Human Nature Research Publisher

Political Memes and Ethical Boundaries: Framing Analysis in the Context of "*No-Confidence Motion 2022*" in Pakistan

Fizza Saleem[1] ⓘD, **Madiha Maqsood**[2] ⓘD, **Shehryar Abbasi**[3] ⓘD

[1]School of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.
[2]Department of Development Communication, School of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.
[3]Department of Communication & Media Research, School of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore.
Correspondence: fizzasaleem300@gmail.com[1]

ABSTRACT

Memes are considered a popular source of information dissemination and influence the mindset of their audience in a lighter mode. In its most common form, a meme is a humorous visual piece of content that has been remixed, repeated, and altered to address diverse contexts and meanings but still adheres to the core concept adopted by the cross-cultural audience. However, it also serves underlying purposes. It is known that internet memes serve as a way for people who live in the digital realm to form opinions and become primary sources of information when they begin to analyze the news that comes from the memes made on the internet. This study aimed to investigate the agendas of political memes, their consideration of ethical boundaries, and their role in building public opinion, especially in the context of the contemporary political scenario in Pakistan. For this purpose, ten humorous political memes on the scenario of "*No-Confidence motion 2022*" have been selected through purposive sampling and analyzed to determine whether they come within ethical boundaries or violate them. Moreover, it also analyzed how these political memes play a role in building public opinion; the framing technique of Agenda setting explains this phenomenon, and content discourse analysis of the memes guides the course of this discussion. The results have shown that political meme creators set certain agendas while creating them and violate ethical boundaries. Most of the memes created during the "*No-confidence motion*" seemed to criticize the PDM and were framed to prove that PDM is wrong. Hence, most meme creators supported the PTI agenda, and the framing done by PTI's social media and memes were relatable. Most of the memes were based on frames that mimicked and criticized the actions of PDM leaders. Further research can be done to check whether memes can change perceptions regarding political issues and the impact of the memes on the audience.

Keywords: Ethical Boundaries, Framing, Political Discourse, Political Memes, SNS Memes.

Introduction

The digital revolution has brought about revolutionary changes. It has allowed internet users to share their feelings, thoughts, opinions, and expressions in the form of posts, photos, videos, tweets, comments,

smileys, and even memes. Information and communication technologies are viewed as mediating and shaping the composition of political institutions and activities. Social media ensures globalization and is popular not only in technologically advanced countries but also strongly impacts developing countries like Pakistan (Fatima, 2020). The shift from traditional modes to digital means for political communication introduces new forms, spaces, and languages.

Traditional politics have given way to social media, which has created new spaces, languages, and forms of political communication. A strong web presence requires an emphasis on visual aspects, which political parties try to incorporate. These images are carefully selected to make a strong impact on Twitter and increase engagement, especially if they are used as memes (Martínez-Rolán & Piñeiro-Otero, 2016).

This study aims to identify how political discourse is built through memes. As an opinion formation and information source, internet memes have been discussed as a medium for forming opinions for people in the digital age (Lisi Lainesk, 2016). It improves the political engagement of digital natives by using Internet memes as a tool of political discourse (Kulkarni, 2017). In this study, the researcher looked at how visual political memes and tweets manipulate political discourse on social media. The meme represents a specific time and place in history and is a society's cultural production. The cultural significance of memes can be partly attributed to their semiotic origin (Tazanfal Tehseen, 2015).

The purpose of political memes is to satirize politics and entertain while at the same time making a comment on politics; as a medium for self-expression, memes serve as a means of providing commentary on politics. Due to their nature, these memes carry other political implications; they are easily created, consumed, and spread (Plevriti, 2013-14).

Statement of the Problem

Internet memes has become unofficial agenda-setters in the newly formed attention economy growing within the country due to the popularity of social media and messaging apps. Political memes offer a way for people to get involved in politics, making it more democratic, inclusive, and accessible. However, the memes created during the no-confidence motion were more satirical, neglecting ethics and normalizing this negative culture among the public instead of making them responsible citizens. The researcher felt a gap in analyzing political memes, their frames, and the observance of ethics.

Research Objective

1. To understand the key agendas and popular frames reflected through the political memes during the "no-confidence motion."
2. To understand the ethical standings of these political memes.

Research Question

Q1. What key agendas are reflected in the popular memes during the "No-confidence motion"?
Q2. Do popular memes fall under ethical considerations?
Q3. What do the frames in the memes suggest?

