

A Narrative Analysis of Political Satire on Pakistani Electronic Media

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Abstract: *This paper aims to investigate how the Satire programs Hasb-e-Haal (Statusquo, 2009), and KhabarDar (vigilant, 2017) produced and aired on private Pakistan Television channels influenced and formed a perception of the viewers about political issues persisted at that historical moment of time. With the comedic revelations of politicians' immoral behavior and corruption, this paper unfolds the unethical attitude of the journalists and the TV channels that lean towards political parties for their personal interests. It was found that the Express-News' Khabardar has friendly coverage towards PTI and its personalities and antagonistic towards PML-N and its political figures. Dunya News' Hasb-e-Hall coverage is opposite to the former. The performers posed as politicians use derogatory language to the opponents. A cynical comedy about political personalities plays a major role in opinion building and changing the political attitude of the masses and thus influence their voting behavior.*

Key Words: Satire, Positive/Negative Coverage, Opinion Building, Ethics, Voting Behaviour

Introduction

Hasb-e-Haal (Status quo), and *KhabarDar* (vigilant) are satire shows produced and aired in 2009 and 2017 on Pakistan private television channels, respectively that influenced and form perception of Pakistani viewers about the current political issues. The lunching years indicate the effects of intense war on terror, low economic growth, the decline in portraying social affairs and apolitical development in Pakistan. As a type of comedy genre, the shows present political satire

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to generate socio-political awareness about the current ideological constraints and their implications on society. These late hours night shows entertain audiences in a comedic and lighter mood.

These shows' comedic revelations of politicians, with having immoral, behavioral-huge corruption, through their performances as 'parodies' generate greater understanding of socio-political and economic realities that prevail in the Pakistani society. These socio-political and economic discourses through serious discussions within the shows, although, entertain the audiences, yet carry intents perceived to be subversive-biased speech forbidden by an authoritarian regime that moves forward the political opinions.

Background

Political entertainment belongs to an area of yellow journalism in which the public get awareness with political knowledge in a humorous manner. People get confused about whether it depicts popular culture, true information or is it a form of entertainment. Political comedy has designated well in markets and among audiences for socio-cultural changes.

The coming of such political comedy in mainstream media is not very conventional. In early 2000, people were reluctant to take late-night political comedy shows seriously due to the generic newness of political shows that rated audience acceptance too low. As time passed by, people became intrigued to see how it might interact with some of the previously existing issues and how it will affect and play a part in molding common people's democratic perception. Thus, this phenomenon became a significant part of a legitimate area of research such as nationalism, socio-culture, race, class, gender, politics and economic dimensions of the nation.

Inclusion of politics in comedy has encouraged dull, ponderous, fact-overloaded presentations of political information in all types of mass media as well as in the classrooms and public lectures, since learning improves audiences' involvement with excitement ([Graber, 2008](#)). Therefore, political comedy is not merely an alternative source for communicating important political information but has great potential to enhance competence and sophistication by engaging the interests of the audiences.

Junaid (Junaid Saleem) a well-known journalist is the host and the main character of *Hasb-e-Haal*. The other character is *Azizi* (*Sohail Ahmed*), a standup comedian and well-received theatre and TV actor, rewarded as presidential pride of performance in 2011 for the same show, plays as a member of lower-middle-class, is habitually warned by the host for his broader oversimplification and generalizations of complex issues contained in the Pakistani political system. Moreover, a character *Jia* (Najia Baig) who presents a line for *Azizi* to perform laughter and, in response, reads comments posed by the viewers. Similarly, a well-known journalist *Aftab Iqbal* hosts another show named *KhabarDar*.

"*Duniya News*" airs *Hasb-e-Haal* that focuses on 'current affairs' every Thursday to Sunday at 11:05 PM. While the Express-News airs *KhabarDar* every Thursday to Sunday at 11:00 PM and was started in the year 2016. Both the shows infotainment such as parodies of politicians generate

wit and laughter. The paper seeks to know how these shows help mature audiences in building their political perception.

Problem Statement

The paper investigates *Hasb-e-Haal* and *KhabarDar* with focus on corrupt politicians that get grand consent of those whom they never intend to educate and thus deprive them of economic, political, social and cultural development. It indicates that these politicians prioritize their personal gains over national interests. The shows get the masses aware of the corruption of a number of well-known political leaders that do not respect the democratic and social values of the people and the society either.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze thematic frames within the narrative about various political personalities in relation to the political scenario in the country.
2. To know friends and foe and political leaning of the Channels towards parties?
3. To identify the specific semiotic language used in the satiric shows.

Research Questions

1. What prominent political personalities are portrayed in the political satires of the television shows?
2. What are the friends and foe and political leaning of Channels towards parties?
3. What is the specific language used about each political leader and their political parties?

Significance of the Study

The paper focuses on the satire shows' broader social signification towards awareness of the general public about the corrupt ruling elite culture in the country. Therefore, the significance lays in the mode of production and the historical moment of production where ideologies are highlighted in terms of socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions aiming broader social change for public welfare.

