

S.A.M.A.R.

S.A.M.A.R.



Society for
Alternative Media
and Research

Monitoring of
General Elections Coverage by Electronic Media
in Pakistan

(2nd Weekly Report - 1 - 6 May, 2013)


FRIEDRICH
EBERT 
STIFTUNG

2013

Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) is a non-Governmental organization based in Pakistan's federal capital, Islamabad. It was established in March, 2005 .SAMAR has been working in different social, political and environmental development fields for the past seven years with collaboration of international donor agencies including Oxfam GB, ActionAid, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, International Union against Lungs Disease (France), Campaign for Tobacco free Kids (USA) and others.

Strengthening Democratic Media Development - Since 2008, the organization has been working on a project "Strengthening Democratic Media Development in Pakistan" with the collaboration of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The organization has published an analytical report, 'Newspapers' Monitoring Report' on media contents with citizens' perspective monitoring and analyzing three English and three Urdu national dailies. Booklets on 'Media Literacy' and 'Media Democracy' have also been published. Under the project educative meetings, training workshops, orientation sessions and seminars on media literacy, democratic media, and citizens' role particularly on "Why do we need democratic media" and " Media ethics and citizens' role have been held in all major cities of the country.

The organization is publishing quarterly 'Media Review' in Urdu language for the past three years. In 2011, the project's target audience was faculty and students of mass communication departments of different universities and colleges focusing on values of media ethics, responsibility, rights of news and views consumers, and to influence changes in curriculum of mass communication to introduce media sociology, issues of economics of journalism and media literacy.

Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR)
House # 67-B | Street # 43 | F-10/4 | Islamabad | Pakistan
Tel +92-51-221-0006 & 7
Email contact@alternativemedia.org.pk | Web www.alternativemedia.org.pk
Twitter: @atlermediapk

Content

1. Background
2. Election Coverage
3. Monitoring Methodology
4. Monitoring period and Time Duration
5. List of TV Channels monitored
6. Time / Slot
7. Paid Political Content
8. Programs/Talk Shows
9. News Headlines
10. Annex: Monitoring Tools
11. Annex :ECP code of conduct for media(election2013)

Background

According to a British media review by Media Standards Trust (2011), the public have little faith in the willingness of the national press to behave responsibly: research conducted for the review found that fewer than one in ten people trust national newspapers to behave responsibly. Nor do people believe we can rely on editors for guidance. 70% of the respondents disagreed with the statement “We can trust newspaper editors to ensure that their journalists act in the public interest.”

Situation in Pakistan is not different. In April 2012, the results of an online survey conducted by The Express Tribune revealed that most Pakistanis feel the local media spreads negativity, is sensationalist and is sponsored by political parties. A total of 1,025 Pakistanis and expatriates participated in the online survey. Respondents included a majority of those aged between 20-30 (61%) and 30-40 (21%). Males comprised 83 per cent of the total sample whereas journalists and media personnel constituted 13 per cent of total respondents, which sums up to approximately 133 people.

The question of ethics and responsible reporting led to questioning the sample whether they had ever been offended by a news story or TV report and if they had ever made an official complaint or signed a petition against a media group. With regards to the former, a large majority of 88 per cent, 902 people out of the total sample, said they had been offended by a news story or TV report.

The Express Tribune, in its editorial on 17 June, 2012, commented that news bulletins blare out everywhere and are available over mobile phones and computers. As a result, there has been an obsession with the news and all that it contains. Endless discussions continue along the lines of the themes laid out, with news organizations setting the agenda for news by determining what we are interested in and what should capture our attention. Not surprisingly then, many issues that we should be concerned about go unnoticed and uncommented on for the most part.

There are laws and rules that regulate the media. But these parameters do not reflect on a comprehensive basis the need to view the role of media from the most important perspective: that of the citizen. At the same time, citizens also have obligations to support and strengthen media independence.

“PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) is clearly not doing its job,” says Zohra Yusuf, Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. “There is a dire need of set up an independent body to regulate the media, she says, adding that there is too much bias in reporting.