Significance of the Research

As political parties and the community that values them interact through political memes, they have the opportunity to explore ways of thinking, behaviors, and actions. This research helps analyze the kind of political memes that gain popularity among the public, the frames that these memes reflect, and the extent to which ethics are observed, emphasizing the importance of observing ethical boundaries from the political meme creators.

Literature Review

More than a decade ago, the advent of information and communication technology revolutionized the world. As the internet frequency has increased during the last two decades, it has been multiplying. Keeping

the economic benefits in mind, the government and mobile phone companies have set policies accordingly. With the advent of social media, political culture has become more integrated, and an abundance of information is available within a short period. It is an online communication method that facilitates collaboration and interaction among people. In order to be social, one has to understand that it is not only the socialization of a specific society that is concerned but also the globalization of the entire earth without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, social class, age, or gender. Political events have become increasingly dependent on social media (Fatima, 2020).

According to Coleman, online memes are "viral images, videos, and catchphrases constantly in flux in response to user input and traveling as fast as the Internet can transport them" (2012: 109). Online communities express themselves through such content (Vickery, 2014; Davison, 2012), taking advantage of platforms of great connectivity and shareability to facilitate rapid consumption and dissemination (García Huerta, 2014; Hernanz & Hernanz, 2012; Knobel & Lanshear, 2007). Hence, along with the idea conveyed, it is also essential that the expression be infectious, whether it is appealing, satirical, humorous, or universal (Huntington, 2013; Chen, 2012; Hansen et al., 2011). There is a mutual influence between virality and appropriation within the meme phenomenon. In order to create value in a meme, it must be disseminated, created, and replicated by the community. adapting it to their context or communicative needs (Vickery, 2014; Santibáñez, 2011; Knobel & Lanshear, 2007). In this way, memes generate chain reactions of creative feedback, not only because of their digital essence but also because of their potential virality and capacity for creating new content or remixes. This language aims to maximize the company's communicative potential by using simple visuals and content (Styker, 2011).

With the advent of technology and the internet, a political party cannot escape the relationship between political memes and their influence on social media. Through memes, they can easily influence public opinion. The term meme was coined in 1976 by Richard Dawkins. It is useful for understanding digital culture broadly as it works as a cultural key. As the source of public opinion on some issues, memes represent the opinions of the public and demonstrate discontent with prejudices, advocate against social threats, and show discontent against prejudices (Tazanfal Tehseen, 2015). While talking about memes, it is important to know that they diffuse from person to person (Shifman L., 2014). Even though meme interpretation is subjective, the implied idea remains very much present because the context is related (Fatima, 2020).

In addition to their ability to summarize real-world issues, memes can influence users to share them further, thus growing their consumption. It has been said that memes can be described as 'amplification by simplification' (McCloud, 1994), which suggests that they can condense complex information into a powerful and engaging message (Kashyap, 2019).

By referencing Knobel and Lankshear (2007), Martinez concludes that studying political memes can provide a forum for exploring how political parties think, behave, and act, as well as their communities who value them (Martínez-Rolán, 2015). A meme can be viewed in a variety of contexts with a variety of captions and objectives. It has become evident that the World has become a web of communities. When examined isolated, these communities can only provide a limited picture of the Manipulation of the Political Discourse of Pakistan within these communities (Cristofaro, 2018).

The adoption of social media has been a great success, as both digital natives and digital immigrants have moved to social media from traditional media. Politicians and members of the public communicate through memes as they communicate through the semantics and semiotics of their messages. There are elements of harassment, anger, and frustration that arise from memes, in addition to their positive political orientation. Pepe, the frog, is an example of an innocent animal animation that is manipulated rather than exploited. Some groups in society are said to be from Alt-right movements, and they may work for the government or opposition to gain support or favor (Fatima, 2020).

Social media also works for the conspiracy theories floating in society by poisoning people's minds on social media sites (Brunben, 2019). As a result, memes on social media are not only concerned with the

issues mentioned earlier but also play an important role in how political campaigns are conducted. Bowyer believes that the internet (social media) has emerged as a powerful force for collecting campaign funds and investing them (Bowyer, 2018).

The satirical meme is often dismissed as pointless and mundane, but it is an effective tool for political critique and a pure form of bottom-up expression. Political memes satirizing politics provide entertainment while simultaneously satirizing politics. Memes, as a form of self-expression, satirize politics while providing self-expression. The ease of creation, consumption, and dissemination of these memes also seem to carry political implications. This makes political participation more inclusive, accessible, and democratic (Fatima, 2020) since they provide entry points into the complex world of politics.

