Contextual Analysis of Current Media Governance & Policies in Pakistan

Hamza Ahmad Qureshi[1], Amir Saeed[2], Ghalib Ata[3]&Abdul Qayyum Chaudhry[4]

Abstract

This paper raises concerns regarding the role of PEMRA and the rules governing the content on Pakistani television. The paper aims to identify the different phenomena which have become common place in the Pakistani media these days. In the later section, it tries to isolate and discuss the historical development of the adopted western cultural ideals, which author's argue led to these phenomena.

Keywords: *PEMRA, Pakistani television, Policies, media*

Introduction

In the year 2002, General Pervaiz Musharraf gave the go ahead to establish Pakistan Electronic Media Authority (PEMRA), which for the first time in Pakistan's history, opened the gates for private media. The aim of PEMRA among other things has been to one, Improve the standards of information, education and entertainment, and second to enlarge the choices available to the people of Pakistan in the media for news, current affairs, religious knowledge, art, culture, science, technology, economic development, social sector

---

[1] Lecturer, Institute of Business and Information Technology, PU
[2]Assistant ProfessorInstitute of Administrative Sciences, PU
[3] Assistant Professor, Institute of Administrative Sciences, PU
[4] Assistant Professor, Institute of Education and Research
PU, Lahore, Pakistan

concerns, music, sports, drama and other subjects of public and national interest(PEMRA, 2002).

Although a closer look at the content of more than 80 licensed channels, one could see that channels remain unbridled. The content showed on these, crosses religious and cultural limits more than often. Although code of conduct has been issued but we witness that neither channels adhere to them in true spirit neither does PEMRA take any significant actions against the violators.

Media broadcasts offensive programs and advertisements that one finds hard to watch alongside family. Vulgar dances and songs are shown in the backdrop of almost every news. The re-enactment and dramatization of crimes in the garb of investigative journalism is pushing society towards sensationalism and violence. Advertising has been blatantly used women as a source of attraction. Making use of skimpily clad and good-looking women as mere objects to lure customers towards advertised products or services has become the tool of choice of advertisers. In this way women are being used as a cheap and effective instrument to sell products even with which women have no concern. This practice of utilizing women to add charm to the screen and using them as marketable commodity is deteriorating the self-esteem of women. This also reinforces women's subordinate positions and discredits their intellectual and productive role in the society(Institute of Policy Studies, 2009).

Pakistani media has desensitized people and especially youth to violence and sexual behaviors through rampant exposure. The rise of celebrity culture has also fueled these temptations with over

glorifying materialism in songs, movies and shows. It appears that nation has lost its religious, cultural and traditional values and they are now extinct from our everyday lives. The assault of international media has made us doubt our own national identities.

Over the years, members of the public have raised such issues in the court of law since these subtle messages through the media are playing havoc with the young generations. Unfortunately government has been able to dodge these attacks by using the multi-polar nature of culture as armor. For example in year 2012 Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry while hearing a case, observed that media is "spreading vulgarity" and PEMRA is completely silent over the matter. It is interesting to note that the then chairman of PEMRA, Javed Jabbar, told the court that laws regulating content of the programs were not properly defined and that vulgarity was relative. "Something which is vulgar to the complainants might not be vulgar to you and me" (Khan, 2012). This relativism has crippled our national belief system.

It is vital to dig out the causes which have resulted in moral, ethical and spiritual degradation of the Pakistani media. It is imperative to look into the roots of these changes which Pakistani media has blatantly adopted since only then we would be able to see the reasons behind its downfall.

Explanation of Phenomena

There have been a number of milestones which played a significant role in establishing the media policies in Pakistan. In 1980's when General Zia ul Haq came into power, he steered the media towards

the path of Islamization which involved ban on airing of music and making females wear head scarves in addition to many other such steps. During the subsequent regimes of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, PTV was reduced to nothing but a mouthpiece of the state.

