



## **Ethics in Monitoring Wing for the Political Talk Shows through the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA)**

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### **Abstract**

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority is an autonomous institution, established during the period of “General Pervaiz Musharaf in 2002; constitutionally it was established for the development of electronic media in Pakistan. PEMRA is responsible for monitoring all kinds of electronic media including Radio, Television, Satellite and Landing Rights Channels, and all type of Television Programs, especially “Political Talk Shows”. It also has the authority to establish the mass media culture and to improve the standard of information, entertainment and education through the electronic media in Pakistan. “Monitoring Wing” is the department of PEMRA, and was established in 2007 for monitoring the Television Programs, including “Political Talk Shows”. PEMRA has a responsibility to maintain a code of ethics and in case of any violation or unethical content must be stopped on-air on the Television Screens. The objective of this study is to explore the current policies and practices applied in the monitoring wing for dealing with the violations of ethical values during the monitoring of “Political Talk Shows” in PEMRA. The researcher has



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selected the qualitative research methodology and for collecting the data to conduct in-depth interviews with the head of the monitoring wing and morning shift monitoring staff.” For analyzing the data, the researcher will use SPSS software in this research. Due to political interference, the “Monitoring Wing” is not enough to follow the guidelines given by the PEMRA to monitor “the Political Talk Shows”. For the recommendation, the PEMRA must launch training sessions for awareness of Monitoring Wing (staff) and anchor persons to follow the monitoring policies

**Keywords:** *PEMRA, Monitoring Wing, Code of Conduct, Freedom of Expression, Political Talk Shows and Violation*

## **Introduction**

Same as the whole world, the Electronic Media in Pakistan was also under the heavy control of the Government of Pakistan before 2002, it was (former president) the “General Pervaiz Musharaf” period so the Government of Pakistan decided to do new developments in electronic media in the country with the “ordinance 2002” for freedom of free flow information and also established a powerful institution for monitoring of on-air content and regulating of electronic media namely; “Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority”. The reason was that the government wants to give the more rights to freedom of expression, information and entertainment to people and also established mass media culture to the improve the standards of information, education, and entertainment for the country, it was a positive initiative for the nation of Pakistan. The PEMRA was established on March 1, 2002 through the ordinance of the Government of Pakistan as open media policy reforms and was fortified with strong regulatory powers. The objectives of this



institution are facilitating, regulating the private electronic media and launching new Television Channels in the country. After establishment of private television channels, PEMRA initially has start to monitor the content of these private channels but in 2007 PEMRA has established a permanent wing to regulate the private Television Channels, and to monitor Talk Shows, News, current affairs, FM Radio, online channels, satellite channels, and landing rights channels. According to PEMRA statistics, more than 120 Satellite Television Channels are working in Pakistan. The Licenses are granted by the PEMRA in different categories of news, current affairs, entertainment, education, food, cooking, sports and religious affairs with different languages like Urdu, English, Arabic, Sindhi, Pashto, Sareki etc. And it also granted the landing rights to the foreign channels like BBC, CNN, and Al-Jazeera Networks.

To monitoring of electronic media, radio channels and satellite channels is a part of the PEMRA. Mostly researchers have discussed the roles and regulation and code of conduct of the PEMRA, and authority/responsibility to the issuing the “licenses for establishing the new channels” but they forget to discussed the monitoring system, they also ignore to discuss the rule of department of monitoring wing, violations, complaints, issues of the news channel’s transmission, code of ethics and show cause notes to the news channels, and fines and stop the Political Talk shows to on-air on the television screens by PEMRA, and all type of fees and fines in PEMRA (Kemal (2002). In his research paper the researcher will discuss the research Gaps in detail Because the people may know that how PEMRA monitors the different programs, find out the violations and give the show cause note to TV channels and make a fine or stop the transmission of a channel and band an anchor person to continue his political talk show.



