

Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy (JSSRP)**The Evolution and Contribution of Major Urdu Newspapers in Pakistan (1947–2026): A Historical Review****Dr. Noor Nabi Khan¹, Munir Ahmed²**

1. Lecturer, Department of Communication & Media Studies, Hazara University Mansehra, KPK, Pakistan.

2. Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication & Media Studies, Hazara University, KPK, Pakistan.

Cite This Article: Khan, N. N. & Ahmed, M. (2026). The Evolution and Contribution of Major Urdu Newspapers in Pakistan (1947–2026): A Historical Review. *Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy*. 4 (01), 764-774.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71327/jssrp.41.764.774>

ISSN: 3006-6557 (Online)

ISSN: 3006-6549 (Print)

Vol. 4, No. 1 (2026)

Pages: 764-774

Key Words:

Urdu newspapers, Pakistan,
Historical evolution, print media,
Digital journalism, press freedom,
Democratic development

Corresponding Author:**Dr. Noor Nabi Khan**Email: noor_cms27@yahoo.com**License:**

Abstract: This study investigates the historical progression and contribution of the major Urdu newspapers in Pakistan from 1947 to 2026. The study, which employs the historical research approach, uses secondary data gathered from books, peer-reviewed journal articles, HEC theses and dissertations, newspaper archives, All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) reports, and the official websites of significant Urdu newspapers. The study examines the evolution of prominent Urdu publications, such as *Daily Jang*, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, *Daily Express*, *Khabrain*, *Daily Pakistan*, and *Dunya*, and evaluates their contribution to the political, social, cultural, and democratic advancement of Pakistan. The findings show that Urdu newspapers have played an important role in developing political awareness, national integration, public opinion, and democratic values while also preserving cultural identity and enlightening residents about national issues. The study also discusses the impact of political regimes, media regulations, and censorship on the development and operation of the Urdu press. It also investigates the technological shift of Urdu newspapers from traditional print media to digital journalism via websites, e-papers, mobile applications, and social media platforms. Despite issues such as dwindling print circulation, lower advertising revenue, digital competition, misinformation, and worries about press freedom, prominent Urdu newspapers continue to adapt to the changing media landscape. The study indicates that Urdu newspapers remain an important part of Pakistan's media system, and their long-term viability is dependent on embracing digital innovation while retaining journalistic professionalism, editorial independence, and public trust.

Introduction

Urdu journalism stretches back to 1822, when Harihar Dutta founded *Jam-e-Jehan Numa* in Bengal, which marked the start of Urdu newspaper publication in the Indian subcontinent. Since then, Urdu journalism has evolved over two centuries, covering the colonial period, the Pakistan Movement, and the post-independence era, during which it played a critical role in molding Pakistan's political, social, and cultural discourse (Sattar, 2024). The Urdu press now plays an important role in the country's political, cultural, and democratic scene due to its widespread circulation and accessibility in both urban and rural areas. Urdu newspapers, as the most widely read print medium, have an important role in

raising political awareness, enhancing civic involvement, and facilitating public discourse on national issues (Hussain & Khan, 2025). Because of their large readership, they can influence public opinion and reach out to a wider range of people than English-language newspapers. Empirical data demonstrates the Urdu press's sustained significance in Pakistan. Shakoor et al. (2023), using a purposive sample of 100 respondents, discovered that Urdu newspapers had the largest circulation in the country and are extensively available on both print and digital platforms. According to their findings, 62% of respondents favored reading Urdu newspapers, while 26% chose English-language newspapers, and only 12% said they did not read newspapers. These findings highlight Urdu newspapers' continued relevance as a main source of news and information for the Pakistani populace. However, the rapid progress of the Internet and digital communication technology has altered the world's newspaper sector. To stay competitive and financially viable, newspaper businesses have increasingly utilized digital technology and online platforms to satisfy shifting audience expectations (Everett, 2011). In Pakistan, leading Urdu newspapers have responded to this transition by developing e-papers, websites, and social media platforms, expanding their readership beyond traditional print distribution and adapting to the changing digital media landscape.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the historical evolution of major Urdu newspapers in Pakistan from 1947 to 2026.
2. To analyze the role of major Urdu newspapers in Pakistan's political, social, cultural, and democratic development.
3. To identify the major contributions of Urdu newspapers in promoting national integration, political awareness, and public opinion.
4. To examine the impact of political regimes, media policies, and censorship on the development of Urdu newspapers in Pakistan.
5. To explore the technological transformation of Urdu newspapers from traditional print media to digital journalism.
6. To identify the contemporary challenges and future prospects of major Urdu newspapers in Pakistan in the digital era.

