

Impact of Media on Pakistani Society

Dr. Aijaz Ali Wassan¹
Nadia Agha Khan²

ABSTRACT: Media in Pakistan has been more informative than ever before. Media in country create genuine public enlightenment about real life issues- Issues that matter such as health, education, sanitation, unemployment, increasing prices of essential commodities and the state of the country and the nation.

In modern- age media has assumed the role of a guide in daily life of everybody. It is used as instrument of policy by the government. The volume of out put of print and electronic media is simply overwhelming. The media in Pakistan continuously shapes and reshapes our opinion, attitudes and perceptions.

The purpose of this paper is to throw light on the three- dimensional role of media i.e. informing the public, educating the unknowledgeable and providing entertainment and the state of print media, radio, television and internet in Pakistani society.

Key words: Media, Pakistan, Print media, Electronic media, Cable, Television.

INTRODUCTION

There is significant progress seems in the era of communication technologies. Among the Asians countries, Pakistan is also adopting these rapidly changing communication technologies from last decade. Many public and private channels have been launched in the country. This paper takes a critical view on the state/role of media in Pakistan and the challenges that it faces at present.

The electronic media in Pakistan has become the most powerful medium of the moment by spreading education, information and

¹ Dr. Aijaz Ali Wassan. Assistant Professor Department of Sociology, University of Sindh, Pakistan Tel.: + (92) 2771681-90; Cell: + (92) 03342637494. *E-mail Address:* aijaz.wassan@usindh.edu.pk – aijazal@hotmail.com

² Nadia Agha Khan Lecturer Department of Sociology, Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Sindh. Email: nadia_gha_khan@hotmail.com

powerful entertainment. It brings us latest news of events and developments. Pakistan's media especially electronic and print media. It has a long history of efforts for its and for the rights of public. It keeps the public aware of even the tiniest detail about their politicians and their misdeeds. We can have a better view of the media in Pakistan by defining their role separately. There are so many angles to see as to what extent television has brought about changes in daily life of people in general and women in particular. Media is largely responsible for bringing about so many social, cultural and economic changes- and that too with rapid speed, and is considered as one major factor to help globalize human thinking and understanding on various matters by fully exploiting all the elements possible in visual communication. Purposes of media are Information, Education, Edification, Acculturation, Persuasion, Propaganda, Entertainment, Amusement and Info-attainment.

T.V viewers at National level

Total TV viewer ship	86 million
Total cable and satellite viewers hip	38 million
Terrestrial viewer ship	48 million

The estimated viewer ship of various genres of TV on an average day is the following

Infotainment channels

(Approximately 28 channels including star plus & PTV as a lead channels) 26 million

News channels

(Approximately 12 channels including Geo news as a lead channels) 7 million

Religious channels 4 million

Music channels 500,000

Business channels 10,000

Source: Gallup TV Ratings Data.

1. PRINT MEDIA

In past dictatorial time only government's favorable stories were published, but presently, the press enjoys centrality. The press does not only articulate public demands but also provides a forum for highlighting issues that are of public concern. The press has developed a healthy public opinion. There is significant relaxation in the laws of publication. There is remarkable increase in the number of publications.

In 1987 there were 1748 newspapers and periodicals published in eight languages: of them 125 were dailies and 346 weeklies. In terms of language, there were 1315 newspapers and periodicals, 317 English, 88 Sindhi and much smaller numbers Guajarati, Balochi, Punjabi and 2 tri-lingual newspapers. The total circulation of the dailies was 1.5 million, of which the Urdu newspapers claim more than 80 per cent. English dailies are about 212,000: Regional language press and the Sindhi dailies claim a circulation of about 60,000 copies. These figures must be viewed in the context of Pakistan's low literacy rate. At present there are 2538 newspapers and periodicals, of them 275 are dailies, 4 bi-weeklies and 510 weeklies. Of the dailies 184 are published in the province of Punjab, 48 in Sindh, 27 in NWFP and 12 in Baluchistan. In term of circulation and readership Urdu and English newspapers form the heart of the national press.

Journalism and communication in Pakistan has tremendous potential to progress. It has played a vital role for the awareness of masses. Political, economic activities were trickled down from mega cities to villages.

2. RADIO

Radio Pakistan began its broadcast on 14th August 1947 as a government department. Radio Pakistan through 25 stations located at as many places in the country is on air for 24 hours daily both on Medium Wave and Short Wave. In the home service using 20 languages and dialects it reaches 75 per cent of the area and 95 per cent population of the country.

