

Pakistani Private TV News Channels' Coverage to Military Operation 'Zarb-e-Azb': A Comparative Analysis of the Viewers' Perception



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Abstract: *The military operations have exacted serious effects on the socio-psychological structure of society which has led to an overall tense environment. The aim of this study was to explore the public's perspective on Pakistani private TV news channels' coverage of military operation 'Zarb-e-Azb'. The research sought to understand the public's consumption habits of this coverage, assess the extent to which it fostered a sense of national integration and examine the media's role during the operation. The results showed that the private TV news channels made an effort to portray the ground battle accurately. From the viewers' perspective, the coverage boosted the Pakistani military's morale, improved relations between civil and military groups, and fostered a sense of national unity. Furthermore, viewers believed that the operation effectively eliminated terrorism..*

Key Words: Military Operation 'Zarb-e-Azb', The War on Terror, Pakistani Media, Media Dependency Theory, Private TV News Channels, ISPR (Inter Services Public Relations)

Introduction

The world was rattled with shock when the twin towers in New York were attacked by terrorists on September 11, 2011. The terrorist attacks had a significant impact on the ideology of humanity. Both the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations (UN) strongly condemned the violence and offered their condolences to the United States. The international community as a whole responded with outrage and grief to these devastating incidents. They also offered full support to bring the culprits to justice. These offers of support demonstrate the global community's solidarity with the United States

and its commitment to combating terrorism. Terrorism and all its kinds are a threat to survival of the global community. It should be eliminated from the surface of earth. Keeping in view the flow of international politics, Pakistan assumed the role of a visible line state in war on terrorism as she had commitments to implement the 12 September 2001 resolution. Foreign Minister of Pakistan stated that it's proud of Pakistan to contribute towards the war on terror as it is a great threat to the world and international community.

Pakistan is facing a number of domestic challenges, including political inefficiency, a fragile economy, inflation, unemployment,

political instability, declining growth, and a high crime rate, which pose a serious threat to the country's stability. In addition, Pakistan is facing significant pressure on its western border and tension on its eastern border. The country has also experienced a highly tense law and order situation, particularly due to terrorist attacks, and its military forces have been engaged in a war on terrorism for the past decade.

In 2009, the Manawa Police Academy in Lahore was attacked by 12 TTP militants, resulting in the deaths of 8 police personnel and 95 injuries (Express Tribune, June 11, 2014). The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has a history of carrying out terrorist attacks in Pakistan. In 2011, the group was responsible for an attack on the PNS Mehran base in Karachi (The News, June 15, 2014), where four Uzbek terrorists destroyed two Pakistani navy surveillance aircraft. This attack was widely condemned by the international community and highlights the destructive capabilities of the IMU. It is important for nations to work together to combat terrorism and prevent such attacks from happening in the future. Uzbek militants were heavily involved in the 2012 jailbreak at Bannu, where approximately 100 of them attacked the facility and freed around 400 inmates.

This event demonstrated the power and determination of the militants, and the potential for such groups to cause chaos and disruption within society. It is important for governments and law enforcement agencies to be vigilant and proactive in their efforts to prevent such attacks and keep their citizens safe (Dunya News, July 5, 2014). In 2012, Bacha Khan Airport in Peshawar was attacked by 10 militants who fired rockets at the facility. This attack caused widespread damage and disrupted the operations of the airport. Later that same year, Uzbek militants also attacked the Dera Ismail Khan jail, who helped free around 170 terrorists affiliated with the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Jundullah. These attacks illustrate the ongoing threat of terrorism in Pakistan and the need for strong security measures to protect against such incidents (The News, June 15, 2014).

On June 8, 2014, the Taliban launched an attack on the Jinnah airport in Karachi, resulting in the deaths of 26 individuals,

including Rangers, ASF members, and civilians (Express Tribune, June 11, 2014). The TTP took the responsibility of this attack and revealed that the perpetrators were Uzbeks affiliated with the group who had perpetrated terrorist acts against Pakistan's sovereignty. In response, the government decided to terminate negotiations and initiate a military operation, called Operation Zarb-e-Azb, to eliminate terrorism in the country (The News, June 15, 2014).