Methodology

This study used the historical research approach to investigate the evolution and contributions of Pakistan's leading Urdu newspapers from 1947 until 2026. Historical research is useful for studying previous events, tracking institutional growth, and analyzing changes across time using documentary evidence.

The study is solely based on secondary data obtained from reliable and legitimate sources. These sources included books on journalism and mass communication, peer-reviewed journal articles, HEC theses and dissertations, newspaper archives, All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) reports, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reports, and the official websites of major Urdu newspapers such as Daily Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Daily Express, Khabrain, Daily Pakistan, and Dunya.

The collected material and documentary data were critically analyzed and chronologically compiled to chart the historical evolution of Urdu newspapers from independence to the present digital era. The analysis focused on key themes such as historical evolution, political and democratic role, social and cultural contributions, national integration, the impact of political regimes and media policies, technological transformation, and the current challenges and future prospects of Urdu newspapers. To ensure the study's reliability, information was cross-checked against various reliable sources whenever possible. Because the study relied solely on published documents and historical resources, no original

data were gathered, and no human volunteers were involved. The conclusions are thus based on a thorough synthesis and analysis of available historical and scholarly literature.

Historical Background of the Press in Pakistan (1947–2026)

The Pakistani press entered a new phase of development when the country gained independence on August 14, 1947. Several newspapers that had supported the Pakistan Movement moved from British India to Pakistan, providing the groundwork for the post-independence press system. The earliest and most significant newspapers were Daily Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Pakistan Times, and Dawn. During the early years of the new state, these newspapers were instrumental in promoting national integration, reporting on refugee rehabilitation, supporting constitutional development, and informing the public about the country's political and economic challenges (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2019; Siraj, 2009). The newspaper industry expanded gradually in the 1950s and 1960s, owing to rising literacy, urbanization, and advances in printing technology. However, the military government of Field Marshal Ayub Khan (1958-1969) enacted the Press and Publications Ordinance (PPO) of 1963, which gave the state broad control over newspaper registration, ownership, and publication. The ordinance significantly limited press freedom and enhanced government control over print media, limiting editorial independence and free expression (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2019).

The 1970s were another watershed moment in the history of Pakistani journalism. Several newspapers and publishing firms were nationalized and transferred to the National Press Trust (NPT) under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's presidency. Although nationalization curtailed editorial authority, newspapers continued to cover significant political developments such as East Pakistan's independence in 1971, constitutional reforms, and the country's emerging democratic institutions. Despite government intervention, the press remained a vital source of political information and public discourse (Siraj, 2009; Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2019). Press freedom faced additional challenges during General Zia-ul-Haq's military dictatorship (1977-1988). This era was marked by tight censorship, pre-publication inspection, limitations on journalistic activities, and legal action against newspapers and journalists. Despite under significant governmental pressure, numerous media maintained to promote democratic values, freedom of expression, and public accountability (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2019).

The restoration of democratic governance in 1988 signaled the start of a more liberal media environment. During the 1990s, Pakistan's newspaper sector experienced significant commercialization, aided by innovations in offset printing, computer-based page design, and growing advertising markets. The launch of several new Urdu and English newspapers strengthened competition in the print media market and helped diversify news content and viewership across the country (Siraj, 2009).

After 2002, Pakistan's media environment saw a significant upheaval, with the deregulation of the electronic media sector and the establishment of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). Although PEMRA primarily supervises broadcast media, the fast growth of private television channels and, eventually, digital news platforms had a considerable impact on newspaper circulation and advertising revenue. In response to these advances, most newspapers embraced digital technologies, developing websites, e-papers, mobile applications, and social media platforms to expand their reach beyond traditional print audiences (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan 2019).

