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Media as an Instrument of Hybrid Warfare: A Case Study of Pakistan

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Headings

Abstract: *This paper aims to analyze the role of media as an instrument of Hybrid warfare to shape public opinion and to see its impact on different organs of state. 21st Century dawned alongside an emerging form of warfare called Hybrid Warfare, one which in its nature and character is remarkably diverse and whose scope extends beyond conventional elements of war, that is to say, domain, adversary, objective, and force. Modern wars, owing to asymmetric lines of conflict, are difficult to be categorized as conventional or counterinsurgency and are in stark contrast to traditional models of war and peace. Given the multifaceted dimensions of this new concept of waging war, it is significant to evaluate its contours and grasp an understanding of its nature and instruments. Does the paper evaluate how it can play a pivotal role to mitigate existing and future challenges being faced by Pakistan in the domain of Hybrid Warfare?*

Introduction

During World War-I, the Central Powers (Germany, Austria- Hungary, Italy, and Turkey) and Allied Powers (Russia, France, Great Britain, and the United States) used the press as a propaganda tool. The primary purpose of such propaganda was three-fold, i.e. to get support from own country, adversaries, public and neutral countries. Allied countries portrayed the leader of Germany, the Kaiser, like a beast in human form. Media continue to play a role in its capacity to transform public opinion and shape the mood of the war. Selected restrictions were also employed on media, which eventually led to manufactured and dictated news and press during the war. British Prime Minister Lloyd George instructed CP Scot, who was the editor of

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Manchester Guardian, that if people came to know about the truth, then we will not be able to sustain war, but they do not know and will not come to know (Khawaja, 2018, p.199). In today's world, innovation in technology and means of communications has made media a dual-edge sword that can shape public opinion both constructively or otherwise and also can become a driver of peace as well as conflict. In contemporary times the states entangled in conflicts publicise their narratives so that the people should not lose morale and keep supporting the conflict in favour of the state. States play with public sentiments by saying that the war is in the best interest of the people, and it is also aimed to achieve the national interest of the country. The state Media is extensively utilised by both states and non-state actors in building narratives publicising information at perilous junctures, shaping public opinion, affecting international politics and defending military interventions, and that is why media has become the fourth state (Khawaja, 2018, p.200).

Media is an instrument of Hybrid warfare, plays a significant role in shaping public opinion. With the advent of the 21st century, the challenge of parallel and multiple frontiers has emerged mainly in developing countries in South Asia (Jabbar, 2008). The impact of modern technology has transformed the media landscape into a new dimension. The introduction of new media and fast-evolving technological advancements in this particular field have posed multifaceted challenges that need to be tackled efficiently. Offensive and innovative employment of media blitzkrieg by modern countries in different spheres amply demonstrate the effectiveness of media in transforming public opinion on domestic as well as global fronts to attain overall national objectives. The media, owing to its pervasive quality and near omnipotence, can create a significant impact on society/masses as an instrument of Hybrid Warfare. Pakistani media has been under criticism for its inadequacies and inefficiency to befittingly respond to the offensive propaganda campaigns waged against it by hostile nations after 9/11.

Media Types and Classification

Media is plural of a medium which can be used in two ways, first as carrier such as air, through which sound waves travel from one point to another. The other use of medium includes means of general communication, information or entertainment in society such as newspapers, radio and TV etc. All these mediums of communication combined are commonly known as Media. The sources through which the media delivers /provide information are shown in the table below.

Table 1. Sources of Media

Print Media	Electronic Media	Social Media
Newspapers.	Cellular Phones.	Facebook
Magazines.	Electronic Bulletin Boards.	Twitter
Books.	Fax machines.	Instagram
Leaflets	Radio	Whats App
Brochures	Tele-printers.	Google Plus

Posters	TV
Placards.	Video Cameras.
	News channels
	Movie channels
	Entertainment channels
	Religious channels
	Music channels
	Sports channels
	Business channels
	Educational channels
	Lifestyle and fashion channels
	Miscellaneous channels

The states use all types of media as mentioned in the above table in many ways to shape public opinion in favor or against any particular issue, idea or project may it be political or related to human welfare. Media has become an essential part of our daily life. Its functions and utility have transformed our way of thinking and living. The information role of Media is crucial as it helps people in one part of the world to stay updated about happenings in other far off parts of the world. Mass media's four primary functions are to influence, inform, entertain and educate. In the 21st century, human beings are living in the technology era. The innovations in information and digital technology have reached new heights where the speeds of communication have reached gigabytes per seconds from Kilobytes per seconds. We are truly living in the information age where media, war, security and the economy have attained new meanings.