Election Coverage

The general elections have been announced in Pakistan in May, 2013. Political parties have already started their activities in this regard. Pakistani media are also preparing for full-fledged coverage of elections. However, keeping in view the concerns about objectivity, impartiality and balance in media, as discussed above, and impulse to manipulate media and control information by different actors in the elections, the need arises to keep an eye on the role of media and election coverage by them.

We have already witnessed a lack of experience and training in reporting election issues in 2008 in an ambivalent media environment. At that time, the Election Commission of Pakistan departed from its tradition of issuing a Code of Conduct for media during the elections and instead issued a directive to Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) to monitor the operations of all TV channels including state-owned Pakistan Television, and ensure that coverage as to electoral activities of political parties and candidates till polling day were fair, un-biased and balanced. However, the PEMRA never issued any report during three months of electioneering.

Why this Project?

The media monitoring of elections coverage is done by PEMRA, the state-owned body. The ECP, while proposing Code of Conduct this time, has again directed PEMRA to monitor the election coverage whereas PEMRA failed to produce any report during the whole electioneering period in 2008. There is a need of fair, independent and unbiased monitoring of elections coverage by an independent and impartial body from civil society. SAMAR intends to fulfill this need.

The objectives of the project:

“Monitoring, analyzing and preparing findings reports of Elections 2013 coverage by electronic media in light of Code of Conduct laid down by Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism (PCEJ).”

Methodology

Six most viewed current affairs Urdu language TV channels shall be monitored for pre, post and during election coverage. Monitoring tools and indicators shall be developed in this regard in the light of Code of Conduct. Time and space allocated to different political parties and candidates and content of electronic media shall be scrutinized. The categories of media products to be monitored shall be:

1. News Headlines
2. Talk shows
3. Paid Political Content

The approaches used for this project include “Content Monitoring” and “Economy of Production”. These approaches entail the following facets of a broadcast content:

- a. Content Monitoring
 1. The Text
 2. The Context
 3. Gesticulation
 4. Time slot
 5. The Outcome
- b. Economy of Media
 1. Time slot of Political paid content
 2. Duration of each Political paid content
 3. Frequency of each Political paid content

Abbreviations

AJI	Awami Jamhori Ittehad	PMLN	Pakistan Muslim League
AML	Awami Muslim League	PMLQ	(Nawaz)
APML	All Pakistan Muslim	PPP	Pakistan Muslim League
AWN	League		(Quaid e Azam)
JI	Awami National Party	PTI	Peoples Party Pakistan
MQM	Jamat Islami		Pakistan Tehrek Insaf
	Mutihida Quomi	ECP	ECP - Election commission
	Movement		

Monitoring period and Time Duration

This report is based on the data collected in six day's consecutive monitoring of the content aired in Prime time (7pm-11pm), from 1st May 2013 to 6th May 2013. The total monitoring duration therefore comprise of 24 hours.

List of TV Channels monitored

The list includes following mainstream State owned and Private News channels:

