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**THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON POLITICAL AWARENESS: CASE OF DERA ISMAIL KHAN DISTRICT**

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Social Media Usage, Knowledge Level, Political Party	This research study was conducted to measure people rely more on social media will have more knowledge about their favorite political party than the users of other types of media. Scholar drawn 400 sample from population of district Dera Ismail Khan using non-probability sampling technique through Curry & John in 2007 method for the sample selection. The researcher used convenient sampling techniques for the data collections. The study adopted cross sectional survey research method with the closed-ended questionnaire. The initial descriptive analysis shows that PTI supporters comprised majority of the portion of the sample in this study, compared to the supporters of the other parties and independent candidates, and also majority of respondents used television as source for political information. Similarly, the supporters of political parties and their reliance on media have significant relationship. The results offered significant information in reaching conclusion and thereby producing the desired outcomes.
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## INTRODUCTION

Political leaders give speeches in rallies, participate in TV debates on different issues. Share their views in form of social media posts. They also engage in face-to-face communication, corner meetings or interviews to media channels. These all prove as link between leaders, citizens and among citizens and all these different types of communications links provides chance to the political actors to talk with audience and share their best knowledge about politics intentionally to persuade, to motivate, to inform and influence audience behaviors (Marland, 2014). Previous studies of political communications disclose that political actors have a chance to present his/her position in rhetoric and content of the message that can engaged their audience about those issues which is very important for them, moreover election give opportunity to audience to revenge in form selection of another candidate against previous candidates, which did not gratify their needs and requirement holding

office, government and political institutions. Public may not have political knowledge, but know about their issues and those political actors who focused on those issues and giving information and knowledge and ensuring policy for safety and solutions they switched towards them (Henderson, 2014).

Meyer and Müller (2013) studied that public issues have major job for political oppositions and transform their policy on the basis of these issue which are more important for public during election scenario. Which grab the voters' attentions because public trying to vote these candidates or party which have more nearest policy and agenda to their preferences. During political campaign, some issues have no importance but most are very significant for voters and parties were trying to compete and addressed these issues according to audience perspectives that they convert their minds towards their candidates and party. According to researcher, political parties present some issues in such way that they can change the perceptions of voters. Researcher has argued that media have more influential role in Pakistan and media exposure have important effects on political elite, government and politicians. According to scholar media have power to change mind set of audience and have ability to persuade our social, cultural and political believes and behavior of the Pakistani Public (Sabir, 2012).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In Pakistan Facebook is more prominent social media website and now a days twitter also become more popular website in Pakistani nation, where the use these media for news, social connections and political affairs. But there were no trends of social media use in senior politicians like former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and former president Asif Zardari. The researcher Jehan Ara says that in social media first time twitter were allowing to users that they create a community of their field of interest and can shared information with each other's. According to researcher social media have key role in political system of Pakistan, which visible increasing ratio of political parties' supporters using social media for political information (Eijaz, 2013). Pakistan major political parties; PTI, PPP, PML-N, ANP, PML-Q and MQM have their own party's social media cells which operating different websites and social networking sites to share information's, agenda news, achievements and others parties' activities to keep updated their supporters, followers and voters. Tom (2019) claims that social media; Twitter, Facebook and YouTube usage in political process changed the political campaigns behavior in America and politicians, political members, institutions high officials and party's candidate are now countable and easily accessible to audience in public office.

By social media, it's possible to communicate the campaign messages, information of party with millions of voters in few seconds and in very low cost allows you to share information with in country and oversees voters and supporters of party. Social media make possible that politicians can directly interacted with their voters and can communicate their agenda

or policy to get direct feedback. Study by [Karlsen et al. \(2106\)](#) claim that social media have power to influence the public perceptions and therefore digital media use increasing day by day in the politics and political actors and candidates trying to connected with voters through social media. Now a days political campaign runs not only by party but also by every candidates of the party to persuade voters and sharing information over social media and connected with audience. Social media to be vital tool of campaigns for individuals and a tool for dissemination of knowledge and mobilization of voters for political parties. A large number of Political Parties contested in General Elections of 2018 which was major political event of Pakistan.

