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## **ROLE OF MICRO-BLOGGING IN PAKISTANI POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, A CASE STUDY OF CANTONMENT BOARD ELECTION 2015.**

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The research seeks to examine the role of micro blogging in creating political awareness the main purpose of the study is to investigate the usage of micro blogging by political parties (PTI and JIP) during election campaign .To investigate the role of micro blogging in creating political awareness. .The research is guided by the theoretical framework of diffusion of innovation theory. To achieve the research objectives, qualitative methods was applied..The analysis was conducted on the tweets( PTI and JIP political parties ) posted from 1st April, 2015 (Pakistan Standard Time) to 26<sup>th</sup> April,2015 in the era of Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections 2015 which was conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> April,2015 by the Election Commission of Pakistan. The study concluded that the micro blogging site (twitter) is helping the political parties to increase their followers. When a political party upload their work, agendas or policies on micro blogging site (twitter) people came to know about them which increase their fame. These websites help voters to know the real faces of the parties as it have the comments of the others as well. These sites help the PTI to win government in KPK and in general election 2013 as well.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A weblog or blog is a website containing periodic, reverse chronologically ordered entries on a webpage. Each entry is called blog post at a blog site which is written and published by a blogger who maintains the site. The collection of all these blogs is called a blogosphere. They include online dairies, discussion platforms or informal medium for reporting on events. Most of the blogs are maintained by individuals. However blogging by groups or individual with similar view points or common purpose is increasing.

When blogging started in 1990 in USA, the users required strong programming skills to assemble and continue their own blogs. Blogging spread rapidly due to its inexpensiveness because a free software practice was available. Now the blogosphere has become modified from a white well educated people to ordinary people of both sexes. They are ranging from wide group of ages, countries and socio-economic backgrounds.<sup>3</sup>

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It was March 2005 when blogs were reported doubling every 5 months. There were almost 7-8 million blogs and 937 million in blogosphere. Technorati discovered more than 112 million blogs by December 2007.<sup>1</sup> A popular blog analysis is search engine on July 13, 2009 and found 112326499 blogs in the world. About one year later on August 3, 2010 blog pulse identified 144217571 total blogs. Then the top five featured people were Lady Gaga (215732 messages) Lindsay Lohan (62079) Kim Kardashian (31572) Angelina Jolie (53335) and JassicaSimpson (22267).<sup>2</sup>The spam like blogs or splogs accompanied the masses. A splog is “a fake blog created solely to promote affiliated websites”. This will considered as a big threat to internet and business specialists.<sup>3</sup>Technocrati estimated 40,000 new blogs daily in March 2005 and at the end of 2005 this estimated grew to 70000 blogs every day. It is 1.4 blogs per second in which 3000 to 7000 were splogs. Splogs were at peak in December 2006 when splogs were 11000 per day. Now they are decreasing.<sup>4</sup>

### **MICRO BLOGS**

In the blogging scene a fast and nimble new player has entered recently. It is micro blog. Very short updates are being sent by the micro blogging to a person or a diminutive set of entered recipients. These blogs give information about everything i.e events in daily life, special activities for example a concert, conference or business meeting. These micro blogs actually came through blogs and are called tumble logs. They were introduced in 2006-2007. Micro blogging was out of favor. Some of micro blogging includes trotter Jaikaand Fraz. Currently the most popular is twitter, which has 2 million to 20 million users from 2008 to 2009.<sup>5</sup> Most twitter users are very young i.e. 31% age 15-19, 35% age 20-24, 15% ages 25-29. Actually twitter was considered as a platform for connecting with a community by answering questions, messaging, texting or the web. Twitter is for SMS, web and mobile web, instant messaging services and API services. Motivation for twittering started in USA and spread around the world rapidly. In July 2010 what twitter statistics released told that up to June 2010 to Associated Press. That Asia overtook North America for generating the most tweets .USA generated 25%, Japan 18%, per capita ranking second 8 million tweets per day. Indonesia ranked third by 10% and South Korea 2%.<sup>3</sup>.There are numerous obligations regarding twitter. Its initials business was vague and has not shown noteworthy reverence. In April 2010 the company announced a new purchase Keywords. If at twitter uses purchased

keyword for a search, a promotion add will Pop up at the screen of the user. Initially it is not clear whether or not ads will impact the business, annoy or other results to the users. Privacy, security and integration into corporate culture are other concerns.<sup>6</sup>