Since the 2010s, Pakistan's press has increasingly operated in a digitally linked media landscape. Leading newspapers now use multimedia technologies to integrate print and online journalism, providing real-time news and engaging people across many channels. At the same time, the industry faces a slew of issues, including dwindling print circulation, declining advertising revenue, misinformation, political division, journalist safety, and questions about media independence. Despite these obstacles, the press

continues to play an important democratic role by informing citizens, facilitating public discourse, and encouraging government accountability (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2019; Freedom Network, 2024). Overall, the history of Pakistan's press reveals a constant interplay between political upheaval, state control, technological progress, and market competitiveness. From its role in nation-building during the early years of independence to its current digital transformation, the press has been a critical institution in Pakistan's democratic and social growth. Despite ongoing political, economic, and technological obstacles, the Pakistani press has demonstrated remarkable endurance and flexibility, assuring its sustained relevance in the country's changing media scene.

Evolution of Urdu Newspapers in Pakistan (1947–2026)

Following the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, several Urdu publications relocated from India or expanded their operations in the newly formed country. Newspapers like Daily Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Anjam, and Pakistan Times contributed significantly to nation-building by reporting refugee rehabilitation, constitutional development, and political issues. Despite political instability and increased government engagement in media matters, the Urdu press helped shape national identity during this time period (Iqbal, 2010; Sattar, 2024). In 1960, the military government of General Ayub Khan enacted the Press and Publications Ordinance (PPO), which severely restricted press freedom. Despite increased censorship, prominent Urdu publications such as Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt continued to report on key political occurrences, including the 1965 Indo-Pak War and the events that led to East Pakistan's independence in 1971 (Iqbal, 2010; Sattar, 2024). Following the split of East Pakistan, Urdu newspapers intensively covered constitutional reforms, economic reconstruction, labor struggles, and political developments under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's administration. Although the press had more independence than under military rule, the government maintained control over media institutions (Paracha, 2012; Sattar, 2024). During General Zia-ul-Haq's rule, censorship was strictly enforced through pre-publication controls and journalist limitations. Nonetheless, Urdu publications continued to influence public opinion through editorials and opinion pieces. During this time, journalist groups including the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) were also instrumental in campaigning for press freedom (Paracha, 2012; Sattar, 2024). The return of democracy in 1988 increased the prospects for political reporting and media expansion. Urdu newspapers increased their national circulation, improved printing technology, and boosted advertising revenue. Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Khabrain, and Express have all had a significant impact on political communication and popular opinion (Sattar, 2024).

Between 2000 and 2007, advances in desktop publishing, automated page design, and internet technology revolutionized the manufacturing of Urdu newspapers. Newspapers created online editions to address both domestic and international readers. The rise of private television channels increased competition, prompting newspapers to prioritize analytical reporting and investigative journalism (Sattar, 2024). Between 2008 and 2018, the rapid rise of smartphones, social media platforms, and internet news substantially altered the traditional newspaper sector. Urdu newspapers used websites, mobile applications, Facebook pages, YouTube channels, and other digital platforms to deliver real-time news updates and multimedia material. This digital convergence increased audience reach but simultaneously contributing to diminishing print circulation (Shahzad et al., 2023).

From 2019 to 2026, Urdu newspapers shifted toward a digital-first approach. The COVID-19 epidemic enhanced digital news consumption, while rising production costs and dwindling advertising revenues presented severe financial challenges to the print media business. To remain competitive, newspapers have incorporated artificial intelligence, digital archives, and mobile journalism into their operations (Sattar, 2024; Tariq et al., 2025; Adnan et al., 2020).

Throughout their history, Urdu newspapers have made significant contributions to national integration, political awareness, democratic engagement, linguistic development, social change, and historical preservation. Their digital transformation has increased their impact on both domestic and foreign audiences (Sattar, 2024; Iqbal, 2010; Tariq et al., 2025). Overall, the evolution of Urdu newspapers in Pakistan from 1947 to 2026 demonstrates their adaptability to political changes, technical advancements, and shifting consumer preferences. Despite problems such as censorship, budgetary limits, and digital competition, Urdu newspapers continue to be critical in informing citizens, molding public opinion, and preserving Pakistan's democratic and cultural history (Sattar, 2024; Tariq et al., 2025).