Media Warfare and Image-fare

The dynamics of traditional warfighting styles have been diversified by the unprecedented progress of digital information technology, which has further complicated and altered the nature of conflicts (Svetoka, 2016). Global access to the virtual environment has created numerous opportunities to conduct battles online, affecting events in both physical as well as cognitive domains related to attitudes and beliefs of people across the globe. Hybrid approaches like diplomatic pressures, economic manipulations, and cyberspace is being employed by both states and non-state actors to pursue their politico-military objectives. Social media has been extensively utilized by the masses to build narratives, coordinate activities and also to collect information during recent violent conflicts in Ukraine, Palestine, Syria and Yemen. The conflicts of the contemporary era have also changed owing to the concept of "Image-fare" as the media can exploit the images constructively and otherwise to achieve political objectives without employing traditional military approaches (Yarchi, 2016, p.301). The countries which utilise images to build state narrative are more successful, in comparison to other states which do not employ such strategies, in achieving their political objectives in the information warfare domain. The

approaches have shifted from warfare to Image-fare swiftly over the last two decades, and its outreach to both local and foreign media makes it more significant. The images created by Pakistani media generally do not support the state narrative owing to foreign influences.

Significance of Media in Shaping Public Opinion during Conflict

From the broader perspective, media gives us immense knowledge, raise the conscious level of the people, help people raise their voice against social evils, and above all, educate society. Free and strengthened media can promote a widespread culture of participatory democracy, fundamental human rights, coexistence, tolerance, and peace. As a bearer of early warning, media have helped to remove dictatorial regimes, highlighted gross violations of human rights and fostered justice and reconciliation. Besides coverage only, media can be employed to do propaganda in order to achieve national objectives. It influences public opinion, emotions, attitudes and behaviours in order to benefit its sponsor. The media affects people's perspective. It can be employed efficiently in order to inculcate and affect the very thinking of the people as a form of propaganda. Psychological warfare can be waged much before the actual conduct of war. Like many "tools" used by nations, the media can serve all the purposes. At its best, media promote peace and understanding. The communication frontiers and physical frontiers of modern nation-states mostly stay on opposite ends and have very few similar aspects (Pfaltzgraff Jr, 1997). Conflict is one of the defining features of the modern world. In contemporary times, Civilians are much more involved in the broader activities of conflicts, although their role may vary from victims to participants. Besides, in most of the conflicts in the 20th century, states remained concerned about their population and legitimacy of the war, at least at face value. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a number of conflicts that have involved the deaths of thousands of people and the suffering and displacement of more than millions of people. Owing to the increased access of media by virtue of modern technologies, the nations are resorting to manage and control the role of media during conflicts so that the people can be convinced about the just reason and inevitability of war. It may be noted that the 21st century will remain an epitome of challenges coming from media due to the information revolution. In order to cater to these challenges, one needs to understand the role of media during the past conflict. Media establishments have been subject to processes of globalization. The local media centres reliance on international media networks is increasing with each passing day. It is important to note that now, the agenda-setting power of international media is often labelled the 'CNN effect'. President Bush seemed to prove this point when he said to learn more from CNN than from the CIA. The upshot is the compression of policy-makers response times during crises. The media has shrunk the decision space for state officials as they are now pressurized by the media to take immediate decisions. The media's role in the wars is not only limited to providing war coverage but also an essential part of the motivation of combats. In this way, media may be regarded as the 'secret weapon' states have at their disposal. Effective media is one of the state organs on battlefields. In modern time, if employed effectively, it can win wars for the nations even without fighting them.

