sometimes it succeeds and other times it only damages one's own reputation. Such tweets act as catalysts and initiate conflicts from both sides. This ultimately diminishes the value of the political system and prevents any progress from being made.

(زىداىى كوسر كون پر گەسىيلون كا) Excerpt 5



The name of the Twitter account who tweeted is Patriot who is a political activist. It appears that this account is disregarding the principles of the Charter of Democracy and is bringing up the past actions of its political rival. It is a prime example of political incorrectness as it reminds opponents of their previous promises. During an election campaign, such tactics serve to sway the crowd towards one's own party. It is important to acknowledge that the role of media in this context is crucial, as it greatly influences people's perceptions and opinions.

(بر گھر سے بھٹو نکلے) Excerpt 6



Q 123 € 1,169 (2,413 III 94.2K 😪

In this tweet, Fayyaz Shah is adding salt to injury. It has become a common occurrence in our politics for the slogans of a political party to backfire and become a source of criticism. We can observe that political workers are taking advantage of such situations and manipulating a party's slogan to diminish their credibility. While it may be an effective technique to criticize opponents, it is not conducive to a political system based on democratic values.

(پيرنى پنكى) Excerpt 7





0

The name of the Twitter account who commented is Syed Adnan Badshah. He is a political worker. It appears that he is imitating the actions of his opponents. It has become a common occurrence in Pakistani politics to target women. When women are attacked, it triggers a response from the opposing side, leading to a vicious cycle. This harmful cycle only corrupts the political system, specifically, and society as a whole.

Excerpt 8 (مسٹریوٹرن) ← Tweet Mrs Anjum Ara Follow خان صاحب نے جو ویکسین لگوائ تھی وہ بھ ٹرن مار گئی۔ نیازی سرکار کرونا وائرس کے شکار۔ Imran Khan سے پہلے کھیرانا نہیں Value Translate Tweet <u>--</u> IS AT LO IN ARCH 3:13 PM · 20 Mar 21 7 Likes 0 tl 0 ~

Mrs Anjum Ara has found a way to attack her greatest rival even in frightening times. Being politically incorrect is seen as a skill, and it seems like she is quite adept at it. Time and circumstances hold no significance in this matter. The sole objective is to demean one's adversaries. The method employed does not matter, as long as it achieves the desired outcome. The political supporters of a party mirror their leaders, and one can only imagine the kind of leaders they will be. It is complete chaos. People can stoop to the point of using words as weapons in order to achieve personal political gains, even if it means resorting to extreme measures.

Excerpt 9 (Beggers can't be Choosers)

← Tweet



Follow

Replying to @KamiRaj47152516 and @ImranKhanPTI

Amrica kai ghulam to tumharah baap sharif Bradraan hai. Beggers can't be choosers so don't choose, obey your lord Nawaz and Shabaz! Allah ka siphai hai Imran khan. Aisai izzat nahi milgai! Wo daakoo to Zaleel ho rahe hai! Haq jeetai ga!!! Imran khan zinda baad!!

1:11 AM · 03 Apr 22



Zameer Ayesha is replying to @KamiRaj47152516. She has launched an aggressive assault on her political opponent. She is leveraging her opponent's leader's political positions and mercilessly criticizing him. The manner in which she is defending her own leader carries a significant sense of authority. Her utilization of politically incorrect statements is overwhelming, accompanied by a relentless barrage. She is also a prime example of a devoted follower of a political party.

Excerpt 10 (بلورانی)

Dr. Sana

@_Dr_Sana_K_



Follow

ŝ

PPP will end Corruption says Bilawal Zardari. Yeah it's just like Prostitute will end Prostitution.

Naughty Bilo Rani 😅 😂 🤡





The name of the Twitter account who tweeted is Dr Sana. Her profile picture reveals her political bent. She is targeting the gender of a political leader. Her tweet is extremely audacious and infused with political incorrectness. By mocking the gender, she aims to belittle the individual portrayed above. Her actions indicate a lack of ethical standards, and she is undoubtedly shaping the new norms in Pakistani politics.