Zarb-e-Azb was a military operation carried out by Armed Forces of Pakistan against a range of militant groups for instance, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan. This operation was started in 2014 in response to a series of terrorist attacks that had taken place in Pakistan, and was aimed at eliminating the threat posed by these groups and restoring stability to the region. It is part of the ongoing war on terrorism in the northwest region of Pakistan and involves approximately 30,000 Pakistani soldiers. The goal of the operation is to remove and eliminate all foreign and local militants who are seeking refuge in the North Waziristan. It was receiving help from Pakistan's defence, political and civilian sectors (www.ask.com, Retrieval Date: 22nd June, 2015). Since the operation began on June 15, 2014, the security situation in Pakistan has greatly improved and terrorist attacks in the country have reached their lowest levels in six years.

Since the inception of Pakistan, challenges are carved in its fate. Terrorist activities have increased the burden than ever before. The unending war against terror has become more challenging; the military operations not doubt is run for state benefit but along with some challenges. During Operation Zarb-e-Azb, millions of people were displaced from Waziristan. Specifically, Before the ground troops began their combat mission, four million people fled from North Waziristan. Operation Zalzala, which took place in South Waziristan Agency in January 2008, had a similar objective as the current situation. It aimed to target Baitullah Mehsud and those who supported him. Operation Zalzala caused around 200,000 locals to be displaced and resulted in most of the region being cleared of SWA, During Operation Zalzala, over 40,000 houses were destroyed by security forces. The

impact of this operation was similar to that of Operation Zarb-e-Azb. Additionally, Operation Raah-e-Raast, which took place from May to July 2009, resulted in the mass displacement of residents from Swat, who were later accommodated in camps and moved to other cities (Shah, 2014).

After the September 11th attacks, the U.S. Department of Defence made efforts to engage with the media extensively, according to Comb (2003). This included hosting over 5,000 media visitors on military installations, conducting over 1,500 special interviews with the press, and organizing more than 225 press conferences. These efforts helped to establish a relationship between the media and the government and kept the media informed about developments in the "war on terrorism." Mockaitis (2003) notes that, while media coverage is not the main objective of terrorist organizations, they do understand that media attention can be an effective way to attract public attention and promote their causes. As a result, media coverage of terrorist attacks serves to bring attention to these groups and their interests.

Media has become as essential in today's world as food and clothing. Its role in maintaining social order is undeniable, as it has the responsibility to inform, educate, and entertain the public. It also keeps us informed about current political situations around the world. The media has a significant impact on social and cultural systems, and is frequently used to convey messages and build opinions and awareness due to its ability to reach a wide audience. The media has the power to educate people about both good and bad, and in societies like Pakistan, it is expected to fulfil its duty of enlightening the public and combating extremism (www.ispr.gov.pk).

It is clear that media will play a significant role in future wars and conflicts. Pakistan and its Armed Forces have often been involved in a "cold war" with hostile neighbours, and there may be elements within their ranks that assist the enemy in achieving their goals. In this context, it is necessary to cultivate an army-friendly media environment. Media's role can be divided into two categories: the positive and the negative. The positive side of media's role in conflict can include informing the public about events and issues, providing a platform for

different viewpoints, and helping to facilitate dialogue and understanding. On the negative side, media can be used to manipulate public opinion, spread misinformation, and fuel conflicts by amplifying divisive or inflammatory messaging.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the viewing habits of people when it comes to the coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb by private TV channels.
- To measure satisfaction level of the viewers about TV coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb.
- To examine viewer's perception about TV coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb.
- To determine the coverage patterns of TV news channels regarding Operation Zarb-e-Azb.

Literature Review

During the time period of the study, more than 90% of Americans said they endorsed military action (Anker, 2005; Lule, 2001). The focus of various studies is the relationship between the characteristics of terrorist attacks and the extent and significance of media coverage (Gartner, 2004; Kelley, 1981). Terrorist attacks gathered lesser coverage when they created fewer fatalities, were perpetrated either in Latin America or Europe. Mueller (2006) It is argued that the media is a crucial component of the "terrorism industry," which profits from exaggerating the perceived danger of terrorism and thereby creates a false sense of the severity of the threat.