Theoretical Framework

The most appropriate theory to understand the agenda hidden in the political memes during the "No Confidence motion 2022" is the Agenda Setting Theory. Rather than telling us "what to think," agenda-setting theory tells people "what to think about" (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). By setting agendas, researchers can think more broadly about themes or ideas that media attention disproportionately favors. As Bernard Cohen (1963) said: "The press may not always succeed in telling people what to think, but it is spectacularly successful at telling its readers what they need to think." Memetics is the way memes spread. A meme spreads via a similar process to how genes propagate themselves via sperms and eggs in the gene pool, and memes propagate within the meme pool via imitation between brain cells. However, evolutionary memetics takes the concept of replication from genetics as its central concept: like DNA strands replicate by reproducing identical copies of themselves B with a constant rate of mutation, resulting in evolution, so memes replicate themselves as well to pass from one person to another (Kashyap, 2019).

Because of their visual and humorous nature, Internet memes can play an essential role in setting public agendas since viewers, and creators can question official narratives without being threatened. Since social media and messaging apps such as Facebook and WhatsApp are popular within the country, Internet memes have become unofficial agenda-setters in the "attention economy" that has emerged. Considering this, this exploratory study aimed to examine how Pakistani Internet memes have become popular during the hype created politically among the society regarding the No confidence motion".

In the current study, researchers found memes used by memers to set an agenda regarding the No Confidence Motion 2022. Social media also works for the conspiracy theories floating in society by poisoning people's minds on social media sites (Brunben, 2019). To analyze these conspiracy theories, researchers used Agenda Setting Theory.

Methodology

This section is based on the methodology used for the current research. The method used in this research is content discourse analysis for which the details are given below.

Research Design

A qualitative approach is employed as it is an appropriate method to enhance our understanding of the phenomenon under study. Ten political memes in the "No-Confidence motion 2022" scenario is selected by purposive sampling and analyzed to see whether they come within ethical boundaries or violate them. Moreover, it also analyzes how these political memes play a role in building public opinion.

Population and Time Frame

The movement of the "No-confidence motion" against the former Prime minister Imran Khan started on Feb 11 and led to Imran khan's de-seating on April 9, 2022. It was followed by an influx of political memes regarding the whole political scenario at that time. Hence, the political memes during this period were selected to study in this research. The sample of this research study constitutes ten politically humorous memes selected from Facebook during the No-Confidence motion 2022. The researcher selected humorous

memes because humorous content gets more reach and engagement; hence, such content is usually more influential. Humor is a very effective way to set any agenda in the audience's minds. Hence, this research aims to see how the minds of the audience are influenced by humorous political memes.

Sampling Technique

In this study, Political memes from Facebook through a purposive sampling technique were selected. It fetches out the humorous political memes using the filter of vote of the no-confidence motion. Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) stated the idea of purposive sampling is selected as the arbitrary method being a representative of the total population; it tends to pick out the sample in relation to some criterion, as per the requirement of the particular study. A purposive sample is appropriate in case of special emphasis on certain specific variables. In this study, the keyword of "No-confidence motion" was taken. The memes selected are most frequently shared and commented on by the SNS users.

Time Duration of the Section Sample

The memes to study for this research were related to the no-confidence motion in 2022 in Pakistan. The no-confidence motion against Imran khan started in February, resulting in the de-seating of Imran khan in April. Hence, the sample of this research study constitutes the Facebook memes that were crafted during the months of February, March, and April of 2022.

Analysis and Interpretation

Figure 1: *Jahaz meme*

This meme shows former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, and Imran khan sitting in the aircraft. This meme was created after the initiation of a no-confidence motion from the PDM; former Prime Minister Imran Khan attended the induction ceremony at the Kamra airbase and sat in the cockpit of Chinese jet J-10 C on March 11, 2022. This was a predictive meme that related his sitting in the jet to similar events in the past where Nawaz Sharif and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi were also sitting in the jet, and both of them also could not enjoy being Prime ministers afterward. So, this was depicted as a signal that Imran Khan would also be unable to complete his tenure as the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Figure 2: *PM meme*

This meme is quite ironic showing the health state of former president Asif Ali Zardari when Imran khan was Prime minister vs when Shehbaz Sharif is prime minister. The right side of the meme shows Mr. Zardari in a wheelchair in the era when Imran khan was Prime Minister and the right side shows that he is healthy and sound when Shehbaz Sharif holds the PM office after the coalition of PMLN, PPP, JUIF, and other parties. This is a kind of taunt that shows how politicians become ill when they are not a part of the ruling party to avoid cases filed against them.