Literature Review

Satire as a 'counter-narrative' aims to take the form of paradox, carrying within it "the notion of a challenge to 'received opinion,' as paradox challenges orthodox" **Invalid source specified..** He adds further that the challenge, although destructive, is not merely so, for "a paradox serves to 'rouse and awaken the Reason of Men asleep, into a Thinking and Philosophical Temper.'" As such, satire can be understood as the means by which an unorthodox opinion is advanced, a vulgar error exposed, or thought stimulated via rhetorical ingenuity **Invalid source specified..**

At the same time, satirists should expect such efforts to be received critically by members of the traditional political sphere to whom such boundary-crossing is unintelligible (i.e., inconceivable within the master narrative frame) and therefore threatening. In this sense, satirists should seek to harm the current system and to create confusion, even if only momentarily, in people's understanding of how the world works, challenging their attitudes and opinions, taunting and provoking them into doubt, and perhaps into disbelief **Invalid source specified..** In the words of Stephen Colbert "We want people to be . . . confused" **Invalid source specified..**

Although crucial differences between programs cannot be denied, traditional hard news formats may still cover complex topics to a greater extent than the late-night comedy **Invalid source specified..** Some scholars argue that soft news downplays policy, military, political, and also partisan nuances and instead focuses on human interest and crime-related themes **Invalid source specified..** However, some scholars also find out that joke in late-night comedy target candidates' traits rather than issues ([Niven, Lichter and Amundson, 2003](#)), and that contentious issue generally lacks the content. Moreover, when covering complex political topics, some soft news programs rely mostly solely—and more so than traditional news—on episodic, rather than thematic, framing ([Baum, 2003a](#)).

Scholars who question whether late-night comedy contributes to an informed citizenry, argue that the information covered therein revolves around trivial topics rather than substantive issues critical to sound opinion formation and rational decision making **Invalid source specified..** Even those who hope that this genre increases knowledge to note that the intensification might primarily emerge for easy and moderately difficult information ([Baum, 2005](#)).

Political Satire and its Effects on Society

With a rising surge in the interest of political communication scholars in exploring political humor, significant academic attention has recently been focused on the subject to investigate its influence on elections and public opinion. Research in this domain focuses on a variety of subjects, ranging from the content of late-night political humor ([Niven, 2003](#)), to preparing effects of late-night political comedy (Moy, 2006), to exploring political humor's influence on audience members' ratings of candidate traits ([Young, 2006](#); [Baumgartner and Moriss, 2006](#)).

The content of political comedy shows effects the political knowledge, and the viewers' age and level of education may serve a moderating role, for example, in *The Late Night Show* ([Cao, 2008](#)). Research shows links between exposure to late-night political humor and enhanced general political knowledge of the audience ([Baum, 2003](#); Hollander, 2005). However, certain forms of political humor increase viewer's cynicism and decrease political efficacy ([Baumgartner, 2006](#)). Furthermore, it has also been recorded that political humor and satirical parodies, (e.g. JibJab cartoons) can reduce viewers's 'trust in political institutions ([Baumgartner, 2007](#)).

Researchers have also examined the demographics, political ideologies, and news media consumption patterns of the viewers of political comedy programs. For instance, the study

conducted on *The Daily Show* reported that fans of the late-night political humor on television use more traditional forms of news content ([Young, 2006](#)) in developing political perception among audiences. Like many younger American voters (less than 30 years of age), report entertainment media as their primary source of information on the politics ([Pew Research Center, 2008](#)).

Political humor has the potential to attitude change and persuasion. Humor in product advertising influences audience members (Spotts, 1997), humor can increase audience attention more than the non-humorous marketing messages ([Gulas, 1992](#)). This shows the significant connection between the impact of mood on the process of persuasion. Experimental studies showed that subjects in positive moods are less likely to scrutinize persuasive messages as compared to the subjects in a bad mood (Bless, 1990). On the contrary, angry subjects demonstrate better central route and analytic processing (Moons & Mackie, 2007). Since, humor, or—perceived wittiness, can be considered as a positive mood ([Moran, 1996](#)), the complex connections between humor, mood, and persuasion are especially relevant to the examination of political satire.

The most basic definition of the term satire, itself, is simply any —trenchant wit, irony, or sarcasm used to expose and discredit vice or folly (Merriam-Webster, 2012), meaning the concept can generally be thought of as a tool to target or expose, negative elements within society. For instance, the unique nature of the character-based political satire performed by Stephen Colbert on *The Colbert Report* shows producing unexpected audience effects.

Satire potentially fills many of the roles and contributes to the virtues of republicanism within a democratic society. Satirical news media do serve a valuable role in exposing corruption and underhanded dealings or intentions found in American media and politics **Invalid source specified.**

[Kellner \(2003\)](#) points out that “doing ideology critique, involves analyzing images, symbols, myths, and narrative, as well as propositions and systems of belief.” However, contemporary theories on ideologies stress “the complex ways that images, myths, social practices, and narratives are bound together in the production of ideology (Barthes, 1957; Jameson, 1981).

[Bartlett \(2012\)](#) examined that the political issues raised and discussed in comedy programs are the sources of creating political awareness or add to cynicism. A comedy based political discussions in the television programs increase not only political understanding but also enhance critical thinking in the troubled circumstances caused by biased actions raised by various political activities. Therefore, critical thinking major role in opinion-making leads to decision making about the good/bad influence of political activities. In this way, viewers contextualize the information and then relate to the problematic situation easily.