Jordan (2014) evaluates the impacts of the drone strikes in Pakistan on Al Qaeda. For that purpose, it creates a theoretical framework to elucidate how the campaign is devastating Al Qaeda's capacity to perform terrorist attacks in the USA and Western Europe. Although the conclusions of a single empirical case cannot be generalised, they nevertheless make up an initial factor for the creation of a broader theoretical framework regarding the use of equipped drones as part of a counterterrorism planning. The 2006 Pew Research Global Attitudes Project survey found that 46% of Pakistanis supported their government's decision to support the US war on terror.

However, by 2008, 80% of Pakistanis had reversed their stance and opposed this decision. Surveys also reveal that a majority of Pakistanis (64%) do not support the Pakistan Army's operations against extremists in KP and FATA (PGS, 2006).

A survey was conducted by Roger and Seidel (2003) on the various sources of news that were used by people to learn about the 9/11 attack on the United States, including telephone, broadcast media, interpersonal communication, and the internet. It was found that most people learned about the attack through phone calls or text messages from friends, family, or other personal connections (Nacos, 2002). This suggests that a person's level of fear in relation to terrorism may be influenced by the extent of media coverage of these events. Media presentation of terrorism can have a significant impact on people's emotions and perceptions, and it is important to understand the different factors involved in this presentation. Altheide (2006) argues that social meanings are constructed through news reports that associate certain words and issues with problems, and the media's use of words like "fear," "crime," and "terrorism" can affect the audience's understanding and expectations. Naco (2008) adds that the media often uses contexts of fear, crime, and terrorism to generate attention and interest, and this can contribute to a pervasive sense of danger and risk in everyday life.

However, it was later recognized that it was important to redirect the focus toward the audience (McAnany, 2001). Erick (2002) posits that people are largely influenced by mass media, which often presents information in an exaggerated or distorted manner, effectively making them "mantle servants" through media. The term "social field" is introduced by him to describe the way people perceive information in the modern age. Wilson, in his book "Youth culture and universities," discussed the way TV channels can alter individual traits, such as behaviour. This suggests that mass media can have a significant impact on how people think, feel, and behave.

Slone (2000) conducted an analysis of televised footage of terrorist attacks and found that such coverage increased levels of anxiety and uncertainty among the audience. A similar study was conducted in Israel, where terrorist

attacks are more common than in Western countries, and similar results were found, with high levels of anxiety and concern about personal safety being reported after viewing a 12-minute documentary on terrorist activities. Bennett and Robinson (2003) conducted a survey-based research study and found that terrorist attacks did not alleviate people's fears about their safety and the threat of terrorism. These studies suggest that media coverage of terrorist attacks can have a significant impact on public fear and anxiety.

Theoretical Framework

The primary objectives of theories are to forecast, interpret, and understand phenomena. They often challenge and enhance current knowledge within their boundaries. A theoretical framework is the structure that supports the results of a research study. It is the theory that explains why the research problem exists (www.libguides.usc.edu). The aim of this study is to examine how the public perceives the coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azab by private television news channels, and to evaluate the extent to which these channels satisfy the public's information needs. This study will also explore the consumption patterns of the public in relation to the coverage. According to the media system dependency (MSD) theory, the media has a big influence on how people feel. We will look at how the theory can be used to understand how the media affects public opinion processes that involve contested "value-frames" in this context. In these situations, the media system contributes to the discussion of how legitimate conflicting viewpoints on a subject are (Rokeach and Rokeach, 1987). The abortion discussion that has just taken place in Pakistan serves as our example. The Media Dependency Theory, which will be briefly explored in relation to this study, serves as the foundation for the research framework (Luker, 1984).

Media System Dependency Theory (MSD)

In 1976 Sandra Ball Rokeach and Melvin Defleur introduced this theory. It combines perspectives of psychoanalysis and social system theory to explain how individuals and groups within a society are affected by power dynamics and interdependence. According to

the Dependency Theory, individuals and groups within a society are not independent entities, but rather are dependent on each other and on the larger social and economic systems in which they exist. This theory suggests that the relationships between individuals and groups within a society are shaped by patterns of dependency and power, and that these patterns can have significant consequences for the well-being and development of individuals and groups, and the uses and gratification theory. It is known as the first theory to consider the audience as an active participant in the communication process. The Dependency Theory is based on the uses and gratification theory, which suggests that people rely on media to fulfil their needs and desires, but places less emphasis on the effects of media on the audience.