In 1995, JavedJabbar along with Dr. MubasharHasan filed a constitutional petition referring to the interpretation of Article 19 of the constitution which refers to the freedom of press. It was highlighted that there is a need to redefine' press' as 'mass media' as in modern time both expressions hold the same meaning and include television and radio as well. Supreme Court of Pakistan was requested to look into the working of the Government which, by creating private monopolies in TV, had encroached upon a number of constitutional rights of the citizens of Pakistan including, elimination of Exploitation (Article 3), freedom of trade, business or profession (Article 18), freedom of expression (Article 19), equality of citizens (Article 25) and preventing the concentration of wealth and means of production and distribution (Article 38A). The petition was heard and deemed worthy of hearing but soon the then government of Benazir Bhutto came to an abrupt end and the case forgotten.

Javed Jabbar became a minister in the subsequent care taker government and was instrumental in the formation of Electronic Media Regulatory Authority Ordinance (EMRA). The succeeding government of Nawaz Sharif did not take much interest in it and the above mentioned act was never passed by the parliament.

This was exactly the time when due to lack luster performance of PTV and the widespread presence of cable TV, Indian channels started to gain popularity and proliferate our society. In

order to curb the onslaught of Indian channels which according to the then Minister for Information and Media Development, "between the song and dance … seek to undermine the rationale that validates and motivates Pakistaniat ", General Pervaiz Musharraf gave the go ahead to establish Pakistan Electronic Media Authority (Jabbar, 2003).

Big tycoons, some with murky backgrounds, jumped on the bandwagon and established colossal media houses by getting licenses (Amir, 2013). Media became oblivious to its real responsibility of educating and informing people. Just a casual glance at the content shows that media which should have been a manifestation of societal values is entrenched in family melodrama and yellow journalism ("The decline of the Pakistani media," 2015).

Profits have taken the center stage because of which priorities are no more aligned with the national agenda. Coverage of national tragedies and social issues are sidelined for content which is more sensational and rating friendly. Impartial and ethical reporting has become a trivial issue. There is no regard for the regulatory bodies as well as myriad directives, ordinances and orders issued by these bodies. PEMRA's Code of Conduct which prohibit from "airing programs that are against basic cultural values and good manners, and the sanctity of home, family and marital harmony" falls on deaf ears. "Well the west does it" is the answer thrown at the face. Media acts as a moral and ethical police of the public and public offices but when it comes to self-accountability, they become defensive and label it as stifling of freedom of speech(Bandial, 2015).

Here we would like to identify different phenomena which have become commonplace in the Pakistani media these days. Then

in the later section, we would isolate and discuss the historical development of the adopted western cultural ideals, which according to us have led to these phenomena.

Freedom to Self-Regulate

A significant portion of what is being presented in Pakistani mass media is hypothetical and under-researched. Most of what reaches the public is based on biased views. As is the case nowadays views and news are amalgamated and the result is a blend of incoherent mess. The content of news media including current affairs programs is of more concern as regulating them is more complex than just distributing broadcast licenses.

There are multiple factors which mold the content. In recent history, rating agencies and media houses have garnered unprecedented power to shape what is being telecasted on the television. They are in possession of big chunks of time slots which they subsequently use to provide benefits to advertiser-clients. All these activities are done behind the scenes and the audience is completely clueless. This cloak of invisibility also helps these organizations to evade accountability when they compromise public interest due to higher profits(Jabbar, 2012).

It is government's prerogative to issue permits and licenses. Although when it comes to deciding the limits of what is permissible, the laws are susceptible to several interpretations. The prime question being that who would be the ultimate authority to decide what is considered moral or amoral. The problem of

regulation roots from the fact that media content can be very unpredictable and needs constant surveillance.