Figure 3: *MQM meme*

The image of Paresh Rawal playing the role of Babu Bhaiya in the movie "Hera Phera" saying "Maine aisa kab Kaha" has been used to make a meme out of the situation prevailing between MQM and Shahbaz sharif. The PDM asked MQM for an alliance to make the "no-confidence motion" a success. Asif Ali Zardari promised that MQM would be remembered while allocating ministries. However, when Shehbaz Sharif held the chair, he completely ignored any kind of promise done with MQM. After the allocation of ministries, the conveyor of MQM Khalid Maqbool Siddique talked to the media and said that 'No government can be formed or run without MQM-P. This meme shows that Shehbaz Sharif simply negated their demand by saying that he did not make any promises.

Figure 4: *Ayat-ul-Kursi meme*

This meme shows Maryam Nawaz making a statement about his father, Nawaz Sharif, telling about his fondness and popularity among the people in Pakistan by saying that "Nawaz Sharif hr Ghar me Basta he." The memers have taken this statement and started sharing it with mocking remarks to negate the claim of Maryam Nawaz in favor of Nawaz Sharif. The memer says that Nawaz does not live in his house as he recites "Ayat ul Kursi" before sleeping every night. "Ayat-ul-Kursi" is a Qurani verse recited by Muslims for a peaceful sleep and for seeking the refuge of ALLAH from "Satan and Devils." So, this meme is a personal attack that seems to violate ethics by relating Nawaz Sharif to the devil.

Figure 5: *150 Raka'at nafal meme*

This meme depicts the events that happened on March 9, when the speaker was supposed to conduct voting on "no-confidence." This meme ridiculously tells that despite the recurrent demand from the opposition to conduct voting at its earliest, the speaker was making sure for it to get delayed as much as possible. This meme mocks this situation that the speaker was delaying the process as if he started offering "150 Rakat prayer".

Figure 6: *Shehbaz Sharif meme*

This meme was made by using the picture from the Golmaal 3 where Mukesh Tiwari playing the role of Vasooli Bhai, was saying that "Abhay jldi bol, Kal subah Panvel nikalna he." This has been related to the parliamentary session on April 9, where the government members were giving long speeches to ensure that the voting process was delayed as much as possible. Shah Mehmood Qureshi made the longest speech, and all the opposition members emphasized conducting voting as soon as possible. This meme shows Shehbaz Sharif was telling Qureshi to conclude his speech at the earliest so that voting must be done as soon as possible.

Figure 7: *Speaker meme*

This meme relates to a viral video that recently took the internet buzzing with memes. The video was from an episode "Good morning Pakistan," a show hosted by Nida. Wherein 2016, she was trying to understand the functioning of a formula car and questioned, "Can it seat more than one driver?" That incident is now related to the resignation of speakers of the National Assembly during the "no-confidence motion" session in the parliament. This meme shows that Nida is technologically unaware, and she thinks that the speakers who resigned from the National Assembly were the technology of Audionic.
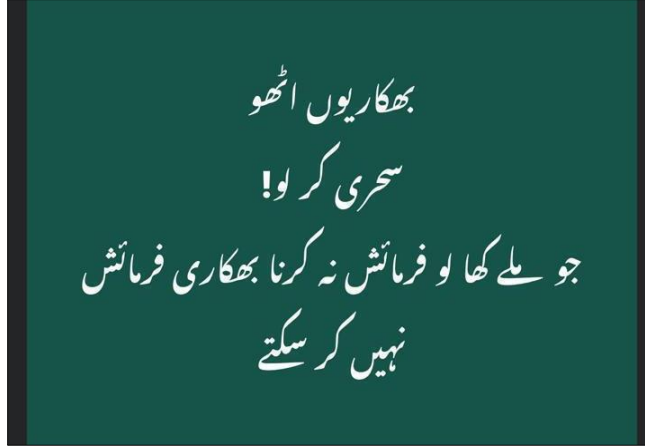
Figure 8: *Bhikari meme*

This meme is a satire on the part of a dialogue made by Shehbaz Sharif in an interview "we are beggars and beggars can't be choosers". This meme has been made keeping in mind that dialogue. As the no-confidence movement was taking place in the month of Ramadan and so this dialogue was taken over by the Netizens for making memes where they merged it with waking up for sehri. The Netizens trolled by saying the whole nation "Bhikari" referring to the dialogue "We are beggars" and said that "Jo mily Kha lo Qk bhikari farmaish Nhi kr skty" referring to "Beggars can't be choosers". This meme seems to be ironically telling how we as a nation are beggars and can't choose anything for ourselves.

