

## DIGITAL SATIRE IN TIMES OF CONFLICT: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI MEMES ON CRICKET AND THE 2025 AERIAL INCIDENTS

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### **Abstract**

*The research paper focused on digital satires and memes in Pakistani society particularly in the year of 2025. The study aims to observe discourse and satire behind the memes. The current research takes place under the descriptive design. It is a qualitative research method. Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model has been applied to analyze the satire digitally specifically Pakistani memes on cricket and aerial incidents 2025. Data is analyzed through close interpretation of memes. The study showed that how online satire specifically memes, humorous statements etc acts as a powerful form of discourse in Pakistan in 2025 during Pak-Indo aerial incidents and cricket rivalry. The research proved that satires and humor serve not only as entertainment but also provides freedom of speech to marginalized voices. They also coping mechanism during the period of political tension and social stress.*

**Key Words:** Aerial incidents, Memes, Cricket, Fairclough Three-dimensional model CDA.

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan is considered the 5<sup>th</sup> most populous country located in South Asia. Pakistan is a developing country. There are a lot of problems including terrorism, inflation, unemployment, poverty etc. Despite all of these problems, Pakistani people are humorous in some ways. They like to make jokes in everyday communication. Pakistan is also well recognized by its rich cultural heritage, traditional cultural values etc. A meme is a piece of text, image, video that rapidly spreads from person to person within hours. Memes are something which is not confined but actually rapidly spreads among people. They are related to humor like satires, irony basically they are "Internet inside jokes" makes commentary on everyday life. Memes also throws light on social, political and economic communication. If we discuss it in Pakistani context, memes mostly highlight desi culture, norms and traditions. It is just like a "mirror of society". Actually, the word meme comes from the Greek word "mime me" originated in 1976. Memes also plays important role in aerial incidents 2025. It rapidly spreads awareness through

social media platforms like twitter, Instagram, Facebook etc. It shapes our narrative. In the war of India and Pakistan 2025, India initiated a Sindhoor operation in Pakistani territory, in response Pakistan had destroyed their aircrafts. A lot of memes have been made in this regard. Basically, memes shift the focus from fear and convert into humorous way. Slangs are informal language used by youth like generation z in order to differentiate themselves from older generations. There are very foundational roles of memes and slangs in Pakistani society. They often mock politicians also discuss sensitive issues like unemployment etc. For example, Gabbana Nii ha is the most popular meme generated from political sector. There are some English slangs like BTW (by the way), OMG (Oh my god) etc. Actually, memes and slangs are the form of digital satires which is online commentary include humor, AI generated videos target the current situation. They are increasing day by day in Pakistani society. Memes and slangs are mostly relying on code mixing. We can see the blend of language including English, Urdu, Punjabi, sindhi etc. In 2025, we can see a massive growth because Pakistan has over 67-71 million active social media users. If we talk about cricket, it is considered a cultural and emotional cornerstone in Pakistan. It is not just a support but symbolic arena which highlights the national unity, pride and represents Pakistan at international level. A lot of digital satires including memes slangs have been made on cricket in 2025. During 2025 tensions, the boundaries between sports, discourse and political commentary became increasingly blurred as social media users began to interpret geopolitical developments through the familiar language of cricket. Digital satire (memes, slangs) is highly multimodal. They do not rely on the single mode of communication. They used multiple ways to convey the message like visual and linguistic modes. Slangs include emojis etc. Basically, in this study, we have to deal with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is a powerful interdisciplinary method to analyze power, ideology, dominance etc. It treats language as a social practice. Halliday Systematic Functional linguistic (SFL) deals with how language is used to achieve communicative goals through ideational, interpersonal and textual analysis. Roger Fowler, Tan Van Dijk, Michael Foucault etc. are the researchers provide critical linguistic foundation to critical discourse analysis as a distinct field. Norman Fairclough is one of the most famous and well recognized research and founder of critical discourse analysis who developed the three-dimensional model which deals with textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice. We can also relate critical discourse analysis to digital satires as it is used for political memes in Pakistan through social media platforms. We can also see the aspect of multimodality combines text, images etc. for analysis such as the analysis of cartoons. Satires act as a “counter discourse “. Conflict of India and Pakistan is also an example of critical discourse analysis and digital satires. The role of digital satires is not just about entertainment but also provides freedom of speech to marginalized voices.

