

Truth is a rare commodity despite freedom of print and electronic media

## 1. Introduction

2. Thesis statement:

'Though freedom of media exists but still truth is hard to find.'

2. Freedom of media is the fourth state in democracy

3. Truth is rare to find despite freedom of media

i - Media commercialization prioritizes profit over truth making truth a rare commodity.

ii - Spread of misinformation over media suppress the truth

iii - Race of ratings and sensationalization defeats the pursuit of truth

iv. Advertisement funding tilt the media and thus make truth a rare commodity.

v. National Laws also often creates hinderances in the way of media to play its true role.

- vi. Algorithm-driven content is suppressing truth in the vast amount of media
- vii. Lack of verification promotes spread of misinformation further deny of pursuit of truth
- viii. Media is being used as a weapon to further person interests and harmful agendas, thus undermining truth
- ix. Political influences over media shapes the truth.
- x. Corporate influences over media reforms the truth in its favor

Truth  
Identify  
man  
truth  
truth  
truth

4. Pragmatic Measures to ensure truth is not suppressed

- i. Policies to regulate Algorithm of media.
- ii. Verification Mechanisms for information being displayed on media
- iii. Promotion of private news channels
- iv. Legal checks and balances over media
- v. Accountability of those promoting biased journalism

Truth has always been hard to identify. ~~Since the start of the civilizations~~ Man has always been seeking truth. Man is running after the truth, truth of universe, truth of existence, truth of God, truth of nature, and truth of life. Man being a curious creature has always sought ways of knowing and exploring the truth. With the advent of print and electronic media, the pursuit of truth seemed easier. ~~It was thought that now may~~ be truth lies just one book ahead or one article ahead. Media has great potential to be the whistleblower and reveals such truth which were hard to access in previous eras. But the real question is whether media has fulfilled this job. By just looking on the surface of the issue one can tell, despite

empowerment of media throughout  
the globe, truth is difficult to  
find. Various factors in media influences  
hinders the pursuit of truth. For example,  
media commercialization prioritizes profit  
over truth, Misinformation and hate  
speeches gain more views and attention  
thus being prioritized on media.  
Sometime, National leaders through censorship  
suppress the truth. There exist no  
proper mechanisms for verification of  
information being promoted via media.  
Furthermore, media bears the  
burden of the political and cooperate  
influences. All of these and many  
others hinder the role of media  
as a torchbearer of truth and  
thus, making truth a rare commodity.

In the democratic  
form of government, which is  
the most dominant form of  
government all over the globe

freedom of media is considered as the <sup>10</sup>fourth estate. Media both electronic and print media act as the watchdog over the actions of government, <sup>20</sup>ills of the society, forms public opinion on a range of issues, ranging from individual to global issues. Media acts as the bridge between the tongues of the citizens and ears of those concerned. Therefore, because of undeniable importance of media in a healthy society, its freedom has been advocated since decades. Free media is sought as basic tenent of democracy and healthy society. It ensures everyone has voice of their own. It also ensures healthy dissent that further strengthens the country. The biggest advocate of dissent Hegel gave whole philosophy highlighting

role of dissent in the growth  
of civilization. Thus, time and  
again progressive societies have  
advocated for freedom of media  
and also met for success in  
this regard. Media is being protected  
with national laws around the  
globe and also by international  
protocols. But the dilemma is  
that despite the protections and  
freedoms enjoyed by media,  
in the vast ocean of information  
it contains, truth is rare to  
find.

One of the reasons for  
this situation might be that  
media commercialization prioritizes  
profit over truth. In the world  
of capitalist mindset and race  
of riches, it is no wonder  
that monetary benefits are advanced  
over the truth. From an individual

journalism on youtube to the big names on newschannel, often news, and topic bring more commercial value are prioritized. Those involved often justify this by explaining how a certain kind of media brings more commercial value that justifies their hardwork and input in the work. But this justification is not enough for the silence over moral duty and the impact of these trends over the suppression of truth and true role of media. For example, in a survey of Youtube content creators, it was revealed that 80% of Youtubers shape their content around Google AdSense policies. Thus, this behaviours results in prioritization of profit over truth, making truth a rare commodity.