Figure 9: *Beggars meme*

This meme shows the moment when on April 03, the deputy speaker ruled out the "no-confidence movement". This moment shows the restlessness on the face of Shehbaz Sharif who seems to be rejecting the ruling. However, Qasim Suri is making him accept the ruling by saying to him that 'Beggars can't be choosers" a statement made by Shehbaz Sharif in an interview. In this meme, Qasim Suri is ironically telling him that he cannot choose to not accept the ruling as he is a beggar who can't be a chooser.

Figure 10: *Orange Turban meme*

This meme depicts Molana Fazal ur, Rehman, the orange representing his Turban and a cartoon drawn on a finger representing his face. In this meme, netizens, without writing his name, are mockingly announcing Molana Fazal ur, Rehman, as the new President of Pakistan after the success of the "No confidence motion." This meme also violates ethical boundaries as it seems like a personal attack on the appearance of Molana.

Result and Discussion

The term meme was coined in 1976 by Richard Dawkins. It helps understand the digital culture in a broader sense as it works as a cultural key. As the source of public opinion on some issues, memes represent the opinions of the public and demonstrate discontent with prejudices, advocate against social threats, and show discontent against prejudices (Tazanfal Tehseen, 2015). The results are discussed thematically to cover the major themes, political narratives, and frames used in the selected memes.

1. *Agendas in the political memes during the "No-confidence motion"*

According to Coleman's definition, online memes are "viral images, videos, and catchphrases constantly in flux in response to user input and traveling as fast as the Internet can transport them" (2012: 109). As shown in figure.1, the meme shows former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, and Imran khan sitting in the aircraft. This was a predictive meme that related his sitting in the jet to similar events in the past where Nawaz Sharif and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi were also sitting in the jet, and both of them could not enjoy being Prime ministers afterward. Social media also works for the conspiracy theories floating in society by poisoning people's minds on social media sites (Brunben, 2019). So, this was depicted as a signal that Imran Khan would also be unable to complete his tenure as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Moreover, they tried to set an agenda that the Military was behind the dethroning of all these prime ministers.

In Figure 08, the meme is a satire on the part of a dialogue made by Shehbaz Sharif in an interview "we are beggars, and beggars cannot be choosers." This meme has been made keeping in mind that dialogue. As the no-confidence movement was taking place in the month of Ramadan, this dialogue was taken over by the Netizens for making memes where they merged it with waking up for sehri. The Netizens trolled by saying the whole nation "Bhikari," referring to the dialogue "We are beggars." "Jo mily Kha lo Q k bhikari farmaish Nhi Kr skty" refers to "Beggars cannot be choosers." This meme ironically tells how we as a nation are beggars and cannot choose anything for ourselves. In figure 03, the image of Paresh Rawal playing the role of Babu Bhaiya in the movie "Hera Pheri" saying "Maine aisa kab Kaha" has been used to make a meme out of the situation prevailing between MQM and Shahbaz sharif. The PDM asked MQM for

an alliance to make the "no-confidence motion" a success. Asif Ali Zardari promised that MQM would. be remembered while allocating ministries. However, when Shehbaz Sharif held the chair, he completely ignored any promise made by MQM. After allocating ministries, the conveyor of MQM, Khalid Maqbool Siddique, talked to the media and said, ' No government can be formed or run without MQM-P. This meme shows that Shehbaz Sharif simply negated their demand by saying he did not make any promises.

2. Ethical Considerations

Due to the ease of creation, consumption, and dissemination of these memes, they also seem to carry implications for politics. This makes political participation more inclusive, accessible, and democratic (Fatima, 2020) since they provide entry points into the complex world of politics. In the current study, most memes do not follow ethical considerations while making fun of a politician or any political situation.

As depicted in figure 04, the meme shows Maryam Nawaz making a statement about his father, Nawaz Sharif, telling about his fondness and popularity among the people in Pakistan by saying, "Nawaz Sharif hr Ghar me Basta he." In response to that statement, some memers make memes on this. The memer says that Nawaz does not live in his house as he recites "Ayat ul Kursi" before sleeping every night. "Ayat-ul-Kursi" is a Qurani verse recited by Muslims for a peaceful sleep and for seeking the refuge of ALLAH from "Satan and Devils." So, this meme is a personal attack that seems to violate ethics by relating Nawaz Sharif to the devil.