Hybrid Warfare

Although peace can be the intrinsic aspiration of humanity, the clash is rooted in the structure of states and the international state system. War has often been studied as political and social phenomena through the prism of military application. The nature of war remains constant; however, the character of war continues to transform from kinetic to non-kinetic, conventional to sub-conventional or a combination of the two. The contemporary global environment is truly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous and is likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. The correct perspective of the present environment must be seen through the prism of diminishing boundaries of nation-states, geo-politics draped in geo-economics, ever-increasing fissures in societies and rapid technological advancements, which are affecting the whole mosaic of politics, societies and global economies. Hybrid Warfare a comparatively new term, and it does not have a universally accepted definition. The meaning and usage of the term Hybrid Warfare itself have drifted considerably from its first use in 2002 by William J. Nemeth. Hybrid warfare can be defined as a creative combination of civil and military ways and means that are deployed in a synchronized manner.

Hybrid Warfare also describes any kind of covert non-military subversion efforts. Whether it is economic subversion or propaganda dissemination, all of these techniques have already been around for ages, and there is nothing novel in them nowadays, except maybe in terms of how these techniques have adapted to incorporate modern-day technologies (Korybko, 2017, p.207). Andrew Korybko defined Hybrid Wars as "externally provoked identity conflicts, which exploit historical, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, and geographic differences within geostrategic transit states through the phased transition from Color Revolutions to Unconventional Wars in order to disrupt, control, or influence multipolar transnational connective infrastructure projects by means of Regime Tweaking, Regime Change, and/or Regime Reboot" (Korybko, 2017, p.208). In his opinion, hybrid wars are not developed indigenously; instead, they are being provoked by external actors who exploit the already existing fault lines in society. In the context of Pakistan, we see that our internal fault lines like Ethnic identity, religious and regional issues are being exploited by external powers to push Pakistan into a hybrid war. Frank Hoffman says that "Hybrid warfare blend[s] the lethality of state conflict with the fanatical and protracted fervor of irregular warfare . . . future adversaries (states, state-sponsored groups, or self-funded actors) exploit access to modern military capabilities including encrypted command systems, man-portable surface-to-air missiles, and other modern lethal systems, as well as promote protracted insurgencies that employ ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and assassinations" (Hoffman, 2009, p.34). Hoffman's definition is also relevant to the Pakistani context, where all the elements of Hybrid warfare are being employed at the same time. Janis Berziņš says that "The Russians have placed the idea of influence at the very centre of their operational planning and used all possible levers to achieve this: the skilful internal communications; deception operations; psychological operations and well-constructed external communications"(Bērziņš, 2014, p.6). This definition is also relevant to the hybrid war being waged in Pakistan as the not state actors

involved have an elaborate communication network and also employ deception operations as well as psychological operations by use of terrorist attacks.

Roles of Media in Relation to Hybrid Warfare

Media in the developed democracies long ago moved from conventional to investigative reporting discussing not only the statements but also highlighting the in-depth perspective of the issues under discussion. Like many developing countries, Pakistani print and electronic media invariably give much more importance to politics. Statements and stories regarding politicians and military leaders are made part of the front page (print media) and headlines (electronic media). Ever since the 9/11 attacks in the USA, Pakistan has been in the eye of the storm. Frequent terrorist attacks, counter-terrorism campaigns and an ever-evolving geostrategic environment, especially after the inauguration of the CPEC project, cannot be ignored. It is not the case that our media does not discuss or generates debate on security issues. However, the unfortunate part is that journalists prefer to hold discussion forums on political statements made by politicians or military commanders rather than following an investigative journalism approach. They fall prey to become a hybrid tool of anti-state elements by propagating narratives that harm the national security of Pakistan without even realizing the consequences. Pakistani media is assumed free, independent and increasingly assertive and plays a significant role in shaping public opinion. However, In reality, both the print and electronic media is in the race of ratings as higher rating brings more advertisement revenue and vice versa. Therefore, instead of projecting the positive image of Pakistan, the media resorts to sensationalism. Relatively more time is dedicated to broadcast sponsor-driven propaganda rather than highlighting core issues faced by the populous. In the absence of comprehensive media policy encompassing all aspects, media remains unchecked and serves the interests of hostile nations or non-state actors by unnecessary coverage of propaganda against state institutions, including Armed Forces. If Pakistani media continues bashing Government policies in the same fashion, then the most significant challenge remains who will project achievements and productivity of the Government to the local and global community. The 'Breaking News Syndrome' of media channels has further complicated the issue where everyone is trying to give breaking news which undermines the authenticity of the news and also generates unnecessary alarm among the general public. Many perpetrators of violence like Khadim Hussain are glorified over media which can prove dangerous for the stability of the country.

