Social Media and Political Polarization in Pakistan: A Case Study of Pakistani Youth

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Abstract:
Globally, political polarization is rising, and Pakistan is experiencing a significant increase in this phenomenon. Today’s political elites, elected politicians, and common people are all divided. Due to the differences in political viewpoints, beliefs, and attitudes under the immense influence of social media, Pakistan’s youth are today politically polarized. The public has shifted away from more even-handed political programming to more adversarial and one-sided broadcasts and articles as a result of the contemporary, fragmented, high-choice environment in the social media. These shows frequently draw partisan viewers who use the polarized programming as a form of ideological confirmation. The study emphasizes the function and significance of social media algorithms, which are crucial in updating users’ news feeds and delivering content in line with their search habits. The study concludes with the formulation of effective countermeasures and detailed plans on how to counter this growing threat by employing different methods instead of traditional and conventional methods, which typically divide the public and the government functionaries. Initial findings suggest the rise in polarization among youth is linked with the extensive use of social media platforms.

Keywords:
Social Media, Political Polarization, Echo Chambers.

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Introduction:

To begin with, first we have to define what is polarization? Polarization is a process that results in a distinctive pattern of interpretations and political preferences held within a population. Polarization happens when there are more different groups within a society—such as religious or ethnic groupings, political factions, the majority and minority—or between societies—hold disjointed opinions on a certain contentious issue. Polarization typically precedes the intensification of conflict.

Since the end of the Cold War and the rise of the digital world, came in a new era where humanity interconnected with each other instantaneously resulted in what the international community calls the “Global Village” (Rascao & Jamil, 2020). This era of globalization and corporate growth further expanded the idea of privatization, uncontrolled technological development resulted in the evolution of social media technologies and the digital world (Pansera & Fressoli, 2021). Then came the 9/11, information warfare became the key element in almost every nation that had the capability of strong military projection. The United States via information warfare and spin doctors made excuses for their invasion in Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan in 2001. The early 2000’s saw the rise of information warfare, a kind of warfare which was adopted by every major power in the world, further adopted by private corporate players and later on by various political outfits, unions, associations both large and small. The existence of information warfare, disinformation campaigns and hate speech in our daily lives resulted in a complete digital disarray, where the current and the future generation is more confused and divided like never before (Littell, 2022). This era is what many experts call the Post-Truth era where individuals confused and doubtful about every new information have now resorted to reinforcing their preexisting ideals and beliefs, these individuals have solidified their echo chambers where new external information is prohibited and the idea of changing someone’s belief and views results in rejection which further causes polarization between people especially youngsters.

Pakistan used this opportunity and manipulated the public in allowing United States to station military assets within Pakistan (Azad, 2020). The policies adopted by nations during the digital age of the 21st century especially by major powers introduced an element which has now become a major threat to the current world order and that is “Polarization”. The ability for global citizens to use medium such as the social media can share opinions without any significant restrictions (Arshad & Khurram, 2020). Different viewpoints and opinions other than the ruling government has now divided society (Achmad, 2021). For Example, in Pakistan we now see a nation in the era of Post-9/11 and Post Truth period polarized where division is present between citizens of various beliefs and even the ruling class. Division between institutions, political outfits and bureaucrats. Differences exist in even most stable of nations yet the kind of divisions that we are currently witnessing is far from normal and is in a literal sense dangerous (Eriksen, 2020). To put it in simple terms, A nation with the 5th largest population, a nuclear weapons state having the ability to attack from land, air and sea and a
nation with one of the leading and one of the largest militaries is now polarized in almost every sphere will definitely raise a lot of eye brows.

Social Media has played a key role in influencing its users in various ways whether its for corporate, political or religious interest but to what extent social media plays a role in generating political polarization among the youth especially in Pakistan? This can be explained to some extent with key events including the August 2021 Minar-e-Pakistan rape case, 2021 Afghanistan Crises, Afghan Refugee crisis etc, all these specific events were trending topics in social media where Pakistani users argued over facts and issues related to those events. The difference of opinion and information also likely generated a polarized youth especially when these key events were exploited by various political forces including both in ruling and opposition (Deinla et al., 2022). Even though social media can be identified as a significant factor to political polarization among the youth of Pakistan mainly due to the ease of access to information and content via social media and the ability to connect and view content suitable with the user’s belief and ideologies. Social media provides users the ability to view selective content and the nature of social media to some extent encourages sensationalism and spread of misinformation which results in further polarization of the youth. It’s important to note that while social media can be seen as a contributing factor to political polarization, especially amongst the youth. Yet we can’t fully determine the extent of role of the social media in political polarization, this thesis study will help us see whether social media has a significant role in political polarization amongst the youth of Pakistan. Even though other factors also play a major role in generating political polarization in the past but this study will help us see if social media is the most influential one from all the other mediums. It is essential to conduct this research in order to investigate the extent of social media impact on political polarization, understanding the mechanism and factors, studies related to this topic are not extensive therefore it is necessary that this particular thesis study an act as an introductory related to more detailed studies that will be conducted in the near future.