Usually a synthesis of three sets of regulation is typically suggested to reign in the media. The first type would be self-regulation by participants of the media themselves but this practice can prove feasible only if regulators are freeand unbiased. Second type of regulation could involve bringing public, media experts and journalists onto the panel. Finally a third type which is also the most daunting one is social regulation by which the public interest is given more weight than the commercial interest of media houses and government (Jabbar, 2012).

In all of the above mentioned regulatory techniques there are certain assumptions which have been taken as universal truths. Firstly, it is assumed that human beings can be "independent" or value-free. If this assumption does not hold true then hiring independent professionals or asking people to devise legislations regarding regulation of media would always remain a biased affair. Secondly, when talking about social regulation, it is assumed that society as an aggregation of individuals would be able to move towards some kind of collective benefit. It can be observed that time and again more independence is demanded by the media. They want more breathing space and freedom to make their own decisions. All these demands of the modern media have sprouted from certain assumptions which have their roots in the western cultural ideals, and would be discussed later in this paper.

Obscene   Content/Women's   Objectification

Nowadays media is the major source of recreation but unfortunately

in the name of entertainment and fun, media is promoting vulgarity and obscenity. Every society has some social, religious and ethical values and media should be cognizant of such values but our media distorts the aesthetic taste of people. Vulgarity in TV programs, brutality in sports (Boxing and Free-Style Wrestling and Bull fighting etc.) and obscenity in advertisements cannot be called entertainment (Jan & Akbar, 2009). Even advertisements that target children as their audience are replete with explicit and suggestive terms and images. The safest option for kids has always been the cartoons but these days even that is risky because of the excessive vulgarity quotient in it (Hasan, 2011).

The PEMRA ordinance's definition of 'acceptable content' is quite unclear and thus leaves the decision on the subjectivity of the content editors. This is the reason why we see media crossing limits every now and then (Zaidi, 2014).For instance when in a Pakistani court it was pointed out that some programs make mockery of politicians and leaders, the now ex-chairman of PEMRA is reported to have said that such programs are "in good humor" and that such programmes "are enjoyed." In agreement with his statement, the Judge said that such programs are telecasted globally and have never faced any opposition. Justice Pervaiz said that even in Western societies, president's parodies are shown on TV. The Chief Justice instructed the ex-chairman to categorize programs according to proper ratings as it is practiced in the West so that the audience have a clear idea of the content of the program they are about to watch(Khan, 2012).

It is interesting that how in the case mentioned above,

Western media practice was considered to be a justification for what is being presented on the national media. There is a need to look at the roots of this cause as to why certain media practices emanate from Western culture.

Profits as the Prime Focus

The foremost occupation of the media is to sell viewers to advertisers. In this way advertisers gain the upper hand, since without their support media would lose its economic edge. As Chomsky and Herman said, "The idea that the drive for large audiences makes the mass media 'democratic' thus suffers from the initial weakness that its political analogue is a voting system weighted by income!"(Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 16)

Television channels have engaged in a rat race of ratings as it is clearly evident from the views of a news director of a channel, "I spend most of my time monitoring the news ticker on other channels to make sure I don't miss anything. Since the only thing the channel owners care about is ratings, we need to break the same news as everyone else, and I feel the pressure to compete"(Yusuf, 2013). On multiple occasions, media tends to favor more controversial news which is bound to result in more revenue instead of something which is although more significant but is less likely to create a hype.

The problems inherent in the market model have also emerged in media environment. For example if governments do not interfere and rely on the invisible hand to drive the whole scenario towards an end which is beneficial to all, then usually we see that greed drives people towards worse. Monopolies, oligopolies and

cartels start to emerge where a handful people try to take the control of the entire industry. Pakistan is also facing media monopolies and concentration of media ownership since PEMRA ordinance has allowed cross ownerships in up to four satellite, TV, FM radio licenses (Rasul & McDowell, 2012; Zaidi, 2014)

Biased Coverage

Another phenomenon which closely relates to profits being the prime focus of all media related activities is the prevalence of biased coverage on different political, economic and social issues. In Pakistan inconvenient realities are sometimes permitted to go on air to give an aura of impartiality so the media could refute allegations of siding with a particular viewpoint. As Chomsky and Herman put it: "the 'naturalness' of these processes, with inconvenient facts allowed sparingly and within the proper framework of assumptions, and fundamental dissent virtually excluded from the mass media (but permitted in a marginalized press), makes for a propaganda system that is far more credible and effective in putting over a patriotic agenda than one with official censorship"(Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. Preface).

