

DERISIVE PAKISTANI POLITICAL TWEETS: A SOCIO-PRAGMATIC STUDY

BY

AFFIFA MARYAM



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Derisive Pakistani Political Tweets: A Socio-Pragmatic Study

By

AFFIFA MARYAM

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Submitted by: Affifa Maryam

Registration #: 39MPhil/Eng Ling/RWP/F21

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English Linguistics

Name of Discipline

Ms. Amina Ayaz

Name of Research Supervisor

Signature of Research Supervisor

Dr. Arshad Mahmood

Name of Dean (FAH)

Signature of Dean (FAH)

Date

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I Affifa Maryam

Daughter of Misri Khan

Registration # 39MPhil/Eng Ling/RWP/F21

Discipline English Linguistics

Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Derisive Pakistani Political Tweets: A Socio-pragmatic Study** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Derisive Pakistani Political Tweets: A Socio-Pragmatic Study

This study delves into the realm of Pakistani political discourse on Twitter. It focuses on the socio-pragmatic aspects of derisive humor employed by prominent political figures from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) parties in their tweets. Through a comprehensive analysis of forty-eight tweets collected over a period of eight months, from January 2022 to August 2022, the study identifies and categorizes linguistic choices of travesty used in these tweets. The objectives include examining these choices as types of humor and analyzing the mediated ideologies underlying verbal humor in the context of Pakistani politics. This study aims to address this gap using a socio-pragmatic approach to explore the use of mockery in Pakistani politics. The methodology is supplemented by i. Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humor, ii. Shade's categories of Verbal Humor and iii. Trudgill's Sociolinguistic Variables to conduct the content analysis of the selected tweets. The findings of the study indicate that humor, particularly satire, irony and sarcasm, is utilized not only for entertainment but also as a strategic tool to critique opponents, shape public opinion and assert dominance in the political landscape. Sociolinguistic variables such as power dynamics and political position significantly influence the linguistic strategies employed by politicians. It also reveals a complex interplay between language, power and ideology. The study sheds light on the intricate relationship between humor and politics, highlighting how linguistic techniques are used to influence user's perceptions and propagate political agendas on social media platforms. Politicians from PTI and PML-N utilize humor to reinforce their political ideologies on Twitter. One of the implications of the study is that political communication on social media platforms creates a denigrated image of these politicians. Generally, the public look upto these figures as their role models. However, in the light of the study, politicians fail to become ideals or role models for their people.

Keywords: *derisive humor, Twitter discourse, political ideologies, social media communication.*

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DEDICATION

To my father and my eldest brother for their love, endless support and encouragement

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Language plays a significant role in the construction of reality which makes it easier for readers and listeners to create a picture of it (Gee, 2014). Language is essential in conveying the orator's thoughts and preconceived assumptions/notions or ideas to the audience (Fairclough, 2001). Language does not have inherent power; rather, it derives power through its persuasive role where a speaker compels and convinces the audience for an intended aim and meaning (Lakoff, 1987). In the light of the appellative function of language, the language used by politicians plays a crucial part in winning public support and favor (Van Dijk, 1997).

The relationship between language and politics is deeply intertwined and can be seen in how language serves as a primary tool for communication, which is fundamental to political interactions. Human beings are inherently political creatures and language enables them to engage in complexities of political life. Language is not just a means of conveying ideas; it is the very tool through which political actions are prepared, guided and influenced (Schaffer, 1996). Beard (2002) highlights the significance of studying the language of politics and emphasizes its role in the individual's pursuit and exercise of power through linguistic means. Politicians harness the power of language through speeches and remarks to shape their careers, communicate policies, and sway public opinion. In essence, language serves as the primary instrument for politicians to persuade and articulate their political agendas (ibid: 35).

Lakoff (1990:7) explained how language and politics are inextricably linked. According to his theory, "language is politics, politics distributes power, and power determines how individuals speak and are understood." He additionally observed that language plays a pivotal role in political manipulation, as it serves as a primary vehicle through which power dynamics are both introduced and comprehended. Every individual who uses language "plays the linguistic power game according to hidden objectives, with the unsaid being far more potent than the uttered" since language is how power is

exhibited” (Ibid:21). Politicians, in particular, use language in a nuanced manner to convey layers of meanings beyond the explicit message. Pragmatics, as Mey (2001:207) notes, focuses on unraveling these implied meanings or the hidden agenda behind linguistic expressions.

Language functions as a potent instrument for politicians. They use it to shape communication and craft their messages to fit their goals. In this context, Opeibi (2009) contends that language not only conveys a candidate’s political concepts and party principles but also facilitates the transformation of these notions into tangible social actions, thereby perpetuating or altering societal norms. Therefore, the persuasive capacity of politician's rhetoric to inspire, mobilize, sway, and educate the public cannot be overstated.

Historically, conventional mass media played a central role in delivering reliable and timely information to the public. However, in recent years, a new form of media i.e., social media (SM) has emerged as a dominant force, particularly among the educated populace. Social media platforms have gained prominence due to their ability to swiftly disseminate information about risks, crises and socio-political issues within society, as noted by Kapoor et al. (2018). The defining trait of social media lies in its collaborative online communication and immediate interactions facilitated through user-generated accounts and pages. These platforms serve as hubs for individuals to share and gather information based on their interests and agendas, as observed by Wickramanayake & Jika (2018). Earlier it wasn’t the case, people used to rely on print media, for instance, newspapers for seeking out information and building opinions about things like what’s going on or how are things going to be, in the future. For instance, in Pakistan a few years ago, the sole sources of news and entertainment were the state-run print and television media, as well as the very few private channels that were accessible at the time. Now, we can see social media has greatly influenced the political discourse and become an important platform for political communication. In line with this, social media has significantly influenced how users behave concerning both national and international politics (Vraga & Tully, 2019).

In modern times, social media platforms are becoming extremely popular. We are living in the era of “digital technology”. Social media serves as a vital platform for the public to engage with one another and facilitates the sharing of activities, viewpoints, and discussions. Public/ audience rely on social media to interact with each other, also serves as a perfect forum to share activities, attitudes, opinions, and debates. Unlike traditional print and broadcast media, which operate on fixed schedules, streaming services provide content continuously as highlighted by Alexander (2021). The increasing prominence of social media has led to a transformation in the conventions and principles of communication across mainstream media outlets. Unlike traditional media formats that are bound by specific time slots, social media content can be enjoyed at the audience’s convenience. Furthermore, with internet connectivity, this content is accessible from any location worldwide (Adhitya & Wulandari, 2020, p. 182). With the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, people began to limit their physical interactions. During this time, people started relying their social lives on online services. People used online services for academic purposes, setting up new businesses, and sharing opinions and experiences as well. During the pandemic, there was a notable surge in the usage of streaming services, as reported by Curry (2021).

With the advent of technology, social media has transformed the way we interact and conduct business. Barker (2009) characterizes social media as, “online communication in which individuals can play the role of both author as well as audience at the same time”. It has removed physical barriers and carved itself into a strong place in the lives of people. Companies and political parties now have very strong social media wings to influence their voters (Lampos, Preotuic-Pietro, & Cohn, 2013). Social media’s major characteristic is that it is interactive in nature and this interactivity enables its users to communicate their ideas in reciprocal ways which distinguishes it from other technologies. Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012) stated that the advent of social media has transformed traditional political scenarios.

Owing to the widespread of electronic media and the rise in the revolution of information, the world has become like a small village. Information, news, and events may now go unimpeded and quickly to every part of the world. These things are immediately there in every living room even before the government can take action and restrict them.

The social, economic, and political lives of contemporary society have been impacted by the media's growing role. One's ideas, convictions, and worldviews are shaped by the images shown by the media. It has become a part of every person's daily activity, including common people, elites, decision-makers, and statemen. The internet and numerous social media platforms have a huge impact on an individual's social life and political activity. Politicians (candidates, government officials, and party members) now have a space to maintain their existence in the form of a space offered by social media, a type of digital communication. They have a chance to shape and sway public opinion here. Digital marketing has a favorable impact on campaign efficacy and the dissemination of political information. The reliability of information offered on social media platforms has a significant impact on the way we increase our shared knowledge. The quality of information presentation may also impact a company's social media reputation.

Despite Pakistan's status as a developing country dealing with a wide range of social, economic, political, and security issues, the influence of media in today's world may be felt here as well (Khan, 2019). Pakistani media is thought to be more direct, forthright, and proactive than in the past. It now demonstrates the social injustices, poor economic management, and political errors made by the country (Ahmed & Qureshi, 2020). Young people in Pakistan are using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to learn new information, sharpen their political awareness, and spread their political opinions (Ali & Hussain, 2021). Social media is now being used by people from all walks of life, students, politicians, and even political parties to express their thoughts and get support for numerous national and global issues (Saeed & Khan, 2022). Social media platforms assist and provide young people with a platform to understand the principles of politics. It enables individuals to communicate with their loved ones and serves as a place for political discussion, social media is like a hotcake among the younger generation (Javed, 2023).

In recent years, social media has become an important area of research for linguists due to its widespread access and popularity among the masses (Rauf, 2022). In the present scenario, we perpetually and purposefully have access to huge and unmatched opinionated data through social media. Social media has become a huge center of information on various subjects in the world for a millennial person (Shah & Iqbal, 2021). Technology has reached its crowning point since its inception. Different digital platforms like Twitter,

Facebook, and Google have become important means of political communication in recent times (Khan & Farooq, 2023). Politics-related tweets, Facebook updates, and Google trending searches are followed and users comment on them. Thus, political events and occurrences, debates, campaigns, and public opinion/polls may all become archives and records on the digital databases just mentioned (Zaman, 2022). At the same time, owing to the nature of different social media websites, people feel free to give their frank opinions. Their messages give interesting patterns and serve as a great source of data for anthropologists, cultural theorists, and most importantly linguists (Ahmed, 2021).

Microblogging service Twitter has been on the upfront for the spread of information on different subjects due to its far-reaching accessibility to the public, in recent times. This has led politicians and journalists to use trends in Twitter messages to assert their respective political stances (Anstead & O'Loughlin, 2015). Additionally, Twitter is becoming more and more popular among researchers as a low-cost alternative to conventional opinion polls or other time-consuming data-collection methods (Barbera, 2015; Tumasjan et al., 2020). As a result, the data from Twitter has been deemed a source of information on politics. Twitter is a significant alternative news source and a forum for conversations on a wide range of subjects and hence one significant subject is politics (Berger & Luckman, 2004).

Sociology and communication studies have both demonstrated that diverse media do not accurately reflect social or political reality, but rather provide a mediated version that is influenced by a variety of elements unique to each particular media type. Communication research has long been highly fruitful in the field of identifying and evaluating the potentially distorting influences of these mediating elements (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014). It's crucial to understand that, unlike the reflection of politics in other media, the political commentary in tweets is not unfiltered but rather the outcome of a mediation process.

As there is a growing use of data from digital platforms by political actors to assess the public's response to politics, scholars are increasingly using and depending on digital trail data to infer political trends. The data is also used to demonstrate the (damaging) influence on society by researchers and scholars (Jungherr, 2015; Howsin et al., 2011). The

studies on these tweets also emphasize how important it is to comprehend how politics are mediated through digital platforms.

Several studies have shown that users who make references to or comment on political issues and leaders on Twitter are more inclined toward politics. They find it fundamentally fulfilling to seek out and disseminate political knowledge as well as to attempt to influence politics, whether in person or virtually (Howsin et al., 2011). Numerous studies have demonstrated the close relationship between political interest reflected through Twitter usage. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that political Tweets are in abundance and cost nothing to users. Framed and constructed political events and subjects are more likely to attract people who lack political awareness. Twitter users may differ from the broader population in the areas of substantive interest and political leanings in addition to the degree of their political interest and preferences (Chadwick, 2013).

Politicians challenge their adversaries on Twitter by using a variety of tactics and language techniques. Their language aka lingo includes sarcasm, metaphor, irony, taunting, etc. Leaders aim to make their opponents lose. John Baugh (2018:137) claims that taunts are a type of insult that includes offensive and aggressive remarks. It is harmful and includes acts that are humiliating, harsh, demeaning, or discriminatory in nature and attempt to pass humor. It also features directed laughs not with the taunt, but at the taunt. The constant information media propagates to the masses is construed as true. Recipients of political news are increasingly exposed to tweets from political and non-political actors (Brands, Graham, & Broersma, 2018; Broersma & Graham, 2012). The constant negative and stereotypical representation on social media is one of the many forms of negativity that the masses have to face on a routine basis. On Twitter, Pakistani politicians of different political parties often depict each other with stereotypical and skewed images and by using derogatory words. Prejudice has been created by using different kinds of media against political parties in the past (Jobe, 2013).

Moreover, due to the developments in the technological world, mainstream social media have a history of stereotypical representations of mocking politicians on Twitter. The categorization of gender is done through language. Language and discursive structures have always been used to construct, perform, represent, and index gender and social

identities (Sunderland, 2004, p.22). In Pakistan, the portrayal of political leaders on social media has captured growing cultural and social attention, in recent times. Butler (2014) ventures that, “the study of language with relation to social media platforms becomes fundamental if we define gender identities as performances and language as one of the major means through which these performances are enacted”.

Across the globe, politicians use social media platforms to spread not only their opinions but also to impose their respective political parties’ hidden agendas to influence the masses for their benefit. For example, the president of the United States, a vast majority of Congressmen, a majority of governors and mayors, as well as candidates and political operatives, are users of Twitter, (Parmelee & Bichard, 2012: 16). On Twitter, millions of people, including journalists, choose to 'follow' political figures so they may know what has been tweeted. Extensive interviews with political figures using Twitter discovered that Twitter is the most popular social media platform used to influence politics.

People use language differently in different social situations. Even though they discuss the same subject, when speaking with a different conversational partner, they employ a different vocabulary/register. People's use of language is influenced by a variety of social factors, including gender, social class, age, certain social contexts, etc. Therefore, when conducting a study on language phenomena, it's important to consider understanding language structure and function, as well as the social factors that have an impact on the use of language (Hanoon & Faisal, 2021) .

Pragmatics is the appropriate approach to be used to examine language usage and meaning, yet when there are disparities in social contexts, sociolinguistics needs to be used in order to understand how socioeconomic classes and cultural traditions influence how people use language (Yule, 1996:3). Sociolinguistics is a field of study that examines the connections between language and society in order to comprehend language structure and how language is used in conversation. To analyze the meaning of language in relation to the social setting, pragmatics and sociolinguistics must be combined. Sociopragmatics is the combination of sociolinguistics and pragmatics (Wardough, 2006: 13).

Sociopragmatics is concerned with the analysis of significant patterns of interaction in particular social situations in a particular social system. It emphasizes the interactive

aspect and the acknowledgment of the social context. Different sociolinguistic variables like power, gender, and class are components of social reality and can be treated as part of many more. These variables are a general class of index symbols that guide the interpretation of content on social media by political figures to exert their political stance on the masses (Anna Tronsborg, 1995: 37-38). Trudgill's use of variables must not be interpreted with scientific/experimental implications. Rather sociolinguistic variables as used by Gumperz (1992) "are components of social reality in and of themselves, and they can be viewed as a more general class of indexical signs that direct and channel the interpretation of intent". It helps to show the influence of sociolinguistic variables on derisive remarks to gain a better understanding of the socio-pragmatic nature of derisive tweets. It determines the techniques used in specific contexts, depending on some social notions.

The current study examines how verbal humor is used in political tweets on Twitter to represent certain political stances by the political figures of Pakistan Tehreek E Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN). In this study, we put our focus on the microblogging service Twitter and address the central question of whether a bunch of tweets serves as an accurate depiction of the political roles of public figures or not. Owing to the informational era, the world has been intrigued by social media because it spreads messages that are easily understood and recognizable as genuine to the general population. The shaping of political and social environments is significantly influenced by media. The judgments that the public is bombarded with through social media are accepted as fact. It has managed to affect people from all walks of life to expand its role in shaping and engaging in the discussion of ideas from that of a passive observer.

Humor is one of the methods used in communication to convey a concept or idea. Verbal humor is humor that depends on the language used to create a humorous effect. The reason for using Salvatore Attardo's General Theory of Verbal humor is that humor can serve as a tool to "produce an alternative perspective and even modify power normative structures" in addition to serving as a source of joy and amusement (Russell, 2009, p. 8). There is also the presumption that using comedy and irony will help the speaker make their superiority over the listeners known. These hierarchical patterns of superiority and inferiority in the population are also highlighted in this study. Through language, different

social variables like gender, power, and status are being (ab)used by different political leaders in their respective tweets to express their political stances. They display various mocking, scoffing, demeaning, taunting, and sarcastic remarks through verbal humor by degrading other political party figures. They use derogatory words and travesty. They aim to misrepresent their opponent for their benefit. This study endeavors to also highlight the hierarchal patterns used for the defamation of political leaders. Their lexical choices are thus analyzed. This study helps to contribute by illustrating the concept of humor not merely as a source of fun but for its capability of confirming and challenging gender identities in society.

The political figures of Pakistan are very active users of social media platforms, especially Twitter. They have massive numbers of followers who look up to and read their tweets. For instance, Imran Khan has 20.1 million Twitter followers whereas, his party's spokesperson Fayyaz Ul Hasan Chohan has half a million precisely, 45.5 thousand followers on Twitter. Not only PTI, but PML-N politicians are also active users of Twitter. Maryam Nawaz Sharif of PML-N has 8 million followers on Twitter, and PML-N spokesperson, Ahsan Iqbal has followers on Twitter around 2.7 million.

The context of the study is the establishment of the Pakistan Democratic Movement aka PDM and the struggle for power between Pakistan's two biggest political parties, PTI and PML-N.

The present study investigates the lexical choices used by selected politicians of Pakistan Tehreek E Insaaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) in their tweets. Hence, the selected site for data collection is Twitter. The tweets by PTI Chairperson Imran Khan and its spokesperson Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan are analyzed for their choice of language. Whereas, the tweets of the prominent leader of PMLN Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and PMLN's spokesperson Ahsan Iqbal are selected for the study. The rationale for the selection of these two political parties and their leaders is that both parties are much in contradictory views and their comments are in the limelight not only for hate speeches but also for the nature of their derisive marks. Data is also available extensively on social media i.e., Twitter in this case. The research is qualitative and quantitative in

nature and data is collected from it through content analysis as it is used to interpret and understand the recorded material about human behaviors in a particular society.

1.2 Problem Statement

The language of prominent political figures on social media platforms is deemed solemn and responsible. The political tweets however embark on travesty and humor to poke fun at one level and at another level, they reveal frames that may have far-reaching effects on the users of Twitter and followers of those political figures. The study analyzes derisive tweets of Pakistani politicians by employing Attardo's General Theory of Verbal humor (1994) and Shade's Categories of Verbal humor (1996) with the help of Trudgill's Sociolinguistic variables model (1995) through representations of their roles as public figures. The research explores how these politicians in their roles as public figures, use humor to communicate complex social and political messages, potentially influencing public opinion and discourse.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives guiding the present research are mentioned here under:

- To identify the lexical choices of travesty used in political tweets
- To examine those choices as types of humor
- To analyze the sociolinguistic variables that display mediated ideologies underlying the employed verbal humor

1.4 Research Questions

The questions posed in the present study are as follows:

1. What language patterns of humor are embedded in the construction of the tweets of selected Pakistani politicians?
2. Which categories of verbal humor are employed in those political tweets?
3. How do the dominant sociolinguistic variables depicted through verbal humor foreground mediated ideologies in the selected tweets?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Media plays a crucial role in shaping narratives and disseminating information. The media portrayal of certain groups of society is both influential as well as reflective. Social media serves as a major source when it comes to the research of political stances on Twitter. This research helps to know whether social media representation of political stance is contributing positively or negatively towards public lives or social status etc.

This study is significant because it focuses on the lexical choices used in political tweets which leads to the social and cultural representation of the political stance of the two biggest Pakistani political parties, PTI and PMLN on Twitter, which holds significant space in the society and influence masses, especially youth at the greatest level.

This research is also significant because it attempts to acknowledge and reveal the role of humor in disclosing certain hidden political ideologies and agendas of these two political parties. The study aims to unravel and present an image of them on social media that is a controlling discourse and perpetuates certain ideologies in Pakistani society.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to the social media platform Twitter and focuses on the usage of lexical choices in the political tweets of the selected politicians of PTI and PMLN. The tweets of Imran Khan, Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and Ahsan Iqbal are under scrutiny for the use of verbal humor as sites of revealing their respective stances on gender, class, and power. Also, this study only includes the political tweets collected over a period of eight months i.e., January to August 2022.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The present study consists of five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter provides a roadmap for the present research. It includes a detailed background and rationale of the topic, research objectives, research questions, and problem statement. Further, it elaborates the theoretical frameworks as latter part of the background of the study, significance of the study and the delimitation of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The second chapter mentions different studies related to social media platforms, especially related to Twitter which has a huge impact in terms of politics on the masses. This part of the study reviews already published works and publications regarding the use of language on social media and how it holds a significant space in public lives, in recent times. Adjacent studies related to the present study are argued in this chapter only to highlight a gap in contemporary research.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The third chapter mentions the theoretical frameworks which is Salvatore Attardo's theory of verbal humor, Richards A Shade's twelve subtypes of humor, and Peter Trugdill's model of sociolinguistic variables which help in the analysis of verbal humor. The chapter also discusses research method of content analysis, sampling technique used in the selection of political tweets and the three-step procedure followed in the fourth chapter of the study.

Chapter 4: Analysis

The Fourth chapter provides us with an analysis of political tweets and highlights the instances of verbal humor used in them for derisive purposes by politicians of selected political parties.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings of the study and provides the answer to the research questions by fulfilling research objectives. Future recommendations for the researchers are also highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes a discussion of works that focus on verbal humor in political tweets and how those works recognize such instances of humor as disparaging remarks. It discusses Twitter as an established platform for political communication. The first section examines a number of researches on social media, particularly Twitter, as an avenue for political discourse. Then, in order to grasp the connection between language and society, political tweets and speeches in relation to sociolinguistic studies are examined. Also, studies on pragmatics are included to show how context influences language use in political conversation. This chapter's last portion discusses the mocking tone of political tweets and speeches from the perspective of socio-pragmatics. It also examines the public response to speeches and tweets from politicians.

Introduction

Social media platforms have become potent communities for political discourse in the modern digital era while allowing users to participate in debates, express their thoughts, and declare their political allegiances. Twitter has emerged as one of these sites where political debates frequently take place, thus, Twitter can provide a distinctive prism to explore the socio-pragmatic dynamics of political discourse. This tendency is also present in Pakistan, which is a country known for its active social media presence and diversified political environment. Sarcastic, satirical, and humorous political tweets have proliferated on Pakistan's Twitter platform, and they play a significant part in influencing the political conversation. In order to analyze the underlying communication mechanisms of Pakistani political tweets that are mocking, this study engages in a socio-pragmatic inquiry.

The rise of mocking political tweets in Pakistan has drawn attention. It illustrates how political discourse has changed in the digital age. These tweets frequently use sarcasm and humor to criticize political leaders, policies, and events that develop a unique communicative style that goes beyond traditional political speech. It is crucial to comprehend the socio-pragmatic elements of these tweets since they have the power to affect political narratives, public opinion, and even election results. This study tries to

clarify the language and contextual nuances of scornful tweets in this setting and offer insights into how they serve as communicative actions within Pakistan's socio-political milieu.

A potential to explore the intricate interactions between language, politics, and society is provided by a socio-pragmatic analysis of scornful political tweets from Pakistan. Such tweets reflect Pakistan's larger socio-cultural dynamics in addition to acting as platforms for political critique. The purpose of the study is to shed light on the discursive practices, rhetorical devices, and language techniques used in these tweets, as well as their intended impacts and prospective outcomes. Additionally, it looks at how derisive tweets affect the development of political identities, the negotiation of power relationships, and the propagation of political ideology in the online public sphere.

This study aims to add to the expanding body of knowledge on digital political discourse and socio-pragmatic analysis by examining the arena of derisive Pakistani political tweets. It aims to offer a detailed understanding of how Twitter, as a platform, changes political communication in Pakistan and affects how the general public views politics and leaders. In the end, this research intends to provide useful insights into the changing political discourse environment in the digital era, where language and pragmatics are crucial in determining political realities and societal views. This study posits that derisive tweets are a powerful tool for political actors in Pakistan not merely for criticism but as a means of shaping political narratives and public opinion. This research aims to investigate the tweets from a sociopragmatic lens to uncover rhetorical and communicative strategies employed by Pakistani politicians on Twitter, thereby contributing to an understanding of modern political discourse in digital spaces.

2.1 Political Engagement on Social Media

According to Halallahan, Holtzhausen, Van Ruler, Vercic, and Sriramesh (2007), “As media has developed into a more direct form of communication, politicians are better able to bypass the largely mediated linkages provided by conventional media and bring concerns to the attention of an organization”. This implies that for convenient accessibility to a larger audience, and to disseminate their message, politicians do not have to rely upon conventional and traditional modes of mass communication. The present research builds

on the idea of bypassing traditional media by exploring how Pakistani politicians use derisive language on Twitter to directly engage with and influence their audience. In order to further explore this idea, Kalsnes (2016a) looked at the three actor groups involved in political communication: media actors, citizens, and political actors. These actor groups made use of social media during the 2013 Norwegian election. This study was significant because it demonstrated how political actors may circumvent media gatekeepers and connect with their constituents directly through Facebook pages. Facebook and Twitter simultaneously had a big role in driving traffic to social media and serving as a viable and convenient channel for politicians to connect with their intended audience and political sources. The study made the argument that we might better understand how political communication took place on social media by understanding the emerging philosophies of social media logic. The primary consequences of the social media logic, according to the study, were media actor's declining roles as gatekeepers (Kalsnes, 2016a). The diminishing role of media gatekeepers is extended in the present study by examining how Pakistani politicians use derisive tweets to shape political discourse without traditional media intervention.

In the same context of the 2013 Norwegian elections, another study was conducted by Karlsen and Enjolras in 2016. By examining candidates' online profiles, they studied the relationship between individualization and digital social media during the 2013 Norwegian elections data on Twitter. According to the researchers, social media may have the ability to affect power dynamics inside political parties since it allows candidates to independently promote the main party. They demonstrated that there were primarily two strategies on social media: a party-centered strategy and an individualistic strategy. Additionally, an individualized strategy increased the likelihood of being more active on Twitter, although it may have a detrimental impact. It was discovered through a cross-communication arrangement that the competitors who had the most impact on social media were those who were able to communicate with both social media and traditional media networks (Karlsen & Enjolras, 2016). The present study also explores how Pakistani politicians use derisive language on Twitter to bolster personal image and political influence.

Conway, Kenski, and Wang (2015) discovered the questions centered on how much social media content might evade, catch up with, or appeal to traditional media's attention. The study investigated how stories published in the nation's main newspapers and the primary presidential candidates' Twitter feeds interact to establish intermediate agendas for the examination of mentioned factors. Time series analysis was used to look at media daily problem patterns. Agendas in Twitter messages and traditional news have been found to be interconnected. On certain subjects, the traditional media follows candidates; on others, they can predict the political agenda on Twitter. The use of internet platforms by politicians to strengthen ties with their constituents was noted. Also, the platform was used to get an understanding of their political stance (Conway et al., 2015).

In order to demonstrate the significance and usefulness of social media in the modern day, Kurt & Karaduman (2012) in their paper discussed politicians who have decision-making authority in the public domain. The authors conducted a study on the usage of social media by parliamentarians of Turkey, as a result of increased social media use in political communication. To explore the amount of usage of social media by leaders, the authors studied social media usage and the purpose of using social media by leaders in the pertinent study. The authors examined the social media profiles of Turkish party leaders, as well as the frequency and purposes behind their use of social media. The findings of the study demonstrated the value of using social media to reach masses by examining the message, language, conversations, and content published by Turkish politicians (Kurt & Karaduman, 2012).

Similarly, in another study to explore the usage of social media by Turkish Politicians, Mengü et al in 2015 examined the candidates of the ruling party and their tweets as well as the other parties running for local elections. The context of the study was the Turkish elections on March 30, 2014. Tweets were analyzed using content analysis in the study. The findings of the study acknowledged social media due to its consistent and practical approach to the constituency, the possibility of one-on-one and pleasant connections, the ability to give honest content, and the avoidance of stories (Mengu et al, 2015). This parallels the methodological approach (content analysis) to studying derisive tweets by Pakistani politicians.

The use of social media in Pakistan is increasing at a rapid rate as it is increasing in the rest of the world (Ali & Fatima, 2016; Butt & Awang, 2017). Different political parties, political workers, and leaders have made their accounts and official sites on various social media platforms to offer their perspectives, influence the masses, and keep themselves up-to-date with the latest political news (Rafi, 2020). The internet and social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc., have established communication channels for the dissemination of news (Adil et al., 2021). Many studies have been published on social media political communication. It has been done from different perspectives like the political engagement of people on social media platforms, to see the influence of social media on political discourse, and how social media is increasing political awareness among the public (Ali & Fatima, 2016; Muzaffar, 2019). In modern times, politics is a major subject being discussed on social platforms (Ahmed et al., 2019). It has been observed in many studies that politicians use social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to influence the masses and engage the public in political discussion (Rafi, 2020; Ali & Fatima, 2016).

In Pakistan, Shaheen (2008) conducted research that investigated the use of social networks like emails, blogs, Facebook etc., for political activism among students. It was done during political crises and emergency imposed by the Government of Pakistan in 2007. The findings of the study concluded that social media was used by students to promote democracy, freedom of expression and to raise awareness about their rights during political crises in Pakistan (Shaheen, 2008). Another study investigated the use of social media by political figures for political purposes. For example, Zafar et al. (2013) measured Facebook's "likes" and "talking about this" options among Facebook users to find opinions about political figures. The findings elucidated that President Parvez Musharraf had more fans than President Asif Ali Zardari. Additionally, it was also found that PTI outperformed all other political parties on Facebook (Zafar et al, 2013). The present study aims to delineate how derisive tweets shape public opinion and political narratives on Twitter in Pakistan. Another study by Eijaz (2013) indicated Facebook as the most popular social networking site among youth as a means to spread political information in comparison with other sites like Twitter, blogs, email, etc. This study aimed to explore the usage patterns of social media by political parties of Pakistan. It was found that PTI had been extensively

using social media, writing blogs, tweeting, and use of Facebook to communicate, and encourage people to participate in the political process. The study outlined Imran Khan as the top-growing profile on Twitter in 2013. Also, the study focused on political content usage patterns of university students. It was done based on rural and urban populations by selecting equal students from hostels and day scholars. It was discovered that young people used social media to highlight the issues of load shedding, socio-economic factors, etc (Eijaz, 2013). The study was a recognition of social media as new media. Also, the study rejects the impact of social media in creating political awareness among youth. However, the present study aims to delineate the usage of language that may have far-reaching effects on youth and the general public.

Kugelman in his report to the Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF) examined the role of social media in Pakistan. It asserts that these social media platforms offer a strong platform for communication, but not a catalyst for a change. It explains the purpose of social media as a means of communication and describes their constraints to bring change. In Pakistan, political gatherings make use of social media to call out individuals. Their primary focus is youth as they are massive users of social media in present times. In Pakistan, various political parties like PTI, PML-N, and PPP use social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook, Twitter, and Skype to interconnect and involve the public in their political movements. This report found the PTI and PML-N as the most loved ideological groups on Facebook, Twitter, and Blogs (Kugelman, 2012).

There are many reasons why social media does not serve as a vehicle for change, notes Kugelman. One major one is private traditional channels being confrontational towards the government. They are often praised for helping to trigger the post-democracy movement of 2007 despite the broadcasting ban imposed by General Musharraf. However, social media outlets ignored the ban. Another reason is the low penetration rate. Despite the rapid increase, social media users in Pakistan remain a tiny percentage of the total population. Current estimates about Pakistani internet users peg about, most of them urban-based, 11-17% of the total population. One of the significant restraints outlined in the report is the cleavages-divisions that arise from the country's ideological, ethnic, sectarian, and provisional differences. It also perpetuates the constant need for prosecution and violence inflicted by those unwilling to accept the country's diversity. This is even apparent in social

media as another study by Michaelsen (2011), was done on new media responses to the 2011 assassination of Salman Taseer (a liberal who spoke publicly and forcefully for minority rights). It revealed that some Facebook pages began appearing in his favor and in favor of his killer Mumtaz Qadri. Many urged others to use Qadri's face as their profile picture to lend their support. This is how social media hinders bringing change in society. This report though outlines the role of social media as a disseminator of information, yet some constraints are there (Kugelman, 2012). This proves the role played by language use on social media, which affects the general public. In that aspect, the present study outlines the use of language on social media, recognized as new media.

A number of studies conducted in Pakistan identified the role of social media in increasing political knowledge and involvement among educated youth (Ali & Fatima, 2016). As a result, social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Twitter, had an impact on people's political involvement since they provided current information about socio-political happenings, and encouraged the public to access information and express their opinions (Karamat & Farooq, 2016). Parallel to the developed world, Pakistan's ethnicity, religious beliefs, and electoral process were influenced by social media. Individuals' intentions to vote increased as a result of increased use of Social Networking Sites (SNS). By spreading ideas and impacting others, this medium has pushed for a change in the political sphere. The usage of social media among the general public reached a peak in Pakistan in 2013. During the most recent elections in Pakistan, political parties used social media to advance their agenda and win over 80 million registered voters in the nation (Butt & Awang, 2017).

Muzaffar, M. (2019) in his research paper, "Social Media and Political Awareness in Pakistan; A Case Study of Youth" investigated the role of social media in promoting political awareness among the youth of Pakistan. He recognized the fact that new media technologies can have a significant influence on young people. The study was qualitative and descriptive in nature. The intended population was the BS and MS students of public sector universities in Gujranwala division. The data was gathered through a questionnaire and a test which comprised 15 multiple choice questions related to political science and knowledge about day-to-day politics. It was found that social media, to a certain level i.e., 43% contributed to increasing political awareness among the youth of Pakistan. Social

media had helped individuals become more politically aware, yet the study found unfavorable evidence suggesting people were less informed than they should be. Although social media is making youth socialize, still their level of knowledge falls short of expectations. The study also recommended that public departments and educational institutions should share authentic information via social media to raise student's political awareness (Muzaffar, 2019). The study may contribute to the fact that all information on social media is not authentic, but mediated for the audience. In this aspect, the present study aims to decipher the mediated aspect of social media.

