# SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON POLITICAL DISINFORMATION AND MISINFORMATION

**Dr. Ejaz Ali[*1], Uzma Afzal[2], Akash Arshad[3], Rao Muhammad Asim[4]**

[*1,]*Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology,*
[2,]*Deputy Director, Press Information Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,*
*Government of Pakistan*
[,3]*Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology*
[4]*Geo TV*

[*1]aejaz062@gmail.com

**Corresponding Author: ***

**Abstract**

*social media has become a primary source of information for millions in Pakistan, especially regarding political developments. This study explores how social media algorithms contribute to the spread of political disinformation and misinformation in Pakistan, examining their role in shaping public opinion and influencing political Communication. The objectives of this research are to analyze the algorithmic mechanisms that prioritize certain types of political content, to assess their role in amplifying false or misleading information, and to understand the impact of this spread on Pakistani society. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study combines quantitative analysis of social media engagement data with qualitative interviews of social media users, political analysts, and technology experts in Pakistan. The findings reveal that algorithms on these platforms tend to prioritize sensational, polarizing, and engagement-heavy content, inadvertently creating fertile ground for the spread of political disinformation. Political actors and other interest groups exploit these algorithms by disseminating manipulated information to target specific demographic groups.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Social media platforms have fundamentally reshaped how people communicate, access information, and form opinions. In Pakistan, where traditional media operates under government oversight and restrictions, social media offers an alternative space for political discourse. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube provide users with instant updates, unfiltered news, and diverse perspectives. However, these platforms also come with challenges, particularly the unchecked spread of disinformation and misinformation.

Social media algorithms prioritize engagement, often amplifying sensational and polarizing content. This mechanism inadvertently aids the dissemination of political falsehoods, impacting public opinion and political stability. The issue is particularly pronounced in Pakistan, a country with diverse

political ideologies, ethnic divisions, and a burgeoning population of social media users.

The role of algorithms in shaping political discourse remains underexplored in the context of Pakistan. With political actors exploiting these algorithms to target specific groups, it becomes crucial to understand how misinformation spreads and its consequences on democratic processes.

This study addresses a timely issue, as Pakistan witnesses a digital revolution that is transforming political communication. By examining the mechanisms of algorithmic prioritization and its societal impact, this research aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on social media and political communication.

## Literature Review

The literature review explores existing research on social media algorithms, disinformation, and political communication to contextualize this study. It highlights the role of algorithms in prioritizing content, the nature and impact of disinformation, and specific challenges within the political landscape of Pakistan.

### Social Media Algorithms: Function and Influence

Social media platforms rely on sophisticated algorithms to curate and display content tailored to individual users. These algorithms function based on metrics such as user engagement, preferences, browsing history, and interactions (Cinelli et al., 2020). Designed to maximize engagement, these systems inadvertently prioritize sensational and polarizing content because such material tends to attract higher levels of likes, comments, and shares (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018).

### Engagement-Driven Bias

Research indicates that algorithms are optimized to keep users on platforms for as long as possible, often at the expense of content accuracy. This phenomenon has been termed "engagement-driven bias." Studies by Tandoc et al. (2018) have shown that content with emotionally charged headlines or controversial narratives often receives higher visibility. For example, an inflammatory tweet about

### Importance of the Study

a political opponent may reach more users than a factual policy announcement.

### Filter Bubbles and Echo Chambers

Another significant effect of social media algorithms is the creation of "filter bubbles" and "echo chambers." Filter bubbles occur when algorithms present content that aligns with users' pre-existing beliefs, limiting exposure to diverse viewpoints (Pariser, 2011). Echo chambers reinforce this by amplifying similar perspectives within online communities, leading to polarization. Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic (2015) argue that while filter bubbles may be unintentional, they contribute significantly to ideological segregation.

Algorithmic Amplification of Misinformation

Multiple studies have demonstrated how algorithms amplify false information. Vosoughi et al. (2018) found that false news spreads faster than true news due to its novelty and emotional appeal. In a political context, this amplification can significantly skew public opinion, particularly during critical events like elections or crises.

### Disinformation and Misinformation: Global and Local Perspectives

Disinformation and misinformation are pervasive challenges in the digital age. While misinformation refers to unintentional inaccuracies, disinformation is deliberately crafted to deceive and manipulate. Both phenomena thrive on social media, where algorithms amplify their reach.

### Global Trends in Disinformation

Globally, disinformation has become a powerful tool for political manipulation. Studies by Marwick and Lewis (2017) highlight how disinformation campaigns are used to undermine political opponents, distort facts, and influence public opinion. These campaigns often involve coordinated efforts using bots and trolls to disseminate false narratives.