This event has importance in this aspect that it's the continuity of democratic government in Pakistan where third time democratic government shifted from one political party to another high mandated political party by vote in history of Pakistan. Pakistan "Tehreek-e-Insaf" caught the attention by emerging as third national political party in a country which is mostly ruled by two major political parties PPP and PML-N. It also changed the history in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by coming into power for second consecutive time where there is no party succeeded for the second time after completing their tenure. In 2018 elections all political parties introduced new slogans and manifestos to attract and motivate undecided voters to vote for them. During election campaign the candidates try in their speeches to motivate voters, give courage to their supports and to convince voters that they are best representative in parliament. Speech language of political leadership reflects their various objectives which is the part of their party manifesto. The candidates present same election party agenda in speeches and they try to present those topics and issues from which they can achieve their political goals. This study investigated that which type of media provides more political knowledge.

### **Objective of Study**

To explore the relationship of different news sources with the voters' perception about statements of political leaders.

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

The present research study is quantitative study which tried to explore the objectives by using survey method of exploratory research. Research design means the set of methods and procedures used to collecting the data and after data collection how to analyze these data to measure the variables relationship. This researcher used the cross-sectional survey research design to study the variables under study in the focused population only at one point of the time.

### **Population**

Population for the present study was the residents of Dera Ismail Khan, including Urban and Rural resident of this district. District Dera Ismail Khan has five tehsils; Tehsil Dera

Ismail Khan City, Tehsil Paharpur, Tehsil Paroa, Tehsil Daraban and Tehsil Kulachi. As per Pakistan Bereave of Statistics report of census 2017, In this connection, total population of the city is 1,627,132. Consequently, the population is further divided Tehsil wise in table which is given below. This information is helpful in determining the views of concerned respondents in this study.

Table 1 Population Details

S.No	Name of Tehsil	Urban	Rural	Total
1	Dera Ismail Khan City	217,457	507,438	724,895.
2	Paharpur	80,155	303,829	383,984.
3	Paroa	39,881	252,585	292,466.
4	Daraban	Nil	123,933	123,933.
5	Kulachi	24,738	77,116	121,854
	Total	362,231	1,264,901	1,627,132

### Sampling Techniques

It is very impractical to study whole population, so sampling techniques allows researchers to select a group of people from the population to collect data and generalize results on whole population. In the current study, it was not possible for researcher to select a subset of population by simple random sampling techniques due to non-availability of detailed information about each individual of the population, therefore researcher drawn a sample using purposive sampling method from the population keeping in view the population’s general characteristics available in the census report 2017 of Pakistan Bereave Statistics in this connection.

### Sample Size

Sample size means selection or choosing a subset of population which is very important feature in research study because goal of sample is to make comparison about population from a sample. According to [Gay \(2013\)](#) essential criteria for sample selection is, if your population size more than five thousands (>5000) then your sample size of four hundred is appropriate for data collections. [Gay \(2003\)](#) described sample size as per population size in his book “Educational research”. According to [Gay \(2013\)](#) if population size is less than hundred, then entire population will be sample size of the study, if the population size is one hundred to five hundred then 50% of the population will be selected as sample size, if the population size is fifteen hundred then 20% of population will be sample size, if the population is more than five thousand then sample size will be four hundred or above. For sample selection [Curry \(2007\)](#) offered another criteria, giving to this criteria if population size is more than ten thousand (10,000) than one percent of population is appropriate for sample size. [Curry, \(2007\)](#) described sample size Rule of Thumb for sample selection which is given below:

Table 2 Population & Sample

Population Size	Sampling percentage
10-100	100%
101-1,000	10%
1,001-5,000	5%
5,000-10,000	3%
10,000+	1%

According to above mentioned criteria, a sample of four hundred (400) was sufficient for this study. The Tehsil and locality wise distribution of sample size is given in the following table in this study.

Table 3 Sample-Size Determination

S. No.	Name of Tehsil	Urban	Rural	Total
1	D.I. Khan City	53	124	177
2	Paharpur	19	74	93
3	Paroa	09	61	71
4	Daraban	0	39	29
5	Kulachi	06	19	30
Total		87	317	400

### Operationalization

In conceptualization the researcher explained the basic concepts involved in the study. In this study the following concepts are relevant. Political participation was measured by a few variables and asked few questions from respondents; The questions which was asked about different aspects of political participation given below one by one, questions with options given below;

#### Which Party/Party’s Candidate Did You Vote For?

a. Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf, b. the Pakistan Muslim League (N), c. Pakistan People’s Party, d. Mutahida Majlas e Amal, e. Awami National Party, f. Independent and g. Others (Please mention the name).