Ahmad et al (2019) and Ali & Fatima (2016) in their studies, identified that Pakistanis were shown to use Social Networking Sites (SNSs) for social networking, obtaining political information, and disseminating political ideologies. To draw users and mobilize people to further their political objectives, political parties created their own independent accounts on social media networks and personal websites. Political parties and activists now rely heavily on social media to find, interact with, and stay in touch with supporters. Additionally, PTI, one of Pakistan's main political parties, was discovered to be the best example of how SNSs have successfully impacted Pakistan's younger population (Khan & Shahbaz, 2015).

Another study by Rafi, M.S. (2020) looked at; a) how political events are discussed on Facebook, a social media platform; b) if political expressions indicate anything about political representations; c) the effects of social media on Pakistani political discourse. In order to examine participant's political expression and representation on social media, he used a sample of 75 chosen people. The information was limited to the issue of disqualification related to the Facebook talks of the former prime minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif. The communicative actions and events were interpreted from a sociocultural perspective. It assumes that the communication habits of speakers determine their cultural context, which can be realized through their linguistic choices such as emoticons, videos, and comments on social media. The study observed a noticeable increase in young's people political participation in Punjab's urban districts. This may persuade political parties to increase their spending on social media advertisements. As one can clearly see the impact of social media on political discourse, has a huge influence on the new generation (Rafi,

2020). This is mirrored in the present study by analyzing how derisive language in tweets reflects and shape political representation and discourse in Pakistan.

Saqib Riaz in his article, “Effects of New Media Technologies on Political Communication” (2010) published in the Journal of Political Studies mentioned that through the use of social media, Pakistan is still evolving in terms of political communication. In democratic republics, political communication in developing or developed countries plays a vital role. Additionally, he mentioned examples from the United States, where extensive e-campaigns were used by Barack Obama’s supporters in order to promote his mandate as well as empower his narrative to make him win elections. Similarly in Africa, the Ghanaian presidential elections of 2008 were of paramount importance where two candidates were contesting along with substantial public support. Among new media technologies, Twitter played a significant role there and the results were astonishing as John Atta Mills who consecutively lost the last two elections, won as a result of an effective e-campaign (Riaz, 2010).

A recent study by Adil et al. (2021), entitled, "Use of Social Media as Political Information Source: The Case of Panama Leaks in Pakistan" examined the use of social media as a source for providing political information regarding Panama Leaks in Pakistan. It was qualitative in nature and used a survey method to collect data from the sample of 500 educated adults available in Lahore city of the Punjab Province of Pakistan. Inferential (independent sample test) and descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviations) statistics were used to analyze data. The findings of the study concluded that the majority of educated adults used social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia) on a daily basis to acquire a historical perspective of Panama Leaks (PL), understand political and economic conditions due to PL outbreak; be aware of court judgments of PL, update themselves with general discussions and opinions(Adil et al, 2021). This links with the present study, which analyzes how derisive tweets serve as a source of political information and influence public discourse.

The above-mentioned studies show the popularity of social media as a tool of communication. The use of social media has prompted researchers to look at how politicians disseminate their stance while using social media. People from the common

man to politicians use social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. These platforms are used to look for information, get involved in political discussions, and exchange opinions regarding national and international political issues. Some studies also observed the influence of politics on social media with respect to the behavior, mindset, and attitude of youth. Likewise, a study shows how social media creates propaganda about certain political issues in very recent times so as to disqualify a politician.

Twitter as stated in the introduction, is an important social media platform used in recent times by political figures to interact with their followers. The following section argues upon studies carried out on the use of Twitter for political motives.

2.2 Twitter as a Mode of Political Communication

One of the primary functions of the Internet is to serve as a tool for communication. Twitter is one of the popular social networking websites used by politicians in recent times. The growing number of users on Twitter has transformed it into a platform that helps politicians create, spread messages and influence the public, get involved with them, and collect their feedback. These days, social interaction and multidirectional communication guidelines govern the entire social media platform communication process. In contrast to traditional media, where responses are sometimes slow or nonexistent and communication is primarily focused on transmission of monologue, social media allows the public to effect media agendas. According to several studies, political figures use Twitter to influence the news media's agenda (Bane, 2019; Parmelee, 2014; Seethaler & Melischek, 2019). This is relevant to understanding how Pakistani politicians might use derisive tweets to shape public discourse and media narratives. Democrats, Republicans, and other politically engaged groups use Twitter to influence public opinion since tweets have a history of being persuasive. One analysis of congressional tweets found that they were largely used "to disseminate information" (Anthony, 2010) about matters that the politicians believe essential as well as "vehicles for self-promotion." This suggests that Pakistani politicians might similarly use derisive tweets to promote their own agendas and discredit opponents. Furthermore, Federal and state agencies also use Twitter to publicize their initiatives and draw attention to topics they believe are crucial (Golbeck et al., 2010: 1612). For example, the US Environmental

Agency tweets about public safety issues, and the US Department of Agriculture tweets about actions it is taking to fight childhood obesity (Howard, 2010).

Twitter played a significant impact in the US election of 2020. One important characteristic of Twitter is that it gives politicians direct access to the public political opinions (Conway, 2018: 36). For instance, President Donald Trump frequently attacks, insults, and taunts his rivals on Twitter, along with other topics that are destructive to other politicians, all to convince people that he is the superior candidate to lead the United States of America.

The role of Twitter in politics has been on the rise in recent years. There are many studies that have explored the use of Twitter by politicians. In one study, Graham & Broersma (2016) did a comparison between the usage of Twitter by British and Dutch Parliament candidates and revealed that Dutch candidates were more eager to use the communicative potential of Twitter, and it also appeared that the audience responded to the tweets by engaging in more conversation (Graham & Broersma, 2016). In addition, Oelsner, K., & Heimrich, L. (2015) explored that Twitter was the latest invention in political campaigning, and at all stages, German Members of Parliament (MPs) used Twitter which proved a beneficial step towards communication with voter associations. Busby & Grant, Moon (2010) observed the use of Twitter by Australian Politicians. The examination revealed that political leaders were using Twitter to carry out their political responsibilities and make contact with the audience and few of them were more confident than others. Those who used Twitter seemed more politically beneficial. In a short period of time, politicians around the globe have begun to use Twitter and Facebook to target their voters (Gulati & Williams, 2010).

To further explain the usage of social media and compare political behaviors from different countries, Aharony (2012) conducted research to investigate communication through Twitter. It was based on descriptive statistical analysis and content analysis of tweets from August to October 2010. The study chose tweets from the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu; the Prime Minister of Britain, David Cameron; and the president of the United States of America, Barack Obama. It was an exploratory study and findings revealed that the US president tweets the most as compared to others, while the

British Prime Minister tweets the least. All three politicians' reason behind Twitter use was transparency and outreach (Aharony, 2012).

Similarly, another study analyzed the characteristics and strategies of the Twitter posts employed by two candidates in Virginia's 2nd Congressional District election, in 2012. The study was the content analysis of the tweets. The selected candidates were Scot Rigell, the Republican Congressman, and the Democratic candidate, Paul Hirschbiel. The study findings unveiled that both politicians used Twitter to inform voters about day-to-day political activities and post information. Thus, the prominent role of social media in the election campaign was highlighted. In addition, it was also found that Rigell tweeted more through direct communication strategies, while Hirschbiel made use of personal messages to attract his followers. The tactical strategies were employed by both candidates to influence the public, stimulate voters, and separate themselves from their opponents (Caplan, 2013).

Another study in Korea found the use of social media among members of the national assembly. It was revealed that politicians used social media (Twitter, Homepages, Blogs) as a primary form of communication to manage election campaigns and establish relationships with voters, throughout non-election stages. Additionally, results indicated that among social media, Twitter was used most by politicians to disseminate information as well as communicate with fellow politicians (Hsu & Park, 2012). This suggests that Pakistani politicians might use derisive tweets as part of their campaign management and voter engagement strategies.

In light of the ever-changing dynamics of social media, a study analyzed the methods by which politicians and policymakers communicate with the public. It dealt with how these communications are changing and adjusting to the dynamic media environment, especially Twitter. The authors of the study looked at political Twitter users to understand how they used the platform and how they presented themselves there. According to findings, political Twitter users are less dismissive of traditional media and more interested in politics in general. The study suggested that Twitter contains a unique audience for political actors to target (Bode & Dalrymple, 2016).

Due to the increased use of Twitter for political communication, Di Fraia and Missaglia (2014) observed that a substantial number of Italian politicians have started using social media networks, particularly Twitter, as part of the Twitter-escalating change in political communication in Italy. The authors tried to understand the specific usage of new media and how politicians used them for their political agendas. The statistics of their survey-based investigation show that Twitter is mostly used in a top-down, unidirectional manner that fosters the traditional media's logical approach to political communication. It helps to get information across in one way and impacts the audience more (Di Fraia and Missaglia, 2014). This relates to how Pakistani politicians use derisive tweets to control the narrative and influence the public/users opinion.

In the context of Pakistan, there are some cases where we can see the influence of social media, especially Twitter, which is a new trend in the face of activism. Saifuddin Ahmed (2014) in his research article, “My Name is Khan: The Use of Twitter in the Campaign for the 2013 Pakistan General Election” focused on a campaign by Pakistan political parties to mobilize, inform, and engage voters during the elections. The study did a content analysis of 10140 tweets from the top four parties. The findings revealed significant differences in terms of usage patterns of PTI’s interaction with the public, more campaign updates, and greater mobilization of citizens to vote. The study analyzed data in two stages. The first part analyzed an archive of tweets posted over the duration of one month, from 10 April 2013 to 14 May 2013, as general elections were scheduled on 11th May 2013. The second part included the statistical data related to the General Elections 2013 provided by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) at their official website. The triangulation findings along with publicly available election data revealed that PTI’s success was largely driven by unique Twitter communication and face-to-face campaigning aimed at increasing voter turnout, especially among youth. Triangulation in research means using multiple data sets, methods, and theories to address a research question. It enhances the validity and reliability of one’s research findings and mitigates the presence of any research biasness (Ahmed, 2014). This can be linked to the use of derisive tweets to mobilize and influence voters.

Social media in Pakistan has emerged as an “essential element of political dissertation and communication in the modern era” (Muntean, 2015, pt.6). It has built a

new perception of how people engage in political discussions with one another. Social media is now vigorously used by politicians to stimulate their political ideologies and preferences as well as, improve their public image. In terms of political gain, politicians are now producers of their own internet-based content and are engaging far more consumers than ever before. Social media has positive as well as negative sides to it. Normatively, it should be done in a positive way but we have seen the negative side in prevailing times as it is used as a propaganda tool to defame others. One study entitled, “Crafting Political Images on Twitter: Analysis of Public Relation Strategy of Politicians of Pakistan” explored how politicians are using Twitter to build their image, what type of language they are using to communicate, and what sort of content they are posting on Twitter. The study used Twitter data of members of the National Assembly of Pakistan in the last democratic regime (2013-2018). Findings revealed that MNAs were busy creating negative images (defaming) by using critical language (Shami et al., 2020).

Recent developments have altered the true essence of things as we can have an opinionated text from social media. After buying a product, people tend to often express their views on Facebook or Twitter. They also express their sentiments and opinions on various social and political issues on social networking sites (SNSs). Twitter has become a significant platform for the expression of sentiments. Politicians sometimes use their sentiments to influence the public, to build a positive image among the public for their own political gains and hidden agendas. Saeed et al (2021) along with others did a sentiment analysis of Imran Khan’s Tweets. Sentiment analysis is a system of knowing polarity (positive, negative, neutral) in discourse. The study used Imran Khan’s tweets between 1st January and 20th November 2018. Findings revealed that he used all three types of sentiments, however, mostly used neutral or free polarity items (FPIs) which were 67.41% in his tweets. Between positive and negative ones, negative polarity items (NPIs) were higher i.e., 23.21% compared to positive polarity items (PPIs) i.e. 9.40%. The use of a negative face revealed that he tried to be independent, and autonomous in his decisions, to build a strong image of himself for the audience along with the use of a positive face to show solidarity with others (Saeed et al., 2021).

Not only in Pakistan, social media is used by Indian politicians as well. In an essay by Pal et al. (2016), it has been argued that social media are a self-sufficient form of media

outreach; traditional news media no longer play a role. The essay examined trends in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political discourse. It corresponded to four different periods through a study of historical patterns of re-tweeting and favoriting of his messages, follow-backs to other Twitter accounts, and evolving themes of messages prior to and following the election through a qualitative study. The essay revealed that the thoughtful construction of messages on Twitter has helped Modi to build a powerful online brand. His brand (@Narendra Modi) became a famous Twitter trend at that time, allowed him to build a strong image as an influential political leader, and emerge as a techno-savvy global leader who speaks directly to his audience (Pal et al., 2016).

In fact, Narendra Modi has a remarkable direct reach on social media. Modi's staff also manages a YouTube channel, a Facebook page with more than 28 million "likes," and other social media sites for example LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, and Tumblr in addition to the Twitter feed. In an industry often dominated by movie stars and young urbanites, Modi, a longstanding grassroots activist connected to social conservatives on the Indian political right, has been an odd figure to go to the top of the social media charts in India (Pal et al., 2016). The most re-tweeted tweet ever sent from India was made by Modi on May 16, 2014, the day his party won the general election. His triumph post, "India has won" served as a perfect example of the manner in which "@narendramodi" on Twitter has come to be associated with political discourse. Instead of merely thanking the people for their approval, he commended the Indian people for their wise decision (Pal et al., 2016).

The above-mentioned studies show that politicians not only in Pakistan but all across the globe use Twitter in contemporary times. It helps them to spread their political ideologies and influence the public thereby using social media strategically to gain popularity and improve their vote bank. However, it can be observed in the light of the studies mentioned above, what content these politicians post on Twitter so that their political motives can be analyzed. The present study intends to decipher their medicated ideologies. In recent times, social media has become a site to see public perception of politicians and government strategies. However, not much work is done on how politicians use and misuse social media for their political interests and hidden agendas.

Twitter has become a prominent platform for political communication and provides a unique space for individuals, including politicians, to express their opinions and engage in discourse. The brevity imposed by Twitter's character limit necessitates concise and impactful statements, making it an ideal medium for conveying political messages. In the context of derisive Pakistani political tweets, a socio-pragmatic study can unravel the intricacies of language use, power dynamics, and social relationships. Analyzing linguistic choices, rhetorical strategies, and the social implications of derisive tweets allows a deeper understanding of how political communication unfolds in the digital realm. Such socio-linguistic studies not only shed light on the language dynamics within political discussions on Twitter but also contribute to a broader comprehension of the socio-political landscape in which these online interactions take place. The following section discusses sociolinguistic studies on political discourse including Twitter and political leader's speeches.

2.3 Sociolinguistic Studies on Political Discourse

Language is not always seen as a neutral vehicle that represents reality. It is sometimes used as a tool to discriminate, insult, abuse, and belittle others. We have seen it in the form of sexism which involves the use of language to discriminate against women by representing them negatively, or which you can say assume explicitly that activities primarily associated with women are not necessarily trivial. It has an effect on society, how we portray gender, stereotyping one while downplaying another, creating negative images especially related to women, and marginalizing them (Atei & Al-Azzawi, 2021). This is also quite apparent in the field of politics where men are subjugating women, making negative images of them, giving rise to a male-dominated society. It is trivial to note the connection between language and society and how people especially politicians are using language for their motives and the different factors which influence it. Wardhaugh (2006:13) notes that sociolinguistics is a field of study that focuses on examining the connections between language and society, to better understand the structure of language. There are many studies done from different perspectives on political discourse mainly on politician's speeches and tweets, using different theoretical frameworks. It helps to

understand the sociolinguistic connection and impact on the use of language, especially by politicians.

Ghachem (2015) in his paper attempted to unveil the social representations present in the discourse of the British Conservative Party Leader. It is aimed at the interface between discourse, cognition, and society. He chose David Cameron's pre-election speeches from back in 2010 for this purpose. The study used systematic functional linguistics (SFL) and the socio-cognitive approach as the theoretical framework. The focus was on the discourse structures of personal pronouns, transitivity, and nominalization. The study looked at how Cameron interacted with the audience based on shared assumptions, knowledge, and ideology. His rhetoric was shaped to garner support and convince others that they had similar ideas (Ghachem, 2015). The present study highlights how Pakistani politicians might use derisive tweets to manipulate public perception and garner support through shared ideologies.

In the same study, the identification of Us and Them, according to their beliefs is revealed through agency analysis. Agency (also called agentivity) is a common concern in critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) studies. Gunn (2009) defines agency as the ability to act and to bring out change. The Agent then becomes the person who stands behind the change and causes it. Nominalization, personal pronouns, and transitivity among the discourse structures are used to frame agency. It also reveals that agency in a discourse reflects power and manipulation. The study, for instance, in the analysis of nominalization, shows foregrounding of Cameron as US not only includes the conservatives, but all British citizens regardless of their political affiliations. It applies to the speaker's social representation as he doesn't mention his or party's negative image and does so for others (Ghachem, 2015). This may contribute to how power, a sociolinguistic variable, is exercised through discourse by politicians.

The ever-increasing use of social media in the 21st century has provided people with more space for dialogue, and individual expression. It allows users to talk, comment, opine, and debate on social and political agendas. This exercise of commenting, opining, and debating has resulted in the form of sexist hate speech. Iginio and Gagliardone (2014) found out that these social media outlets have allowed sexists to locate their discriminative

voices, which is not possible in traditional media and mainstream media. Their sexist voices often send women into the periphery and incite gender stereotypes, because of the prevalence of patriarchal set-ups in Asian countries. On social media, public figures and celebrities, including women from politics, media, and entertainment, are potentially highlighted groups that receive sexist comments (stereotypes) and opinions. In the context of Tanzania, Elias & Gurbanova (2018) examined the linguistic characteristics of sexist hate speech on social media (Facebook and Instagram). They learned how social media conversation reflects gender stereotypes. This study employed content analysis and critical discourse analysis techniques to analyze the discourse, and data was gathered from the stories of famous people and public personalities to reveal the sexism in Tanzanian culture.

Also, in the study, sexism is used to mute women when they appear to challenge traditional male roles. For instance, phrases like “we mwanamke (you woman) and demu (unmarried lady in a casual way)” on social media present women diminutively with stereotyped roles. It has been noted that language is pervasively gendered and it selects or carries ideological constructs of a particular community in either way (Elias & Gurbanova, 2018). This may relate to the use of language on social media which is pervading patriarchal ideologies, male politicians use it to subjugate women, indirectly propagating power through discourse.

Similarly, another study looked into how language may be a tool for abuse and discrimination against members of a certain group or society. Additionally, it is used to marginalize women in society and discriminate against them. The authors of the study used critical discourse analysis as a methodology to examine Donald Trump's sexist remarks. It exposed Trump's sexist philosophy, which inevitably breeds sexist discourse. Researchers looked at the structural, lexical, and rhetorical processes that lead to the development of discriminatory and derogatory discourse. The author used Mills' model of sexism (2008) and Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework (2006) to assess Trump's ideas. This study found that Trump's ideology portrayed men as superior and women as subordinate. Trump employed a number of linguistic and rhetorical devices to degrade women. Metaphors and vocabulary with negative connotations were investigated in his speech (Darweesh & Abdullah, 2016). This parallels how Pakistani politicians use derisive tweets to subjugate and belittle opponents.

Language in political discourse plays a key role. It helps the politicians to make, build, confirm, and propagate their respective ideologies. A study was conducted on Benazir Bhutto's final speech, the former prime minister of Pakistan (1988-1990 and 1993-1996). Soon after she delivered the speech, she was assassinated while leaving the venue of her political gathering. The fundamental ideology driving the speech was examined. It focused on the speech discourse to examine how linguistic devices were used with an aim to promote her political ideas. In order to analyze the socio-cognitive boundary, a socio-cognitive approach was taken as well. The study used critical discourse analysis (CDA) to identify the ideological features, power relations, and socio-cognitive boundary through content analysis. It was found that various techniques, like the use of emotional attachment, mind control, history distortion, and creating negative enemy images helped the speaker to navigate her party ideology to the audience. According to Van Dijk (1993), mind control is another way to replicate dominance and hegemony. Politicians control the minds of listeners by giving them information about which people do not have sufficient knowledge. Hence, history distortion. The use of “political orphans” by Benazir Bhutto for opposition was an argumentative move to give positive self-representation and negative others. In conclusion, it was elucidated that the speaker used all good forms of linguistic features for her party and negative for the opponents. The study showed that political rhetoric was used to sway people's opinions (Memon et al., 2014).

Similarly, another study examined the comparative use of diplomatic language through critical discourse analysis of Z.A. Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif's speeches. In diplomatic discourse, diplomats, executives, and decision-makers frequently use historical analogies to strengthen their ideologies and make their opinions broadly acceptable in order to influence the masses. The speeches were delivered at the UN Security Council on 15th December 1971 and General Assembly on 21st September 2016. In the study, audio-visual analysis along with documentary was done with the help of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It showed the use of linguistic choices which helped both prime ministers to propagate their domestic ideology and power politics in their speeches. The findings of the study unveiled that context (pragmatics) played a pivotal role as Zulfikar Ali Bhutto broke all conventional norms of diplomatic language. He excessively used an aggressive tone, personal references, and blunt language in his speech because his country

was at war at that time. In his comparison, Nawaz Sharif avoided the use of personal references and an aggressive tone as his context was not alarming. Furthermore, the extensive use of stylistic devices and rhetoric was observed in Z.A. Bhutto's speech. Critical discourse analysis helped to reveal the relationship between language, identity, and ideology (Talib & Khaleel, 2021). In a nutshell, context affects the use of language in political discourse, the present study aims to delineate this concept in political tweets.

A study entitled, “An Ideological Analysis of the Former President Donald Trump’s Tweets During Covid-19” aimed to explore the former US President Donald Trump’s representation of “us” and “others”. It was based on his tweets and how he portrayed the representation of “us” and “others”. The study used a sample of tweets by Donald Trump about COVID-19 that was selected from January to May 2020. The ideological framework proposed by Van Dijk (1997) was used as a theoretical framework to reveal the underlying intentions and ideologies of us and other representations. The results of the study indicated that Donald Trump portrayed a positive us group and a negative others group. In addition, different strategies like argumentation, comparison, repetition, capitalization, and metaphors were typically used by Trump to portray both groups (Lou et al., 2022).

In the study, the ideological analysis i.e., CDA helped in understanding the meaning of the discourse of tweets. It was found that consistent positive portrayal of the us-group and negative portrayal of the others-group were not always apparent as there were some changes when given descriptions to both groups, which may well be coherent concerning the basic interest of the groups. For instance, he used positive expressions to describe and praise China initially for their hard work, and great job in handling COVID-19. It was due to the fact that initially there were fewer numbers at the start, which increased later for which he blamed China for its incompetence and mass deaths (Luo et al., 2022). It also posits how politicians use language strategically to convey their implicit ideologies in their political discourse.

With the advent of social media platforms, “going negative” has become a new phenomenon in political discourse. It is frequently seen, especially in connection to political campaigns. Another study, entitled “Going Negative: An Appraisal Analysis of the Rhetoric of Donald Trump on Twitter” explored a corpus of selected tweets (2016-

2017) of President Donald Trump. His tweets were examined in relation to his use of negativity as a rhetorical political strategy. The analysis was guided by SFL (systemic functional linguistics) and the Appraisal framework by Martin and White (2005) which is concerned with the evaluation of language. It closely analyzed interpersonal language to examine his rhetoric and strategies of ‘going negative’ and character assassination. SFL takes language in use i.e., language is described and analyzed according to the context in which it operates (Halliday, 1978). The findings of the study revealed that in order to carry out an approach of “going negative” Trump used the appraisal system in a variety of ways, with the ultimate aim to attack and undermine the character of his opponents. It can be seen in frequent negative judgments of Henry Clinton as well as any other (Democrats), activities connected to her. It was shown explicitly through Trump's use of “crooked Hillary”- a top-trended tweet of that time (Caldwell & Ross, 2020). It also relates to the derisive nature of political tweets and shows how language is used creatively by politicians.

Discourse analysis focuses on how discursive construction is understood and how it affects society. It is a research method used for studying written or oral language in relation to its social context. It aims to understand how language is used in real-life situations. A study was done by Tahsin (2019) entitled, “Discourse Analysis of PM Imran Khan’s Speeches during Foreign Visits for Economic Recovery of Pakistan”. He investigated the discursive practices in the form of linguistic devices employed by PM Imran Khan to construct the discourse of economic recovery for Pakistan. It was a qualitative study based on a content analysis method collected from a sample of three speeches during his official visits to Saudi Arabia, China, and Turkey. To determine the variance in their use, the frequency of repeated terms was also examined. The findings of the study unveiled that a discourse of hope regarding the economic recovery of Pakistan was constructed successfully by PM Imran Khan. It was done by manipulating a variety of discursive practices like the use of specific terminology, repetition, figurative expressions, active voice, cohesiveness, constructive self-impression, and allusions. The hidden purpose was to attract foreign investors and to give a ray of hope to the Pakistanis back home (Tahsin, 2019). This suggests that Pakistani politicians use specific linguistic choices in their tweets to construct desired narratives and influence public perception.

Similarly, another study carried out a critical discourse analysis of Imran Khan Dharna speeches from a Socio-political perspective. It tried to explore and unveil the power play behind Dharna 2014 speeches of Imran Khan. Fairclough's theoretical perspective of power (2003) was followed in two dimensions i.e., power within and behind discourse. Thematic analysis was used as a research method. The speeches were analyzed on discursive, textual, and societal levels of discourse. The findings of the study revealed the use of the personal pronoun, “I” by the speaker to show his power and “We” to gain the support of the audience and reflect his power on the rulers. In his speeches, he thoroughly explained the unjust rule of government through the use of linguistic tools like modal verbs, transitivity, and harsh vocabulary. This is how power was exhibited through the use of language in his speeches. It showed how language creates and sustains power relations and vice versa, the influence of power on the use of language. When it comes to the power behind discourse, the power of Islam and the West was highly observed in his speeches (Nusrat et al., 2020). This may contribute to view power, a sociolinguistic variable, and how politicians manipulate it through the use of language in their tweets as well.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a critical, interdisciplinary approach to discourse, which takes language as a form of social practice. It essentially deals with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships as manifested in language. It studies language in relation to its social context. A study analyzed the hate speeches by Nigerian politicians using the CDA framework. Some of the hate speeches by politicians were selected and analyzed. Data was collected using a random sampling technique from the Nigerian dailies. The data includes hate speeches against opposing parties or individuals. The study was descriptive in nature. The study elucidated hate speeches as the use of accusations and judgments, mockery and degradation, propagation, and solving problems using disdain statements. In addition, it was also unraveled that the use of rhetoric by the members of the All-Progressive Congress (APC) and People’s Democratic Party (PDP) showed power and dominance over one another (Obiora et al., 2021).

A study analyzed rhetorical tropes in Donald Trump’s first speech to the UN through the lens of critical discourse analysis. The study focused on the functions of some rhetorical strategies like parallelism, anaphora, expletive, nominalization, and passivization as well as lexical and textual analysis. The speech was delivered at the UN

on September 19, 2017. The findings revealed that Trump used various tropes in his speech to create, convey, and enforce powerful political ideologies to his audience. It was done to make his speech eloquent, influential, manipulative, and pre-planned as well. Additionally, it was also found that Trump's speech carried some serious cynical and negative attitudes towards some governments like Iran and North Korea. It was done intentionally to create a negative attitude toward those countries and build a negative image of them worldwide (Derakhshani et al., 2021). This may contribute to how language is used strategically by politicians to sway public opinion.

Sociolinguistic studies on political discourse play a crucial role in unraveling the intricate relationship between language use and social structures within the realm of politics. When delving into derisive Pakistani political tweets as part of a socio-pragmatic study, the focus extends beyond linguistic choices to encompass the pragmatic aspects of communication. Pragmatics, in this context, explores how language is used in specific social contexts to achieve communication goals, and it reflects the speaker's intentions and the socio-cultural norms of the community. In essence, the relationship between sociolinguistic studies and pragmatics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the intricate interplay between language, society, and politics in online political discourse. The following section argues upon the studies in the domain of pragmatics on political discourse.

2.4 Pragmatic Approaches to the Study of Political Discourse

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies how people use language in context. It examines the relationship between language and the users of language, and how context shapes the meaning of language. It is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener, and how context affects the interpretation of meaning. Political tweets often involve the use of pragmatic language to achieve goals. Politicians may use sarcasm or irony to make a point or may use language in a way that is intended to appeal to a particular audience. Nowadays, everyone can see the importance of the internet. Twitter is becoming a major social networking site, especially related to political discourse. Besides the positive sides, there are some negative issues that media unknowingly may reflect, which are little known to readers. Politicians

use language not only to communicate but also to gain their hidden agendas by portraying others as negative through different techniques like bullying, taunting, sarcasm, etc. Various studies have incorporated pragmatic approaches to analyze political tweets and speeches using different theoretical frameworks.

Cyberbullying in Trump's tweets was examined in a paper titled "Bullying in Trump's Tweets through Covid-19: A Pragmatic Approach." The perpetrator of cyberbullying might hide their identity behind any kind of digital device. As a result, the attacker can attack the victim more easily without having to wait to see how the victim will react. Several pragmatic theories, including implicature, pragmatic metaphor, and politeness, were used to examine the data. The study's primary objectives were to demonstrate whether Trump either overt or covert bullying; to make clear the civility techniques he might employ in his tweets; and to illuminate the subliminal messages conveyed by Trump's messages. The survey-based research found that Trump bullied others, particularly those who disagreed with him, such as China and Biden. Additionally, it was noted that he employed direct tactics to intimidate Biden or China, demonstrating his severe nature. He employed a number of techniques, including overt record impoliteness, negative record impoliteness, and positive impoliteness. In order to uncover his mocking behavior, the pragmatic strategy of implicature was used as well (Hameed Ma'yuuf & Abbas, 2022). This highlights how Pakistani politicians might use derisive tweets to intimidate and attack opponents covertly using digital platforms.

Similarly, another study, "A Cognitive-Pragmatic Analysis of Trump's Political Tweets" was concerned with the analysis of irony in Trump's political tweets. Irony as a cognitive-pragmatic concept represents the discrepancy between more than one level of meaning which is conceptualized through the mapping between source and target. To analyze tweets, a model that mixes cognitive and pragmatic approaches to irony was used. The analysis revealed conclusions that are relevant to political discourse. The most significant was that irony is used as an important strategy in politics as it is related to revealing the different purposes of using language like congruity and discrepancy whose implications can only be found by mapping the source and target domains of meaning (Khadim & Merzah, 2021). The present study may suggest that Pakistani politicians use similar strategies to convey layered meanings and satirize political opponents.

Another study, entitled “Linguistic and Pragmatic Devices in King Abdullah’s Speech: A Political Discourse Analysis” investigated a speech delivered by King Abdullah of Jordan at Oxford University. The author started by outlining the growth of the concept of discourse, along with elucidating features of political discourse. The study analyzed the linguistic and pragmatic devices used in the speech. The findings revealed distinctive features used in discourse like the use of first-person deixis, metaphor as a rhetoric figure, repetition, and the pragmatic use of language. The analysis concluded that speech can be envisaged as a political discourse whose structure is influential and convincing (Bataineh, 2019). This suggests that Pakistani politicians could use/employ rhetorical devices to assert authority and persuade audience/users.

Rehman et al. (2021) in their study, “Persuasion and Political Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Imran Khan UNGA Speech (74th Session:2019)” explored the power of language to reveal the ideologies and visions of political leaders. It investigated the speech of the Prime Minister of that time, Imran Khan at the UNGA 74th session. The speech focused on national as well as international issues like money laundering, islamophobia, climate change, and the Kashmir issue. The study tried to reveal and uncover the ideologies and visions which was behind that speech. The speech was analyzed qualitatively through the Fairclough model. In the study, it was observed how different linguistic tools (rhetorical devices) were used to gain political gains and hidden objectives. Many key points like repetition, word choices, the implication of words, context, and impact of speech were discussed. In addition, politicians’ use of certain linguistic choices to convince the audience to follow their visions and ideologies was also highlighted (Rehman et al., 2021).

Similarly, Ulrikayanti (2022) carried out “Pragmatics Analysis on anger expression in #IndonesiaTerserah on Twitter”. In the study, she attempted to identify the intention and pragma-linguistic forms of anger expression in tweets using #IndonesiaTerserah. A pragmatic analysis framework was used to analyze the corpus of thirty tweets. The data was collected using the Twitter Archiver Program (API). While analyzing the data, the illocutionary acts and pragma-linguistics forms were focused. The findings revealed that the main intention of using #indonesiaterserah was to state the facts and give their opinion regarding the issue. Ancillary, the irritated feeling dominated the intention of using the

#indonesiaterserah. Based on the findings, the study also found that anger in a thinly veiled form of cynical humor was expressed to make the message more straightforward to the addressees (Ulrikayanti, 2022). The present study relates to understand discourse strategies in Pakistani political tweets.

Sarah (2018) in her article entitled, “Language in Political Discourse: A Pragmatic Study of Presupposition and Politeness in the Inaugural Speech of President Donald Trump” investigated the pragmatic presuppositions made and politeness strategies employed by Trump in the speech delivered at his inauguration ceremony. The inauguration ceremony for a new president is probably a worldwide custom. It is a ceremony that serves as the president’s commencement of official status. The inaugural speech is an important component of the inauguration rituals, and people typically look forward to it because of the comforting assurances and promises it conveys. The text of the speech was downloaded from the internet and ninety-nine (99) sentences in it were numbered for close analysis and ease of reference. The findings of the study revealed that Trump presupposes the uniqueness of the event in itself, among other things, and the socio-economic crisis affecting America, the necessity and urgency of saving it. With regard to politeness strategies, the paper unravels both face-saving and face-threatening acts performed by the speaker and various strategies deployed by Trump. In the end, it was concluded that although Trump strived hard to mitigate the effects of threats aimed at prior American Presidents, the poignancies of the threat nevertheless endure as painfully unforgettable due to their magnitude and focus (Sarah, 2018).

In another study, Mokhlos & Mukheef (2020) carried out a pragmatic analysis of litotes in Trump’s political speeches. Litotes is defined as a figure of speech that uses negation to create an affirmative understatement. It was concerned with identifying and analyzing litotes in Trump’s political speeches on a pragmatic level. The study aimed at identifying the illocutionary force of litotes, the functions of litotes, which maxim of Grice was mainly used in the production of litotes to produce implicature, and which type of litotes was heavily used by Trump. Data consisted of four texts from speeches during his tenure between 2016 and 2019. The findings concluded that the illocutionary force of litotes most of the time was asserting. It was mainly used to fulfill the function of emphasis but can be used to perform the functions of encouraging and inciting. Additionally, it was

also found that Trump used contrary litotes in most of his speeches (Mokhlos & Mukheef, 2020). The present study aims to indicate how Pakistani political tweets might use understatement for rhetorical effect to emphasize points or critique opponents subtly.