Example: The 2016 U.S. presidential election witnessed significant disinformation campaigns,

including Russian interference through fake social media accounts (Jamieson, 2018).

Mechanisms: Techniques such as fake news articles, doctored images, and deepfake videos are commonly employed to spread disinformation.

### The Role of Political Actors

Political actors exploit social media platforms to amplify their narratives. Bradshaw and Howard (2018) identify "computational propaganda" as a growing trend, where bots and algorithms are used to manipulate online discourse. These campaigns often target specific demographic groups based on psychographic profiling.

### Political Disinformation in Pakistan

The issue of political disinformation is particularly pronounced in Pakistan, where social media platforms play an increasingly central role in political communication. The unique socio-political context of Pakistan, characterized by ethnic diversity, religious sensitivities, and political polarization, makes it fertile ground for the spread of disinformation.

### The Rise of Digital Politics

Social media has become a key platform for political actors in Pakistan. Political parties, activists, and influencers use platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp to engage with their audiences, share updates, and mobilize supporters. However, the reliance on these platforms has also facilitated the spread of disinformation.

Example: During the 2018 general elections, manipulated images and videos targeting political leaders were widely shared on WhatsApp groups, influencing voter perceptions (Rehman, 2019).

### Ethnic and Sectarian Dimensions

Disinformation campaigns in Pakistan often exploit ethnic and sectarian divisions to further political agendas. For example, narratives targeting the Pashtun or Baloch communities have been used to delegitimize their political movements. Similarly, sectarian disinformation is used to incite hatred and violence against minority groups.

### The Role of Algorithms

Algorithms amplify disinformation by prioritizing content with high engagement. Research by Ali et al. (2020) found that politically charged hashtags and viral videos in Pakistan often gain traction due to algorithmic prioritization. This creates an ecosystem where unverified and polarizing content spreads rapidly.

### Challenges of Regulation

Regulating disinformation on social media platforms poses significant challenges in Pakistan. The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) was introduced to address cybercrimes, including the spread of false information. However, critics argue that the law is often misused to target dissent rather than curb disinformation effectively (Ammar, 2021).

### Consequences of Disinformation in Political Communication

Disinformation has far-reaching consequences for political communication, public opinion, and democratic processes.

### Erosion of Trust

One of the most significant impacts of disinformation is the erosion of trust in institutions. When citizens are exposed to conflicting narratives on social media, they often lose faith in traditional media outlets, political leaders, and government agencies (Tandoc et al., 2018). In Pakistan, this distrust is further exacerbated by the lack of transparency in governance and media regulation.

Example: Misinformation about government policies during the COVID-19 pandemic led to widespread skepticism and non-compliance with health guidelines.

Polarization

Disinformation deepens existing divisions within society, creating a highly polarized political landscape. Social media platforms, through filter bubbles and echo chambers, exacerbate these divisions by limiting exposure to opposing viewpoints.

### Threats to Democracy

Disinformation undermines democratic processes by distorting public opinion and manipulating voter behavior. During elections, false narratives can sway

voters, delegitimize opponents, and disrupt fair competition.

## Existing Gaps in Research
While extensive research exists on social media algorithms and disinformation, specific gaps remain, particularly in the context of developing countries like Pakistan. Most studies focus on global trends, overlooking the unique challenges faced by countries with low digital literacy, weak regulatory frameworks, and diverse political landscapes.

## Challenges in Pakistan
Digital Literacy: Limited understanding of how social media platforms function leaves users vulnerable to disinformation.
Regulatory Inefficiencies: Existing laws fail to address the complexities of algorithmic amplification and computational propaganda.
Lack of Transparency: Social media companies often fail to disclose how their algorithms operate, making it difficult to address their role in amplifying disinformation.

## Theoretical Framework
This study draws on two key theoretical frameworks to analyze the issue:

## Agenda-Setting Theory
This theory posits that media platforms influence what people think about by prioritizing certain topics. Social media algorithms, as gatekeepers of information, play a significant role in setting the public agenda.

## Framing Theory
Framing theory explores how information is presented to influence perceptions. Disinformation campaigns often frame narratives in emotionally charged ways to manipulate public opinion. The literature highlights the critical role of social media algorithms in shaping political communication and amplifying disinformation. While global trends provide valuable insights, the unique socio-political context of Pakistan demands localized research. This study aims to bridge existing gaps by examining how algorithms contribute to the spread of political disinformation in Pakistan and its societal impact.