Major Urdu Newspapers in Pakistan

Urdu newspapers have had a considerable impact on shaping public opinion, raising political knowledge, and preserving cultural and linguistic identity in Pakistan. Daily Jang is the country's most widely read Urdu daily. Mir Khalil-ur-Rehman founded it in Delhi in 1940; after the subcontinent's split, it moved to Karachi and began publishing in Pakistan on October 14, 1947. Since then, Jang has remained one of the country's most important newspapers thanks to wide national coverage and excellent journalism (Ali, 2021). Hameed Nizami started another well-known daily, Daily Nawa-i-Waqt, in 1940. Originally produced as a biweekly periodical, it later became a daily newspaper. During the Pakistan Movement, it ardently backed the All-India Muslim League and fought for the establishment of Pakistan. Majid Nizami led the publication till 2014, after Hameed Nizami passed away. The Nawa-i-Waqt Group is now one of Pakistan's most significant media enterprises, publishing Nawa-i-Waqt in Urdu, The Nation in English, Nida-i-Millat, and the children's magazine Phool (Mahmood & Tahir, 2021). Daily Express became a key rival in Pakistan's Urdu newspaper sector after being launched on September 3, 1998, by Century Publications, a Lakson Group affiliate. It created a multi-city simultaneous printing model, which enabled nationwide distribution. It is now published in 11 cities, making it one of the country's largest newspaper networks (Century Publications, 2024). Daily Mashriq has had a strong regional presence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since its inception in 1963 by Inayat Ullah Khan. The journal was nationalized by the National Press Trust (NPT) in 1964 and later privatized following the NPT's dissolution in 1994. It remains a major source of regional and national news, especially in northern Pakistan (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2018). Zia Shahid created Daily Khabrain in 1992, and the publication swiftly established itself through investigative journalism, crime reporting, and regional news coverage. It is published in various major cities and has gained influence in Pakistan's Urdu press and the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) (Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2018).

Among the newer newspapers, Daily Pakistan, founded in December 1997 by Akbar Ali Bhatti in Lahore, was the first Pakistani newspaper to be produced entirely in full color. Under the editorship of Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami, it grew into a national daily with Urdu and English editions in Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Multan, and Peshawar, covering politics, business, current events, and social concerns (Daily Pakistan, n.d.). In the same way, Daily Aaj, founded in 1989 by Abdul Wahid Yousafi and published by A.A.A. Publications (Pvt.) Ltd., has established itself as one of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's major Urdu newspapers. It began in Peshawar and eventually expanded to Abbottabad and Islamabad. Daily Aaj's print and digital platforms provide comprehensive coverage of political, economic, social, cultural, and regional concerns, reflecting Pakistan's newspaper industry's overall digital change (A.A.A. Publications, n.d.). Collectively, these newspapers have contributed significantly to the growth of Urdu journalism in Pakistan. While each has a unique history and editorial perspective, they continue to play an important role in informing the public, shaping political discourse, and adjusting to the changing digital media

landscape.

Contribution of Urdu Newspapers

Pakistani political parties have used the media to raise political awareness about national concerns in the public. Urdu newspapers have a vital role in shaping and changing the ideas of both the elite and the general people through agenda-setting and framing strategies. They have a considerable impact on public opinion and political discourse by presenting political topics from specific views (Hussain & Khan, 2025). Urdu media have raised political knowledge among residents by publishing extensive editorials and analytical reports. They educate readers on government policies, international affairs, elections, and constitutional issues, allowing the people to better grasp complicated political developments and engage in democratic processes (Maini, 2009).