Oduola & Olajumoke (2019) studied hate speeches in Nigerian Presidential Campaign advertisements in 2015 and 2019. It was a pragma-semiotic analysis; discursive images and pragmatic acts used in hate speeches to negotiate meaning were studied. The study used pragmatic act theory by Jacob Mey's (2001) and Gunter Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen's (2006) discourse analysis approach. The sample of the study was five speeches selected through purposive sampling from the Punch and the Guardian Newspapers, due to their ability to project sensitive political messages. The findings revealed different pragmatic acts like condemning, warning, challenging, and accusing acts. The visual portrayal of hate speeches foregrounded various semiotic features such as contact, the value of information, salience, and framing in constructing representational significance. Both the use of verbal and visual modes reflected that political parties in Nigeria employed derogatory expressions to boost their own prestige while degrading the opposing party. They used it to ridicule and lower each other's self-esteem (Oduola & Olajumoke, 2019). This reflects potential strategies in Pakistani political tweets to influence public opinion through derogatory discourse.

Similarly, another study carried out a pragmatic study of racial hate speech. The main aim of the study was to identify the speech acts employed in articles published in a Rwandan newspaper called Kangura. The study chose seven extracts that represented hate speech in racial contexts. It covered articles from November 1990 to February 1994, disseminated by Kangura, that were famous for their role in shaping the aggressive ideology of Hutus towards Tutsis. Searle's classification of speech acts (1975) was used as an analytical framework for the study. The results of the study revealed various pragmatic acts like dehumanizing, criticizing, abusing, and belittling were done through the use of directives; used mostly (48.64 %) along with assertiveness, and expressive. The analysis revealed directives outnumbered all other speech acts in representing racial hate speech. It helped the propagators (Hutu people) to incite hatred, violence, and negative attitudes toward Tutsis (Dhayef & Ali, 2020). This gives insights into how extreme language in political tweets can polarize and marginalize groups.

The next section deals with socio-pragmatics studies on political discourse.

2.5 Socio-Pragmatics Studies on Political Discourse

A limited number of studies have been carried out on political discourse with a sociopragmatics lens. However, these studies have paved the way for the present research. The political discourse of Twitter is explored with the help of Sociopragmatics. Sociopragmatics is the combination of sociolinguistics and pragmatics. It deals with the study of how people use language in social interactions. It looks at how language is used to achieve goals, establish social relationships, and convey social meaning. It focuses on the context in which language is used, including the speaker's intentions, the listener's expectations, and the social norms that govern the communication. With respect to political discourse and especially political tweets, it deals with how politicians use language to achieve their hidden agendas and goals. The context in which the tweets are written, the intended audience, and the social norms all play a role in shaping the language used in political tweets. Politicians may use humor in their tweets to achieve social goals, such as building rapport with their audience or discrediting their opponents. There are a few studies done from the socio-pragmatics perspective on tweets. They are argued here under.

A Sociopragmatics analysis of Trump's Political Tweets' Taunt (Radhi, 2021) shows how language is used in communication, and analyzes the meaning of language in the social setting. Therefore, pragmatics and sociolinguistics must be combined. The study aimed to identify the functions of the taunt, the purpose of the taunt, the social variables of the taunt, the speech act of expression, and the type that was frequently used by Donald Trump. The analysis was carried out on four tweets collected from the official account of Trump during the period of the 2020 election. The study findings concluded that the verbal mode of taunt was used by Trump most of the time along with the speech act of criticizing. Taunt was used by Trump to fulfill the purpose of insulting, attacking, provoking, and sometimes mocking and laughing at the target. The most achieved purposes by Trump were defamation, humiliation, irritation, and challenging the targets (Radhi, 2021).

Many researchers examined common phrases, discourse techniques, and representations of Trump himself and others in Trump's tweets. Tasente (2020) identified the most frequent expressions in Donald Trump's tweets, which provided a basis for further

research. This provides basis for examining the linguistic patterns and expressions used by Pakistani politicians to construct derisive messages and shape public perception. Piksar (2018) investigated discourse techniques and how Trump “himself” and “others” were portrayed in his tweets in more detail. It was discovered that Trump aimed to present himself favorably by disparaging others or by portraying them negatively through nabbing, arguing, and intensifying. The present study offers insights into how Pakistani politicians might similarly craft their tweets to create favorable self-images while negatively portraying their adversaries.

According to Cameron (2015:8), there is overwhelming evidence of male dominance in the situation that is most immediately relevant to this present study's focus: political speech in contemporary democracies. A recent analysis, presented by Christopher Karpowitz and Tali Mendelberg in their book, *The Silent Sex* (2014), demonstrated that women are typically a minority of those who speak, even when they are a majority of those present, at every level of political discussion and democratic decision-making, from the town meeting to the national legislature. This suggests that improving women's "substantive" representation does not always result from improving their "descriptive" representation (i.e., their numbers in an institution) (i.e., the extent to which their views influence the decision-making process). Even research demonstrating the opposite result—men becoming more verbally dominant as women's numbers rise is cited by Karpowitz and Mendelberg (Kathlene, 1994: 560–576). The present study examines the language used by Pakistani female politicians on Twitter and how gender may influence their rhetorical strategies.

Another study by (Oraibi, 2023) focused on the position as a power dynamic in political speeches. It aimed to find out the way speech act is used to reflect position differences in the political speeches of two American politicians, Joe Biden, and a defense minister, Austin. The study focused on the use of politeness strategies which helped both politicians to reflect position differences. The study adopted an eclectic model which consisted of Searle's classification of speech acts (1976), Levinson's politeness strategies (1978), and Grice's Maxims (1975). The findings of the study revealed that Biden used the representative speech act the most as he said, “You haven't found one person, one world leader to say America going backward”. He reflected on his position (representative) being

America's president and has the right to talk about America's position in the world. Positive politeness was used 100 times (54.48%) as he tried to build rapport and make direct contact with members of American Society. It helped him to forge trust with the public as the only one who was best for America. Biden used the relation maxim the most to make his points relevant. It also reflects his hidden policy to remain relevant to the actions and keep positive relations with the audience and reporters especially (Oraibi, 2023). This study investigates how Pakistani politicians use derisive language in tweets to assert dominance, build rapport or challenge rivals, reflect their socio-political positioning.

Conclusion/Research Gap

The studies mentioned above recognize the role of different social media platforms in disseminating political discourse. The studies on Twitter employed various theoretical underpinnings from the fields of Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics. All the studies focus on the generic aspect of language use. Only a few studies focus on the use of verbal humor to express political stances. One of the studies highlights the use of taunts as a technique of humor in Trump's political tweets. Another study also recognizes the use of irony as a pragmatic phenomenon in Trump's political tweets. These studies consider context and sociolinguistic variables integral to the tweets of foreign political leaders. Also in recent times, an ample amount of work has been done on hate discourse in the speeches and tweets of foreign political leaders. These studies affirm that politicians use derisive remarks to degrade opponents and make fun of them. The use of verbal humor as a technique in Pakistani political tweets to be studied with the help of the socio-pragmatic approach is a topic that is yet to be explored. This allows the researcher to fill in the gap in the domain of Sociopragmatics.

Gender dynamics in derisive political tweets is another area to be researched. There is a disparate online political experience that has not been emphasized in any of the studies mentioned above. A crucial topic of research is to determine what kind of derisive remarks female politicians use and what male politicians say. Such a gendered-oriented approach can help us gain a deeper grasp of how the two genders make use of language in online political discourse in Pakistan.

There is still a deficit of researches that focus on studying mockery in Pakistani political tweets. Even though a large amount of literature on political communication and online discourse has already covered many forms of language use. There is a lack of focus on the aspects of travesty, humor, and the sociolinguistic variables encoded in the lexical choices in the tweets. These aspects are interpreted only to uncover the complexity of comedy and satire in political debate.

Although studies have addressed the topic of humor in political discourse, a thorough classification of the linguistic patterns of humor that are included in the composition of tweets by Pakistani politicians is lacking. A comprehensive analysis of these humorous tweets also mediates the political ideologies of the users. For understanding the socio-pragmatics of mockery in Pakistani political tweets, the study is crucial.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present chapter delineates the methodology employed in the study. It gives details of the research design, data collection, population, sample, sampling technique, and research method. Moreover, the theoretical frameworks have been explained. It also provides an outline of the data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This study falls under mixed-method research. It is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. It is qualitative because it is descriptive in nature. It focuses on lexical choices and analyzes the influence of social factors on those lexical choices. The present study is also quantitative in nature because the frequency of the categories as well as social factors prove the reliability of data. According to Polkinghorne (1983), the term "qualitative research" includes a variety of approaches like critical discourse analysis, grounded theory, ethnography, semiotics, and discourse analysis. It explains many levels of analysis, each focusing on how meaning is created in a communicative action that uses verbal and nonverbal cues. It emphasizes characteristics rather than evaluating the statistical facts. According to Creswell, quantitative research is, "an investigation of a social or human issue based on putting to the test a theory made up of variables, measured with statistics, and evaluated with statistical methods to see if the theory's general predictions are accurate" (Creswell, 2014). The study investigates verbal humor in political tweets while using the General Theory of verbal humor. The categories of verbal humor are demonstrated with the help of statistical data (frequency and percentage) which makes the present study quantitative.

3.2 Data Collection

The data for the present study includes derisive political tweets from four selected political figures from two Pakistani political parties. The data is gathered over a span of eight months i.e., January to August 2022. The tweets of the Ex-Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek I Insaf, Imran Khan, ex-information minister for Punjab Fayyaz Ul Hassan

Chohan, PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and ex-federal minister for planning and development Ahsan Iqbal are under scrutiny for the use of verbal humor as well as as sites of revealing their respective stances on gender, class, and power.

The steps for data collection have been taken from Gao's(1989) and they are followed in a hierarchy and thus, enumerated here under:

- “To determine what material should be included in the analysis,
- to select the units of analysis, to develop coding strategies,
- to code the material, and
- to collect the data, evaluate and interpret the outcome” (p. 9).

The study focuses on the analysis of verbal humor and its effect on creating sociocultural images of political figures. The study's main focus lies particularly on the use of language when these figures portray themselves on Twitter accounts, and how they use language to present images of others and themselves in the selected political tweets.

The tweets of the four politicians can be considered relevant data because they offer a wide range of amusing statements and colorful depictions of derisive remarks in their usage of language. The choice of humorous tweets is selected and then the coding procedures are applied to these occurrences which the researcher gathered over a period of eight months. The chosen utterances are further coded by dividing them into the categories of verbal humor proposed by Shades (1996), each of which had a percentage associated with it. Coding is then followed by data analysis using Salvatore Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humor which describes each amusing statement containing six knowledge resources. When the amusing utterances were examined, several derisive remarks emerged. They have been presented as being an integral aspect of these selected political figures' persona.

3.3 Population

Population refers to units one is interested in studying or examining (Marshall, 1996).

These units can include people, cases, and pieces of data gathered from different sources.

The target population for the present study includes political tweets of Pakistani politicians.

3.4 Sample

Due to liability of cost and time restraints, it is unfeasible to examine the truth about the whole population. Marshall (1996) recommended creating a sample that would be a proper representation of the entire population to address this issue in research. Considering the sample size is very important since it has a direct impact on the caliber of the study that will be produced. To prevent bias, the sample size should not be either too small or too large; instead, it should be accurately representative of the entire population.

The sample for the present study includes derisive tweets from two selected political parties. It consists of twelve tweets from the selected four politicians. Thus, it makes a total of forty-eight tweets for examination. All the chosen tweets from Imran Khan's handle are in English language. All the chosen tweets from Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan's handle are in Urdu language. There are only two tweets of Maryam Nawaz and two tweets of Ahsan Iqbal in English. However, the rest of the tweets from these later figures are in Urdu. Those tweets have been translated first and then evaluated by an expert informant, Dr. Farooq Alam, from the esteemed National University of Modern Languages, Rawalpindi Branch. Interestingly, the respective Urdu tweets are facilitated with English translations on the twitter site but those translations were erroneous because they were word for word renderings by machine translator.

The present study uses a nonprobability purposive sampling technique. This technique helped the researcher to choose units/data that she finds relevant to the study. This technique's key characteristic is the researcher's judgment in the analysis of the data to create the sample. In the context of a qualitative study, this sampling strategy is justified; the purposive sampling technique is to include only derisive political tweets to highlight verbal humor and to see the influence of social variables on the socio-cultural representations of the selected politicians (Doherty, 1994).

3.5 Research Method

According to Miles (1994), content analysis is used to analyze the humorous utterances in political tweets. The use of content analysis in this situation is justified since it may be used to comprehend and evaluate recorded information about human cultures and behavior. Content analysis is a systematic analysis of the content of a text (e.g. who says what, to whom, why, and to what extent and with what effect) in a qualitative or quantitative manner (Miles, 1994). The present study includes content chosen from the Twitter website.

3.6 Theoretical Framework

3.6.1 General Theory of Verbal Humor

The primary theoretical framework guiding the present study is the General Theory of Verbal Humor by Salvatore Attardo (1994). This theory offers insight into the linguistic analysis of humor. The General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) was proposed by Victor Raskin and Salvatore Attardo in 1991 in an article titled, “Script Theory Revisited: Joke Similarity and Joke Representation Model”. This theory was proposed in the revision of the Semantic-Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) theory (1985) which deals with the semantic analysis of humor. The General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) by Attardo (1994) is the appropriate framework for this study as it provides a structured approach to analyzing humor beyond just semantics, while incorporating both linguistic and pragmatic dimensions. This theory is particularly relevant to political discourse, where humor is strategically used to construct ridicule, assert dominance, and shape public perception. The six knowledge resources of GTVH—Script Opposition, Logical Mechanism, Situation, Target, Narrative Strategy, and Language—allow for a detailed examination of how humor operates in political tweets. Script Opposition helps explain how politicians contrast ideas (e.g., competence vs. incompetence) to ridicule opponents, whereas Logical Mechanisms such as irony, exaggeration, and put-down humor highlight the rhetorical strategies used in political taunts. The Target component is especially crucial, as it identifies the individuals or groups being mocked, in shedding light on power dynamics and ideological conflicts. Given that Twitter is a platform where politicians use humor concisely yet effectively, GTVH facilitates with a comprehensive model to deconstruct the linguistic

strategies and sociopragmatic implications embedded in derisive political tweets. The linguistic study of humor is better understood with the aid of Attardo's theory. Six components of verbal humor were proposed by the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH). Attardo (1994) refers to these components as knowledge resources embedded in the language patterns of humor (p. 15). They are as follows: Script Opposition (SO), Logical Mechanism (LM), Situation (SI), Target (TA), Narrative Strategy, and Language (LA).

I) Script Opposition (SO):

The two scripts are presented in this knowledge resource in a way that they conflict with one another. Attardo (1996) states that script contrast, in humor, denotes antagonism between genuine and fictional situations. Three categories of script opposition are possible vs. impossible, normal vs. atypical, and actual vs. non-actual (SO). Ruskin, whose list of the most frequent SOs includes good vs. bad, high vs. low, life vs. death, money vs. non-money, and obscene vs. non-obscene, is cited by Attardo (1994).

II) Logical Mechanism (LM):

According to Attardo (1996), script opposition causes inappropriateness that is remedied by a logical method. The logical mechanism points to the way two opposed scripts are combined in a joke. For example, "twisting prepositions," "twisting homonymy," "twisting idiomatic expressions," "twisting figurative language," "absurd neologism," "absurd interpretation," "false analogy," "fallacious reasoning," "word repetition," and "insult or put-down humor" is among the ten categories of logical mechanisms that Pasaribu and Kadarisma proposed (2015, p. 3).

III) Situation (SI):

Every amusing occurrence requires a specific setting or circumstance to occur. According to Attardo, this circumstance is referred to as "props," which include persons, objects, instruments, and other activities.

IV) Target (TA):

The core of any amusing occurrence is the target. Target alludes to the things and people that are being made fun of. In lighthearted interactions that are not meant to make fun of anyone, the target value becomes zero.

V) Narrative Strategy (NS):

Humor's narrative strategy is how it is organized. This tactic may take the shape of dialogue, conversation, question-and-answer sessions, etc.

VI) Language (LA):

This knowledge resource contains all the linguistic details of the amusing occurrence that is being studied. The linguistic details concern the phrasing, the lexical choices' practical implications, and the humor's syntactic patterns.

3.6.2 Categories of Verbal Humor

The study then categorizes tweets into different subtypes of humor proposed by Richards A Shade which he gave in his book entitled, "License to Laugh: Humor in the Classroom" (1996). Verbal humor emphasizes incongruity by using language to introduce contradiction, understatement, exaggeration, surprise, or reversal. He then divided verbal humor into 12 different categories: pun, riddle, joke, satire, limerick, parody, anecdote, farce, irony, sarcasm, tall tale, and wit. The rationale for using Shade's categories of verbal humor in this study lies in their comprehensive classification of humor types, which effectively capture the diverse linguistic strategies used in political discourse. Political communication, especially on social media platforms like Twitter, often relies on humor to criticize opponents, reinforce ideological narratives, and engage followers. These categories provide a structured approach for analyzing how humor is strategically employed. By examining political tweets through this lens, the study identifies patterns in the use of humor and explores their pragmatic implications, particularly in shaping public perception and political discourse (Shade, 1996).

I) Pun:

Puns are created by combining words with similar phonetic or orthographic properties but different meanings or functions. For Example,

“Now is the winter of our discontent,

This sun of York has made this summer beautiful”. (Shakespeare's Richard III)

In this instance, despite being spelled differently than a son, the sun still refers to both the sun and Richard III's son. Humor is produced by the similar phonetic effect between the sun and the son.

II) Riddle:

Riddle provides humor by deceiving or misinforming the audience, either by asking questions or by confusingly presenting the information. Collins (1996) cites an instance:

Q. If six kids and two dogs were beneath one umbrella, how come nobody got wet?

A. It didn't rain.

III) Joke:

Laughter-inducing statements are referred to as jokes. According to Shade (1994), jokes may incorporate some or all of the "various interpretations of words, idioms or metaphors, ambiguity, incongruity, rapid change of perspective" (p. 3). Jokes can also be divided into deep-structure jokes, surface-structure jokes, metalinguistic jokes, phonological jokes, and lexical jokes.

IV) Satire:

Satire uses exaggeration, understatement, or distortion to poke fun at the audience. Shade (1996) provides the following example to show how satire is used:

“An old lady was sent on a 10-day cruise that was paid for by her son. The food on this cruise was dreadful, she stated in a letter of complaint. And very few servings! (p. 4)”.

V) Limerick:

A form of nonsense verse known as a limerick uses structural patterns to create humor. A limerick's subject matter has no boundaries, allowing for the inclusion of endless nonsense as a lighthearted response to the topic at hand.

VI) Parody:

An imitation of any work of art is a parody. It attempts to highlight the original by mimicking a specific circumstance.

VII) Anecdote:

An oral description of a fictional or actual figure or event is called an anecdote. This is a brief embellished tale.

According to Mello's account, "Searching in the Wrong Place,"

A neighbor who sees Nasiruddin looking for a lost key in a street offers to help by going down on his hands and knees. Upon inquiring as to where he left the key, in response, Nasiruddin says that although he lost the key at home, he is looking for it in the street since it is brighter there.

VIII) Farce:

A farce is a type of drama that elicits laughter through complex plots, absurd situations, caricatures, and other devices. There are many cases of identity confusion in the farce.

IX) Irony:

Irony is a statement with an intended meaning that contradicts its literal meaning. Irony denotes a discrepancy between expectations and reality. Shade's (1996) use of irony is illustrated in the following sentence,

"When a strong snowstorm compels you to cancel your planned ski holiday".

X) Sarcasm:

Sarcasm can be described as a hidden scoff, insult, or joke intended to make people laugh. It involves implying the opposite of what is said. Here is an example of sarcasm from the third edition of the Cambridge Dictionary for Advanced Learners:

“You have been working hard,” he said, looking at the blank page”.

XI) Tall Tale:

A tall tale is a description of exaggerated facts or events involving certain individuals or a particular environment. An excerpt from an American folktale that was featured in Core Knowledge Language Arts (2007) is as follows:

“Even as a baby, Paul Bunyan was pretty huge. How large? His parents used a covered wagon as his cradle because he was so enormous”.

XII) Wit:

The ability to creatively link amusingly dissimilar concepts is essential for the effectiveness of wit. The lyrics from Shade (1996) help us understand wit.

Judge: Order, Order in the Courtroom

Attorney: Good. I'll probably have a cheeseburger

3.6.3 Sociolinguistic Variables

Another model of analysis is Peter Trudgill's sociolinguistic variables (1995) which he gave in his book “Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society, Fourth Edition”. It includes power, position, and gender. The rationale for using Trudgill's sociolinguistic variables in this study lies in their ability to explain how gender, power, and position influence language use in political discourse. Trudgill's framework highlights how social factors shape linguistic choices, which assist in analyzing political tweets, where politicians strategically employ language to assert dominance, construct identity, and engage with audience/public (Trudgill, 1995). By integrating Trudgill's sociolinguistic variables, this study uncovers how gender, power, and position shape the linguistic strategies used in political tweets. This framework provides a sociolinguistic lens for

analyzing the ways in which humor, mockery, and derision are employed to influence political narratives.

I) Gender:

Researchers in subjects including cultural studies, psychology, neurology, and linguistics have long been interested in the relationship between gender and language. Men typically take the lead in formal settings and speak for a longer time and more frequently than women. They are also more likely to be the speakers whose contributions are most valued and influential in the sense that people take them up for reference and follow their debates. According to Trudgill, the feminine expression is more like the standard variety. Trudgill's studies on Norwich English indicate that women tend to choose the conventional form and men tend to use the vernacular, as a variation (1995:69).

II) Power:

Power can be defined in many different ways. From a sociological or psychological standpoint, it is relative and involves influencing others and achieving objectives. It manifests in the ability of individuals or groups to impose their opinions and ideas on others. Language serves as a key tool for exercising power and it plays a crucial role in the creation of social reality. According to Holmes, people use speech to cooperate, coerce, and navigate power dynamics (Holmes, 2014:3). This dynamic use of language is essential for establishing, perpetuating, or challenging power structures within institutions.

III) Position:

In terms of a person's place in the status order, which is considered to be a crucial component of his/her identity, the concept of status creates clear distinctions between superiority and inferiority. According to Weber (1968:932), social relationships among individuals of lower rank are typically marked by standards of deference to those of higher status. Weber also emphasizes that a person's lifestyle functions as a status symbol. When two people engage, one may have a higher status than the other. In such situations, people attempt to manipulate others to appear superior. Professional women due to their professional status might not receive the respect they deserve when engaging with men of lower professional status. This highlights that social circumstances are vital in shaping

interactions, especially in shared settings where participants collaborate on group tasks (Ibid).

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

The examination of data gathered in the form of political tweets is guided by an analytical formula. This formula consists of features adopted from the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), which is the primary framework of the study. Before proceeding with the content analysis, the context of each tweet is explicated. This is followed by Step 1.

3.7.1 Step 1

In Step 1, for every tweet, an outline of knowledge resources is given in the form of a table. This is followed by a description of the fabrication of lexical choices of travesty in the chosen political tweets. The description is aided by Salvatore Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH). It helps to elaborate the implied meaning of those lexical choices used in the political tweets.

3.7.2 Step 2

Step 2 includes the division of derisive political tweets into subcategories of verbal humor as proposed by Richards A. Shade (1996). It helps to highlight the purpose of derisive remarks given by the politicians. Additionally, these categories of verbal humor are quantified which shows how much one politician uses various subcategories of verbal humor while disclosing the mediated ideology behind such remarks (Step 3 further elaborates it). This quantification is both tabulated and described.

3.7.3 Step 3

Step 3 interprets the impact of sociolinguistic variables on the derisive remarks given by politicians. It helps to see how Pakistani politicians through the manipulative use of different variables like power, gender, and position foreground respected mediated ideologies of their political parties. It also helps to see the influence of these variables on the linguistic choices of the selected derisive political tweets.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided the research methodology for the present study. The goal of a research design is to answer the research questions posed in the study's first chapter. The researcher scrutinizes the data to see the derisive aspect in lexical choices of political tweets to highlight verbal humor and the impact of sociolinguistic variables on them in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an interpretation of the gathered data using Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humor and Shade's categories of Verbal Humor. Also, Trudgill's model of Sociolinguistic variables is used to interpret the data. The present chapter provides the tweets of selected four politicians. Tweets of Pakistan Tehreek I Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his spokesperson Fayaz Ul Hassan are presented in the initial part of the analysis. The latter part of the analysis covers the tweets of leaders of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). It includes PML-N vice president, Maryam Nawaz, and Spokesperson, Ahsan Iqbal. In addition, the researcher tried to answer the research questions in the light of theoretical insights.

As per my research objectives and research procedure, step one provides an analysis of the knowledge resources embedded in the fabrication of tweets. Step two identifies and describes the category of lexical choices of verbal humor, and step three reveals different sociolinguistic notions foregrounded through the use of verbal humor.

4.1 Analysis of Imran Khan's Tweets

A total number of twelve tweets were selected from Imran Khan's handle. The lexical choices of travesty were scrutinized using the knowledge resources given by Attardo in General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) in step one. The next step determines the category of that lexical choice of verbal humor, proposed by Shade (1995). The last step examines the different sociolinguistic notions like power dynamics, gender perspectives, and position influences. The aim is to explore how verbal humor, expressed through specific lexical choices in tweets, actively mediates and communicates underlying ideologies given by Trudgill (1995).

Tweet No:01

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, March 17)

“Congratulations to Babar Azam for leading the Pak team in a tremendous fightback with a superb captain's inning and world-class batting display; and congratulations to the rest

of the team too in the way they fought back, especially Rizwan & Shafique. Unfortunately, I could not watch this match as I am fighting on another front against match-fixing where huge amounts of money are being used to lure my players!’’ (Khan, 2022).

Context:

During that period, PDM aka Pakistan democratic movement comprised of several political parties that united against Prime Minister Imran Khan’s government. They accused him of poor governance, political victimization of opponents, and mismanagement of economy and foreign policy. They aimed to dismiss him by bringing a collective vote of no-confidence. Simultaneously, on the same day, Pakistan’s cricket team won a match against Australia. In this context, Imran Khan congratulated the team. He said he could not watch the match due to his preoccupation with political challenges from the PDM. There were speculations in media about the PDM allegedly offering bribes to PTI leaders to secure their support in the vote of no-confidence, raising concerns about potential match-fixing.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Expectation vs reality
	Logical Mechanism	Fallacious Reasoning
	Situation	He mocks the PDM, accusing them of trying to influence his players with money. He labels it as match-fixing, implying that the opponents aim to secure a victory in the no-confidence movement against him.
	Target	PDM

	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>Congratulates Pakistani cricket team's win against Australia.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Unfortunately, I could not watch this match as I am fighting on another front against match-fixing where huge amounts of money are being used to lure my players</p>

The travesty in Imran Khan's tweet lies in his phrase "fighting on another front against match-fixing". He humorously suggests that his inability to watch the match is because he is figuratively battling match-fixing. He implies that he is protecting his players from external influence. This introduces a script opposition of expectation vs reality as his initial congratulations on Pakistan's win led to an assumption that he had watched the match, but in reality, as he said, he did not watch the match. The two scripts are connected through fallacious reasoning, where he provides a false reason for not watching the match. This humorous tweet was set up against the PDM's no-confidence movement, delivered in the form of a monologue. The intended target is the PDM and the tweet concludes with a punchline that blames the PDM for allegedly bribing his players, who are his party members, to fix the political match.

Step: 02

The lexical choice of travesty falls into the category of verbal humor, which is irony. Irony involves using language to create a contrast between expectation and reality. In this case, Imran Khan's statement about, "fighting on another front" is ironic because it implies a literal battle against corruption in cricket while playfully acknowledging the

user's expectation that he is referring to a more conventional front like political or military matters. He uses an ironic tone to mock the PDM, which includes the union of different political parties like PPP, PML-N, JUI, etc., against his government. He alleges that they are bribing his players to get their support, accusing them of match-fixing to win the vote of no-confidence. He seeks to paint a negative image of the PDM coalition by accusing all its parties of engaging in corrupt practices.

Step:03

It shows his vulnerability as a prime minister at the time. Despite being in power, the PDM's strength in attempting to remove his government highlights his political weakness. Also, the phrase, "fighting on another front" reveals his awareness of corruption and the practice of bribery in the opposition. It aims to depict the PDM negatively by implying their engagement in corrupt practices to gain support from the users.

Tweet No:02

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, April 04)

"The people are always the strongest defenders of a country's sovereignty and democracy. It is the people who must come out and defend against this latest & biggest assault on Pakistan's sovereignty & democracy by a foreign power through local collaborators—our Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs" (Khan, 2022).

Context:

On April 7, 2022, the Supreme Court of Pakistan rejected Imran Khan's attempt to dissolve assemblies and call for early elections, while citing it as unconstitutional. The court orders the resumption of assemblies (AL JAZEERA, 2022). On April 10, the PDM is gearing up to bring a vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan, a situation he seems destined to lose. After the court decision, Imran Khan decides to protest and urges people to join him.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Actual vs non-actual
	Logical Mechanism	Twisting figurative Language
	Situation	He makes fun of General Bajwa and Faisal Naseer by calling them local collaborators--our Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs.
	Target	The Establishment
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: Urges the people of Pakistan to come out and protest against foreign conspiracy. Punchline: Our Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs.

In the mentioned tweet, the lexical choices of “Mir Jafars” and “Mir Sadiqs” are instances of travesty. Imran Khan at one level urges people to come out and protest. He emphasizes that citizens are crucial defenders of a country’s sovereignty and democracy. At another level, he ridicules the Establishment, particularly the Ex-Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Jawed Bajwa, and Major General Faisal Naseer (THE WIRE, 2022). He labels them as local collaborators—our Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs. This involves a

figurative twist, making an analogy to historical figures who betrayed their dynasties. Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq betrayed the dynasties of Bengal and Mysore by taking bribes from the British. The target is the mentioned two prominent figures of the Establishment. It is set up against challenging a rejected court decision of Imran Khan's attempt to dissolve assemblies. The tweet is presented as a monologue and concludes by condemning the no-confidence move as the major assault on Pakistan, carried out by what he labels “our Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs”.

Step: 02

He uses satire to mock the Establishment in Pakistan. The Establishment includes the civil and military bureaucracy and politicians. Imran Khan labels those betraying the nation as Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs. He considers the Establishment his primary opponent. He draws an analogy between historical figures and the ex-chief of army staff and an army general, ridiculing them as traitors who colluded with America to overthrow his government. This is similar to the one of the Trump's tweet where he has called Joe In Pakistan, the army holds significant political influence, determining government changes. Both the ex-army officials and the PDM, his political rivals united in a foreign-backed conspiracy to bring a vote of no-confidence against him and dismiss him as Prime Minister.

Step: 03

In this tweet, Imran Khan, as the prime minister, is using his authority to present his possible removal from office as an attack on Pakistan's independence and democracy. He aims to get public support by framing it as a threat from foreign powers and local collaborators. He uses his power and position to rally public support. Similarly, Donald Trump, in his tweet from September 3, 2020, uses his position as President to taunt Joe Biden, highlighting his own achievements while criticizing Biden's past failures and current actions (Radhi, 2021). Hence, leaders utilize their positions of power to discredit their opponents and garner public support for themselves in political communication.

Tweet No:03

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, May 02)

“My question for the Biden Administration: By indulging in a regime change conspiracy to remove a democratically elected PM of a country of over 220 million people to bring in a puppet PM, do you think you have lessened or increased anti-American sentiment in Pakistan?” (Khan, 2022)

Context:

Imran Khan's government was ousted and the PDM succeeded in a no-confidence motion against him on April 10, 2022. There was news on media that PDM had backing from the US (India Today, 2022). Imran Khan accuses the Biden administration of being involved in a “regime change conspiracy” in Pakistan. He insisted that the US, in collaboration with the PDM, was responsible for his removal from the government.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs Insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He insults the PM of that time Shahbaz Sharif by calling him a puppet of the US.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Question
	Language	Set-Up:

		Accuses Biden Administration of regime change conspiracy. Punchline: Do you think you have lessened or increased anti-American sentiment in Pakistan?"
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In the tweet, the “puppet PM” is an instance of travesty used by Imran Khan. He employs a script opposition where he praises himself as the democratically elected prime minister of over 220 million people while insulting Shahbaz Sharif as a puppet prime minister. The humor serves the purpose of insult and put-down, targeting Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet narrative strategy takes the form of a question where Khan questions the Biden administration for its involvement in a regime change conspiracy. It is set up against his removal from power through a no-confidence motion. The tweet concludes with a punchline, posing a question to Biden. It inquires whether, after the alleged regime change conspiracy, he has lessened or increased anti-American sentiment in Pakistan.

Step: 02

The above tweet falls in the verbal category of humor by Shade which is irony. It arises from the use of the term, “puppet PM”. Imran Khan suggests that the Biden administration is involved in a regime change conspiracy to replace him with a leader who would be perceived as a “puppet”, implying someone controlled by external forces. It creates a contrast between the appearance of a democratically elected leader and the reality of a manipulated or controlled figure. In this, he mocks Shahbaz Sharif as a puppet PM, which is seen as a significant insult in the context of the country’s leadership.

Step: 03

It shows Imran Khan’s status as the first prime minister removed through a no-confidence vote in Pakistan. Additionally, it shows his faith in Pakistani people just like him, who have anti-American sentiments. He rhetorically questions Biden and the US

government's role in his removal from the prime minister-ship as part of the US regime change conspiracy. The goal is to portray himself as a democratically elected leader to differentiate himself from Shahbaz Sharif, whom he labels a “puppet PM” supported by the US.