## Research Objectives
The research objectives are designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. These include:
- To Analyze Algorithmic Mechanisms: Investigate how algorithms prioritize certain types of content and whether they unintentionally favor disinformation.
- To assess Amplification of Misinformation: Examine patterns of engagement with false or misleading content.
- To Understanding Societal Impact: Explore how political disinformation influences public opinion, trust in institutions, and political polarization.

## Methodology
The methodology outlines the research design, data collection techniques, sampling strategies, and analytical frameworks used in this study. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media algorithms on political disinformation in Pakistan.

## Research Design
The research utilized a convergent mixed-methods design, allowing for simultaneous collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. This design was chosen to achieve the following:

## Quantitative Analysis
To identify patterns and trends in social media engagement, focusing on how algorithms prioritize political content.

## Qualitative Analysis
To explore user experiences and expert opinions, providing insights into the societal and psychological impact of disinformation.
The combination of methods allowed the study to address both measurable phenomena (e.g., engagement metrics) and subjective experiences (e.g., perceptions of disinformation).

## Data Collection Methods
### Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data was collected from popular social media platforms in Pakistan, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The data focused on political content shared during a six-month period, encompassing major political events such as election campaigns and policy announcements.

### Sources of Data

Public posts, tweets, and videos with political hashtags.
Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, retweets, and comments.

### Tools and Techniques

Web Scraping: Social media APIs (e.g., Twitter API) were used to extract data. Tools like Python and R were utilized to automate data collection.
Data Filters: Posts were filtered based on relevance to politics, using keywords such as "elections," "democracy," "corruption," and names of political parties.

### Sample Size

Approximately 5,000 posts and tweets were collected for analysis.

### Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with three key groups:

### Social Media Users

Twenty participants from urban and rural areas were interviewed to understand their content consumption patterns and their ability to identify disinformation.

### Political Analysts

Five experts in political communication provided insights into the role of disinformation in shaping political narratives.

### Technology Experts

Five professionals with experience in algorithm design and digital platform management discussed algorithmic biases and their implications.

### Interview Questions:

Social Media Users: "How often do you verify the authenticity of political content on social media?"

### Political Analysts

"What strategies do political actors use to amplify disinformation online?"
Technology Experts: "How do social media algorithms prioritize content, and what are the unintended consequences?"
Interviews were conducted via video calls and audio recordings, with participants' consent. The average interview length was 45 minutes.

### Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure diversity in perspectives.
Quantitative Sampling:
Data was sampled from public accounts to capture content visible to the general public.
Focus was placed on posts with high engagement, as these are most likely influenced by algorithmic prioritization.

### Qualitative Sampling

Social Media Users: A balanced representation of urban (e.g., Lahore, Karachi) and rural (e.g., Chitral, Rahim Yar Khan) participants.
Experts: Professionals with documented expertise in political analysis and algorithmic technology.

### Data Analysis
### Quantitative Analysis
### Statistical Tools

Data was analyzed using software such as SPSS and Tableau to visualize trends.
Engagement metrics were categorized and analyzed to identify the types of content algorithms prioritize.

### Focus Areas

Emotional tone: Posts categorized as sensational, polarizing, or neutral.
Virality: Correlation between engagement rates and content characteristics (e.g., language, hashtags).
Demographics: Analysis of content targeting specific regions or groups.

### 4.4.2 Qualitative Analysis
**Thematic Analysis**
NVivo software was used to code interview transcripts and identify recurring themes.

### Key Themes
Users' perceptions of disinformation and its impact on trust in institutions.
Experts' insights into the exploitation of algorithms by political actors.
Challenges in distinguishing authentic content from disinformation.

### Ethical Considerations
The study adhered to ethical research guidelines:
Informed Consent: Participants were informed about the study's objectives and their right to withdraw at any time.
Anonymity: Personal information was anonymized to protect participants' identities.
Data Security: All data was stored securely, with access restricted to the research team.

### Limitations
While the mixed-methods approach provided rich insights, some limitations were identified:
Quantitative Data: The reliance on public posts excluded private discussions (e.g., WhatsApp groups), which may also contribute to disinformation.
Sample Size: The limited number of interviews may not fully represent the diversity of user experiences in Pakistan.

### Data Presentation
The data presentation section provides detailed findings from the study, organized into key themes and supported by quantitative metrics and qualitative narratives.