### **Monitoring Wing**

The Monitoring Wing in PEMRA is a strong part of the institution. The Monitoring of STV channels started in 2005 through a conventional initial monitoring set-up, after one year in 2006 a computerized recording and monitoring system was installed, and in 2010 a comprehensive and digitized software-based monitoring set-up was started to work for monitoring of news, talk shows and advertisements content on private satellite TV channels. Currently, the Monitoring Wing is working to monitor almost 120 Pakistani news channels, sports channels, and entertainment channels, 50 radio stations, 123 satellite channels, and 33 landing rights channels. The PEMRA also monitor political talk shows, morning shows, news bulletins, dramas, advertisements and other activities 7/24 hours a week, if the monitoring wing finds out any ethical violation in on-aired content, they take action against the violation to send a report immediately to operation department for further procedure, if operation wing finds any violation, send show-cause notes to the concern TV channel to explain reasons behind the violation in a specific time, Sometimes the department stopped the transmission of concern “Political Talk Show” and sometimes they charged only a reasonable fine. The monitoring wing has a responsibility to take action against violations in dramas, morning shows, political talk shows, fake news about the Judiciary, Pak Army, Government’s policies, and its officials in the content.

Electronic media is so powerful than a nuclear device which is why there should be a powerful monitoring system that monitors all kinds of electronic media including television channels, FM Radio, and landing right channels. The scope of social media and electronic media is larger than print media.



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The Constitution of Pakistan has granted a lot of powers to PEMRA for improving “the standard of information, education, and entertainment”.

Much of the research work has been done in the current area of the topic of “Pakistan Electronic Media Regularity Authority” and its role and powers in the media industry. The previous work was focused on the explanation of the monitoring system of the PEMRA but in this study, the researcher only will focus on the issues of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regularity Authority inside the “monitoring wing” department and its several operations to monitor “the Political Talk Shows” on-aired on the Private Television Channels, Satellite Channels and FM Radios and Landing Rights Channels. The Researcher has tried to find out the research gaps through a literature review of the Research Articles. “In previous research studies” there is no discussion available about the structure of the “monitoring wing” to the establishment as an Autonomous Body in Pakistan. One of the major gaps has founded in the previous studies is the lack of information available about the department of the “monitoring wing” in the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority.

The power was granted by the constitutional law of Pakistan to PEMRA in 2002. To maintain its power the PEMRA has the right to monitor all types of electronic media, FM Radios, and satellite channels. Here researcher will also discuss the monitoring system and its power to ban a “political talk show” from on-air the Television Screens, prepare a report against the program, recording system for all “political talk shows” and on-aired content, and technical verification system of Fake News and unethical content by the News Channels.

The question is that how did PEMRA start working in Pakistan? The answer is that, as you are already aware, during the period of General Pervaiz



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Musharraf, the PEMRA was started. The reason behind the being here of this institution, is due to the lack of news channels in Pakistan there was a huge demand in the society to have some new channels in Pakistan, and people want to apply for the licenses for new channels, Media want more freedom, there was no proper way to apply a license for the new channel, no proper institution was available for applying a license for a TV channel, at that time they have to go to Prime Minister to get permission for a license of news channel, then go to the interior ministry, PTA, and FEB, after completed of these requirements, they can start a news channel, to monitor the content, the standard of information, and entertainment in Pakistan and it was the PEMRA. Before this institution (PEMRA) there were violations but no monitored, people want to send a complaint but they don't know how and where they send a complaint against the violations? At that time in the ministry of information there was a department for the local level monitoring it was DEMP, but it was a small size of the department for monitoring. Currently, besides the PEMRA, there are a few departments that are monitoring the media content as their requirements, like ISPR which is also monitoring international media content, and PTA is also monitoring the content of social media.

During the PTI government, "Information Minister" Mr. Fawad Chaudhry has a suggestion to monitoring the social media through the PEMRA on a high level; he has a view that PEMRA should monitor the social media because it has already better experience in monitoring FM Radio, TV channels, satellite channels, and Cable Operators. Different agencies are also monitoring social media content for their own requirements, IBP and ISPR are monitoring social media, but only PTA is monitoring the social media in a proper way, so it's clear that social media is a big platform



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available in our hands, so we need to have a proper institution, hundreds of experts, and proper set-up for the monitoring of its contents, and I am sure that ISI also has a monitoring system to monitor the content because it is a no: 01 agency in the world.

For the new license application, how many institutions are involved? The license will apply in PEMRA while the PTA will provide the several approvals to the channel and Frequency Allocation Board (FAB) will provide signal frequency, for the order of the types of equipment from the foreign countries the interior ministry will provide the clearance certificate and APP and other News Agencies will provide the news and information to the news channels, in this process the Information Ministry also has a role for launching a channel.