Tweet No:04

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, May 14)

“I will be going to Sialkot today, let there be no doubt. What Imported Government did in Sialkot against our leadership and workers is outrageous, but not unexpected. This bunch of criminals out on bail and their convict mafia boss in London have always used fascist tactics against opponents when they are in power-storming of SC, Model Town Murders, bribing judges, NS trying to declare himself Amir Ul Momineen. They use & abuse democracy when in opposition & totally destroy all democratic norms when in power. But people have now risen against them. Our government never stopped any of their Jalsas, sit-ins, rallies because we are committed to democracy. I will be in Sialkot today and I am calling our people to come out and protest in their areas/cities after Isha prayers against this fascist Imported government” (Khan, 2022)

Context:

At that time, PTI was protesting against the PML-N government and named their protest “Haqiqi Azadi”. It implied emancipation from unjust rule. PTI changed its venue after the police stopped its workers from the mass protests. They cited a lack of permission to hold a rally there. Earlier in the day, protestors were halted by the police and local administration of Sialkot at the CTI ground. The law enforcement used tear gas and batons to disperse the supporters (The Express Tribune, 2022). In this context, Imran Khan announced that he would go to Sialkot and resisted the PML-N's attempt to stop his protests.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of PML-N as they all are a bunch of criminals and take fascist steps to weaken their opposition and yet consider themselves as Amir Ul Momineen.
	Target	PML-N
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He describes PML-N outrageous treatment against his workers in Sialkot and calls them as an imported government.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>I will be in Sialkot today and I am calling on our people to come out and protest in their areas/cities against this fascist imported government.</p>

In this tweet, “Imported Government” is an instance of travesty. Imran Khan employs a script opposition where he praises his government for allowing political

activities. He contrasts it with an insult aimed at the PML-N government, labels it as “Imported”. The two scripts are strategically used to degrade the PML-N government. The tweet’s narrative unfolds as a monologue and is framed against Imran Khan's planned protest in Sialkot, where the PML-N tried to impede the gathering. The tweet concludes with a punchline where Khan asserts his presence in Sialkot and calls on his supporters to protest against what he labels as a “fascist Imported government”.

Step: 02

In the tweet, Imran Khan employs satire to mock the PML-N government and labels it as “imported”. He also accuses them of involvement in attacks on his workers during a protest in Sialkot. He sarcastically refers to these PML-N actions as outrageous but expected and characterizes them as criminals. He humorously highlights their past behaviors such as storming the Supreme Court, bribing judges, and model town murders. Khan assumes that Nawaz Sharif attempt to call himself as *Amir Ul Momineen* which adds a touch of irony and suggests a discrepancy between the claimed innocence and alleged criminal acts. Moreover, Khan pokes fun at the PML-N, calls them fascists, and questions their commitment to democracy. He suggests that PML-N actions, both in power and opposition contradict democratic principles such as deals with the Establishment, the pursuit of NRO, and collaboration with America for regime change. The reference to the destruction of democratic norms when in power, through violent actions against opposition workers serves as a critique of PML-N leadership.

Step: 03

It showcases his role as a political leader in struggle against the powerful PML-N government. In this tweet, he asserts his strength and determination in the opening sentence with the words, “I will be going to Sialkot today, let there be no doubt”. This shows his strength and resilience against his opponents for their attempts to hinder his activities, such as rallies and protests. In the statement, “Let there be no doubt” he shows his unwavering commitment to his cause of Haqiqi Azadi and a refusal to be deterred.

Tweet No:05

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, May 21)

“For our govt, Pakistan’s interest was supreme but unfortunately, the local Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs bowed to external pressure forcing a regime change, and are now running around like a headless chicken with the economy in a tailspin” (Khan,2022).

Context:

After being removed from the prime minister’s office through a vote of no-confidence, Imran Khan engaged in protests and rallies. He believed that the vote of no-confidence was intended to change his regime forcefully. During these events, he referred to those involved as “local Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs”. He held them responsible for pushing Pakistan’s economy toward a collapsing stage.

Step 1:

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Twisting figurative language
	Situation	He praises his government for prioritizing Pakistan's interest supremely while insulting the Establishment, labeling them as ‘Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs’ who are running around like a headless chicken.
	Target	The Establishment
	Narrative strategy	Monologue

	Language	Set-Up: He praises his government while criticizing the Establishment. Punchline: Headless Chicken
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In the given tweet, the lexical choice of “Mir Jafars” and “Mir Sadiqs” serves as instances of travesty, employing script opposition. This involves praising his government’s emphasis on Pakistani interests as its prime motive while insulting those Pakistanis who betrayed the nation as Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs. The figurative language connects the two scripts. Historical figures Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq are known for betraying the kings of Bengal and Mysore in the 18th century. These two Mirs took bribes from the British and helped them in overthrowing their respective kings. Mir Jafar betrayed his king, Alivardi Khan, the Nawab of Bengal while Mir Sadiq betrayed his king, Tipu Sultan of Mysore. He aims to degrade the Establishment especially the Ex-Chief of Army Staff during 2022, Qamar Javed Bajwa as Mir Jafir and Major General of Army, Faisal Naseer as Mir Sadiq (Friday Times, 2022). The intention is to depict them as traitors colluding with America. The primary target is the Establishment which includes Pakistan’s armed forces, intelligence community, civil and military bureaucracy, and politicians. This post-removal monologue humorously mocks the Establishment by labeling them as local Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs. The tweet concludes with a punchline characterizing them as headless chickens jeopardizing Pakistan’s economy.

Step 02:

The humorous tweet falls in the category of sarcasm as it mocks the Establishment by labeling them as the local Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs. Imran Khan once again blames both the Establishment and America for supporting PDM, which ousted him through a vote of no-confidence. The PDM, a union of parties, initiated the vote against Imran Khan, leading to Shahbaz Sharif of PML-N becoming the new prime minister of Pakistan. He ridicules

the Establishment for backing the wrong party, resulting in a worsened economic situation with a 30% inflation rate in 2022, as reported in Pakistan's Economic Survey. He calls them headless chickens, implying disorganized actions that risk Pakistan's economy during the government transition. This indicates individuals working in an uncontrolled, disorganized manner, not logically for the country. Imran Khan mocks the figures in the Establishment as local collaborators responsible for the economic downturn, accusing them of irrational thinking. According to him, they betray the people by bringing an ineffective new setup. Imran Khan's use of "headless chicken" and Donald Trump's "Sleepy Hiden" - as noted by Radhi (2021), similarly aim to undermine their opponents. Khan's term suggests irrationality and lack of direction, while Trump's nickname implies incompetence and lack of energy. Both use these taunts to damage their opponents' public image.

Step: 03

It depicts his position as a weak/less powerful political figure fighting against more powerful opponents, namely, the Establishment. He views the Establishment as his real opponent, labeling them as the real culprits behind regime change and the jeopardy to Pakistan's economy. Through ridicule, he wants to tell the users the difference between himself and them. Now, after being removed from the government, he attempts to defame the image of the Establishment for Twitter users, while portraying them as local Mir Jafars, Mir Sadiqs, and headless chickens.

Tweet No:06

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, May 24)

“PPP, PMLN, and JUI marches against our government were never stopped nor did we carry out any crackdown on their workers. This is the difference between kleptocrats and democrats” (Khan, 2022).

Context:

Imran Khan lost his parliamentary majority and was ousted from power through a no-confidence vote by political parties in opposition. PML-N, PPP, and JUI were together to bring a no-confidence vote against him. After losing his government, he decided to march against the PDM government in Islamabad on Sunday, May 25th, urging his

followers to join. There were reports on social media about police raids on his party's top political candidates (AL JAZEERA, 2022). This raised concerns about potential interference with the right to protest of the PTI supporters. In this response, Imran Khan stated that during his tenure, PTI's government allowed all political parties to march and never stopped them.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Insult and put-down humor
	Situation	He praises himself as a representative of his political party stating that they did not stop them from protesting, while insulting the other political parties by calling them kleptocrats.
	Target	Political parties
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set up:</p> <p>He makes fun of political parties and talks about their marches which he never stopped.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>This is the difference between kleptocrats and democrats.</p>

In the tweet, the lexical choice, “kleptocrats” is an instance of travesty employed by Imran Khan. He uses script opposition where he portrays himself as a democratic leader who during his tenure never stopped political parties from protesting. In contrast, he insults the opposition as “kleptocrats” implying they are corrupt leaders misusing public money on police raids only to stop PTI marches. The logical mechanism of these two scripts is based on insult and put-down humor. Kleptocrats refer to corrupt politicians exploiting political power to steal government funds at the expense of the wider population. The target is political parties and the humor narrative strategy takes the form of a monologue. This humor utterance is set up against his non-prevention of political marches of his opponents during his regime. The tweet concludes with a punchline where he states the difference between them and him as “kleptocrats” and “democrats” respectively.

Step: 02

The above humorous tweet falls into the category of a “joke”. In this tweet, he uses the term, “kleptocrats” as a joke to mock and deride the political parties. After his removal, Imran Khan started protesting against the PDM government, referring to all the political parties in the PDM as kleptocrats, which means rule by thieves. These parties united against Imran Khan’s government and played a role in ousting him. Amid speculations on various social media platforms of police raids on PTI’s top political leaders, he accuses them of trying to stop PTI from protesting. He ridicules them as corrupt leaders, insinuating they are thieves in reality who came into power to steal more and are funding the police to arrest PTI leaders. Whereas, he calls himself a democratic leader who neither stopped nor cracked down on the opposition from protesting during his tenure.

Step: 03

It reflects his position as a powerless PTI chairman who could not overcome the PDM union. During that period, he lacked influence and protested against them. He accuses those in power of using funds to stop PTI marches, mocking them as kleptocrats. He creates a derogatory image of political parties by telling the users the difference between him and them. He labels himself a democratic leader while the political parties are kleptocrats.

Tweet No:07

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, May 31)

“Crime Minister trying to interfere in his and his family’s money laundering cases by altering record through friendly prosecution. FIA on the behest of the crime minister has taken back challan for supplementary reference for altering it to destroy the case in toto” (Khan, 2022).

Context:

Following Imran Khan’s removal, Shahbaz Sharif became the new prime minister of Pakistan. On May 31, 2022, the FIA withdrew the challan for a supplementary reference regarding money laundering cases of PML-N involving the Sharif family and PML-N. In this response, he refers to the prime minister as a “crime minister” which implies Shahbaz Sharif, the then prime minister, attempts to protect himself through criminal acts and the use of a friendly prosecution.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Wordplay
	Situation	He mocks the term ‘prime minister’ and accuses PM Shahbaz Sharif of being a crime minister for influencing money laundering cases.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue

	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He talks about Shabaz Sharif, alleging that he uses the money to influence money laundering cases for himself and his family.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>FIA on the behest of the crime minister has taken back challan for supplementary reference for altering it to destroy the case in toto.</p>
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In this tweet, “Crime Minister” is an instance of travesty employed by Imran Khan. The tweet uses script opposition by contrasting what is traditionally considered “normal” behavior for a prime minister with the atypical conduct described in the tweet. In a typical scenario, a prime minister is expected to adhere to legal standards, uphold transparency and avoid interference in legal proceedings, particularly those involving personal matters. However, the tweet suggests an atypical situation where the Prime Minister is accused of deviating from these norms. Specifically, the term, “crime minister” is introduced, which diverges from the conventional title of a ‘prime minister’ and implies an alleged involvement in illicit activities. The script opposition is achieved through wordplay, where “prime minister” is humorously altered to convey a negative or critical sentiment by replacing “prime” with “crime”. The target is the then prime minister, Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet is framed against the backdrop of the FIA’s withdrawing the challan back for supplementary reference in the money laundering case involving PML-N. Imran Khan accuses Shahbaz Sharif of exerting control over government institutions like the FIA. The narrative strategy of this humorous tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline, where he accuses Shahbaz Sharif of manipulating the FIA to completely dismiss the case.

Step:02

The above-mentioned use of language by Imran Khan creates verbal humor in the form of sarcasm. He takes the sarcastic tone by labeling Shahbaz Sharif as “crime minister” instead of “prime minister”, suggesting involvement in illicit activities. He accuses him of exerting influence to manipulate institutions like the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for personal gain. Imran Khan asserts that Shahbaz Sharif, in his role as the head of the government, wields undue influence over institutions like the FIA, citing the withdrawal of a supplementary reference as evidence. This withdrawal is presented as an attempt to eliminate legal challenges and shield the PML-N from money laundering cases. The mention of “friendly prosecution” implies that the prime minister, referred to as ‘crime minister’, is allegedly trying to control or manipulate the legal process through a favorable treatment. Through this type of verbal humor that is sarcasm, a derogatory image of Shahbaz Sharif as a criminal and corrupt figure is given.

Step: 03

Imran Khan was forced into opposition that turned his position weaker against Shahbaz Sharif. However, Imran Khan uses his high position as the PTI Chairman and notable public figure, aiming to damage the PML-N image by mocking Shahbaz Sharif as a “crime minister”. He labels Shahbaz Sharif a “crime minister” to mock and insult him. He aims to convey that Shahbaz Sharif is a criminal who exploits power and resources for personal gain.

Tweet No: 08

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, June 15)

“Ever since the Imported Crime Minister’s corrupt son illegally grabbed power in Punjab through a farcical election there is complete political anarchy in Pak’s most populous province. People suffering, farmer crops are under threat, no governance is in sight just a criminal mafia running riot, police and local administration have become complicit with this mafia and have unleashed a reign of terror on peaceful PTI workers, leaders, and their families. Now they feel they are not answerable before the people’s elected leadership. We cannot allow such anarchy and criminal rule to prevail” (Khan, 2022).

Context:

During the contest for the position of the chief minister of Punjab between the PTI and the PDM, Hamza Shahbaz secured 197 votes against PTI's candidate Chaudhary Pervaiz Elahi. However, the Election Commission of Pakistan de-seated 25 PTI candidates who had voted for Hamza, revealing irregularities (Dawn, 2022). Imran Khan alleges that Hamza wrongly obtained power through a farcical election, mocks him as a corrupt son of the “imported crime minister”.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He mocks Hamza Shahbaz, referring to him as the son of ‘imported crime minister’ and alleges that he obtained power through illicit methods.
	Target	Hamza Shahbaz
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: Discusses the situation of the province of Punjab under the rule of chief minister, Hamza Shahbaz.

		Punchline: We cannot allow such anarchy and criminal rule to prevail.
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In this tweet, the phrase “Imported Crime minister corrupt son” serves as an instance of travesty. He uses script opposition where he praises himself as “people’s elected leadership” implying that there’s just and right leadership representing people’s interests. In contrast, he mocks Hamza Shahbaz as the imported crime minister's corrupt son. He alleges that he obtained power through illicit means and since then, Punjab has been suffering. The tweet uses two scripts in the form of insult and put-down humor, creating a narrative strategy resembling a monologue. It was set up against his candidate's loss in the chief minister election for Punjab. The tweet concludes with a punchline where Imran Khan positions himself as the defender of order and justice. He implies his commitment to preventing anarchy and criminal rule.

Step: 02

The verbal humor used in the tweet falls under the category of “sarcasm”. It is evident as Imran Khan mocks Hamza Shahbaz as an “imported crime minister’s corrupt son”. He accuses Hamza Shahbaz to have acquired power in an absurd manner, thus leading to political anarchy in Pakistan’s populous province. He criticizes the dynastic aspect of Pakistani politics and asserts that Hamza became the chief minister due to his father’s position as prime minister. He characterizes the elder as an “imported crime minister”. Imran Khan denounces this as nepotism and alleges that Hamza gained power through the farcical elections, where the family held the ultimate decision-making authority. He criticizes Shahbaz for causing political turmoil. He cites the financial threats born by farmers and the suffering of the common people during CM’s Shahbaz reign. Using sarcasm, he believes that there is no governance but just a criminal riotous mafia. Additionally, he blames institutions that work under his rulership. For instance, both the Punjab police and local administration joined hands with this mafia. They are persecuting terror and victimizing peaceful and harmless PTI workers, leaders, and their families.

Conclusively, like a typical anarchist Shahbaz and his administrative tools have become indifferent to an extent that they believe they are not answerable and unaccountable to him.

Step: 03

The tweet indicates Imran Khan's position as a weaker political leader against the PDM, since his candidate, Pervaiz Elahi lost to Hamza Shahbaz. It infers Khan is battling against more powerful opponents. He criticizes the alleged criminal mafia and emphasizes the lack of governance and accountability. Simultaneously, as the tweet concludes, he emphatically calls his leadership as the one elected by the people. He asserts his strength and powerful status. He believes that the anarchist reign must feel to be accountable for their criminal acts. His statement, "We cannot allow such anarchy and criminal rule to prevail" showcases his authority and positions him as a leader with a significant following. The use of "we" emphasizes the collective strength of the people behind him, who support his narrative. Being in opposition, he adopts the tone of a powerful, influential leader who can or cannot sanction acts according to his will.

Tweet No: 09

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, July 08)

"This Pattan Report once again makes it obvious why these two criminal family mafias opposed the EVM machines as did the shamefully biased and controlled ECP. With EVMs 130 out of 163 ways of rigging elections in Pakistan would have been eliminated. I am afraid neither the PDM parties, who have perfected the art of rigging over the years want free and fair elections, nor does our establishment" (Khan, 2022).

Context:

During that period, Imran Khan shared a report from a local media agency advocating the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) to ensure transparency in the upcoming elections. However, both the government and the Election Commission of Pakistan opposed the use of EVMs (The Express Tribune, 2021). According to him, this opposition stems from the intention to engage in rigging and manipulation during the elections. He asserted that neither the PDM nor the Establishment desires free and fair elections.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He mocks the PDM (Pakistan Democratic Movement) and the Establishment, suggesting that they have mastered the art of rigging and are thus reluctant to hold elections.
	Target	PDM & Establishment
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>The Pattan Report to eliminate rigging in the elections.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>I am afraid neither the PDM parties, who have perfected the art of rigging over the years want free and fair elections, nor does our Establishment.</p>

In this tweet, the phrase “criminal family mafias” serves as an instance of travesty. The tweet uses script opposition of normal vs atypical. In a typical scenario, the use of

EVMs would have been seen as a positive step to eliminate rigging in the elections. Whereas, the normal script opposition which is also stated in the tweet says, that the two political criminal family mafias opposed the initiative of EVM. This atypical behavior is adopted by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The two scripts are used for insult and put-down while framing the PDM and Establishment. The primary target is the PDM and the Establishment and the tweet is situated within the context of their alleged opposition to EVM's against Imran Khan's call for free and fair elections. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where he accuses both the PDM and Establishment of rigging in the elections.

Step: 02

In the above tweet, Imran Khan uses satire as it mocks the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the Establishment. The PDM, a coalition of political parties united against Imran Khan, criticized his governance, economy, and foreign policy. He alleges, citing the Pattan report, that this is the reason behind their opposition to EVMs as it would eliminate rigging in elections. He makes fun of them as the masters who have perfected the art/skill of rigging over the years. He expresses fear that neither the PDM nor the Establishment desires free and fair elections. Following his removal from the prime minister's office, Khan suggests that they are unwilling to conduct free and fair elections due to their alleged proficiency in rigging.

Step: 03

It shows his position as the ousted prime minister who is now protesting to call for free and fair elections. He mocks the PDM and the Establishment for mastering the art of rigging. The use of the phrase "I am afraid" expresses his regret over unfair elections. He believes since they are the masters of the art of rigging, they would never win if free and fair elections were held in Pakistan. He shares his doubts about non-commitment for just and transparent elections.

Tweet No:10

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, July 12)

“Rains have once again exposed 14 years corrupt rule of Zardari & family in Sindh. This is a classic example of how corruption ruins Governance. Money given to Karachi ended up in fake Accounts and invested in Dubai Properties. This nexus of evil must be brought to an end.” (Khan, 2022)

Context:

Karachi, one of Pakistan’s largest cities and the capital of the province of Sindh, faced severe flooding during heavy rainfall. According to Imran Khan, the flood worsened because public funds had not been invested and capitalized on urban infrastructure. He criticizes ex-president Zardari’s government in Sindh for its failure to address various issues like poor infrastructure, and power outages, especially during the monsoon season. He sarcastically remarked that rain exposed the corruption in the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP). In other words, he suggests that ex-president Zardari and his family only aim to hoard money in fake accounts and invest in properties internationally. The evil practice must come to an end.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Cause vs Effect
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/pot-down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by drawing an analogy between rains and corruption.
	Target	Zardari and his family

	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He draws an analogy between rains and Zardari's family's corruption.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>This nexus of evil must be brought to an end.</p>

In the tweet, the phrase, “This is a classic example of how corruption ruins governance” involves a lexical choice that signifies travesty. The term, “classic example” suggests that this post-rainfall picture of Karachi becomes the site of corruption during the fourteen years reign of the PPP. The use of the word, ‘ruins’ further emphasizes corruption causing a serious failure in governance. Imran Khan introduces a cause-and-effect relationship between heavy rains and the exposed alleged corruption during Zardari’s rule in Sindh. By stating, “rains have once again exposed 14 years of corrupt rule”, he implies that heavy rains have acted as a catalyst, that reveals corruption. It suggests that the impact of rains led to infrastructure failure and mismanagement of funds. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor, while targeting the PPP. The tweet is set up against the backdrop of poor conditions in Karachi during heavy rainfall. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where he suggests that this nexus of evil should be put to an end.

Step: 02

This tweet falls into the verbal category of humor, specifically irony. The use of the phrase, “classic example” introduces a form of irony as it is typically associated with ideal

situations, but here it is used to highlight the recurring problem of corruption effecting governance. The irony lies in the contrast between the positive connotation of ‘classic example’ and the negative reality of corruption. Every city in Pakistan has a fixed budget allocated annually for its betterment which includes infrastructure, basic needs, and health facilities. Imran Khan alleges that the money allocated for Karachi ended up in fake accounts and properties in Dubai. He uses rain as a humorous angle to criticize corruption in Sindh. He contends that Zardari and his family are incapable of handling natural disasters like heavy rainfall. According to Khan, their corrupt practices persisted over a period of fourteen years.

Step: 03

It depicts Imran Khan as an ousted political leader, underscores the misgovernance during the fourteen-year rule of the PPP. Despite being out of power, Khan asserts influence by calling an end to the perceived ‘nexus of evil’. The use of the passive structure where the verb “brought” implies a definitive action to be taken by someone. This aligns with a typical rhetoric of an opposition leader emphasizing the need for a different leadership. Khan creates a dishonest image of the PPP, most specifically ex-president Zardari and his family for the accumulation of wealth in fake accounts and investment in international properties.

Tweet No: 11

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, July 20)

“After the Federal government toppled with stolen money from Sindh and NRO2 achieved, Certified Criminal Asif Zardari in cahoots with Sharif mafia now seeking to steal Punjab people’s mandate by trying to purchase MPAs. Want to ask Honorable SC are they not cognizant of the damage being wreaked?” (Khan, 2022)

Context:

There were rumors of horse trading between PTI and PML-N for the upcoming re-election for the chief minister in Punjab (Pakistan Today, 2022). In this context, he asserted that ex-president Zardari in collaboration with the Sharif family was seeking to manipulate the people of Punjab’s mandate. He posed a question at the end to the Supreme Court if

they are unaware of the havoc created through a coalition between PPP and PML-N as both try to displace people elected MPAs.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/ put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of the PPP that they have joined hands with PML-N to steal the Punjab mandate by purchasing MPAs.
	Target	PPP
	Narrative strategy	Question
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>PML-N and PPP have joined hands to win CM elections.</p> <p>Punch line:</p> <p>Want to ask honorable SC if are they not cognizant of the damage being wreaked.</p>

In the given tweet, Imran Khan employed strong language, such as “certified criminal Zardari” and “Sharif mafia” which can be viewed as instances of travesty. These terms are used for insult and put-down, specifically targeting the leaderships of PPP and

PML-N. The tweet establishes a script opposition, contrasting what Imran Khan considers a normal democratic functioning with what he portrays as atypical and damaging actions. The expected norm involves a federal government operating without financial assistance, political leaders adhering to legal and ethical standards, and a democratic process free from alleged corrupt influences. However, Imran Khan describes an atypical scenario alleging the toppling of a federal government, purportedly involving stolen money from Sindh. The tweet is set against the backdrop of an upcoming re-election of a Chief Minister and takes the form of a question. The tweet concludes with a punchline where Imran Khan questions the Supreme Court about the potential repercussions of the perceived damage being wreaked.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Imran Khan uses satire to mock the ex-president Zardari by calling him a certified criminal. He also uses the word Mafia for the ‘Sharif’ clan. At the same time, he uses the informal phrase “in cahoots” to signify the dishonest alliance of the two. As part of the PDM, both parties had collectively chosen Hamza Shahbaz as the candidate for chief minister ship. Imran Khan alleges their attempts to purchase MPAs for the election, portraying it as an unethical deviation from democratic norms. He maintains that despite achieving what he terms as ‘NRO2’, which involved dismissing the case against PML-N and PPP on political grounds, Zardari and Sharif still attempts to buy members of the Punjab assembly. The tweet ridicules Zardari as a ‘Certified Criminal’ and refers to PML-N as the ‘Sharif Mafia’. Imran Khan alleges that they have money to buy MPAs. The tweet also targets the Supreme Court, where he questions the judiciary's unawareness of the damage being done. He indirectly expresses concern about the perceived negative consequences and seeks intervention from the judiciary regarding this issue at hand.

Step: 03

It reflects Imran Khan’s portrayal as a less powerful political leader facing challenges in countering his opponents. It highlights the perceived influence of PPP and PML-N in purchasing candidates. Imran Khan rhetorically asks the Supreme Court which is known for suo motto notice to recognize the evil in horse trading. This interrogative structure shows his sense of superiority/authority in challenging powerful and mighty

stakeholders of government. He sees this act of trading politicians as a threat. Hence, he urges the Supreme Court to recognize those he considers responsible. He aims to frame an immoral and vicious image of PPP and PML-N by calling them criminals and mafias who are controlling enough to buy MPAs so that they can win a strong position in the Punjab assembly.

Tweet No: 12

Khan, I. [@ImranKhanPTI] (2022, July 23)

“If anyone had any doubts about the US regime change conspiracy this video should remove all doubts as to why a democratically elected PM and his govt were removed. Clearly, the US wants an obedient puppet as PM who will not allow Pak choice of neutrality in a European war; a PM who will be obedient to US demands; who will not sign agreements with Russia & who will downgrade our strategic relationship with China. If a PM asserts Pak's sovereignty & an independent foreign policy he will be removed and a subservient, crooked PM like Shahbaz Sharif will be brought in” (Khan, 2022).

Context:

At that time, the “letter gate issue” confirmed a conspiracy to remove Imran Khan's government in favor of the PDM. He repeatedly asserted that his government was removed through a foreign conspiracy. He claimed that during his visit to Russia, the country agreed to supply cheaper crude oil to Pakistan at 30% below the market rate (The News International, 2022). In this context, he showed a video and highlighted the role of the US in his government's removal through a vote of no-confidence.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He ridicules Shahbaz Sharif as an obedient puppet and crooked PM.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He mocks Shahbaz Sharif as a crooked PM.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>If a PM asserts Pakistan's sovereignty and an independent foreign policy he will be removed and a subservient, crooked PM like Shahbaz Sharif will be brought in.</p>

In this tweet, the phrase, “obedient puppet as PM” serves as an instance of travesty. Imran Khan uses script opposition where he praises himself as a democratically elected PM whereas, he insults Shahbaz Sharif by calling him a crooked PM. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor aimed at Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet is set up against the backdrop of the letter gate issue, which Imran Khan claims revealed a conspiracy against his government. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline. In the punchline, Imran Khan asserts that a PM advocating for Pakistan's sovereignty and independent foreign policy will be at risk of being removed and a dishonest, unscrupulous and crooked PM being brought in as a replacement.

Step: 02

The above tweet falls into the verbal category of humor which is satire. In the accompanying video, a US defense analyst is heard stating that the United States played a role in ousting him. He uses this information to mock Shahbaz Sharif and labels him as a “crooked PM” which implies subservience to the US as an obedient puppet. Imran Khan constantly asserts that the US was involved in the regime change conspiracy due to their desire for Pakistan to distance itself from China and Russia and comply with US demands. According to Khan, his government's commitment to Pakistan's sovereignty and an independent foreign policy was the reason behind his removal. The punchline in the tweet subtly highlights the irony of an ousted prime minister who advocated for Pakistan's sovereignty and independent foreign policy was replaced by a successor with a reputation for corruption. Khan's remark playfully critiques the perceived circumstances surrounding the change in leadership.

Step: 03

It portrays Khan as a weak prime minister who couldn't fulfill the US demands and it became the reason for his ousting. Additionally, he brands Shahbaz Sharif as a deceitful PM and accuses the US hand in his government's downfall. Khan demonstrates his power as a bold political figure with the ability to blame even a superpower like the US.

Table 1.1 shows Shade's categories of verbal humor along with their frequencies and percentages arranged in ascending order. In the collection of twelve derisive tweets of Imran Khan, the use of verbal humor falls into four categories:

Irony: Three instances of irony, where expressions convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning of the words, were identified.

Joke: A joke, which is typically a humorous remark intended to provoke laughter, was found once in the tweets.

Sarcasm: Sarcasm which involves the use of irony to mock or convey contempt appeared, three times.

Satire: Imran Khan employed satire, a form of verbal humor that uses irony and exaggeration to mock and criticize, five times.

The frequency of each category was divided by the total number of occurrences across all categories and then multiplied by 100 to determine the percentage of occurrence for each category. The percentages are as follows:

- The aggregate percentage of satire is 41.66%, while irony constitutes 25% of the total.
- The aggregate percentage of joke is 8.33%, whereas sarcasm constitutes 25% of the total.

This analysis provides the distribution of different forms of verbal humor found in Imran Khan's derisive tweets. It highlights the prominent use of satire whereas irony and sarcasm have been equally employed by Khan. Jokes as a category of verbal humor have been least used. The frequencies in the tweets reveal key patterns in his use of verbal humor, particularly how he employs satire, sarcasm, irony, and jokes to construct political narratives. The distribution of these humor categories provides insight into his rhetorical strategies, ideological positioning, and audience engagement. This frequency distribution has significant implications. It demonstrates that Khan's political discourse on Twitter is not just about engagement but about power assertion, ideological reinforcement, and narrative control.

Table 1.1 Shade's Categories of Verbal Humor

Category of Verbal Humor	No. of Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Irony	3	25%
Joke	1	8.33%
Sarcasm	3	25%
Satire	5	41.66%

4.2 Analysis of Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan's Tweets

In line with PTI's chairman Imran Khan's tweets, twelve tweets have been selected from its spokesperson Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan's Twitter account. It follows a similar methodology that was used for the analysis of Imran Khan's tweets. The analysis follows a three-step approach. Firstly, Chohan's tweets are examined to identify instances of travesty. Secondly, these instances are categorized into subtypes of humor which are proposed by Shade (1995). Lastly, various sociolinguistic variables are elaborated from the used verbal humor in Chohan's tweets.

Tweet No: 01

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, March 17)

“Maqsood chaprasi wali sarkar ki choti si ashaa--!!

Khair sey kis ko dey rahay han yeh bhasha---!!!!

Urta rahay han awam k haq numandgi ka tamasha----!!!!

Qoumi choron ki qoumi hukumat awaam ko jali accounts jali ti tis money laundering aur loot maar k jaded scientific asolon aur tor tareeqon ki taleem o tarbeet dey gii” (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

“Peon Maqsood's government has a little desire!!!

To whom are they giving this speech/lecture!!!!

They are making fun of the right of representation of the public!!!

A national government of national thieves will educate and train the public in the art of making fake accounts, money laundering, and plundering while, using modern scientific principles and methods.

Context:

Amid discussions of a no-confidence motion against Imran Khan, the PDM pledged to the public a stable economy, a strong foreign policy, and poverty alleviation in their

protests and rallies (Pakistan Reader, 2022). Chohan, in this situation, suggests that their promises are just high resounding speeches carrying no substance. He rather adds the corrupt practices of PDM only to indicate that their promises are shallow and have no worth in practice.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of the PDM government by calling them the national government of national thieves.
	Target	PDM's government
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He describes the PDM government as the government of thieves, who are making fun of the representation of the public.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>A national government of national thieves will educate and train the public in the art of making fake accounts, money laundering, and</p>

		plundering while using modern scientific principles and methods.
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In the tweet, the travesty lies in the humorous and exaggerated portrayal of a government, mockingly referred to as “Maqsood Peon’s government” and the ironic depiction of its supposed objectives. The statement implies that this government, associated with Maqsood Peon will be a government of national level thieves. It suggests that they will disseminate knowledge in deceptive practices such as making fake accounts, money laundering, and plundering while using modern scientific principles. The tweet establishes a contrast with the expected behavior of a government with the atypical and exaggerated depiction of a national government of national thieves. Thus, it undermines government future role if it gets governance. The unexpected twist lies in the ironic assertion that a national government of national thieves will educate the public about corrupt practices like making fake accounts and money laundering. This is done to insult and belittle while specifically targeting the would be PDM government. The tweet is situated within the context of PTI’s government, where the opposition (the PDM) was prepared to bring a vote of no-confidence against it. The tweet adopts the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline. The punchline suggests that if PDM will come into power, it would be a government of nationalized thieves that would educate the public about modern ways of corruption.

Step: 02

Chohan uses satire to mock the future PDM’s government. He suggests it’s involvement in deceptive practices such as money laundering and making fake accounts. He derogatorily refers to the future PDM government as “Maqsood Peon’s government” and dubs it the “national government of national thieves”. Furthermore, he bases his criticism on the exaggeration that if it gets power, it would prioritize illicit activities. Additionally, Chohan sarcastically suggests that the PDM government would impart knowledge and teach the public modern and scientific methods of money laundering and looting. He specifically mentions Maqsood Peon as a symbolic representation of fake

accounts, looted wealth, and money laundering. The FIA reportedly found three billion rupees in Peon Maqsood's bank account and fake telegraphic transfers (TTs) (Dawn, 2022). The TTs included Peon Maqsood's name. He ridicules the idea that the PDM government would encourage such illicit activities rather than fulfill their supposed role as representatives of the people.

Step: 03

It depicts Chohan as a strong spokesperson for the ruling PTI. Despite the PTI's expectations of a successful no-confidence motion by the PDM, the latter remains in power. He reaffirms his party's dominance and confronts the PDM. He derides the PDM and suggests that their claim of being "representatives of people" is a farce. He characterizes them as "national thieves" who seek power for money laundering and looting. Thus, Chohan tarnishes the PDM's image by calling them thieves.

Tweet No:02

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, March 22)

“Sadar- Fazul Rehman

Wazir e Azam-Shahbaz sharif

Wazir e Dakhla- Maryam Aurangzeb

Wazir e Kharja-Bilawal Zardari

Wazir e Aala Punjab- Hamza Shahbaz

Mustaqbil ka plan- Nawaz Sharif ki wapsi

Governor state bank- Maqsood chaprasi

Chairman NAB- begum Safdar Awan

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Jahan khawab wahan HBL...!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

“President- Fazlur Rehman

Prime Minister- Shahbaz Sharif

Interior Minister- Maryam Aurangzeb

Foreign Minister- Bilawal Zardari

Chief Minister Punjab- Hamza Shahbaz

Future Plan- Return of Nawaz Sharif

Governor State Bank- Maqsood Peon

Chairman NAB- Mrs. Safdar Awan

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Where there are dreams, there is HBL....!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Context:

There was going to be a vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan on April 10, which was set to be initiated by the PDM. The PTI anticipated a potential loss. In this context, Chohan points out that these are the PDM’s proposed arrangements for various positions within the government.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult or put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He insults PDM, a coalition of parties that wants to oust Imran Khan.
	Target	PDM
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: He makes fun of PDM and all political rivals of their dreams of various positions once they oust Imran Khan. Punchline: Where there are dreams, there is HBL...!!!!!!