As depicted in Figure 07, a meme relates to a viral video that recently took the internet buzzing with memes. The video was from an episode of "Good morning Pakistan," a show hosted by Nida Yasir; wherein 2016, she was trying to understand the functioning of a formula racing car and questioned, "Can it seat more than one driver?" That incident is now related to the resignation of speakers of the National Assembly during the "no-confidence motion" session in the parliament. This meme shows that Nida is technologically unaware, and she thinks that the speakers who resigned from the National Assembly were the technology of Audionic. This shows the unethical behavior of memers who mock any celebrity just because of a slip of the tongue or unawareness regarding a specific issue. In addition, figure 10 depicts Molana Fazal your Rehman, the orange representing his Turban and a cartoon drawn on a finger representing his face. In this meme, netizens, without writing his name, are mockingly announcing Molana Fazal ur, Rehman, as the new President of Pakistan after the success of the "No confidence motion." This meme also violates ethical boundaries as it seems like a personal attack on the appearance of Molana.

In figure 09, the meme shows the moment when on April 03, the deputy speaker ruled out the "no-confidence movement." This moment shows the restlessness of Shehbaz Sharif, who seems to be rejecting the ruling. However, Qasim Suri is making him accept the ruling by saying to him that 'Beggars cannot be choosers," a statement made by Shehbaz Sharif in an interview. In this meme, Qasim Suri is ironically telling him that he cannot choose not to accept the ruling as he is a beggar who cannot be a chooser.

3. Frames in the Memes

A meme can be viewed in various contexts with various captions and objectives. It has become evident that the World has become a web of communities. When examined isolated, these communities can only provide a limited picture of the Manipulation of the Political Discourse of Pakistan within these communities (Cristofaro, 2018).

Most memes created during the "no-confidence motion" criticized the PDM. Hence it can be said that most meme creators supported the PTI agenda. Most of the memes were based on frames that mimicked the actions of PDM leaders.

Political events have become increasingly dependent on social media (Fatima, 2020). In figure 02, the meme is quite ironic, showing the health state of former president Asif Ali Zardari when Imran khan was Prime minister vs. when Shehbaz Sharif was prime minister. This kind of framing shows how politicians become ill when they are not a part of the ruling party to avoid cases filed against them. Another framing

shown in figure 05, the meme, depicted the events that happened on March 9, when the speaker was supposed to conduct voting on "no-confidence."

This meme ridiculously tells that despite the recurrent demand from the opposition to conduct voting at its earliest, the speaker was making sure for it to get delayed as much as possible. This meme mocks this situation that the speaker was delaying the process as if he started offering "150 Rakat prayer". So, this could be an easy way to delay this. We can relate it to that memer trying to frame this situation as PTI wants some delay as they are looking for some external help. Another meme related to the parliamentary discussion has shown the delay from PTI for the voting process, as depicted in figure 06.

It was a meme made using the picture from the Bollywood movie Golmaal 3 where Mukesh Tiwari playing the role of Vasooli Bhai, was saying, "Abhay jldi bol, Kal subah Panvel nikalna he." This meme is related to the parliamentary session that took place on April 9, where the government members were doing long speeches to make sure that the voting process is delayed as much as they can. Shah Mehmood Qureshi made the longest speech. On the other hand, the opposition emphasized conducting voting as soon as possible. This also shows that PTI wants to delay the voting process. It has been said that memes can be described as 'amplification by simplification' (McCloud, 1994), which suggests that they can condense complex information into a powerful and engaging message (Kashyap, 2019).

Conclusion

Most of the memes seemed to criticize the PDM. Hence, most meme creators supported PTI's political narrative after a vote of no confidence was placed in the National Assembly of Pakistan. In memes, memers tried to set an agenda that the Military is behind the dethroning of all these prime ministers. Memers also make a meme out of the situation prevailing between MQM and Shahbaz sharif. The PDM asked MQM for an alliance to make the "no-confidence motion" a success. Asif Ali Zardari promised that MQM would be remembered while allocating ministries. However, when Shehbaz Sharif held the chair, he ignored any promise made with MQM. After allocating ministries, the conveyor of MQM, Khalid Maqbool Siddique, talked to the media and said, ' No government can be formed or run without MQM-P.

During the no-confidence vote, most memes were based on frames mimicking PDM leaders' actions, such as Maulana Fazlur Rehman's cartoons and mocking others that did not fulfill ethical considerations. Against ethical values, memers criticized the leaders of other political parties, creating unrest between memers. Most memes do not follow ethical considerations while making fun of a politician or any political situation. Memers made memes that were personal attacks that seemed to violate ethics by relating Nawaz Sharif to the devil. This mocking behavior is just not related to politicians. However, actors too were targeted by these memers and the unethical behavior of memers who mock any celebrity just because of a slip of the tongue or unawareness regarding a specific issue.