Before the PEMRA the information ministry also has a department to monitor the news channels at a low level only for the political news (like the news about the PM, President, and different ministries) without checking the code of conduct. In the beginning stage the monitoring wing in PEMRA was a low-level set-up in the “F-8 sector, Islamabad”, there were only six staff members, a few Computers, Television sets, Receiver sets, and VCRs. For recording and saving its transmission record, there was a VCR and cassettes system available in this monitoring section, it was small size of a monitoring system to save three to six-month recordings only through the VCR recording shape. In 2010 PEMRA’s headquarter building in G-8 was completed for operation, so this monitoring department has shifted from the F-8 sector to the main headquarters building of PEMRA, at that time 2010 the new set-up of the monitoring wing has recorded a saving backup capacity of around 80 channels only but there were monitoring only 50 channels through primary set-up and secondary set-up both. Now a day



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in the monitoring wing totals 40 staff members are working as monitoring experts in three shifts with 8 hours per shift. At the massive level, Monitoring Wing PEMRA Head Quarter in Islamabad has the capacity to monitor around 250 channels, while at the regional or district level it also has a small capacity to monitor the radio stations.

PEMRA has two types of monitoring of content, one is listening content and the second is visual content, Radio content is not visual content but it's listening to content, it is very tough to monitor and understands according to the code of conduct. For monitoring Radio content we need more attention monitoring it as compared to visual content like satellite channels. For satellite television content we can watch with eyes, listen with ears, and can properly point out any violation, sometimes content "except speaking" can be available as a piece of background information, like a picture and written content, for example sometimes during the press conference we can see that a map of Pakistan available on the background but there is missing the map of Kashmir on background, it means there is something violation of code of conduct in map. So we can say that visual content is easier than listening content (Radio).

"Monitoring Wing" has three categories of licenses, like first is Radio licenses, the second is CTV (Cable Television) licenses, and the third one is STV (Satellite Television) licenses. These three categories of licenses can come to issue through the PEMRA. After getting these three categories of licenses a person can on-air a TV channel in Pakistan. And same as for a "web TV channel license can issue by the PTA, not by a PEMRA. Yes, a positive discussion is available between the officials on the issuance of licenses for social media and Web TV Channels, but there is no final decision available in the ministries in Islamabad the reality is that before the





establishment of PEMRA there was no format for a license is available for Web TV Channels in PTA and even not now.

### **Why did the Media start Accountability in Pakistan?**

In 2006 when “Muhtarma Benazir Bhutto” (shaheed) was killed in a bomb blasts incident at “Liaquat Bagh-Rawalpindi”, all Television channels have started live coverage of the incident’s bloodshed visuals for the audiences, in reaction to the public were become hyper, came out on the roads and started violation in the whole country after this incident PEMRA has built monitoring wing for the regulation of all news channels according to the rules of laws about the incidents live news coverage. Another argues that if the media does not monitor its content, does not go for self – accountability and doesn’t take care of its responsibilities, and continues pursuing its commercial interest, advocating media freedom without any accountability, this is a dangerous act for the society and too much-acclaimed media freedom might be sabotaged by external forces, so accountability and monitoring to the content both are better for media freedom in our society.

### **Mandate of PEMRA**

1. To bring the improvement in the standard of information, education, and entertainment.
2. To ensure accountability and good governance by optimization and transparency of the free flow of information in Pakistan.
3. To provide the facilitation and empowerment at the basic level to Media Houses by improving the Standard of information through Electronic Media in Pakistan.
4. To increase the choice available for the people in Pakistan through talk shows in Electronic Media in Pakistan.

### **Statement of Problem**



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The freedom of expression is a pivotal component of our individual development as human beings and “political animals” to improve and radicalize democracies. (Mendel & Salomon, 2011). Media Regulatory Authority has started its development hand in hand with guaranteeing, promoting, and protecting the freedom of expression. (Mendel & Salomon, 2011). For the research gap, there is no research available for monitoring the Television Channels, Satellite Channels, International News Channels, Cable networks, and FM Radios through the “monitoring wing”. The basic purpose of this research is to analyze the News Monitoring Standards for the Electronic Media by “Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority”. By analyzing the monitoring system of PEMRA, the paper will cover the regulatory authority and its impact on regulation policies for the news and current affairs. This research paper will present an exhaustive review of past studies of the monitoring system and at the end; it will also give suggestions for the future direction of Media Freedom in Pakistan.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the current policies and practices applied in the monitoring wing of PEMRA for monitoring “the talk shows” in Pakistan?
2. What are the effective criteria for dealing with the violations of ethical values in “talk shows” by the monitoring wing of PEMRA?