In the tweet, the lexical choice of travesty is evident in the unconventional and unexpected appointments/designations of various political figures who were active members of the PDM. Travesty refers to grotesque or absurd imitation or misrepresentation. In this tweet, the list of political positions seems to be an exaggerated prediction that was meant to evoke humor. The travesty is on the names of a commoner, who was a peon by profession, and Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the daughter of ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif. The former was Sharif's renowned servant Maqsood who was a peon and worked for him at Ramzan Sugar Mills. The latter is called Mrs. Safdar Awan as per English conventions specifically and Pakistani generally of recognizing a woman by her husband's name when she gets married. Both the designations of Governor state Bank for Maqsood Peon and Chairman NAB for Maryam Nawaz Sharif also contribute to the travesty. It presents an unreal scenario that diverges from typical political expectations. Neither Maqsood peon nor Maryam Nawaz Sharif are eligible for the stated positions. Chohan uses a mix of normal (expected) and atypical (unexpected) elements in the script

to create a contrast. The “normal” elements include the listing of political positions and figures in a conventional manner such as a prime minister, president, and interior minister - typical roles in a government setup. In contrast, the “atypical” or unconventional elements introduce unexpected and humorous twists. For instance, assigning roles like “Governor state Bank to Maqsood Peon” and Chairman NAB to Mrs. Safdar Awan” deviates from the usual expectations. These appointments serve as script opposition by contrasting the usual political scenario with a more exaggerated version. The tweet is set against a backdrop of a future successful no-confidence motion against Imran Khan. It is intended to insult and put-down humor while targeting the PDM. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where Chohan connects the political aspirations or dreams with HBL’s slogan that is where there are dreams, there is HBL.

Step: 02

Fayaz Ul Hasan Chohan in this tweet uses satire to mock the Pakistan Democratic Movement. It was a coalition formed in September 2020 against Prime Minister Imran Khan’s government. He ridicules the PDM’s alleged motives to secure specific government positions for personal gains. He assigns roles like president to Fazul Rehman and prime minister to Shahbaz Sharif and suggests their intention to exploit these positions for corruption and wealth. Chohan sarcastically notes the future plan of the PDM government which includes Nawaz Sharif’s potential return and references a fictitious/imaginary appointment of a peon as the governor state bank to insult PML-N. He further mocks the PDM by proposing Maryam Nawaz Sharif as chairman of NAB which insinuates control over institutions. The punchline “Where there are dreams, there is HBL” is likely a play on the ideas of dreams and aspirations. It humorously suggests that the ambitious political lineup outlined earlier in the tweet which includes prominent figures associated with the PDM could be seen as mere dreams. In the punchline, Chohan subtly mocks the PDM’s objectives in a light-hearted manner.

Step: 03

Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan, the spokesperson for PTI in this tweet humorously comments on potential future political developments. The chairman of his party and the

then prime minister in power Imran Khan faces the risk of being removed from power. This prompts concern about the potential loss of PTI's government. Chohan uses humor to express doubt or criticism on the uncertainty in the political makeup of Pakistan.

Tweet No: 03

Chohan. F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, April 10)

“prime minister jaa raha ha.....crime minister aa raha ha--!!!!!!” (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation: Prime Minister is going away.....Crime Minister is coming in--!!!!

Context:

On that day, a vote of no-confidence was to be held against Imran Khan by the PDM. PTI had expected to lose it. In this context, he says that the prime minister is leaving his position and a crime minister is coming into power.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Praising vs insulting
	Logical Mechanism	Wordplay
	Situation	He praises his party Chairman, the ex-prime minister of Pakistan who was ousted, by referring to him as prime minister and insults the upcoming new prime minister of Pakistan as Crime Minister.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif

	Narrative strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He praises his party chairman by downgrading the future prime minister.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Crime Minister is coming in.</p>

In this tweet, “crime minister” is an instance of travesty. The script opposition of praising vs insulting is evident. Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan praises his party’s chairman as he calls him the prime minister whereas, he insults Shahbaz Sharif as a crime minister. The two scripts involve wordplay where the word ‘prime’ is substituted with ‘crime’ and “going away” is substituted with “coming in”. The tweet is set against the backdrop of the no-confidence motion against Imran Khan and this takes the form of a monologue. It concludes with a punchline where he asserts that a crime minister is coming into power.

Step: 02

The former spokesperson of PTI Fayyaz Ul Hasan Chohan uses satire to mock Shahbaz Sharif. He calls him the ‘crime minister’. He ridicules Sharif, who assumed the prime minister position after Imran Khan was ousted through a vote of no-confidence. Chohan playfully suggests Sharif’s lack of legitimacy in his prime-minister ship. This indicates his critical perspective and hints at the possibility that Sharif attained power through questionable means. He supports Imran Khan and considers him a democratically elected prime minister. The insult towards the new prime minister as ‘crime minister’ stems from PTI’s allegations that PML-N in collaboration with other allies aimed to oust Khan with the support of America.

Step: 03

It shows his weak position as ex-federal minister from a party whose chairman has been removed from the premiere ship. He and his party could not win against the powerful PDM. It aims to establish a distinction between a prime minister and a crime minister, with an intention to cast the image of new PM Shahbaz Sharif in a negative light.

Tweet No:04

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, April 11)

Maqsood chaprasi bilakhir cherry blossom k sar sadqay wazir e azam ban gaya--!!!!!!

Ikhlaqiyat ka janaza ha zara dhoom sy nikly

Har khas ke muhallay sy zara ghoom k nikly (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

Maqsood Peon finally became the prime minister that owes to cherry blossomed boots...!!!!

The ethics can be eternally departed with greater celebration,

Let the loss of ethics wander and dance through every special neighborhood

Context:

Shahbaz Sharif assumed the position of prime minister after Imran Khan was ousted through a vote of no confidence on April 10, 2022. In this context, Chohan humorously remarks that, at last, Shahbaz Sharif due to the unethical benevolence of army has attained power.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He sarcastically commented on Shahbaz Sharif becoming the prime minister, attributing it to the supposed kindness of army.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He humorously referred to Shahbaz Sharif as a Maqsood peon, who with the supposed aid of army ascended to the position of prime minister.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Let the loss of ethics wander and dance through every special neighborhood.</p>

In the tweet, travesty lies in the exaggerated and satirical depiction of Maqsood Peon's becoming the prime minister with the support and blessings of the boots which is a metonymy for the army. This adds humor and sarcasm to the usual expectations for political leaders. Additionally, the ethics are mentioned as if they have departed in a coffin in a funeral and such a funeral takes place with much celebration in the neighborhoods of the elite. It creates a sense of absurdity and mockery. A funeral which is "Janaza" in Urdu is a solemn ceremony or gathering held to commemorate the life of a deceased individual, typically marked by mourning. This portrayal of the funeral of ethics with celebration highlights the seriousness of the departure of ethics in a satirical way. The tweet establishes a script contrast between the normal path of political figures with atypical and satirical

representation. In a normal scenario, a peon would not rise to the position of prime minister and the phrase, “that owes to cherry blossomed boots” is unconventional. The reference to the funeral of ethics and the celebration in funeral is an atypical element and deviates from the usual expectation of political discourse. This satirical approach aims to insult Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline that suggests that this funeral of ethics to have taken place in the neighborhood of the elite.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Chohan uses satire to mock Shahbaz Sharif as Maqsood peon. This indirect reference alludes to Shahbaz Sharif’s involvement in a corruption case where his peon was reportedly found with 3 billion rupees. Chohan also highlights Shahbaz Sharif’s collaboration with General Bajwa in an attempt to overthrow Imran Khan’s government. Thus, Chohan portrays Shahbaz Sharif as someone who is willing to stoop to any level of servility for personal motives. Furthermore, he cleverly incorporates Imran Khan’s reference to Shahbaz Sharif as “cherry blossom” (The Express Tribune, 2022). Cherry Blossom is a name of a shoe cream brand meant to polish and shine boots. Shahbaz Sharif is metaphorically called cherry blossom shoe cream that yields to a powerful establishment while displaying his servility and subservience towards the army. The army is considered more powerful, authoritarian and controller of all political endeavors. The poetic expression about the downfall of morality emphasizes the gravity of the situation. It illustrates Shahbaz Sharif’s assumption of power as prime minister as a significant decline of ethical standards in Pakistan’s history.

Step: 03

The tweet shows Chohan as a representative of PTI with its chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan, being ousted the day before. It positions Chohan as a less powerful figure who could not defeat their opponents, the PDM. Simultaneously, he asserts his influence by referring to cherry blossomed boots which is a metaphor for the military. This suggests an alliance between the PML-N and the military power. Chohan aims to create a deviated perception of PML-N and insinuates their collaboration with the military during their assuming of power.

Tweet No:05

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayanchohanpk] (2022, April 12)

“Shahbaz Sharif ka Imran Khan ko phone--:

Wazir e Azam house k wi-fi ka password kya ha--???

Imran Khan ka jawab--:

Beggars174” (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

“Shahbaz Sharif’s call to Imran Khan;

What is the Wi-Fi password of Prime Minister House?

Imran Khan’s reply:

Beggars174”

Context:

Two days after Imran Khan’s removal from office through a vote of no-confidence, Shahbaz Sharif became the new prime minister of Pakistan. In this context, Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan creates an identity for the new residents of the prime minister’s house. He calls them “beggars174”, where Shahbaz Sharif and his allies are called beggars. One hundred and seventy-four is the total number in aggregate who voted against Imran Khan.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He makes fun of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and his allies as “beggars”.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif & his coalition government
	Narrative Strategy	Dialogue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He makes a joke about Sharif as a representative of PML-N asking about the Wi-Fi password of PM house.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Beggars174.</p>

The travesty in this tweet lies in the satirical portrayal of a supposed phone call between Shahbaz Sharif and Imran Khan. It stems from the question about the Wi-Fi password of the Prime Minister's house and Imran Khan's unexpected response that is “Beggars174”. This plays on the expectation that the Prime Minister’s Wi-Fi password would be something official or sophisticated but the response introduces a humorous element incongruous with the formal government setting. The tweet uses normal vs atypical elements as a form of script opposition. It involves a contrast between the anticipated formal setting and the unexpected twist introduced by Imran Khan’s response. The two scripts insults and put-down Shahbaz Sharif and various stakeholders of his coalition government. The tweet is set against the backdrop of Imran Khan's removal from office. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a dialogue as it involves an

assumed conversation between two people. The tweet concludes with a punchline which is Imran Khan's response.

Step: 02

Chohan in this tweet uses satire to mock Shahbaz Sharif and PML-N. He especially mocks them in the context of Imran Khan being voted out of power through a vote of no-confidence. Subsequently, Shahbaz Sharif becomes the new prime minister of Pakistan, nominated and collectively supported in a decision by the allied political parties aka the PDM. Chohan humorously suggests that when Sharif became the prime minister, he asked for the Wi-Fi password and upon calling Imran Khan received the response "beggars174". The intention is to portray Shahbaz Sharif as dependent and incapable. He suggests that Sharif relies on financial aid from others like the USA, Saudia Arabia, and the IMF. He highlights what he sees as incompetence and dependency of the PDM's government.

Step: 03

It indicates Chohan's weaker role as the representative of the PTI whose party's chairman and prime minister Imran Khan has been ousted. He derides the new prime minister of the PDM's government and labels him a beggar. The intention is to portray Shahbaz Sharif and his allies as weak and incompetent mendicants.

Tweet No: 06

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazvhohanpk] (2022, April 17)

Raaj wo hota ha jo dilon py kiya jaye

Warna takht pey to Yazeed bhi betha tha

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Pakistani Viceroy of imported government Maqsood chaprasi aur governer general Punjab chotu Shahbaz ko ruswai aur jag hasai k tor par wazarat e uzma aur wazarat e aala Mubarak o--!! (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

Kingdom of heart is the true kingdom

Or Else, Yazid too possessed a throne

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As a symbol of shame and mockery, congratulations to Maqsood Peon, the viceroy of Pakistan's imported government for becoming the prime minister and junior Shahbaz, governor general of Punjab for becoming the chief minister...!!

Context:

After the successful vote of no-confidence that removed Imran Khan from power, Shahbaz Sharif assumed the role of the new prime minister while Hamza Shahbaz took on the role of Chief minister of Punjab. In response to this political change, Chohan congratulates them in a mocking and degrading manner.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	He mocks Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz by derisively referring to them as the viceroy figures.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif & Hamza Shahbaz
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue

	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He ridicules Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz by sarcastically labeling them as the representatives of an imported government.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>As a symbol of shame and mockery, congratulations to Maqsood Peon, the viceroy of Pakistan’s imported government for becoming the prime minister and junior Shahbaz, governor general of Punjab for becoming the chief minister...!!!</p>
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The travesty in the tweet is evident through the satirical and exaggerated depiction of government officials. The use of phrases like, “imported government”, “Maqsood Peon” and “Junior Shahbaz” employs a humorous and derisive tone. In terms of script opposition, the tweet contrasts the expected discourse surrounding government officials and political positions with an atypical and satirical representation. The normal script includes a discussion characterized by respect and formality. However, the tweet deviates from it and employs atypical and derogatory terms such as “Maqsood Peon” and “Junior Shahbaz”. The term, “imported government” further adds an unusual touch and suggests something unconventional. This is aimed at insulting Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz. Chohan portrays their elevation to these esteemed positions as the degradation of meritocracy and competence in the political landscape. The tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where Chohan mockingly congratulates them.

Step: 02

Chohan employs irony in his commentary on Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz. He uses poetic language to create a dual meaning. He subtly praises Imran Khan as the one who earned the affection of people by saying that, “kingdom of heart is the true kingdom”. The reference to Yazid seated on a throne is a metaphorical comparison of Shahbaz Sharif’s government with Yazid’s. Yazid was the second Umayyad caliph, a dictator and suppressor who was involved in the events surrounding the tragedy of Karbala. He killed Hazrat Hussain (R.A.), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and his followers. His reign is associated with corruption, oppression and disregard for justice and morality (Britannica, n.d.). Chohan compares Shahbaz Sharif’s government to that of Yazid’s. It implies that Sharif’s administration shares characteristics of tyranny and oppression. Moreover, it conveys a sense of dissatisfaction with the state of governance under Shahbaz Sharif’s leadership. Chohan’s reference to Shahbaz Sharif as “Viceroy of Pakistan’s Imported government” is a sarcastic way to highlight his perceived submission to external influences, particularly the US. The term, “Imported Government” is used to mock the PML-N alleged collaboration with foreign powers. In a congratulatory tone, Chohan subtly infuses mockery and intimates that their coming to power is more of a disgrace and a joke than a genuine achievement for the people of Pakistan. He implies that the PML-N’s actions like collaboration with external forces are sources of embarrassment and defamation for all.

Step: 03

It shows Chohan as the ex-spokesperson of PTI, who has recently witnessed his party's loss of government. He aims to assert his influence by labeling Shahbaz Sharif as the “viceroy” of the imported government. Moreover, he creates a negative image of PML-N for twitter users by presenting Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz as individuals who have compromised their loyalties towards the Pakistani nation. Chohan targets their alliance to external forces.

Tweet No: 07

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, April 27)

“Baap……PM (Maqsood Chaprasi)

Beta.....CM (Cucry Mafia)

Corruption....AM to PM’’ (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

“Father.....PM (Maqsood Peon)

Son.....CM (Cucry Mafia)

Corruption....AM to PM’’

Context:

On April 16, 2022, PTI faced a setback in the election for the chief minister of Punjab. They were defeated by PML-N in a close contest. In this context, Chohan says that Shahbaz Sharif as the prime minister is compared to “Maqsood Peon”. Whereas, Hamza Shahbaz as chief minister is called a “Cucry Mafia”. The implication of their roles as PM and CM is that they continue to practice corruption from morning to evening.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz as being mafias and their only job is doing corruption from morning till evening.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif & Hamza Shahbaz
	Narrative strategy	Monologue

	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He calls Shahbaz Sharif a peon and Hamza Shahbaz Cucry mafia (poultry mafia) and their only job will be corruption.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Corruption.....AM to PM</p>
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In this tweet, travesty lies in the satirical and exaggerated representation of familial relationships and political roles. The phrase “Father....PM (Maqsood Peon)” humorously suggests that the father is Shahbaz Sharif and he is the prime minister. Shahbaz Sharif is metaphorically called “Peon” named Maqsood. Whereas, in the phrase “Son...CM (Cucry Mafia)” Hamza Shahbaz who is the chief minister of Punjab is the son of Shahbaz Sharif. He is called a “poultry mafia”. It introduces a lighthearted and unconventional element in the portrayal of their political roles and personalities/identities. The final phrase “Corruption....AM to PM” contributes to travesty as it implies a continuous flow of corruption from morning (AM) to evening (PM). Chohan uses the framework of time to emphasize the nature of corruption. The tweet employs normal vs atypical as a form of script opposition which juxtaposes conventional familial relationships with flamboyant/dramatic political roles. In traditional family structures, the father would not typically be equated to a prime minister and a son would not be associated with a chief minister. These connections introduce unexpected humorous twists as they deviate from normal roles and titles. It is used for insult and put-down humor to target Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where the continuous nature of corruption is presented as a day-long job.

Step: 02

Chohan uses satire to mock Shahbaz Sharif and his son, Hamza Shahbaz. Chohan refers to PM Shahbaz Sharif as Maqsood Peon. Maqsood was embroiled in a money laundering case. Being a peon at the Sharif family's Ramzan sugar mills, he was assumed as PMLN's pawn in corruption. He became a central figure in the case when 3 billion rupees were found in his bank account. However, his reported demise led to the dismissal of the money-laundering charges against both Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz by NAB. Chohan suggests that Maqsood's death paved the way for Shahbaz Sharif to become prime minister. Hamza Shahbaz known as the "king of poultry" and became chief minister of Punjab due to his father's position (The Express Tribune, 2022). He alleges Hamza Shahbaz for corruption in poultry business. As an influential figure, it was known that he could manipulate poultry prices and gain an advantage out of it. "Mafia" suggests his control over poultry enterprise in the province of the Punjab. The punchline, "corruption.....AM to PM" serves as an indication of their unstoppable greed and corruption. Chohan purports that their primary approach to governance involves the use of devious means of money laundering and corruption in poultry.

Step: 03

This tweet reflects Chohan's position as a displeased federal minister of the PTI who recently faced defeat against PMLN in the chief minister's election. Pervaiz Elahi, who was the candidate for chief ministership from his party, was defeated by Hamza Shahbaz. He calls them mafias and money launderers. He endeavors to build their image of dishonesty and emphasizes their dexterity in illegal practices round the clock.

Tweet No:08

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, May 05)

Duniya k sab sy azeem lotay dost mazari ki ruling ki desi aur jhatky andaz sy tashreh--:

"larki ko nikah mn leny k liye teen baar han aur alahidigi ki surat mn talaq larka ni dey gaa balkay susr dey gaa kyun k ghar ka sarbara susr ha" (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

The ruling style of the greatest turncoat in the world, Dost Mazari, can be described in a local and convoluted manner as:

“To take a girl in marriage, yes is required thrice and in case of separation, the boy will not give the divorce, rather the father-in-law will give it because the father-in-law is the head of the family”.

Context:

In the Chief Minister contest for Punjab between PTI and PML-N, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi faced Hamza Shahbaz. Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi is one of the prominent leaders of PML-Q. At that time, he declared his support for the PTI. This led the party president of PML-Q Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain to send a letter to Dost Mazari who was the speaker of Punjab Assembly at that time. The letter advocated the allocation of PML-Q's ten votes in favor of Hamza Shahbaz. The speaker Dost Mazari then asserted that those ten votes would not be considered in favor of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. Ultimately, Hamza Shahbaz won the elections with the inclusion of those ten votes. Also, PTI claimed that Mazari accepted money from both PML-N and PML-Q (Arab News Pakistan, 2022). Chohan's party accuses Mazari of an unjust ruling against Pervaiz Elahi.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Absurd interpretation
	Situation	He makes fun of the speaker of Punjab Assembly as a turncoat, who did not come up to the expectations related to his role and thus, gave an unjust ruling against Pervaiz Elahi.

Knowledge Resource	Target	Dost Mazari
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He makes fun of the ruling by the speaker of the Punjab Assembly, Dost Mazari.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>In case of separation, the boy will not give the divorce, but the father-in-law, because the father-in-law is the head of the family”.</p>

The travesty in this tweet lies in its satirical and humorous depiction of the political ruling. Both marriage proposal and divorce are used as situations where if one flouts the conventions there is a chance of unjustified decisions. The introduction of exaggerated circumstances into the divorce process, wherein the father-in-law rather than the husband, initiates the divorce. This playfully twists traditional customs linked with marriage. The absurdity of the situation is intended for humor and satire. The tweet employs script opposition by contrasting atypical and exaggerated divorce conditions with more conventional expectations. In a normal scenario, if a girl seeks separation, the husband has the right to initiate divorce. However, the tweet introduces an amusing twist and suggests that the father-in-law instead of the husband would be responsible for the divorce. This absurd interpretation is used for comedic effect and as a form of insult and put-down humor aimed at the speaker Mr. Dost Mazari. The tweet is based on the election of chief minister for Punjab and adopts the form of a monologue. It concludes with a punchline where the assertion is made that the father-in-law would give the divorce instead of a husband.

Step: 02

The tweet falls into the category of verbal humor, specifically situational irony. It contrasts the expected role of the husband in the divorce with the absurd twist of the father-in-law initiating it. Chohan uses this irony to satirize the ruling of the speaker of the Punjab Assembly, Dost Mazari. He suggests his dishonesty and political manipulation. The reference to the PML-N's alleged efforts to make Hamza Shahbaz the chief minister of Punjab is made through a sarcastic scenario. It involves a girl, Pervaiz Elahi who seeks separation and has to ask her husband, Shujaat Hussain, the president of PML-Q. However, the father-in-law, Dost Mazari, who is the speaker of the Punjab Assembly intervenes by rejecting votes in favor of Elahi and supports Hamza Shahbaz. This implies a shift in allegiance which Chohan directly ridicules and calls Dost Mazari a "turncoat". He alleges, as per the context, that Mazari accepted money from both the PML-N and PML-Q.

Step: 03

It reveals Chohan's weaker stance as the representative of the PTI party that suffered defeat against the PML-N. After the loss of PTI's candidate Pervaiz Elahi, Chohan seems to express frustration and discontent by blaming the speaker for what he perceives as a betrayal. The tweet mocks the speaker's ruling and shows Chohan's inability to accept the defeat graciously.

Tweet No: 09

Chohan, F.U.H [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, May 19)

"Hukumat ny apny ilawa, har imported cheez par pabandi laga di--!!" (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

"The government has put a ban on every imported item, except itself."

Context:

On that day, the PDM's government announced a ban on the import of non-essential luxury items under an emergency economic plan (Dawn, 2022). In this context, Chohan asserts that the government has imposed restrictions on the import of every

commodity/item. However, he adds, the PDM government has not put a ban on itself as it itself is called ‘imported’ (government).

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Expectation vs Reality
	Logical Mechanism	Wordplay
	Situation	He makes fun of the PDM government by calling them an ‘‘imported government’’.
	Target	Coalition Government
	Narrative strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He makes fun of the PDM’s government take on the import restrictions.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>except itself.</p>

In this statement, travesty lies in the humorously exaggerated claim that the government has imposed a ban on every imported thing except on itself. The script employs the opposition of expectation vs reality through this exaggeration. While the expectation is that the government would not be treated like an imported item subject to a ban, the humorous reality presented suggests otherwise. It implies that the government itself is

included in the list of banned imported items. The humor arises from the unexpected twist between what is expected (no ban on the government itself) and what is humorously presented (the government being part of the ban). The two scripts involve wordplay as it plays on the term “imported” and adds a humorous twist to the phrase, “except itself”. This use of wordplay serves as a form of insult and put-down humor to target the PDM’s government in power. The tweet is situated within the context of the PDM’s government announcement of the ban on imported items under an emergency economic plan. The statement takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline that cleverly includes the government to the list of imported items and adds an extra layer of humor and critique.

Step: 02

The tweet embodies situational irony, a form of verbal humor wherein the unexpected scenario of the government being treated like an imported item contrasts with expectations. Chohan employs an intended pun to mock the PML-N government as “imported”. This term is a subtle reference to Chohan’s allegations during his time as a spokesperson for PTI. He and his party claimed that the PDM’s government was backed by America for regime change. The use of “imported” suggests that the PDM government was not democratically elected but rather came to power through foreign support. This allegation is based on the economic crisis in Pakistan which led to the ban on non-essential luxury items under the PDM’s government in 2022. He adds a layer of satire to their actions. He combines situational irony, a pun, and political commentary to poke fun at the PDM government's perceived lack of democratic legitimacy as well as economic policies.

Step: 03

This statement shows Chohan as the former spokesperson of a political party currently without power. The exaggerated claim implies a sense of powerlessness on the part of the government that is no longer in governance. Moreover, he seems to assert his influence by directly labeling the PDM government as “imported”. This terminology is used to paint a negative image of the PDM. He insinuates that they are not democratically elected but gained power with the support from the USA.

Tweet No: 10

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, May 27)

Mushtri hoshiyar bash---!!!

Ba adab ba mulahiza---crime minister Maqsood chaprasi apny hathon sy bnaye huy kat putli opposition leader raja Riyaz key mashwry sy nab mulzim fawad hassan fawad ko nab ka chairman bnany ka soch rahay han..

Ilan khatam—Pakistan ka Khazana hazam (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

Caveat Emptor --!!!

Be respectful and attentive-!!! Crime Minister Maqsood Peon is thinking of making NAB accused Fawad Hassan Fawad the chairman of NAB, with the advice of opposition leader Raja Riaz, a puppet made by his own hands.

End of the announcement and so is the end of the treasure of Pakistan.

Context:

In the Aashiana Housing project case, both Shahbaz Sharif and Fawad Hassan Fawad faced corruption allegations. They were later declared innocent by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) (Pakistan Observer, 2022). In the light of this news, Chohan hints that Shahbaz Sharif contemplates about making Fawad Hassan Fawad as the chairman of NAB. He also points out that Shahbaz Sharif in collaboration with Raja Riaz intends to confirm Fawad's chairmanship of the NAB. The notable point is that Raja Riaz was appointed as the leader of opposition by Shahbaz Sharif himself (Dunya News, 2022).

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
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Knowledge Resource	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He mocks Shahbaz Sharif, portraying him as the one involved in looting Pakistan.
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He characterizes Shahbaz Sharif as Crime Minister Maqsood peon and associates him with Raja Riaz, accusing them of collectively engaging in corruption and looting Pakistan.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>End of the announcement and so is the end of the treasure of Pakistan.</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the connection of a political scenario that diverges from reality and involves fabricated actions by the mentioned individuals. The phrase, “Crime Minister Maqsood Peon” is intended for dramatic effect and the mention of “a puppet made by his own hand” highlights the alleged collaboration among political figures. This contributes to overall travesty, including the appointment of an individual as NAB chairman. The tweet employs a combination of traditional political language and atypical, fictional elements. It starts conventionally with expressions like, “Caveat Emptor” and references to political figures. However, it quickly introduces a dramatic and fictional

narrative wherein the prime minister is referred to as “Crime Minister” and “Maqsood Peon”. It also states his supposed plans to appoint the accused Fawad Hassan Fawad as the NAB chairman based on the advice taken from the opposition leader, Mr. Raja Riaz. This narrative is designed to insult Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet is set against the backdrop of the Aashiana scandal and structured as a monologue. It concludes with a sensational punchline about the depletion of Pakistan’s treasury.

Step: 02

The tweet uses satire to ridicule Shahbaz Sharif as a “Crime Minister” and “Maqsood Peon”. The subtle reference hints at Shahbaz Sharif’s connection to a corruption case, in which his subordinate, the Peon was discovered with 3 billion rupees. This situation metaphorically compares Shahbaz Sharif to his peon Maqsood. Additionally, he suggests that Raja Riaz who was originally affiliated with PTI indirectly joined PML-N after becoming the opposition leader and expressed his intention to run for PML-N in future elections (Business Recorder, 2022). The phrase, “puppet made by his own hand” suggests a connection between Raja Riaz and Shahbaz Sharif. Chohan implies that both figures are corrupt and are considering the appointment of NAB accused Fawad Hassan Fawad as NAB chairman to shield themselves from accountability and continue their nefarious activities. The sarcastic remark in the last line states that the announcement is over with an additional announcement that the treasure of Pakistan has been consumed. It implies that the collaboration between both figures poses a threat to the country.

Step: 03

It shows Chohan as the spokesperson for a political party engaged in a power struggle against more powerful adversaries. Chohan hints that the powerful positions are held by criminals and accused. Shahbaz Sharif is called by him a crime minister involved in making fake accounts, Raja Riaz is an opposition leader who does not show affiliation or alliance to his own party but towards the government and the adversaries of PTI and Fawad Hassan Fawad is to be given chairmanship of NAB despite his own corruption cases filed in the NAB previously. The ones who should be captivated, are in this tweet established as the ones in power. Hence, Shahbaz Sharif is hinted as an autocratic prime minister.

Tweet No:11

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, May 31)

Imported hukumat ki pareshani

Agy khai peechy PTI (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

The imported government's dilemma

Between the devil and the PTI

Context:

During that period, the PDM government faced challenges in managing the country's economic affairs. Despite coming into power, they were unable to improve the economy. They removed PTI, which was proficient in economic management (Business Recorder, 2022). Now, the PDM's government finds itself in trouble between the devil and the PTI.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Twisting idiomatic expressions
	Situation	He mocks the PDM's government and suggests that they fear facing challenges from PTI.
	Target	PDM government
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue

	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He ridicules the PDM government that their primary fear seems to be PTI.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Between the devil and the PTI</p>
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In the tweet, the term, “imported government” is used as a form of travesty. The tweet creates a script opposition between normal elements and atypical in the context of political discourse. The phrase, “the imported government’s dilemma” offers a critical perspective on a government believed to be influenced by external forces. On the atypical side, the phrase, “Between the devil and the PTI” introduces a metaphorical scenario. It positions as the deep blue sea laces PTI and suggests a challenging situation for the PDM government. They can neither overcome the economic crises nor the condemnation by PTI. He twists the idiom to mock the dilemma of the PDM government. It targets the PDM government. The tweet is embedded in the backdrop of the PDM government which faced economic challenges. It is structured as a monologue. It concludes with a punchline that employs an idiomatic twist to convey that the devil of economic crises is at one end and the reproach by PTI lies at the other. It adds a humorous touch to the critique.

Step: 02

Chohan employs satire to mock the PDM government by twisting an idiomatic expression. Initially, he ridicules the PDM government as an “imported government”. This satirical remark implies that they were not democratically elected, but rather perceived as being selected or influenced by America. He implies that the PDM’s government effort to oust PTI’s government received alleged support from the U.S. to facilitate regime change in Pakistan. Further, Chohan uses a play on an idiomatic expression. He alters a common proverb of, “Between the devil and the deep blue sea” to “Between the devil and the PTI”. This satirical twist implies that the PDM government should be cautious about potential

challenges (devil) that lie ahead. He specifically mentions the competition posed by PTI. He indicates that the PDM's main worry is PTI and stresses that they foresee only difficulties ahead. The metaphor of choosing between the devil and PTI suggests that despite being in power, the PDM government might struggle to overshadow PTI's influence.

Step: 03

As the spokesperson for PTI, Chohan once again emphasizes the political power struggle. Despite not holding power, he leverages the situation to criticize and mock the PDM as an “imported” government. Chohan conveys that although PDM has come into power, they have been unable to stabilize the economy and now no solution seems to be forthcoming. They are stuck in the situation with a devil ahead and PTI behind them.

Tweet No:12

Chohan, F.U.H. [@Fayazchohanpk] (2022, June 04)

Baqol Maryam Aurangzeb 786 par ghareeb call kry gaa aur ussy subsidy mily gii.

786 par call krny par jawab

“Aap k matluba number k pass ap k maslay ka koi hal nahin ha. Baray mehrbani Shahbaz sharif sey rabta karain wo apny kapry bech kar shyd aap ka masla hal kar sakyn. Aap ka call karnay ka shukriya aainda zehmat na kijiye gaa” (Chohan, 2022)

English Translation:

According to Maryam Aurangzeb, the poor will call on 786 and will receive a subsidy.

Upon calling 786, the response is

“Your requested number does not have a solution to your problems. Kindly contact Shahbaz Sharif; perhaps he can solve your problem by selling his clothes. Thank you for calling; please do not bother to call in the future.”

Context:

At that time, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif announced fuel package relief for low-income families under the name of the “Ehsas program”. People were instructed to dial

786 to get registration for the Ehsas program (The Express Tribune, 2022). In this context, he mentions an instance of it through the reference to the PML-N spokesperson that is Maryam Aurangzeb.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of the prime minister's Sasta petrol diesel scheme (786).
	Target	Shahbaz Sharif
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He makes fun of the Shahbaz Sharif Sasta petrol diesel scheme.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Thank you for calling; please do not bother to call in the future.</p>

In this tweet, travesty is apparent in the satirical and exaggerated reaction to the suggestion of calling the number 786 for a subsidy. The response suggests that the requested number has no solution to the caller's problems and humorously directs them to Shahbaz Sharif. It is added that Shahbaz Sharif might sell his clothes to solve the caller's issues. This establishes a script opposition by contrasting the typical expectation of seeking

assistance on a helpline number with the unconventional response that deviates from the usual helpful norm. The atypicality is heightened as it directs the caller to contact Shahbaz Sharif and adds an exaggerated twist. The closing line adds another layer of atypicality by thanking the caller and asking them not to bother calling in the future. This is used for insult and put-down humor while targeting Shahbaz Sharif. The tweet is set particularly in the context of the PML-N's announcement of the Sasta petrol-diesel scheme. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a dialogue as it involves an assumed conversational interaction on a helpline number. The tweet concludes with a punchline that ends the interaction with a dismissive and amusing tone.

