Making Sense of Electronic Media Regulatory Agencies: A Case of PEMRA

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Abstract

Every society's context essentially develops from within it having some cultural ideals that affect social sciences in such a way that its subjects are driven by these specific ideals of culture. The disguised ideologies in the form of cultural ideals of the west help to understand the context of the modern western culture due to which the real purpose of research falls backstage and social reality gets heavily constructed in the light of these disguised ideologies. It is needed to investigate whether these cultural ideals of the west are confined only to the western societies or these ideals and reform solutions, for addressing the problems of efficiency and effectiveness, are also equally applicable to other societies. This paper has been written to address this issue by finding out the background and relationship of sudden boom in privatization, regulatory agencies, impact the electronic media actually creates on societies and the role it should play by discussing the case of PEMRA. This is done by unearthing the history and context of regulatory agencies, cultural ideals like instrumental reasoning, autonomy, political liberalism, liberal individualism and the trends prevalent in the field of public administration nowadays. Results show that traces of cultural ideals in the regulatory authority and the problems that emerge as a result of these ideals shows that the attempt of creating a globalized culture and values without considering the history, culture and context of that specific society leads to an increase in the societal problems rather than addressing them.

Keywords: PEMRA, Cultural ideals; instrumental reason; autonomy; political liberalism; liberal individualism

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Introduction

In order to ensure its welfare, every society needs to be governed in the best possible way. For this purpose, Public Administration plays a pivotal role. It is recognized as an active part of the government in which public servants, through public organizations, strive to serve the people and society. Since its inception, the role of state and public administration has been evolved through many changes depending on the shifts in theoretical and scholarly paradigms of governance. The era proceeding 1980s is marked with the rise of privatization in public administration, as a solution for the claimed inefficiency of the role of the state. Backed by major theoretical changes in the public sector with private sector policies, the world has seen the advent of a new spreading perspective. It is called as New Public Management which stresses on the reduction of size of government by introducing autonomous agencies. The notion of regulatory governance has stemmed through these regulatory agencies.

With the advent of New Public Management as a solution for claimed inefficiency of public sector, world experienced a massive increase in privatization. This trend led towards shifting the main objective of public sector to profit making in order to enhance efficiency. Due to rise of regulatory governance shadows of capitalism and colonialism remained intact in the disguise of neo-colonialism. With this background mushroom growth of regulatory agencies was experienced throughout the world without understanding their theoretical underpinnings and ultimate motives. Pakistan, having a colonial history, with the institutions still being governed in the same manner, also experienced the rise of regulatory agencies in many sectors.

Media has emerged as the fourth pillar of the state. In the public administration of our times media has the most powerful impact on shaping the lives of individuals and society apart from serving as an informative and an entertaining entity all over the world. It is said that today is the era of media war, which clearly depicts its importance as media, through the power it has and the impact it creates, can raise individuals and countries to the status of hero or vice versa. In this context, a need for regulation in media sector also arises. At that time of encroaching privatization as described above, it was felt that the ways should be paved for the establishment of regulatory agencies/authorities to regulate the activities of media. With this background PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) was established to regulate electronic media in Pakistan, an emerging fourth pillar of the state, with the capacity to shape the opinion of masses.

As every theory or paradigm shift is characterized with support as well as critique, in the opinion of the scholars and academicians this notion and boom of regulatory agencies also carries some pitfalls. Generally reforming initiatives are introduced, spread and evaluated according to the set standards of overall progress by the world. Often these reforms, their roots and ultimate objectives are not linked and traced in their history or in a bigger context; which is the most important aspect to understand their effect and aftermath.

Paper's Objective

With this background and introduction let's explore what social sciences articulate about the problems mentioned above. Social sciences should help to find the solution of societal problems but it has been observed by the social scientists like Bishop (2007) that instead of solving problems of mankind social sciences have in fact increased these problems. Furthermore, Bishop (2007) says that every society's context essentially develops from within the society. It has some cultural ideals that affect social sciences in such a way that its subjects are driven by specific ideals of culture. On this foundation of concepts, that are culturally driven, a society is built upon.

