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Abstract

This research examines the role of FM radio in shaping the awareness and engagement about politics among university students in Lahore, by focusing on the influence of socio-political aspects. The study purposes to recognize the history of FM radio and its effectiveness to address the socio-political issues. The sample size of 600 students between the ages of 18 and 32 from three private universities of Lahore (University of South Asia, University of Management and Technology, Superior University). The statistics were attained by the technique of purposive sampling; the research finds that FM radio upholds a noteworthy occurrence in spite of the rise of new media. The majority of people listen to FM radio for entertainment, information, education, and development. The findings show that FM radio is an effective medium for raising socio-political awareness and encouraging political connection among youngsters.

Keywords: FM Radio, University Students, Socio-Political, Politics, Society, Political Education, Radio Broadcasting

Authors:

Usama Bin Saleem: (Corresponding Author)

Lecturer, Department of Media Studies,
University of South Asia, Lahore, Punjab,
Pakistan.

(Email: usama-bin-saleem@usa.edu.pk)

Ilsa Islam: Lecturer, Department of Media Studies, University of South Asia, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Syeda Sumblah Bukhari: Lecturer, Department of Media Studies, University of South Asia, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

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Title

Impact of FM Radio on Political Awareness and Engagement among University Students: A Socio-Political Study

Authors:

Usama Bin Saleem: (Corresponding Author)
Lecturer, Department of Media Studies,
University of South Asia, Lahore, Punjab,
Pakistan.
(Email: usama-bin-saleem@usa.edu.pk)

Iisa Islam: Lecturer, Department of Media Studies,
University of South Asia, Lahore, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Syeda Sumbal Bukhari: Lecturer, Department of
Media Studies, University of South Asia,
Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Keywords:

[FM Radio](#), [University Students](#), [Socio-Political](#), [Politics](#), [Society](#), [Political Education](#), [Radio Broadcasting](#)

Abstract

This research examines the role of FM radio in shaping the awareness and engagement about politics among university students in Lahore, by focusing on the influence of socio-political aspects. The study purposes to recognize the history of FM radio and its effectiveness to address the socio-political issues. The sample size of 600 students between the ages of 18 and 32 from three private universities of Lahore (University of South Asia, University of Management and Technology, Superior University). The statistics were attained by the technique of purposive sampling; the research finds that FM radio upholds a noteworthy occurrence in spite of the rise of new media. The majority of people listen to FM radio for entertainment, information, education, and development. The findings show that FM radio is an effective medium for raising socio-political awareness and encouraging political connection among youngsters.

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Introduction

Radio is a distinctive shape of wire-less communication that supports the transmission of data on a wide range, as like from ten to hundreds of KM. It enables the transfer of data with high speed, accomplished to handle hundreds of megabits to numerous gigabits per second (Komilov, Makhmudov & Tillaboyev, 2023). Radio

is a dynamic tool for communication that eradicates the barriers of geographical and social basis. It disseminates news and info, and musical programs, and develops the atmosphere for social connectivity. Radio provides facts, edification, and empowerment to its users (Krause & Fletcher, 2023).



Radio is the cheapest medium for entertainment which offers a wide range of auditory content in which music, songs, and news are included. It operates with transmission equipment that enables its broadcasts to reach and be heard by a broad audience, no matter where they are located. (Kustiawan et al., [2023](#)). Radio is the most effective medium for connecting rural communities, especially in regions with limited internet and energy resources. It has all the qualities needed to be the leading mass communication tool: it reaches a large audience across vast areas, is affordable, portable, fast, simple to use, and can be accessed anywhere, whether in cars, buses, on the road, or in offices (Bhattacharyya, [2022](#)).

Nur, Anom, and Iswadi ([2023](#)) state that, radio is a communication and entertainment medium connecting broadcasters and listeners. It offers a range of programs, including news, music, sports, dramas, and educational and political content. Radio serves as a platform for public discussion, encouraging community members to actively engage in political matters (Sujoko, Rahmiati & Rahman, [2023](#)). Even with the rise of modern technologies like the Internet and social media, radio remains a widely used and popular information source in developing countries. In fact, radio's quick adaptation to digital advancements such as online streaming and podcasts helps it keep a significant global presence (Diddi, Kuble & Shen, [2021](#)).