Step: 02

In this satirical critique, Chohan mocks Shahbaz Sharif's Sasta petrol-diesel scheme. He specifically focuses on the claim made by the PML-N spokesperson, Maryam Aurangzeb. Chohan playfully adds a humorous touch to the situation via the reference to the relief for the poor on calling 786. The remark, "Please contact Shahbaz Sharif, he may be able to solve your problem by selling his clothes" is a play on Shahbaz Sharif's frequent promise to help the poor even by selling his own belongings. Chohan's inclusion of "maybe" adds a satirical element and implies uncertainty or skepticism about Sharif's actual willingness to help. The punchline, "Thank you for calling; Please, do not bother to call in the future" serves as a dismissive conclusion and further highlights Chohan's mockery of Shahbaz Sharif's perceived incapacity to effectively aid the poor. Overall, the satire aims to question Shahbaz Sharif's effectiveness in providing genuine assistance to the poor people.

Step: 03

The former spokesperson of PTI, Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan adopts a critical stance towards the relief schemes announced by the PDM government. He mocks Shahbaz Sharif's initiatives which were supposedly created to aid the less fortunate. He seeks to foster a negative view of the Sharif's efforts. Chohan suggests that the focus of these schemes is more on gaining popularity rather than to genuinely help the poor.

Table 1.2 shows the categories of verbal humor arranged in an ascending order along with their frequencies and percentages in Fayyaz Ul Hasan Chohan's derisive tweets. Among the twelve derisive tweets analyzed, two subcategories of verbal humor proposed by Shade are found. The categories are satire and irony. Satire as one category of verbal humor appears nine times whereas, irony is another category of verbal humor which appears three times. To determine the percentage of each category, the frequency of each category is divided by the sum of occurrences across all categories of verbal humor and then multiplied by 100. The aggregate percentage of satire is 75% while the percentage of irony is 25% respectively. The frequency analysis of Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan's tweets reveals a calculated use of verbal humor to construct derisive political discourse. This distribution highlights Chohan's strategic preference for satire as a dominant rhetorical device to mock political opponents. While dismissive remarks exemplify how humor is weaponized to reinforce skepticism and ridicule. The presence of irony, though less frequent, adds a nuanced layer to his criticism by subtly highlighting contradictions in rival policies and political performances. These humor strategies align closely with sociolinguistic variables such as power relations, political affiliation, and audience perception. The frequencies demonstrate that Chohan's use of verbal humor on Twitter is not incidental but deliberate—a discursive strategy that reflects his role in sustaining partisan narratives, challenging rival credibility, and shaping the ideological landscape of Pakistani political discourse.

Table 1.2

Subcategories of Humor	No. of Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Irony	3	25%
Satire	9	75%

4.3 Tweets of Maryam Nawaz Sharif, PML-N Vice President

A similar approach to data collection has been used to gather twelve tweets from Maryam Nawaz Sharif's Twitter handle. Just as in the analysis of tweets from PTI figures which include Imran Khan and Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan, the first step involves scrutinizing Maryam Nawaz Sharif's tweets to identify lexical choices indicative of derision/travesty. Subsequently, in the second step, these choices are categorized into subtypes of verbal humor as proposed by Shade (1995). Lastly, the third step highlights sociolinguistic variables like power, position and gender as prioritized in the use of verbal humor in her tweets.

Tweet No: 01

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, March 07)

“Khan sahab ney sirf mukhalfeen ko hi nahi blkay dusry mumalik ko bhi galiyan aur dhmkian din. Apni siyasi mukhalfat mein Pakistan ka nuksan karny ka ikhtiyar inko kis ny diya? Inko kamry mn band kr deyn wrna bandar k hath machis aa jay to aag lagny ka khatra hai! (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

Mr. Khan did not just target the opposition but also used abusive and threatening tone for other countries. Who gives him the right to cause harm to Pakistan in his political disagreement? He should be locked in a room otherwise there is a risk of one running with scissors is likely to destroy everything in one's way.

Context:

On March 08, 2022, the PDM planned to submit a vote of no-confidence against Prime Minister Imran Khan. PDM cited his government's failure to control inflation as the primary reason. During the PTI's tenure, accusations such as the Panama Leaks and Sugar Mill scandal, etc., were directed towards the PML-N. It resulted in the imprisonment of PML-N leaders which includes Maryam Nawaz and Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz perceived these actions as threats and insults. In 2022, PML-N was in opposition to the PTI government. During this period, Imran Khan refused to cooperate with the United States

on counter-terrorism efforts. He stated a firm “NO” to provide military bases (Pakistan Reader, 2022). In response to Imran Khan’s refusal, Maryam Nawaz mocks Khan and points out that while in power, he not only attacks his political rivals but also resorts to abusive language towards other countries. She questions his right to jeopardize Pakistan in his political disputes and likens his behavior to someone wielding scissors dangerously and capable of causing widespread harm. She suggests that unless Khan is restrained, there is a risk of significant damage.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	She mocks Imran Khan and suggests that while in power, he not only insulted and threatened political opponents but also other countries.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She playfully compares Imran Khan to a monkey and pokes fun at him.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>He should be locked in the room otherwise there is a risk of one running</p>

		with scissors is likely to destroy everything in one's way.
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In the given tweet, the use of the phrase, “one running with scissors” stands out as an example of a travesty. It is used metaphorically to suggest that if Mr. Khan continues expressing his opinions, it poses a serious risk akin to a reckless and harmful action. This comparison is hyperbolic and inappropriate, as it equates political discourse with physical danger in an inflated and unjust manner. The tweet employs script opposition as it juxtaposes typical political discourse with atypical and exaggerated scenarios. In the normal script, the tweet criticizes Imran Khan for targeting both the opposition and other countries which aligns with usual patterns of critique. However, the atypical script is introduced with the unconventional suggestion to “lock him in the room” followed by the metaphorical comparison of one running with scissors. The use of these two scripts aims to insult and put down Imran Khan. The tweet is situated within the context of the PDM’s attempt to dismiss Imran Khan’s government through a vote of no-confidence and takes the form of a monologue. It concludes with a punchline where Maryam Nawaz Sharif views the actions or words of Imran Khan as reckless and potentially harmful, akin to the dangerous act of one running with scissors and suggests to lock him in the room. It emphasizes the belief that if Khan’s actions are not restrained or controlled, they could lead to significant damage.

Step: 02

In this satirical portrayal, Maryam Nawaz mocks Prime Minister Imran Khan’s actions and leadership. She makes use of an Urdu idiom where “running with scissors” is noted as “if monkey gets hold of matches”. She alleges that during his time in government, Imran Khan abused and threatened his political rivals and other countries. For such actions, Imran Khan is paralleled to a monkey. She satirizes his actions as irrational and potentially harmful. She suggests that his actions only bring chaos and damage to the country. Furthermore, Maryam Nawaz Sharif criticizes Khan for his refusal to cooperate with the United States on counter-terrorism efforts. She portrays it as detrimental to Pakistan’s

interests. She ridicules Khan's "NO" and parallels it with his actions towards his opposition to suggest that he is no better than a dangerous monkey. She undermines Khan's credibility and leadership and emphasizes the absurdity of his political maneuvers.

Step: 03

Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her role as a vice president of PML-N leverages her position to critique Imran Khan's government. She highlights her power and poses a question about who gave Khan the right to harm the country. She depicts Khan unfavorably as a political leader who harms his political rivals and other countries during his time in office.

Tweet No:02

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, March 29)

“Jali sabiq wazir e azam ka supreme court k chief justice ko khat dikhanay ka kehna in ka mujhy bacha lo faryadon ka hissa ha- brrayy mehrbani supreme court ko apny fitny aur shar sy door rkhiye-” (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

The former fake prime minister presenting the letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is a part of his desperate pleas, 'PLEASE SAVE ME'. For goodness's sake, keep the Supreme Court away from your wickedness and malevolence.

Context:

Imran Khan claimed a letter that contains evidence of the West (specifically the US) being involved in a conspiracy against his government and its removal. He asserted to present the letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (The Express Tribune, 2022). In response to Imran Khan's plan, on the same day, Maryam Nawaz Sharif denounces it as an act of wickedness and malevolence. She further contends that it is merely an attempt by Khan to save himself.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	She mocks Imran Khan by labeling him a “fake former prime minister” and ridicules his request to show a letter to the Supreme Court.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She pokes fun at Imran Khan's plea to present the letter to the chief justice of the Supreme Court.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>For goodness’s sake, keep the Supreme Court away from your wickedness and malevolence.</p>

In the tweet, the phrase “former fake prime minister” exemplifies travesty as it employs linguistic exaggeration for a humorous effect. The tweet establishes script opposition by juxtaposing a conventional request to show a letter to the chief justice of the Supreme Court. It contrasts with an atypical and unconventional characterization of the former prime minister as a “fake prime minister”. The normal script involves a standard

legal or official request, whereas the atypical script introduces a strongly opinionated term ‘fake’ to describe the prime minister. The tweet is set against the backdrop of Imran Khan’s stated intention to show a letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and is aimed to insult and put down Imran Khan. The tweet is presented in the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline. The punchline asserts that Imran Khan should keep the Supreme Court away from his wickedness and malevolence.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz employs satire to ridicule Imran Khan's request to present the letter to the chief justice of the Supreme Court. She labels him a “former fake prime minister” and suggests that his plea is a desperate attempt to save himself. This situation is ironic because it implies a contradictory situation where someone who holds the title of prime minister is labeled as “fake”. She believes that he obtained his position through illegitimate means. Maryam mocks his perceived lack of legitimacy and portrays his actions as manipulative. Additionally, she humorously advises Khan to keep the Supreme Court away from his “wickedness” and “malevolence”. She further exaggerates and lampoons his behavior.

Step: 03

It shows Maryam Nawaz’s influential position as the vice president of PML-N. She calls PM “fake” and states that his request to show the letter is a deceptive attempt to save himself. Maryam Nawaz Sharif’s use of terms like “wickedness” and “malevolence” implies a portrayal of Imran Khan as someone prone to deceitful behaviors or unethical actions. It depicts him as a destructive force.

Tweet No: 03

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, March 31)

Honestly, this man is on a rampage! He has to be gagged or muzzled before he makes a joke out of the country. (Sharif, 2022)

Context:

Prime Minister Imran Khan embarked on a series of public rallies as the PDM prepared to table a vote of no-confidence against him. In these gatherings, he leveled accusations against the PDM and the US for plotting a regime change in Pakistan. Imran Khan further asserted that Shahbaz Sharif and PML-N collaborated with the US. He also alleged General Bajwa of supporting PML-N with the aim to destabilize his government (Voice of America, 2022). Maryam Nawaz dismisses these claims as nonsense and characterizes him as someone riotous and unruly.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult and put down humor
	Situation	She mocks Imran Khan and portrays him as a man on a rampage solely interested in causing destruction and disaster.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She portrays Imran Khan as a person who has become increasingly violent and difficult to control.</p> <p>Punchline:</p>

		He has to be gagged or muzzled before he makes a joke out of the country.
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In this tweet, the phrase, “gagged or muzzled” signifies travesty and suggests extreme measures to silence or restrain someone. This strong language contributes to the exaggerated and dramatic nature of the criticism. The tweet uses script opposition between normal and atypical elements to intensify the criticism of Prime Minister Imran Khan. The expression “this man is on a rampage” introduces a relatively conventional expression of disapproval and suggests an aggressive behavior. However, the atypical elements emerge with the call for extreme measures and states that he has to be gagged or muzzled. This usage of language surpasses standard political discourse. The tweet’s atypical element extends to the figurative expression, “before he makes a joke out of the country” which suggests an exaggerated impact of Khan’s actions. Both scripts insult and put down Khan. The tweet is situated within the context of PTI’s rallies and protests following its potential removal from government, during which Imran Khan accused former army general, Qamar Javed Bajwa and the PDM of conspiring against him. The tweet is presented in the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline. It asserts that Khan must be silenced before he makes a joke out of the country.

Step: 02

This tweet falls under the category of verbal humor, specifically satire. Maryam Nawaz uses satire to mock Prime Minister Imran Khan and depicts him as an erratic individual. The use of the term, “rampage” characterizes Khan as a violent and irrational individual who brings destruction and disturbance. Maryam Nawaz implies that Imran Khan has become so unpredictable and destructive that he requires restraint. She proposes terms such as “gagged” or “muzzled” to prevent what she considers nonsensical. The use of these terms also carries a derogatory undertone and pictures him as an unruly animal that bites everyone who crosses his path. She indirectly depicts Imran Khan as a creature capable of causing chaos. Additionally, she conveys that if he persists, he risks becoming

a subject of ridicule for the entire nation. Similarly, Donald Trump in one of his tweets calls Nancy Pelosi a "very sick person" and suggests that she has something wrong "upstairs." He aims to defame and ridicule her by implying she is mentally unstable. Trump's characterization of Pelosi as "sick" serves to portray her as irrational and harmful, aiming to damage her public image and credibility (Radhi, 2021). Such a strategic use of derogatory language reflects similar objectives in political communication.

Step: 03

This portrays her as a formidable and influential political figure unafraid to use strong language when criticizing a prime minister in power. She refers to him as, "this man" which depicts him as an insignificant individual who is acting like an animal. She asserts that like a violent and misbehaving animal, his mouth should be covered too so as to prevent further harm. She preconceives her powerful political position and thus, subjects him to mockery and criticism.

Tweet No:04

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 03)

"Apni kursi ko bachanay ki khatir aain e Pakistan ka huliya bigarnay ki ijazat kisi ko nahin di jani chye- iss jurm par iss pagal aur junoni shakhs ko saza na di gai to aj k bad iss mulk mn jungle ka qanoon chly gaa!" (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

No one should be given permission to tarnish the image of the state of Pakistan just to save one's own seat. If this crazy man and fanatic is not punished for this crime, then from today onwards, the law of the jungle will prevail in this country!

Context:

In a session of the National assembly, PTI's speaker Asad Qaisar cited Article 5 of the constitution of Pakistan. He argued that the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) attempt to initiate a vote of no-confidence against PM Imran Khan is illegal. This legal contention gained further significance when Imran Khan announced the early dissolution of assemblies prior to the scheduled no-confidence vote (Dawn, 2022). Maryam Nawaz

Sharif condemns all these actions as unconstitutional and portrays Khan as a reckless and fanatical figure driven by a relentless pursuit of power. She suggests that Khan goes so far as to flout the Constitution in order to cling to his premiership, despite its clear prohibition against the premature dissolution of assemblies.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Absurd interpretation and Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	She mocks Imran Khan and characterizes him as an eccentric and obsessive figure who strives to safeguard his seat of PM.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She pokes fun at Imran Khan and portrays him as a mad and demented figure who defied the constitution of Pakistan.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>If this crazy man and fanatic is not punished for this crime, then from today onwards, the law of the jungle will prevail in this country!</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the phrase “law of the jungle” which suggests a descent into chaos and disorder if the described offense of breaking the constitution goes unpunished. The term, “jungle” metaphorically signifies anarchy that lacks structured legal system. The tweet employs a script opposition between the expected legal procedures and an atypical consequence of the crime. It creates a contrast to emphasize the severity of the situation. In a typical legal scenario, one would expect an accused person to go through the legal established system, face a trial and receive punishment in accordance with the law. However, the tweet diverges by introducing the phrase “law of the jungle” to describe the potential consequences if the accused individual is not punished. Both scripts are connected through an absurd interpretation as they envision an irrational link between the conventional legal script and the atypical “jungle” scenario. The tweet serves as an insult and put down humor aimed at Imran Khan. The tweet is set within the context of the PTI’s speaker of the National Assembly’s move to stop the vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan and Khan’s move to dissolve assemblies. The tweet is presented as a monologue and concludes with a punchline. The punchline asserts that if the mentioned individual’s offense goes unpunished, the law of jungle will prevail in the future.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz employs satire to ridicule and criticize Imran Khan. She exaggerates in her criticism of his move to dissolve assemblies and calls him a crazy and fanatical person. She mocks his actions and suggests that Khan engages in these maneuvers solely to safeguard his position of premiership. Additionally, she lampoons him and asserts that failure to punish him for these actions would lead to the imposition of the “law of the jungle” in the country. The term “fanatical” implies an extreme and irrational pursuit of something. She indicates that Imran Khan’s thirst for power led him to disregard the Constitution.

Step: 03

It portrays Maryam Nawaz as a figure within PML-N, who can challenge the ones in power, gearing up to bring a vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan on April 10.

Despite the apprehension that the speaker might reject their no-confidence move, she mocks Imran Khan as a frantic and extreme individual. She accuses him of violating the constitution by dissolving assemblies. This depiction aims to shape Imran Khan's image as someone desperate to cling to power to the extent that he even takes unconstitutional actions.

Tweet No: 05

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 07)

“Pakistan ko awam dushman, nalaiq tareen, na ehl tareen, aur nakam tareen hukumat sey nijat bht bht Mubarak” (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

“Heartiest Congratulations to Pakistan on getting rid of an anti-people, the most incompetent, the most incapable, and the most unsuccessful government.”

Context:

On that day, Pakistan's supreme court rejected Imran Khan's attempt to dissolve assemblies and call for early elections. Instead, the court ordered the assemblies to reconvene and conduct a vote of no-confidence. This potentially led to Imran Khan's removal from office (Al Jazeera, 2022). In this context, she pioneered in congratulating the people of Pakistan on the possible ousting of the PTI government.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	She pokes fun at the PTI's government following the Supreme

Knowledge Resource		Court decision against Imran Khan's move to dissolve the assemblies.
	Target	PTI
	Narrative Strategy	monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She ridicules the PTI government after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of her party.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Heartiest congratulations to Pakistan on getting rid of an anti-people, the most incompetent, the most incapable, and the most unsuccessful government.</p>

The given tweet incorporates elements of travesty in the selection of exaggerated and derogatory adjectives to characterize a government. The terms, “the most incompetent”, “the most incapable” and “the most unsuccessful” exemplify instances of travesty and introduces a satirical tone. The tweet contrasts typical political language with a pointed critique on a government. it labels the government as “anti-people”. This departure from standard criticism employs a critical tone to express profound unease. The repetitive use of phrases like “the most incompetent”, “the most incapable” and “the most unsuccessful” amplifies the deviation. This contributes to an insulting and degrading portrayal of the PTI government. The tweet is situated within the context of the Supreme Court ruling against Imran Khan’s attempt to dissolve assemblies and is presented in the form of a monologue. The entire tweet itself is a punchline where the PTI government is degraded through the use of exaggerated adjectives.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz Sharif employs satire to ridicule the PTI's government. She humorously exaggerates the shortcomings of the PTI government to create a mockery on it. She makes sarcastic remarks by congratulating Pakistan on removing a government portrayed as the most incompetent, incapable, and unsuccessful. This implies a celebratory tone on part of the PDM, poised to remove the PTI's government through a no-confidence motion. She highlights the perceived flaws of PTI's government in an exaggerated and mocking manner. The irony lies on the PTI's government failures, while following Khan's failed attempt to dissolve assemblies which was rejected by the Supreme Court. Furthermore, she derides the PTI's government as "anti-people". This indicates extreme opposition towards the PTI government. Additionally, she brands the PTI's government as "the most unsuccessful" using exaggerated adjectives as a form of punchline to belittle the administration.

Step: 03

It depicts Maryam Nawaz, as a powerful figure in the PDM, firmly set to remove Imran Khan's government through a no-confidence motion. She uses strong language to ridicule the PTI. She congratulates the people following the Supreme Court decision against PTI. She implies that this decision indicates a sense of relief among the populace. She seeks to portray the PTI's government in an antagonist manner by calling it "anti-people"; this is to imply that it was against the welfare of the people.

Tweet No: 06

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 09)

One person who is not in his senses anymore cannot be allowed to wreak havoc and bring the entire country down. This is not a joke. He should not be treated as PM or ex-PM; he must be treated as PSYCHOPATH who just to save his own skin is holding the entire country hostage. Shame (Sharif, 2022)

Context:

On April 10, ahead of a scheduled no-confidence vote, Imran Khan faced political challenges from the PDM and urged his supporters to protest against them. Consequently, widespread protests occurred across the country on April 9, 2022, with major cities and roads blocked (Dawn, 2022). In this situation, Maryam Nawaz calls him a crazy man who is not in his senses and has become a psychopath.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult and put-down humor
	Situation	She refers to Imran Khan as a PSYCHOPATH, intending to mock him.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She depicted Imran Khan as a person who, in effort to save himself, keeps the entire country hostage.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Shame</p>

In this tweet, “PSYCHOPATH” serves as an instance of travesty. The tweet employs script opposition between “normal” vs “atypical” to convey a critical perspective on an individual. The tweet begins with a more conventional critique and expresses concerns about the individual’s mental state and the potential negative consequences for the country. However, it takes an atypical turn as it characterizes the person as a “PSYCHOPATH” and accuses him of holding the entire country hostage. This shift in tone moves beyond typical criticism and portrays the individual’s actions as highly abnormal and posing a significant threat. The two scripts are used for insult and put down humor while targeting Imran Khan. The tweet is set up against Imran Khan's call for people to protest in retaliation against a foreign conspiracy and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline where she expresses strong disapproval and adds a moral dimension to the criticism. She infers that the individual’s call for a protest restrains the entire nation like a hostage; his call for protests is appalling and immoral.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz in this tweet uses satire to deride Imran Khan. She criticizes him and expresses a serious concern about his mental state. The phrase, “not in his senses anymore” implies a lack of rational thinking and stability. Furthermore, she characterizes Imran Khan as a “PSYCHOPATH” and implies that he is violent and uncontrollable. He keeps the entire country hostage through his protests. Sharif mocks him and says that his countrywide protest is merely an attempt to safeguard his position amid the possibility of removal from power. She emphasizes that he should not be treated as the Prime Minister or Ex-Prime Minister but as a psychopath. The satire in the tweet presents Imran Khan as someone with irrational thinking and an obsession with power. In her view, it humorously highlights his actions as events that lacks rationality and pose a threat to the freedom of the country.

Step: 03

The tweet portrays Maryam Nawaz as someone harboring concerns that their vote of no-confidence might not succeed. She seeks to establish Imran Khan’s image as a psychopath. She believes he has become a violent erratic person willing to go to any extent to preserve his government. Through this portrayal, she aims to label him as mentally

unstable, a narcissist political leader, who keeps the entire country imprisoned to protect his premiership.

Tweet No:07

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 10)

Gharoor aur takabur insanon k liye nahin-takabur ko zawal ha, zawal ha zawal ha issi liye Imran khan Pakistan ka vote out ho janay wala pehla wazir e azam thehra (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

Pride and arrogance are not for humans. Pride hath a fall. Thus, Imran Khan has become the first prime minister of Pakistan to be voted out!

Context:

Imran Khan's tenure as prime minister ended because the no-confidence motion by the PDM successfully removed him from the office on April 10, 2022 (Dawn, 2022). In this context, she ridicules and highlights Khan's status as the first prime minister of Pakistan to be deposed this way. She attributes his departure to his pride and arrogance that ultimately led to his downfall. She suggests that Khan's downfall was the result of his hubris.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Word repetition/ insult & put down humor
	Situation	She ridicules Imran Khan's deposition and attributes his downfall to pride and arrogance.
	Target	Imran Khan

	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She ridicules Imran Khan as the first prime minister of Pakistan to be removed from office.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Thus, Imran Khan has become the first prime minister of Pakistan to be voted out!</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the exaggerated and repetitive use of “zawal/fall” for humorous effect. It is employed in a hyperbolic manner and creates a satirical tone. The tweet establishes script opposition by juxtaposing normal and atypical perspectives within the context of political discourse. In the normal script, the statement asserts that pride and arrogance are unsuitable for humans and emphasizes the negative consequences of arrogance leading to decline. Furthermore, from a typical perspective, one would expect a prime minister to lead the country and complete his term in office without being ousted. However, the atypical script describes Imran Khan as the “first prime minister to be voted out”. The repetition in the tweet in Urdu “zawal” adds an exaggerated and dramatic touch. It suggests a significant and repeated downfall in Imran Khan’s political standing. The two scripts are joined through word repetition, ‘zawal’ to insult and degrade Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the backdrop of a vote of no-confidence movement on that day, which made Imran Khan lose government. The tweet is structured as a monologue and concludes with a punchline where she calls Imran Khan the first prime minister of Pakistan to be removed.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz Sharif employs irony in this tweet to ridicule Imran Khan. She highlights the unexpected outcome of his downfall due to pride and arrogance. The irony lies in the disparity between expectations or outcomes, as one might typically assume that a leader's success would be linked to humility rather than arrogance. Imran Khan's dismissal as prime minister via a no-confidence motion marks a significant event in recent Pakistani political history. Maryam Nawaz Sharif conveys this message through an analogy with an Islamic ideology. She emphasizes that pride and arrogance lead to decline, which is exemplified by Khan's removal from power. She mocks Khan for his perceived excessive pride in his governance.

Step: 03

It reveals the strong position of Maryam Nawaz as a representative of the PML-N. PML-N along with other political parties in the PDM removed Imran Khan from his office. She ridicules Khan as the first prime minister in Pakistan to be voted out. The last line of the tweet was an intended pun directed at Imran Khan.

Tweet No:08

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 18)

“Imran khan ki hukumat ki trhan iss ka social media bhi shyd moqlats aur jinat chala rey han- tabhi in k jalson ki tasaveer khala (NASA) sey li jatin han” (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

Imran Khan's social media accounts are probably being run by some unknown and supernatural powers, just like his government was. That's why his political mass meetings are captured from space by NASA.

Context:

Imran Khan embarked on various protests and rallies against the newly elected PDM government after his removal from the PM's office. He accused the PDM of conspiring to overthrow his rule. These protests were amplified through PTI's social media

content which showcased pictures of large public gatherings (Dawn, 2022). In this context, Maryam Nawaz Sharif asserts that Imran Khan's social media accounts seem to be under the influence of unknown and supernatural forces, akin to his former government. She suggests that this influence is so pervasive that even his political mass meetings are captured from space by NASA.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Expectation vs Reality
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	She makes fun of Imran Khan's strength in public meetings and social media.
	Target	PTI
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She mocks the notion that his social media is influenced by mysterious and supernatural forces.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>That's why his political mass meetings are captured from space by (NASA).</p>

In the given tweet, the travesty lies in the sarcastic and exaggerated claim that former prime minister Imran Khan's government's social media is possibly influenced by supernatural forces. Additionally, it asserts that pictures of gatherings are alleged to be taken by NASA. She employs script opposition of expectation vs reality to convey a sarcastic and critical tone towards Imran Khan's former government. The normal aspect includes references to "Imran Khan's former government" and his showcase of strength of public meetings on social media. These were expected topics in political discourse. However, the atypical script defies these expectations and introduces unexpected and exaggerated elements with phrases like, "unknown and supernatural forces" and the mention of NASA in the context of obtaining pictures from political gatherings. This incongruity creates a humorous and ironic effect as the audience is led to expect a discussion grounded in reality but instead, encounters an exaggerated scenario. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor to target former PTI's government social media accounts and the alleged supernatural powers possessed by the former first lady. The tweet is set against the backdrop of PTI's public gatherings subsequent to its removal from government and adopts the form of a monologue. It concludes with a punchline, wherein she posits that the images of these gatherings are presumably captured by NASA.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz uses irony to satirize the former PTI's government social media images of public gatherings. She particularly suggests that images of these political gatherings are sourced from NASA. NASA is an organization known for space exploration and scientific research (Britannica). The irony arises from NASA's focus on political events, not space exploration. It creates an absurd and incongruous scenario. This twist humorously plays on the expected connection between the space agency and political imagery. Maryam Nawaz describes the former government led by Imran Khan as being run by supernatural forces. It basically alludes to the influence of the first lady, who is generally referred to as *peerni*- *a female spiritual mentor with supernatural powers*. She alleges that the first lady played a significant role in the administration of the former PTI's government. She believes that just as his administration was supposedly run by unknown forces, its social media content is similarly influenced by them. PTI's leaders frequently showcased

public meetings on social media pages. Maryam Nawaz mocks this practice and denotes that their meeting pictures are taken from NASA. She proclaims that PTI's social media images of public meetings are deceptive and fraudulent. It is similar to the alleged manipulation in the execution of the PTI's own government. This critique underscores the perception of dishonesty and manipulation within PTI's communication strategies.

Step: 03

It highlights Maryam Nawaz's significant standing as the vice president of PML-N. PML-N is a crucial member of the PDM coalition that played a pivotal role in removing Imran Khan's government from power. She leverages her authority to openly critique and satirize Khan's former administration. She particularly focuses on its social media presence and depiction of public gatherings. She endeavors to diminish PTI's online credibility. She depicts it as fraudulent and manipulative.

Tweet No:09

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 18)

“Mandate bhi jali, leader bhi jali, biyania bhi jali, tabdeeli bhi jali aur ab accounts bhi jali-sharam karo!” (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

The mandate is fake, the leader is fake, the manifesto is fake, the change is fake, and now the accounts are fake too. Shame on you!

Context:

During that period, a wave of smear campaigns against state institutions flooded social media following ex-prime minister Imran Khan's exit from office. The PDM government claimed that PTI was using botnets to generate coordinated and spam activities. This was aimed at artificially boosting trends against the newly elected Prime Minister, Shahbaz Sharif (Pakistan Today, 2022). In response, she contends that everything during the Khan period was fabricated. She adds that the social media accounts are newer additions to fabrication and falsehood from PTI's end; all is done to defame and manipulate the prestige of PM Shahbaz Sharif.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	She mocks the former PTI's government after its removal from power.
	Target	Former PTI Government
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She ridicules the ex-PTI government to possess false mandate, leader, narrative, and the change, along with social media accounts.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Shame on you!</p>

The entire tweet is crafted in a style that represents travesty. Each element in the list from the leader and manifesto to the change and accounts contributes to a satirical and exaggerated portrayal of the perceived lack of authenticity of the former PTI's government. The tweet employs script opposition between normal and atypical elements. In normal/typical political discourse, leaders strive to ensure the legitimacy of the mandate, uphold their leadership's integrity, adhere to party manifestos and deliver promised changes. However, the tweet takes a satirical turn and presents a series of atypical and

exaggerated events. The elements such as PTI's mandate, leader, manifesto and its claim to change, and their social media accounts are called sham and simulated. Each element is metaphorically described as "fake" and suggests a complete and exaggerated failure in different facets of governance. This tweet is framed against the backdrop of social media campaigns run via fake pages. This satirical approach is used to insult the former/previous PTI government and is presented in the form of a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline where she asserts that, given all these shortcomings, they must show some dignity and/or feel embarrassed over such disgraceful acts.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Maryam Nawaz employs satire to ridicule the former PTI government. She characterizes its mandate as fake and questions the legitimacy or the authenticity of the electoral victory claimed by the PTI when they came into government. She believes that PTI's mandate is illegitimate as it lacks popular support. Maryam Nawaz Sharif presents a humorous critique on PTI's legitimacy and denounces both the change and manifesto as false. This mocking tone directly targets the PTI's narrative of 'change'. It undermines the foundation of PTI's political platform. Additionally, she criticizes the PTI's social media presence. She alleges that their accounts are fraudulent and are involved in boosting forged activity against state institutions and the newly formed government led by Shahbaz Sharif. This implies that the falsity associated with PTI extends to various aspects which include the mandate, leader, narrative, and even their social media accounts.

Step: 03

It highlights Maryam Nawaz's influential position as the vice president of PML-N. PML-N was part of the PDM that ousted Imran Khan's government a month earlier on April 10, 2022. Despite the change in leadership, she continues to mock and criticize him. The use of term such as "shame" underscores her perceived power. It indicates PML-N's stance on the perceived fakeness of the PTI's actions. She asserts that PTI should be ashamed of their actions.

Tweet No: 10

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, April 21)

“Dusron ko chor kehny walay ny puri zindgi aik he kamyab karobar kiya ha jis ka naam tosha khana ha! Wazire e azam ki kursi py beth kar riyasat ko milny walay tahaif ki khareed o farokht sey umar bhar ki kamayai sy ziada paisa bnaya-

Imran khan duniya ka wahid hukmaran hai jis ki money trail mein iss ka rozgar tosha khana hai” (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

The one who accuses others of being thieves has built a successful business throughout life, known as *ToshaKhana* (a place to store/archive state gifts). By sitting on the prime minister’s chair, he has accumulated more wealth by buying and selling state gifts than from his earnings during his entire lifetime.

Imran Khan is the only ruler in the world whose money trail verifies him as an employee of *ToshaKhana*.

Context:

The reference to “*ToshaKhana*” is related to a case against Imran Khan in which he was accused of allegedly selling gifts received during his tenure as a Prime Minister. In response to this controversy, Imran Khan stated, “my gift, my choice” (Arab News Pk, 2022). In this response, she uses the term to mock former prime minister Imran Khan and slams him over his statement. She points out the hypocrisy of Khan and asserts that he accused others as thieves whereas he himself engaged in a what she terms as “*Tosha Khana*” business venture during his tenure in the office.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	She ridicules Imran Khan by alluding to his alleged earnings through Tosha Khana.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She humorously states that Imran Khan earned more money through Tosha Khana than he did in his entire lifetime.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Imran Khan is the only ruler in the world whose money trail verifies him as an employee of ToshaKhana.</p>

In the tweet, the mention of “ToshaKhana” serves as a travesty and implies financial irregularities. The term is used with a negative connotation and suggests personal gains and questionable dealings. The tweet employs script opposition by juxtaposing normal and atypical scenarios in the context of an individual’s life and financial dealings. In the conventional script, the individual is portrayed as someone who successfully

manages a business named “Tosha Khana” throughout his life. However, the atypical script diverges from this expected narrative and introduces the accused person sitting in the Prime Minister’s chair. The unexpected twist implies that, instead of solely profiting from the business associated with ToshaKhana, the individual in question amassed substantial wealth by engaging in the buying and selling of government assets while holding the position of prime minister. Both scripts are used for insult and put-down humor, specifically targeting Imran Khan. The tweet is situated against the backdrop of the Tosha Khana case, in which Imran Khan was accused of selling and buying gifts during his term as prime minister and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline that mentions Imran Khan as the only ruler in the world who is employed at ToshaKhana because his wealth and money trail proves him to have earned from ToshaKhana/ a place to store/archive state gifts.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz uses satire to mock Imran Khan and calls him a thief. She finds irony in his past habits of accusing others of theft and asserts that Khan's only business throughout his life was Tosha Khana. Furthermore, Maryam Nawaz adds another layer of mockery and claims that Imran Khan has bought and sold gifts received by the state and made more money through this activity than all his other earnings combined. The tweet uses this humorous exaggeration to depict Imran Khan as someone who exploits his position of being a prime minister to hoard. The punchline at the end serves as a sarcastic remark and ridicules Khan’s lack of financial transparency. Maryam Nawaz suggests that while politicians worldwide provide their detail money trails and showcase their legitimate sources of income, Imran Khan stands out as the only ruler whose declared job in the money trail is Tosha Khana. This punchline is crafted to underline the absurdity of Khan’s financial disclosures and presents him as inadequate or questionable.