1. PTV News
2. Geo News
3. Express News
4. Duniya News
5. Dawn News
6. Sama Tv

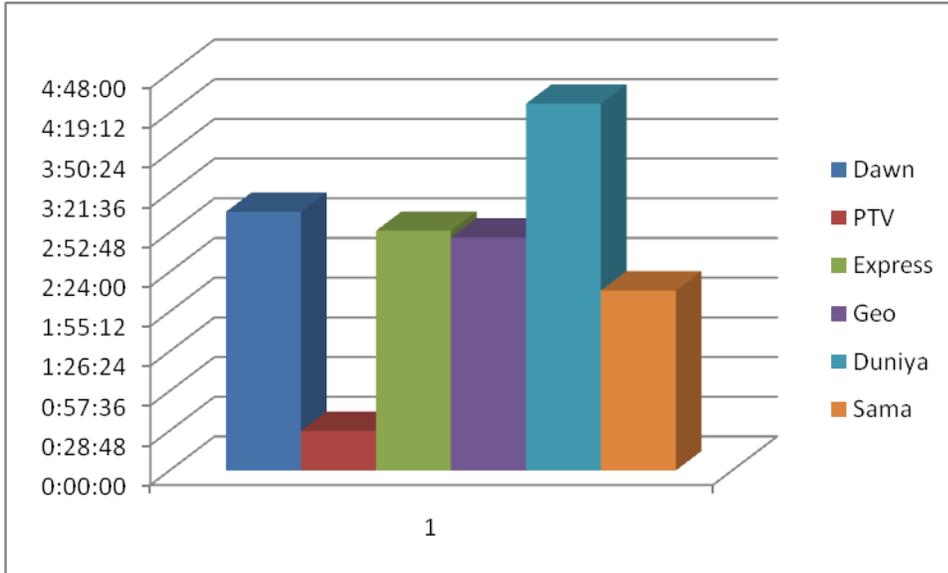
Time slot

The objective towards selection of merely “The Prime Time” for monitoring is mainly because of its significance in terms of “Viewership” and “Commercial outcome” which are both essentially relevant to each other. According to the popular media viewership indicator's Prime time grasp maximum number of viewers in front of their TV screens worldwide, and obviously is the highest priced slot.

.

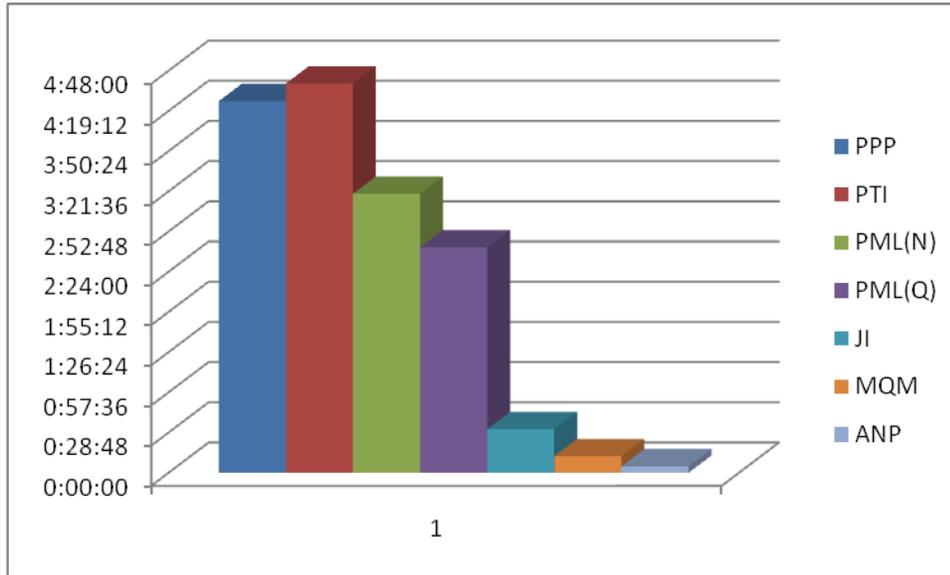
Channel wise Paid Content

Dawn	PTV	Express	Geo	Duniya	Sama	Total
3:07:35	0:28:40	2:53:50	2:48:54	4:26:00	2:10:30	15:55:29