Twitter will going to change the conventional approach of political communication, which is conquered by political leaders and media authority in which there is no space for a local person to express his thoughts. These types of communicating mediums gave a way to politicians and community to interact and change dialogue without the need of television or any other media.<sup>25</sup> Political parties used twitter as a tool to update people about their political campaigns , offer political assertion and share links to their own website<sup>26</sup>

### **Objectives of the study**

- To investigate the usage of micro blogging by political parties (PTI and JIP) during election campaign.
- To investigate the role of twitter campaign among political parties
- To investigate the role of micro blogging in creating political awareness

### **Significance**

Uses of blogging and micro blogging are increasing now days. Politicians are now targeting their audience through the internet media especially micro blogging. The emerging trend of usage of micro blogging for creating political awareness needs to be study.

### **Hypothesis**

- Micro blogging create awareness among people regarding politics
- Micro blogging create change in field of politics

### **Research Questions**

- 1: Which political party (JIP or PTI) was most frequently using Twitter during cantonment board elections in Pakistan?
- 2: What functions do the tweets serve for targeted parties?
- 3: Micro Blogging Create awareness among people regarding politics?

### **Studies related to micro blogging and politics**

Blogging is pioneer the variety online instructional potential results.

To some degree in the light of the way blogging licenses understudies when there is an ability to work together in a more open venue to explain them. Consider clear and trusts the understudies with

anyone who wants to contribute on the web. Blogging has become media dear among media outlets in the middle of last presidential race<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the political interest the blog sphere seems a model. Blog readers are exceeding to partake corporate to sustain online general readers for government issues so that they can coordinate their activism. The blog readers who read left and right wing blogs participate as much as who read left wing. Rather readers left wing websites and cross cutting users take and interest more than per users. It shows a solid difference in the middle of felt wing and conservative bloggers to take part in political activity<sup>8</sup>

It is observed investigated that online networking is limitless in any political data and its support hole in the middle of government and restriction. Another change in Media is individual mind fullness about the world's governmental issues through the usage of internet they get more aware about world political situation and their outcome. Web is an operator of electronic media which spread news among the common people about significant issues and needs to share their thoughts which can influence choice making so that components among the public eye to guarantee law based thoughts and choice making. It is to the subject about the interest legislative issues so that they can produce thoughts results.<sup>9</sup>

Ronald said that internet has ended up being the most progressive managing and drawing device since 1992. Due to the web, political battenning and informed communication utilities have empower similarly each sort of political and non-political action.<sup>10</sup>

Social media may be thought a long term tool strengthening civil society and public sphere. Due to internet we called social media as a way of environment view through the positive change it has brought in our life .Social media is considered as a tool for intensify relation between communities<sup>11</sup>. Commerce, media and political affairs are the main contributor of weblogs. Politicians used microblogging to set political agenda, to make assets and enhanced communal support .<sup>12</sup> Researchers looked at the role of U.K Political blogs in political campaign. It has been observed that the potential of blogs in setting the political and media agenda, "blogging in the U.K is in its infancy."<sup>13</sup>

Blogging has promoted trends. Blogging has made online political organizing easier. New technological interactions among world will result in intricate connections among industrial, societal, educational, political, and monetary forces. Wherever, there is a struggle between emerging technologies and old establishment the

political possessions mainly depend upon technological revolution and decision.<sup>14</sup>

The democratization of communication has never been to such an ease by any medium of communication as it has been swayed and boosted by the social media technologies. "From the French revolution to the Bolshevik Revolution, history has shown us that while people are the driving force for change, contemporary technology the catalyst that can transform a movement into a revolution."<sup>15</sup>, it was YouTube, for the Colar Revolution of the former Soviet Union, and it was mobile phones. Looking at the never-ending example of social innovation, we can suppose that cyber-technologies hold a particular influence, that they are "technologies of liberation"<sup>14</sup>

Blogs, face book, twitter and other social media have played special role in advancing historical revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt. Ongoing antigovernment protest in Arab and Muslim countries like Libya, Syria, Morocco and Bahrain are also planned through facebook and twitter youth movement<sup>16</sup>. People of SidiBouzi broke through the media black out to spread word of their appriizing in an article that the use of mix of social media technologies like Facebook, blogs, twitter and YouTube, the people of Tunisia over care the censorship and they ensured that their revolution did not go in silence. The authorities' tried much to prevent the flow of videos but citizens ensured that their videos are available online.<sup>17</sup>