The cultural ideals of the West have been identified and discussed by Bishop (2007) help to understand the context of the modern western culture. Bishop (2007) declares them as *disguised ideologies* of the modern western culture because they are enriched in that culture like the air that they breathe. Due of this reason the real purpose of research falls backstage and social reality gets heavily constructed in the light of these disguised ideologies.

The question arises here is whether these cultural ideals of the west are confined only to the western societies or these ideals and reform solutions, for addressing the problems of efficiency and effectiveness, are also equally applicable to other societies. For this purpose, a contextual analysis of the cultural ideals of the west is necessary in order to address the question of their applicability in other societies.

This paper has been written to address these problems and questions them by finding out the background and relationship of sudden boom in privatization, regulatory agencies, impact the electronic media actually creates on societies and the role it should play by discussing the case of PEMRA. This will be done, by unearthing the history and context of some fancy terms and the trends prevalent in the field of public administration nowadays, in the light of disguised ideologies identified by Bishop (2007).

Regulatory agency/ Independent regulatory authority
As described by Jacobzone (2005) agencies entrusted with regulatory powers are known as regulators. They are designed in a way to be independent in their decision making to a certain level. They have a system of check and balance to match the authority of ministries.

According to Jacobzone (2005) independent regulatory agencies is the main feature of regulatory governance by being a part of a regulatory state in which there is clear distinction between policy making and regulation. The rationale behind establishment of such agencies is to ensure the decision making to be free from political deliberations and private interests.

Focus of regulatory agencies in most OECD countries has mostly been in three sectors according to Jacobzone (2005):

- Telecommunications sector including broadcasting
- Energy sector
- Financial area/services

Characteristics of regulatory agencies
Regulatory agencies normatively carry following characteristics as described by (Jacobzone, 2005):

- They are entrusted to regulate certain aspects of a sector.
- They operate under an autonomous management.
- Their budgetary expenses may be covered under a ministry.
- They enjoy a varying range of authority.
- Normatively, the activities of these agencies are free from political/ ministerial interference and may only be provided with advice on policy making.

Regulatory and autonomous bodies in Pakistan
According to Hussain in National Commission for Government Reforms (2008) Pakistan has 411 organizational entities operating in the form of attached departments, autonomous bodies, semi-autonomous bodies, subordinate offices, statutory corporations and registered companies. Out of these organizational entities NCGR categorizes 29 as autonomous and regulatory bodies that are operating at federal level (Hussain, 2008).

Media in Pakistan: Historical background
The roots of controlling the minds of masses through some form of media by the establishment can be traced back to the colonial rule in the subcontinent. Charles Trevelyan, a Bengal civil servant and member of a committee in 1838 was assigned to transform the education system of subcontinent according to British interests. He discussed in his report that in the subcontinent the government was the most authoritative and influential entity so people wanted to be a part of it by being a public servant. Trevelyan (1838) was of the view that the government was able

to control and direct the minds of people by doing the same with public employees who used to govern the masses.

For achieving the purpose of transforming the educational system in subcontinent Trevelyan (1838) suggested by first referring that there were three newspapers in Calcutta being translated in English. He further extended his idea that the print media and its personnel should be incorporated in their objective of making English the influential language of the subcontinent.

A report by International Media Support (2009) explains the historical context of Pakistani media. It states that it dates back to the pre-partition years when a number of newspapers were established with the purpose of promoting the partition agenda. With this background Pakistani media's reason for existence was to propagate and strengthen the idea of Pakistan.

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority
Established in 2002 under PEMRA ordinance 2002, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority is an autonomous and regulatory authority.

Rationale & mandate of PEMRA
In order to regulate the affairs of electronic media, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has been promulgated since March 01, 2002. The major aim of the organization is to assist and regulate the establishment and the processing of all private transmission media and its distribution in Pakistan (Iqbal, 2012).

Rationale behind creation of this agency is to perform the regulatory function on electronic media, as mentioned in its ordinance as to "improve the standards of information, education and entertainment" by playing a facilitator role for the broadcast media and to monitor its distribution services. Furthermore, it also aims to "enlarge the choice available" in media news regarding various aspects, to enhance "public and national interest" in public. Last but not the least, its functioning also includes ensuring "accountability, transparency and good governance" in Pakistan (PEMRA, 2002, p. 5).

