

**Introduction:**

During the last fifty years in Pakistan, the number of people reached by mass media has risen dramatically as the media's role in their lives has increased. Today the mass media affects all aspects of their lives including the political, social and personal. It shapes their world view; it evokes 'primordial' values of good and evil, love and hate, envy and prejudice, compassion and altruism. It introduces them to cooking and stitching, sports and aerobics. It is a parent, a teacher, a role model and a friend. In other words it is a surrogate community and sometimes even a surrogate family. Its geographic scope has expanded beyond local communities through entire nations to a global level. The issues of media are therefore as relevant and as complicated as in society in general. In political life the ethical issues of reconciling various sources of power dominate the discussion. In social life, the issues are those of reconciling competing social preferences across religious, moral, generational, ethnic and socio-economic divides. In personal life the ethical issues may relate to personality development of oneself and one's family.

As more and more of physical reality cedes the stage to virtual reality the custodians of this new space will be subjected to an expanding framework and newer dimensions of ethics and concerns about their observance will be enhanced.

A discussion about media issues therefore is universal on the one hand because it addresses issues which are fairly uniform across the globe, but particular on the other in the sense that different societies may lie at different points on the continuum of change which expands the role of the media in people's political, social and personal lives.

The expanding scope of the media in our lives increases its functions and the numbers of relevant actors. The repertoire of functions and the cast of actors who play a role on the stage of media ethics are thus somewhat specific from society to society.

While all of this discussion may seem abstract, it has essentially emerged from reflections on the experience of Pakistan in its recent history spanning over half a century. The present incident which started from 7 July 2010 at Punjab Assembly with speeches from Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) on the role of media towards democracy and reached to its culmination when a resolution was passed unanimously by Punjab Assembly against media.

Even though the resolution itself does not hold any condition which is contradictory to “Media Ethics” but the speeches made by MPAs and the timeframe (Fake degrees issue) at which the resolution has been presented reflects the difference of perceptions in major actors.

The literal meaning of perception is: Perception is the process by which organisms interpret and organize sensation to produce a meaningful experience of the world OR Process by which people translate sensory impressions into a coherent and unified view of the world around them. Though necessarily based on incomplete and unverified (or unreliable) information, perception is 'the reality' and guides human behavior in general. Perception is the immediate product of mass communication. During the discussion in case the perception of politicians is “Media is performing the character assassination of politicians”; while the media holds the perception that “being watchdog of the society media has to expose the corruption”.

**Aim:** To analyze the contents of op-ed pages of four national newspapers on the issue of resolution passed in Punjab Assembly on 9 July 2010 against media.

**Sequence:** The paper is presented in the following sequence:

- Methodology of work
- Background of the issue
- Text of resolution passed in Punjab Assembly
- Content Analysis
- Conclusions

### **Methodology of Work**

For the work four national newspapers have been selected, that is; two English and two Urdu languages based. The newspapers selected are: The Daily Times, Dawn, Nawa-i-Waqt, and Jang. The material for content analysis has been gathered only from op-ed pages contains editorials, columns, letters to editor and cartoons. The material is categorized as aggressive and balance as per their contents. The time period covered is from 8 July 2010 to 22 July 2010

### **Background**

In the first of its kind the Punjab Assembly in Pakistan has passed a resolution condemning the media. The resolution condemning the media for irresponsibility that is damaging the