#### **Objectives of Research:**

- The study aims to observe discourse and satire behind the memes.
- To examine the role of digital satire in shaping and reinforcing national identity.

#### **Research problem:**

Limited research has examined how memes produced during 2025 aerial tension construct nationalist ideologies, negotiate power relations and contribute the process of othering in Pakistani sphere.

A lot of people have created memes on aerial incidents in 2025 but there is a significant gap because no one can apply Norman Fairclough three-dimensional model on the events.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital satire has become a contested battleground where humor, national narratives, and ideological tensions intersect. This intersection is particularly visible in Pakistan's meme culture, especially in the context of cricket rivalry and interstate conflict. Scholars have moved beyond treating memes as mere entertainment. Shifman (2014) defines memes as units of cultural transmission that spread through imitation and remix. Building on this, Nissenbaum and Shifman (2017) argue that memes function as serious vehicles of political argument, as they combine portability, irony, and subtle persuasion.

The 2025 aerial incidents between Pakistan and India, occurring within an already tense cricket rivalry, demonstrate how quickly sports discourse can transform into geopolitical commentary online. Despite this, South Asian meme culture remains underexplored in academic research. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly Fairclough's (1992, 1995) three-dimensional model, has been widely used to study such discourse. However, its application varies. Some scholars apply CDA directly to visual memes (Ben Moussa et al., 2020), while others combine it with multimodal analysis to understand digital platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp (Unuabonah & Oyeboode, 2021).

A common trend across these studies is the expansion of the "text" dimension in CDA to include images, layout, and multimodal elements. However, some researchers argue that qualitative analysis alone is insufficient. Walters et al. (2023) suggest that computational methods such as image clustering are necessary to capture large-scale meme patterns. This creates a methodological debate between qualitative interpretation and computational analysis. This debate also reflects a broader political question: whether memes act as tools of resistance or instruments of nationalism. Some studies present memes as forms of dissent, allowing marginalized voices to challenge authority (Zeb et al., 2025). Similarly, Ben Moussa et al. (2020) show how memes function as tactical resistance. However, other research highlights their role in reinforcing national identity and political narratives.

Yasser et al. (2025) argue that memes are increasingly used in information warfare to shape public opinion and promote national solidarity. Ghilzai (2025) further demonstrates that Pakistani Gen Z uses memes both as coping mechanisms and as tools for ideological expression during conflict.

Memes are therefore polysemic, meaning their interpretation changes depending on context and audience. Cricket adds another layer to this complexity. Mazahir et al. (2020) demonstrate how media framing of cricket contributes to national identity construction and describe cricket as both a diplomatic bridge and a site of political tension.

However, a significant gap exists between studies of traditional media and grassroots digital content. Most research lacks cross-platform and large-scale analysis of memes. The 2025 aerial incidents provide an important case study. Ullah et al. (2025) show that memes can trivialize war while also encouraging civic engagement, although their sample size is limited. Naqvi and Naeem (2025) similarly conclude that memes can both diffuse and intensify conflict. Yasin et al. (2025) introduce the emerging concern of AI-generated memes as tools of psychological warfare.

Overall, existing literature suggests that memes play multiple roles during conflict: they can comfort, mobilize, and manipulate. However, methodological limitations such as small datasets and platform-specific studies restrict broader conclusions. Most importantly, scholars have not fully explored the intersection of cricket discourse and wartime satire. This hybrid space remains under-researched.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how cricket-based memes function during military conflict, particularly through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis. It argues that digital satire does not merely reflect social realities but actively shapes identities, ideologies, and power relations.

## CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Theoretical Framework:

A model or a theory is a fundamental part and necessary for every research that is to be conducted. A theory is more than speculation. It is built upon observation, logical reasoning and more importantly evidence. Theory details the connection between author and his work and it presents itself as the backbone of the research enabling reasoning and logic to flow together ultimately providing insights into problems and questions related to forming research. As far as the current research is concerned, Norman Fairclough's CDA (1992,2013) model is used to analyze the satire digitally depicted in form of memes and statements given by specific public figures, specifically Pakistani memes and text posts circulated during episodes of national conflict rather than merely counting linguistic features; the study investigates how humorous digital content expresses ideologies of national identity, resistance, and emotional coping in the context of the 2025 Pakistan–India aerial incidents and cricket tensions. The overarching design treats digital satire as a vehicle for ideology construction, national identity formation, and communal stress management (Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

The dataset comprises eight digital artifacts drawn from Pakistani Instagram and social media accounts. Four are text-based meme captions: Statement 1 of cricket memes states “The cricket fan died inside me after watching India vs Pakistan game” (from the Instagram page “Pakistan Cricket”) and Statement 2 implies that “Pakistan won the toss and chose to collapse first” (same source). Statement 1 of aerial incidents states “Never ask a woman her age, a man his salary and Indian Government for proof”, lastly, Statement 2 of aerial incidents reads “Indian social media and news channels have apparently destroyed all of Pakistan, only my house is left, and I am posting from here. Pakistan Zindabad”. Four image memes: Picture 1, showing cricketer Haris Rauf displaying six fingers, implying Pakistan downed six Indian jets during the 2025 aerial clashes. Picture 2, depicting former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sprinting while clutching a trophy, captioned “only this way we can win.” Picture 3, shows an image of a burned laptop usb port labelled as made in Karachi ironically presenting the claim of Indian media that they’ve destroyed Karachi port and picture 4, presents a scene where five to six people are sitting near and watching a missile being fired at India in time of conflict. The meme also reads with a caption “Pakistani’s are sitting there and chilling while a missile is being launched. We are not a serious country”. These eight items are chosen because they collectively represent distinct satirical mode (i.e., self-deprecating cricket humor, military exaggeration, and political criticism) and each is widely circulated within Pakistani online communities.

### 3.2 Research Design

The current study takes place under the descriptive design. The researchers will find out apply Norman three-dimensional model on eight social media generated memes and statements to expose the deep meaning by analyzing the surface structures and its social and discursive practice in society.

### 3.3 Research Method

The present study uses qualitative approach. Through analyzing linguistics features, interpretation and social practice researchers are going to present results.

### 3.4 Data Generation Tool

Data is generated and gathered from publicly available Instagram pages and Twitter accounts between September and December 2025, coinciding with both the aerial incidents and major cricket tournaments.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Data is analyzed through close inspection of the memes and statements obtained from publicly available social media accounts.

## CHAPTER 4 CONTENT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This study employs a qualitative content analysis approach to explore the ways in which satire is constructed and communicated through social media memes and public statements circulating within Pakistani online platforms. This study examines how digital satire and irony through humor shapes public discourse and how it reinforces or challenges the socio-political ideologies. In order to accomplish this, study applies Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which provides a detailed analysis of text and image at three distinct levels as put forwarded by Fairclough i.e. textual, discursive and social. With this framework in mind, it explores how with the deep analysis of language; power dynamics, social relations, public opinion and ideological patterns establish.

The research works on two major thematic domains rooted in Pakistan's socio-cultural and political discourse: Ariel Conflict, showcasing the ever-going political tension between India and Pakistan, and Cricket Rivalry, representing the intense sports-based competition between the two neighboring nations. These specific multimodal memes and statements are chosen because they illustrate the cross border interrelated aspects of national identity and perception. One depicts the political and conflictual, the other exhibits cultural and recreational. thus, exposing the underlying social attitudes, emotions and the ways in which satire combined with humor transports resistance, patriotism and shape's public opinion.