Blogs sphere is getting population in political information both in developed and developing countries since the 2008 U.S election the debate the use blogs in politics and its effect on democracy has grown much deeper. Blogs has make the possible for the people to expose to themselves to political information and discussion most scopic blogs played special role in 2004 and 2008 U.S presidential election.<sup>18</sup>

The capacity of these new means of political campaign and election attract the politicians throughout the world. Walter M.R (2009) examined that students participate and more affected by the new media exposure during 2008 election. During this election the information was already available on social media. Researchers used the uses and gratification agenda settings, selection exposure and other theories as a guide to investigate of social networking users at the university of South Alabama have an increase in political activism. They conducted that the students used facebook, my space, youtube only for political information but they did not use it for sending a receiving political information.<sup>19</sup>

Hayes studied the use of younger people social networking, who were voters and their participation in 2008 presidential election. This time two key candidate made their profiles to reach youth at social networking. He took the Bundara's social cognitive theory as guide to investigate how variables like political knowledge and efficacy took part in electoral process. They used a scale of political learning efficacy qualitatively and quantitatively. Researcher used a new scale in a nationally representative survey of young voters. It was concluded that political communication can have an encouraging impact on political learning efficacy, awareness and contribution, but political participation was lower much lower than mainstream media.<sup>20</sup>

If we look upon the use of social media and Facebook in Pakistan, the influence is seen much positive during political activities protests and political participation. When Musharraf imposed emergency in Pakistan, the lawyer's movement, assassination of Benazir Bhutto and general election 2008 media compromised. But youth found social media to fill the gaps and maintain flow of news, information and freedom of speech.

Blogs has started changing thinking patterns of Pakistan youth, because youth who have no interest in politics are exposed to it said Hamza Sadiq Khan who is creator of Go Mushraff Go. Number of people against emergency in Pakistan was 10903. This group was in favor of Independent judiciary. The political discussion on this group involved young students. Blogs and Facebook was venue for those who never expressed themselves previously, in the public sphere.

Pakistan may be under military blockade but its citizens have activated via sophisticated use of internet and there must be a time for revolution bus using of new media technologies<sup>21</sup>

Internet is a crucial tool for youth as government arrested thousands opposition leaders, two private channels have been blocked, but youth found their way to be heard using blogs in Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> Political activism is the use of interactive political content on social media. Youth are taking part in discussions, opinion building and communication on the political issues.<sup>28</sup> Electronic participation in politics is a reality, especially in democratic countries. More and more citizens are attracted to the media to self-organize in favor of holding political leaders accountable.

The citizens of a country can embrace internet for democracy, but the results must be positive. Internet can be the best tool for

citizens to make decisions because democracy is nothing without citizen participation<sup>23</sup>

Internet has improved opportunity of the public use it as a tool in way that public can affect decision making. It is citizens we can provide help in decision making in the democratic countries.

The evolution and development of micro blogging has been done in the light of diffusion of innovation approach. The original diffusion research was done in 1903 by the French Sociologists Gabriel Trade

### **Core assumptions and statements**

It based on the notion that with the advancement of a new idea, product or practice it will be adopted by the numbers of a given culture. It expects how communicating technologies and interpersonal communication effect attitudes and decisions. EME Rogers (1995) says that it consist of four stages innovation diffusion through microblogging. Flow of information take place through a network. The features of network and rule played by the opinion determine the likelihood of adoption. Innovation diffusion research attempts to explain the variables which influence how and why they adopt a new information medium. Opinion leaders influence people through their behavior and change agents in the process of diffusion. Five adapter categories are (i) Innovative (2) early adopters (3) early majority (4) late majority and (5) laggards. These use deviation course. 2.5% innovators adopt innovation, 13.5% early adopters, 34% early majority 34% late majority while laggards 16%<sup>24</sup>

Rogers' theory considered as an inclusive framework for perception of spread of an innovation and its driving factors accelerating the rate of adoption. It basically address diffusion of innovation which tell us about user motivations and adoption behavior. Usage of twitter for providing political awareness is a new form of communicating medium for innovators which may attract other user group or influencers to adopt twitter for other purposes also.<sup>27</sup>

### **Methodology**

#### **Data Collection**

The current study involved following type of data collection. The research analysis was conducted on the tweets posted from 1st April, 2015 (Pakistan Standard Time) to 26<sup>th</sup> April,2015 in the era of Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections 2015 which was conducted on 25<sup>th</sup> April,2015 by the Election Commission of Pakistan. We started

to collect the data from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2015 in order to collect data for almost 1 month period, which was 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2015 to 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.