The Urdu press holds a unique role in Pakistan because Urdu is the national language and the most generally recognized means of communication. Unlike English newspapers, which predominantly serve the educated urban elite, Urdu publications reach rural people, workers, and politically active citizens all over the country. They are Pakistan's most influential print medium due to its accessibility and large viewership (Hussain & Khan, 2025). Similarly, Urdu journalism focuses on national and local issues, making it more relevant and accessible to Pakistan's general people. In contrast, English journalism focuses on foreign matters and caters to a smaller, more educated readership (Abbas & Yaseen, 2023). Furthermore, Urdu newspapers have a larger audience among the working class, rural areas, and Urdu-speaking residents, whereas English newspapers mostly express the views of urban and educated elites (Abbas & Yaseen, 2023).

Urdu newspapers have historically played a significant role in influencing Pakistan's sociopolitical discourse, from the independence movement to modern democratic changes. Their large audience allows them to influence political narratives, define public agendas, and affect voter perception. Beyond news distribution, the Urdu press is a cultural institution that reflects the country's heterogeneous identity and appeals to readers through patriotism and shared societal ideals (Ahmed, 2013). Despite problems such as political instability, censorship, and partisanship, Urdu newspapers have played an important role in democratic progress in Pakistan. They have promoted informed political involvement through their coverage of governance, public policies, and election campaigns. The coverage of governance failings during the 2013 elections and corruption cases during the 2018 elections increased democratic accountability and influenced electoral outcomes (Riaz, 2018).

Elections are crucial to democratic administration, and Urdu newspapers have traditionally played an important role in Pakistani electoral politics due to their affordability and popularity (Saeed, 2010). Unlike television, newspapers give thorough reporting, editorials, and opinion columns that allow for long-term political analysis. During elections, they educate residents about political parties, candidates, and public problems, allowing voters to make educated choices (Hussain & Khan, 2025). During election campaigns, political parties make extensive use of newspapers to disseminate their objectives, manifestos, and messaging. The media examines political narratives by supporting, critiquing, or reporting them objectively, allowing citizens to make their own conclusions. Political propaganda regularly uses symbolic language, election symbols, party flags, and national symbols to affect voter perceptions and generate electoral support (Ahmed, Irfan, & Farooq, 2025). During Pakistan's 2013 general elections, the Pakistan People's Party stressed its governmental accomplishments, whereas the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) concentrated on concerns such as corruption, energy scarcity, terrorism, and governance failure. Major Urdu newspapers, such as Daily Jang, Daily Nawa-i-Waqt, and Daily Express, extensively covered election campaigns, party

manifestos, Election Commission activities, caretaker government decisions, security concerns, and political advertisements, informing voters about key electoral issues (Ahmed, Irfan, & Farooq, 2025). Research on the 2013 and 2018 general elections shows that Urdu newspapers actively framed political parties rather than simply reporting political occurrences. During the 2013 elections, media centered on development efforts and governance, whereas the 2018 elections focused largely on accountability, corruption, leadership problems, and economic stability. Such framing altered political identities, raised political knowledge, fostered democratic involvement, while also contributing to political polarization and media bias (Hussain & Khan, 2025). Similarly, the media coverage of the 2013 and 2018 elections varied in its emphasis on party campaigns, corruption scandals, governance performance, accountability, and coalition politics. For example, the 2013 elections highlighted PML-N's development plan and PTI's anti-corruption campaign, whereas the 2018 elections focused on accountability narratives and leadership issues (Aslam, 2019).

Political reporting in Urdu media usually uses moral and emotional language to depict political struggle using themes like justice vs corruption, sacrifice versus betrayal, and national interest. These narratives have a tremendous impact on Pakistani readers' political attitudes. For example, the Pakistan Peoples Party's link to the Bhutto legacy and the PTI's "Naya Pakistan" narrative were frequently reinforced by emotionally charged reporting that appealed to young and first-time voters (Hussain & Khan, 2025). Political parties have continually used Urdu media to spread their ideology, campaign slogans, and election manifestos. In comparison to English-language publications, the Urdu press typically employs a more populist and emotionally appealing style that effectively resonates with the general people (Riaz, 2018). In addition to encouraging nationalism, Urdu publications have helped to foster peace during periods of improved diplomatic relations. Daily Jang, for example, promoted engagement between Pakistan and India by supporting legislative exchanges, publishing editorials advocating for economic cooperation, and highlighting diplomatic efforts. Such coverage illustrates newspapers' positive influence in increasing regional understanding (Maini, 2009).