Landreville (2010) has explained the relationship between the three important variables of the political system; partisan attitudes and political participation explain the relationship between exposure to the comedy shows and political discussions. Brewer and Young (2016) founded two main factors of viewer’s shift towards comedy shows. First, 84 % of viewers replied to the news as

“depressing” and more than 50 % considered “not enjoyable.” The shows always present specific agendas and telecast for these two purposes.

Theory

This study uses Agenda Setting Theory of McCombs and Shaw (1968) as a framework for achieving pragmatic evidence in order to analyze socio-political and cultural singularities and their relationship with representation of a current political situation in Pakistan through the study of Satire narrative of *Khabardar* and *Hasb-e Haal*.

This theory unfolds the importance of shaping audience perception and building of opinion associated with a political scenario during presidential elections. Generally, satire is composed of song and dance exertion, yet it also includes individual or private criticism, clowning, and authenticity and openness. The history of satire and the current socio-political situation in Pakistan makes us believe that power-abuses, annoyed cultures and careless nations, inconsistent-weak-normative practices are the primary and indispensable concepts, altogether. Furthermore, there is always an observer to note down evils and blunders of the time, with humor.

Satire speaks about dishonesties in obscurity, both face-to-face unfriendly or disagreeable and common-pervasive with blunted wisdom. The satirist, therefore, overstates and highlights the covered realities in order to understand and cope with. As the laughter recedes, the satirist prepares the audience to better restore the problematic conditions s/he has identified, such as devastating socio-political-economic and cultural conditions of the nation-state.

‘Satire’ through dramatic performances carries much more than the lexical choices alone such as theatrical performance function differently in priming motivations; therefore, this attribute to the prime-effect on the procedure of the objective motivations. This study priming effects also have a vivid contribution from various dramatic aspects such as mise-én-scene, the underlying structures of narrative, actions and functions; therefore, the text brings broader socio-political significance.

Research Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature; narrative and non-narrative data are used for analysis. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) pointed out that qualitative data analysis is about organizing, explaining, interpreting, and realizing the data according to the themes and categories or groups under investigation.

The paper follows the protocol of discourse by studying narrative and non-narrative elements in the satire shows, by watching and observing episodes of the selected shows and taking notes (Pernecky, 2016). For interceding reliability, four sheets were given to three external coders, including myself, to identify the units. Each coded separate sheet. All the coders shared the sheets. The coders knew the title of the paper but unaware of the research questions and objectives, resulting in a certain unit of analysis. These units were classified into ‘themes and categories’

where ‘ambiguity, cynicism, humor, irony or parody’ existed in the shows (Holliday, 2007). Furthermore, the coding sheet is removed from the paper due to limited space.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was used for data collection by implying to late-night comedy shows naming *Hasb-e-Haal* and *KhabarDar*. Both narrative and non-narrative approach was used to analyze the data. The paper selection criteria of two shows as under:

Political satire telecasted on mainstream TV channels, its high viewership and popularity in public that reveals high rating with broader socio-political awareness. Four episodes of each show telecasted in 2017 were selected. The duration of the shows is one hour each. The paper focused on Political Theatre (Siyasi Natak) and Dummy Museum, of 20 minutes, in *KhabarDar* and *Hasb-e-Haal*, respectively.

Research Instrument

Watching, observing, notes taking, obtaining themes emerging in the narrative, interpretative technique with stylistic language was used to get the results and answer the research questions.

Table 1. Indicates Conceptualization and Categorization

Conceptualization	Categorization	Satire Show	Year
1. Political Theatre	1.1. Royal Leader 1.2. Unemployment 1.3. Penalized Leaders of House 1.4. Public Convention	KhabarDar	2017
2. Dummy Museum	2.1. Members of Parliament 2.2. Criticism /KPK Government 2.3. House of Opposition 2.4. Religious and Political chaos	Hasb-e-Haal	2017

Data Analysis

KhabarDar (vigilant)

A well-known news channel Express News presents *KhabarDar* through a famous host-anchor/journalist Aftab Iqbal including his team comprising of famous theatre artists assigned with different roles to bring forth the hidden realities of complex socio-political and cultural issues of Pakistan.

Table 2. Detail of the Selected Episodes of the Shows

Show/Episode	Political Party	Year	Title	Personalities
Khabar Dar 1	PML-N	2017	Political Theatre	Nawaz Sharif
				Maryam Nawaz Sharif
Khabar Dar 2	PML-N	2017	Medical Cell	Shahbaz Sharif
				Maryam Nawaz
				Hussain Nawaz
Khabar Dar 3	PML-N	2017	Mughal Darbar	Hamza Shahbaz
	PML-N			Nawaz
	PML-N			Shahbaz
	PML-N			Hussain
	PTI			Ishaq Dar
Khabar Dar 4	PML-N	2017	Musiqar Gharana (Music Band)	Imran Khan
				Nawaz Sharif
	PPP			Asif Ali Zardari
				Farzana Raja

Political Theatre

Political theatre is a major theme having different subthemes as categories of a show *KhabarDar* in which the team members perform different ongoing political scenarios through different roles. [Kirby \(1975\)](#) argued that the stage has forever been a place of investigation of political issues. The ritualistic and social significance of the earliest Greek performances in central arenas brought relevance to many controversial topics, a pattern that has not subsided to this day. Political theatre can also be defined as exploring themes more universal and central to society itself, especially when the society defines itself as politically conscious.