(دەجودوائى لىنے گياتھا) Excerpt 11

← Tweet





Aik nawaz ha jo Har mushkil waqt Pakistan kay kaam ata ha Or aik wo nawaz Jo dawai leny gya or kabhi wapis nhi aya feel so sorry to #Everyone #Chacha #Hacker

11:31 AM · 14 Oct 22 from Punjab, Pakistan



Waleed Malik has cleverly drawn lines between two personalities from different fields i.e. cricket and politics. He portrays one person as a saviour and another as an absconder. In his tweet, he is clearly displaying his own political position. The utilization of political incorrectness in this context can be advantageous, as it influences public opinion and often uneducated individuals go along with the prevailing narrative.

(ڈڈو چارجر) Excerpt 12



The Twitter handle @RoyaleNawaab is making fun of a politician's appearance in order to secure a political gain. Attacking personalities has become a prominent characteristic of Pakistani politics. It highlights the absence of political maturity among our people. Our democratic values have deteriorated to such an extent that only a few individuals actually condemn these trends. It is indeed a very concerning situation.

(جبزيادةبار)ش بوتا المتوزيادة پانى آتامه) Excerpt 13



#Karachi today. PPP Government's unbroken 12 years Sindh tenure manifesting each and everytime it rains heavy.

Guess where #Bilawal been busy? Pontificating in Lahore and other cities, masquerading as a politician!



Zartaj Gul Wazir, a politician, makes fun of her opponent in this tweet. She has effectively diminished her rival by imitating him. She holds a leadership position within a constituency. This incident clearly demonstrates the extent to which our standards have declined. Even our leaders do not uphold moral values. As a nation, what actions can we take? It appears that we are destined to endure struggles for many more years to come.

(ووٹ کوعزت دو) Excerpt 14





Ch Fawad Hussain 🧇 @fawadchaudhry

The people of GB has" REJECTED" Nawaz & Mariyam's Narrative against state / institutions. People of GB have spoken and spoken for Pakistan. A big NO to PMLN and now PMLn & Co (کو عزت دو

♦ Ch Fawad Hussain ♥ @faw... • 15 Nov 20 میڈیا کے مطابق GB انتخابات PTI جیت رہی ہے، امیدیے آج کی عبرتناک شکست سے PDM کی قیادت کو احساس ہوگاکہ ان کے بیانیہ پر عوام کس قدر ناراض ہیں اور بجائے اس کے کہ وہ دھاندلی کا غیر سنجیدہ بیانیہ ایائیں انھیں اپنی سیاست اور لیڈرشپ کی تبدیلی پر غور کرنا چاہئے۔...

11:03 PM · 15 Nov 20

The renowned politician Ch Fawad Hussain has targeted the slogan of a political party in this tweet. He appears to be gloating about the impending defeat of his opponents in the elections. He is constructing a significant storyline filled with politically incorrect statements. The unethical political strategies being used here are also infiltrating our democratic system.

(مريم كياپاچور) Excerpt 15



3 Bookmarks

Another famous political activist Annie Sehar has successfully used a politically incorrect stance here. She is endorsing a political party by chanting slogans against its competitors. It is evident that, even as a woman, she is intensifying pressure on her opponents. For her, it's not about what is right or wrong. She is simply justifying any improper methods as correct.



Awais Raza has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors. The trend of attacking the personal lives of politicians is being fueled by such comments. However, falling to such lows can lead to negative consequences. This can harm not only a political party on a specific level but also the nation as a whole. When such practices are repeatedly carried out, they solidify into a tradition. Such traditions have a tendency to persist for a long time.

(چھوٹاڈان) Excerpt 17



The Twitter handle with the name Ihatasham is solidifying the tradition of attacking the personalities of politicians. His political bias can be discerned from this tweet. Political workers like Ihatasham exhibit a lack of education and proper manners. This not only reflects poorly on them but also on our nation as a whole. A country where every politician is subjected to ridicule is a country where moral degradation will prevail.