The power elites often put journalists or entire media houses on their payroll and in this way circulate the news which is important to their own interest. Experts which appear on talk-shows are also at times linked to those organizations which are funded by corporate sector and affluent families. To uphold their place, government and businesses spend money to make things "comfortable" for news agencies. They offer journalists facilities such as advance copies of

speeches, governmental reports and press conferences. They also strategically organize press conferences which makes it easy for journalists to give them due space and air time. This means large organizations of the power elite support the mass media by playing their role in cutting down of the media's costs of obtaining news updates. In this way, these organizations get privileged access to media. Considering this scenario, it is a far-fetched notion that media coverage of news would ever be free from biasness.

In all the above mentioned phenomena which are prevalent in Pakistani media, there is a reason why parallels can be drawn between media practices in Pakistan and West. Over the years our government and organizations have applied "European and North American strategies and institutional paraphernalia to societies and cultures where they simply do not fit" (Wiarda, 1981). Under the garb of foreign aids and assistances, these ideals have also permeated into the practices of Pakistani media as well.

The roots of phenomena such as Freedom to self-regulate, culturally inappropriate and biased content can be discerned in the western cultural ideal of political liberalism. Moreover this approaches where people solely focus on maximizing choices for given goals is known as utility maximization in modern economics and has its roots in a cultural ideal of individualism. In the next section we aim to see that how these ideals were initially developed in the Western society and subsequently how they made their way to East.

Historical Development of Cultural Ideals

Here we would like to trace the historical roots and the subsequent

development of these Western cultural ideals i.e. political liberalism and individualism which are playing havoc with Pakistani media. It is critical to note that these ideals reinforce the instrumental picture of agency which emerged from the scientific picture of the world. The uniqueness of instrumental rationality (goal-instrumental /zweckrational approach) lies in the fact that it considers that an individual takes an action in social domain only after considering the costs and the various tools/resources available. It believes that deliberations before a social action are similar to those before an action which involves lifting a heavy object. This approach also came to be known as "means-ends" since under this conception only the goal (end) and resources (means) are the prime focus and if acting morally in a certain situation does not help to achieve the desired goal then (according to this conception) a person ought to refuse to act morally. Instrumental rationality stems from the scientific ideal of the Enlightenment age. Under this instrumental picture of world view, worth of aims is not in question as long as they serve the interest of an individual. Complementing the modern scientific age, such world view involves making decision irrespective of social, cultural, religious and historical contexts(Bishop, 2007).

Political Liberalism

It is an ideal which lies at the heart of liberal values, which staunchly support noninterference of state machinery in an individual's life. It is an important political ideal, known as *political liberalism*. According to this ideal, the state should not stand by a particular conception of what constitutes a perfect life i.e. it should not matter to the government whether the aim of an individual (or in this case media

houses) is happiness, honor, integrity, wealth or fame. Similarly government should not side with any particular religious or sexual norm. Working contrary to this is considered an attack on autonomy and individuality, both of which have their roots in instrumental picture of the world(Bishop, 2007).

Liberalism became a political drive during the Enlightenment era, and it became a rage among intellectuals of the West. Ideas prevalent at that time such as hereditary rights, state religion and kingship were disallowed by liberalism. John Locke is often credited with establishing liberalism as a separate philosophical institution. Locke contended that each man has the right to life, liberty and property, and that governments must not encroach upon these privileges based on the social contract(Locke, 1690).