The commencement of Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections 2015 which was scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2015. In this connection, we collected a total of 84 tweets posted by the two political parties 43 tweets by (Pakistan Tehreek-i- Insaaf) PTI & 41 Tweets (Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan) JIP and their leaders.

### Coding Scheme

**Table 5.1 Types of Tweets**

Category	Category Definition
Mention of party Leaders	Any Tweet which mention the party leader
Normal Post	Any Tweet which describe the tweets other than Retweets& Replied Tweets

**Table 5.2 Functions of Tweets**

Categories	Categories Definition and example
Campaign updates	Tweets consist of appraises on forthcoming political rallies or events in the political campaign e.g.: <i>“Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan led a rally in Punjab's Mianwali district on Friday to gain support of voters ahead of the second phase of local government (LG) elections in <a href="#">Punjab and Sindh scheduled to take place on Nov 19.</a>”</i>
Promotion	Tweets to promote self-interests e.g.: <i>JIP will contact people of all walks of life to be part of JIP. Especially encouraging youth to Join JIP &amp; play their role.</i>



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Criticis m	Tweets which criticize the current government's policies e.g.: <i>The issues of sending troops to KSA should be discussed in parliament. Irresponsible statements from Govt. &amp; Opposition should be avoided.</i>
Vote Calling	Tweets which made a proclamation for citizens to come out and vote e.g.: <i>It's my humble request to all voters of NA 246 to cast their vote on merit for dedicated and honest person &amp; stamp on tarazu.</i>
Political news	Tweets comprising news updates pertaining to Pakistan or world politics e.g.: <i>Any provocative attempt against Saudi Arabia will be considered an aggression against Pakistan.</i>
Other news	Tweets comprising news updates which were not from the political domain e.g.: <i>Saddened by the death of Richie Benaud, one of the greatest cricketing brains.</i>
Party Details News	Tweets which provided details about constituents, nomination or candidates e.g.: <i>A candidate for PTI paid Rs5 million to have his votes verified.</i>
Other	Any tweets which did not fall

under the above categories  
e.g: *There will be a great Concert performance  
at Gaddafi stadium Lahore, for NA252.Sun  
April. 1 pm.*

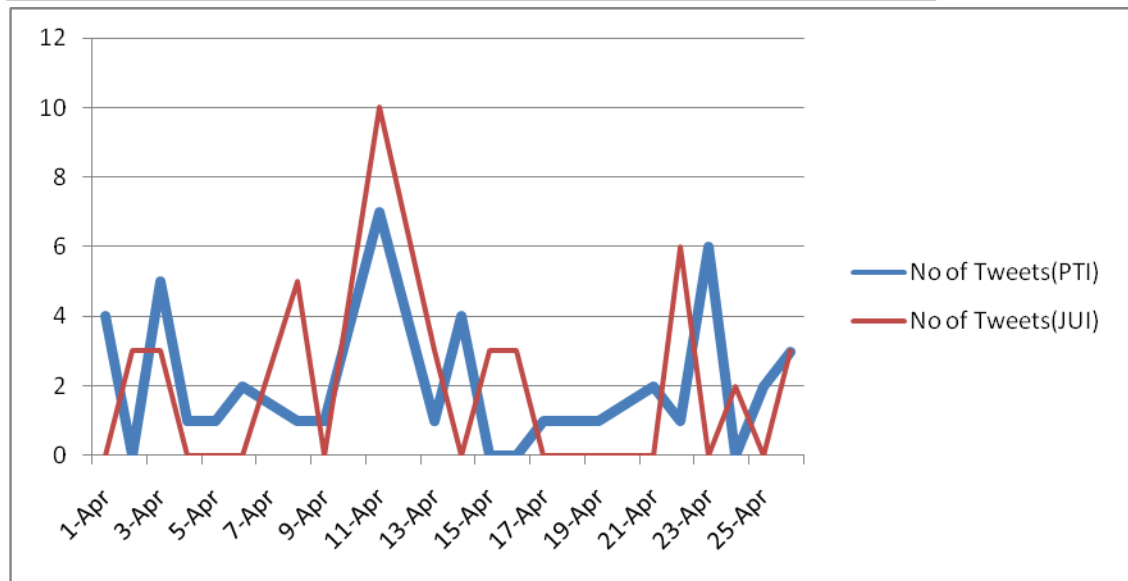
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## **Analysis**