Step: 03

In this tweet, Maryam Nawaz uses her strong position in the PDM, which recently had ousted Imran Khan from power. She uses her influence to mock and criticize the former prime minister. Sharif labels Imran Khan as a thief and tarnishes his image for the users as a hypocritical leader who accuses others of theft while himself engages in corrupt practices.

Tweet No: 11

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, May 25)

Punjab ny aj fitna khan sy Punjab k mandate par daka dalny aur farah gogi ki loot maar k badla ley lia! Shabash Punjab (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

Punjab has reclaimed the mandate from Fitna Khan today and sought revenge on Farah Gogi's plundering acts! Well done, Punjab!

Context:

On May 25th, 2022, during a session of the Punjab assembly, Hamza Shahbaz became the Chief Minister of Punjab and succeeded Pervaiz Elahi who was the candidate from PTI (The Express Tribune, 2022). She extends congratulations to Punjab and views the appointment of Hamza Shahbaz as a form of retribution against Imran Khan's sacking of the mandate in Punjab and Farah Gogi's plundering of public wealth.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	She ridicules Imran Khan as Fitna Khan and takes a dig at his defeat in the Punjab elections.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue

Knowledge Resource	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She conveys her congratulations to the people of Punjab and simultaneously mocks her opponent Imran Khan with the term “Fitna Khan”.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Well, done. Punjab!</p>
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In the tweet, the phrase, “Fitna Khan” serves as an instance of travesty. The characterization of political events as a form of retaliation and revenge contributes to the dramatic nature of the statement. The tweet deploys script opposition between conventional and unconventional elements in its language and portrayal of political events. The conventional aspect lies in the statement, “Punjab has reclaimed” which represents a standard response to the perceived issue. On the other hand, the tweet introduces atypical elements such as the use of “Fitna Khan”. It uses the term “fitna” to characterize Khan’s political tactics as conflicting or mischievous. Additionally, the mention of “looting by Farah Gogi” adds an accusatory tone and uses strong language to describe alleged misconduct and corruption. Both scripts are employed for insult and put-down humor while targeting Imran Khan. The tweet is framed within the context of the election for the Chief Minister of Punjab, where PML-N emerged victorious over PTI and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline where she congratulates the members of Punjab Assembly who voted in the favor of Hamza Shahbaz. She perceives it as revenge.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz uses satire to mock Imran Khan and playfully calls him “Fitna Khan”. She believes that Khan spreads mischief and evil. She accuses him of manipulating the mandate of the people in Punjab by appointing Usman Buzdar, who was selected without elections by Khan, as the chief minister of Punjab during his tenure. She claims that real decision-making power lies with Farah Gogi, an insider associated with PTI. Farah

Gogi played a significant role in making key appointments within the administration (Business Recorder, 2022). FIA stated that Farah took billions of rupees as a bribe for the transfer of regional police officers and deputy commissioners during the former PTI's government (The Express Tribune, 2023). She ridicules Khan as "Fitna Khan" and depicts him as someone who not only spreads mischief but also engages in wrongful actions by appointing individuals like Farah Gogi. She congratulates members of the Punjab assembly and asserts that they have sought revenge by choosing Hamza Shahbaz as the new Chief Minister for Punjab.

Step: 03

It highlights Maryam Nawaz as a powerful political figure of PML-N. PML-N emerged victorious over PTI in the Chief Minister election. After her party's win, she congratulates members of the Punjab assembly and simultaneously, uses her power to mock and degrade her political rival, Imran Khan. She jests at Imran Khan through linguistic choices such as, "Fitna Khan" and "looting", "revenge". She aims to cast an evil image of Khan and highlights the alleged malpractices that involved Farah Gogi. She mentions Farah Gogi to suggest dishonesty and looting in Punjab.

Tweet No: 12

Sharif, M.N. [@MaryamNSharif] (2022, August 02)

"Fitna Khan Pakistan ka wahid siyasat dan hai jo aik hi faisaly mein na qabil e tardeed sabuton k sath beyak waqt jhoota, corrupt, money launder aur beroni quwaton k imma par kaam karny wala sabit hua ha- iss ka apna hi bnaya hua jhoota, imandari aur hubul watni ka but aaj oondhay munh gir gaya-

Beshk Allah Haq ha!" (Sharif, 2022)

English Translation:

Fitna Khan is the only politician of Pakistan who in a single verdict, has been proven by irrefutable evidences that he is a falsifier, corrupt man, a money launderer and the one who works for the external powers. His own crafted idol of honesty and patriotism has fallen flat today.

Indeed, Allah is the Absolute Truth!

Context:

On 2nd August 2022, the Election Commission of Pakistan delivered a verdict on the foreign funding case against Imran Khan. The ECP declared that the political party of ex-Prime Minister, Imran Khan, had received “prohibited funds” from foreign individuals and companies to support election campaigns (Dawn, 2022). In this situation, she mocks him as the only politician, who in a single decision is proven corrupt, a liar and guilty of money laundering.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	She refers to Imran Khan as “Fitna Khan” and highlights his alleged involvement in corruption within a foreign funding case.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>She derides Imran Khan and characterizes him as a figure synonymous with trouble or chaos.</p> <p>Punchline:</p>

		Indeed, Allah is the Absolute Truth!
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In this tweet, “Fitna Khan” functions as an instance of travesty. The script's opposition between normal and atypical is evident in the portrayal of Imran Khan's political behavior. The conventional or “normal” expectation for a politician suggests making decisions based on credible evidence and upholding values of honesty and patriotism. However, the use of the term, “Fitna Khan” and the subsequent accusations in the tweet present Imran Khan's actions as highly “atypical”. The tweet alleges that he has been proven to be a liar. Furthermore, it accuses him of involvement in corrupt practices, money laundering, and collaboration with foreign powers. Both scripts are used for insult and put down humor while targeting Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the court decision against Khan, where he was found guilty, and takes the form of a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline where she invokes the Almighty Allah, the Reality, to affirm the validity of the claims made against Fitna Khan. It emphasizes the belief in the disclosure of the truth of the allegations against Khan regarding his hypocrisy.

Step: 02

Maryam Nawaz in the tweet satirically mocks Imran Khan as Fitna Khan yet again. She uses the term “Fitna” to symbolize the troublesome and chaotic actions of Imran Khan. She derides him as the embodiment of trouble and humorously highlights him as the first and the only politician proven to be involved in multiple crimes in a single case. The case of Foreign Funding involves support from other countries for political aims which is prohibited by the constitution of Pakistan. Maryam Nawaz Sharif emphasizes his deceit and the external influence evident in foreign support during his election campaigns in 2018. Moreover, she further mocks Imran Khan's claims of honesty and patriotism. She asserts that Khan's own lies have backfired him and exposed his true nature. It implies that his deceitful tactics have not succeeded in covering up his alleged misdeeds but instead have led to his exposure and potential downfall. She calls Khan's lies “crafted” and hints that it was deliberately fabricated to deceive the public. This adds to the portrayal of Imran Khan

as a cunning and untrustworthy figure. Overall, Maryam Nawaz Sharif's mockery of Imran Khan in this tweet aims to discredit his leadership, integrity and patriotism.

Step: 03

It portrays Maryam Nawaz's strong position in the PDM government that was in power at that time. She leverages her position to degrade Khan's image and calls him Fitna Khan. She mocks him and asserts that since he was proven guilty in a foreign funding case, his façade of patriotism has crumbled. She suggests that his own words have come back to haunt him and reveal a contradiction in his public persona.

Table 1.3 shows the categories of verbal humor proposed by Shade (1996) in Maryam Nawaz Sharif's derisive tweets. They are arranged in ascending order along with the frequencies and percentages of those categories of verbal humor. Two main categories of verbal humor emerged in the analysis of the twelve tweets. The categories of verbal humor are satire and irony. Satire, a prevalent category is identified ten times whereas, irony appears only two times. To determine the proportional representation of each category, the frequency of each is divided by the sum of the total occurrences of both categories and multiplied by 100. As a result, the percentage of satire is 83.33%, whereas irony comprises 16.66% respectively. The frequency analysis of Maryam Nawaz Sharif's tweets reveals a strategic deployment of verbal humor—predominantly satire (83.33%) and to a lesser extent irony (16.66%)—to ridicule Imran Khan and undermine his political credibility. This distribution highlights satire as her principal rhetorical tool, which is used to expose perceived contradictions in Khan's persona and actions. Irony, though less prevalent, plays a significant role in subtly questioning the sincerity of his past statements and public stances. Maryam's humor-laden tweets function as a discursive mechanism to delegitimize Khan's leadership, assert her own political authority, and reinforce her party's ideological narratives. Thus, the frequencies show that Maryam Nawaz's use of verbal humor on Twitter goes beyond mere expression—it serves as a deliberate strategy of political messaging designed to influence public opinion, question the legitimacy of her opponents, and solidify her position within Pakistan's deeply polarized political environment.

Table 1.3

Subcategories of Humor	No. of Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Irony	2	16.66%
Satire	10	83.33%

4.4 Tweets of Ahsan Iqbal, PML-N Spokesperson

Just like in the analysis of Maryam Nawaz Sharif's tweets, a similar approach has been used to analyze Ahsan Iqbal's tweets. A total of twelve tweets have been chosen from Ahsan Iqbal's Twitter handle. In the initial phase, these tweets are dissected to unveil the lexical choices characterized by travesty. The second stage involves categorizing those lexical choices into subtypes of humor as proposed by Shade (1995). The last step unfolds various sociolinguistic notions embedded within the verbal humor present in Iqbal's tweets.

Tweet No:01

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 8)

Imran khan ki taqreer ka Khulasa:

-Allah k wastay mgy na nikalo!

-Allah k wastay mgy bacha lo!

-mery ilawa pura Pakistan Ghadar ha!

-mein PMLN k MPA tor sakta hoon mery MNA nahi toot saktay!

-Mein IMF ko surrender kar skta hoon!

-Mjh sy behtar Maghrib ko koi nahi janta!

-mein mein hoon aur mein mein hi hoon! (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Summary of Imran Khan's Speech:

- For the sake of Allah, don't oust me!
- For the sake of Allah, save me!
- The entire Pakistan is treacherous except me!
- I can disintegrate PMLN's MPAs, but my MNAs can't split up!
- I can surrender to the IMF!
- No one knows the West better than I do!
- I am unique, and I am the only one!

Context:

Imran Khan addressed the public in a televised speech on April 08, 2022. In that speech, he vowed not to recognize any imposed government after a potential ouster by the PDM. He expressed disappointment with the Supreme Court's dismissal of the speaker's attempted move to set aside the no-confidence motion. He emphasized widespread horse-trading within the political coalition of the PDM. He asserted his unparalleled understanding of Western affairs and claimed that his opposition to drone attacks had made him a target for removal. He asked people to come out and protest against the "imported government" and asserted that he would continue to fight till the last ball (The Express Tribune, 2022). Ahsan Iqbal takes a humorous stance on Imran Khan's speech and highlights Khan's plea for divine intervention, his assertion of honesty in contrast to labeling the rest of Pakistan as treacherous and his tendency towards self-aggrandizement.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult and put-down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He satirizes Imran Khan's speech during his protest against regime change.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: He presented a summary of his speech and made fun of it. Punchline: I am unique, and I am the only one!

The travesty in the tweet lies in the satirical or ironic representation of Imran Khan's statements. The phrases used in the summary, such as "For the sake of Allah, do not oust me!" and "I can surrender to the IMF" are presented in a manner that emphasizes the perceived absurdity or inconsistency in Imran Khan's statements. The tweet employs script opposition by contrasting the typical expectations of political discourse with the atypical statements attributed to Imran Khan in the summarized speech. In a conventional political speech, one anticipates discussions centered on policy, governance, and national issues, with leaders expressing dedication to the welfare of the people. However, the summarized statements attributed to Imran Khan deviate from this norm and features unusual appeals and pleadings such as "For the sake of Allah, don't oust me" and "I can surrender to the IMF". The script opposition emerges from the stark contrast between the expected political discourse and the unconventional nature of the statements. The use of both scripts is to insult and put down Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the backdrop of Imran Khan's televised address to the people that day and takes the form of a monologue.

The tweet concludes with a punchline in which Iqbal criticizes Khan as a narcissistic leader who sees himself as unparalleled and distinct from all.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal in this tweet uses satire to mock Imran Khan's rhetoric and presents a gist of his speech. Each point in the brief amplifies the perceived absurdity or inconsistency in Khan's remarks. Iqbal portrays Khan's plea to be saved for the sake of Allah as a desperate appeal. He finds amusement in Khan's claim that except for himself, the entire country is traitorous which is presented as a grandiose and self-aggrandizing claim. This contrasts with Khan's portrayal of himself as an honest individual, as he tends to blame others and labels those who disagree with him as traitors to Pakistan. Additionally, Iqbal reveals Khan's overconfidence on him being influential enough to disintegrate PML-N's Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs): however, Khan's fails to understand that his own members can also split up. He also highlights the irony in Khan's statement that he can surrender to the IMF and suggests a shift in position or insincerity. Moreover, Iqbal ridicules Khan's assertion of his superior understanding of the West. In the punchline, he further underlines Khan's self-adoration and portrays him as inimitable and one of a kind.

Step: 03

It reveals Iqbal's strong position as the spokesperson of the PML-N, which was part of the PDM at that time. The PDM was firmly set to oust Khan. It was a situation seemingly imminent for the PDM. He expresses his authority to criticize Khan and portrays him as one who consistently praises himself while criticizing others. Iqbal paints a picture of Imran Khan as an irrational individual who blames others, views the rest as traitors, and often boasts about knowing all especially the West better than everyone else does.

Tweet No: 02

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 9)

Kya latifa ha jo mamnua foreign funding key zor sey hukumat mein aya ho wo dusron ko imported keh raha ha- (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

What a joke it is that someone who himself came into government with the help of prohibited foreign funding is calling others imported.

Context:

Ahead of the vote of no-confidence scheduled for the next day, which Imran Khan appeared likely to lose, he protested against the PDM. He accused the PDM of being imported and implied that the PDM had backing from the US (Dawn, 2022). In this context, Ahsan Iqbal remarked that Imran Khan, who himself came into power through prohibited foreign funding, is now calling others imported. It is no else than a joke.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	He mocks Imran Khan as the one who came into government with the support of foreign funding, yet he labels others as “imported”.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: He insults him using an intended pun and calls him an imported one. Punchline:

		What a joke it is that someone who himself came into government with the help of prohibited foreign funding, is calling others imported.
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The travesty in the tweet lies in the ironic situation where someone, who allegedly entered government with the support from forbidden foreign funding ridicules and labels others as “imported”. The tweet employs a script opposition between normal and atypical scenarios to deliver a satirical commentary. In the normal script, one would anticipate a political figure making a government through legitimate and uncontroversial means, specifically regarding funding sources. However, the atypical script presented in the tweet reveals a situation where the accuser, while criticizing others as “imported” is ironically associated with alleged forbidden foreign funding, during his ascent to power. Both scripts are used for insult and put-down humor to target Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the backdrop of a vote of no-confidence and takes the form of a monologue. The entire tweet itself serves as a punchline as it captures the ironic and satirical essence of the message.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Ahsan Iqbal mocks Imran Khan satirically. The Election Commission of Pakistan accused Khan of taking money from foreign countries to support his election campaigns. Ahead of the vote of no-confidence, Imran Khan called his supporters to protest against the regime change. He accused PML-N leader Shahbaz Sharif, who will be the prime minister after his removal, of being imported. Khan implies that Shahbaz Sharif allied with America to remove him from power. Ahsan Iqbal uses a pun against Imran Khan after he is accused of taking money from foreign countries in a foreign funding case against him. He suggests that Imran Khan, who himself entered government through prohibited foreign funding labels others as imported. The use of “what a joke” serves as a punchline intended to ridicule Imran Khan and highlights the irony of a foreign-funded agent who calls others imported.

Step: 03

It underscores Iqbal's secure position as the PDM was about to remove PM Imran Khan and his regime the next day. In his sturdy stance, he mocks Imran Khan as the imported one and laughs at his accusations against the PDM to possess support and favors from foreign countries. Iqbal endeavors to present Imran Khan as an imported leader who ascended to power through unlawful means.

Tweet No: 03

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 9)

Imran Niazi hamary nojawanon k liye kya misaal qaim kar rahay han?

-match haar jao to kya karo?

-wicket py lait jao,

-aeriyen ragro,

Maidan kharab karo

Magar qanoon na mano aur khoob bezat ho- (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

What example are you, Imran Niazi, setting for our youth?

If you lose a match, what would you do?

-Lie down on the pitch (be obstinate),

-run here and there to get something done, or

-Destroy the field?

But not to obey the law. Hence, be thoroughly disgraced.

Context:

While the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) geared up to table a vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan the next day, he announced the dissolution of assemblies and called for early elections. However, the Supreme Court of Pakistan rejected his decision and instructed the parliament to reconvene. In response to this rejection, Imran

Khan urged his supporters to protest (Dawn, 2022). In this context, Ahsan Iqbal makes fun of Imran Khan and points out the irony of his actions.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	He pokes fun at Imran Khan for his reluctance to acknowledge the Supreme Court verdict, which rejected his attempt to dissolve the assemblies and prompt for early elections.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He ridicules Imran khan's opposition to a vote of no-confidence against him.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>But do not obey the law. Hence, be thoroughly disgraced.</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the satirical portrayal of Imran Niazi's actions and behaviors. The tweet sarcastically suggests that instead of setting a positive example for the youth, Imran Niazi promotes nasty actions such as lying on the pitch, rubbing heels, and destroying the field in response to losing a match. The tweet uses script opposition between normal and atypical scenarios to critique Imran Niazi's influence on youth. In the normal script, one would expect a leader or role model to provide virtuous examples particularly in response to adversity, such as losing a match. However, the atypical script presents Imran Niazi as the one who deviates from these expectations. He engages in absurd reactions, like lying down on the pitch means he is stubborn, rubbing heels means early dissolution of assemblies and destroying the field means no parliament. Both scripts are used for insult and put-down humor to target Imran Khan. The tweet is set against Imran Khan's move to stop the vote of no-confidence by the early dissolution of assemblies and call for early elections. The tweet is presented as a monologue and concludes with a punchline. It humorously suggests that despite involvement in unconventional actions, the ultimate disgrace for Imran Niazi would be to disregard the law and lose his dignity.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal employs satire to mock Imran Khan. He exaggerates in his criticism of Imran Khan's perceived influence on the youth. Iqbal questions the message Imran Khan is sending to the youth when they lose a match. He satirizes Imran Khan's decisions and actions that he would take after losing a match. For instance, would he be lying down on the wicket after that. Would he be rubbing heels and run here and there to change the course of action in such a situation? Or would he destroy the field where matches are played? He ridicules Khan's resistance to the court decision. Khan urged his supporters to protest against this decision. The protest includes lying down on pitch which reflects Khan's stubbornness and unwillingness to yield. Running here and there aimlessly suggests a tactic to dissolve assemblies prematurely to prevent a vote of no-confidence against himself. Lastly, destroying the field means elimination of parliament to maintain power/government without facing opposition. He concludes that all of Imran Khan's actions and decisions are aimed at encouraging the youth for disobeying the law. Iqbal believes that Imran Khan remains to be disrespected for such vicious pieces of advice.

Step: 03

It highlights Ahsan Iqbal's powerful position as the spokesperson of PML-N which was part of PDM. The PDM was about to oust Khan the next day. It was a situation Khan predicted to lose. He uses his power to insult Khan's move and jokes about his actions. Iqbal tarnishes the image of Khan for the users as a leader who cannot accept defeat and so breaks the law. He declares that Imran Khan must undergo disrespect for leading the youth towards anarchy.

Tweet No: 04

Iqbal. A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 09)

Imran Niazi opposition k sath match shuru krny sey musalsal farar hasil kar raha ha!

Tehrek adam aitamad k bouncer k khof sey isski musalsal kanpain tang rahin han! (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Imran Niazi is constantly avoiding to begin a match against the opposition!

Due to the fear of a vote of no confidence, he continues to experience shivers down his spine!

Context:

Ahead of a vote of no-confidence on 10 April, Imran Khan protested countrywide. His supporters outpoured in massive numbers that led to blockage of major cities and roads (The Express Tribune, 2022). In this situation, Iqbal asserts that Khan fears to face the opposition, the PDM, as it would file a vote of no-confidence against him.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He ridicules Imran Khan a day before the vote of no-confidence and portrays him as a frightened political leader who is evading a confrontation with the opposition.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He makes fun of Imran Khan by stating that the continuous fear of losing a no-confidence vote plagues him.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Continues to experience shivers down his spine.</p>

The travesty in this statement lies in the use of exaggerated and emotionally charged language, particularly the depiction of Imran Niazi's actions as "constantly avoiding to begin a match against the opposition". Additionally, there is a suggestion that he is continuously experiencing shivers down his spine due to a fear of a vote of no-confidence.

These expressions may be interpreted as hyperbolic and subjective. The language used could contribute to the biased or sensationalized representation of the situation. The tweet establishes a script opposition by contrasting the expected behavior of a political leader with the atypical actions attributed to Imran Niazi. In the normal scenario, a political leader is expected to face the opposition, engage in political activities, and not to evade challenging situations. However, the tweet suggests that Imran Niazi deviates from this expected conduct and avoids starting of a match with the opposition. The language, particularly the expression, “continues to experience shivers down his spine” introduces an atypical level of fear or anxiety associated with Niazi’s actions. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor to target Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the backdrop of a vote of no-confidence against Imran Khan on the next day, April 10, which PDM seemed to be winning. The tweet’s narrative strategy takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline. In the punchline, Iqbal uses vivid imagery and hyperbole to emphasize Imran Niazi’s alleged avoidance of facing the opposition and fear associated with a vote of no-confidence.

Step: 02

In this tweet, satire is employed through exaggerated language and mockery to criticize Imran Niazi’s behavior. Iqbal mocks Imran Khan's protest that he fears facing a vote of no-confidence. Imran Khan and his party understood that the coalition of the opposition would lead to the removal of PTI’s government. Iqbal asserts that this fear is the reason he avoids confronting the opposition and deliberately delays the match. He implies that Khan’s nationwide protest is an indication of avoiding the just political match. He criticizes the protests result in the obstruction of major roads and cities. Further, he pokes fun at Khan and portrays him as extremely terrified to an extent of experiencing shivers down his spine. Iqbal quotes an incidental tongue twister by PPP’s Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari which is *Kanpein tang rahin han*. It is literally translated as “shivers down his spine” and adds a humorous and exaggerated tone and suggests a heightened sense of fear or anxiety on part of Imran Khan. Iqbal uses this expression to depict Khan as avoiding political confrontations with the opposition and presents his actions in a critical light.

Step: 03

It reflects Iqbal's strong position because the PDM had gained enough strength to oust Imran Khan. He asserts his power and ridicules Khan. He implies that PDM is more powerful than Khan is; Khan seems to be losing the match. This is the reason Khan avoids even to begin a match with the opposition and has inhibitions.

Tweet No: 05

Iqbal, A, [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 16)

Imran Niazi is hell bent to create anarchy at all levels. The display of vandalism, hooliganism, and violence in the Punjab Assembly by PTI and Q League MPAs to block the election of the Chief Minister is most condemnable. Imran is proving that he is Hitler's disciple but will be stopped." (Iqbal, 2022)

Context:

On that day, the election for the chief minister of Punjab was held. Lawmakers from PTI and PML-Q attacked Punjab Assembly acting speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari as he arrived at the house to preside over the PA session for electing the chief minister (Daily Pakistan, 2022). In this context, Iqbal says that such a display of violence was an attempt to block the election for the chief minister of Punjab.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put-down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of Imran Khan and labels him "Hitler's disciple".

Knowledge Resource	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He calls him a Hitler who is destroying Pakistan through his authoritarian regime.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Imran is proving that he is Hitler's disciple but will be stopped.</p>

In this tweet, travesty lies in the comparison of Imran Niazi with Hitler. The tweet employs a script opposition as it contrasts the expected or normal behavior with the perceived atypical actions of Imran Niazi. In the expected or normal script, political leaders are expected to uphold law and order, maintain decorum in assemblies and facilitate democratic processes like the election for the position of chief minister. However, the tweet portrays Imran Niazi as the one deviating from this norm by being “hell-bent on creating anarchy at all levels” and orchestrating “vandalism, hooliganism, and violence in Punjab Assembly”. These actions are presented as atypical and condemnatory. The tweet then takes an even more dramatic turn and likens Imran Khan to Hitler, a highly charged and historically significant comparison. This extreme association intensifies the script's opposition and portrays Imran Khan's actions and character in a negative light. It goes beyond what might be considered normal political discourse. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor to target Imran Khan. The tweet is situated against the attack on Punjab Assembly acting speaker Mazari, who was to chair the session for the election for the chief minister of Punjab. The tweet's narrative strategy takes the form of a monologue and concludes with a punchline where Iqbal compares Khan with Hitler and suggests that he will be stopped from spreading anarchy.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal uses satire to mock Imran Khan. He delivers a strong and exaggerated critique by comparing him to Hitler. He describes Khan as “Hitler’s disciple” and implies that he shares characteristics with Adolf Hitler. Hitler was an infamous dictator of Nazi Germany. He is widely condemned for his role in instigating World War II, arranging the holocaust, and his authoritarian and oppressive regime (Britannica). Iqbal uses this metaphorical statement to condemn Khan’s authoritarian tendencies and leadership. The satirical element lies in the exaggeration of the comparison. It suggests that Imran Khan is not merely a leader with flaws but has reached the extreme and violent level associated with Hitler. Iqbal mocks PTI’s attack on the deputy speaker and labels it as their attempt to block the chief minister’s election, which PTI seemed to lose.

Step: 03

It reflects Iqbal’s determined position of the spokesperson of PML-N. He boldly points out the intention of the PTI that they might not let the chief minister’s election. Iqbal is also sure that PML-N has greater chances of winning the elections at that time. In this anxious state, PTI displays violence. He condemns the PTI’s attack on Punjab assembly and calls it vandalism, hooliganism, and violence. Iqbal asserts that such a situation leads to anarchy. He is determined like a powerful leader who must prevent malevolence and lawlessness.

Tweet No: 06

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 21)

Wo skhs jis ki aalmi pehchan “mister u-turn” ho wo dusron ko jhootha kahay to ussy kya kaha jaa sakta ha? (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

If a person who is recognized as “Mister U-turn” globally calls others liars, what can be said about him?

Context:

Imran Khan vocally opposed the new administration led by the PDM after being ousted from his position as the head of the government through a vote of no-confidence. He criticized the PDM government and labeled it as dishonest and a liar. Khan contended that the PDM's ascent to power involved improper means and suggested their involvement in a foreign-backed plot to undermine the country's governance (Arab News Pakistan, 2022). In this context, Ahsan Iqbal highlights the contradiction and raises the question of what can be said about Khan, who is widely recognized as "Mister U-turn" yet denounces others as liars.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of Imran Khan and refers to him as Mister U-Turn who calls others liars.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Question
	Language	Set-Up: He derides him in the form of a question. Punchline:

		If a person who is recognized as “Mister U-Turn” globally calls others liars, what can be said about him?
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The travesty in the statement lies in the irony that a person with a reputation for changing positions or opinions frequently accuses others of being liars. The tweet uses script opposition by juxtaposing the conventional expectation of honesty and consistency with the atypical behavior associated with the term, “Mister U-turn”. In normal circumstances, individuals with international recognition are presumed to be straightforward and consistent in their statements and actions. However, the atypical behavior of frequent changes in stance, symbolized by the term, “Mister U-turn” contradicts this expectation. The irony emerges when this individual known for atypical behavior, accuses others of lies. The two scripts are used for insult and put-down humor aimed to target Imran Khan. The tweet is set against the post-removal protests of Imran Khan in which he accused the PDM as dishonest and liars. The narrative strategy of the tweet takes the form of a question. The entire tweet itself is a punchline in a subtle way, where someone known as “Mister U-turn” accuses others of dishonesty.

Step: 02

The given statement leans towards irony as it involves a situation where a person internationally recognized as “Mister U-turn” accuses others of dishonesty and calls them liars. The irony lies in the contradiction between Imran Khan’s own reputation as “Mister U-turn”- known for frequently changing stances and his accusations against the PDM government as deceitful. Iqbal seizes upon this irony to question the credibility of Khan’s accusations by highlighting Khan’s nickname as “Mister U-turn”. He implies that Khan’s own tendency to flip-flop on issues undermines his authority to pass judgment on the honesty of others and call them liars. Additionally, he suggests that it is hypocritical for Imran Khan with his track record of changing perspectives to label others as liars. He points out the inconsistency in Khan’s behavior and highlights the irony that Imran Khan is known for his own U-turns and yet calls others liars.

Step: 03

It reveals Iqbal's fortified position. The PDM had gained power after Imran Khan was removed from premiership. He ridicules Imran Khan as a political leader who frequently changes his stances and ironically calls others liars. Iqbal presents a skeptical image of Imran Khan and emphasizes his reputation as a leader who often backs out on his statements. He suggests a lack of substance in Khan's accusations against the PDM. Iqbal questions Khan's credibility and moral authority and hints at the inconsistent and hypocritical leadership of Imran Khan.

Tweet No: 07

Iqbal, A. (2022, April 23)

Alas- if only Jalsas and Dharna and Memes could pay back some interest loans PTI took out and help with inflation and unemployment Kaptaan left. (Iqbal, 2022)

Context:

After Imran Khan's removal from the office, the PDM government came into power with Shahbaz Sharif as the nominated prime minister. The government faced economic challenges along with PTI's calls for protest, which was considered unbeneficial for the execution of government by the PDM (United States Institute of Peace, 2022). In this situation, Ahsan Iqbal suggests that Imran Khan's administration borrowed loans with high interest rates. He expresses regret over the prioritization of political activities such as Jalsas, Dharna and memes. He wonders if perhaps such activities could somehow generate enough resources to repay the heavy interest loans and address economic issues like inflation and unemployment.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult and put-down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He accuses Imran Khan of borrowing loans with interests, causing inflation and unemployment.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He ridicules Khan for his Jalsas, Dharna, and Memes.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Alas- if only Jalsas and Dharna and Memes could pay back some interest loans PTI took out and help with inflation and unemployment Kaptaan left.</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the use of “Alas” and the subsequent statement. The tweet sarcastically suggests and regrets that holding political gatherings (Jalsas), sit in protests (Dharna), and creating memes on social media platforms will not contribute to address economic challenges such as interest loans, inflation, and unemployment. This is emphasized particularly after the departure of *Kaptaan*/ the captain (Imran Khan). The tweet employs script opposition by juxtaposing what is conventionally expected as serious measures to address economic challenges with atypical actions associated with political activism and online humor. In a normal script, one anticipates that economic issues like interest-laden loans, high inflation, and severe unemployment will be addressed through substantive policy measures, economic reforms, and strategic financial planning by the government. However, the tweet takes an ironic turn and proposes that activities such as

political gatherings (Jalsas), sit in protests (Dharna), and even memes could somehow alleviate these economic concerns. Both scripts insult and put down Imran Khan's political activism. The tweet is situated within the context of the PDM government facing economic challenges after ousting the PTI government and is presented in the form of a monologue. The entire tweet serves as a punchline and suggests that activities like political gatherings, sit in protests and creation of memes could address some serious economic challenges.

Step: 02

This tweet revolves around verbal irony, where there is a contrast between the literal meanings of the words used and the intended meaning. The irony lies in proposing that activities like political gatherings, protests and memes could resolve serious economic issues, such as interest loans, inflation, and unemployment. Ahsan Iqbal through irony mocks Imran Khan. The use of Alas- is to express grief, concern, or pity. It highlights the idea that Imran Khan Jalsas, Dharna, and memes could pay back the loan. Iqbal accuses him of inflation and unemployment. He implies that all Khan did was organize Jalsas, Dharna, and create memes to ridicule his opponents. He asserts that Khan ultimately left the public only with inflation and unemployment. He criticizes Imran Khan's leadership during his time in government.

Step: 03

It highlights Ahsan Iqbal's vulnerable position as the PDM government struggled with economic challenges post-removal of Imran Khan's government. In the face of a weakened and challenging economic situation, Iqbal criticizes the former government for its failures. He ridicules Imran Khan as a leader primarily interested in humiliating his opponents while displaying power through his political tactics. He is grieved upon the situation of heavy loans, inflation and unemployment that cannot be reverted with the help of mass public meetings, sit-in protests and circulation of memes on social media.

Tweet No: 08

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, April 30)

Jo sakhs Pakistan ki tareekh k sab sy ziada karzay ley kar mulk ko karzon k jaal mn dhunsa gaya ho aur IMF k aagy surrender bhi kar gaya ho agar wo mulk ki azadi ka champion

banay to aisa e ha jesy koi daku amn e aama par waiz dey ya nashai sehatmand zindgi par lecture dey- Imran Niazi k azadi k khutby aisy e han. (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Someone, who has taken out maximum number of loans in the history of Pakistan, leaves the country in the tangles of debts, and even surrenders before the IMF, if he chants for the freedom of the country, it is like a dacoit sermonizing peace for all or a drug addict delivering a lecture on health: parallel to these are Imran Niazi's speeches on freedom.

Context:

After being ousted from power by the PDM, Imran Khan took to the streets to protest against the PDM and labeled it as a fight for freedom (Dawn, 2022). In this context, Iqbal mocks him. He asserts that after wrecking the country with economic crises of heavy debts with intricate contracts, Khan now portrays himself as the champion of freedom. Khan talking about freedom is similar to a dacoit preaching peace or an addict emphasizing a healthy lifestyle.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor
	Situation	He makes fun of Imran Khan's speeches on freedom during his protests against the PDM.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue

	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He mocks Imran Khan's speeches by comparing them with lectures as if given by dacoits and addicts on the subjects of peace and healthy lifestyle, respectively.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>It is like a dacoit sermonizing peace for all or a drug addict delivering a lecture on health.</p>
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In this tweet, travesty lies in the exaggerated and potentially unfair comparisons between Imran Niazi's speeches on freedom and the scenarios of a dacoit preaching peace or an addict giving a lecture on a healthy lifestyle. The use of such insulting imagery contributes to the distorted and satirical characterization of Imran Niazi. In the tweet, a script opposition is established by contrasting expected or normal behavior of a champion of a country's freedom with the atypical and unusual behavior attributed to Imran Niazi. The expected norm would involve a leader who demonstrates financial responsibility and successful economic management, especially when the country faces economic challenges. However, the tweet portrays a departure from this norm and suggests that Imran Niazi, accused of taking substantial number of loans and making compromises with the IMF, is presenting himself as a champion of the country's freedom. The two scripts insults and put-down Imran Khan. The tweet is situated within the context of Imran Khan's protest after removal from the government by the PDM and takes the form of a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline where Iqbal humorously compares his speeches on freedom to incongruous scenarios like a dacoit preaching peace or an addict giving a lecture on a healthy lifestyle.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal employs satire to mock Imran Khan by highlighting what is perceived as a contradiction in his actions and rhetoric. He juxtaposes Khan's advocacy for freedom to a dacoit's favoring peace or a drug addict emphasizing health. Iqbal mocks him and proposes that after imposing a significant burden on Pakistan in the form of loans, Khan has also surrendered the country and its policies before the IMF. In this way, he has mortgaged the country. He accuses Khan of being the cause of Pakistan's adverse economic situation. Iqbal asserts that now, after being removed from the office, Khan's protest in the name of freedom amounts to hollow speeches without any point of signification and truthfulness. His speeches are likened to a dacoit's preaching peace to the public or a drug addict's highlighting the importance of health. Iqbal ridicules him through these analogies and suggests that his actions and rhetoric diverge from what he claims.