Famous revolutionaries made use of liberal philosophy to defend the coup d'état against what they perceived as despotic rules. Liberalism began to gain ground swiftly; particularly after the French Revolution. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, first penned down in 1789 in France, is the foundation of both liberalism and human rights. The 19th century witnessed liberal governments coming to power in nations across Europe, South and North America. During the 20th century, liberal ideology strengthened as liberal democratic nations triumphed in world wars. Nowadays, liberal parties continue to exercise control across the globe, accompanying an obligation towards limited government control and laissez-faire economic policies (Kalkman, 2011). Historically political liberalism is also connected with the concept of autonomy, which was developed as a comparison to the sovereign

self-government of individual nation states. Although autonomy in human context has been difficult to define but it certainly involves external factors such as the right and privilege to live life free from any kind of mediation from the state or the people. It also involves internal factors such as the psychological capacity for self-government and the ability to make our own decisions and decide the course of our lives. Any involvement of the world with the self is considered an attack on an individual's autonomy and integrity. This ideal is reinforced by the intense liberationist or anti-authoritarianism of modern Western culture(Taylor, 1992). This strong drive for autonomy in modern times dates back to Enlightenment age and aims to free people from all form of superstitions, prejudices, authorities. The Enlightenment ideal of autonomy aims to disregard customs, traditions and authority and become an autonomous, self-defining individual. The ground reality is that this deep commitment to autonomy leaves society with no fundamental values which are shared by the society. No matter how much the liberalist repeat the slogan of "live and let live", emphasis on autonomy would create clash of wills and powers.

Individualism

The concept of freedom of speech/expression which has permeated in our society provides a shield to the media who in its name churn out whatever they wish. Freedom of speech has its roots in a form of individualism (a western cultural ideal), known as expressive individualism. It is steered by the belief that each human being has a particular core of feelings and intuition, which require an outlet to be

realized. A person would not develop as a human being if these feelings are suppressed or if they are not respected. These are the lines on which today's' drive for freedom of speech is built. Therefore, whenever someone is hindered from speaking about something (no matter how hurtful, blasphemous or derogatory), it is considered a direct attack on a person since expressive individualism has linked freedom of expression with basic human rights.

This form of liberal individualism arose out of the Romantic movement of the late 18th and 19th centuries as a counter narrative to the rationalistic and calculating atmosphere of that age. Romanticism takes pride in closeness to nature, instincts, mythical consciousness, beauty and art(Bishop, 2007).

In modern times this expressive individualism has found its culmination in the form of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was approved on December 10th, 1948 at the General Assembly of the United Nations. The General Assembly made it mandatory to all member countries to make public the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

The International covenant on civil and political rights (ICCPR) Article 19 (1 & 2) gives citizens of the signatory countries the right to freedom of expression; This right comprises freedom to search, obtain and convey all kinds of information and ideas irrespective of borders, either verbally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of his choice. "This has its roots in the same process that led to the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights. A "Declaration on the Essential Rights of Man" had been proposed at the1945 San Francisco Conference which led to the founding of the United Nations" (General Assembly resolution 217 A (III), 1948).

Pakistan is also a signatory of these declarations and thus subsequently the essence of this declaration found its way in Pakistan's constitution and different ordinances. PEMRA's ordinance is also no exception.

Another offshoot of liberal individualism is utilitarian individualism and it focuses on maximization of happiness or welfare of an individual or group/society. This disguised cultural ideal gets its vent in the practices of our media industry. The rise of utilitarian ethics and marginal revolution coupled with the powerful media hasn't bode well with the society. It reduces human being into a rational calculator with a sole aim to maximize self-interest. Commitment to this ideal is nothing but the acceptance of the conceptual ideal of instrumental rationality.