In total, eight multimodal items are selected as the dataset, incorporating four social media memes and four public statements. Two memes and two statements are analyzed within the model domain. The memes encompass visual discourse combining images, symbolic cues and captions while on the other hand statements serve as verbal discourse mirroring public discourse. Dominant ideologies, are extracted by examining these using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model eventually contributing to dominant discourse prevalent amongst India-Pakistan relations both in conflict and cricket. consequently, the aim of the research is to expose how digital satire not only serve the function of entertainment but also serve as a powerful force in shaping ideologies and structuring perceptions.

### 4.2 Results and Discussions

#### 4.2.1 Ariel conflict (Indo-pak political tensions)

##### 4.2.1.1 Statement memes

Statement 1: "Never ask a woman her age, a man his salary and Indian Government for proof". This meme style statement appeared during the Indo-pak conflict (2019) ariel incidents. Followed by immense tensions where the two countries claimed to have ariel victories above the other. The statement possesses satirical, ironical and political tones. Statement 2 states " Indian social media and news channels have apparently destroyed all of Pakistan, only my house is left, and I'm posting from here. Pakistan zindabad". This statement also emerged during Indo-pak ariel conflict and serve as a political satire reinforcing resistance.

##### Textual Analysis:

Statement 1: Never ask a woman her age, a man his salary and Indian Government for proof".

Statement 2: " Indian social media and news channels have apparently destroyed all of Pakistan, only my house is left, and I'm posting from here. Pakistan zindabad".

Lexical pattern: Through the use of three socio-gendered terms, woman, man and Indian government it creates parallelism in syntax. In statement 2 words such as " apparently destroyed" and " only my house is left" use of dramatic tone and exaggeration is observed which highlights the inconsistency and contradiction between ground realities and what is presented on media

Irony and humor: The first two phrases of the statement depict social norms regarding age, and salary. but the proceeding phrase indicates political critique exposing the false evidences from Indian side of the media. In statement 2 the humor is that the claim regarding total devastation yet posting online exposing the fakeness of the reports is being mocked.

Tone and structure: Statement 1 and 2 implies playful sarcasm ("posting from here") with national solidarity, balancing humor and pride. Statement 2 maintains a cynical and melancholic tone, reflecting the intense emotional stakes of India-Pakistan rivalry.

#### **Discursive Practice:**

Production: The first meme was produced in the aftermath of Balakot airstrike incident in 2019, where concrete proof was withheld. Meme was produced by a social media user who drew on the referenced the cultural proverb in his statement i.e. never ask a woman her age and a man his salary. This shows interdiscursivity where social discourse is blended with political discourse and accountability. The meme purpose was to sound casual yet satirical disguising political commentary as humor. Statement 2 is originated in Pakistan as a satirical reply to Indian media's exaggerated coverage of airstrikes. the user of this meme highlighted himself as the survivor by parodying the so-called destruction exposing the Indian media reporting. irony is used to subvert narratives

Distribution: Both 1 and 2 memes circulated through digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and twitter. Due to its shareable structure, it proliferated easily. it was used by many influencers' meme pages and journalists too. It traveled across linguistics and national borders. its reach was accelerated through virality and algorithm of social media platforms.

Consumption: The two memes were consumed by the audience both as entertainment and commentary. statement 1 is decoded as censorship satire and propaganda but also seen as humor too. In Fairclough's terms, it demonstrates negotiated reading which means that the social media users are participants in meaning making. on the other hand, meme 2 is consumed through the lens of digital resistance and national identity. this meme carried out oppositional readings (rejecting Indian hegemony) and ironic relief (hostility is soften using humor). Both the memes spread across ideological boundaries.