Radio, known for its wide reach and ability to transcend literacy barriers, stands out as a highly effective medium. When utilized adeptly, radio broadcasts excel in communicating with the public, especially in political contexts. They not only stimulate political engagement but also contribute to economic progress. During election periods, radio broadcasts significantly influence listeners, particularly when candidates present their platforms and promises (Cajetan et al., [2023](#)). Radio serves as a platform that enhances immigrants' presence in their local community, helping them connect with politicians, organizations, and the wider society (Zonszein, [2024](#)).

The FM radio industry's resurgence in Pakistan is credited with revitalizing radio listening across the country. In 2022, PEMRA reported 256 FM radio stations in Pakistan, comprising both

commercial and non-commercial stations. Notably, 21 licenses were revoked due to regulatory non-compliance (Zaman, [2022](#)). This study aims to explore the influence of FM radio on the youngsters of Pakistan, particularly its socio-political influence. With FM radio channels gaining popularity among the youth, this research seeks to understand their role and significance in shaping societal and political perspectives.

Research Objectives

"The primary goals of this study are:

1. To understand the historical context of FM radio.
2. To explore the socio-political effect of FM radio on university students.
3. To investigate how FM radio can effectively attain its socio-political goals."

Research Questions

1. What is the current rate of FM radio listenership among university students?
2. What socio-political impacts do FM radio programs have on the political awareness and engagement of university students?
3. How effectively does FM radio address the current socio-political issues pertinent to university students?

Significance of the Study

This study aims to examine the FM radio industry in Pakistan and explore its socio-political influence, particularly on the youth.

Problem Statement

This paper will examine the background of FM radio in Pakistan. Additionally, it will also intricate how the transmission of FM radio has achieved acceptance among the youngsters and socio-political impression to listen to the FM Radio by the youngsters of Pakistan.

Literature Review

The study of Chaudhary and Paracha (2019), explores the social and cultural impact of FM radio in Pakistan. Radio Pakistan was the primary electronic medium at independence and remains a powerful communication tool. However, due to policy issues, radio has been neglected, often

promoting specific agendas instead of education and societal issues. FM radios have revitalized radio broadcasting with over 200 operational, airing educational and entertaining programs. They effectively reach diverse audiences, including youth and rural populations, contributing to social and cultural influence. Despite progress, maximizing radio's potential in Pakistan requires further concerted efforts.

The research of Saleem, Rizwi, Khan, and Saleem (2024) depicts that Radio Pakistan which is also recognized as the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC), participated in socio-economic development in Punjab from 2008 to 2013. It evaluates the international literature and the archives of Pakistan's Finance Division to reach the role of the National radio station to address the needs of regional development, importantly regarding projects like the CPEC. Via interviews and surveys, the research assesses the efficiency of radio content to meet the expectations of listeners and support development communication. In spite of challenges in operations like low facilities, the research proposes enhancing the quality of programs and investments in technologies to serve the targeted communities in a better way.

This study by Saleem, Rizvi, and Saleem (2019) discovers how the stations of Radio Pakistan in Lahore, Faisalabad, and Sargodha participated in socio-economic development in Central Punjab from 2008 to 2013. They examined the policies, broadcasting content, and setups concentrating on socio-economic indicators such as religion, healthcare, education, culture, politics, agriculture, trade, small businesses, infrastructure, and the CPEC. By using qualitative methodology, the sample was the listeners of Radio Pakistan, highlighting the radio's role as a vital information source in rural areas. Despite notable achievements, the study suggests further improvements are necessary. Radio Pakistan has notably facilitated women's education, navigating familial opposition and conservative attitudes.