Impact of Media on National Security

Every state provides means to its people for living their lives in a free and secure environment, an environment that is suitable to practice their shared common beliefs and values by preserving their national identity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. National Security denotes the ability of the nation to successfully prevent and resist the commission of overt and covert hostile acts by state or non-state actors both internally and externally. National Security policy deals with matters

concerning the defence of the nation and the promotion of interests of the state. At present sovereignty of Pakistan is threatened by both internal and external challenges, which are multi-directional. However, we need to defend the national purpose of Pakistan, which is stated in article 37 of the constitution as "A progressive and democratic Pakistan, based on principals of sovereignty and social justice as enunciated by Islam" (Pakistan, 1982). Traditionally, national security is referred to as combating external threats through force comparison and mitigating internal challenges to protect the core values of the nation. Discourse on national security has widened with the advent of technology and globalization. Nations will now be focused more on the proliferation of weapons and threats emanating from information warfare, cyber-crimes and space technology rather than spending money on conventional armed conflicts. Therefore, all platforms especially, electronic media managers, will have to change their tactics and train their journalists accordingly to identify such threats, create national consensus and recommend a suitable way forward to the state institutions by arranging interactive discussions, conferences and open forums. "The Dawn Leaks" is a perfect example where the national security of Pakistan was compromised owing to the irresponsible behaviour of a journalist. Pakistan is surrounded by a hostile environment all-around, especially India being the primary threat to our National Security. Despite three conventional wars and nuclear tests by both Pakistan and India in 1998, India is still pursuing to find space for limited war under the nuclear overhang. False claims of surgical strikes inside Pakistan by Indian DGMO in September 2016 (The Indian Express, 2016) and the statement of the Indian Army Chief on 12 Jan 2018 is also an effort to pursue its objectives (The Economic Times, 2018). Although Pakistani print media countered this statement on the following day as replied by DG ISPR (Dunya News, 2018) but Pakistani electronic media depending only on one English news channel, the "PTV News", could not effectively utilize the statement as state terrorism. On the contrary, not only Indian channels made effective use of media in parliament attacks and Mumbai attacks against Pakistan but also continues to support anti-state elements in Pakistan to destabilize the country. Indian journalists exploit local and foreign media effectively to malign Pakistan's image (projecting it as a safe haven for terrorists) in the community of nations.

Impact of Media on Judiciary

The media and judiciary can be regarded as the integral components of modern democracies, and their coverage and decision can impact the working of others. For proper functioning of the democracy, free media and independent judiciary cannot exist in isolation. Authority of the court and freedom of the press to comment on matters of public interest must always be respected to maintain the balance between the two-state institutions. The media played an essential rule in the restoration of Ch Iftikhar as Chief Justice of Pakistan. Over the past few years, the exaggeration strategy being adopted by media on national issues is not only derailing the publics' confidence in the judicial system, but also judges have been pressurized by media groups to alter their decisions. The issues are being made controversial through the use of Print, electronic and social media and then courts are pushed to walls to make the decisions as per the built narratives. The

Asia bibi case of blasphemy is a classic example of this where the people like Khadim Rizvi declared the Judges as Kafir for acquittal of Asia bibi and also provoked massive violence across the country. Such protests and threats to the judiciary compromise the transparency and judicial value of the court decisions. The media builds narratives to influence decisions of crucial cases in line with the CNN effect and acts as a tool of hybrid warfare.

Impact of Media on Military

"Fighting external monsters is easy in comparison to how we fight those within."

Jeffrey Fry (Goodreads)

Before analysing the role of media in different wars, let us have a look at how media gathers information during conflicts. Amongst the overt sources, media collects information from press briefings, press releases or hand-outs and embedded visits to battlefield area. Covertly, journalists use their contacts, electronic eavesdropping and clandestine visits to the battle areas. In the 20th century, coverage of war incidents or conflict reporting was dependent on state machinery. Coverage was controlled by the state institutions, and only limited information as deemed appropriate was released to the media for the public. However, with the advent of technology, high-resolution photographic satellites are now available that can make the battlefield transparent, and the location of ground troops, ships or field assets can be transmitted live from a distant location. Therefore, the 21st-century media landscape is different, and censorship is now virtually impossible.