### **Objectives**

1. To explore the current policies and practices applied in the monitoring wing of PEMRA for monitoring “the talk shows” in Pakistan
2. To find out the effective criteria for dealing with the violations of ethical values in “talk shows” by the monitoring wing of PEMRA



## **Literature Review**

A large and growing body of literature has been investigated by Siraj (2009) in his research work about the Monitoring Wing in Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority; the researcher argues that PEMRA has the authority to ban any “Television Channel” on the basis of content that is not in line with Pakistani values and norms. He further says that the PEMRA has the authority to ban those channels that have involvement in portraying the vulgarity and content which was against Pakistani society. He is with the view that responsibility lies on the media channels to do not air such programs which are against Pakistani society. He further said that content related to the news and current affairs for those journalists should take responsibility on their shoulders and they should do the reporting and cover the events by following the normative structure of the Pakistani society.

Yousaf and Rehman (2014) in their study said that the responsibility for the designing programs for the Pakistani audience lies on the shoulders of producers who are planning the idea and shaping it in a way that has a direct and quick effect on the viewer’s mind, so they should design the content by following the norms and values of the Pakistani society. They are with the view that the same responsibility lies on the shoulders of reporters and anchors because the audience is much interested to listen in the news aired by the reports and the anchors and how they convey the news content to the public. Previous studies have primarily concentrated on the News Content by the researchers, that everyone who is working on the development of news content should keep accountable on individual notes also should follow the ethical guidelines set by the PEMRA. The responsibility that readers and viewers should also give their feedback as well in order to



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improve the quality of the news and entertainment content that is aired for them. They also said the audience should play an active role as they are the ones who can make the content quality better if they give proper positive feedback to the relevant media organizations as well as to the required institutions, who are responsible for monitoring the programs as per rules and regulation.

Abrar (2012) in his work says that in Pakistan the enforcement rate is very low and there is a need to increase this rate because with its implementation it is not possible to air better quality content on Pakistani television channels. He says that PEMRA is not able to work properly in an effective manner when it comes to dealing with Pakistani media outlets. It is maybe because of the lack of proper planning or the lack of training of monitoring staff that are not able to get the desired objectives in an effective manner. He is with the view that there is also a need to focus on the current media laws which are not effective and need to be improved with the help of technical experts who can share their feedback with the required decision-makers so that they can make changes in media laws and be able to implement these laws on the media outlets. He further gives stresses on the monitoring wing should contribute in an effective way by bringing the required changes with proper planning in an organized and effective way. There is a large volume of published studies describing by the Sohail (2012) that the development of PEMRA was on the idea taken by the British Media Outlet which was known as “Ofcom”, by following that the PEMRA was established in Pakistan in 2002. He says that both institutions have almost the same objectives but the only difference was geographical in nature, and both institutions have the same policy to monitor the programs (Political talk shows) of private media outlets. He says that PEMRA has not only the



responsibility to monitor the radio programs but they have to monitor the programs which are aired on the electronic media as well. He is of the view that it is important to keep an eye on the programs on-aired through satellite channels. PEMRA has a responsibility to monitor the programs with proper planning as these programs have a great impact on the audience who is viewing those programs by sitting in their homes and PEMRA should also boost its standard in terms of looking at the angle of ethical consideration of programs telecasted on the Pakistani media outlets.