Prior to independence, major Urdu newspapers provided important support to the Pakistan Movement. Newspapers such as Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt rallied Muslim public opinion in support of Pakistan's establishment and continued to help construct the country after independence by promoting national identity, patriotism, and state ideology. Their historical contribution helped establish Urdu journalism as an essential institution in Pakistan's political growth (Maini, 2009). Urdu publications have constantly supported nationalism by emphasizing matters concerning Pakistan's sovereignty, security, and national interests. During times of political unrest and external strife, their articles frequently reaffirm patriotic sentiments and promote national togetherness. While newspapers' ideological orientations vary, they generally prioritize national cohesion and the safeguarding of Pakistan's interests (Maini, 2009).

Digital Transformation of Urdu Newspapers

Daily Jang was Pakistan's first Urdu newspaper to use computers for composition, editing, and page layout, as well as the Noori Nastaliq typeface for Urdu publishing. Daily Express pioneered a paperless newsroom in 1998 with the introduction of the Century Publication System (CPS). The following use of software like as InPage, CorelDRAW, and Adobe Photoshop enhanced the efficiency, speed, and quality of Urdu newspaper creation (Kamboh et al., 2023). Surprising technological advances in information communication equipment and digital media have caused alterations in the pattern of Urdu journalism. The production of news, the use and dissemination of images, advertising, and visual graphics have all seen significant transformations. Today, significant changes in the news media and technological innovation have reshaped the essence of Urdu news journalism. Digitalization has serious consequences

not just for the future of news stories, but also for the practice of democratic ideals. The digital uprising, particularly the rise of the internet and social media, has improved the media landscape in developing countries such as Pakistan (Adnan et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Urdu newspapers are facing growing competition from websites, social networking platforms, blogs, news portals, and audio-visual multimedia technology (Hussain & Hassan, 2021). These internet platforms have revolutionized news consumption habits by delivering timely, accessible, and engaging material. As a result, Urdu newspapers must adopt digital technology and strengthen their online presence in order to remain competitive and meet consumers' changing information needs. Social media has altered the newspaper industry by increasing reader participation and engagement. Readers can comment on news information using interactive digital technologies, which connects them to news organizations and increases their sense of involvement in the news process (Farhi, 2009).

Challenges and Future Prospects

Despite their major contribution to Pakistan's media landscape, Urdu newspapers confront a number of issues that jeopardize their viability and efficiency. Political pressure and political involvement have frequently hampered editorial independence through legal limits, censorship, and selective allocation of government advertisements, limiting balanced and impartial reporting. Censorship, particularly under military governments, has harmed press freedom by encouraging self-censorship and limiting coverage of sensitive political matters (Niazi, 1986, 2004; Paracha, 2007). Furthermore, the Urdu press is facing financial challenges due to increased production costs, diminishing advertising earnings, and a high reliance on government advertisements, with smaller newspapers being especially vulnerable (Fazal & Khan, 2020; Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan, 2018). The rapid rise of digital media has also contributed to a decline in print circulation, as audiences, particularly younger readers, rely more on smartphones and online news platforms. To remain competitive, prominent Urdu newspapers have expanded their digital editions and social media presence, however adjusting to the digital environment continues to pose financial and technological obstacles (Adnan et al., 2020; Everett, 2011; Sattar, 2024). Despite increased competition from digital media and falling print circulation, Urdu newspapers continue to be an essential source of news and public conversation in Pakistan. Their future is dependent on adjusting to technology changes while retaining journalistic integrity and editorial independence. Major Urdu newspapers have already increased their digital presence through e-papers, websites, mobile applications, and social media platforms to match readers' shifting tastes (Everett, 2011; Adnan et al., 2020). Urdu journalism is likely to undergo additional transformation in the next years as digital technology, multimedia journalism, and artificial intelligence are integrated. At the same time, newspapers must improve fact-checking, enforce ethical standards, and combat misinformation in order to retain public trust. Urdu newspapers can continue to play an important part in Pakistan's changing media landscape by embracing digital innovation while maintaining their focus on democracy, public accountability, and Urdu language and culture (Shahzad & Iqbal, 2024; Sattar, 2024).