Royal Leader

(Nawaz Sharif as Lewd Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan with his Family)

This episode represents the cast of *KhabarDar* as Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the backdrop of the worse political crisis in Pakistan wherein the Socio-cultural and economic situation seems upsetting. The performers target Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, as shown in the red costume with his family members, as corrupt, self-centred, members of elite class and cause of the country's aggravated poverty through the specific symbolic and metaphoric messages as shown in the *Figure 1*.

One of the characters poses himself as Nawaz Sharif as the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan the well-known lover of his wife Mumtaz Mahal a.k.a Taj Mahal, in a red costume that overtly and symbolically represents overwhelming vividness and advances in occupying the space and symbolizes volcanic eruption and danger as seen in both plates *A* and *B*.



A



B

Figure 1: Nawaz Sharif as Mughal Emperor with Family

In the non-narrative moments, the host not only explains the history of Mughal emperors' signification of lavish and luxurious lives irrespective of the poor socio-cultural and economic situation of the citizens of the subcontinent and relates to the backdrop of the current-poor Pakistani conditions, at the same time exchanges views with Sharif's family (the performers on the stage).

The host stresses that irrespective of poverty and jobless citizens, the prime minister spends enormous national fund on Metro bus project, and compares him with an ethnic Afghan Pashtoon king Sher Shah (Farid Khan 1486-1545) of Suri kingdom in the subcontinent who takes control over Mughal Empire in 1538 and whose great efforts for the public welfare is well-known, sitting static in a medium shot in blue in plate B, the host's conversation as an associational form relates Nawaz Sharif as the king of the democratic republic of Pakistan and grand Metro project with emperor Shah Jahan's grand construction of Taj Mahal.

They are insisting on the premiere's huge spending of funds not on improving education, health and industries and other well-beings for poor but to generate eclecticness in the capital Islamabad where only 50% of citizens ride on Metro buses. The static shot is framing the host cuts to the rows of audiences sitting in the studio with zooming-in-shot signifying their annoying reaction.

These non-narrative moments show that the intention and effect though not are comic, yet it relates the objects (people) and caricatures the actions and functions of the unfortunate few. Thus, the socio-cultural role and significance of the satire become central to the narrative as positive elements or subversive characteristics for social change.

Bringing all the existing critical socio-economic issues into the discussion in a lighter mood, the comedians of the show also pass random jokes among themselves through imitations, references and citations. Meanwhile, a sound of drum indicates the arrival of *Tabalchi* (Drummer) that signifies him as a *Merasi* (a class of Indian subcontinent that traditionally inherit the heritage of dancing, singing and playing music) considered as low-cast, marginalized and disrespected members of the community.

The non-narrative moments enter into narrative moments with a Behram Khan as Shahbaz Sharif a three times chief minister of Punjab dressed in a white enters and says in Punjabi to *Tabalchi* as:

Behram Khan: A son of a drummer, you were the one beating the drum?

Tabalchi: Yes, I was the one

Tabalchi's wife: But Sir Behram Khan you also play the Drum.

Tabalchi: Yes Behram Khan, Why, am I, Hanif Abbasi.

Hanif Abbasi a member of PML-N and a parliamentarian is famous as *Merasi* among Pakistanis who has jailed for corruption. While the drummer asks the king Nawaz Sharif about his post, hundreds of servants and several guards, he replies "All of them are facing hearings at Joint Investigation Team (JIT)." These signify their corruption and crimes as the causes of a current national socio-economic and political disaster. Another comedian joins a serious political debate and says "He too is going to be part of JIT", referring to Nawaz Sharif investigation, the Sharif Brothers (criminals of the episode) begin to dance-sing around him the associational form of 'depression' and 'joy' therefore suggest them low-level *Merasis*. The 20 minutes segment signifies Nawaz Sharif worst economic and political scenario with shame and embarrassment to the nation and to find safe ways out of investigations and subversion.

While the actions and functions work in a sentence for pose narrative, the structure such as sequence and text make plot order for narrative moments to tell the reader.

Unemployment

(Maryam Nawaz and Her Media Cell)

The *Khabardar's* second episode, entitled 'PML-N Media Cell', a cast represents Maryam Nawaz as head of the cell, her brother Hussain and her cousin Hamza as family members. In conversation, the PMLN workers show displeasure over the disqualification of the Premiere Nawaz Sharif with confusion and panic only for their own benefits. Maryam interferes and asks the host for serious discussion.

With this, the host asks her opinion about the chaotic situation in the country and Panama proceedings. Maryam prefers public mandate about their annoying position against the case that signifies dishonesties in obscurity and her blunted wisdom.

Host to a person "you had Construction Company...

Person: Companies vanish; I have fixed oven for baking, which means their corrupt businesses are under investigation. As the show goes on, several people embarrass Maryam's family members through laughs and gestures, concerning the corruption cases.