Military needs media or media needs military is debatable, but the fact remains that disagreement may arise between the two, especially during a conflict scenario, mainly because their operational requirements are different. Successful military operations require an element of surprise that entails secrecy, whereas media generally prefers transparency of the fact's sensationalism. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two plays a significant role in national security as wars are now being fought overseas and at home in the realm of public opinion. Successful military operations against insurgents today not only mean that military objectives have been met, but it also ensures that people at home and abroad are convinced that the tide of the battle is on the side of counterinsurgents. Tug of war will continue between journalists' desire to report conflicts and the military's concerns to keep security and secrecy of its operational information. Media loves to broadcast actions live from the battlefield as it creates sensationalism, whereas the military keeps its focus on achieving its objectives at the same time maintaining the morale of the soldiers by guarding against lost territory or causality rate etc.

On the contrary, positive coverage of the achievements will serve as a morale booster for the soldiers as well as people back home. Media can be embedded and employed to sell selected themes to build the perception of the troops. In recent times, Military commanders aspire to accrue advantage through selective media coverage, enhance public awareness and build support for the military operations. Operation Zarb-e-Azab and Operation Rad-ul-Fasad are the two recent examples of successful employment of media to build state narrative. Nevertheless, on the

international front, the international media and also Unites States keep on accusing Pakistan of ties with the Afghan Taliban and keep repeating the "Do More" Mantra, which portrays a negative image of Pakistan armed forces and intelligence agencies. The Indo-US nexus keeps on maligning the image of Pakistan as a terrorist state owing to a more significant number of channels and outreach.

Impact of Media on Politics

James Hoge is of the view that the media has become much more pervasive in contemporary times and the political leadership has to make swift decisions due to enormous pressures by media for immediate actions; thus, these decisions often lack clarity context and sometimes go wrong as well (Hoge Jr, 1994, p.137). One of the most important roles that media play is political coverage during the electoral process. It is the moral obligation of the media outlets to broadcast agenda points and party proposal plans without any biases. However, private media being a money-making entity has its agenda, but it does not mean that private media has no obligation at all. Broadcasting stations are generally issued licenses by a public body called Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). Professional and renowned journalists resort to accurate and balanced reporting standards with a clear separation of facts and deductions which is unfortunately not very common in Pakistan. H.L. Menken said, "In a democracy, one party always devotes its chief energies trying to prove that the other is unfit to rule; and both commonly succeed and are right" (Mencken). Imran Khan and Dr Tahirul Qadri prefer to block Islamabad every time rather than resolving their political issues peacefully through bilateral talks. Such incidents not only malign Pakistan's image in the community of nations but also derails the development process as trade worth billions of dollars are wasted because of the Sit-in(s). For instance, in 2014, the sit-in was called just before the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping when the Government was ready to sign projects worth 34 billion USD. Political parties continue to show irresponsible attitude and do not take care of the public sentiments. During the long march from Lahore to Islamabad, approximately 40 TV channels provided live coverage 24/7 (Rehmat, 2014). Most of the channels dedicated much of their air time to live coverage of dharma without any censorship. During the Dharna, The Express media group gave full coverage to Imran Khan and Tahir-ul-Qadri, and they were mostly covered in headlines on the front page. Nawaz Sharif was usually censored while the insider mismanagement stories at Dharna were not covered. Finally, the Government has to accept the demands of the protestors as the media supported the protestors by shaping public opinion in their favor and pressurized government to take the decision which otherwise could not have been taken. So this supports the CNN effect theory.

The media coverage of Faizabad Sit-in also shows us that how media can portray similar things differently. Faizabad Sit-in started on 5th December and ended after three weeks on 26 December 2107 by use of force from both sides, causing a chaotic situation in twin cities. The media in general and print media, in particular, provided extensive coverage to the sit-in. The sit-in was led by Mr Khadim Hussain, who called for countrywide protests to pressurize the

government to roll back the amendment in the election act 2017 and also for the removal of Law Minister Zahid Hamid for proposing that amendment. The English media mostly criticized the sit-in and also criticized Khadim Hussain on the disruption of life for ordinary people.