Zia (2007) in his research work focused on the cable impact on the Pakistani audience and the role of PEMRA and how they monitor those programs (political talk shows) which are on-aired on Cable networks. He focused on the audience who were spending more time watching those political talk shows on Television Screens, the audience who were spending reasonable time, and the audience who were spending less time watching those political talk shows. He says that the introduction of cable technology has given choice to the audience to watch their desired political talk shows but the programs which are produced by the foreign media outlets may have a negative impact on the Pakistani society and there is a responsibility on the PEMRA that should monitor those political talk shows. He says that many of the channels came into a working model in the first decade of the 21st century and it has revolutionized the media in Pakistan. When these channels came into Pakistan there were no such policies that were in line with the conditions and normative structure of Pakistani society so with the passage of time need aroused in form of such institutions that should monitor those political talk shows on a regular basis. One of the most significant current discussions in the monitoring wing is a content analysis that PEMRA should focus on such content which is getting the audience



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attraction and should give emphasis on the media outlets that they should produce those programs locally as well so that audience should watch locally produced programs instead of paying attention to the foreign content which is totally different from the local culture of Pakistan.

Jahangir, Khan, and Husain (2011) in their work say that getting the information is the basic right of every citizen in Pakistan and they should have access to the latest information with the help of our institutions. They say that in a democratic country such policies should be designed which provide the support to the public in getting access to their required area of knowledge and it should empower the democratic system in Pakistani Society. They further say that the responsibility lies on the government and policymakers and that they should develop such mechanism and system that the public should be informed via media in a way that norms and values should be followed. They say that often hurdle comes from the policies in the media system which are made by the government officials who do not have enough experience to design that, it should be done by those group of people who have proper knowledge and experience about the required area in which they are designing and making strategies and getting implemented through law. There are articles that enable the viewer to know more about their required area. They conclude that PEMRA is not totally independent.

Liaquat, Sadaf, Qaisrani, Ayesha, Khokhar, and Noel (2016) concluded that in Pakistan “as per law” the freedom of expression is allowed to every citizen and it has been given a lot of importance in the Pakistani society. They say that though it is allowed by the law to practice on the media screens this practice is getting violated by many of the private media houses who are airing programs on their daily live programs. They say that institutions like PEMRA should monitor those programs and should take



actions that do not encourage such practices followed by the private media houses. They say that freedom of expression does not mean that to do not obeying the cultural values and the religious teachings in the society but it means that it should be done by staying within the limits of the Pakistani society. The ethical line should be followed more rather than not following that line. They say that an example should be set by the media organizations as well as the PEMRA itself that they give a role model in the society for one another so that both institutions should learn from one another with a positive intention.

There have been several studies in the literature reporting on the marketing industry by “Saeed (2013)”, due to the growth of the media industry, the marketing industry and ad industry were made rapidly development introduction in our society, and it is important to consider the ethical element while designing and making the ads it is important to follow the ethics on the higher side because on the basis of the ethical values society become aware with the traditional past cultural values and they learn more about the past in a positive way. He says that these ethical values are not only followed by our local media houses separately but this practice is done by the global media as well and they give a lot of importance and serious consideration to the ethical values in their society. He is with the view that ads have some certain message with hidden agenda and it is made for a targeted audience to mobilize them in the desired direction so it is important that a clear line should be drawn which should not affect the ethical values of our Pakistani society. He concludes with the argument that there should be a fixed monitoring standard that needs to be practiced by the ad developers who are designing the campaign with whatever their motive.



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Meyar (2011) defines the role of a Journalist in our society that a Journalist is one of those, who follow the ethical guideline by his own self not communicated by the senior to him that basic line that needed to be followed. He says that actually, this is the time when there are open forums like social media, where everyone has the opportunity to share the news story. He gives emphasis on the individual ones to do it with the responsibility. The Media is viewed by the audience as different in nature so it is important to follow the ethical guideline. He says that Western countries do follow ethical guidelines and many organizations do follow ethical values. He is with the view that there should be such laws that give protection to the journalist and the viewer if they acquire legal help. The Researcher has concluded that the media organization should give more importance to ethical values and guidelines and also the reporters should follow those set patterns in a practical fashion.

There is a large volume of published studies by “Eijaz, Rahman, Ahmad, and Butt (2014)” describing that the Media is the place where the audience has the option to know more about their political leaders and they can make up their mind about their policies and future plans in the country after getting the authority or control over the position of decision making. They argue that it is important to inform the audience and citizens on equal terms so that they should know more about the development and progress about the set task or project. In this way media is bridging the gap among the public and the government in a positive way but it is important for the media that it should present a true picture that is based on the real setting or actual occurrence of incidents. They say that it is important to follow the ethical guidelines because without doing that this important element will totally ignored. They are with the view that normative structure in the society has





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a lot of importance in any country so the media should also follow that. They conclude that the education level of the general public should be increased then they should be molded in the direction more easily.