Though seems consent to the corruption with contentment, it signifies his dim-wittedness. With Hamza's intervention, "What if Nawaz Sharif disqualifies, yet nobody bothers about his vicegerent?" It signifies the greed of Maryam and Shahbaz in wishing to become vicegerent, despite premiere's choice of Hamza.

As the panellists of Panama Case confess that none of the countries such as UK, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia and Luxemburg, though possess Sharif's illegal property, yet not ready to help disclose their assets to JIT.

The host (in serious mood says) Luxemburg's unsupportive exploitation of inquiry and halting investigational process, disturbs the expected results due to Priere's 300 million dollar assets in Luxemburg.

They highlight clause 62 and 63 of the constitution and speculate the disqualification of the entire cabinet based on corruption charges and their work visas of United Arab Emirates. The Apex Court justification of JIT's Panama proof, Hudabia mills case though real but Sharif family denies without justification as their actions tell in the show.

Hussain's portrayal with innocence has great capability of comedic form. He, as a donor and helper, confirm corruption of his family members that create further space for satire narrative continuity. Many of the conversations connote the existing practices of criminal and corrupt politicians' escape off the country along with their assets to safe heavens as London.

Penalized Leaders of the House

(Sharifs as imprisoned Mughal Emperors)

The weekly episode frames Sharifs as Mughal kings for their extravagant lifestyles, now behind bars for corruption as seen in *Figure 2*.

As Husain arrives with a catchphrase of *Alhamdulillah*, the Sharifs become certain of the corruption disclosure. In excitement, he says, Oh, Dad! I have good news; I got the papers (Panama case papers)... With a loud laugh from audiences, the shot in associational form shows a heavy bike that relates to Hussain.



Figure 2: Penalized Leaders of the House behind bars.

TV channels wherein Hussain reveals in his previous interviews, the second half (12 minutes) of this segment stages Sharifs' old steel factory putting in doubts how Sharif brothers become wealthy in a short span of time.

As the host highlights Robert Clive's statements about the battle of Plassey fought in 1757 in which the first Nawab of Bengal Siraj-Ud-daullah lost due to a local traitor Meer Jaffar. Nawaz Sharif (in sorrows): "I am at this disastrous situation due to my Meers."

As Hussain joins them, both say “now he is here to ruin our remaining business as well...”

As Nawaz calls Ishaq Dar, Imran Khan the Chairman of PTI immediately follows him to say “I am here to search all of you for having illegal Off-shore companies and to make them public” and finds the list of the same in Dar’s pocket is symbolic of Dar who actually runs the government affairs off the screen.

Public Convention

(Mosiqar Gharana, Nawaz Shariff and GT Road Rally)

The episode begins with Raj Kapoor’s popular Hindi film *Awaara*’s (Vagabond, 1951) composer Shankar Jaikishan’s musical performance “*Ghar Aya Mera Pardesi*” (My beloved voyager is back home) that symbolically associates Premiere Nawaz Sheriff’s Post-disqualified Road (GT) rally from capital Islamabad to hometown Lahore after vacating Prime Minister’s house. A host asks the singers as:

Host: are you singing with respect to Nawaz Sharif locked fate?

Singers: no, we sing for our friend Kalay Khan who probably certainly loses his 2000 rupees for today’s labour to chant for 10-15 times and to kiss the deposed premier’s car for 1-2 times as paid acts in the rally at Gujranwala (city).

Host: What type of slogans?

Kalay Khan: Be attentive “who arrived, lion arrived.” The PML-N serves us meat puffed bread and mixed rice (*Biryani*) dish at each reception camp.

Popular in the country, PML-N workers perhaps vote for a plate of mixed rice dish (*Biryani*) that signifies ill-fated Pakistani political system lacking the authenticity that any society essentially requires. Bringing potentially great effects related to attitudes that also deeply relying on susceptibility, Schema, have tremendous influences on audience way of perception as Mc Quail’s (2005) priming and framing in mass media suggest.

As the discussion continues, a participant discloses corruption of other politicians’ such as Farzana Raja with funds of Benazir Income Support Program and others with projects such as *Ashiyana scheme* and *Lahore Development Authority*. In comedic mood, a participant predicts Asif Ali Zardari as the next Prime Minister as he plans to unite with PML-N.

As the shot cuts to participants passing on witty statements over Asif Ali Zardari’s reliable political adviser Naagi who is unfamiliar with his boss vulnerability says “politicians approach him for Zardari’s help to protect their corrupt assets.” As the participants sing “Tired of looking towards GT-Road” now what to do love, the sound of boots (army) is terrifying me” that signifies supremacy of the armed forces. With this, the segment ends in 27 minutes.

Hasb-e-Haal (Status quo)

Duniya TV’s *Hasb-e-Haal*, Aftab Iqbal a well-known anchor introduced this bold political satire show in the year 2009 is based on the idea of old shows that are popularly known as “*Jamhoor Di*

Awaaz" and "*Nizam Din Di Baithak*". One of its prominent segments *Dummy Museum* includes well-known politicians of different political parties.