The main intellectual impact on 19th century liberal tendencies were of Adam Smith and other classical economists, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. Adam Smith's The Wealth of Nations, published in 1776, established majority of the concepts of economics. Smith wrote that as long as supply, demand, prices, and competition were allowed to move freely without government intervention, self-interest, rather than selflessness, would maximize the wealth of a society through profit-driven production of goods and services(Smith, 1776).

According to Smith an "invisible hand" directs society

towards collective benefit as they strive to maximize profits. This stance provided the foundational grounds for wealth accumulation which hitherto was considered an objectionable act. Utilitarianism gave the rationale for economic liberalism. Despite the earlier bend of this movement towards welfare, as envisaged by John Stuart Mill, it turned out to be an excuse for noninterventionist movement (Richardson, 2001).

This ideal results in an over emphasize on predictive success and pushes towards an 'anything goes' attitude. This instrumental approach leaves truth at the expense of usefulness. These ideals also gave rise to the concept of *homo economicus*as compared to *homo reciprocans.* Supported by the ideas of John Stuart Mill, Adam Smith, David Ricardo and finding its concrete meaning in rational choice theory of Lionel Robbins, homo economicus or economic man conception viewed human beings as rational and self-interested individuals who as consumers aim solely for utility maximization and as producers aim just for economic profits. On the other hand conception of *homo reciprocans* viewed human beings as motivated towards collective good. The following words of Smith do give us an idea as to under which light human actions were being analyzed in that era. "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest."(Smith, 1986).

Ceteris Paribus is also a part and parcel of this cultural ideal. Ceteris Paribus means that people can hold only a certain number of variables constant while performing economic analysis but in reality when they apply such a model, there can be many unwanted

repercussion. Ideally in such a case, economic model should not be applied but when goals are being achieved 'getting' takes precedence over 'getting it right'. We witness media destroying millions of households by showing indecent material but as long as profits are being made, everything else is ignored.

Analysis

Serious questions have been raised against media since its global rise. Although touted to be free and fair, nowadays it is marred with "rampant growth of commercialization, decline of public broadcasting, dominance of entertainment programming and a lack of genuine diversity in program genres"(Chadha & Kavoori, 2000). It is developing at a break neck speed and establishing its roots in all the emerging economies of the world.

There is talk of media freedom but at the front of media accountability there is complete silence. In the clash for higher profits media personnel often resort to distorting reality and making mountain out of a mole hill. Media, which enjoys unprecedented powers and hold public under their sway, is divided along the lines of ideologies and for some "money is also an ideology" (Siddiqi, 2014).

Like US, Pakistan also has a liberal outlook towards its media policies. The ideal of free market economy in which we allow the market forces to act freely without any governmental intervention is also applied to media. Government does not supervise daily operations of the media and let the market decide the media output. Pakistani media left their responsibility as gatekeepers and have

allowed a frenzy of shock tactics to go on unchecked. The fine line between facts and opinions is blurred out by the incessant talk shows. This blurring on one hand has created confusion among the masses and on the other hand has made media itself shift from one standpoint to another (Rehman, 2014) "reducing the media to a genre of mediocrity, hypocrisy and degeneration" (Pasha, 2000). Unreasonable commercialization has given the reigns of Pakistan media in the hands of the corporations who pay for advertisements. Money is the deciding factor behind portrayal of different viewpoints on channels. Media tycoons are busy saving their own business interests which span multiple industries. These shady practices have downgraded media to a supplier of infotainment which includes substandard tabloid journalism; leaving public unable to differentiate between truth and fiction (Shah, 2013).

Media treats audience instrumentally for the goal of maximizing the welfare. These days we witness an onslaught of mindless shows without any consideration for the moral and ethical values of the society just to gather ratings. This gives us a picture of a society which becomes increasingly rationalized and progressively unable to evaluate the worth of its output other than personal preferences or sheer desire.Modern society with affinity for instrumental view would lead towards overly exuberant lifestyles disregarding what is best for the collective welfare. It focuses on the most efficient and effective means to achieve a particular end disregarding any moral justifications. Instrumental rationality tends to focus on the 'hows' of an action, rather than its 'whys' (Bishop, 2007).