### **Authoritarian Theory**

“Authoritarian Theory” has developed by “Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, Adorno, and Wilber Schramm” in 1960. Authoritarianism is characterized by highly concentrated and centralized government power maintained by political repression and the exclusion of potential challengers. It uses political parties and mass organizations to mobilize people around the goals of the regime. Broadly defined, authoritarian states include countries that lack civil liberties such as freedom of religion, or countries in which the government and the opposition do not alternate in power at least once following free elections.

Media is always controlled by a “Sitting Government” through repressive laws, official secret acts, National Security Acts, proscription, contents, heavy taxation, and the influence on Media Houses. Reasons behind the Control of Mass Media, Private Media, and National Media are working to protect the interest of the Government in powered in the country. Sitting Government is not allowed to publish or on-air anything that is under censorship. The Media Houses that don’t obey the rules and regulations are subject to punishment such as fines or imprisonment or ban to the news channel or program. For example; a sitting government that is more concerned with having people obeys laws than with people having some freedom is an example of an authoritarian government.

So according to this theory, the sitting Government have the right to monitor the electronic media, print media, radio stations, satellite channels, advertisements, cable network, and other community based channels.



## **Methodology**

This study is based on the “Qualitative Methodology”; The Researcher has conducted this research for the monitoring of Political talk shows on-aired during the peak time of 04:00 PM to 11:00 PM during the period of Jan-01-2022 to 31-Mar-2022. Data was collected through in-depth interviews from 10 senior staff members who were part of the Monitoring wing of PEMRA during the mentioned period. The interviews were recorded using an electronic device. The data was later categorized according to the repeated themes and codes. In the monitoring wing of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, there are several types of the monitoring activities operating for the monitoring of current affairs, Political Talk Shows, breaking news, morning shows, entertainment like dramas, cultural shows, sports, and other paid content like advertisements and social message, etc, but the researcher has only focused on “Political Talk Shows” during the prime time at evening from 04:00 PM to 11:00 PM.

## **Data Collection Tools**

Primary information was collected by ten (10) In-depth Interviews from the senior staff member of the monitoring wing (department) in PEMRA and secondary information was collected from the PEMRA’s official website, Journals, Newspapers, and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the research articles related to this topic available on Google Scholar.

## **Data Analysis and Discussion**

The major reason behind the establishment of the monitoring wing; is actually that in 2002 the Pemra was established after that the licensing for new channels was started, for that we started the monitoring wing to check the code of conduct followed by the channels.

## **Discussion and Analysis**



### **The total capacity of the Monitoring Wing**

Monitoring wing has a capacity to monitor a total: of 250 channels, and save their data/content in the record, while today the wing is monitoring around 120 TV channels, and it has the total capacity to monitor around 50 FM Radio Stations while currently, the wing is monitoring total 20 FM Radio Station. For the “political talk shows”, Monitoring Wing has the policy to monitor the talk shows and check their content with a code of ethics followed by the anchor persons and TV channels. And now the wing is focusing to monitor that nothing should be available in content during the on-aired of “political talk shows” against Judicially, Arm Forces, no discussion should be available against the government or its policies, against friendly countries, and no use rough languages against social acceptable norms, and no fight allowed during the live programs. Monitoring Wing is tried to monitor programs according to its code of conduct.

### **Violations**

Senior management provided the code of conduct to its monitoring staff in both languages Urdu and English; and advised them to follow the code of conduct during monitoring of political talk shows, in case any violation is found staff must refer its violation clip to the operation department for the further actions. As the operation department received this clip, watch, observe and decide to take action against the violation. Do they also decide whether (this violation) should be punishable or not? They also have a right to give the showcase notice or charge a reasonable fine, stop on-air the program or close the TV Channel as well; they will decide that the TV channel must say sorry life in front of the audience. (During interview time the respondent was not sure to share the exact fine amount but the PEMRA



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can charge as a fine million of rupees to the TV channel against its violation)S. On a daily basis the monitoring wing shares around 150 clips with the operation department for further investigation. In reply to a question by the researcher, the respondent answered, that during the monitoring of political talk shows if the wing found any violation by the anchor person, immediate basis the wing informs to operation department through the message on what's app group or make a call to operation wing for further procedures.