Table 3. Details of the Selected Episodes of the Shows

Show/Episode	Political Party	Year	Title	Personalities
Hasbe-e-Hall 1	Other Party	2017	Press Conference (Dummy Museum)	Sheikh Rasheed
Hasbe-e-Hall 2	PML-N	2017	Press Conference (Dummy Museum)	Daniyal Aziz
Hasbe-e-Hall 3	PML-N	2017	Press Conference (Dummy Museum)	Shahbaz Sharif
	Other Party	2017	Press Conference (Dummy Museum)	Dr. Tahir ul Qadri
Hasbe-e-Hall 4	Other Party	2017	Press Conference (Dummy Museum)	MaulanaFazlurRehman

Dummy Museum

A popular artist Azizi (Sohail Ahmed) takes various politicians on the storm by highlighting different socio-political issues.

Members of Parliament

The conflict between Sheikh Rasheed and a member of PML-N Azizi impersonates a member of opposition Sheikh Rasheed in a press conference. He highlights social issues during the discussion of performers posing as politicians of the ruling PML-N party. The host *Junaid Salem* reminds Sheikh of Malik a PML-N worker's planned physical attack on him, next to parliament house, claiming that he owes him two million Pakistani Rupees.

Sheikh calls it a baseless and desperate attempt to damage his political prestige in revenge for his supporting the PTI provincial government against Sharifs' Panama corruption case wherein the court proves their guilt. In a comedic way, Sheikh declares "whoever goes against Sharif brothers, they get bad punishment, and so "be safe Junaid."

Sheikh asks the host "Don't you pay to a milkman for a month...? Meanwhile, Malik enters with his demand for money; Sheikh associates him with Shahbaz Sharif and says "when will he come back with another fake loan case."

Criticism /KPK Government

Daniyal Aziz (Azizi) a PML-N cabinet minister holds a press conference, "I want to tell you that for a better memory, you all need to eat a lot of almonds."

Host: “you suppose to tell not about remedies here.”

Daniyal criticizes PTI in abusive language concerning PML-N accountability. “Are you blind? Can’t you see, ‘how can you ignore partiality of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in KPK province?’” He reminds almonds again for a purpose.

The host let Daniyal know of bashing others for public motivation to get their votes in the general elections to come, yet supporting PML-N on Hudabiya corruption case. “The remedy of almonds can trouble you then.” He mocks Imran Khan’s demand of premier Nawaz Sharif resignation and sings as “sitting in Nathia Gali (Hill station) alone, but wishes to command.”

House of Opposition

Dr. Qadri participates in Dummy museum while Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif joins via telephone. CM claims his every action for the betterment of Pakistan, “that’s why I have inaugurated a 100 beds hospital at Manawa today with a warning to doctors about strikes.” The host asks “why doctors of this certain hospital will never go on a strike.” He says “because, through surgery, I use to remove their strike.”

Personally, I have a chance too to protest, but I do not want despite all Pakistanis’ wishes to become President of PML-N, but the leadership does not have the intention as such. By reminding Model Town killings of ATP members, Shahbaz becomes confused, we both brothers at that time as followers used to serve Dr. Qadri with the best food.

Dr. Qadri: Junaid! Look at their duplicity. Both of them used to kiss my curry mixed each hand, despite telling them, they still liked to taste curry on my hands instead.

Shahbaz asks the host to ignore Qadri and remind his lunching his projects of Metro Bus and Orange Train. I order tree plantation with fifty dozens monkeys aiming for a sustainable environment. “I think the trees grow taller if the monkeys exist in Murree.”

To help Pakistani society defines itself, politically conscious the segment ends with associating participants of the show with wild animals and the society as tall trees by using wit to guide the general audience towards socio-political and cultural ills of the society.

Religious and Political chaos

(Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman Press Talk in Favour of PML-N)

Maulana enters the arena along with a participant whom he suggests to have selfie and autograph. With different jingles, he relates politicians’ press talks with selling fruits.

About PM’s resignation, Maulana establishes it an international conspiracy, especially of Indian and American to block China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plan, to hinder economic and socio-economic development in Pakistan.

Host: But! India claims that Nawaz Sharif resignation gets Pakistan into a worse situation in favour of its stronger army. Maulana calls these statements/rumors baseless for creating

confusion. Furthermore, his praises for Nawaz Sharif to make him happy and ex-president Asif Ali Zardari as well in the past does not mean friendship except Pakistan. “Only Nawaz Sharif can develop Pakistan so he should stay for unity”, while his praises for Zardari were his unawareness about his corruption. The ten minutes segment comes to an end with people mocking him and his party JUI as well.

RQ 1: What prominent political personalities are portrayed in the political satires of different television shows?

Table 4. Political Personalities in Political Satire Shows

S.No	Personality	P. Party	Show	Channel	Portrayal
1	Maryam Nawaz	PML-N	Khabaradar	Express News	Negative
2	Hamza Shahbaz	PML-N	Khabaradar	Express News	Negative
3	Hussain Nawaz	PML-N	Khabaradar	Express News	Negative
4	Nawaz Sheriff	PML-N	Khabaradar	Express News	Negative
5	Shahbaz Sheriff	PML-N	Khabaradar	Express News	Negative
6	Ishaq Dar	PML-N	Hasb-e-Haal	Dunya News	Positive
7	Daniyal Aziz	PML-N	Khabardar	Express News	Negative
8	Imran Khan	PTI	Khabardar	Express News	Positive
9	Imran Khan	PTI	Hasb-e-Haal	Dunya News	Negative
11	Sheikh Rasheed	Other Party	Hasb-e-Haal	Dunya News	Positive
12	Asif Ali Zardari	Other Party	Khabardar	Express News	Negative
13	Dr.TahirulQadri	Other Party	Hasb-e-Haal	Dunya News	Negative
14	Maulana Fazl Ur Rahman	Other Party	Hasb-e-Haal	Dunya News	Negative

The results in TABLE 4 present the image of the political personalities that also cause to affect the peoples’ opinions which is the main voter's bank.