Iqbal (2012) also states that PEMRA has become a major organization for issuing licenses to radio and TV channels in Pakistan. Statistics reports that 83 licenses for satellite TV channels has been issued so far, that includes 38 news and current affairs channels and out of them around 65 channels are currently working. According to Iqbal (2012) PEMRA since its establishment has issued eighty-three licenses to diverse media groups. The major part among the given licenses consists of news channels while the nature of other channels is entertainment, sports, and religious.

Functions of PEMRA

According to PEMRA ordinance (2002, p. 11) this authority is responsible for:

- "Regulating the establishment and operation" of all broadcast media and circulation services in Pakistan created for international, national, provincial, district and indigenous or special targeted audiences.
- Furthermore, the authority shall "regulate the distribution" of foreign and local TV and radio channels in Pakistan.
- Thirdly, the authority may "make regulations" by notification in the Official Gazette and also "issue determinations" for carrying out the resolutions of the ordinance (PEMRA, 2002).

In order to move forward towards understanding the cultural ideals of the modern western culture and addressing the question of these ideals being universal, it will be helpful to understand the advent, development and theoretical underpinnings of regulatory authorities.

Advent of Regulatory governance and NPM

In the previous century, there was a debate about the reduced role of state in running the affairs of the government. The assumption was that the corruption, inefficiency and self-interest of public servants presumably lead to inefficient government. The governments in under developing countries as well as developed ones like UK, USA, New Zealand and Australia were declared inefficient and non-responsive to their citizens' needs (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

As a result, according to Saeed (2012) the size, scope, activities and methods of governments were highly criticized demanding the government's role to be reduced through the implementation of private sector's practices in the public sector. This gave rise to a new paradigm named as New Public Management in which government was supposed to 'steer rather than row, 'empower rather than serve', 'leverage the change through market' (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Saeed (2012) explain the implications of this paradigm shift as privatization, deregulation, restructuring etc. Under this paradigm shift, public policy formulation was no longer considered to be done only by government. Its implementation was no longer only in the hands of the executive pillar of state rather the third sector like NGOs, civil society were also involved in the process.

As a result of this globalization of NPM, the structure and role of state changed from a dominant and intrusive to a regulatory and smaller in nature by delegating its functions to other sectors (Haque, 2002). International donors like World Bank and International Monetary Fund prescribed, rather pressurized the governments around the globe for these reforms. It also includes Pakistan where diverse modes of privatization

have been adopted in the major sectors such as telecommunication, energy, manufacturing and services sector in the form of autonomous or independent regulatory authorities (Haque, 2002).

Theoretical underpinnings of Regulatory Agencies

According to Roness et al., 2007 autonomous and regulatory agencies' features are linked with different theories. In order to understand the regulatory agencies, one has to study and link certain theories in order to understand these agencies.

Public choice theory

According to Sönmez (2004) public choice theory became popular in 1970s due to the perceived market failures in the welfare states. This theory proposes that government servants seek their own interests within the institutional limits they are given. It states that the state should intervene in the political, economic and social aspects; because of the reason that individuals act upon their self-interests so state should be considered as an instrument to shape the behavior of politicians, bureaucrats, voters and interest groups. With the market concepts of efficiency and competition state should act for the betterment of its own institutions by making public institutions compete for provision of regulatory and other services.

Sönmez (2004) states that the public choice theory aimed at bringing market principles in public sector and it set the foundation for NPM reforms. Hence, it can be deduced that public choice theory contributed towards the notion of independent agencies or autonomous bodies through which notion of regulatory agencies stemmed.

Instrumental perspective

According to Christensen et al., 2007 public organizations can be considered as instruments for accomplishing important targets because their objectives are based on the instrumental rationality for achieving certain results on the behalf of the society as a whole. According to this perspective employee of public organizations make choices between available alternatives and by selecting the best alternative or tool for a task, the purpose is to achieve the desired results. Instrumental perspective works on means and ends assessment in accordance with the structural design of an institution through the ability to make rational calculations (Christensen et al., 2007).