Another meme regarding Molana Fazal ur Rehman got viral. A very harsh reaction came from his followers as he is also a religious figure and has many followers throughout the country. In the meme, orange represents his Turban, and a cartoon drawn on a finger represents his face. In this meme, netizens, without writing his name, are mockingly announcing Molana Fazal ur, Rehman, as the new President of Pakistan after the success of the "No confidence motion." This meme also violates ethical boundaries as it seems like a personal attack on the appearance of Molana.

Most of the memes created during the "no-confidence motion" seemed to criticize the PDM and were framed to prove that PDM is wrong. Hence, most meme creators supported the PTI agenda, and the framing done by PTI's social media and memes was very much relatable. Most of the memes were based on frames that mimicked and criticized PDM leaders' actions. Some memes were based on framing that shows how politicians become ill when they are not a part of the ruling party to avoid cases filed against them. Another meme ridiculously tells that despite the recurrent demand from the opposition to conduct voting at its earliest, the speaker was making sure for it to get delayed as much as possible. This meme mocks this situation that the speaker was delaying the process as if he started offering "150 Rakat prayer". So this

could be an easy way to delay this. We can relate it to that memer trying to frame this situation as PTI wants some delay as they are looking for some external help. Another meme related to the parliamentary discussion has shown the delay from PTI in the voting process. One more meme is related to the parliamentary session. During the parliamentary session, Shah Mehmood Qureshi made the longest speech; on the other hand, the opposition emphasized conducting voting as soon as possible. This also framed that PTI wants to delay the voting process.

Limitation

The limitation of the study was to collect memes only after the no-confidence Motion in Parliament against PTI's government by opposition parties on 1st April 2022. So, for this purpose, researchers took memes only related to the no-confidence motion. Moreover, to check the impact of political memes on the audience, the researcher has not included the audience's point of view.

Recommendations

There is scope for further research on the changing nature of political memes, the makers and users of memes, and whether memes can change perceptions regarding political issues. Moreover, researchers can check the impact of the memes on the audience by surveying them to check how effectively the meme makers are setting the agenda.

Ethical Consideration

To keep in the eye, ethical values, bold and vulgar memes regarding politicians are not selected by researchers. Memes having only funny meanings or taunting sentences were used as data.

ORCID iDs

Fizza Saleem[1] https://orcid.org/ 0000-0003-3418-1033
Madiha Maqsood[2] https://orcid.org/ 0000-0002-5731-0152
Shehryar Abbasi[3] https://orcid.org/ 0000-0002-9251-5356

References

Bowyer, J. K. (2018). *The Political Significance of Social Media Activity*. Routledge.

Brunben, A. (2019). The Synthesis of Social Media Dialectics And The Rise of AltRight Memes.

Chen, C. (2012). The creation and meaning of Internet memes in 4chan: Popular Internet culture in the age of online digital reproduction. *Habitus 3*, 6-19.

Coleman, E.G. (2012). *Phreaks, hackers, trolls, and the politics of transgression and spectacle. In M. Mandiberg (Ed.). The social media reader* (pp. 99–119). New York: New York University Press.

Cristofaro, E. D. (2018, december 13). Memes are taking the Alt-right messages of hate mainstream.

Davison, P. (2012). *The Language of Internet Memes. In M. Mandiberg (Ed.), The Social Media Reader* (pp. 120-136). New York: New York University Press.

Dawkins, R. (2006). *The Selfish Gene. 30th-anniversary ed*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics*, *5*(1), 1-4.

Fatima, K. (2020). Manipulation of Political Discourse of Pakistan on Social Media. *Research Journal of Language and Literature*, *5*, 137-161.

García Huerta, D. (2014). Las imágenes macro y los memes de internet: posibilidades de estudio desde las teorías de la comunicación. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/7O7OV0.

Hansen, L.K., Arvidsson, A., Nielsen, F.A., Colleoni, E. & Etter, M. (2011). *Good Friends, Bad News - Affect and Virality* in Twitter. In J.J. Park, L.T. Yang & C. Lee (Eds.). *Future Information Technology* (pp. 34–43). Berlin: Springer

Hassan, S.A.U., Safdar, G. (2022). Relationship between Self-Esteem and Problematic Use of Facebook among University Students. *Annals of Social Sciences and Perspective, 3*(1), 199-217. DOI: 10.52700/assap.v3i1.83

Hassan, T.U., Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Hussain, J.S. (2019). Social Media Defy Spiral of Silence Theory and Provides Baseline for new Spiral of Social Media Theory: Ground Perspective. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS), 39*(4), 1549-1558.