Another reason that truth has become a rare gem

is the spread of misinformation over electronic and print media. Specially on sensitive issues there is bombardment of news and information which confuses the consumers of such news to and further makes truth a rare gem. Misinformation has potential to destabilize the country and thus media further enhances it. For example in October, 2024 during the times of SCO summit there were huge protests in Lahore, causing chaos of a serious matter of rape allegation on a security guard. Many students were hurt in the process and later on investigations revealed that the whole protest was based on misinformation thus, making truth a distant dream.

Furthermore, a race of ratings in

60  
electronic media and over sensationalism of news defeats the pursuit of truth in media. The success of news channels depends mostly on the ratings therefore, news channels prioritize the news that brings more rating. It has been observed in the trends of sensationalization of news and overstretching of sensitive topics or news bring more ratings, ∴ thus generate more revenue and are therefore prioritized. A study of news channels ratings revealed that there is significant increase in viewership during times of crises as compared to peacetimes. So often in the peacetimes, newschannels over-sensationalizes the evils of societies to generate more rating. This behaviour further pushes away the truth and change the perception of secure society.

In addition to its advertisement funding also tilt the media and pushes truth further away. Most of the revenue generated by print and electronic media depends on the advertisements. For example, Youtube revenue depends on Google Ads, Newchannel journalism also run on commercial advertisements. The information displayed on such ads is often false and focused on more sale of a certain product or service. The consumers of such content are being subconsciously trained in favour of advertised commodity based on the shown traits that might be false. Thus, media shapes the truth of people but the guiding force behind this shape are those who invest millions in advertisements.

Another major contributor of truth suppressor in the times of

free media ~~can~~ is national laws.

As stated before media act as the watchdog over the actions of government that promotes freedom of speech, freedom of expression and ensures accountability. This

role of media often does not align with government and this pushes legislature to enact laws to restrict media on discussing certain topics and issues. The

United States Espionage Act is

a major example of suppressing freedom of media to reveal truth. Thus

state institutions use legislation that further enhances hindrances in

way of free media and promotion of truth.

Not only this but algorithm-

driven content is also contributing

in making truth a rare commodity.

Truth, to survive has to deal with

dissent for which majority of  
the population is not ready. This  
problem further exacerbates when the  
algorithm-driven content only brings the  
content to people that matches their  
belief. Google, YouTube and Meta via  
Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp  
channels spend millions of dollars and  
human resource to strengthen the  
Algorithm of these platforms. Thus they  
mostly bring the selective data in  
front of selective people whose ideologies  
and beliefs align with the content.  
Further narrowing the space for truth.  
Such data reassure people that their  
beliefs and presumptions are truth  
while everything else is lie and  
the real truth is lost in between  
those lines.

Lack of verification of  
information adds salt to the injury.  
People being fed on news that

don't have any factual standing  
as become norm of the  
day. Lack of verification of news  
before being published, uploaded  
or run on-air cause spread of  
misinformation. During times of Covid-19  
social media, television media and  
some of print media were spread  
latest updates of Covid-19 cases,  
causalities and remedies, which were  
often denied rather and called  
as propaganda. So it can be safely  
concluded that in the media  
industry lack of verification makes  
truth a rare commodity.

Moreover, role of media has  
often been observed as a character  
undermining truth by being used  
for personal interests and harmful  
agendas. Free media in theory should  
easy the way for truth. but  
it has been observed that

freedom enjoyed by electronic and  
print media is manipulated to  
further individual interests and agendas  
Biggest example of manipulation  
of media is use of media by  
Israel and the United States of  
America. At 1st the United States  
of America used media to  
advance its interests in Russia -  
Ukraine war and later on  
Israel manipulated media to  
generate soft corners in the global  
society and justify its evils actions  
with advocating right to self-defence.  
Thus, media being manipulated  
at the hands of big powers  
deny pursuit of truth of media.  
One of crucial influence  
over media that further pushes  
away the truth is political influences  
over it. Through out the globe it  
has been observed that major political

parties use media as a weapon  
in the electoral process. This promotes  
'Yellow journalism'. Political parties  
polarizes media channels to advance  
their manifestos and sometimes to  
dig the weakness of opposition  
or built public narrative in  
favor or against of a certain  
political party or political figure.