Conclusion

This historical study shows how major Urdu newspapers have played an important role in Pakistan's media landscape since its independence in 1947. Over the past seven decades, newspapers such as Daily Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Daily Express, Khabrain, Pakistan, and Dunya have transformed from conventional print publications to modern multimedia news organizations while retaining their role in informing the people and molding national conversation.

The study found that Urdu newspapers have made significant contributions to Pakistan's political, social, cultural, and democratic growth. They have covered major national events, encouraged political

engagement, promoted democratic values, protected cultural identity, and provided a vital forum for public debate. Their large readership has allowed them to influence public opinion, enhance national integration, and raise awareness about political, economic, and social concerns throughout the country. The historical research also shows that the evolution of Urdu newspapers has been heavily influenced by shifting political situations. Military governments placed strong censorship and legislative restrictions on press freedom, but democratic periods often allowed for more journalistic speech, despite ongoing political and economic constraints. Despite shifting circumstances, the Urdu press displayed resilience by continuing to serve as a source of information and public accountability. The findings demonstrate the considerable technological revolution of Urdu publications. The shift from traditional print journalism to digital platforms has increased audience access via websites, mobile apps, e-papers, and social media. Digital journalism has accelerated news delivery and increased audience engagement, allowing Urdu newspapers to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive media landscape. Despite these gains, Urdu newspapers continue to confront significant obstacles, such as decreased print circulation, lower advertising revenue, competition from digital and social media platforms, misinformation, budgetary limits, and worries about editorial independence. These problems necessitate ongoing innovation, investments in digital technology, sustainable economic structures, and adherence to professional journalistic standards.

Overall, the historical growth of Urdu newspapers demonstrates their long-standing significance to Pakistan's democratic progress, public communication, and national identity. Although the media environment is fast changing, Urdu newspapers continue to be a vital institution in Pakistani society. Their future success will be determined by their ability to strike a balance between the traditions of credible journalism and the needs of digital revolution, while maintaining editorial integrity and public trust.

References

- A.A.A. Publications. (n.d.). *About Daily Aaj*. *Daily Aaj*. <https://www.dailyaaj.com.pk/about>
- Abbas, S., & Yaseen, S. (2023). Comparative analysis of Pakistan's Urdu and English newspaper coverage in the context of the establishment's role during the regime change episode. *Journal of Social Sciences and Media Studies*, 5(2), 7–15. <https://doi.org/10.58921/jossams.05.02.0217>
- Adnan, M., Yousaf, Z., Nawaz, M. B., & Bhatti, M. A. (2020). The changing role of Urdu news media with digital communication in Pakistan. *Journal of Research (Urdu)*, 36(1), 173–184. <https://jorurdu.bzu.edu.pk/website/journal/article/5ece710a01e38/page>
- Ahmed, M. (2013). Urdu journalism in Pakistan: A historical perspective. *Journal of Media Studies*, 28(1), 1–12.
- Ahmed, T., Irfan, M., & Farooq, M. S. (2025). The role of Urdu leading newspaper (Daily Express, Daily Nawa-i-Waqt and Daily Jang) to overpowering the political communication in election 2013 period. *Insights: Journal of Humanities and Media Studies Review*, 1(2), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.63290/jhmsr.v1i2.19>
- Ali, M. A., & Mughari, S. (2025). Use of Facebook for information sharing among university students: A case study of Pakistani universities. *Journal of Media Horizons*, 6(5), 85–96.
- Ali, S. (2017). *Journal knowledge: Addressing a long standing demand, the Pakistan Study Centre launches an Urdu journal*. *The News on Sunday*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/564137-journal-knowledge>
- Ali, S. (2021). Editorial policy of *Daily Jang* newspaper on Pak-India relations: A review of General Pervez Musharraf political era. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(1), 602–615.