#### **4.2.1.2 Image Macros (Memes in image form)**

This section will interpret and analyze macro images under Norman Fairclous's Three-Dimensional Model specific to the ariel conflict incidents between Pakistan and India.



Image 1

Image 2

### Textual Analysis:

At textual level the image 1 meme operates on linguistic and visual double meaning. The image shows a burnt usb port of a laptop implying humorously that this (the labelled Made in Karachi usb port) was the port destroyed by Indian strike not the actual Karachi sea port (key economic site in Pakistan).

The second image2 meme shows a missile launch site with civilians casually observing nearby and the meme reads;

“Pakistanis are sitting there and chilling while a MISSILE is being launched. We are not a serious country 🤔”

it depicts contrast and irony. Military event is clashed with relaxed civilian reaction yielding humor and satire. "Not a serious country" is Self-deprecatory, mixing national affection with critique i.e. a character of Pakistani digital humor.

Linguistically: Port here has two meanings one is technological and the other is geopolitical. one part of the meme text mirrors the structure of war reporting but image humorously denies it. The capitalization of language mimics news discourse together with satirical punch. Image 2 The emoji used adds humorous tone mitigating criticism. "Sitting here and chilling" employs casual diction which is common in online platforms.

Visually: Inter semiotic irony is used in the first image where text is blended with image to create multilayered humor. exaggerated Indian media claims are mocked through the "burnt port" pointing out the absurdity of war narratives. On the other hand, image 2 contrasts a symbol of national power (missile launch) with casual indifference, suggesting that in Pakistan, remarkable occurrences are routine transforming a geopolitical theme into an instance of everyday humor.

### Discursive Practice:

Production: This image macro 1 was produced by Pakistani social media influencer Fazi Zaka as a response to Indian claim of destroying Karachi port. the meme exaggerated Indian claims and the creator recontextualizes war discourse into everyday digital slang using humor. It exhibits Fairclough's idea of interdiscursivity. second image was also produced by social media user responding to circulated image of a missile test. here humor is used to downplay the conflict related imagery. The producer of this meme transforms a military act into comedic commentary.

**Distribution:** The image 1 and 2 memes circulated via online platforms like Instagram Facebook and twitter; further went viral because of its brevity and wit. audiences understood the meanings of the burnt port and usb port. it accelerated into an interactive meaning making process. Because of the digital spread it turned into a national sentiment from and individual joke.

**Consumption:** The image 1 and 2 memes are consumed by the audiences at two levels i.e. humor and ideology. it is views by the spectators as clever pun mocking Indian narratives. The audience negotiation reflects Polysemy (multiple readings coexisting) drawing on Fairclough's idea. This process of consumption is active. users add captions, friends are tagged, involved in ideological play.

### **Social Practice:**

At this level, meme 1 contributes to broader nationalism formed by the conflict between the two countries. It reacts to exaggerated media coverage and distorted political narratives, where national pride and propaganda frequently eclipse truth. The meme engages in discursive defiance it subverts prevailing narratives by mocking their overstatements. This meme shrunken the seriousness of the military discourse. Humor becomes a way for common people to regain agency in defining their national image. it represents how digital discourse reframes geopolitical conflicts through irony and satire.

The second image macro comes within the premises of Pakistan's cosmopolitical context. here, public discourse is majorly shaped by military. humor in this particular meme act as a socio-discursive tool. The meme showcase that Pakistani society is habituated to the presence of military. paradox is under scrutiny in this meme: seriousness of militarization and casual behavior or response of the civilians. This can be seen as a coping mechanism or a critique. the two image memes show participatory nationalism.

## **4.2.2 Cricket memes**

### **4.2.2.1 Statement memes**

Statement 1: "The cricket fan died inside me after watching India vs Pakistan game".

This statement reflects the deep emotions and heart break of fans. It uses a critical and ironical approach to describe how a fan's passion can suddenly turn into sadness.