According to MSD, media users rely on the media to satisfy their needs for information, entertainment, and socialization. As a result, the media have a great deal of influence over their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. Organizations, such as political parties and interest groups, also depend on the media to disseminate their messages and gain public support. MSD also argues that society as a whole is dependent on the media to provide information about events and issues that affect their lives. Media plays an significant role in shaping the public opinion, setting the political agenda, and promoting cultural values. The theory suggests that the level of dependency on the media varies depending on factors such as the importance of the issue, the complexity of the information, and the availability of alternative sources of information. The theory also recognizes that the media are not the only source of information and that individuals and organizations may seek information from other sources as well. Overall, MSD emphasizes the important role that the media play in shaping the way individuals, organizations, and society as a whole perceive and respond to the world around them.

The current study has a connection to dependency theory, which posits that people rely on media information to fulfil certain needs and achieve specific objectives, similar to uses and gratification theory. In Pakistan, the society is experiencing a war on terror. As a major stakeholder with a strategic location,

Pakistan has had to confront this war on its own. The Pakistani army has been at the forefront of efforts to combat non-state actors who engage in anti-social behaviour. The spokesman for the army is the Director General Inter Services (ISPR), who communicates on behalf of the Pakistani army.

The ongoing war and unstable situation in Pakistan have made it difficult for the general population to access first-hand information about the conflict. As a result, people have turned to the media for updates and news about the situation. This reliance on the media for information is a result of dependency theory, which suggests that during times of social change and conflict, individuals may need to rely on established institutions and sources of information to make sense of the situation and make informed decisions. In the case of Pakistan, the media, particularly television coverage, has played a critical role in keeping the public informed about the progress of Operation Zarb-e-Azb, which has been fought by the Pakistani army in an effort to improve its image and protect the country from its enemies. Despite the high levels of casualties and collateral damage that have occurred during the war, the media has helped to keep the public informed and aware of the situation.

Methodology

Methodology is the systematic process of planning and implementing research strategies. It is a standardized way of managing research and includes the definitions, procedures, and data collection techniques, analyse, store, and present data as part of a research process (Cresswell, 2003). This is an empirical study that based on quantitative research design, which involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to answer research questions. The specific method being used is a survey, in which a sample of viewers of private TV news channels in Pakistan asked to provide their opinions and perceptions about the television coverage of Zarb-e-Azb operation. The universe of a study refers to those set of events from which the sample is selected. (Reinard, 1994). The focused universe of this study was University of Sargodha. Whereas male and female viewers (teachers and students of Sargodha university) of television coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb

were the population. One viewer is considered as "unit of analysis".

Stratified sampling technique was used to ensure representation of different demographic groups in the study sample. The strata included gender (male and female), education (bachelor's, master's, M.Phil., and higher), and occupation (teachers and students). Convenience sampling was then used to collect data from the respondents within each stratum. This approach was chosen because it allows for the inclusion of

specific demographic groups that may be of interest in the study and helps to ensure the representativeness of the sample. 300 respondents consisting of an equal number of males and females (teachers and students) from the University of Sargodha were selected as sample size. In order to meet the requirements of the study and to allow for meaningful inferences to be drawn, written surveys was distributed to 300 respondents from the University of Sargodha, including 150 teachers (75 males and 75 females) and 150 students (75 males and 75 females).

Respondents' Demography

Teachers				Students			
Departments	Male	Female	Total	Departments	Male	Female	Total
Social Sciences	38	37	75	Social Sciences	38	37	75
Natural Sciences	37	38	75	Natural Sciences	37	38	75
Total	75	75	150	Total	75	75	150

Questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used as tool of data collection. The close ended questions have clear meanings, elicit standard responses, are easy to analyse and tend to provide relatively complete answers (Bailey, 1978). The questionnaire begins by collecting demographic information about the respondents, including gender and occupation. The survey aims to determine whether there are any differences in the perception of male and female viewers, and between teachers and students, regarding the coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb by private television news channels. To measure the respondents' viewing habits, a Likert scale with five response categories (very much, much, somewhat, rarely, not at all) is used. This scale allows the researchers to quantify the respondents' responses and analyse them in a more standardized way. Cronbach's Alpha was applied to check the reliability of the questionnaire. The reliability statistics value was .799. The data was presented in percentage and tables are used along with the understandable.