In order to achieve the goals of increased efficiency, effectiveness and performance in the public sector of Pakistan the formation of autonomous bodies was proposed which further led to the creation of independent regulatory agencies. The question arises here is that, whether the instrumental perspective behind the creation of

regulatory agencies led to the desired results of increase in performance and efficiency or not.

After discussing the context of regulatory agencies let's move forward to the cultural ideals of western culture which according to Bishop (2007) have increased mankind's problems.

Cultural ideals

Bishop (2007) discusses that social sciences and its research have somehow increased our problems instead of decreasing them. In support of his argument he sheds light on some cultural ideals that are entrenched in our society to an extent that they are like the air we breathe without realizing.

According to Bishop (2007) these cultural ideals are the hallmark of the modern western culture. Let's first understand how these western cultural ideals were built gradually during the course of history.

Historical foundation of cultural ideals

The Western history paved the way for the gradual build-up of those ideologies that now work as disguised ideologies in social sciences. Let's discuss how the cultural ideals were established with the help of historical analysis done by Gordon (1993) and Bishop (2007).

The basis of the modern western culture was gradually set throughout the course of history in which a prominent era played a significant role which is known as 'enlightenment'; an eighteenth-century feature. It was the result of an intellectual trend in England backed by secular perception. This era of enlightenment also has a history linked with jurisdiction and hegemony of the church in the west. They used to dominate the lives of the people and was indulged in various acts of hegemony such as confiscation of property of the people, claiming all the worldly goods for church and aristocracy while depriving the people of fulfilling basic needs, burning men and women by alleging them for witchcraft and wizardry, complete negation of science and indulging in events such as trial of Galileo (Gordon, 1993).

The Aristotelianism of church was challenged and eventually led to extreme measures such as replacing religion with reason and science, replacement of God with science. It was established that science and man can govern the society following the gradual reduction of role of church and God in the west. Sociologists such as Durkheim started viewing schools with secular professional educationists as the main source of moral education of children rather than church or home. Renaissance scientists demarcated the field of science as an independent religion which led to a movement to separate church and state and set foundations of ethical philosophy by discarding the religious beliefs from them. Age

of enlightenment is also mentioned as the "age of reason" in which freedom of discussion was a prominent feature. (Gordon,1993).

These changes led to recognition of man as a social creature whose individuality gained importance. Individuality was described as maximization of man's utility in all the actions depicting worldly benefits and happiness to be of supreme importance for the individual. It led social scientists to coin popular mottos such as 'the greatest good for the greatest number'. Focus was shifted towards the reduction in role of state with the idea of progress which according to social scientists could be manifest in a perfect social order with the help of introduction of 'laissez-faire' in which market forces were free to work. According to social scientists, they were capable to create a perfect social order and government's role was reduced to a mere regulator. The ultimate aim for all these interventions was to free the individuals in the west from the restrictions imposed by church and government (Gordon, 1993).

Bishop (2007) traces the history and points towards the era of enlightenment that aimed towards liberating the people from all the restrictions and to make them 'captain of their own souls', as the basis on which foundation of today's modern western culture lie. After discussing the history of modern western culture now we are in a better position to identify the disguised ideologies entrenched in that culture. Let's discuss some of the cultural ideals identified and discussed by Bishop (2007).

Cultural ideals of western culture

Instrumental reason

Means-ends relationship was termed as *zweckrational* by Weber, quoted by Bishop (2007) that employs choosing the most effective or efficient means for achieving a goal with the help of rational evaluation.

The criticism given by Horkheimer (1974) tells us that this means-ends thinking dominates the society to an extent that important features of life lose their importance. All human actions become instrumental as all the actions become a mere mean to achieve set goals without considering the morality and worth of those desired results.

Autonomy

Second cultural ideal Bishop (2007) discusses is the concept of autonomy which has been taken synonymously with freedom, liberty, self-government and punctual self. This concept is also linked with instrumental reasoning in which actors engage in work on the basis of self-interest and evaluate alternatives based on their preferences; same logic works at societal level. Dworkin (1989) as quoted by Bishop (2007) describes an autonomous person as the one who is able to identify his desires, goals and values and this identification should not be influenced in the manner that can make this process alien to the person.