Statement 2 reads:

"Pakistan won the toss and chose to collapse first". Irony and dark humor are used to describe team's performance. The fans use self-deprecating humor (making fun of their own team) to deal with the stress and disappointment of a bad game.

### **Textual Analysis**

Statement 1: "The cricket fan died inside me after watching India vs Pakistan game".

Statement 2: "Pakistan won the toss and chose to collapse first".

**Lexical pattern:** In statement 1 the word "died" is used which functions as a powerful metaphor for emotional exhaustion, referring to a complete loss of passion following the match outcome. In statement 2, a sharp lexical contrast is created between the words "won" and "collapse". Winning is favorable event but collapse suddenly is a symbol of pessimism. So, this statement shows the inconsistency of team's performance.

**Irony and humor.** The humor in statement 1 is derived from hyperbolic irony. The game's loss is symbolized with literal demise to express the depth of fan's heartbreak. In statement 2, the humor is satirical and dark. It predicts that batting failure was an intentional choice or wrong decision made by team. This shows the unpredictable nature of national team.

**Tone and structure:** Statement 1 maintains a cynical and melancholic tone, reflecting the intense emotional stakes of India-Pakistan rivalry. Statement 1 is structured as declarative hyperbole to show the maximum level of disappointment. Statement 2 uses a parodic structure,

which seems like captain announcement after a toss and second part shows the frustration of fans after losing the game.

**Discursive Practice**

Production: Statement 1 was produced as a result of the disappointment of public after badly losing match from India. It was generated by a social media user by using the hyperbolic language to express the individual as well as collective grief of Pakistani nation. Statement 2 appeared as a satirical critique of Pakistan team’s performance. It mocked the team’s historical pattern of batting collapses. The producer of this statement used parodic discourse by making fun of the team’s professional performance.

Distribution: The 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> cricket memes circulated rapidly through digital platform such as Facebook and what’s app groups. Due to their short structure and broader context, they got virality within south Asian diaspora. These memes crossed the geographical borders through social media algorithms that prioritize high engagement content related to “cricket rivalry” theme.

Consumption: The statement 1 and 2 were used as a source of fun and a form of emotional venting. Statement 1 is used by the audience as a representation of “fan heartbreak” by relating it to death which is the ultimate end of every sorrow. Statement 2 is consumed through the lens of self-deprecating humor and national frustration. In Fairclough’s terms, this demonstrates “negotiated reading “where the audience is well aware of the team’s failure but uses ironic relief to soften the hard blow of defeat. This maintains national identity even in the times of sporting loss.

**4.2.2.2 Image Macros (Memes in image form)**

This section will interpret and analyze macro images under Norman Fairclous’s Three-Dimensional Model specific to the cricket memes.



Image 1



Image 2

### Textual Analysis

Image 1 meme operates through a visual and numerical signifier where cricketer Haris Rauf is shown holding up six fingers in the top frame and making a gesture associated with “zero” or “perfect” in the bottom.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> image macro depicts the former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in a cricket uniform, running in the field while holding the World Cup trophy. This meme reads “Our last hope to get #CWC23 trophy...only this way we can win”.

Linguistically: Image 1 has no text present in the image but the numerical cue of six functions as a symbolic claim within Pakistani digital landscape to represent the alleged downing of six Indian jets during 2025 aerial clashes. Image 2 implies a dramatic and self-deprecating tone. The capitalization and hashtags mimic sports news discourse, while the accompanying emojis add humorous tone that mitigates the underlying political and sporting criticism.

Visually: Image 1 meme utilizes inter-semiotic irony by blending the discourse of athletic achievement with military triumph, recontextualizing a sports hero’s celebration into a narrative of national defense. The juxtaposition of athlete’s gestures against the background of the 2025 Indo-Pak aerial incidents transforms a sports broadcast still into a tool for military exaggeration and nationalistic resistance. In image 2, the humor is created from the absurdity of the scene. Inter semiotic irony is used as the text is blended with a manipulated image to create multi layered humor. The controversy in this image shows the inconsistency between national desire and reality of team’s performance.