RQ2: What is the political leaning in term of friends and foe of these satiric political shows towards political parties?

This research question emphasizes the actual leaning of the satirical shows towards the preferred political parties and political personalities. Mostly, political shows reflect their affiliations with particular parties in defending indirectly, but their leaned behavior is fairly clear from their statements and defensive attitudes.

Table 5. Political affiliations towards Political Parties

Political Party	Khabardar	Hasb-e-Haal
PML-N	Foe	Friend
PTI	Friend	Foe
Other Party	Friend/Foe	Friend/Foe

RQ3: What is the specific language used in these political satiric shows towards each political leaders and their political parties?

This question clearly explains the type of language used by the political personalities in the satirical shows. The political personalities frequently use derogatory language for the personalities of the other parties due to having political differences. Table 5 represents behavior of the personalities towards the other personalities and political parties in the show.

Table 6. The use of Language in Satirical Shows

Political Party	Show	Personality	Derogatory/Appreciative
PML-N	Khabardar	Hamza Shahbaz	Derogatory
PML-N	Khabardar	Hussain Nawaz	Derogatory
PML-N	Khabardar	Nawaz Sheriff	Derogatory
PML-N	Khabardar	Shahbaz Sheriff	Derogatory
PML-N	Khabardar	Ishaq Dar	Derogatory
PTI	Khabardar	Imran Khan	Appreciative
PTI	Hasb-e-Haal	Imran Khan	Derogatory
Other Party	Hasb-e-Haal	Sheikh Rasheed	Appreciative
	Khabardar	Asif Ali Zardari	Derogatory
	Hasb-e-Haal	Dr.TahirulQadri	Derogatory

Discussion

With quotes by Critic Doyle (2006) that "There are specific periods when satire is necessary. We've entered one of those times", a political culture where the fouls rule with tyranny and fascism in the cover of democracy are exposed through the negative perception that generates cynicism and to produce feelings of anti-anarchism.

A growing and overarching globalization effects and advanced media technologies that have catalyzed international and national problematic issues alike, necessitated Pakistani government of General Pervez Musharraf to privatize television channels, media and other communication technologies in 2002 to disseminate appropriate if not real information, of the time, to the national audience. With humor and wit, the satire programs profoundly highlighted few powerful elites' influences and 'mass consent formation', military coupes and violation of the citizens' rights and exposed democratic governments' systematic corruption and socio-political blunders.

Satire is a genre of powerful art form and a ‘counter-narrative’ (Griffin, 1994), provided that the historical moment of production of the episodes (2017) of *KhabarDar* and *Hasb-e-Haal* casted countless socio-political effects with greater attention-motivations on common Pakistanis through the projection of ‘deficiencies in the behavior’ (Bartlett, 2012) of the political ruling class. The year 2017 signifying as an ‘oppressive socio-political period” projected with crime themes, of ‘individuals and public matters’ these satire shows paved the way for dissidents.

Table 4 showed that majority of politicians portrayed belonged to PML-N party, supported by JUI’s Fazl Ur-Rehman and PPP, while hated by PAT’s Dr. Qadri having closeness with AML’s Sheikh Rasheed that supported PTI. Irrespective of the pedagogical, economic and cultural purposes of the privatization to communicate the real political information, shockingly, these news channels proliferated biasness and built up political affiliations with political parties and portrayed their personalities in friendly and positive manners, however, became foe to others as Table 4.4 have indicated. The medialization of politics may lead to the confusion of few for some time but not all members of society.

It is evident from Table 5 that these satirical shows also use derogatory language about political personalities. *Khabardar* uses derogatory language about PML-N and its personalities and only uses appreciative for PTI’s Imran Khan. *Hasb-e-Haal* uses appreciative language only for Sheikh Rasheed and derogatory for the rest of the personalities but only excludes PML-N. Ignoring the power abuses and misconduct, most often these journalists interfere in the peoples’ personal lives to mollify the opponents.

Therefore, journalism in Pakistan is yellow, newspapers and TV channels downplay human behavior, and media ethics, attitude and moral as do the politicians’. Among those culpable, PMLN as ruling party resulted as corrupt with political incapability and lack of good governance. As the satire observed and noted down, it is up to the audience how to perceive blunders and evils of the present time where power-abuses, cultural exasperation and ‘inconsistent-weak-normative practices’ () are common. The audience has to judge wither the ‘Penalized Leaders of the House’, with such a great comedic sense of humiliation, ‘revolutionize the social issues’ (Gruner, 1965), being absurd for Pakistani citizens.

KhabarDar and *Hasb-e-Haal* bring unstable political-controversial subject matter of the nation and the politicians to the limelight with ‘social significance’ (Kirby, 1975), having temporal and spatial value. The subject matter in political theatre, itself, is universal and intrinsic to society with positive utopian desires that are politically-conscious.