Taylor (1995) described the concept of punctual-self as free and rational to such extent that it can fully differentiate itself with both natural and social worlds and should be able to instrumentally treat both of these worlds for the welfare for itself and others. Concept of autonomy in the modern western culture is linked with the era of Enlightenment according to Bishop (2007) which aims to make individuals 'captains of their own souls'.

Political liberalism

The Western culture according to Bishop (2007) is based on liberal values that have few assumptions including person's individuality to be respected, right to be protected, individual freedom to remains unchallenged and individual values to be accepted.

According to Bishop (2007), another concept and cultural ideal is political liberalism according to which state should not support a specific notion of good life, or support any particular religion because this poses a threat to individual autonomy and freedom so state should act neutrally in all aspects of life. Interestingly it ignores the fact that this stance of neutrality by the state is another vision of the good life and thus cannot be stated as neutral. This notion of political liberalism stresses on being apolitical by forcing functions like education and research to deal separately with public policy. State shouldn't use its authority according to political liberalism on functions like education and research in order to promote how citizens should live their lives (Bishop, 2007).

According to Kymlicka (1989) neutrality has been a distinctive feature of liberal theory with the view that state should not reward or punish some specific notion of good life. It should provide a framework which should be neutral to different and conflicting conceptions of good life that can be pursued by individual. Criticism discussed here by Kymlicka (1989), by taking an example of civil liberty, is that these liberties will definitely have non-neutral consequences. As freedom of speech allows for different notions to be pursued and promoted, resulting in creating a marketplace of ideas where ideas not supported by strong or majority will not find space. This consequence of claimed neutrality for individual is far from neutrality.

According to Bishop (2007), problem is not in this stance. He states that the problem is the end result of state, organizations and social enquiry promoting a particular vision of good which is all but value neutral.

Liberal individualism

Another cultural ideal present in the modern western culture, as a disguised ideology, according to Bishop (2007), is liberal individualism. It manifests that an individual's freedom is of supreme importance and

any influence on it can compromise his individuality. The history of this notion traces back to Enlightenment, after which the individual became the unit of analysis and focus of social phenomenon and the purpose was to liberate people from all shackles.

According to Schwartz and Nagel, as discussed by Kymlicka (1989), the notion of individualism thus presupposes an individualistic theory of human motivation. This theory says that the people want to maximize their share of social resources rather than promoting the good of others. They want to maximize the material benefits rather than promoting their spiritual or emotional state.

Bishop (2007) views this raw individualism as a risk of developing into a clash of one against another who are pursuing their own and different aims of life. Coles (1987) as quoted by Bishop declares US society being persistently focused on individualism as *solipsism* which means that the self is the only form of existential reality. As discussed above liberal individualism is regarded as the air we breathe means it is operating in every aspect of human and social life, without being noticed as a disguised ideology.

Different forms of individualism like utilitarian, expressive and existential individualism all have a common aspect; self is not to be compromised, indirectly turning natural and social worlds in raw material for pursuing individual goals (Bishop, 2007).

Saleem, Hafeez and Munawar (2014) says that Stearns (1997) held the western European region responsible for introducing the culture of material goods. It can also be named as an individualist mentality with acquisitive nature resulting in a society in which people make their goals, through acquiring those goods, which they essentially do not need. Furthermore, the acquisition of material items is not that important, as it is actually the desire to acquire more, which becomes important in developing an individual's goals in life.

According to Wolfe (1989) and Putman (2000), commercialism and privatization of TV channels in United Kingdom have reduced the feeling of unity and sense of belongingness affecting collectivism within communities.

In this regard Flouri (2007) explains his work about parent-child relationship in context of acquisitive individualist mentality that is backed by consumer culture and promoted by media. It tends to measure the relationships through the instrumental reasoning of their value usage.

Cultural ideals and PEMRA

After a contextual analysis of the cultural ideals as disguised ideologies in the modern western societies by tracing the roots of their history, we are now in a better position to analyze their existence in the

regulatory authority, PEMRA. Its foundation, theoretical underpinnings and assumptions have already been discussed above.

PEMRA and instrumental reason

The establishment of PEMRA, a regulatory authority, can be easily linked with the cultural ideal of instrumental reason. Instrumental perspective according to Christensen et al., 2007, is that the organizations can be considered as instruments for accomplishing important targets because their objectives are based on the instrumental rationality for achieving certain results on the behalf of the society as a whole. According to this perspective employees of public organizations make choices between available alternatives and by selecting the best alternative or tool for a task. The purpose is to achieve the desired results.