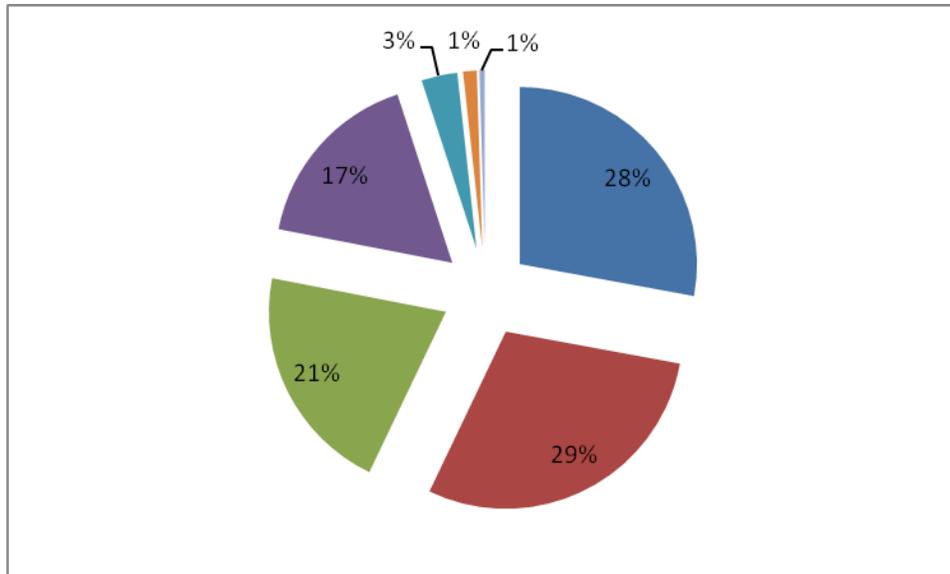


Party wise Duration of Paid Content

PPP	PTI	PML(N)	PML(Q)	JI	MQM	ANP	Total
4:26:17	4:38:55	3:20:00	2:41:40	0:31:20	0:11:55	0:04:40	15:55:29

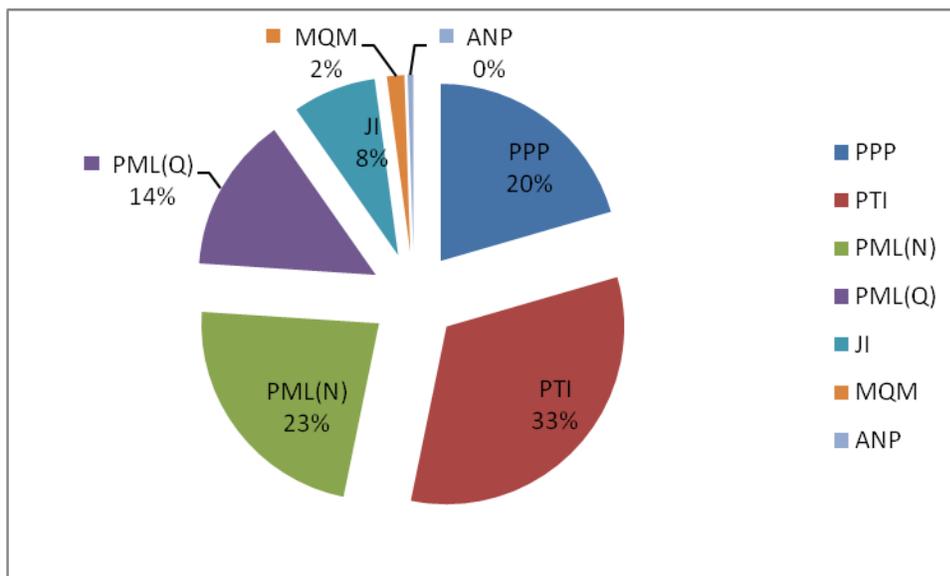


%age of the duration of Paid content

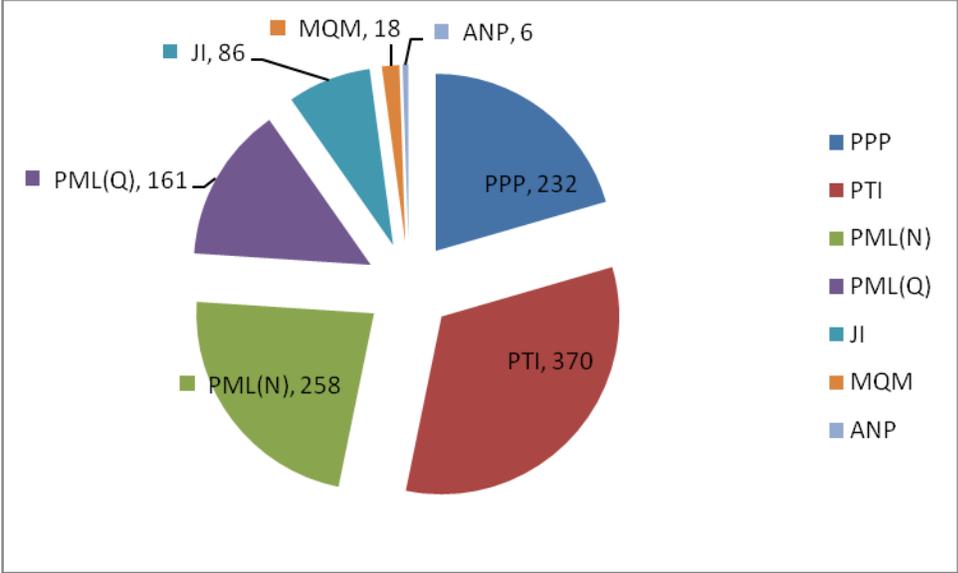


%age Frequency of the paid content

PPP	PTI	PML(N)	PML(Q)	JI	MQM	ANP
232	370	258	161	86	18	6



Frequency



Programs / Talk Shows

TV Channels	Dominant Issues	Party Representation (in order of representation)	Public opinion	Fairness (ECP code of Conduct for media)
Dunya TV	Election Process, Party Manifesto ,governance ,Water Issues	1. PPP , PMLN 2 . PTI 3. ANP& JI 4.AML & AT	20%	50 %
PTV News	Election process, new provinces, Baluchistan ,threats, Party manifesto	1. PMLN 2. PPP 3. PTI 4. BNP M,PMAP 5. ANP,MQM,JI,HDP	80 %	90 %
Dawn News	Elections Process, Manifesto, Taliban , Karachi ,KPK ,Economic policy	1.PML N 2.PPP 3.PTI 4.JI 5.MQM & ANP	20%	90 %
SAMA TV	Election Process ,	1.PTI 2.PMLN 3. PPP,ANP ,AML	20 %	40 %
Geo News	Election Process, Violence/ Threats ,Manifesto ,governance	1.PML N 2.PTI 3.PPP 4.ANP 5.JI,MQM,JUIF ,NP,HDP	70%	70%
Express News	Election campaign , Manifesto, Governance ,Threats ,Caste System	1.PML N 2.PTI & PPP 3. MQM 4.ANP & JI	60 %	70%

News Headlines (9 PM)

- All Private TV channels projected accusations from the party leaders against each other as News headlines.
- Most public rallies by mainstream politicians on private TV channel often comprised personal attacks and accusations against one another.
- Emergency coverage of Election violence, specifically “Bomb blasts”, on private TV channels was mostly based on speculations, disinformation and exaggeration.