Hernanz, F.P., & Hernanz, J.L.P. (2012). #Socialholic: Todo lo que necesitas saber sobre marketing en medios sociales. Barcelona: Gestión 2000. Huntington, H. E. (2013). Subversive Memes: Internet Memes as a Form of Visual Rhetoric. Selected Papers of Internet Research 14. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/dyhqeL

Kashyap, S. R. S. (2019). Political Memes and Perceptions: A Study of Memes As a Political Communication Tool in the Indian Context. In *Proceedings of the 5th World Conference on Media and Mass Communication, 5*(1), 35-48.

Khan, A.W., Safdar, G., Ashraf, M. (2018). Effects of Mobile Phone Usage on Social Behaviours of University Students: A Case study of Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. *Global Media Journal Pakistan Edition, 11*(1), 1-26.

Knobel, M., Lankshear, C. (2007). *Online memes, affinities, and cultural production. In A new literacies sampler*. New York: Peter Lang

Kulkarni, A. (2017). *Internet meme and Political Discourse: A study on the impact of internet memes as a tool in communicating political satire*.

Liisi Lainesk, P. V. (2016). Laughing across borders: Intertextuality of Internet memes. *European Journal of Humour Research.*

Martínez-Rolán, X. &.-O. (2015). The use of memes in the discourse. *Communication & Society*, 145-159.

Martínez-Rolán, X., & Piñeiro-Otero, T. (2016). The use of memes in the discourse of political parties on Twitter: analyzing the 2015 state of the national debate. *Communication & Society*, *29*(1), 145-160.

McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1993). The evolution of agenda-setting research: Twenty-five years in the marketplace of ideas. *Journal of communication, 43*(2), 58-67.

Plevriti, V (2013-14). *Satirical User-Generated Memes as an Effective Source of Political Criticism, Extending Debate and Enhancing Civic Engagement*.

Safdar, G., Abbasi, A. (2020). Evaluation and Development of Social Media: A Historical Perspective. *Online Media & Society*, *1*, 35-44.

Safdar, G., Khan, A.W. (2020). Digital Media Use and Religious, Moral and Cultural Effects on Female University Students of Punjab, Pakistan. *Ulum-e-Islamia, 27*(1), 113-129.

Safdar, G., Riaz, S. Khan, S. (2021). Social Media Use and Effects on Islamic Cultural Values among University Students: A Case Study of South Punjab, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Islamic Research, 22*(1), 171-184.

Safdar, G., Shabir, G., Khan, A.W. (2018). Media's Role in Nation Building: Social, Political, Religious and Educational Perspectives. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS), 38*(2), 387-397.

Santibáñez, C. (2011). *Teoría social y memes*. A Parte Rei, 18. Retrieved from http://goo.gl/OXznyV.

Shabir, G., Hameed, Y.M.Y., Safdar, G., Gilani, S.M.F.S. (2014). Impact of Social Media on Youth: A Case Study of Bahawalpur City. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 3*(4), 132-151.

Shabir, G., Iqbal, Y.W., Safdar, G. (2014). Demographics" Differences in Social Networking Sites Use: What Communication Motives Does it Gratify? *International Journal of Social Work and Human Service Practice, 2*(5), 184-194.

Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Hussain, T., Imran, M., Seyal, A.M. (2015). Media Ethics: Choosing the Right Way to Serve. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 5*(3), 80-85.

Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Imran, M., Seyal, A.M., Anjum, A.A. (2015). Process of Gate Keeping in Media: From Old Trend to New. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6*(1S1), 588-593.

Shabir, G., Safdar, G., Jamil, T., Bano, S. (2015). Mass Media, Communication and Globalization with the perspective of 21st century. *New Media and Mass Communication, 34*, 11-15.

Shifman, L. (2014). The culture Logic of Photo-Based Meme Genres. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 340-358.

Stryker, C. (2011). *Epic win for anonymous: How 4chan's army conquered the web*. New York: The Overlook Press.

Vickery, J.R. (2014). The curious case of Confession Bear: their appropriation of online macro-image memes. *Information, Communication & Society 17*(3), 301-325.

Tazanfal Tehseem, Z. B. (2015). Spoiling or saving faces in Pakistani newspapers: a multimodal discourse perspective on analyzing political cartoons. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*.