In order to achieve the goals of increased efficiency, effectiveness and performance in the public sector of Pakistan the formation of autonomous bodies was proposed which further led to the foundation of independent regulatory agencies including PEMRA. According to instrumental picture as described by Bishop (2007) actors engaging in means-ends relationship deliberate the means independently from the social context, cultural values, history and other aspects of the society in which they are being implemented.

The actors of these means-ends reasoning are also driven by personal choice of the individual rather than by some cultural, moral or spiritual aspiration. This can be linked with the formation of regulatory agencies as a mean to attain legitimacy in the environment in which they operate. Parsons (1956) was the first to explain this phenomenon that organizations need legitimacy to survive rather than efficiency. In order to adopt the western norms to gain legitimacy, some components become fashionable overall and thus all the organizations start adopting same components by becoming dependent on those external factors.

Christensen et al., 2007 describe that these institutionalized standards become common for the decision of choosing the formal structures, processes and ideologies for an organization thus making them *myths* that are socially legitimized recipes for designing a part or a whole organization.

With this background, it is not difficult to understand that NPM reforms including establishment of regulatory agencies has been fashionable institutional recipes to gain legitimacy in internal and external environment. With the context of this situation in Pakistan, it is interesting to note and refer to Christensen et al., (2007) who describe the concept of reforms serving as a window dressing by explaining that leaders of public organizations often talk about reforms to make masses

believe that they are practically following them but in reality, little is done by the leadership to practice these reforms in their real form.

Autonomy and PEMRA

Individuals make organizations and try to use same rationality in order to govern them. Hence, this concept of individual autonomy is also linked with organizational autonomy. According to Roness et al (2007), various international descriptions of agencies/autonomous bodies are available. However, their definition and functions vary. Pollitt et al (2005) state that agencies are structurally different from ministerial hierarchy, however, it can vary from country to country. In Japan, they are considered separate from ministries while in Netherlands and UK they are a part of their ministry. It should be noted here that agencies should not be considered divisions within ministries but they are also not free from their parent ministries. Ministries are responsible for their autonomous bodies. Thus, we can define autonomous bodies, according to Pollitt et al., 2005, as "public organizations which have greater autonomy than the 'normal' divisions and directorates in the core of the ministry" (p. 22). The term greater autonomy refers to the freedom of decision making with respect to personnel or financial management.

In critique of the concept of autonomy Bishop (2007) says that when every person will act upon instrumental reasoning the result would be chaotic as it will signify the clash of will against will. Every person will consider the natural and social world as mere raw material for the achievement of self-interest. Bishop (2007) raises questions that how can an individual be autonomous or free and bound to someone at the same time. Same goes for the case of autonomous organizations.

There is a paradox in the definition and characteristics of autonomous public bodies as at one point it is being asserted that they are free to make their own decisions and then it is being implied that they are also bound to some forum. Critiques here question the amount of freedom and control but the real question should be raised on the existence of such organizations that work on instrumental reasoning and propagate the concept of so called autonomy among individuals that results in the clash of values and self-interest between them.

A valid question here arises that how these autonomous bodies can be called autonomous if they are dealing with public affairs using public money, as mentioned above that these agencies get their budget from government. Being autonomous would imply that the agencies don't need to be accountable as they are free from government's intervention. An important element has been neglected here that since they are dealing with public affairs using public money they have to be accountable. Basically government is responsible for solving the public

issues and is accountable to public, then how can the government create such organizations that are not accountable and work independently from government's intervention. Same goes for PEMRA, as it was established, as a regulatory body, for electronic media in Pakistan. Its management structure reflects the same paradox as discussed above which will be analyzed after shedding light on its structure.