Baker (2001); Robert W McChesney (2003); Robert Waterman McChesney and Nichols (2002)), maintain that cross-media ownership results in 'oligopolistic dominance' resulting in privatization of information (Masterman, 1985). This sentiment is voiced all over the world by people. Pope John Paul II said in 2000: "…Journalism cannot be guided by economic forces, profit and special interest. It must instead be felt as a mission in a certain sense sacred, carried out in the knowledge that the powerful means of communication have been entrusted to you for the good of all" but unfortunately the underlying concept of working for the public good has been replaced by the greed to extract profits out of the airwaves. It is now the "personal, political and corporate agendas driving the Pakistani media industry" (Husain, 2012).

The treatment of a person as a tool for the objectifiers purposes is quite evident in media's objectification of women. This is practiced persistently and effects the society. The "ideal" woman as portrayed by the media is damaging as people are made to run after an unachievable image of femininity. Women are enslaved in this perception of being a mere object or prize.

This portrayal of woman has also set high and unrealistic standards of beauty for both women and men. On one hand women get frustrated trying to reach those standards. They become dissatisfied with their overall life and low self-esteem and eating disorders become frequent occurrences in the general female population. On the other hand men compare women in their lives to what they witness on electronic and print media. These men consider women's modeling as an indication of their longing to be treated as

they are depicted on the media. Society both at individual and collective level suffer from this objectification. This malicious cycle which never lets an individual get satisfied with what he has, keeps pushing society towards risky situations as relationship lose their worth (Berberick, 2010).

Unfortunately, when one stops believing in any particular conception of good life then every individual starts running after their very own conception. This might not prove beneficial for the society as a whole. Although political liberalist believe that they can come up with a conception of good life which is best for all since they can use value-free methods. This belief that there can be value-free methods in social sciences similar to natural sciences is also a misconception enforced due to the popularity of scientific method. Nature of social sciences is definitively unlike the physical phenomena which we study under natural sciences and which may or may not follow natural laws. There is definitely room in social sciences for objective reality. Therefore, no matter which conception of good life liberalist come up with, it would always be value-laden and would be favoring one segment of the society over another. Pakistani media seems to be suffering from the same problem where media houses, government and different segments of public have different views regarding the working of media.

Everywhere there is talk of freedom of speech but all we have seen in the name of media freedom is a downward spiral towards sensationalism. Usually it is thought that these ideals would lead to tolerance and respect for each other's views but when one considers his own views as a panacea for all world problems then it generates

intolerance. According to Western culture as long as you are not hurting someone physically and monetarily then it is fine to express opinions regardless of how blasphemous or insulting they are. The recent controversies regarding the drawing of caricatures of Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is a stark evidence of the cultural insensitivity of expressive individualism.

If this situation is analyzed solely on efficient causation then yes, making a caricature of a person is not supposed to hurt anybody. Only when this situation is put into historical, cultural and moral perspective; we are able to see the significance and consequences of such an act. The mechanical way of understanding presupposes that the meaning of freedom of speech is same for all people on the globe (Kays, 2012).

Unlike the instrumental picture of the world where humans are treated like molecules governed by efficient causation, humans are far more complex entities. If we remain entangled in the cultural ideals of autonomy and individualism then ultimately everyone would become well equipped to get what he wants instead what someone else wants for him. It would portray a very disengaged, impersonal and mechanistic picture of the world leading to social isolation and a troubling emptiness (Bishop, 2007).

Martin Heidegger, a fierce critic of instrumental rationality, was of the opinion that individual's instrumental relationship with the world is one of the gravest dangers and threats of modern times. It is even detrimental to the human soul and may lead to moral nihilism.