Findings of the Study

The preference of viewers to watch private TV news channels' coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb, a military operation launched by the

Pakistani government against militants in 2014, can be influenced by several factors.

Firstly, the quality and nature of the coverage provided by private TV news channels can play a significant role in determining viewer preferences. If the coverage is comprehensive, balanced, and provides in-depth analysis of the operation, viewers are likely to prefer these channels over others. However, if the coverage is sensationalized, biased, and lacks depth, viewers may opt to watch other channels. Secondly, the credibility and reputation of the private TV news channels can also impact viewer preferences. Channels with a history of reliable and unbiased reporting may be preferred over those with a reputation for sensationalism and political bias. Thirdly, the political orientation of the channels can also influence viewer preferences. If a viewer's political beliefs align with the editorial stance of a particular channel, they may prefer to watch that channel's coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb. Lastly, personal preferences and viewing habits of individual viewers can also play a role in determining their preference for private TV news channels' coverage of the operation. Some viewers may prefer to watch channels that provide a more emotional and dramatic coverage of the operation, while others may prefer a more factual and objective

approach. Overall, viewers' preference for watching private TV news channels' coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb can be influenced by a combination of factors such as the quality of coverage, the credibility of the channels, their political orientation, and individual preferences.

Television has become an integral part of modern life, serving as a primary source of information and shaping public opinion. In the last decade, television has played a particularly significant role in Pakistan, serving as both a means of activating the public and as a voice of opposition to government issues. One of the most pressing issues in Pakistan in recent years has been terrorism, and the country's military has launched several operations to combat this threat. Operation Zarb-e-Azb is one such operation, targeting terrorists operating within Pakistan's borders. Pakistan has been one of the countries most affected by terrorism, and these efforts to

combat it are crucial for the country's stability and security.

The private TV news channels have devoted significant coverage to various aspects of the Zarb-e-Azb operation during its progress. So that, researcher conduct the study on approved topic "Comparative analysis of the perception of teachers and students about TV coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb". The sample has taken from University of Sargodha and they were regular private news channels' viewers. Both the teachers and students were selected for data collection and they were asked to fill questionnaires as per their convenience. The questions were about the coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb. Researcher tried to study the students and teachers' perception about this military operation, military role, feeling of insecurity and placement of IDP's. An extensive data has collected, that organized, analysed and interpreted in the following details.

Table 1

Viewers' preference to watch private TV news channels' coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb.

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
Geo News	Very frequently*	53.0**	26.0	33.3	26.7	26.3
	Somewhat	38.0	19.7	12.7	19.3	18.7
	Not at all	9.0	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0
ARY News	Very frequently	66.0	29.0	27.0	36.3	29.7
	Somewhat	31.7	19.0	21.0	12.3	19.3
	Not at all	2.3	2.0	2.0	1.3	1.0
Dunya News	Very frequently	45.3	22.3	20.7	26.3	19.0
	Somewhat	49.7	26.0	27.0	22.3	27.3
	Not at all	5.0	1.7	2.3	1.3	3.7
Samaa News	Very frequently	52.3	24.3	18.0	20.0	32.3
	Somewhat	42.0	23.7	28.3	26.3	15.7
	Not at all	5.7	2.0	3.7	3.7	2.0
Express News	Very frequently	59.0	27.7	29.3	28.7	30.3
	Somewhat	38.0	20.7	18.3	19.3	18.7
	Not at all	3.0	1.7	2.3	2.0	1.0
		100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

- "Very frequently" means "very often" and "frequently," "somewhat" means "to a certain extent" and "rarely," and "not at all" means "not in any way."
- Figures showing percentage.

The table 1 shows the viewing preferences of Pakistani TV news channels among the viewers during Operation Zarb-e-Azb. The results indicate that the majority of

respondents preferably watching ARY News (66.0%), and Express News very frequently (59.0%) respectively and followed by Geo News (53.0%). As per the gender division male preferred ARY News (29.0%) overall and Express News (27.7%), while female viewers in overall preferred Geo News (33.3%) and followed by Express News (29.3%) and ARY News (27.0%). These findings show that, the

both categories have their own pretences and choices to watch Television and get information about the Operation Zarb-e-Azb. These choices have shown the majority responses and interest to prefer news channels on the basis of their coverage, content quality and reach to the facts in the battle field.

