

## **Framing of Political Emotional Messages on Twitter: Case Study of Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on 1) how Twitter as a platform was utilized by a political party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to evoke emotions of hatred against the military establishment in Pakistan and emotions of love and enthusiasm around the personality of the former Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, 2) how emotions of hatred and love from informed social media users who were exposed to the narrative of that specific political party, were exploited by the PTI on 9th May 2023 when Imran Khan was arrested to mobilize them for protests. The research will analyse the framing of messages by PTI on Twitter to evoke these emotions which lead to public mobilization.

Brader (2020) found in his first-ever scientific study on the role of emotional appeals on voters' decision-making, that politicians set out to campaign for the hearts and minds of the voters arguing that the minds are won through hearts. He also reveals that informed citizens can be more easily motivated through emotional appeals. Albertson, Dun, and Gadarian (2020) believe that political persuasion relies on emotions. Emotions grab people's attention and can be a starting point for changing minds. Studies reveal that emotions like anger, shame, and enthusiasm all influence the decision to participate in politics and can motivate people to vote, and emotions of hatred influence violence. Academics like Calderón-Monge (2017) have argued through findings of their research that politicians use media to publish stories to generate emotions among people. Print and broadcast media was one way communication where

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political advertisements were used to evoke emotions in potential voters. Social media has changed the conventional patterns of communication and political parties are utilizing social media platforms for political campaigns. Authors including Tan et al. (2013) have argued about the role of Twitter in social movements, political mobilizations, and microtargeting of potential voters.

By selecting random Tweets from the official Twitter account of PTI, official Twitter handles of PTI leadership including Imran Khan on the time periods of 1) one month after the ousting of Imran Khan, 2) one month before and on the 9 May incident). A total of 200 Tweets will be analyzed to explore the strategic use of Twitter to evoke emotions of love and hatred among social media users in Pakistan which resulted in mobilizing protesters to burn multiple military and public installations, raid houses of military personnel, and creating a huge law and order concern in Pakistan. This research will carry out a qualitative content analysis to dig out elements of emotional persuasion.

### **Keywords**

Political communication, Twitter, Framing theory, persuasion, emotional mobilization

### **Bio**

Mrs. Naheed is a Ph.D. research scholar at UWS, political analyst, and Youtuber, and working in electronic media as a reporter and producer for the last fifteen years. Has also taught Media and Politics at NDU and News, Journalism, and Strategic Communication at the University of Strathclyde. Working as a research assistant for Festivals Connect, a research project at UWS, teaching Applied Research Methodology in Social Sciences at UWS, supervising postgraduate media projects at the University of Glasgow, supervising postgraduate research dissertations at the University of Strathclyde.