Since the introduction of social media as a communication and information gathering medium in the 21st century, it raised a lot of concerns about the impact of such medium on the youth around the globe including the youth of Pakistan. Pakistan as a nation has a very young population where an article posted back in 2018 by UNDP indicated how Pakistan’s 64% of the population is younger than 30 years whereas about 29% of the population is between 15-29, With the rapid expansion of social media platforms in Pakistan especially during the 2010’s timeline with the introduction of smartphone technology and introduction of economical network packages to the citizens of the country, Social Media has become a powerful tool for the Pakistani public for sharing information, connecting with people and influencing the public. These developments have also resulted in some drawbacks particularly an increase in political polarization especially among the youth of Pakistan, developments in social media technologies allowed individuals of our country to filter out content according to their likes and dislikes, viewing content that reinforces their ideals and blocking content that might challenge their beliefs, this results in the creation of “echo chambers”. Social Media in current day and age has become a primary source of information especially for the young people of Pakistan. Social Media acts as a powerful tool not just as standard communication system but also having the ability to play a certain role in influencing the public opinion in various political events of the
21st century. Social Media has also currently created “echo chambers” and “filter bubbles” that act as limitations in blocking diverse content and opinions which further creates less tolerance towards difference of opinion. As mentioned earlier the extent of social media’s influence on the youth of Pakistan remains unclear, it is crucial to understand how social media is influencing political beliefs and views among the younger generation of Pakistan and to determine the extent of its impact on political polarization. It is important to understand how social media plays a role in political polarization and the purpose of this particular thesis is to explore the effects of social media on political polarization among the youth of Pakistan by analyzing the relationship between social media usage, political engagement and polarization. The findings of this thesis study will give us an idea into the role of social media in political polarization and can give us views and insights into the role of social media in creating an effect on political polarization. There’s no extensive research done related to issues such as effects of social media on political polarization among Pakistani youth. The current age of anarchy that our nation is facing will likely have long terms effects, particularly because of the existence and widespread usage of social media platforms. In order to mitigate the long-term negative impacts, it is essential to understand the extent of the social media influence when it comes to polarization and understanding its mechanism which can resulting in the creation of precautionary measures and robust solutions to counter this developing threat. This particular thesis study is essential in creating a general situational awareness about this current development and can contribute to other articles and researches.