On the other hand, the Urdu media was soft on protestors and criticized the government for proposing a controversial law. The issue could have very quickly been resolved by meeting the demands of the Protestants through bilateral talks. Instead, Govt. delayed the decision unnecessarily, which not only politicized the issue but also displayed the incompetence of the Government functionaries. Indian media and anti-Pakistan elements projected it as the success of the Islamic extremists as Government officials had to give in to their demands (Editors, 2017). Naved Masood Hashmi, a columnist in Daily Ausaf, pointed out that the amendment was made under pressures from the European community to end the finality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)(Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, 2017). "The Daily Dawn wrote editorially on the issue and termed the sit-in as the 'politics of siege'. It further said that the democratic right to protest had been hijacked and the federal capital and country's fourth most populous city, Rawalpindi, has virtually been held hostage"(Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, 2017, p.3).

Zahid Hussain of Dawn also highlighted that the government is doing wrong by accepting the demands of a politico-religious party, and this will weaken the writ of the state and its institutions. He further highlighted that it is a dangerous phenomenon and may lead to an event like Lal Masjid (Hussain, 2017). Daily Pakistan's columnist Ahmed Quraishi termed the sit-in as a slow-motion coup in Turkey style. He criticized the Government and law enforcement agencies for being clumsy and incompetent and further added that Islamabad is badly exposed by these protests (Quraishi, 2017). Here again, the government was compelled to reverse the amendment owing to the immense media pressure because the media followed the narrative of the protestors. In this case, the media built pressure on the government for reverting decision, and the democratic values were compromised. So we can say that news makes policies in the case of Pakistan as stated in the CNN effect. Coverage of these incidents repeatedly on TV channels does not help resolve the issues; rather, it maligns the nation's image in the community of nations. Although Pakistani media has gradually developed the capacity to identify problems and suggest the way forward, unfortunately, sometimes media plays in the hands of its investors and coverage of events seems biased.

Moreover, the undemocratic culture within political parties and preference for impulsive decisions due to media without the institution's input is a big security challenge. These impulsive decisions not only give birth to governance issues instead eliminate the process of prosperity and development. The above discussion demonstrates that the CNN effect is visible and relatable in the case of Pakistan.

Dynamics of Social Media

The world has become aware of the power potential of Social Media to disseminate information

or shape public opinion from one end of the world to the other. The usage of the Internet and social media is increasing at an unprecedented rate. Being a front runner in technology, social media brings online coverage of most of the events happening in the world, even which are not telecasted live. While Governments might like to keep some of the operations, news or occurrences discrete, but social media will not let it happen now. For instance, at least two videos were live-streamed from Ukraine for the clash between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian activists. Showing of fighting at trade union building followed these videos, and Facebook was inundated with posts on the unfortunate issue (Stern, 2014). The role played by social media in Ukraine, Israel (Kalb, 2007), and Syria (Kadi, 2017) made it clear that this new medium has become a form of modern diplomacy that can directly reach people and carry messages without relying on media organizations.

Social media has flourished over the past decade and has become the main instrument of communication. The swift advancements in technology have changed the way we live in the information age. Peace, as well as war, is equally transformed by the dynamics of social media. On one side, it has made people more aware, connected them across the regions and also helped societies to progress socially and economically. However, on the other side, it also diversified the threat domains from conventional to hybrid, which poses serious challenges to national security. Facebook posts and tweets on Twitter have helped people to stand against the violation of women rights, child abuse, corruption and fostered movements like #metoo and #Timesup. However, on the other side, the recent Yellow Vest protests in France over an increase in fuel prices were further aggravated by the social media networks as national media was not reporting situations, but the people stayed updated by Facebook. French journalist Frederic Filloux wrote, "Facebook is the expression of the people, then it does not lie. When it carries obvious fake news, such as images of protesters shot two years ago [in] Spain or spreads rumours of tanks ready to move against Yellow Vests (15,000 interactions), the quick_debunking by mainstream media is lost in the noise"(Mcnicoll, 2018).