The study of Zia, Bangash, and Zaman investigated the character of FM radio stations to promote awareness on a societal level in the province of Nangarhar, Afghanistan in 2023. This study investigated the development of radio on a historical level in the area, the effect of the civil

conflict on broadcasting, and the move towards devolution and self-governing media post-2001. The study outlines the present condition of radio broadcasting in Afghanistan, highlighting famous FM stations and their approachability from digital podiums. It explores the power of FM radios on educational and community awareness, with an extraordinary concentration on Nargis Radio's role in allowing Afghan women. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and focused group discussions, and analyzed from a theoretical perspective on the media's role in civic education. The findings disclosed the perceptions and experiences of the respondents, emphasizing the significant contributions of FM radios to the education of society and the engagement of the community.

The paper of Zahid, Qinghe, and Sohail (2021) examines the role of communal radio in promoting awareness about political participation in South Africa through the usage of Radio Grahamstown and Forte FM as case studies. Grounded in the agenda-setting theory, the study investigates how these radio stations influence political awareness and participation in their communities. By the means of qualitative research methodology, this research is accompanied by discussions of focus groups with selected listeners and in-depth interviews with the station managers. The findings reveal that both radio places gave the platforms for political education and engagement, ensuring that listeners and community members become politically literate. The study concludes that radio on the community level serves as a medium for democracy for marginalized communities, facilitating continuous and active citizen participation in the democratic process. The paper emphasizes that the survival of democracy relies on the ongoing and energetic involvement of its inhabitants.

The researchers GIGINYU, Jada, and Mutha (2021) measure the effect of political-based radio programs on the awareness of the public about the political domain in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The exact objectives of this research include evaluating the awareness about politics that gained by the radio users, determining audience motivation for listening and assessing the effect of political-based radio programs on political choices in the state of Jigawa. Statistics were investigated using graphic

statistics and frequencies were distributed in the shape of percentages. The inhabitants include Jigawa State's 5,368,612 residents, with a sample size of 384 determined using the Research Advisor (2006) sample size table. Simple Random Cluster Sampling was employed, with 48 respondents selected from each of the eight Local Government Areas (LGAs). Findings reveal that 70% of respondents believe RPPs significantly enhance public political awareness in Jigawa State. Recommendations for improvement include enhancing transmission quality, balancing information, improving the educational aspect of radio programs, and increasing community involvement in sponsorship.

The study by McMahon (2021) explores the enduring relevance of local Irish radio stations amidst global economic challenges and the rise of new media. It argues that stations like Radio Kerry, Beat, and RTÉ 2fm have thrived by maintaining strong community connections and delivering locally pertinent content. By embracing digital platforms and fostering online communities, these stations have adapted while staying true to their audience's social, cultural, and political interests. The study underscores the vital role of local radio as a public service and cultural cornerstone, advocating for its preservation in today's diverse media landscape.

Research Methodology

The researcher analyzed the role of FM radio on the youngsters of Pakistan from a socio-political perspective by examining FM radio. This study utilizes a survey method, with a research questionnaire consisting of close-ended questions. Data was collected from a sample of 600 students from three universities (University of South Asia, University of Management and Technology, Superior University) in Lahore.

Table 1

Frequencies and Demographical Analysis of Respondents where n =600.

Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	300	50%
Female	300	50%

Population

The survey targeted FM listeners, specifically focusing on university students aged 18 to 32 both male and female.

Sampling

600 university students in Lahore were chosen as the sample for this research. They are regular FM radio listeners aged between 18 and 32, enrolled in undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate programs at three private universities: the University of South Asia, the University of Management and Technology, and Superior University. The research used purposive sampling to select participants.

Data Analysis

This study conducted a detailed survey in Lahore to analyze the revival of FM radio through FM broadcasts. This research designed a questionnaire with closed-ended questions. The survey results were gathered and analyzed by the use of SPSS.

Data Interpretation

Table 1 shows the variables about gender in this study. There are 600 hundred respondents in this research, of which 300 are male and 300 are female. These respondents were taken from three main private universities of Lahore which University of South Asia, the University of Management and Technology, and Superior University. The respondents were distributed into three classes with respect to their age group. 330 participants belong to the first category of 18-22 years of age, 190 participants belong to the second category of age 23-27, and 80 respondents fall in the third category of age 28-32. The qualification of the respondents, 298 participants belonged to undergraduate discipline, 212 from graduate, and 80 participants were from post-graduate studies.