**Literature Review:**

Social Media is currently playing a key role in our daily lives when it comes to absorbing content both for informational and entertainment purposes. The impact of social media on our daily lives and particularly the youth has been studied by researches to determine the extent of social media when it comes polarizing the society (Ferguson, 2021). The main purpose of this literature review is to explore and determine the impact of social media on political polarization of the youth of Pakistan. Social Media as a medium has considerable amount of influence on the various aspects of our lives and to some extent this also include political polarization (Vrontis et al., 2022). Social Media has also made significant impact on the political participation among the younger generation of Pakistan, Social Media platforms have allowed user to voice their opinions and views giving them the ability to be part of the factors that are responsible for evolving the political landscape of Pakistan. To understand the topic of the thesis study we first need to identify the term “Political Polarization” which can be defined as the increasing division between individuals and groups over various issues such as differences in political views, ideologies etc. The youth of Pakistan are a crucial element in the overall population of Pakistan as the country is still having a relatively young population and one of the largest populations of the world and youngest, analyzing and understanding the influence of social media on the youth will help us determine the current and near future political trend, developments and landscape of the country and finally this study will help visualize the extent of social media in creating an effect on political polarization of the youth, providing us with possible future scenarios and likely course of actions and counter measures to avoid further political polarization. According to a study the controversial 2013 elections in Pakistan and the follow up of mass protest by PTI supporters resulted in a scenario where both traditional and social
media saw the rise of polarized youth with differences in political viewpoints and beliefs as it was stated in the same research that, “During whole movement against electoral rigging, media role had become very interesting. During the movement, Imran Khan came into direct confrontation with chief editor and owner of Geo TV & daily Jang group, Mir Shakeel-ur-Rahman. During all this, PTI found support from ARY TV that emerged as an opponent and competitor of Geo TV”. This study intends to demarcate the level of media partisanship and its impact on viewers.” A study by Indian researchers discussed how the 2019 Pulwama incidents triggered a wave of trends especially on twitter related to various campaigns and politically motivated content related to incident where both Pro-Pakistani users and Pro-Indian users linked with government and political organizations sharing unconfirmed information further creating a polarized social media user. The study found that social media played a significant role in polarizing the youth of both Pakistan and India where the study found that social media has generated echo chambers where users are exposed only to information and views that support the user’s own views, beliefs and opinions. Such echo chambers act as reinforcement of their existing ideologies and beliefs. Further studies show that both Political Polarization of youth and “Selective Exposure” concept have a link as social media users actively engage in seeking out information that are compatible with their beliefs and ideologies. The Social Media technology has allowed Pakistani youth to actively to have greater control over the information that they can extract from the internet (Khan et al., 2021). This further results in a scenario where a user with specific sets of beliefs and ideologies will likely block or avoid content that might challenge his thinking and concepts. Such developments will further lead into the reinforcement of existing beliefs and political views which will further result into the generation of Political Polarization among the youth of Pakistan (Zeebaree et al., 2020). In study related to 2013 elections conducted by members of the Government College Women University, Sialkot concluded with the statement that, “It is concluded that university students of Gujrat district, have become politically active and choosy in their selection of media according to their political preferences. During electoral rigging issue, selective exposure as well as diverse exposure was observed. Mostly, audiences watch both news channels for getting information about electoral rigging. However, this study provides considerable evidence for effect of partisan media in strengthening preexisting attitudes and beliefs of audience (Froehlich, 2020). Heavy viewers of GEO TV, were found more inclined towards PML-N. On the other side, heavy viewers of ARY TV were found more inclined towards PTI. During electoral rigging issue in Pakistan, media partisanship has too much increased and respondents preferred that media which supports their beliefs and predisposition. One of the other reasons as to why social media is playing a key role in Political polarization of the youth is mainly how the existence of political developments on social media has attracted the attention the major segment of social media that includes the youth, Youth which actively engages in all sorts of activities in social media is now also engaging in political developments via social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook and to some extent Instagram. A study conducted by experts on the Indonesian and Pakistani Youth and their participation in political activities via social media stated “The results show that social media is a persuasive medium in providing platform to youth to participate in political activism. Youth healthy engagement in such activities plays a significant role in the political structure of states. furt The social media presence may strengthen or weaken the
political values in society. It encourages the freedom of expression among the public to participate in any form of action to the state. Thus, the present situation in both countries primarily has addressed the importance of social media. Thus, the youth is freely participating and involving their peer groups as a part of their events. A study found that social media provides opportunities to citizens can make decisions based on their choices, needs and participate through the Internet and social media. There is a hope that citizens will be able to increase their involvement and achieve their own goals better.” It is also to be noted that the influence of social media on youth and its effect on political polarization is also because of the wide usage of social media platforms especially Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and to some extent Instagram where users communicate and coordinate for various activities and acquire information. A study conducted by organization Pakistan Social Sciences Review members stated, “The impact of social media and the web is 'gradual, relevant, and intensifying' for gathering political improvements in Pakistan. According to Facebook insights of 2013, this information demonstrated that the Facebook clients in Pakistan are achieving 8,055,680. This digit circulated in 70% male clients and 30% female clients in Pakistan and information likewise delineates that the biggest age assemble is youth who are 18-24 years in age. In Pakistan, political gatherings and pioneers utilized online networking to cooperate and include individuals. Particularly, they concentrated on youth and this age amass is expanding massively via web-based networking media. In Pakistan, various ideological groups like PTI, PPP, PML-N, and others are working and the quantities of these ideological groups utilized internet-based life and work their very own records and systems on Facebook, Twitter, and Skype to interconnect and compose individuals to take part in political procedure. PTI and PML-N are among the most loved ideological groups on Face book, Twitter and Blogs.” The study further stated that, “Today in Pakistan, ideological factions and groups are utilizing the social networks; the majority of the ideological groups have developed their own official websites and pages. Long range informal communication media has turned into a vital standard for the ideological groups and political workers to charm the general population for their help and to stay contacted with their systems. PTI is the significant case of achievement of person-to-person communication media in creating impact on the youth of Pakistan.