(ايبسلوڻليناڪ) Excerpt 18



The name of this Twitter handle is Zuhaib Pmln. He has used the popular technique of political incorrectness for criticizing his adversary. He is censuring the stance taken by the displayed political figure. He is performing an act of blaming and his maneuvering of language is working as a catalyst. This catalyst is a bad omen in Pakistani Politics.

(چیرىبلاسم) Excerpt 19



2:41 AM · 11 May 22

The Twitter handle Naveed is a political activist. He is endorsing a political figure by mocking the other one. His approach is a well-established one and it appears to have become deeply ingrained in our politics. It seems that political incorrectness has become a necessary tactic to achieve any kind of success. However, this raises a serious question about the integrity of the Pakistani nation.

Conclusion

Political incorrectness refers to the attitude or policy of someone who demonstrates a lack of concern about potentially offending or upsetting groups of people in society who may have experienced disadvantage or discrimination based on their sex, gender, race, or disability. When a person's language is perceived as politically correct or incorrect, it can influence the overall perception of that individual. It is important to note that political incorrectness often involves language or actions that go against prevailing norms of sensitivity and inclusiveness. Political incorrectness is a wonderful weapon tool to degrade, mock and ridicule political opponents. It directs the uneducated folk in whichever direction one wants. It enables a political setup to achieve political gain. It is used in the political domains of Pakistani politics through which politicians do propaganda for their desired cause.

Findings of the Study

- The study reveals that political incorrectness is an excellent tool to degrade, mock and ridicule political opponents.
- It also brought out that political incorrectness directs the uneducated folk in whichever direction one wants.
- Political incorrectness is a very clever technique which enables a political setup to achieve political gain.

 Political incorrectness is used in the political domains of Pakistani politics through which politicians do propaganda for their desired cause.

Discussion

It has been observed that political incorrectness can be used as a powerful tool to discredit one's, political opponents. In Pakistani society, the decline in moral values is a topic often discussed and commented upon. Moral values are concerned with distinguishing right from wrong in human behaviour. Moral decay, therefore, refers to a decline in the understanding of this difference. It represents a deterioration or collapse in upholding societal values, beliefs, norms, and ethical standards. Morality plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' ethical foundations, influencing their choices between good and evil, honesty and deceit. When discussing the application of morality, four aspects are often considered: religious morality, morality in relation to nature, individual morality, and social morality.

The clever use of language in political incorrectness also appeals to the uneducated population. This technique is particularly appealing and often leads the common man to fall into its trap, affecting their voting decisions. Emphasizing education is critical because illiteracy provides fertile ground for corrupt politicians who exploit affiliations and clan systems to secure votes instead of focusing on their contributions to the nation.

Public awareness is closely linked to education. The mass media in Pakistan has made significant progress in recent years, playing a vital role in keeping the public informed and subjecting the ruling class to scrutiny and accountability. However, there is still room for improvement. Certain sections of the media cater to the interests of a select few, influencing people's opinions and leading to biased viewpoints. With elections on the horizon, the role of the media becomes paramount. Given that a significant portion of the population is uneducated, the mass media holds considerable influence over the voting decisions of the public. It is crucial for the media to present unbiased opinions through print and television programs to enable the public to make informed choices.

Political incorrectness has brainwashed the people. It has built a narrative that is likely to run for a long time. Political propaganda is harmful because it produces emotional responses, threats and attacks on political opponents, or spreads messages that create division among social groups in a community.

Recommendation for Future Researchers

It is recommended for future researchers to grope the history of political incorrectness in Pakistani Politics and its effects on different generations.

Limitation and Delimitations

The limitation of this research is that there has not been a great amount of theoretical work published on Political Incorrectness in politics. Another limitation might be the fake Twitter accounts that have been used by political activists.

The major delimitation is that it has only to do with the present politics of Pakistan.

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