These dreadful political conditions not only highlighted socio-economic disparities and unemployment but also projected the rigged the election in 2013. It also pointed out their subsequent corruption proven in JIT’s Panama proofs, Hudabia mills, their dishonesty and money laundering that led Apex court to disqualify the Prime Minister along with the entire cabinet under the clause 62 and 63 of Pakistan constitution. *Khabardar*’s second episode clue us the same historical moment, the year 2017, of production.

The global flow of finances of these political parties like industrial capitalist organizations with economic power created new space as private/public in Pakistan. With respect to this art is not also free from the state institutions like PEMRA, deprived from the ordinary production, led art to serve the artists' individual desires to come up with. As what the satire shows under discussion portray about 'dishonesty in obscurity' raised a question wither Pakistani society itself is utopian in essence, wither art critics and marketplace judge the artists' merits.

In addition, ideology is 'interface of language and political organization. It is a system of ideas that explains, makes sense of society' (Hayward, 2000). Marx suggest that ideology is practice of reproducing social relations of inequality where the ruling class through the ideas control the way the nation perceives itself and they regulate too the way other classes are perceived or represented" (p. 193). However, [Kellner \(1995\)](#), suggests that since 1990s, the significance of gender, race oppression, age, sexuality are the forms of ideological domination as an integral part of oppressions based on class and economics (Cox 1948; Barrett 1980), ideology extension that 'cover theories, ideas, texts and representations' is multicultural in form. According to this logic, these satires programs contextualized and differentiated oppression of people, individuals from other provinces of the diverse races, ethnicities, gender, and sexual preference. For example, the representation of politicians and their association with Merasi (the drummers) as worthy of attention as class conflicts.

Media culture representing heterogeneous struggle between groups and class divisions for societal control through inducing consent can also be seen as a tussle between liberals and conservatives in America, struggle between BJP and INC in India, including the struggle between PML-N and PTI in Pakistan. They deploy discourses of 'democracy, freedom, and individualism according to their own agendas and ideologies.

For example, after the assassination of liberal Kennedy as president of America and the symbol of hegemonic forces, the rightist (democrats) hegemony re-established followed by liberal Reagan in 1980, evolved "common sense" ([Kellner, 1995](#)), such as the production of rhetoric considered to be the salient feature of Clinton period of ruling. This "common sense" involved the limitation of government and the reduction of taxes, to strengthen business, creation of jobs and increase domestic wealth with elimination of policies related to regulations. This also included the encouragement of entrepreneurship for successful and strong society.

In *KhabarDar and Hasb-e-Haal* the host and the performers organize a culture of desire and mimeses as what Dollimore puts it cited in Girard's well-known work '*Things hidden*', the observer hypothesizes that how these shows transcode representations (information and language), within the existing social and political struggle in Pakistan. These programs resembles somewhat French and British melodrama genre that create a culture wherein sexual rivalries overtly take place.

While setting the agenda of heterogeneity, *KhabarDar* and *Hasb-e-Haal*, emphasize the Pakistani audiences' identification so as to motivate them for political evaluations of the 'changes in the standards' (Iyengar & [Kinder, 1987](#), p. 63), and opinionate about how hate take place between members of the political parties through demonizing and feminizing one another.

Dollimore identifies different types of hating in sexual difference within the theories such as heterosexual desires, nature of patriarchy, the true, negative, totalitarianism and fascism, destruction of the autonomy of the other and the underestimation of a dying culture.

This is open for readers' judgment wither framing the ruling PML-N party members, that presented no motivations to expose public virtues against the goal-oriented opposition in these political late-night shows has significant 'influence on elections' that held in 2108 and 'on the public opinion' in exploring and evaluating Pakistani personalities and their behaviours (Moy, 2006; Young, 2006).

Furthermore, priming as a 'temporal extension of agenda-setting' (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987), enable to 'ease of information' (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973, p. 208), to access the minds of audiences with maximum significance and to effect their memories as well as their decisions to form their attitudes (Hastie & Park, 1986). Similarly, satire text on TV also has the ability to change the audience attitudes-perception, due to 'angry subjects in a bad mood' (Moons & Mackie, 2007), because, it scrutinizes to persuade them further as observed in the case of Maulana Fazl-Ur-Rehman in Dummy Museum (*Hasb-e-Hall*) that gets annoyed over allegations as does Maryam Nawaz. Thus negative perception generated through witty arguments, 'targeted and exposed' them as evils within the Pakistani political culture. Therefore, humour-mood-persuasion are shared node to analyze satire as it motivates audience attention more than the other media forms towards their aims as *KhabarDar* and *Hasb-e-Haal* in this sense produce feelings of republicanism (anti-anarchism), and play a positive role in motivating standards and public virtues to expose ideologies that naturalize 'corruption and underhand' within as [Holbert \(2013\)](#), comments per se.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these shows propagated socio-political and cultural realities of the present time by determining positive/negative portrayal of political personalities, the derogatory language used to their good/bad image through comic and wit, cynical comedy played a major part in opinion building and changing political attitude in masses that can eventually affect the voting behavior depending on their like and dislike for the political parties.

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