### Discursive Practice

**Production:** The image 1 macro featuring Haris Rauf was produced by Pakistani social media users. It exhibits Fairclough’s idea of interdiscursivity by merging “sports hero” discourse with “national defense” narratives. It refers to the claim of downing six Indian jets during the 2025 aerial clashes. The 2<sup>nd</sup> image macro was produced by the digital creator Naina. Edits as a satirical response to the national team’s performance. The producer mingles the political and sporting events into a comic commentary on cricket, referring to achieve the unconventional ways of glory.

**Distribution:** Image 1 and 2 memes circulated via online platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. They got viral because of their double meaning, larger context and deeper reality. Audiences understood the specific meaning of “six fingers” and “stolen trophy”. These images turned from individual jokes into widely shared national sentiments during periods of communal stress, such as major cricket tournaments and regional conflicts.

**Consumption:** Image 1 and 2 also deals with humor and ideology. The spectators’ views Haris Rauf image as a mocking gesture against India’s militarily defeat while Nawaz Sharif image is consumed through the lens of self-deprecating humor and irony. People have different perspectives to understand these images. Some people might just see them as a joke for amusement while others see it as a conflict and rivalry between two countries. In this way users show their own national ideologies by sharing and tagging these memes.

### Social Practice:

The image of Haris Rauf shows the national conflict between Pakistan and India. It serves as a reaction to media coverage and distorted political reviews where national pride and propaganda often overshadow the truth. It represents how digital discourse can re frame intense geopolitical tensions through the lenses of irony and satire.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> image macro, featuring Nawaz Sharif, exists within the premises of Pakistan’s cosmopolitical context, where public discourse is often created by the leaders. In this case, humor acts as a tool to express collective feelings. It highlights a major contrast that a politician might be the only ways to win the trophy rather than the players or athletes. This shows the

serious desire about for national victory vs humor. Together, these images show how citizens participated in building a national identity through shared digital humor.

### **Conclusion:**

This study showed how online satire, especially memes and humorous statements, act as a powerful form of discourse in the Pakistani digital environment during the 2025 Indo-Pak aerial incident and cricket rivalry. By applying Fairclough Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)1992, the research shows how textual, visual, and cultural elements work together to construct ideological meanings, maintain national identity, and shape public opinion.

The findings revealed that memes are not merely humorous online content rather, they act as important socio-political tools through which users express protest, nationalism, disappointment, and collective emotions. In the context of aerial conflicts, satire was used to challenge dominant media discourse, criticize manipulation, and symbolically defend national identity through irony and exaggeration. Similarly, cricket-related memes reflected emotional disappointment, self-mocking humor, and the deep cultural significance of cricket within Pakistani society.

The analysis further shows that digital satire operates through multi-modality, where text, visuals, emojis, symbolism, and cultural references collectively produce complex meanings. The study also highlighted how audience actively participate in explanation building by sharing, interpreting, and reproducing memes across digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. This interactive nature transforms memes from individual jokes into collective expressions of national feelings and ideological positioning.

In addition, the research proved that humor and satire serve not only as entertainment but also as coping mechanisms during periods of political tension and social stress. Through irony and parody, social media users negotiate power relations, reduce hostility, and create counter-discourses against dominant narratives. Thus, digital satire emerges as a powerful communicative practice that reflects broader social realities, ideological struggles, and cultural identities in contemporary Pakistani society.

In conclusion, this study adds to the growing field of online discourse studies by showing how memes and online satire function as meaningful discursive practices within geopolitical and cultural conflicts. Future researchers may broad this area by analyzing larger datasets, comparing global meme practices, or exploring the role of artificial intelligence and emerging online media in shaping political satire and online discourse.

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