### **Date –wise Tweet Analysis.**

The date-wise analysis has been shown in the following figure 6.1 to compare the daily no of tweets 43 & 41 Posted by both the political Parties (Pakistan Tehreek-i- Insaaf) PTI & (Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan) JIP respectively during the Period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 26<sup>th</sup> April,2015 focusing Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections 2015 on the online campaign related strategies of PTI .Here we can see the trend and variations of the tweets of two political parties, whereas thick dark Blue line is showing the trend of the daily posted tweets by the PTI and thin Brown line showing the Trends of daily posted tweets by the JIP. From the figure it is clearly compared that JIP has not been very consistent Party on twitter to post the Tweets but high variations on some specific dates e.g. 22th Apr, 11th Apr & 8 Apr as 6, 10 & 5 No of tweets respectively but on the contrary PTI has been very consistent in posting tweets and had interaction with the party supporters and the Nation. Only four days on specific dates 24, 16,15 and 2 for the Month of April PTI did not post tweets.

**Figure 6.1**

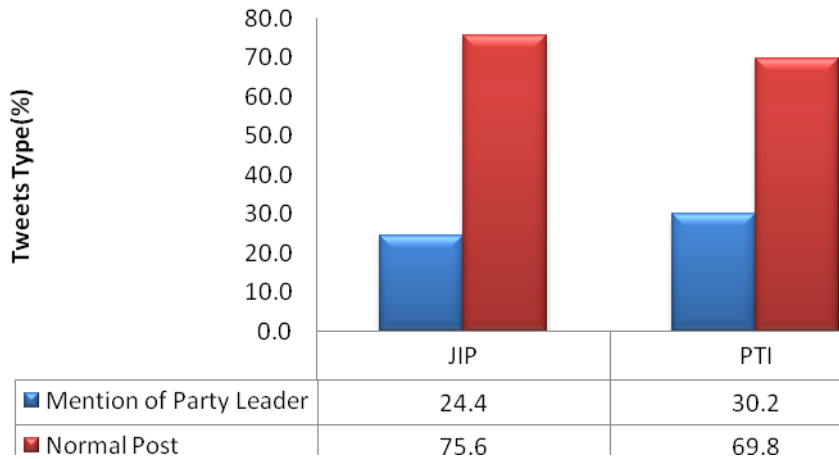


**Table 6.1 Descriptive Analysis of Tweet Types**

Tweet Type	Party Name	
	JIP	PTI
Mention of Party Leader	10(24.4)	13(30.2)
Normal Post	31(75.6)	30(69.8)
Total	41	43

**Figure 6.2**

### Types of Tweets of JIP & PTI(%)



#### Descriptive Analysis

The Descriptive analysis of the Types of the tweets which was categorized into two main categories as” Mention of party Leader” & “Normal Post” has been shown in table 6.1 as well as in the figure 6.2. Descriptive Analysis in Table 6.1 justifying our first research question mentioned in the Chapter “Methodology” and defines the frequencies along with the percentage of the tweets of PTI and JIP in the parenthesis we can see the percentage of the tweets from there it is clearly seen the difference of the tweets as JIP posted 24.4 percent tweets in which this party mention its party leader for campaign/political purposes in the era of Cantonment Board Elections and 75.6 posts were posted as normal posts in which the Political Party leader name was not mentioned. PTI mentioned its Party Leader in 30% tweets which is almost 6% more as compared to JIP it shows that party in the online campaign strategies focusing the party leader which made PTI more prominent and successful in the community of Pakistan. The same information can be seen in the graphical form, which is more visible interpreter tool for the types of tweets. PTI bar is higher as compared to JIP Mentioning their Party Leader.