H1: The extensive usage of social media by the youth of Pakistan has resulted in a scenario where the ability to independently filter out and select content according to your preference has resulted in the creation of Echo Chambers therefore more exposure to social media results in more selective content by the youth using social media.

H2: The polarization of Pakistani youth will increase as they are exposed to increasingly selected content. Echo chambers, which can lead to a situation where a user can only reinforce his or her political ideals and beliefs by avoiding different opinions or ideas, are predominantly because of a rise in political polarization among young people in Pakistan.

Methodology:

The methodology for this research study will be both “Exploratory and quantitative research methodology”. Exploratory due to the fact that this methodology will allow us to explore the research question more in depth and since the topic we are working on is still relatively new and only few have focused on this particular area (Casula et al., 2021). Descriptive will allow us to accurately define and describe a population/respondents (Moehring et al., 2021).
Descriptive research will help us explain the type of population and type of situation research is conducted in, further this research will in a way highlight the characteristics of our respondents. Descriptive part of our research will mainly focus on the “what?” element which will help us explain our population sample and their situation.

The research design of this particular study focuses on the impact of social media on political polarization among the university students of UMT, Sialkot. The research will use a quantitative research method and will use survey methods to collect survey data which will be done by using “Google Forms” application. The survey will be designed in a way to measure social media usage, demographic information, political content viewing etc. The main purpose of this particular research design is to gather responses via survey in a way that the final outcome would be a thesis topic providing general situational awareness towards an issue, this thesis study will help us see the extent of the impact of social media and help us identify the reasons behind such developments and a possible course of action to mitigate this development in a basic form which is easy to understand. This thesis will act as an introductory towards more detailed research topics related social media and political polarization.

Results & Discussion:

As mentioned earlier data will be collected through online survey conduction by using the application “Google Forms”. The survey will be generated using standardized questions and will be conducted using English language. The purpose of this specific survey will be to measure social media usage, political content exposure, content absorption, public perception, to verify the existence of echo chambers within the participants of the survey etc. The survey will be pre-tested before it is administered to ensure its validity and reliability. Another important thing to mention is that the data collected will be quantitative. In order to effectively conduct a survey question will be constructed with the support of professional/experts, these questions will be linked to our research study. Respondents will be filtered out via purposive sampling.

The study will use theoretical analysis/Descriptive Statistics to examine the relationship between social media usage and political polarization among the youth of Pakistan. This particular analysis method will support us in giving a well-defined and proven basis of generating an argument. This analysis method provides us with the information of the study’s significance and validity. From this analysis method we can identify the current problems that are generated by social media and its effects on political polarization especially among the youth. The study from this analysis can provide us in generating informed policy interventions aimed at reducing political polarization.

Figure 01: Age Statistics
The initial question focused on the age, generally it can be seen as a simple question but for this study we need to understand that the age is an important factor in order to understand the relationship between social media and Political Polarization among the youth. Fig.1 shows that about 57.1% of the responders were between the ages of 22-24 years, 19% were between the ages of 18-20 and 23.8% were between the ages of 19-21 years. Firstly, we need to understand that each age group to some extent will react differently when exposed to the political content. Students between the ages of 18-20 are still relatively new to the adult age and in most cases are less aware about their own political orientation. This particular age group is experiencing a complex political environment likely for the first time therefore it is their formative years. The ages of 19-21 is a point where students in this age group have likely decided what kind of political beliefs and ideologies they want to acquire and store within their mindset. The age group between 22-24 years what most people consider them as university seniors have generated/build up strong belief and commitment towards their political ideologies and concepts, this specific group age have mostly created their own echo chambers where their years of selective content process has allowed the search algorithm of social media platforms to only provide content according to their search and viewing history which has resulted in them being stuck in their own echo chambers. In such scenarios individuals of this particular age group have less tolerance when facing a different opinion or viewpoint which results in the generation of political polarization among the youth. The range of age group between 18-24 is due to the fact that normally undergraduate students are in between such range of age, there are some scenarios where there will be above 24 years old students studying in undergrad programs mainly because of taking gap year, late admissions or some other personal reasons. 