Table 2

2. Background

University of South Asia University	University of Management and Technology	Superior
Frequency	200	200
Percentage	100%	100%

Table

3. Age

Age Group	Total Frequency	Total Percentage
18-22	330	55%
23-27	190	31.67%
28-32	80	13.33%

Table 4

Educational Level

Age Group	Total Frequency (Male + Female)	Total Percentage
Undergraduate (18-22 years)	298	49.67%
Graduate (23-27 years)	212	35.33%
Postgraduate (28-32 years)	80	13.33%

Table 5

Q. No. 1: Do you listen to the radio?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	338	56.3%
No	162	27.0%
To Some Extent	100	16.7%
Total Participants	600	100%

Table of question 1 indicates that, out of 600 participants, a significant 56.3% reported that they regularly tune in to FM radio. Meanwhile, 27% of respondents indicated they do not listen to FM radio at all. Interestingly, 16.7% of the participants expressed that they listen to FM radio to some extent, suggesting a partial engagement with this

medium. This data highlights the continued relevance of FM radio in the digital age, with over half of the respondents still actively engaging with traditional radio broadcasts, while a notable portion remains at least somewhat connected to it.

Table 6

Q. No. 2: If yes, how frequently do you listen to the radio?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Regularly	200	45.66%
A few times in a Week	150	34.25%
A few Times in a Month	60	13.70%
Rarely	28	6.39%

The results of question 2 demonstrate the FM radio listenership, it is evident that FM radio still enjoys a significant audience. Nearly half of the respondents, precisely 45.66%, reported tuning in regularly,

highlighting FM radio's enduring appeal. A notable 34.25% listen a few times a week, suggesting that many find value in the content provided. Those who listen a few times a month constitute 13.70%, indicating a more

casual but consistent engagement. Meanwhile, only a small fraction, 6.39%, rarely listens to FM radio. This data underscores the continued relevance of FM radio in

people's lives, with a substantial portion of the population maintaining a regular or frequent listening habit.

Table 7

Q. No. 3: What's your main reason for listening to FM radio?

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Entertainment	150	34.25%
Information	100	22.83%
Education	60	13.70%
Development	50	11.42%
Persuasion	78	17.81%

The results of question 3 depict the diverse reasons why people tune into FM radio. A significant 34.25% of listeners primarily seek entertainment, making it the most common reason for tuning in. Information is the next most popular purpose, with 22.83% of listeners using FM radio to stay updated. Education accounts for 13.70%, showing that a notable portion of the audience values learning opportunities through radio. Development

purposes attract 11.42% of listeners, indicating the role of FM radio in personal and community growth. Lastly, 17.81% of listeners are drawn to the medium for persuasion, highlighting radio's influence in shaping opinions and behaviors. This variety underscores FM radio's multifaceted appeal, catering to a wide range of listener needs.

Table 8

Q. No. 4: How much time do you spend daily listening to FM radio transmissions?

Listening Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-2 Hours	180	41.10
More Than 2 Hours	150	34.25
More Than 3 Hours	108	24.66

According to the answer to question 4 on FM radio listening habits, it was found that a significant portion of the audience tunes in regularly, with 41.10% of respondents listening for 1-2 hours daily. A notable 34.25% dedicate more than 2 hours to their favorite radio programs, indicating a strong engagement with FM radio content. Additionally, 24.66% of the listeners spend over

3 hours each day, showcasing a deep connection and reliance on FM radio as a primary source of entertainment and information. This data highlights the enduring popularity of FM radio in an era dominated by digital media, reflecting its unique appeal and the loyalty of its audience.

Table 9

Q. No. 5: To what extent do you believe FM radio transmissions are effective in highlighting various socio-political issues?