In other category, occupation wise teachers preferred to watch ARY News (36.3%) in majority over Express News (28.7%) and Geo News (26.7%). Similarly, the students overall watching Samaa News (32.3%), Express News (30.3%) and ARY news (29.7%) respectively. After extensive and detailed analysis, it is found that viewers have different preferences on the basis of gender, occupation and age wise. In overall position, majority preferred to watch ARY News over other available media channels on the basis of their credibility and content quality.

On the basis of collected data, it can be traced that students preferred to watch Samaa News at large and they have interest on this channel over other available private news media. Moreover, female teachers preferred Geo News in majority and they preferred to watch this channel to get information about battle field. On other side, majority of the male teachers preferred to watch ARY news over

other available private media channels at that time. They have much confidence on their preferences and use available option to get informed themselves. Due to this military operation, people were under stress and they feeling anxiety. They were conscious about their families and they want to know about the current status of war on terror. This situation create distress in their life. At that time, terrorists were attacking the civilians, military bases, mosques and many other places in the whole country.

Majority of the respondents in teachers perceived that, ARY News portrayed true picture of the operation and boost morale of Pakistan army. Due to this positive role of the media, IDP's get attention for rehabilitation. Private news channels built positive image of military, that was need of the hour to combat the curse of terrorism. After 9/11, terrorist groups become active throughout the world and attempting terrorist activities. Pakistan lost many lives during this war on terror. Many militant groups inside and outside of Pakistan were operating and involved in terrorist activities and killing innocent peoples. That's why people were relaying on media for knowing true picture of the operation.

Table 2

Viewers level of Information acquired from private TV News Channels about Operation Zarb-e-Azb.

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
Geo News	Very Much*	59.3**	26.0	33.3	30.7	28.7
	Somewhat	32.3	19.7	12.7	15.3	17.0
	Not at all	8.4	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.3
ARY News	Very Much	56.0	29.0	27.0	27.3	28.7
	Somewhat	40.0	19.0	21.0	20.0	20.0
	Not at all	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.7	1.3
Dunya News	Very Much	43.0	22.3	20.7	21.0	22.0
	Somewhat	53.0	26.0	27.0	27.0	26.0
	Not at all	4.0	1.7	2.3	2.0	2.0
Samaa News	Very Much	42.3	24.3	18.0	23.0	19.3
	Somewhat	52.0	23.7	28.3	24.0	28.0
	Not at all	5.7	2.0	3.7	3.0	2.7
Express News	Very Much	57.0	27.7	29.3	27.7	29.3
	Somewhat	39.0	20.7	18.3	18.7	20.3
	Not at all	4.0	1.7	2.3	3.7	0.3
		100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

- Very much" means "a great deal" or "to a great extent," "somewhat" means "to a certain extent" or "rarely," and "not at all" means "not in any way."

- Figures showing percentage.

The above table-2 shows the viewer's preferences to watch private TV news channels coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb. This table-2 explains about to what extent people preferred to watch which channel to get information during this military operation. Empirical findings show that most of viewers' preference was Geo News (59.3%), Express News (57.0%), more frequently as compared to ARY News (56.0%), Samaa (42.3%) and Dunya News (43.0%) as source of getting information. Exclusive analysis of data in term of gender, male viewers preferred to ARY News (29.0%) very frequently, female viewers with significant difference (27.0%), whereas female viewers preferred to Geo News.

Furthermore, in term of occupation, teachers preferred to Geo News and Express News (30.7%, 27.7%) very frequently to get information, students preferred to watch Express News (29.3%) rather than others. Exclusive analysis of the whole data in table-2 shows that the overall viewers getting information regarding Operation Zarb-e-Azb from Geo News (59.3%), Express News (57.0%) and ARY News (56.0%) very frequently, male preferred to watch ARY News (29.0%) similarly female preferred Geo News (33.3%) and in occupation teachers preferred to Geo News (30.7%) and students preferred Samaa News (29.3%) very frequently with no significant difference as compared to other private TV news channels.