#### Media Usage for Political Exposure

The use of media for political exposure we mean that which media was used during the election campaign for getting information about favorite parties press conferences, news talks, relays and party conventions. To measure the uses of media variable, media divided into seven categories and given five options with each category for respondent. Further detail is given below; How frequently do you get information from the following sources about political issues?

Table 4 Sources about Political Issues (1. Very Frequently 2. Frequently 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never

S.No	Source of Information	1	2	3	4	5
1	Newspaper					
2	Television					
3	Radio					
4	Twitter					
5	Facebook					
6	Friends/Family					
7	Political gathering					

**Hypotheses of Study**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** It is more likely that people who rely more on social media will have more knowledge about their favorite political party than the users of other types of media.

**RESULTS OF STUDY**

To analyses the data descriptive and inferential statistics are used. This part is divided into two main portions. The first part is comprised of the univariate analysis of all the variables while second part is of hypothesis testing.

**Univariate Analysis**

The purpose of presenting these results is to give an idea about the distribution of data across different variables of the study. The data in this portion is presented in frequency distribution tables, and in each table frequency, percentage, and cumulative frequency percentage are provided for each variable. This part is divided into six tables. The first table is about favorite party while the rest five are for source of information. Each table is followed by its explanation.

Table 5 Favorite party (Frequency Distribution)

		f	%	Cf%
Party/Candidates	PTI	255	63.8	63.8
Frequency	PMLN	32	8.0	71.8
	PPP	24	6.0	77.8
	MMA	28	7.0	84.8
	ANP	6	1.5	86.3
	Independent	49	12.3	98.5
	Others (Please Mention)	6	1.5	100.0
	Total		400	100.0

The above table depicts frequency distribution regarding favorite party of respondents. The table indicates that respondents 63.8% voted for PTI 12.3% respondents voted for independent candidates while 8% respondents voted for PMLN candidates. Only 7% voted for MMA while those who vote for PPP were 6%.

Table 6 Newspaper as Source of Information (Frequency Distribution)

		f	%	Cf%
Newspaper	Very frequently	94	23.5	23.5
	Frequently	109	27.3	50.8
	Sometimes	101	25.3	76.0
	Rarely	45	11.3	87.3
	Never	51	12.8	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	
Television	Very frequently	231	57.8	57.8
	Frequently	98	24.5	82.3
	Sometimes	46	11.5	93.8
	Rarely	11	2.8	96.5
	Never	14	3.5	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	
Radio	Very frequently	22	5.5	5.5
	Frequently	25	6.3	11.8
	Sometimes	63	15.8	27.5
	Rarely	86	21.5	49.0
	Never	204	51.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	
Twitter	Very frequently	40	10.0	10.0
	Frequently	52	13.0	23.0
	Sometimes	56	14.0	37.0
	Rarely	66	16.5	53.5
	Never	186	46.5	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	
Facebook	Very frequently	167	41.8	41.8
	Frequently	113	28.3	70.0
	Sometimes	53	13.3	83.3
	Rarely	18	4.5	87.8
	Never	49	12.3	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	

The above table shows that 27.3% respondent frequently get information from newspaper about political parties, leadership and policies. The respondents which sometimes used newspaper as a source of political information were 25.3%. The 23.5% very frequently used newspaper as a source of the political information while 12.8% never used newspaper for political information. Small numbers of respondents rarely used newspaper for political

information. Majority of respondents used television as political information source with 57.8% respondents very frequently and 24.5% respondents frequently using television for said purpose while a small portion of the respondents 11.5% sometimes use television for political information. 51% never used radio for political info while very small number of respondents used radio very frequently and frequently radio for same. 46.5% never used twitter for political information while 16.5% rarely used twitter for political information. Small number of respondents used Twitter very frequently and frequently for same. 41.8% respondents used it very frequently while 28.3% frequently used Facebook for political information. Respondents which used Facebook were 13.3% and 12.3% respondents never used Facebook for political information.

**Hypothesis Testing**

The results of the analysis are provided in an organized manner in order to give better understanding of the findings of the study. To test the hypothesis, correlation test is used. The alpha level is .05. The results are presented in one table.