- Care taker government and state affairs were not given adequate coverage on private TV channels.

The smaller political parties and independent candidates were not given appropriate coverage

S.NO	Channel	Dominant Issues (in order of presentation)	Smaller Parties/Marginalized group	Fairness *
1	Dawn News	1.Security /Election violence 2.Party campaign (PMLN) 3.Party Campaign (PTI) 4.Party campaigns (others)	APML	80%
2	PTV News	1.State Affairs /PM/ECP/President 2.Election violence 3.Party campaign (PMLN) 4.Party Campaign (PTI & others)	All small parties in Sindh & Punjab Independent candidate	90%
3	SAMA TV	1.Election violence/PTI Campaign 2.Campaign MQM 3. Campaign PMLN 4 .Campaign PPP ,ANP	NIL	70%
4	Express News	1.Election violence 2. Campaign PMLN 3.PTI 4.MQM	PMLF,APML	80%
5	Geo New	1.Election violence 2.PTI 3.MQM campaign /threats 4.PPP,ANP,JI,PMLQ,JUIF	APML,NPP	80%
6	Dunya News	1.Election violence 2.Party campaign PTI/PMLN		80%

*

Fairness has been calculated in the light of Election Commission of Pakistan code of conduct for media during election (ECP code of conduct for media is annexed in the end of report)

Annex: Program Monitoring Tool

Electronic Media Monitoring
Society for Alternative Media & Research (SAMAR)

Date: ----- Monitor no: List no: -----

1. Tv Channel

Geo News Duniya Tv Dawn News ARY News Express News Sama Tv Waqt News
PTV News

2. Starting time..... Ending time.....

3. Duration:

30:00 minutes 40:00 minutes 45:00 minutes 50:00 minutes

4. Program Title.....

5. Anchor person.....

6. Participants (Studio/Video conference) names:

1. 2. 3. 4.