**Table 6.2 Descriptive Analysis of Functions of Tweets**

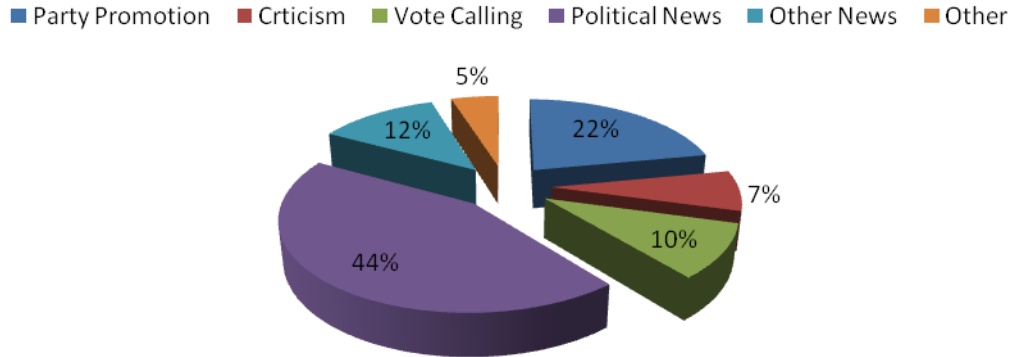
Functions Of Tweets	Party Name	
	JIP	PTI

Campaign Updates	0(0)	0(0)
Party Promotion	9(22.0)	9(20.9)
Criticism	3(7.3)	12(27.9)
Vote Calling	4(9.8)	1(2.3)
Political News	18(43.9)	16(37.2)
Other News	5(12.2)	4(9.3)
Party Details News	0(0)	0(0)
Other	2(4.9)	1(2.3)
Total	41	43

For Research Question-2 mentioned in the methodology chapter Table 6.2 describes the functions of tweets that how did the political parties serve their functions in the online twitter campaign. Table 6.2 in the similar fashion of table 6.1, describes the frequencies of the functions of tweets along with the percentages of the defined categories as “Campaigns Updates”, “Party Promotion”, “Criticism”, “Vote Calling”, “Political News”, “Other News”, “Party Daily News” & “Others”. In the light of functions of tweets, JIP & PTI mostly contributed online strategic campaign in the “Political News” category, tweets related to this category JIP 43.9 percentage is high as compared to the PTI 37.3. Party Promotion percentage has been almost equal by both the parties which is 22 percentage from the JIP side very close to the PTI’s 20.9. Present government remained in the circumference of criticism by the PTI, which are 27.9.

**Figure 6.3(a)**

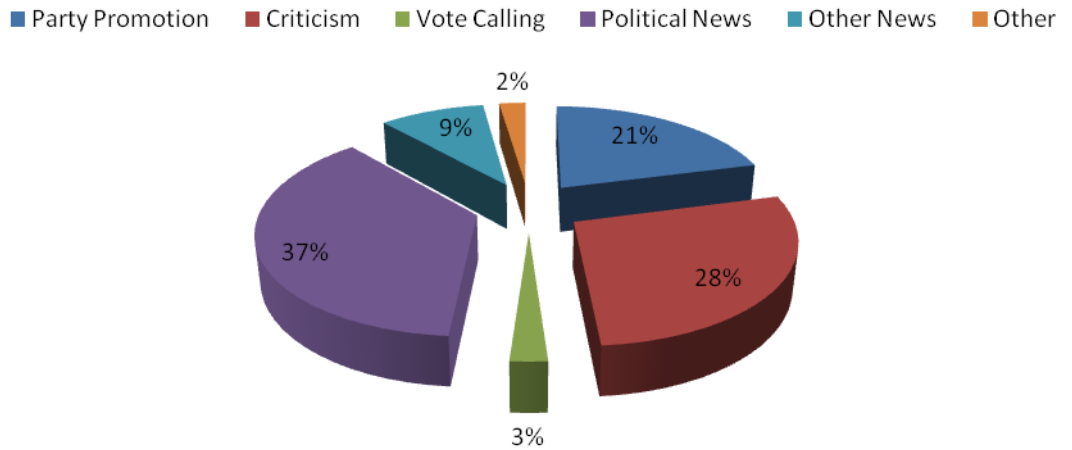
### Functions of JIP Tweets(%)



Pie Chart with the different slices shows the functions of tweets of JIP in percentage and Figure 6.3(a) which is presenting a quick glance on the functions of JIP part tweets, 44% Political News from JIP’s side can be seen from the big slice of pie chart. 22% tweets elaborate function of part promotion.