Step: 03

It underscores Iqbal's position in the government that faced economic challenges. Rather than addressing these issues, he attributes blame to the previous government. The PTI government was ousted by the PDM, and the PDM government assumed power thereafter. Iqbal accuses Khan of economic instability and indirectly of hypocrisy and lack of true morals.

Tweet No: 09

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, May 23)

Pehla drama- naya Pakistan

Dusra drama- riyasat e madina

Teesra drama kiya-americi sazish

Chotha drama kiya- imported hukumat aur ab

Taza panchwan drama- azad Pakistan

Koi puchy yeh bhi btao 4 saal siyah o safaid k malik thy Pakistan ka kya hashr kar k gye ho? 1 mansooba dikha do jo mukamal kiya ho? (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Act One - Naya Pakistan/

Act Two - State of Medina

Act Three- American Conspiracy

Act Four- Imported Government, and now

Act Five, the most recently created- Independent Pakistan

Someone please ask him, what did you accomplish in your four-year rule over Pakistan when you were responsible for both good and evil? Show one project that has been successfully completed?

Context:

During that period, Imran Khan announced a march protest against the PDM government and labeled it a fight for real freedom and named it “Azad Pakistan” (Arab News Pk, 2022). In this context, Ahsan Iqbal asserts that this slogan of “Azad Pakistan” is his new act for the people of Pakistan. Iqbal refers to the consistency of creating acts and narratives in Imran Khan’s political activism. Iqbal questions the decisions/slogans of Imran Khan taken during his tenure because none of the projects for the public were completed successfully.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He ridicules Imran Khan as an actor who staged dramas throughout his political journey.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He labels him as an actor or writer performing during his political career.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Someone please ask him, what did you accomplish in your four-year over Pakistan when you were responsible for both good and evil? Show one project that has been successfully completed?</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the sarcastic portrayal of various initiatives or themes undertaken by the PTI and labels them as “dramas/acts”. The term, “drama” suggests a lack of sincerity or seriousness and the tweet implies skepticism or criticism regarding the efficacy or authenticity of Khan’s slogans/narratives. The tweet employs a strategy of script opposition by contrasting conventional political narratives with unconventional and skeptical narratives. The phrases used, such as “new Pakistan”, “state of Madina” and “independent Pakistan” represent the typical rhetoric associated with political aspirations and promises of Imran Khan. However, the tweet introduces an unexpected twist and labels these slogans as acts/performances. The two scripts,

conventional and atypical are used for insult and put-down humor to target Imran Khan. The tweet is situated against the new protest of PTI which they have called to fight for freedom and an independent Pakistan and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline in the form of a question. In the punchline, Iqbal challenges Khan to provide evidence of a successfully implemented plan and emphasizes the criticism expressed throughout the tweet.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal uses sarcasm to mock Imran Khan. Sarcasm, a form of verbal irony meant to convey contempt or mockery, is evident in this tweet. It sarcastically labels various slogans of the PTI as “dramas/acts” and implies a lack of sincerity and seriousness. Iqbal portrays Khan as an actor or performer who has created various themes to boost his political career. He humorously divides his performance into five acts. The first dramatic act follows the theme of Naya Pakistan, the second State of Madina, the third an American Conspiracy, and the fourth an Imported Government. Iqbal jests about Khan through such sarcastic remarks and suggests that all his political maneuvers are merely theatrical and lack substance. He continues his sarcasm and notes that Imran Khan is not finished yet and has introduced a fresh drama called Independent Pakistan. This characterization aims to label Imran Khan as an actor adept at adjusting his roles to suit different situations, all to gain public support and position himself as a strong national leader of Pakistan. Iqbal implies that these dramas are distractions and means to present a façade of having a dried and cut rule over Pakistan while not making any substantial contributions in the form of a single completed project for the people of Pakistan. The punchline comes at the end of the tweet, where Iqbal targets Khan for the perceived failures of all these ‘dramas’ including the new one, ‘Independent Pakistan’. Iqbal poses a rhetorical question that since Khan had control over everything for four long years, he should give an account of everything he has done during his tenure. Unfortunately, Khan is not able to demonstrate that he completed even a single project.

Step: 03

Once again, it highlights the PDM government's vulnerable position, as instead of focusing on governance, they ridicule the opposition (PTI) for their protests and label it as

dramas. Iqbal constructs an image of Khan as an actor who, before coming into power, staged a drama (Naya Pakistan, state of Madina), and continued with these dramatic themes when in power. And after his removal from power, he presented dramas like ‘American Conspiracy’ and ‘Imported Government’. Now he suggests, that Khan has introduced a new title ‘Independent Pakistan’. He aims to portray Imran Khan as a con artist who consistently lures his followers with his politically charged theatrics.

Tweet No: 10

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, July 30)

“Ball tampering”

K bad paish ha

-foreign funding tampering-

Jis sy ki Kaptan ny

“siyasi tampering” (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

After “Ball Tampering”,

is presented,

Foreign Funding Tampering.

The Captain did it for

“Political Tampering”.

Context:

At that time, Imran Khan was embroiled in a legal dispute over allegations of receiving funds from foreign countries to back his election campaigns. The constitution of Pakistan prohibits such acts and deems them illegal (FINANCIAL TIMES, 2022). In this situation, the assertion is that he practiced politics and engaged in political manipulation with the help of foreign fundings.

Step: 01

Knowledge Resource	Script Opposition	Normal vs atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Wordplay
	Situation	He ridicules Khan in the backdrop of a foreign funding case against him.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	Set-Up: He accuses Imran Khan of political corruption with the help of foreign funding. Punchline: “Political Tampering”

In this tweet, “foreign funding tampering” serves as an instance of travesty. The tweet employs script opposition between “normal” and “atypical” elements as it creatively links two disparate contexts. These include the conventional notion of “ball tampering” in sports and the introduced concept of “foreign funding tampering” in politics. The aforementioned term is associated with an illegal practice in sports, specifically cricket, where players modify the ball for an unfair advantage. On the other hand, the tweet introduces a satirical twist as it applies the term, “tampering” to the political sphere, where foreign funding serves as a corrupt practice. This juxtaposition is atypical, as it blends

sports terminology into politics and humorously hints at irregularities in the context of foreign funding. This is achieved through wordplay where the original expression, “ball tampering” is altered to fit into political context and resulted in the form of a term “foreign funding tampering” to target Imran Khan. The tweet is set within the context of a case against Imran Khan in which he was accused of receiving financial support from other countries to support his political campaigns and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline and insinuates that Imran Khan has engaged in deceptive practices within politics.

Step: 02

Ahsan Iqbal employs satire to mock Imran Khan in a funding case against him. Iqbal ridicules Khan and compares his actions to the practice of “ball tampering” in cricket. It involves altering the ball’s state which is prohibited as per cricket rule. He uses the term, “foreign funding tampering” to equate Imran Khan’s purported manipulation of foreign funds. Iqbal humorously suggests that Khan transitions from one type of tampering to another. He satirizes the idea of corruption and manipulation within both sports and politics. The narrative takes a drastic turn with the introduction of the term, “political tampering”, to indicate Khan’s actions as part of a sequence which led to political manipulation for electoral gains. Iqbal believes that Khan’s actions were intended to manipulate the political landscape.

Step: 03

It illustrates his strong position, notably given that the PML-N was in power during that period. He uses his power to deride Imran Khan's image as a deceitful politician who funded his campaigns through financial support from other countries. He depicts Khan as an incompetent leader who resorts to shortcuts and engages in unethical acts like tampering to get power.

Tweet No: 11

Iqbal, A. [@betterpakistan] (2022, August 2)

Foreign funding case:

Sabit ho gaya jo dusron ko chor kehta tha khud chor nikla,
 Jo dusron ko imported kehta tha khud foreign funded agent nikla,
 Jo dusron ko jhoota kehta tha khud jhoota nikla,
 Beroni funding sey Pakistan mein intishar aur anarchy ki siyasat kar raha tha-
 Koi sharam koi haya Imran Niazi jawab do! (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Foreign Funding Case:

It has been proven that the one who called others thieves, is a thief himself,
 The one who called others imported, is a foreign-funded agent himself,
 The one who called others liars is a liar himself,
 He was inflicting political destruction and anarchy in Pakistan with the support of external funding.
 Shame on you, Imran Niazi. Be accountable!

Context:

On the 2nd of August 2022, Imran Khan was proven guilty of money laundering in a foreign funding case against him (Dawn, 2022). In response to this situation, Ahsan Iqbal makes fun of him through sarcastic remarks.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He taunts Imran Khan by calling him a liar, a foreign-funded agent, and a thief.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He mocks Imran Khan in the light of a case where he was found guilty of corrupt practices.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Shame on you, Imran Niazi. Be accountable!</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the ironic exposure of the subject, Imran Niazi, who had previously accused others of corruption and deceit. The irony is evident as the tweet reveals that the subject himself embodies those qualities. The use of terms like “liar”, “foreign-funded agent” and “thief” creates a satirical twist. The tweet employs a script opposition between normal and atypical scenarios. In normal script, individuals are commonly seen accusing others of various wrongdoings, such as being thieves, foreign-funded agents, or liars. The atypical script is introduced and takes an unexpected turn. It reveals that Imran Niazi, who had been known for making these accusations against others, is now found to embody the vices he had previously assigned to others. Both scripts are used for insult and put-down humor. The tweet is set against the backdrop of a court decision in the foreign funding case of Imran Khan, which found him guilty. The tweet is presented as a monologue and concludes with a punchline where he rhetorically calls Khan to take responsibility for the matters highlighted in the tweet and address the issues.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Ahsan Iqbal uses irony to mock Imran Khan. The tweet is ironic because it presents a situation where the subject, Imran Niazi, is revealed to embody vices. He had targeted others for those vices previously. The irony lies in the reversal of roles- the person who used to make accusations is now the one being accused. Imran Khan used to call PML-N party imported, liars, and thieves after his removal from office through a vote of no-confidence (The Express Tribune, 2022). Iqbal ridicules him in the light of the verdict by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that declared him guilty of accepting money from foreign countries. He jokes about him and states the reality that Imran Khan is a foreign-funded agent and foreign countries supported him in his election campaigns. He further suggests that Imran Khan engages in politics of chaos and anarchy only because of external funding and thus, he carries foreign agendas.

Step: 03

Once again, it highlights Ahsan Iqbal's strong position as a spokesperson of PML-N at that time. It allows him to mock and criticize Khan. Iqbal paints a damaging image of Khan by calling him a "foreign-funded agent", "liar" and "thief" in the eyes of users. He depicts Khan as a political leader engaged in politics based on foreign agendas that is verified by Khan's own acceptance of funds from foreign countries.

Tweet No: 12

Iqbal, A.[betterpakistan] (2022, August 21)

“Imran Niazi jis ny 4 salon mein Pakistan ki maaishat ki ieenth sy ieenth bajai , Kashmir surrender kiya, CPEC band kiya aur kharja policy tabah o barbad ki agar wo “haqiqi azadi” ka naara lagaye yeh aisa ha k jesy:

-Hitler aman,

-Mir jafar o Mir sadiq wafa,

-Stalin ahtram e insaniyat

- Mussolini jamhoriyat

Ki baat karen- (Iqbal, 2022)

English Translation:

Imran Niazi, who in four years destroyed completely the economy of Pakistan, surrendered Kashmir, shut down CPEC and crushed foreign policy, can chant the slogan of, “True Freedom”, it would be like:

-Hitler for peace,

-Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq for loyalty,

-Stalin for humanity,

-Mussolini for democracy

Take a stand.

Context:

At that time, Imran Khan was arrested from the inside of the High Court in Islamabad by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) under anti-terror law. Khan’s speeches were banned after he criticized state institutions. He was briefly detained. Later, the Supreme Court of Pakistan declared his arrest from the High Court vicinity illegal. In the wake of these events, the former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, called for nationwide protests and named it “Haqiqi Azadi-True Freedom” (Aljazeera, 2022). In response to this situation, Ahsan Iqbal makes fun of Imran Khan’s fight for what he terms as “True freedom”.

Step: 01

	Script Opposition	Normal vs Atypical
	Logical Mechanism	Insult/put down humor

Knowledge Resource	Situation	He pokes fun at the four-year tenure of Imran Khan's government in power.
	Target	Imran Khan
	Narrative Strategy	Monologue
	Language	<p>Set-Up:</p> <p>He uses historical references to mock his endeavor for “True Freedom”.</p> <p>Punchline:</p> <p>Take a stand.</p>

The travesty in the tweet lies in the ironic comparisons aimed to criticize Imran Khan. It associates him with historical figures known for evil practices such as Hitler and Stalin, and conveys a strong disapproval of Khan’s actions and policies. The tweet cleverly employs script opposition by juxtaposing normal and atypical situations to deliver a satirical critique of Imran Khan’s leadership. In the normal script, historical figures like Hitler, Mir Jafar, Mir Sadiq, Stalin and Mussolini are associated with qualities that are drastically different from their historical actions. For instance, Hitler is mentioned for peace, Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq for loyalty, Stalin for humanity, and Mussolini for democracy. The atypical script introduces Imran Khan chanting the slogan of “True Freedom”. This contrasts with the vices associated with historical figures and creates a humorous tone. Both scripts insult and put down Imran Khan. The tweet is situated within the context of Imran Khan's call for protest in favor of real freedom and is presented as a monologue. The tweet concludes with a punchline, where historical figures are sarcastically associated with qualities, which they did not possess, to be standing and supporting those qualities quite like Imran Khan is supporting “True Freedom”.

Step: 02

In this tweet, Ahsan Iqbal uses satire to present exaggerated and ironic comparisons between Imran Khan and historical figures known for political vices. He mocks Khan's claim of fighting for “true freedom” and accuses him of widespread destruction during his four-year tenure as head of the state. According to Iqbal, Khan is held responsible for damaging Pakistan's economy, surrendering Kashmir, shutting down the CPEC and adversely affecting foreign policy. Iqbal derides his call for “real freedom” and believes it to be nothing more than a joke in the light of his failures during his time in government. He justifies his opinion by comparing Imran Khan's fight to Hitler's advocacy for peace, Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq talking about loyalty, Stalin's claimed respect for humanity, and Mussolini's for its democratic rule. However, Adolf Hitler is mentioned for peace, who is primarily known for his role in instigating World War II and orchestrating holocaust which resulted in the genocide of many people (Britannica). Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq are mentioned for loyalty despite their betrayal to their own leaders for personal gains and shows lack of trust (Business Recorder). Stalin is known for his brutal regime and disregard for human life and widespread atrocities (Britannica). Lastly, Mussolini is known for his undemocratic governance. Despite a fascist dictator, he was ousted from his own Grand Council (Britannica). He suggests that Khan's current plea for freedom is hollow and is similar to the hollow claims of the historical figures mentioned in the tweet.

Step: 03

It highlights Iqbal's strong position as the spokesperson of PML-N/PDM when in power. He criticizes Imran Khan's call for real freedom. Iqbal uses historical references to illustrate how Khan's governance affected crucial state decisions during his four-year tenure. He pictures Khan as a failed ex-prime minister who inflicted harm upon the country and now endeavors to reclaim power under the guise of freedom slogan.

Table 1.4 illustrates the breakdown of subtypes of humor in Ahsan Iqbal's tweets which are presented in ascending order. The frequencies and percentages of each subcategory are provided. A total of eight instances of satire, three instances of irony, and one instance of sarcasm were identified in the selected tweets. The percentage for each subcategory is calculated by dividing its frequency by the total sum of all frequencies of

verbal humor categories and then multiplied by 100. The percentages for satire, irony, sarcasm are 66.66%, 25% and 8.33% respectively. The frequency analysis of Ahsan Iqbal's tweets reveals a strategic use of verbal humor—primarily satire (66.66%), followed by irony (25%) and sarcasm (8.33%)—to construct politically charged narratives aimed at discrediting Imran Khan's leadership. Satire emerges as a dominant humor strategy employed to ridicule Khan's political slogans and portray them as deceptive, thereby influencing public perception and challenging the authenticity of his governance. Irony is used to expose contradictions in Khan's political statements, emphasizing the inconsistencies between his claims and actions, which serves to foreground opposing ideological positions. Sarcasm, though less frequent, delivers pointed criticism that reinforces Iqbal's depiction of Khan as an unreliable and inconsistent leader. These humor strategies reflect Iqbal's role within the PML-N and align with broader power dynamics in Pakistani politics, functioning as a discursive tool to delegitimize rivals and strengthen party narratives. Thus, the frequencies highlight that Ahsan Iqbal's use of verbal humor on Twitter functions as a strategic instrument of political messaging—one that not only amplifies criticism of opponents but also actively molds public narratives, affirms party ideology, and fortifies his position within the competitive dynamics of Pakistan's digital political sphere.

Table 1.4

Subcategories of Humor	No. of Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Irony	3	25%
Sarcasm	1	8.33%
Satire	8	66.66%

The following table presents a comparative analysis of the humor strategies used by the four Pakistani politicians in their tweets. It categorizes and presents a contrast in the use of different types of verbal humor—such as satire, irony, sarcasm, and jokes—by these

politicians. The table outlines the frequency of each type of humor employed by each politician in his/her tweets.

Table 1.5 Comparative Analysis Table

Type of Humor	Politicians			
	Imran Khan	Fayyaz Ul Hasan Chohan	Maryam Nawaz Sharif	Ahsan Iqbal
Satire	5	9	10	8
Irony	3	3	2	3
Sarcasm	3	0	0	1
Joke	1	0	0	0

In the light of the above table, satire is the most commonly used type of humor used by these political figures. Their individual twelve tweets clearly show that they can not refrain from using humor especially satire and sometimes irony in their use of language on a public forum.

Conclusion:

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of derisive Pakistani political tweets with the help of theoretical frameworks. The content analysis of the lexical choices of travesty in derisive Pakistani political tweets helped answer the questions raised at the beginning of the study. Moreover, theoretical insights proved to be substantially beneficial in highlighting the use of verbal humor in derisive Pakistani Political tweets. The following chapter presents the findings and discussion with a reflection of tweets from a Sociopragmatics lens, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a synthesis of the entire study. It provides a critical review of the research along with the findings/answers to the posed research questions. The study first objective was to identify lexical choices of travesty in tweets, followed by categorizing them into subtypes of humor and then primarily examined derisive Pakistani political tweets from a Sociopragmatics lens. The latter part of this chapter outlines recommendations for future researchers.

The present study has investigated derisive Pakistani political tweets through a lens of socio-pragmatics. Its objective was to identify the derisive aspect foregrounded through verbal humor in the tweets of selected political leaders from Pakistan's two biggest parties, PTI and PML-N. The study aimed to see the effect of context and sociolinguistic variables on the linguistic choices of travesty in Pakistani politicians' tweets. The content analysis of the derisive tweets of politicians revealed that humor is used not only as a source of amusement but also to degrade, taunt, make fun of, and humiliate opponents. The current study analyzed a total of 48 tweets from selected four political figures. The tweets were collected over a period of eight months that is from January 2022 to August 2022. It scrutinized the lexical choices of travesty and classified them according to categories of verbal humor provided by Shade. The study also examined the aspect of mediated ideology depicted through sociolinguistic notions.

The first objective was to identify lexical choices exemplifying the use of travesty in the political tweets of Imran Khan, Fayyaz ul Hasan Chohan, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and Ahsan Iqbal. In Imran Khan's tweets, phrases such as "Mir Jafars," "Mir Sadiqs," "puppet PM," "Imported Government," and "kleptocrats" serve as instances of travesty, where historical and political references are used humorously to ridicule his opponents. Similarly, in Fayyaz ul Hasan Chohan's tweets, instances like "Maqsood Peon's government," "crime minister," "Beggars174," "imported government," and the satirical familial roles in "Father...PM (Maqsood Peon)" and "Son...CM (Cucury Mafia)" employ exaggerated and ironic depictions to undermine opposing political figures. Maryam Nawaz

Sharif's tweets use travesty through phrases like "one running with scissors," "former fake prime minister," and "gagged or muzzled,". She exaggerates and ridicules Imran Khan's behavior with inappropriate terms. Ahsan Iqbal's tweets include travesty with statements like "Mister U-turn" to criticize Imran Khan's inconsistencies and likens his grandiose claims to a dacoit's peace lecture. He also portrays Khan's initiatives with words like "dramas/acts." Additionally, Ahsan Iqbal compares Imran Khan to Hitler. He uses such an analogy to criticize Khan's actions and suggest anarchical tendencies in his regime. These lexical choices reflect an exaggerated, ironic twist that targets and undermine the credibility of the respective politicians.

The study then identified and quantified the tweets in terms of subcategories of verbal humor. Imran Khan's tweets featured satire five times which makes it the most prevalent category. Satire often serves to critique or ridicule individuals. It tells that Imran Khan employed this form of humor to comment on political matters. Additionally, he employed irony and sarcasm three times, which makes these categories as the second most prevalent ones in his tweets. Irony and sarcasm are commonly used to convey mockery or disbelief. Imran Khan used these rhetorical devices to convey his opinions or viewpoints. However, the category of joke was the least utilized as it occurred only once in Imran Khan's tweets. It suggests that Imran Khan may have used humor in online communication, he relied less on traditional jokes compared to other forms of verbal humor such as satire, irony and sarcasm.

In his tweets, Fayyaz Ul Hasan Chohan predominantly employs satire, which is evident nine times. This makes the satire the most prevalent category used in his tweets as well. Satire, with its sharp wit and critical edge indicates Chohan's inclination towards using humor as a tool to critique political figures. Additionally, irony emerges as another prevalent category in his tweets. It appeared thrice in his tweets. Irony, known for its subtle and humorous portrayal of contradictions, highlights Chohan's ability to convey complex ideas or criticism indirectly. This showcases Chohan's adeptness at utilizing different forms of humor to express his opinions and viewpoints effectively in his tweets.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the vice president of PML-N's party in her tweets uses satire the most. Satire as a form of verbal humor appeared ten times in her tweets and this

makes her the political figure who uses it the most. Satire serves as her weapon of choice, applied to illuminate political absurdities and contradictions with sharp wit and humor. Through satire, Maryam Nawaz Sharif navigates the complexities of contemporary issues, using wit to challenge prevailing narratives and provoke critical thought among her audience. She uses irony twice. It is a complementary device that adds layers of complexity to her commentary in tweets. Irony, with its subtle juxtaposition of expectation and reality allowed Maryam Nawaz Sharif to emphasize the contradictions inherent in political discourse. She tried to offer her audience a fresh perspective on prevailing narratives. This shows her skillful use of rhetorical techniques and demonstrates her ability to convey her viewpoints effectively in the realm of social media discourse.

Just like Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Ahsan Iqbal, the spokesperson of PML-N frequently incorporates humor into his tweets. Satire was used on eight occasions. Satire is a literary technique that blends humor and criticism to cleverly critique societal issues, political events or individuals. He used exaggerated scenarios or ironic observations to shed light on shortcomings or absurdities in a manner that engages his audience while prompting reflection on pertinent issues. Ahsan Iqbal's tweets often features irony, as it had been used three times where the intended meaning of his words contrasted with their literal interpretation. This technique added layers of meaning and depth to his messages. It also helped him to subtly convey skepticism or highlight incongruities in political rhetoric. Thereby, he encouraged his followers to critically analyze prevailing issues. Iqbal occasionally used the sarcasm in his tweets. Sarcasm is a form of verbal irony which uses mocking and contemptuous remarks to express a tone or language that appears to praise or express approval but actually conveys the opposite sentiment. It is often used to criticize someone or something in a humorous or biting manner. Iqbal uses sarcasm to ridicule perceived shortcomings in his political opponents or their governmental actions. He employed humor not only to entertain but also to provoke a solemn thought among his followers.

Furthermore, the study revealed politician's hidden agendas and highlighted the display of sociolinguistic variables, particularly power, among the four selected politicians. They were observed blaming, taunting, and insulting each other, all the while showcasing their respective ideologies. The context of the study was the power struggle and, the

disqualification of Imran Khan from his office, which occurred in April 2022. The use of power-related language such as authoritative remarks attempted to assert the politician's dominance and revealed the hierarchal nature of political discourse when they were in power. By examining power dynamics revealed through the use of language, the study sheds light on how Pakistani politicians on social media platforms negotiate and assert power. It influences their perceptions of authority and credibility among the public. Another significant sociolinguistic variable observed in the tweets was the use of specific political position. It is related to the political leader's affiliation to his/her party or the dominating position of the respective party which influenced the politician's language choices and interactional strategies. Politicians used it to challenge their opponents and form alliances. It helped them to shape the political discourse on Twitter and highlight power dynamics within Pakistani political landscape.

The political leaders of both parties were observed pulling one another down to demoralize the other. They resorted to making fun of their opponents while also presenting their own ideologies as the superior choice for the country. For instance, Imran Khan termed his opponents as local Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs, intending to ridicule them. This aligns with existing research on political discourse, particularly the strategic use of taunts and humor in political tweets. The analysis of Imran Khan's tweets demonstrates his strategic employment of derisive language to frame his political opposition and foreign powers as conspirators against him. This mirrors Donald Trump's rhetorical approach, as discussed in the literature review. For example, Trump frequently employed mocking nicknames such as "Sleepy Hiden" to depict Joe Biden as weak and ineffective. Similarly, Imran Khan's historical references aim to question the loyalty and legitimacy of his opponents. According to Radhi (2021), Trump's taunts were a calculated use of presidential authority to undermine Biden while reinforcing his own leadership credentials. In the same vein, Khan consistently praised the PTI government and emphasized that the nation's interests were paramount. This dual strategy served both to discredit his adversaries and to present PTI as the only honest and just political force in the country. The use of terms like kleptocrats sought to brand the opponents as criminals and mafias who exploit their power for selfish ends. He depicted them as narcissistic leaders who ascend to power solely to abuse it. Additionally, throughout his tweets, Imran Khan

consistently referred to Shahbaz Sharif as the Crime Minister deliberately avoiding the title of prime minister of Pakistan. This tactic aimed to mock Sharif and depicted him as a lifelong criminal who gained power unlawfully. He ensured that the public perceived Sharif as a ‘crime minister’ insinuating his involvement in criminal activities and his ascent to power through unfair means.

He insulted Shahbaz Sharif as a puppet PM to assert his own power while also ridiculing him. He depicted Sharif as a subservient figure working for America, lacking independent authority and merely following orders from others. Imran Khan extended his mockery to all parties involved in the PDM (Pakistan Democratic Movement). He labeled the PML-Ns as Sharif Mafia and called Asif Zardari a Certified Criminal to destabilize their credibility. Imran Khan criticized the PDM government that assumed power after his removal, branding it as an imported government. These actions indirectly conveyed his mediated ideology as the Chairman of PTI, portraying himself as a champion of justice and loyalty with sincere interests at heart.

Similarly, the study examined derisive remarks while using verbal humor in the tweets by Imran Khan’s spokesperson, Fayyaz Ul Hassan Chohan. He employed an extreme level of derision to ridicule PML-N leaders. Like Khan, he labeled Shahbaz Sharif as a crime minister and referred to PML-N as beggars. He derided Shahbaz Sharif as Maqsood Peon, insinuated that he misused his position, and suggested Sharif’s involvement in corrupt practices such as money laundering and offshore investments.

The study identified derisive elements in the tweets of PML-N leaders, Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Ahsan Iqbal as well. They utilized verbal humor to mock PTI leaders, particularly targeted Imran Khan. She referred to Imran Khan as Fitna Khan, the most incompetent, monkey, fake prime minister, Psychopath, and corrupt leader. She employed these terms to undermine his authority and credibility. This strategic use of language exploited the sociolinguistic variable of power, allowing Maryam Nawaz to ridicule her party’s opponent and paint Imran Khan as a symbol of malevolence. Even when Imran Khan faced a vote of no-confidence and was ousted from power, Maryam Nawaz continued to ridicule him and highlighted his premature removal from the office as a unique historical occurrence. This demonstrated her commitment to deriding and defaming him, using

linguistic tactics to present a negative portrayal to the users. Additionally, these linguistic choices indirectly emphasized her position as the vice president of PML-N while leveraging her authority to belittle her political rival through mockery and scorn.

Similarly, Ahsan Iqbal, the PML-N spokesperson, characterized Imran Khan in his tweets as a foreign-funded agent, a liar, a thief, Mr. U-TURN, and a drama actor. One of his tweets humorously linked Imran Khan's protest for "Azad Pakistan" to the disloyalties of Mir Jafar and Mir Sadiq. Through this comparison, Iqbal implied that Khan was a dishonest individual who engaged in various political theatrics throughout his political career such as advocating for Naya Pakistan, Riyasat E Madina, Imported government, and now 'Azad Pakistan'. These instances of humor served to ridicule, mock and taunt Khan, presenting him in a negative light to the users. Furthermore, it demonstrated that as a PML-N spokesperson, Iqbal exploited his authority to deliver sarcastic remarks aimed at both making fun of and insulting Khan.

The analysis of derisive Pakistani political tweets provides insight into how humor is used as tool for political discourse and manipulation. The study revealed that humor, particularly in the forms of satire, irony and sarcasm is not only employed for entertainment but also served as a mean to degrade and humiliate opponents. Political leaders strategically adopted verbal humor in their tweets to critique their adversaries, shape public opinion and assert dominance within the Pakistani political landscape. Socio-pragmatic variables such as power and political position play a significant role in shaping the linguistic choices and interactional strategies of politicians on social media platforms.

The use of power-related language, authoritative remarks and derogatory terms delineate the hierarchal nature of political discourse and reflects the attempts of politicians to showcase their dominance against opponents. The sociolinguistic variable of position also influenced the linguistic strategies employed by politicians, as seen in Maryam Nawaz Sharif's use of highly charged and derogatory remarks to target her political rivals. Her position as the vice president of PML-N amplified the impact of her linguistic choices and display her status as a woman to wield language as a weapon. Moreover, the study highlighted how political position influenced language use, as evidenced by the strategic deployment of humor by representatives of both PTI and PML-N. Politicians of both

parties exploited their position to ridicule, mock and challenge their adversaries and reinforce their party's agenda. Although gender was recognized as another sociolinguistic variable in this study, no instances were found where politicians actively employed gender-related tactics in their communication strategies. Overall, it reveals a complex interplay of power dynamics and political positions, where linguistic techniques are used to influence/shape users opinion and spread political ideologies.

In conclusion, the present study offers insights into derisive humor in Pakistani political tweets from a socio-pragmatic perspective. The study aimed to analyze the effect of context and sociolinguistic variables on the linguistic choices of travesty in tweets from prominent political figures of Pakistan's major parties, PTI and PML-N. The analysis revealed that humor, particularly in the form of satire, irony and sarcasm is wielded as a powerful tool in Pakistani political tweets. Beyond mere entertainment, it served as a strategic weapon for critiquing opponents and shaping public perception about each other on Twitter. This intricate interplay of linguistic strategies is shaped by socio-pragmatic factors such as power dynamics and political affiliations. Politicians tried to establish superiority over their rivals using authoritative language and derogatory terms. This leads to the implication of the present research.

5.1 Implications

This research unveils the multifaceted nature of political communication on social media platforms, where linguistic techniques are used to influence public opinion, spread political ideologies and assert dominance. The interplay between humor and political messaging reflects the dynamic nature of political discourse, where social media has become a crucial arena to influence public opinion and shape political narratives. The study also reveals that the abundant use of humor by these respected politicians draws a fine line between their typical roles as political leaders and humorists. These political leaders embark on humor time and again as if they think that their supporters can only be guided if entertained with humor. The analysis of political tweets reveals significant implications for the use of social media in political communication. The study emphasizes the importance of using social media platforms like Twitter with responsibility. The frequent use of mockery, criticism, and derogatory language by prominent political figures

highlights the potential misuse of social media. These platforms, originally designed for constructive communication and engagement, are increasingly being exploited by politicians to discredit opponents and assert their own dominance, rather than promote respectful and healthy discourse. Such misuse of social media threatens to erode public trust and distort the essential qualities, which are constructive, respectful and evidence-based, of political debate.

5.2 Recommendations

There are several recommendations for further studies. The present study is limited to two political parties in Pakistan and only four selected politicians from each party. Further studies can work on a large amount of data and can include more political parties and leaders like PPP, and Jamat I Islami to see what kind of language they use on social media platforms. The future researchers can choose some other context and take into account some other political events. They can study how politicians have reacted to those events in their political tweets or on any other social media site

The moral ramifications of derisive remarks can be another area of research for future studies. It will be interesting to see how the general public takes this derisive use of language by politicians. The researchers can look for the comments under these politicians' tweets to see how they see it. Moreover, it will be interesting to see the impact of such remarks on the audience. Is it making any difference for these political leaders in the public or not? Is their vote bank going to be affected due to it or not? It will be an interesting area to research in further studies.

Another area of significant research in the future will be to see if female politicians from across the globe use certain coping mechanisms such as ignoring and disengaging, assertive response, turning negative into positive, legal action etc., to deal with derisive tweets or do such tweets target them differently based on their gender. Such a gendered approach will be helpful to see how two genders manipulate the use of language on social media platforms.

Another area to be researched in the future can be comparative studies. The comparative studies across different cultures or regions could shed light on how socio-

cultural factors influence the use of derisive humor in political discourse. It will allow for cross-cultural comparisons and generalization in terms of rhetoric.

In the end, it is hoped that the present study will contribute to highlighting the aspect of verbal humor in political tweets. It will also contribute to studies based on deep analysis of language. It will help to see that politicians not only use it to joke, and make fun of each other but also reveal their hidden ideologies through it. It will contribute to studies on humor and will help to see how politicians use humor to reveal their agendas and ridicule the other person.

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