Management structure of PEMRA

According to PEMRA ordinance (2002):

- The authority consists of a chairman and twelve members that are appointed by President of Pakistan.
- The chairman of the authority shall be a well-known professional of known honor and competence having considerable experience in media, business, management, finance, economics or law.
- Out of twelve members one should be appointed as full time by the Federal Government and five members should be renowned citizens, who are chosen to make sure an equal representation of all provinces with proficiency in one or more fields of media, human rights, law and social service.
- Two members should be women out of the five members from general public.
- Ex-Officio members of the authority include Secretary of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Secretary of Interior Division, Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and Chairman Central Board of Revenue.
- The last two members are appointed by the Federal Government, when needed, on the chairman's recommendation.
- The members will be entitled fee and expenses as prescribed for every meeting.
- Any member other than the ex-officio members is considered to vacate his/her office if absent for three consecutive meetings of the authority without approving the leave from the authority.

Management structure and the traits of chairman of the authority are subjective and needs interpretation and the President of the country representing the government can interpret these traits. Compulsion of five members being 'renowned citizens' is also a vague term as renowned citizen could be anyone belonging to different fields mentioned in its composite structure. The question arises that is it necessary that some renowned individuals in their field would be capable of handling the regulatory matters of the authority efficiently and effectively fulfilling the basic purpose for which the regulatory authority was created. How they can represent public and also be accountable when they are free to make their decisions. It is also mentioned that

among five renowned persons two should be women and apart from that nothing has been mentioned making it entangled with another cultural ideal of 'feminism'.

If PEMRA is an independent regulatory body having autonomous status then why its management structure includes participation from government officials including Secretary of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Secretary of Interior Division, Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and Chairman Central Board of Revenue. Representation of bureaucracy in the form of these members represents a vulnerability of that organization becoming a typical bureaucratic organization with centralized decision making keeping in view the colonial background of our bureaucracy, whose main functions were to maintain law and order and ensure revenue collection. Here a question arises whether the will of PEMRA officials will prevail in management decisions or the self-interest of the appointed government officials. Whether the freedom of decision making will prevail or it will be a conflict between a will against a will.

PEMRA and promotion of individual autonomy

The electronic media in Pakistan is actively, rather aggressively promoting individual autonomy and self-interest. Iqbal (2012) says that media is also criticized for not playing a responsible role in the society. From the brutality of displaying mutilated limbs on the screen to producing a panic-oriented news culture, and from demoting the status of objective 'anchors' to biased political players, the tendencies were and continue to be troubling. The self-congratulatory madness that now permeates through various channels deceives their utter incapability to look back and repair the damage (Iqbal, 2012).

There are various examples that highlight the irresponsible role the media is playing in the society. Nizami et al., (2011) in their research stage media as one of the contributing factor in the initiation and propagation of smoking that leads to serious fatal diseases and sometimes death.Similarly, Zain-Ul-Abideen et al., (2011) reviewed some of the proof regarding the effect of media on the development of young individuals self-perception, body image, weight worries and weight control attempts. They examined how the television advertisements are causing eating disorders in young females of Pakistan.

Television is the most strong medium of advertisement and it has its impact not only on the individual's attitude, life style, experience but also on the culture of the country. Unfortunately, the needs and issues of the society are often not the real priority of media. PEMRA being a regulatory body should look into these dangerous trends that are being

set in electronic media but it is clearly not the priority of this regulatory body.

Political liberalism and PEMRA

As discussed above the assumption of political liberalism is that the state should be neutral in supporting any notion of good life. In case of PEMRA it can be observed that the state is all but neutral in manipulating and using the regulatory agency for its purposes which is far from neutrality. According to International Media Support (2009) Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) was sponsored by the government normatively as an open media policy reform with a strong regulatory function. Keeping the rosy picture aside it is to be kept in mind that political pressure on media is frequently exerted indirectly.

One tool generally used by the government is that it cuts off the unfriendly media from getting government advertisements. Now the government has stopped banning or officially silencing television channels that are popular in the masses. PEMRA in this regard acts either by suspending the channel's license or by threatening to do so (International Media Support, 2009). Klasra (2016) reports that journalists reporting scams of government officials are being issued contempt notices by PEMRA. Common opinion among media experts is that PEMRA only acts as a license issuing office that implements regulatory barriers for broadcasters. Some declare it a Bhatta (money squeezing) body that collects money from broadcasting operators in a legal way (International Media Support, 2009).