On Telephone

1. 2. 3. 4.

7. Topic/ Issue/Issues

Electoral Process Party Manifesto Governance Transparency Restraints Threats (Any other)

8. Scope National Provincial Local

9. Constituency NA No..... PP No.....

10. Participants backgrounds

Party Rep (No:) Analysts (No:) Journalists (No:) Retired Armed Personnel(No:)

Retired/Serving Bureaucrats (No:) Legal Expert (No:) Independent Contestant (No:) Public(students urban rural) Others

(i) If students then institution

a. Public b. Private

(ii)Public Opinion

a. Yes b. No

(1) live (2) recorded

(i) No of respondents.....

(ii) The number of neutral respondents

(iii) The number of respondents having party affiliations

(iv)The proportion

a. Biased b. Balanced

11. Represented Parties

PPPP PML(N) ANP PTI MQM PML(Q) JI JUI(F) APML PML(F) NP BNP PMAP
PPP(SB) JSQM Others

12. Participation of Marginalized/ Vulnerable Groups

Women (no:) Religious Minorities(no:) Transgender(no:) Ethnic Minorities(no:) Other

13. No. of questions to each Participant 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

14. Time Dedicated to each Participant (percentage)

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

15. Method of Questions raised (a) Fair (b) Discriminative (c) Factual (d) speculated (e) Direct (f) Ambiguous (g) Biased Other

16. Basis of Bias or discrimination (a) Against a particular Candidate/Party name_____ (b) Religion_____ (c) Creed_____ (d) Gender_____ (e) Ethnicity_____ (f) Political affiliation/Ideology..... Other

17. Questioning Manner (a) Polite (b) Harsh (c) Emotional (d) Offensive (e) Neutral

18. Repeated Words/Terminologies/Variables (a)Democracy (b) Transparency (c) Economic crises (d) Energy crises/ Power outage (e) Rigging (f) Unemployment (g) Price hike (h) Army (i) America (j) Drone strikes (k) Taliban/ Banned religious outfits (l) FATA (m) Balochistan (n) KPK (o) Sindh (p) Punjab (q) Saraiki province (s) Judiciary (t) Agencies (u) Polling station (v) Security (x) Election commission (y) corruption (z) Peace, change Others

19. Deemed outcome of discourse

Information about (a) Parties (b) Candidates (c) Campaign issues (d) Voting process (e)
Electoral reforms (d) Incitement to violence/ hatred /intolerance/ Pubic disorder Other

Monitor's Name & Signature

Supervisor's Name & Signature

News Monitoring Tool

Annex: Electronic Media Monitoring

Society for Alternative media & Research (SAMAR)

Date: Monitor no: Form no:

Broadcast outlet/Channel:

News Bulletin/Program Title:

Time Start: Time End: Total Duration:

Headlines in order of presentation:

1. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Govt.Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

2. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

3. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

4. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

5. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

6. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

7. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

8. _____

Statement Press conference News Report

Supporting visuals: a.Video b.Pictures c.Documents

Org/Ind/Party/Inst/Official Other

Positive/negative: 1 2 3 4 5

Est Time:

Parties/Institutions Represented:

PPPP PML(N) PTI ANP JUI(F) MQM PML(Q) NP BNP(M) PML(F) PPP(SB) APML AML JI
JUI(N) others

ARMY JUDICIARY ELECTION COMMISSION CARE TAKER GOVT. Others

Social Issues Represented:

Gender Health Education Environment Unemployment Price hike Load shedding Others

Marginalized Groups Represented:

Women Religious minorities Ethnic minorities Transgender Others

Govt. Official's represented:

PM Governor CM Federal Minister Provincial Minister

Monitor's Name & Signature

Supervisor's Name & Signature

7. Nature of the Paid Advert/Content (Party wise):

Nature	Party Name/Names
Documentary style	
Video song	
Emotional	
Biased	
Neutral	
Comparative	

Monitors Name & Signature Supervisors Name &Signature

Annex II: ECP's Media Code of Conduct for Elections 2013.