Table 7 Used Social Media more Knowledge about Favorite Political Party

Favorite Political Party		PMLN	MMA	PPP	PTI
PTI	Newspaper	-.002	-.021	-.046	-.073
	Television	-.095	-.190(**)	-.145(*)	.149(*)
	Radio	.342(**)	.362(**)	.185(**)	-.352(**)
	Twitter	.155(*)	.157(*)	-.004	-.132(*)
	Facebook	-.083	-.052	-.099	.020
	Friends/Family	-.031	.008	.065	.129(*)
	Political gathering	-.002	.084	.070	.030
PMLN	Newspaper	.017	-.045	-.273	.339
	Television	.383(*)	.132	-.250	-.209
	Radio	-.160	.104	-.079	.249
	Twitter	.168	-.007	-.005	.109
	Facebook	.244	-.221	-.092	-.157
	Friends/Family	.163	-.045	-.260	.119
	Political gathering	.001	-.302	-.154	.107
PPP	Newspaper	-.048	-.149	-.435(*)	.220
	Television	-.166	-.603(**)	-.169	.141
	Radio	.342	.263	-.029	-.302
	Twitter	.217	-.231	-.249	.309
	Facebook	-.311	-.653(**)	.075	.004
	Friends/Family	.181	-.155	-.110	.001
	Political gathering	-.275	-.492(*)	.147	-.147
MMA	Newspaper	.226	-.203	-.026	.439(*)
	Television	-.083	.205	-.020	-.166



	Radio	.226	-.499(**)	-.084	.270
	Twitter	.499(**)	-.401(*)	-.514(**)	.339
	Facebook	.028	.238	-.713(**)	.304
	Friends/Family	-.030	.002	.089	-.006
	Political gathering	-.133	-.080	.444(*)	-.096
Others	Newspaper	.292(*)	.273(*)	-.056	-.201
	Television	-.132	-.122	-.022	.114
	Radio	.305(*)	.199	.075	-.187
	Twitter	.440(**)	.225	.070	-.184
	Facebook	.145	.002	.224	.049
	Friends/Family	-.123	.112	.180	.145
	Political gathering	.100	-.033	-.092	-.011

The above table shows that supporters of PTI have significant relationship with television, radio, twitter and friends/family. While insignificant relationship with newspaper, Facebook and political gathering of PTI supporters. Supporters of PML-N have positively significant relationship with television while insignificant link with the newspaper, radio, Facebook, friends/family and political gathering. PPP have negatively significant relationship with the newspaper while the insignificant relationship with television, radio, twitter, Facebook, friends/family and the political gathering. The MMA supporters have negatively significant relationship with radio and twitter while in this connection, insignificant relationship with newspaper, television, Facebook, friends/family and political gathering. Therefore, on the basis of result, null hypothesis of the study is rejected and alternative hypothesis of the study is accepted.

## DISCUSSIONS

This research study was conducted to measure the people rely more on social media will have more knowledge about their favorite political party than the users of other types of media. The initial descriptive analysis shows that PTI supporters comprised majority of the portion of the sample in this study, compared to the supporters of the other parties and independent candidates, and similarly majority of respondents used television as source for political information. Reliance of voters on social media has increased in stronger democratic states due to the added value of the medium (Grzywińska & Batorski, 2016), and most important value of this platform is being interactive where politicians and voters can interact with each other, which is not possible in case of traditional media (Arugete, 2017). Due to facility of social media, politician and party member include high officials are easily available to audiences (Tom, 2019).

However, other studies suggested that even though social media is revolutionizing the field of political communication, it still lacks the credibility of the messages posted there. The majority of public perceptions about news sources is very logical because they have

perception about different news channels that mostly channel/source of information are biased and they give support to the political party which agenda and policies in favour of them than they give full coverage to come in powers (Hopmann et al., 2010). The current study also found that voters have more positive relationship with mainstream media than with social media. It is understandable, because mainstream media is more authentic and reliable than social media, where source of information in most cases are either unknown or dubious, due to which it will be difficult for voters to assess the validity of information provided on social media.

## CONCLUSION

In light of research study results and conclusion, scholar suggests some recommendations for future studies and political practitioners. The researcher study was focused on post elections perceptions, while in future researcher can conduct pre-elections research study on same topic. This research study was based on district Dera Ismail Khan resident, future researchers can study on same topic on the residents of others area of Pakistan. In this research study, the sample of the population were selected by using convenient sampling technique, because it was not possible in this study to draw sample through probability sampling techniques. Future researchers should prefer probability sampling techniques particularly where parameters of the population are known. The social media has much significance in modern times. But the political leaders and parties should be careful about campaigning on social media. It does provide better chances of connecting with people, but it may harm the credibility of the leader or party. Therefore, it is suggested, that along with social media, political leaders and parties should focus on campaigning on traditional media as well as public communication.

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