Figure 6.3(b)

### Functions of PTI Tweets(%)



In the similar fashion the percentages of Tweets in respect to functions of the PTI has been shown in the figure 6.3(b). From the PTI's side 28 percentage criticism slice is clearly indicating that PTI has been in its natural style criticizing the government with the 37 percent share in the political news tweets.

### Retweets& Tweet Likes Analysis

**Figure 6.4**

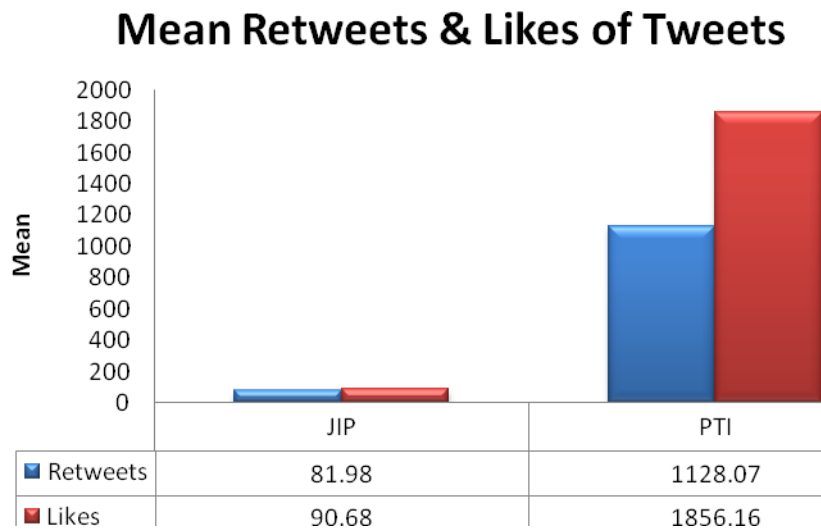


Figure 6.4 shows the Mean Average of Retweets and Likes of Tweets. So PTI being the most popular party which has been using twitter micro blogging since 2013 general elections, hence through the Bar Chart statistics which is again many times higher in Mean Retweets(1128.07) and Mean Likes(1856.16) than JIP's Mean Retweets(81.98) & Mean Likes(90.68) in Cantonment Board Election April 2015.

### Discussion & Conclusion

This study basically focused on the usage of the online tool for campaigning by the political parties in Pakistan in the period of Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections, April, 2015. The purpose of the research was to analyze the two main research questions/objectives that how much political parties used online

political campaigns and used micro blogging twitter as a tool and secondly what type of functions political parties expresses through tweets during Cantonment Board, Local Bodies Elections April 2015 in Pakistan.

Past studies showed that PTI has used micro blogging in more effective manners as compared to the other Political Parties and the effective use of micro blogging helped PTI to win almost 30 seats in National Assembly in 2013 elections. PTI maintained its campaign online and offline mostly youth was in enthusiastic spirit to made PTI successful in social media campaigns as well. The regular and consistent tweets regarding the rallies, public interaction, upcoming party events posted by the PTI party made its positive role in making PTI the second largest successful party in the city and established a Provincial Government in KPK and PTI has been a dominant party on Social media specially on Twitter. After two years of the General Elections we took and another Party JIP to compare its usage of micro blogging with the PTI which was a strong micro blogging user party in 2013 general elections and found that JIP has been as much active as PTI on twitter in Cantonment Board Elections 2015, however the likes on the tweets and retweets were on much more in the credit of PTI. In a 26 days study tweets are almost the same posted by both the Parties JIP used twitter in effective manner as well. JIP has been 7 percent more vote calling part on twitter as compared to PTI and in Party Promotion is 1 percent ahead to PTI and almost 7 percent high than PTI in posting Political News. But PTI already having the more popularity on twitter and being the consistent in posting tweets and making interaction with the nation become successful at the third stage in cantonment election 2015 by getting 42 seats as compared to JIP 6 seats. Although PML(N) was the successful party by securing 68 seats. Overall PTI has been a strong Political Party which is using twitter in more effective manner and winning the series of success in a rapid way as compared to the other Political Parties in Pakistan.

Hence keeping in view the above cited statistics it is very clear that micro blogging created awareness among the people regarding politics and twitter has been an amazing and rapid effective tool for the people of Pakistan as awareness factor/tool regarding politics and as the drastic success of PTI and won seats in General Elections 2013 and Cantonment Board Elections, 2015 proved that twitter/micro blogging has made an enormous change in the field of politics.



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