Guideline 1 - Duty to Inform the Public: During the election period all media have a duty to ensure that the public are properly informed about relevant electoral matters such as political parties, candidates, campaign issues, and voting processes.

Guideline 2 - Duty of Balance and Impartiality: 2.1. Publicly owned media have a specific mandate requiring fairness and non-discrimination in their election reporting and not to discriminate against any political party or candidate. All media houses should also follow professional standards and strive for accuracy, balance and impartiality as far as possible.

2.2. News media will try to the best of its ability that news, current affairs, interviews, talk-shows, analyses and information programmes are not biased in favour of, or against, any party or candidate. In particular, media shall encourage journalism of the highest standards in their election coverage and shall

a) Try to the best of its ability to avoid all forms of rumour, speculation and disinformation, particularly when these concern specific political parties or candidates and where malicious intent is demonstrated,

b) Discourage all forms of hate speech that can be interpreted as incitement to violence or has the effect of promoting public disorder. 2.3 While it is not always possible to cover all candidates in an election, the media should strive to ensure that all candidates/parties shall be subject to journalistic scrutiny and appropriate media coverage according to its area of target audience.

Guideline 3 - Laws Restricting Freedom of Expression: Freedom of expression and the rights of journalists to report freely should be respected by all parties/ candidates and state authorities during the election. There should be provision of full access to information during the election period and afterwards.

Guideline 4 - Duty to Respect and Promote Tolerance: The media have a duty to respect and promote tolerance and avoid all forms of expression that might be interpreted as incitement to violence or hatred on the basis of religion, creed, gender, or ethnicity.

Guideline 5 - Duty to Punish Attacks against Media Personnel and Property: The authorities should make special efforts to investigate all acts of violence, intimidation or harassment directed against media personnel or the property or premises of a media outlet, and to bring those responsible to justice, particularly where the act was motivated by an intent to interfere with media freedom.

Guideline 6 - Limits on Prior Restraint: 6.1. There should be no prior censorship of any election coverage/programme. 6.2. All political parties and state institutions must issue a clear statement that the media will not be penalized for broadcasting/publishing programmes/Contents merely because they are critical of a certain party or a type of politics. 6.3. Neither the authorities nor media outlets should interfere with the broadcast of any election programme or election coverage unless there is a real danger or threat of imminent harm and violence.

Guideline 7 - Limits on Media Liability: The media shall not be held responsible legally for unlawful statements made by candidates or party representatives and broadcast during the course of election campaigns. This, however, will not apply to the repeat/recorded telecasts or publications.

Guideline 8 - Corrections and Replies: Any candidate/party which has been defamed or is a victim of gross misrepresentation or other illegal injury by broadcast of information should be entitled to a correction and where appropriate granted an opportunity to reply.

Guideline 9 - News Coverage: Fair and Balanced: 9.1 All media should also be careful to comply with any obligations of balance and impartiality that the law may place on them.

9.2 The duty of balance requires that parties/candidates receive news coverage commensurate with their relative importance in the election and the extent of their potential electoral support.

9.3 State and private media are urged to keep a clear distinction between, editorial/opinion, news and paid content. There will not be paid or sponsored news, election evaluation, analyses and editorial opinion.

9.4 All paid materials, media campaigns for elections paid by candidates or their supporters must be clearly shown as Paid advertisements/campaign/content and should be done in a transparent manner in accordance with the code of ethic for elections issued by the ECP.