Figure 02: Gender Statistics
The current developments especially affect every single gender and class both financially and socially. Discussing as to how their decision are effected by their gender or that their gender plays a crucial role in influencing one’s decision, this can be applied to other scenarios or various other topics but in relation to this specific thesis the decision made by each individual indicates that their gender does not influence their decision or perspective especially their political orientation and views related to this topic. Yet what we see from this Fig.2 the participants included in this survey include about 52.4% females and about 42.9% males. The ones who have selected others category did not take this specific question seriously.

**Figure 03:**

In this question we asked participants about the social media usage routine, from the options given to them about 90.5% of the participants use social media platforms multiple times a day, whereas about 9.5% of the participants use social media platforms once a day. From this Fig.3 we can see that 90.5% of participants using social media platforms multiple times a day are likely the ones who use social media platforms for various purposes including entertainment, socialization, business related etc. The 9.5% of the participants who use social media platforms once a day mostly do so for work related/online business-related purpose and for general update about the society once in a while. Irrespective of Gender most of the participants use
social media platforms multiple times a day and even the rare cases who only use it once a day still use social media for various purpose both work related, entertainment, general information etc. From this we understand that social media platforms are relevant in almost everyone’s lives especially the fact that almost everyone use social media platforms daily even if the frequency of usage in a day might be different. Another thing to note is that since the participants are between the ages of between 18-24 they use social media daily mainly because it provides easy social interaction between friends, family, colleagues etc.

Figure 04:

This figure shows that about 52.4% of the participants come across political content multiple times in a day. Whereas about 23.8% of the participants come across political content on social media once a day, likely the category of such participants come across political content in the shape of memes, quotes, small video clips etc. These kind of activities participants will likely come across on social media platforms like Instagram or Facebook. The ones who come across political content on social media daily likely use social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and most specifically Twitter. Most users of Twitter within Pakistan likely use the platform to absorb political content and related activities. There is a small number of participants who rarely come across political content on social media, this is mainly due to the fact that their search history and pattern is mostly focus on some other content and the rare occasion they do come across a political content is mainly when there is a major event/incident which can affect his/her lifestyle. In recent cases what we see are scenarios such as the current financial and political crises within Pakistan, the crises have developed to such an extent that it has impacted every person, industry, groups etc. in the country. So to sum it all up this particular question and its results indicates that whether your interest in political content/activities exist or not there is a likely chance you will come across the content on social media mainly due to the factors that exists outside the digital world, for the participants who are living in Pakistan the factors include the political instability which has effected the financial market which further effected all the industries of the country including entertainment where it is not possible to avoid discussions or highlights of issues related to politics.

Figure 05:
we highlight the participant’s beliefs and attitudes likely influenced via social media. According to the results shown in Fig.5 we see that 76.2% of the participants believe that social media has played a major role in influencing the participant’s political beliefs and attitude. There a likely factor of the amplification of extreme views where the social media platforms using their algorithm highlight content which has likely generated strong emotions and reactions, in Pakistan’s view this sort of development can be seen in political posts and activities on social media where an issue is highlighted by generating the emotions of its users. Furthermore the 76.2 percent of the participants that feel social media has influenced their political beliefs and attitudes is also due to the factor of the existence of social media activism or mobilization of activism where social media being a powerful tool mainly how social media allow users to mobilize and initiate political activism, especially among the younger demographics where the social media platforms are used to organize movements, protests, boycott, debate and other forms of activism which can likely shape into political polarization especially when another group emerges with a different viewpoint and beliefs that might generate friction/division between groups of different political belief and mindset. There a small percentage of participants of about 9.5% who believe that social media platforms have not influenced the political beliefs and

Figure 06:
As we can see in Fig.6, the question we asked to our participants was whether to engage with political content that aligns and reinforces their existing beliefs and attitudes on social media and that they ignore and avoid information and content that contradicts them or generate a different viewpoint or belief? The results of this specific question indicate that about 38.1% of the participants disagree to the fact that on social media they only engage with political content that aligns with their own beliefs and attitudes and while avoiding and ignoring information that contradicts them, the ones who disagree to the fact are the ones that have avoided generating echo chambers of their own and are likely focused on diversifying their media sources to acquire information from multiple sources and absorb multiple viewpoints in order to get a much more larger clear picture to any rising political development. Another thing that this result in the Fig.6 indicates is the small percentage of about 9.5% of participants who are unaware that whether they engage in social media or not in relation to interacting with political content that aligns with their existing beliefs and attitudes on social media, while avoiding content or opinion that is against their beliefs and ideology, the ones who are unaware are likely the ones who have less political awareness and lack the overall knowledge in relation to the basic operation structure of social media, such participants also likely focus on contents not related to politics or they likely skip any political content. Even if that is the case it is difficult to avoid any political content as previously mentioned, the current political developments and activities happening in Pakistan is directly affecting our economy and in many cases which further affects the industries and sectors of all types including entertainment.