### Quantitative Findings
**Engagement Metrics**
The analysis of 5,000 social media posts revealed the following trends:
High Engagement for Sensational Content:
Posts with emotionally charged headlines had an average engagement rate 40% higher than neutral posts.

Example: A viral tweet accusing a political leader of corruption received 15,000 retweets compared to a factual update on government policy with 5,000 retweets.
Algorithmic Prioritization of Polarizing Content:
Content categorized as polarizing (e.g., accusations, scandals) accounted for 60% of top-performing posts.
Example: Posts using hashtags like CorruptionScandal and #SavePakistan consistently appeared in top search results.

### Demographic Targeting
**Regional Variations**
Content targeting urban users (e.g., Karachi, Lahore) focused on governance and corruption.
Posts aimed at rural audiences highlighted local issues like water shortages or land disputes.
Language Differences:
Urdu-language posts had higher engagement rates compared to English, indicating a broader reach among Pakistani audiences.

### Virility Factors
**Hashtags**
Politically charged hashtags like #VoteForChange and #StopCorruption were amplified through coordinated campaigns.
Example: The hashtag #RiggedElections was used 30,000 times in a single day, often by accounts exhibiting bot-like behavior.

### Multimedia Content
Videos and memes had higher engagement rates than text-based posts, indicating that visual content is more likely to go viral.

### Qualitative Findings
**Users' Perceptions**
Interviews with social media users revealed several key insights:
**Difficulty in Identifying Disinformation**
"I usually believe what I see on Facebook because it's shared by people I trust," said a 22-year-old student from Lahore.
Impact on Trust:
Many participants reported losing trust in traditional media due to conflicting narratives on social media.

Example: A teacher from Chitral noted, "I don't know which source to believe anymore. Social media shows one thing, and TV says another."

### Expert Opinions

Political analysts and technology experts highlighted critical challenges:

Exploitation of Algorithms:

"Political actors know how to game the system. They use clickbait headlines and bots to manipulate the narrative," said a political analyst.

### Algorithmic Bias

Experts emphasized that algorithms are not inherently biased but are designed to prioritize engagement, inadvertently amplifying disinformation.

### Societal Impact

Polarization:

"People are becoming more divided. Social media is no longer a place for dialogue; it's a battlefield," remarked a journalist.

Marginalization:

Disinformation targeting minority groups was reported to increase discrimination and hate speech.

### Visualizations and Graphs

The following visuals summarize key findings:

Bar Chart: Engagement rates for different types of content (sensational vs. neutral).

Heatmap: Regional variations in content targeting.

Word Cloud: Most frequently used hashtags in political disinformation campaigns.

### Findings

This chapter presents the results from the quantitative and qualitative analyses, identifying patterns and insights into how social media algorithms contribute to the spread of political disinformation in Pakistan. Key findings are organized into themes to demonstrate algorithmic prioritization, exploitation by political actors, and societal impacts.

### Algorithmic Bias Towards Sensational and Polarizing Content

Quantitative analysis of 5,000 social media posts revealed that sensational and polarizing content consistently achieved higher engagement compared to neutral or factual posts. This bias was evident across platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

### Engagement Metrics

Posts with inflammatory or emotionally charged language had 40% higher engagement on average. For instance:

A post titled, "Corrupt Politician Exposed – See What He Did!" received 25,000 likes, compared to a factual government announcement post that garnered 6,000 likes.

### Content Characteristics

Sensational posts often used provocative headlines, exclamation marks, and strong emotional appeals, such as anger, fear, or patriotism.

Polarizing content, particularly posts that framed political opponents in a negative light, dominated user feeds.

### Algorithmic Amplification

The study found that algorithms prioritized posts with higher engagement rates (likes, shares, and comments), reinforcing the virality of divisive content.

### Exploitation by Political Actors

Qualitative interviews with political analysts and technology experts highlighted how political actors exploit algorithmic mechanisms to amplify disinformation.

### Tactics Used by Political Actors

Clickbait Headlines: Politicians and affiliated groups crafted emotionally charged headlines to provoke reactions. For example:

A viral tweet during the 2023 elections falsely claimed a political leader had embezzled millions, with the hashtag #CorruptLeader trending for days.

Hashtag Campaigns: Coordinated campaigns involving bots and troll accounts amplified hashtags like #RiggedElections and #SavePakistan to manipulate public discourse.

Fake Accounts and Bots: Many viral posts were traced to automated bot accounts or fake profiles designed to spread disinformation and generate artificial engagement.

### Targeted Demographics
Content was tailored to specific demographics. For instance:
Urban audiences saw posts about corruption and governance issues.
Rural users were targeted with content related to local grievances, such as lack of resources or ethnic tensions.