3. TELEVISION

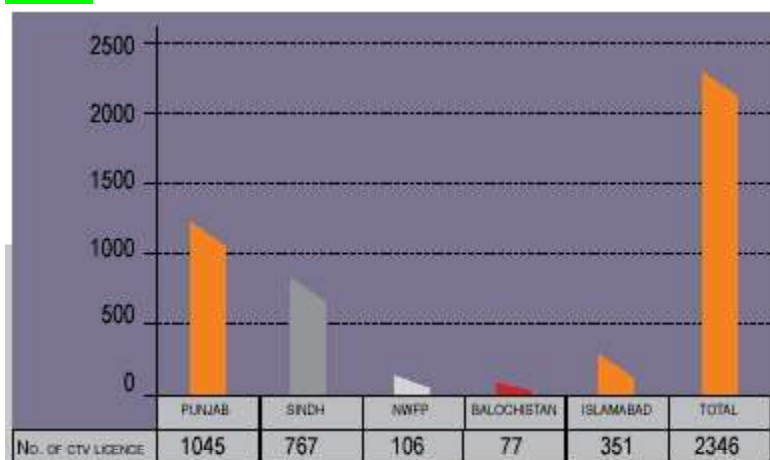
Television is the main source of electronic media. It plays leading role in creating awareness in the society and enlightens the social, economic and health issues of the country. Television in Pakistan is successfully playing three-dimensional role of educating, informing and entertaining the public.

Apart from government owned PTV, there are many other private channels operating in Pakistan. Their reach to viewer ship and listener ship is very vibrant and full of liberty in the development of enabling environment.

To add to this fortunate state of affairs is the assumption of a greater role by the ministry of information and Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) to encourage the private media from reporting on issues such as politics, current affairs and particularly terrorism.

CABLE

The most popular form of receiving TV signals in Pakistan is through cable and 74% of the urban population has access to it. Cable networks in Pakistan have expanded to a rapid pace. The Authority has so far issued 2346 cable TV licenses all over the country. The number of CTV licenses issued by the Authority since 1st July, 2002 till end of financial year 2009 is however given as below:



With the expansion of cable networks to far-

flung areas of the country, a substantial increase in number of cable subscribers has occurred. Although there is no reliable data which may lead to exact calculation of cable subscribers in the country, it is however estimated that more than 08 million house-holds are connected to cable networks. If on average a Pakistani house-hold comprises five persons, it may be estimated that around 40 million people watch cable television daily. The cable TV is also the largest in the media industry in terms of revenue collection. The monthly cost to consumers for cable subscription is at a very low average price of PKR 150[source: [EMTELTECH].

4. THE INTERNET AND THE TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Internet is the most important mover of change for print and electronic media. It has brought about the greatest revolution in mass communication since the invention of movable type of printing. Unlike the previous one, which took centuries in reaching all parts of the world?

In Pakistan, the introduction of internet services into schools and universities allow students and teachers alike to explore veritable universe of information at their fingertips. Today there are many

websites which educate, inform and entertain the users. The major contribution of this scientific revolution towards human development is that has removed all boundaries. This is why it has enabled like- minded people around the globe to form a single world community.

The use of internet in Pakistan is on the rise not only in offices but also in shops and residences. People now carry the world of information and communication in the form of laptop and mobile phones. Students now mostly appoint for subjects related to information technology and their courses are designed to catch the modern needs.

CONCLUSION

Pakistan's media outlets are full of vibrant and talented journalists. Pakistan's news organizations increasingly provide a constructive channel for debate and dissent. These media organizations also have businesses and contribute to the economic growth of the country.

The only criticism that can be done on the media in the field of entertainment is that it has not shown native genius in innovation. It is aping the Indian model of entertainment- high heels and lower necks. The media can improve its performance in the three aspects of its role in the society and can play it more effectively and more successfully.

Trend of privatization has been increased due to competition which is the root cause to minimize the share of government commercials. So far there is a control of state on macro level. Reduction in Government commercials will keep up editorial liberty in the country. Many states exploit commercials as a tool against publication.

We cannot escape globalization, so why do not we reap its benefits? But to achieve this we have to be part of the global village. This objective will be achieved only if we allow liberalizing and totally independent radio and television stations and channels, including news broadcast.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Media should play more positive role in sensitive issues it should be more careful;
 2. Racial, ethnic, and personal issues should not be exposed;
 3. Media should play a role as a welfare agency in society;
 4. Social evils should impartially be highlighted on media;
 5. Positive role of government should also be highlighted and negative role should be criticized.
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