### **Show cause notes**

When the monitoring wing points out any violation on the TV Channels and the operation department issues show-cause notes to the concerned TV Channel, at the first impression the channel has refused to accept this violation and starts to do blame PEMRA, so all these matters are dealt through the legal department, this department will decide to take action or refer it to the council of complaints (council of complaints is a body of experts/senior journalists of media field, which are not a part of PEMRA, they are a separate council). On a daily basis wing shared around 150 violation slips with the operation wing for further action. Delay mechanism. The delay mechanism is a 30-second delay to on-air content and this refers to personal TV channels, not to the monitoring wing. Currently, the monitoring wing is monitoring all types of the television channels including news channels, entertainment channels, health channels, education channels, science and technology channels, sports channels, cooking and food channels, landing rights channels (overseas channels that are on-aired in Pakistan according to their own policies they get the permission from PEMRA for landing in Pakistan, like CNN, Al-Jazeera TV).



## **Complaints**

The monitoring wing has several complaints systems in all provisional offices including “head office in Islamabad” provisional offices like complaints center in PEMRA office in Karachi Sindh, complaints center in Peshawar- KPK, and complaints in Quetta Baluchistan, complaints center in Lahore Punjab office, secondly wing has toll free numbers, email IDs, call center and another source of contact for the submission of a complaint as a written application in PEMRA. If someone has a complaint against the content of a Political Talk Show, Drama, Commercial, News, cable operators, or any other area of content he can make a call, or send an email, the wing forward this complaint to the concerned regional office. On daily basis, the monitoring wing received around 15 to 20 complaints but these complaints were only about the events/functions. Most complaints are about the content aired by the TV Channel. As the department received these complaints send it to its regional offices for further proceeding. Sometimes a person makes a complaint about the female anchors should wear a hijab on the TV Channels, so can you please explain whether you will accept it as a complaint or not? Same as a person asking five times azan on the TV Channels, these complaints should be accepted or rejected.

In the replay, the respondent share his suggestions about the improvement in Monitoring Wing that in my observation currently monitoring wing is performing very well, but I will suggest making our monitoring staff more trained relay able because in the future the monitoring wing will receive a heavy content from the Television Channels to monitor in Pakistan.

## **Conclusion**

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) is an autonomous institution and regulator for the broadcasting of electronic



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media in Pakistan. PEMRA has the authority to issue the license of a Television Channel, Radio Station, Cable operators, Satellite Television Channels, Wireless TV Channels, Mobile TV Channel, or Digital TV Channel, and also has the power to fine them in case of any violation found. Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority is responsible to maintain the quality and standard of information and entertainment, for this purpose a monitoring wing department in PEMRA is operating to monitor the “Political Talk Shows” of “Private News Channels”. For addressing the party’s opinion the guests are invited by the “Anchor Person” to participate in a “Political Talk Show”, during their conversation sometimes guests use rough/vulgar language, show the aggression behavior, and speak loudly to present their point of view and violates the code of ethics. The monitoring wing in “PEMRA” has a responsibility to monitor the violation and maintain the code of conduct.

### **Recommendations**

The Training workshops and refreshment courses are advised to pervade the whole staff of the monitoring wing, Journalists, and media workers at all levels of the electronic media in Pakistan. There should launch a campaign for awareness of the monitoring policies and self-regulatory activities, especially with owners of Media Houses, Anchor persons, Reporters, and correspondents to become more responsible for performing their duties. Financial advantages for Media Houses and the legal expenses in a non-costly self-regulating Mechanism would be major attention to media ownership.

### **Limitations of the research**

This research is limited to analyzing the monitoring wing department’s activities and is structured by Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory



Authority (PEMRA) to private Television Channels, Radio Stations, and Satellite Channels in the country. The researcher has only focused to discuss the issues which are related to “Political Talk Shows” on-air on Private Television Channels during the three months only dated from 01/01/2022 to 31/03/2022. Another limitation of this research is that researcher has not included the entertainment, educational, and sports programs of electronic media that are on-aired on Pakistani Television Channels.

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