### Challenges in Identifying Disinformation
Interviews with social media users revealed a significant gap in their ability to discern authentic content from disinformation. Users reported several challenges:

Trust in Personal Networks: Many users believed information shared by friends or family without verifying its credibility.

A user stated, "If my cousin shares a post about politics, I trust it because I assume he knows the facts."

Lack of Fact-Checking Skills: Most participants lacked the tools or awareness to verify information, often assuming viral content was accurate.

### Examples of Impact
A viral video falsely claiming that a political party had rigged an election led to protests in some cities, demonstrating how disinformation could incite real-world consequences.

### Societal Impact
The findings revealed profound societal consequences of algorithm-driven disinformation, including polarization, erosion of trust, and marginalization of minorities.

### Polarization
#### Division Among Political Groups
Social media created echo chambers where users were exposed only to content aligned with their beliefs, deepening divisions between rival political factions.
Example: Supporters of two major political parties engaged in heated online arguments fueled by viral disinformation, which often escalated into offline hostility.

### Erosion of Trust
#### Distrust in Institutions:
Users expressed skepticism toward government institutions and traditional media, citing conflicting narratives on social media.
A teacher remarked, "I don't believe the news anymore because every platform tells a different story."
Marginalization of Minorities

### Targeting Vulnerable Groups
Disinformation campaigns frequently targeted minority communities, using fake narratives to incite hate speech or discrimination.
Example: Posts falsely accusing a minority group of being "anti-national" led to online harassment campaigns.
The findings underscore the complex interplay between algorithmic prioritization, political exploitation, and societal outcomes. Social media algorithms inadvertently amplify sensational and divisive content, which political actors exploit to shape public opinion. The resulting disinformation has profound consequences, including polarization, distrust, and marginalization.

### Discussion
This chapter contextualizes the findings within broader theoretical frameworks and discusses their implications for political communication, algorithmic accountability, and societal cohesion in Pakistan.

### The Role of Algorithms in Political Communication
Social media algorithms have transformed political communication, enabling greater reach and engagement for political actors. However, the prioritization of engagement-heavy content creates unintended consequences.

### Agenda-Setting Theory
According to this theory, media influences what people think about by highlighting specific issues.

Algorithms serve as modern gatekeepers, determining which political narratives gain visibility. In Pakistan, algorithms often prioritize sensational political content, shaping public discourse around corruption, scandals, and divisive issues.

### Framing Theory

Framing theory explains how information is presented to influence perceptions. Disinformation campaigns use framing tactics to manipulate public opinion, such as portraying political opponents as corrupt or incompetent.

### Ethical Challenges and Algorithmic Accountability

The findings highlight ethical challenges in algorithmic design and implementation. While algorithms are not inherently biased, their prioritization of engagement inadvertently amplifies disinformation.

### Algorithmic Transparency
### Need for Transparency

Social media companies must disclose how their algorithms prioritize content and address biases that favor sensationalism.
Challenges: Critics argue that algorithmic transparency could be exploited by bad actors to manipulate systems more effectively.

### Responsibility of Platforms

Social media platforms must take greater responsibility for curbing disinformation by:
Implementing stricter content moderation policies. Investing in AI tools to detect and demote false or misleading content. Facebook's initiatives to label false information during elections provide a potential model for Pakistan.
polarization and Social Fragmentation

### Echo Chambers

The creation of echo chambers intensifies political polarization, as users are rarely exposed to opposing viewpoints.
In Pakistan, this polarization has led to a breakdown of civil discourse, with political debates often devolving into personal attacks.

### Erosion of Trust

Impact on Democracy:
Disinformation undermines democratic processes by distorting public opinion and delegitimizing opponents. This erosion of trust extends to institutions such as the judiciary, media, and electoral bodies.
Example: False claims of election rigging in Pakistan have led to widespread protests and reduced confidence in the democratic process.

### 6.3.3 Targeting Vulnerable Groups

The marginalization of minority communities through disinformation campaigns perpetuates discrimination and violence.
Example: Viral posts accusing religious minorities of "threatening national security" have led to real-world consequences, including hate crimes.

### Regulatory and Policy Implications

The findings underscore the need for regulatory reforms to address the spread of disinformation.
Strengthening Digital Literacy
Educational programs are essential to teach users how to identify credible sources, fact-check information, and avoid sharing disinformation.