- All Pakistan Newspapers Society. (n.d.). *About APNS*. Retrieved July 28, 2026, from https://apns.com.pk/about_us/
- Aslam, R. (2019). Framing of political parties in Urdu newspapers during 2013 and 2018 general elections. *Journal of Media Studies*, 34(1), 1–15.
- Century Publications. (2024). *About Express*. <https://www.express.pk/about-express>
- Everett, C. E. (2011). Transformation of newspapers in the technology era. *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 2(2), 102–109.
- Fazal, I., & Khan, S. (2020). Newspaper's impact on education development in Pakistan: An analysis. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 4(3), 1107–1122. [https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2020\(4-III\)80](https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2020(4-III)80)
- Freedom Network. (2025). *Freedom of expression and media freedom report 2025*. Freedom Network.
- Hussain, S., & Khan, A. W. (2025). Framing of political parties in Urdu press of Pakistan: A comparative study of general elections 2013 & 2018. *Pakistan Journal of Law, Analysis and Wisdom*, 4(10), 60–70. <https://pilaw.com.pk/index.php/Journal/article/view/v4i10-60-70>
- Iqbal, Z. (2010). Pakistan's press and politics in the first decade (1947–58): An analysis in structural-functional perspective. *Journal of Political Studies*, 17(1), 95–126.
- Iqbal, Z., & Shabir, G. (2010). Press-government relations in structural-functional perspective: A case of Pakistan under General Zia (1977–1988). *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 30(1), 97–114.
- Khan, S., Sheikh, M. A., Aslam, M. J., & Tariq, M. (2023). Photographic reportage of war on terror: A perspective of mainstream print media in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(3), 3272–3286.
- Mahmood, A., & Tahir, R. (2021). Historically transvaluating newspaper of the colonial rule. *Journal of Research (Humanities)*, 57(2), 1–22.
- Maini, T. S. (2009, June 17). *The Urdu press in India and Pakistan: A comparison* (ISAS Working Paper No. 68). Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore.
- Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan. (2018). *Khabrain Group*. <https://pakistan.mom-gmr.org/en/owners/companies/detail/company/company/show/khabrain-group/>
- Media Ownership Monitor Pakistan. (2018). *Mashriq*. <https://pakistan.mom-gmr.org/en/media/detail/outlet/mashriq/>
- Nawa-i-Waqt. (n.d.). *History*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nawa-i-waqt>
- Niazi, Z. (1986). *The press in chains*. Royal Book Company.
- Niazi, Z. (2004). *The web of censorship*. Royal Book Company.
- Pakistan Press Foundation. (2025). *Press Freedom Report 2025*. Pakistan Press Foundation.
- Paracha, A. S. (2007). *Pakistan's media policy: A normative approach* (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan).
- Reporters Without Borders. (2025). *Pakistan – World Press Freedom Index 2025*. <https://rsf.org/en/country/pakistan>
- Riaz, S. (2018). Urdu press and politics in Pakistan. *Journal of Media Studies*, 33(1), 1–12.
- Saeed, S. (2010). Urdu journalism in Pakistan: A historical perspective. *Journal of Media Studies*, 25(1), 1–10.
- Sattar, N. (2024, January 25). *Urdu journalism in Pakistan: Journey through time*. Pakistan Press Foundation. <https://pakistanpressfoundation.org/urdu-journalism-in-pakistan-journey-through-time/>
- Shah, H. (2010, December 9). *The tongue-tied press of Pakistan: Comparing English and Urdu newspapers*. *South Asia Monitor* (No. 148). Center for Strategic and International Studies.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/south-asia-monitor-inside-pages-analysis-pakistani-press>

Shahzad, S. A., & Iqbal, Z. (2024). Constructive journalism approaches and practices in Pakistani Urdu print media. *Journalism, Politics and Society*, 2(1), 40–55. <https://doi.org/10.63067/vv3y7806>

Shakoor, A., Siddiqui, A., Idrees, U., & Murtaza, G. (2023). The impact of sensationalism on Urdu press: A quantitative analysis. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4), 4016–4028. <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.1104.0671>

Yousaf, M., Ullah, I., & Shah, S. (2022). Press in Pakistan 1947–1958: A historical evolution. *Global Digital & Print Media Review*, 5(2), 211–217. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2022\(V-II\).19](https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2022(V-II).19)