Max Horkheimer was also of the view that instrumental knowledge

would make social and moral values subjective and irrelevant. He also thought that this type of knowledge is the cornerstone of oppressive industrial culture of capitalism (Zalta, 2009) and this would lead to negligence of important values which have until now kept traditional societies together.

Guignon (2002)believes that under such rationality a person is a living cost-benefit calculator and continuously in search for most efficient ways to his desired goals. This technical approach does not reap any intrinsic rewards rather only extrinsic benefits. On the other hand the most fulfilling social experiences in life are those which give us intrinsic gratification and make us a wholesome person. Such experiences can only be achieved through a 'whole-structure' where you act while keeping your complete life in view. This view is beautifully captured in the following verse of Allama Muhammad Iqbal

Translation: "Life is higher than the calculation of profit and loss; Life is sometimes living and sometimes forfeiting living."

One cannot be autonomous and remain a social entity at the same time. There is a need to create a more holistic picture of human activity where it is realized that human actions have a profound effect on other human beings as well. We should strive to adopt a *wertational* approach which does not solely aims towards fulfilling goals rather aims towards a well-lived life where our goals fit nicely into the overall society.

References

Baker, C. E. (2001). *Media, markets, and democracy*: Cambridge University Press.

Bandial, S. (2015). The media frenzy, *The Express Tribune*.

Berberick, S. N. (2010). The Objectification of Women in Mass Media:Female Self-Image in Misogynist Culture. *The New York Sociologist, 5*.

Bishop, R. C. (2007). *The Philosophy of Social Sciences*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Chadha, K., & Kavoori, A. (2000). Media imperialism revisited: some findings from the Asian case. *Media Culture & Society, 22*(4), 415-432.

The decline of the Pakistani media. (2015). *The Express Tribune*.

General Assembly resolution 217 A (III). (1948). The International Bill of Human Rights. from http://web.archive.org/web/20080313093428/http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu6/2/fs2.htm

Guignon, C. (2002). Hermeneutics, Authenticity and aims of Psychotherapy. *Journal of theoretical and philosophicla psychology, 22*, 83-102.

Hasan, A. u. (2011). Media- Moral or Immoral. *The News Blog*. http://blogs.thenews.com.pk/blogs/2011/12/media-moral-or-immoral/

Herman, E., & Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The political economy of the Mass Media*: Pantheon Books.

Husain, F. (2012). How to reform the reformer, *Dawn*.

Institute of   Policy Studies. (2009). Portrayal of Women in Advertisements and the PEMRA Ordinance [Press release]

Jabbar, J. (2003). To ban or not to ban? : Newsline Publications (Pvt) Ltd.

Jabbar, J. (2012, February   23). And making excuses for frequent lapses. Regulating the media. *The Express Tribune*.

Jan, M., & Akbar, M. W. (2009). Conceptualization of Islamic Recreation. *Global Media Journal Mass Media, II*(2).

Kalkman, M. (2011). *New Liberalism*: Granville Island.

Kays, T. M. (2012). Western ideals & the freedom of Speech: Minnesota Daily.

Khan, A. (2012, August 6). TV channels spreading vulgarity, PEMRA doing nothing: Chief justice. *Express Tribune*.

Locke, J. (1690). *John Locke, Second Treatise of Government*: Prometheus Books.

Masterman, L. (1985). Teaching the Media. London: Comedia Pub. *Group*.

McChesney, R. W. (2003). Theses on media deregulation. *Media, Culture & Society, 25*(1), 125-133.

McChesney, R. W., & Nichols, J. (2002). *Our media, not theirs: The democratic struggle against corporate media*: Seven Stories Press.

Pasha, S. (2000). *A Historical Overview of Television in Pakistan*. Paper presented at the 1st South Asia Media Conference: Towards a Free, Fair and Vibrant Media, Islamabad, Pakistan.

PEMRA, P. E. M. R. A. (2002). *Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority Ordinance, PEMRA*