Similarly, the violence by Tehreek Labaik Pakistan (TLP) over the verdict of the Asia Bibi case is also a classic example of how social media can act as a tool in the hands of miscreants. The national media was not giving any coverage to the violence, but WhatsApp and Facebook were used intensively to create havoc in the country. Around 70% of active internet users generally use social networking websites owing to convenience in sharing views, staying updated about events and trends and interacting with people around the world and recent statistics reveal that an average internet user has 7.6 social networks accounts which increase the risks of privacy breaches manifolds (Syed, 2018). These networks provide anonymity which makes the situation complex by providing equal space to people with extreme views to propagate their ideas publically without disclosing their identities, and this trend is growing in Pakistan. On 8th November 2018, the BBC spread the news that Asia bibi has flown away from Pakistan, and this news was everywhere on media, including TV, print and Social media, in no time (BBC News, 2018). This incident created a sense of insecurity among people as they expected massive violence again, so most of the people avoided commuting the very next day. Therefore, social media is becoming an essential tool for

Hybrid Warfare owing to its unique dynamics of reach and interactivity. At present, the issue of dam construction is also being made controversial on social media to keep the country in turmoil.

Pashtun Tahauz movement, commonly known as PTM, emerged as a social movement with the name Mahsud Tahafuz movement for the protection of rights of Mahsud tribes in FATA. The movement gained momentum in 2018 owing to more extensive social media coverage and also was renamed PTM under the leadership of Manzoor Pashteen. Although the initial mandate of PTM was the social welfare of the Pashtun community and their demands included that the missing person may be realized and tried through courts, Landmines may be removed immediately, the security forces checkpoints may be removed as they humiliate people and the murderer of Naqeeb Ullah may be tried, but they adopted the wrong approach and started to provoke people against the state and institutions (Khattak, 2018). Although their particular demands were constitutional and work was already in progress, as the army was removing landmines at a rapid pace and many soldiers got martyred during the process, but they adopted non-constitutional strategies to achieve their aims. They tweeted on their official PTM Twitter account that, "We are going to Islamabad to protest against the atrocities of Pakistan Army in Pashtun Watan #ManzoorPashteen" (Pashteen, 2018a). They also started a social media campaign against the Kalabagh dam, which indicates the involvement of foreign element to provoke people against the government so that Pakistan should remain a water-scarce country. The tweeted that the government cancelled the Kalabagh Dam project because Pashtuns protested and were hit by bullets in their chests and then begum Nasim Wali Khan said that reject Kalabagh Dam (Pashteen, 2018b). Both the local and international media initially gave much coverage to the PTM as they perceived that PTM is working for human rights. There were much debate and diverging views of government and institutions regarding the conduct of PTM. The Diplomat, while praising Manzoor Pashteen and criticizing the army, highlighted that actually Manzoor also liked Pakistan Army during his childhood. However, his mind changed once the army conducted the operation in FATA as he witnessed the killings, destruction of properties and businesses, and forced disappearances of civilians (Khattak, 2018). The Diplomat team has just targeted the Pakistani military and has not talked about the atrocities of the Taliban in the FATA region, which shows a biased approach. In this case, the foreign media and the so-called liberal class of Pakistani society supported the PTM by criticizing the government and armed forces so shrinking the decision making space for them as assumed in the CNN effect. Recent self-fabricated turmoil in the country on Khatm-e-Nabuwat issue concerning Asia Bibi case verdict is one more such example of Hybrid warfare as violence was seen across the width and breadth of the country. Many anti-state elements also seized the opportunity to disrupt the peace and stability in the country. In this case, the electronic and print media played a very positive role and were well managed by the Government as well but the social media platform helped to fuel violence in the country. The provoking videos and remarks of TLP leadership were spread on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, which created violent protest in the country. The social networking platforms do not come directly under the control of the country, so they may be utilised to wage hybrid conflicts by hijacking public opinion against the state and its institutions.