In the U.S.A the news delivery of  
CNN and Fox News clearly  
indicates this difference. Thus, it  
will not be wrong to state  
that political influences over the  
media shapes truth.

Another major influence on  
media that hinders the truth is  
corporate influence. ~~over~~ Big  
conglomerates offer advertise their  
products, and services at the  
cost of truth. Often they prevent  
media to play its role of

Plz break this into short sentence

watchdog to maintain their reputations.  
Pakistan's largest chain of colleges,  
Punjab Group of Colleges called police  
on students during many students  
injured, to control the situation and  
maintain its honorable reputation.

There are so many other  
incident

Moreover, many industrialist stop  
media channels to raise awareness  
on environmental issues because  
they themselves are the emitters  
of Green House Gases and the consumers  
of fossil fuels. Therefore, to keep  
their pace with honor, they  
influence the media in their  
favor turning themselves into  
heroes and creating stories far  
from reality.

If the media continues  
to be influenced like this,  
those days are not far when  
truth will become impossible to  
find and societies will be so

Plz avoid such lengthy statements

inevitable that any revolution of  
media will be left. Therefore,  
it is need to the time to  
take pragmatic measures to ensure  
that the not suppressed. One  
of major measure in this regard  
is reforming the Algorithms of  
media. There is need of specific  
policies to reform and regulate  
algorithm of media in such a  
way that content based on verified  
information, and backed by certain  
criteria such as facts, researches, or  
institutions is promoted rather than  
the interests, biasness and beliefs  
of individuals which is the correct  
scenario.

The information being  
spread is fed into brains and  
almost 80% of the time there  
is no way to verify journalists  
claim. This can be countered by

establishing a fact finding institutions where people can access on-line and off-line inquiry portals. Article 19-A of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973 declares right to information as the fundamental right. Establishment of such a fact finding or checking institution will provide the citizen their right to information.

There is

Moreover, there is further need to enhance and promote private news channels. During the decline of democracy in Pakistan in the era of Zia-ul-Haq, there were strict laws on freedom of media and starting a private news body was next to impossible. It was observed that it caused polarization and monopoly of media outlets and it was easier to push the truth away. Therefore,

multiple news outlets being run  
by private body will bring variety  
of content, and their will be  
healthy competitions of truth  
findings.

One of the most  
important step in ensuring truth's  
survival in media industry is  
legal checks and balances. Right  
now ~~PRMRA~~, PECA and Telegraph  
Act are among some of the  
legislations that ~~tries to~~ balance the  
~~truth and freedom of media~~ but  
~~despite their presence~~ both are  
being questioned everyday. There  
is a need to draft ~~specific~~  
law with the assistance of  
technocrats on the special issue  
of balance of truth ~~alongside~~  
freedom of media and speech.∴  
Last but not the least,  
there is a need to hold

those accountable responsible for promoting biased journalism. Quacks needs to be revealed and brought to public. This will create awareness among masses and realization that whatever is fed by media by their favorite respective media outlet might be totally based on propaganda and false facts.

~~In conclusion, the whole discussion can be summed up as although freedom of media that is the basic tenet in a healthy democratic society is advocated since ages and is ensured by some laws both on national and international fronts, but still due to numerous factors it is unable to convey the truth, making it a rare commodity. Major reasons may that~~

hinders the truth and stops the freedom enjoyed by media to play a healthy role and cooperate with political influences over the media industry. Those in power, whether they are governments or conglomerates they shape the truth which is far from reality often times. Furthermore, lack of verification of media narratives adds salt to the injury. Due to all these factors and many more, one reaches to the conclusion that ~~truth is indeed a rare commodity.~~ Fortunately, all is not lost, if right steps are taken in the right direction, truth can still be protected, which is also the need of the time and demand of the freedom enjoyed by electronic and print media.

These are

Good use of such idioms

You have the ability to twist