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Greater Extent	150	34.25%
Great	100	22.83%
To Some Extent	120	27.40%
Rarely	50	11.42%
Not at all	18	4.11%

According to the answers to question no 5, data reveals the effectiveness of FM radio in addressing socio-political issues, with a significant majority of respondents

recognizing its impact. A notable 34.25% of participants believe FM radio is helpful to a greater extent, while 22.83% consider it to be of great help. Furthermore,

27.40% feel that FM radio contributes to some extent. Only a small fraction, 11.42%, think it rarely highlights these issues, and an even smaller 4.11% believe it is not helpful at all. These figures suggest that FM radio is a

valuable medium for raising awareness and discussing socio-political matters, although there is room for improvement in its reach and influence.

Table 10

Q. No. 6: To what extent do you believe FM Radio has influenced the youth in driving political change?

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agendas of Political Parties	150	34.25%
Coverage given to political Rallies	100	22.83%
Current Political Developments	120	27.40%
Political Campaign	68	15.52%

FM radio has significantly influenced youth by shaping their political awareness and engagement. The data reveals that 34.25% of the youth are impacted by the agendas of political parties broadcasted on FM radio. Coverage of political rallies, which captivates 22.83%, also plays a crucial role in mobilizing and informing young listeners. Additionally, 27.40% of the youth are

drawn to current political developments, indicating that real-time updates on FM radio are a vital source of political information. Lastly, political campaigns broadcasted over FM radio reached 15.52% of the youth, highlighting the medium's role in promoting political messages and encouraging active participation in the political process.

Table 11

Q. No. 7: How do you perceive the socio-political values reflected in the programs aired on FM radio?

Opinion	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Ethical	250	57.08%
Unethical	66	15.07%
Average	110	25.11%

The analysis of question no 7 regarding socio-political values in FM radio programs reveals a predominant perception of ethical content among listeners. A significant majority, 57.08%, view the programs as reflecting ethical values, suggesting that FM radio is largely seen as a responsible and principled medium. In contrast, a smaller fraction, 15.07%, considers the content unethical, indicating a notable, but less influential, concern over the

moral integrity of these broadcasts. Meanwhile, 25.11% of listeners perceive the programs as average, highlighting a segment that finds the content neither particularly commendable nor objectionable. This data underscores a general confidence in FM radio's alignment with positive socio-political standards, while also pointing to areas where ethical improvements could be made.

Table 12

Q. No. 8: How would you evaluate the influence of FM radio programs on university students?

Impact Type	Frequency	Percentage
Positive Impact	218	49.77%
Negative Impact	62	14.16%
Neutral Impact	158	36.07%

According to the results mentioned in the table of question no 8, the impact of FM radio programs on university students reveals a predominantly positive influence, with nearly half of the

respondents 49.77% indicating a favorable impact. This suggests that FM radio is a significant medium for enhancing students' educational and social experiences. Conversely, 14.16% of students

reported a negative impact, highlighting some areas of concern or dissatisfaction. Interestingly, 36.07% of the participants remained neutral, indicating that while FM radio is a key player, it

may not be a critical factor for all. This data underscores the importance of FM radio in shaping the university experience, though its influence varies among the student population.

Table 13

Q. No. 9: How well is FM radio meeting the demands of the modern age?

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Great Extent	120	27.4%
Great	95	21.7%
To Some Extent	143	32.6%
Rarely	25	5.7%
Not At All	55	12.6%

According to the results in the table of question 9, FM radio continues to be a significant player in the modern media landscape, as evidenced by recent survey data. A considerable portion of the audience, 27.4%, believe FM radio meets the demands of the modern age to a great extent, while an additional 21.7% simply consider it "great." This positive reception is reinforced by 32.6% of respondents who feel FM radio meets modern demands to some extent. However, there are still areas for improvement, as 5.7% of participants believe it rarely meets these demands, and 12.6% think it doesn't meet them at all. This mixed feedback highlights both the strengths and areas where FM radio needs to evolve to remain relevant in the digital age.

Finding and Discussion

The findings of the study focus on the current importance of FM radio in the current media field. A considerable number of participants tune into FM radio on a regular basis, showing its long-term appeal in spite of the growth of digital media podiums. On the other hand, limited people do not listen to FM radio at all, a distinguished portion of listeners showed the partial engagement of the listeners by representing that FM radio endures to hold significance for a varied audience.