Table 3

Responses on private TV channels are portraying the true picture and factual position of Operation Zarb-e-Azb

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
Geo News	Strongly Agree*	53.0**	25.7	27.3	27.7	25.3
	Neutral	40.0	20.3	19.7	19.0	21.0
	Strongly disagree	7.0	4.0	3.0	3.3	3.7
ARY News	Strongly Agree	57.7	28.3	29.3	29.3	28.3
	Neutral	40.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Strongly disagree	2.3	1.7	0.7	0.7	1.7
Dunya News	Strongly Agree	48.7	24.7	24.0	24.7	24.0
	Neutral	47.0	25.0	22.0	23.7	23.3
	Strongly disagree	4.3	0.3	4.0	1.7	2.7
Samaa News	Strongly Agree	47.7	26.7	21.0	24.3	23.3
	Neutral	49.0	22.0	27.0	24.3	24.7
	Strongly disagree	3.3	1.3	2.0	1.3	2.0
Express News	Strongly Agree	62.0	30.3	31.7	30.7	31.3
	Neutral	33.7	18.3	15.3	17.0	16.7
	Strongly disagree	4.3	1.3	3.0	2.3	2.0
		100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

- Strongly agree means strongly agree and agree, neutral means neutral and strongly disagree means disagree and strongly disagree.
- Figures showing percentage.

Table-3 shows the extent to agree that, private TV news channels are portraying the true picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb. The empirical findings reveal that overall majority of viewers strongly agreed with the coverage of Express News (62.0%) which portrayed the true picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb over ARY

News (57.7%) and Geo News (53.0%) with significant difference, rather than other private TV news channels. Exclusive analysis of the data in term of gender, male and female viewers strongly agreed and satisfied with the coverage of Express News (30.3%, 31.7%) that portrayed the true picture of operation Zarb-e-Azb.

Whereas students preferred the coverage of Express News frequently over teachers (31.3%). The majority of viewers agreed from the coverage of Express News (62.0%) little more as compared to other private TV news

channels which portrayed the true picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb with significant difference. Moreover, gender and

occupational analysis shows no significant difference.

Table 4

Viewers responses on private TV news channels coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb promoting the feeling of National Integration

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
Geo News	Strongly Agree*	61.3**	26.3	35.0	30.7	30.7
	Neutral	33.3	20.0	13.3	16.7	16.7
ARY News	Strongly disagree	5.4	3.7	1.7	2.7	2.7
	Strongly Agree	65.7	32.7	33.0	32.7	33.0
	Neutral	32.3	16.3	16.0	16.7	15.7
Dunya News	Strongly disagree	2.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.3
	Strongly Agree	58.3	30.0	28.3	32.0	26.3
	Neutral	40.7	20.0	20.7	17.3	23.3
Samaa News	Strongly disagree	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.7	0.3
	Strongly Agree	57.0	30.3	26.7	30.0	27.0
	Neutral	39.0	19.0	20.0	18.0	21.0
Express News	Strongly disagree	4.0	0.7	3.3	2.0	2.0
	Strongly Agree	64.0	33.0	31.0	31.7	32.3
	Neutral	32.7	15.7	17.0	16.3	16.3
	Strongly disagree	3.3	1.3	2.0	2.0	1.3
		100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

- Strongly agree means strongly agree and agree neutral means neutral, strongly disagree means disagree and strongly disagree.
- Figures showing percentage.

Table 4 illustrates the viewers' perceptions of the coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb by private TV news channels, which promotes feelings of national integration. Empirical findings indicate that the majority of viewers frequently responded positively to ARY News, with (65.7%) expressing favorable views. Express News (64.0%) and Geo News (61.3%) little more over Dunya News (58.3%) and Samaa News (57.0%) respectively, which shows that operation Zarb-e-Azb covered by these channels, that promoting feelings of National Integration. Exclusive analysis of the

data in term of gender, male viewers responded Strongly Agree to Express News (33.0%) and ARY News (32.7) respectively, with little difference which shows that these channels promoting the feeling of National Integration, whereas female viewers frequently respond that Geo News (35.0%) gave the coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb and promoting the feeling of National Integration. Additionally, in term of occupation, teachers respond towards ARY News (32.7%), Dunya News (32.0%), over Express News (31.7; students respond to ARY News (33.0%) and Express News (32.3%) very much that indicate these channels are portraying the feelings of national integration, while gender and occupational analysis shows no significant difference.