**Figure 07:**
As we can see in this Fig. 7 about 61.9% of the participants agree that there is a likely scenario where exposure to new information or ideas on social media can result in the generation of a changed political view. This is due to the reason that when participants are exposed to new information they are likely challenged to re-evaluate their current information, beliefs and orientation which in the end results in the changing of political views, such scenarios are not applicable to all since in many cases other social media users of different belief and political orientation have solidified their echo chambers due to which a change in their political views as a result of exposure to new information is difficult and some with extreme political views will completely avoid or reject new information that might challenge their original political beliefs and views. The participants who change their political views as a result of the exposure to new information which includes 61.9% of them are likely open minded and willing re-evaluate or reconsider their political beliefs and orientation when they are exposed to new information and evidence present in social media. These participants believe in the idea of broadening one’s understanding of various complex social and political issues which results in the development of new insights or viewpoints which can result in a change of political beliefs and ideology. Furthermore, in the data we see that about 28.6% of the participants disagree that the exposure to new information via social media can result in a changed political view or stance, there are regular cases where social media users such as the likes of our participants will disagree to various viewpoints and new information that can challenge their original political beliefs and orientation, such participants and social media users as discussed earlier are likely with strong and extreme political viewpoints, furthermore these participants are most likely part of individuals with strong echo chambers where the penetration of new external information is likely difficult.

**Countermeasures for Constructive and Less Polarized Youth:**

Firstly, it is essential to highlight and promote social media content both political and of another category that is balanced and informative, instead of being polarizing and sensational. Such measurement can be achieved by developing algorithms that prioritize content from verified and reputable resources. It is essential that in this day and age media/digital literacy needs to be prioritize especially to the younger generation since they are the ones using social media
platforms the most (Rubio Hurtado et al., 2022). Digital Literacy as a subject should be implemented in grade school curriculums, from which the next generation when consuming social media content will critically analyze it and have the ability to track down sources, verify them and able to distinguish between a credible information and a fabricated information.

In order to maintain a balanced approach when it comes to regulation and freedom of speech it is essential for the political parties, federal government and media groups to make a coordinated effort to set up a standard protocol for handling information that is to be distributed to the public. Government functionaries and media groups need to set up limits for information distribution where any both media and government authorities should work together in identifying critical issues of social media platforms that can likely create negative impact in the long term and should be addressed in a way that all the power structure of the country including media giants with public support should work together. Regulatory bureaus that are currently established by government including PEMRA and PTA are headed by government officials mostly belonging to military background or other government departments that have less experience when it comes to regulated media content, due to their conventional mindset both PTA and PEMRA feels more like a conventional law enforcement agencies which in the end results in the development of aggressive policies that creates distrust between the public and the government. The complex nature of social media and its relationship with the public requires new tactics and protocols by government functionaries to adopt a more balanced and progressive approach in handling public information.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the effects of social media on political polarization among the youth of Pakistan are complex. While social media has the potential to promote political engagement and awareness among the youth, it can also contribute to the polarization and radicalization of political views. Overall, addressing the issue of political polarization among the youth of Pakistan requires a multi-pronged approach that involves collaboration between social media giants, educators, political leaders, and civil society organizations. By working together, a comprehensive strategy needs to be implemented providing a constructive protocol in dealing emerging threats generated by the digital society of Pakistan where effective methods are to be developed to reduce division and polarization among the youth of Pakistan. The existence of conventional method within the regulatory departments such as the PEMRA and PTA will likely create gap between the government and public understanding, the inclusion of a comprehensive and a constructive strategy where consensus of various institutions and industries particularly media industry, experts and government officials is necessary in order to have a stable society. Identifying social media platform as some conventional threat like we usually see with terror outfits will only further escalate public disturbance, it is important to see social media as an evolving medium which is rapidly advancing at phenomenal rate which requires policies that can be compatible with the future developments. Information black out, data manipulation etc. will only cause further polarization and division between the youth which further creates mass civil disturbance in our country.

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