Media as Soft Power

Media plays a significant role in today's international environment by following two-prong strategies. Media either becomes part of the conflict and escalates violence or it stays aside hence contributes towards conflict resolution. Media experts believe that media as an instrument of soft power shape public opinion and form views on a particular issue under discussion. During the cold war era, the USA and the Soviet Union competed to achieve excellence in terms of symbolic music, films and theatre etc. Both these countries focused on using soft power rather than hard power to influence each other's political system and cultural values. The US employed soft power resources to attract the Soviet people to American culture, lifestyle and their capitalist system. Hollywood films glorified American culture and linked it to freedom, openness and democracy. The Pakistani media lacks the capacity and capability to act as a soft power and to build a soft image of Pakistan. The media is mostly busy propagating the propaganda against the government or state institutions. There is no reach to the international arena. Most channels like National Geographic and Discovery are being operated through India, so the overall image of Pakistan is maligned at the international level by portraying it as a terrorist state. On the other side, our media gets influences on international media and plays the same stories, which are generally anti-state.

Dynamics of Pakistani Media

Pakistani media has very successfully switched the population from CNN and BBC to local channels like DAWN, GEO, AAG, SAMA and ARY etc. However, the media being a relatively free and money-making entity, tend to fall prey to the breaking news syndrome. Sensational issues take precedence over real news. Therefore, it has become the norm to exaggerate the threat or problem to attract and maintain audience interest. The race amongst the media outlets to be the first to broadcast a development leads to erroneous or incomplete information many times. For Pakistani media to be effective in providing and protecting the country's national interests, it must avoid banking on speculations, unverifiable data or plain untruths. National failures should not be swept under the carpet but examined and explained rationally without causing despondency and loss of morale in public. Media is the wolf, while all other institutions are the rabbits. It indirectly controls the functions of the state. The media in Pakistan is an eager and enthusiastic associate of the new warrior family of the 21st century. Notwithstanding affiliated to the war-torn country, it is playing a crucial role in keeping abreast with the modern era by airing conflicting views and engaging in cross inquiring on critical national and societal issues; the media depicts and informs public opinion and virtually shares the mission of the parliament. The distortion and exaggeration still going on in the media are emanating from what we all mistake for nationalism blocking our way to a prosperous and peaceful future.

Conclusion

Emerging trends in electronic media coupled with Social media have given a new dimension to psychological warfare and propaganda. Public diplomacy is the significant element of modern

warfare; opinions are now being shared through social networks like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp etc. Policymakers now have the most significant challenge towards emergency preparedness, image-shaping, morale-boosting of the population, creating the notion of victory and overcoming adversity at the home front as an essential start point. New media has made it possible to produce quality content with less cost as compared to erstwhile media techniques ensuring reach to the same number of audience or perhaps better. Social Media, on the one hand, has opened avenues for technologically advanced states to pursue their objectives by reaching out to almost the same number of populous at a relatively cheaper cost. While on the other hand, social media has created security issues that can only be solved through the education of the masses to make careful use of social media sites. The technological revolution and information age have virtually changed our perspective almost entirely. Pakistan needs to adopt a comprehensive media policy and requires enhancing its lobbying efforts in order to address the gap between the real situation and the wrong image of the country. Indeed, traditional media has mostly been in support of national aims and objectives. In order to improve the contribution of media and to augment its effectiveness, media policy must include the most modern trends and a structure of self-control. All Private Radio, Television and Internet channels are allowed to air their broadcast in every alcove and place of Pakistan; however, they should linger within the censorship sphere. The government must maintain some degree of control over them. Speedy reporting (Breaking News Phobia) without a trustworthy foundation prepared by a few media channels must be confronted by law authorities without delays via strict penalizing measures wherever established responsible. The media should keep away from sensationalism, and more center of attention should be high-quality content. Media programs should stay away from abusive language and using communication tools that may trigger aggression and violence. The media need to emphasize the perspective of up to date subjects without disrespecting others. The media should lend a hand to the government in counter-terrorism by rational and mature reporting of acts of terrorism and violence. They should not create distress and fear that the terrorists wish, consequently defeating the government's intention. The media should understand the obligation for strengthening national protection, and thus, it should battle the gossips and reports that are at digression with the nation's wellbeing. Pakistan needs to understand and recognize the force of media threat and institute effective countermeasures by enhancing its media profile and exploiting the optimal potentials of this force multiplier.

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