Table 5

Viewers responses on private TV news channels' coverage Bridging Civil Military Gap during Operation Zarb-e-Azb

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
Geo News	Strongly Agree*	58.7**	27.0	31.7	30.0	28.7
	Neutral	35.0	19.0	16.0	17.0	18.0

Channels	Category	Overall	Gender		Occupation	
			Male	Female	Teacher	Student
ARY News	Strongly disagree	6.3	4.0	2.3	3.0	3.3
	Strongly Agree	58.7	29.0	29.7	29.7	29.0
	Neutral	38.0	18.3	19.7	18.0	20.0
Dunya News	Strongly disagree	3.3	2.7	0.7	2.3	1.0
	Strongly Agree	51.3	24.7	26.7	23.3	28.0
	Neutral	45.7	23.7	22.0	25.3	20.3
Samaa News	Strongly disagree	3.0	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.7
	Strongly Agree	49.0	24.7	24.3	25.3	23.7
	Neutral	48.3	23.3	25.0	23.7	24.7
Express News	Strongly disagree	2.7	2.0	0.7	1.0	1.7
	Strongly Agree	55.7	27.0	28.7	27.7	28.0
	Neutral	37.3	20.0	17.3	19.0	18.3
	Strongly disagree	7.0	3.0	4.0	3.3	3.7
		100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

- Strongly agree means strongly agree and agree neutral means neutral, strongly disagree means disagree and strongly disagree.
- Figures showing percentage.

According to the data presented in Table 5, the majority of viewers had a positive perception of the coverage of Operation Zarb-e-Azb by private TV news channels in terms of bridging the civil-military gap. The findings show that the highest percentage of viewers frequently responded positively towards ARY News (58.7%), followed by Geo News (58.7%) and Express News (55.7%), with slightly lower percentages for Dunya News (51.3%) and Samaa News (49.0%). These results suggest that these channels were successful in presenting balanced and unbiased coverage of the operation and bridging the gap between the military and civilian sectors. There was no significant difference in the responses for the different channels, indicating that they were all perceived similarly by the viewers in terms of their coverage of the operation. Exclusive analysis of the data in term of gender, male viewers responded Strongly Agree to ARY News (29.0%), Express News (27.0%) and Geo News (27.0%) respectively with no difference which shows that these channels bridging civil military gap by their coverage, whereas female viewers frequently respond that Geo News (31.7%) gave the coverage to operation Zarb-e-Azb and bridging civil military gap.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the data, it can be concluded that overall, viewers obtained information about Operation Zarb-e-Azb very frequently from Geo News (59.3%), Express News (57.0%), and ARY News (56.0) when watching coverage of these channels. However, gender and occupational analysis shows significant difference. The results show that ARY News (68.0%), Express News (68.0%), and Dunya News (60.0%) presented a more favourable portrayal of the Pakistani army's efforts to defend the nation in Operation Zarb-e-Azb compared to Geo News (58.7%) and Samaa (58.3%). These findings strongly support the research hypothesis that "respondents perceive that Express News presents a more accurate portrayal of the operation Zarb-e-Azb compared to other private television news channels."

Whereas in term of gender male viewers preferred to Express News (30.3%) as a true source over other television news channels which portrayed the true picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb. This result also supported the research hypothesis "It is more likely that male viewers perceive that Express News portray truer picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb than other private television News channels". In term of occupation, (30.7%) teachers of university of Sargodha preferred to Express News frequently over other selected television news channels, this result also supported the

research hypothesis “It is more likely that teachers of university of Sargodha perceive that Express News portray truer picture and factual position of operation Zarb-e-Azb than other private television news channels”. The results showed that the private TV news channels made an effort to portray the ground battle accurately. From the viewers' perspective, the coverage boosted the Pakistani military's morale, improved relations between civil and military groups, and fostered a sense of national unity. Furthermore, viewers believed that the operation effectively eliminated terrorism.

Recommendations

The following recommendations has been made on the basis of above conducted study:

- Government should develop a proper communication mechanism to inform the audience at large about military operations.
- PEMRA and other government observatory bodies should observe the content regularly regarding military operations.
- Government should help the IDP's for their re-habitation in war zones.
- Media should support and buck up the Pakistan army by using media space.

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