Guideline 10 - Direct Access Programmes: 10.1. Publicly owned media should grant all political parties/candidates airtime and news space for direct access programmes on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. 10.2. Parties/candidates that represent minorities or special interest communities and groups and are formally registered should be granted access to some airtime and news space 10.3. State and Private media will make every effort to ensure that space/airtime should be allocated on a relative, proportionate basis, according to objective criteria indicating general levels of support for different parties. The registered parties that represent any section of people should normally receive some airtime. Airtime for Parties that have been banned or are operating under new names and are publicly engaged in violent acts or opposed to the democratic process and constitutional framework should be avoided. 10.4 Direct access programmes by the state media should be aired at times when the broadcasts are likely to reach the largest audiences. The duty of balance would be deemed to have been breached if the programmes of some parties/candidates are aired at less favorable times than those of others.

10.5 Direct access slots should be made available by the private media on equitable financial terms for all parties/candidates. State media should provide all parties/candidates a reasonable amount of time free of charge. 10.6 a party/candidates are to be allowed to purchase airtime/space for political advertisements they should have access to such time/space in a transparent manner in accordance with the Code of Ethics for political Parties.

Guideline 11 - Special Information Programmes and voter access: 11.1. During elections, the media should endeavor to provide special information programmes that provide an opportunity for members of the public to put questions directly to party leaders and candidates, and for candidates to debate with each other on policy matters and issues that are of great concern to the electorate.

11.2. Candidates standing for office should not, however, act as anchors or presenters during the election period. 11.3. Attempt to air special information programmes regarding policy matters and the issues of public importance should be aired during prime viewing or listening hours. 11.4 Broadcasters and publishers have greater editorial discretion in relation to such content than the news. But such discretion is subject to the general obligation of balance and impartiality.

Guideline 12 - Voter Education: 12.1. Publicly owned are obliged to broadcast voter education programmes, at least to the extent that this is not already sufficiently covered by other information initiatives. Other media should endeavor to also introduce such programmes as a matter of public service. 12.2. Voter education programmes must endeavor be accurate and impartial and must attempt effectively to inform voters about the voting process, including how, when and where to vote, to register to vote and to verify proper registration, the secrecy of the ballot (and thus safety from retaliation), the importance of voting, the functions of the offices that are under contention, and similar matters. 12.3. These programmes

should reach the greatest number of voters, including where most relevant, through programmes in regional languages and targeting groups traditionally excluded from the political process, such as women, the under-privileged, and religious and ethnic minorities.

Guideline 13 - Opinion Polls and Election Projections: 13.1 If a broadcaster/newspaper publishes the results of an opinion poll or election projection, they should strive to report the results fairly and in a proper context explaining the scope and limits of such polls that have their own peculiar limitations. 13.2 Opinion polls should be accompanied by information to assist viewers/listeners to understand the poll's significance, such as who conducted, commissioned and paid for the poll, the methodology used, the sample size, the margin of error, the fieldwork dates, and data used.

Guideline 14 - Announcement of Results: 14.1. Broadcasters will not air any final, formal and definite elections results without the consent and or they will be aired only with clear disclaimer that they are unofficial, incomplete and partial results which should not be taken as final results until election commission has announced final results.

Guideline 15 - Regulatory and Complaints Mechanisms: 15.1. The Election Commission of Pakistan will evolve a suitable mechanism for the implementation of Media Code of Ethics prepared by the representatives of various media organizations.

15.2 The Complain Committee will be headed by Add. DG (PR), ECP and will comprise of representatives from PBA, APNS, PCP, CPNE, PTV, PBC, PFUJ, SAFMA and SAWN.

Disclaimer

SAMAR in collaboration with FES has undertaken this Electronic Media Monitoring as a pilot project with very limited human resource and finance involved. Four monitor's watched assigned television channels and filled questionnaires separately designed for each assignment by SAMAR. There is, however, a possibility of human error affecting the overall accuracy of the data. The report aims to give a representative sample of the Pakistani electronic media but cannot be used as evidence in any court of law. This is an attempt to gauge the trends and dynamics of election campaign on state owned and private TV channels. All the content has been monitored with reference to the code of conduct for media (election 2013) issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan



Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR)

House # 67-B | Street # 43 | F-10/4 | Islamabad | Pakistan

Tel +92-51-221-0006 & 7

Email contact@alternativemedia.org.pk | Web www.alternativemedia.org.pk | Twitter: @atlermediapk