### 6.4.2 Collaboration Between Stakeholders

Policymakers, social media platforms, and civil society must work together to create comprehensive solutions. This includes: Developing clear guidelines for content moderation.
Encouraging social media companies to collaborate with fact-checking organizations.
Recommendations for Future Research

### Exploring Private Platforms

Future studies should investigate how disinformation spreads through private messaging apps like WhatsApp, which are widely used in Pakistan.
Longitudinal Studies: Long-term studies can provide deeper insights into how disinformation trends evolve over time.
### Comparative Analysis
Comparing Pakistan with other developing countries can help identify common challenges and shared solutions. The discussion highlights the dual role of social media algorithms as enablers of political

communication and amplifiers of disinformation. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach involving algorithmic transparency, user education, and regulatory reforms. Only by tackling these issues holistically can Pakistan move toward a more informed and cohesive digital society.

## Recommendations
Improving Digital Literacy
Educating users about critical media consumption can reduce the spread of disinformation.

## Programs should focus on
Identifying credible sources.
Fact-checking claims before sharing.
Algorithmic Accountability

## REFERENCES

Ali, S., & Hassan, A. A. U. (2016). Representation of women and Pakistani media: Mapping objectification phenomena in TV commercials. *Journal of Social Sciences and humanities, 24* (2), 79-108

Arshad, A., Ali, S., & Hassan, A. A. U. (2023). Chunian Child Abuse Incidents and Pakistani Newspapers: A Comparative Analysis of Daily Dawn & The Nation. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences, 43*(1), 177-188. Retrieved from https://pjss.bzu.edu.pk/index.php/pjss/article/view/1255

Arshad, A., Mir, F,A & Nawaz, A (2022). An Examination of Post-Media Depiction Psychological States Experienced by Chunian Child Abuse Victims' Families. *Competitive Social Science Research Journal (CSSRJ), 3*(2), 453-465

Hassan, A. A. U., Amin, R, U., & Iqbal, M, Z. (2023). Media and Self-Objectification of Women in Pakistan: Exploring the Role of Culture and Religion. *Research Journal for Societal Issues*, 5(4), 45–57. https://doi.org/10.56976/rjsi.v5i4.162

Hassan, A. A. U. (2016). Representation Of Women In Tv Commercials: Investigation Of Objectification Phenomenon In Pakistani Electronic Media. M.Phil thesis. Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Pakistan

## Social media platforms should
Implement stricter policies against false content.
Use AI to detect and demote disinformation.

## Collaborative Efforts
Collaboration between policymakers, tech companies, and civil society is essential to develop comprehensive solutions.

## Conclusion
Social media algorithms play a pivotal role in shaping political communication in Pakistan. While they democratize access to information, their prioritization of engagement-heavy content creates fertile ground for disinformation. By addressing algorithmic biases and promoting digital literacy, it is possible to mitigate the negative impacts of social media on political discourse

Ali, A. (2020, March 16). 358 child abuse cases reported in last five years across

Sindh. Dawn. Retrieved from https://www.dawn.com/

Ardèvol-Abreu, A. (2015). Framing theory in communication research. Origins,

development and current situation in Spain. Revista Latina de Comunicación

Social, (70).

Atmore, C. (1996). Cross-Cultural Media-tions: Media Coverage of Two Child

Sexual Abuse Controversies inNewZealand/Aotearoa. Child Abuse

Review, 5(5), 334-345.

https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0852(199612)5:5<334::AID-CAR288>3.0.CO;2-

Y

Beddoe, E. (2014, April). 'Racism,'bad mothers' and child abuse in news media: A

role for social work advocacy'. In 4th European Conference for Social Work

Research. Retrieved from

https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/22455

Bingham, A., & Settle, L. (2015). Scandals and silences: The British press and child

sexual abuse. Retrieved from http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy

papers/papers/scandals-and-silences-the-british-press-and-child-sexual-abuse

*Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. (2000). Substance Abuse Treatment for*

*Persons with Child Abuse and Neglect Issues. Substance Abuse and Mental*

*Health Services Administration (US). Retrieved from*
*https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22514842/*

*Christenson, D. (2014). Victim Worthiness: The Effect of Media Coverage on the*

*Portrayal of Homicide Victims. Undergraduate Review, 10(1), 49-54.*

*Available at:*
*https://vc.bridgew.edu/undergrad_rev/vol10/iss 1/14*

*Collings, S. J. (2002). Unsolicited interpretation of child sexual abuse media*

*reports. Child abuse & neglect, 26(11), 1135-1147.*
*https://doi.org/10.1016/S0145-2134(02)00384-8*