Liberal individualism and PEMRA

Although liberal individualism emphasizes on using value neutral means for pursuing individual aims but it can be observed that these means become far from being neutral rather they become value laden; one individual forcing other directly or indirectly in order to fulfill his ulterior motives. This dangerous social trend of promoting individualism is also being entrenched in Pakistan by media. PEMRA being a regulatory authority is supportive in this phenomenon by not implementing proper check and balance on electronic media and working like a government organization waiting for orders from government acting as a mere tool of state to achieve their purposes.

Cassidy and McGrady (2001, p. 139) say that through Enlightenment emerged a culture of individualism and the form it took in twentieth century would be hard to imagine by its founders. The media, we know today, has been emerged from this context of cultural individualism in which media ethics were formulated and the rise of

modern capitalism in early ninetieth century is a crucial factor in this development, as capitalism needs media in order to promote its values such as competition, self-sufficiency and freedom of choice (Cassidy and McGrady, 2001).

Consumerism subjugated the west as a culture according to Saleem, Hafeez and Munawar (2014), beginning to influence individual identities and values resulting in material products like clothing and household items as symbols of individual identity; effects of which also can be seen in Pakistani society. Materialism is promoted by media with regulatory agencies i.e. PEMRA having no check and balance over this trend. Effect of electronic media on the family dynamics of middle class in Pakistan has been discussed by Hasan (2014) through investigating role of state in this regard. Study shows that the state's priority has been changed from traditional Pakistani family to be replaced by economic motives. This negligent attitude of state allows families to depart from their previous values of collectivism, although it was benefiting to the business of private media. Hasan (2014) discusses that this dangerous trend can be observed in the claimed harmless and neutral content being aired in the form of drama serials and advertisement that does not reflect the needs of traditional values but it solely reflects the stress being put in economic value. This slow trend results in alterations in family dynamics such as switch towards nuclear family system and individualism. Hali (2014) raises a question about the role of PEMRA in practicing the liberal approach regarding media content and an unequal control on private channels. The repercussions can be seen in the form of a distorted society and confused youth following the idols of freedom and individualism.

Conclusion

Although PEMRA's actual role was to ensure best practices from private TV and radio channels but futile legislation and weak implementation created virtual Frankenstein in the media (Hali, 2014). Private channels' owners gained unrestricted power, started exploitation by following the vested interests and internal & external agendas by using revenue generation as a tool and ignoring the quality and the impact of their transmission.

The Constitution of Pakistan, PEMRA's act and even its rules made by PEMRA itself, with the approval of the Parliament and the government, enclosed clear protection for Islam and its values, ideology and army of Pakistan yet PEMRA's Content Regulations 2012, according to Abbasi (2012), do not contain any mention of these things. The PEMRA rules 2009 approved by the government and the Prime Minister, says that the programmes shall not be aired containing content

against Islamic values, judiciary, armed forces but no reflection of these things can be found in PEMRA's content regulations of 2012 (Abbasi, 2012). In 2015 PEMRA introduced a code of conduct which restricts electronic media airing the content against above mentioned entities but it can be observed that it is being selectively implemented to school certain media channels and anchors as reported by Klasra (2016).

The analysis and context building of cultural ideals in this article is done with the help of Bishop's identification of disguised ideologies of the modern western culture including instrumental reason, autonomy, political and liberal individualism. After identifying these cultural ideals, it is discussed whether these ideals are confined to modern western culture or have been spreading in developing countries like Pakistan as well. Studying a case of PEMRA, a regulatory agency of media in Pakistan, it seems apparent that the disguised ideologies and cultural ideals of western culture are no more confined to west rather they are rapidly entrenching in the developing countries like Pakistan.

It is, however, in stark contradiction with the context and history of the country, as the cultural ideals discussed in this paper has nothing to do with the values of our society. However, they are actually the hallmarks of modern western culture having their own history, context and gradual buildup in their culture. The traces of cultural ideals in the regulatory authority, as discussed in this paper, and the problems that emerge as a result of these ideals shows that the attempt of creating a globalized culture and values without considering the history, culture and context of that specific society leads to an increase in the societal problems rather than addressing them. This proves Bishop's (2007) stance to be true, that social sciences have increased mankind's problems instead of addressing them.

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