There is a wide variety of FM radio listeners, with a large number of listeners tuning in regularly. A lot of users found that FM radio gives respected content, listening to the radio in few times a week, on the other hand, others involved more casually but regularly.

The aims of listeners are different from the FM radio, they listen radio for entertainment, getting information, education, growth, and persuasion. The aspect of entertainment emerged as the most collective reason for using it. A handsome part of the listeners listen radio, on the other hand, others seek personal and social development. The convincing power of FM radio to shape opinions and attitudes further underscores its multilayered appeal.

The listening behaviors of the listeners depict a solid bond with FM radio. Many listeners devote a handsome amount of daily time to their preferred radio content, showing a profound relationship and dependency on FM radio as a main source to get infotainment. This continued acceptance of FM radio depicts the exclusive appeal and trustworthiness of FM radio in a digital age.

The role of FM radio in addressing the context of socio-political issues is known by a large majority, who trust in raising awareness and conversing these matters. On the other hand, some people see space for betterment; the general overview is that FM radio participates optimistically in socio-political discourse. This proposes that FM radio is a valuable way to inform the public on multiple topics.

The effect of FM radio on the awareness of politics and engagement of youngsters is important. A lot of young listeners are affected by the broadcasted political agendas, the reporting of rallies, and present political developments. FM radio is a source to promote political information and encourage the active participation of listeners in

politics, emphasizing its value in shaping the political awareness of the youth.

The FM radio programs are ethically, positively, and predominantly perceived by the listeners. Many listeners analyze the programs as depicting ethical values, mentioning a common interest in FM radio with positive socio-political values. Nevertheless, some discussion over the ethical veracity of these broadcasts exists, suggesting areas for ethical development.

The impact of FM radio content on youth is mainly positive, increasing their educational and social involvement. While some listeners have a negative effect, the bulk of listeners show a favorable influence. A substantial part of participants endured neutral, signifying that while FM radio is significant, it may not be precarious for all listeners. This underlines FM radio's role in determining the university experience, though its influence differs among the students.

Finally, FM radio continues to be an important factor in the digital era. A substantial portion of the audience believes FM radio meets the demands of the current age, though there are areas for development. This mixed response highlights both the strengths and weaknesses in the digital age. Generally, the results demonstrate FM radio's continuous relevance, different appeal, and the need for the current version to meet the altering demands of its audience.

Conclusion

FM radio is an enjoyable way for the audience. A lot of listeners tune it regularly. This thing highlights this medium and the importance of its content in front of listeners. FM Radio also participates in an informal way. Some users tune the radio for few times a month, highlighting

constantly but use it less frequently manners. Listeners tune to FM radio for multiple purposes as entertainment, information, education, development, and persuasion. This diversity points out the multifaceted appeal of FM radio and its aptitude to deal with the needs of listeners. Listening habits refer to a strong engagement with radio, with a lot of consecrating significant daily hours to FM radio. This profound relationship highlights the FM radio's exclusive appeal and the faithfulness of its listeners, even in an era of digital media.

FM radio is documented for its efficiency in addressing socio-political issues. A majority of respondents acknowledge its impact, though there is room for improvement in its reach and influence. Additionally, FM radio significantly influences youth by shaping their political awareness and engagement, with political agendas, rallies, current developments, and campaigns playing crucial roles. The perception of ethical content in FM radio programs is predominantly positive, with many listeners viewing the programs as reflecting ethical values. However, a smaller fraction raises concerns over the moral integrity of these broadcasts, indicating areas for ethical improvement. FM radio has a predominantly positive influence on university students, enhancing their educational and social experiences. While some students report negative impacts, a neutral segment highlights that FM radio's influence varies among the student population. In the modern media landscape, FM radio continues to be significant. While many believe it meets the demands of the modern age to varying extents, areas for improvement remain. This mixed feedback highlights both the strengths and areas where FM radio needs to evolve to remain relevant in the digital age.

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