

## Media Construction of P.T.I: An Analysis of Public Perception

Muhammad Saeed Yousafzai<sup>1</sup>, Khalid Mahmood<sup>2</sup>  
Shazia Tabassum<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Media & Communication Studies, International Islamic  
University, Islamabad

<sup>2</sup>Department of Gender Women Studies, AIOU, Islamabad

<sup>3</sup>Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan

Received: September 1, 2014

Accepted: November 13, 2014

---

### ABSTRACT

The study attempts to examine the media construction of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) before 2013 elections for National and Provincial assemblies of Islamic Republic of Pakistan by analyzing public perception. 120 questionnaires were distributed among the educated community of Pakistan randomly and were collected back with a response rate of 88.3% (n=120). The age ranged from 20-26 years. SPSS was used to analyze the data collected using regression analysis. Greater response were found in the age ranged from 21-25 years with 72.6%. The value 0.76 near to 1 showed a strong association of mass media with people perception. This study concludes a strong and significant relationship between Television and public perception that Television played its role in building people perception about Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). For further research, the study suggests to incorporate social influence and the cross comparison of social influence and the role of Television in changing public perception.

**KEYWORDS:** Media Construction, Social Influence, Role of Television, Public Perception.

---

### INTRODUCTION

Most of our perceptions about the events are those which shaped and created by media. Furthermore on daily basis the ratio of these events is very high which is difficult to handle and present it in a proper way. Viewers have no ability or sources to observe these events by their own eyes; they just can make a sense about it as they received the information via media or some others. For example Egypt situation, 9/11 attacks etc. Cliffs described that the effects of Mass Media are very strong on community and society. For this purpose, the media repeats the information to make a picture in the minds of its viewers to believe in its accuracy and reality [1]. In Pakistan viewership of Television (TV) is increasing day by day and according to Gallup Survey Pakistan that in 2004, 63 million people was watching TV but in 2009 it turned to 83 million [2].

**Mass Media (TV) and Politics:** Existence of Political system and political parties in a region are the basic requirements for democratic System. Every political party has their own goal and objectives, for which they works to achieve it. For this purpose they try to establish communication to public through modern mass media (TV, Radio) and sometimes through direct campaigns *i.e.*, social gatherings, processions, corner meetings etc. to build a better image (Perception) in the minds of the public. Media is sometimes called “Watch Dog” but at the same time it plays a promoting role in the sense of advertisement or propaganda. Media persons try to make influence on its viewers via news selection process [3]. Mass media can influence on individual perception of what other people are thinking [4].

News media has not enough time to cover all those events taking place on international and national as well as on local level. So they push it to gate keeping. Some events are ignored while others are included for coverage. The selection of events and information is based on the personal choice of gate keepers [5]. Gatekeepers are not only the media professionals but also the political personalities and government officials. The ‘embedded journalism’ is also the example of gate keeping theory. Usually, this phenomenon is used by the organizations according to their own policies. They framed the events according to their policy book. Framing process is playing an important role in gate keeping [6]. According to Election Commission of Pakistan<sup>1</sup> there are 162 registered political parties in Pakistan. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is also one of them and it was established by Imran Khan, a former famous Pakistani cricketer on 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1996<sup>2</sup>. Gate keeping strategy was also adopted by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) a political party of Pakistan for a couple of years.

**Agenda-setting role of media and Public Opinion:** The influence of media organizations on the perception of its viewers has a very positive co-relation [7].

As it is believed that News influenced and manipulated viewers/listener’s perception. Public’s exposure

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://ecp.gov.pk/Misc/ListPolParties.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.insaf.pk/>

\* **Corresponding Author:** Muhammad Saeed Yousafzai, Department of Media & Communication Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad.

to electronic media has changed their perception about the developments around them. So this was a survey based study to explore and examined the positive relationship between Television and public political perception.

- i. Whether and to what extent electronic media play role to influence on the public perception about Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf (PTI)?
- ii. Is electronic media has a positive role in Public Perception change/build in Pakistani politics?

## METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view, the nature and requirement of this study survey research was adopted to explore and examine the electronic media. The influence of electronic media on public perception was also carried out about the Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Pakistani politics.

### Theoretical Framework

The research is related to the Media Construction of Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf (P.T.I): An Analysis of Public Perception. The whole research revolves around the two theories:

1. Perception theory
2. Gate keeping theory

Perception theory illustrates that how a perception of human developed about the environment, which is around him/her. In this process, human is attaining awareness or understanding of the environment by organizing and interpreting sensory information. All perceptions, signals/messages are involved. These signals/messages may be received directly or indirectly (Mass media). Indirect signal/messages go through a process in which a medium are involved. That medium is controlled through its operators (Media owners, journalists, editors etc.). This way forced media professionals to gate keeping. The gate keeping theory illustrates that how the media operators filtered the signals/messages. The pictures of the world are shaped and refined in the way that media operators framed the events (Figure. A).

Since, Perception is not the passive receipt therefore public acts as they perceive in their minds whether they got by direct or indirect signals/messages.

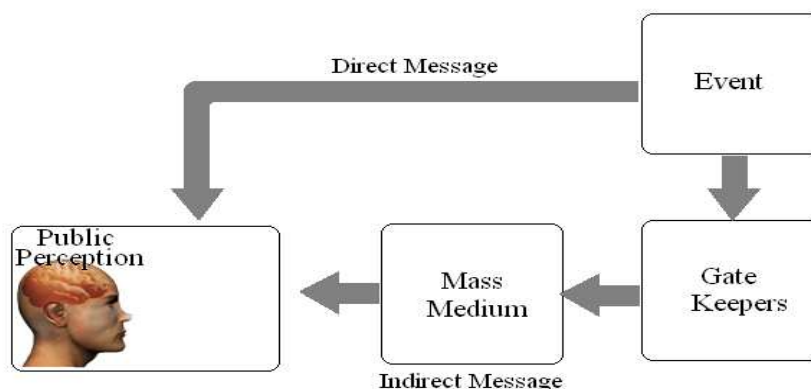


Figure:A

**Study area:** Study was carried out in International Islamic University, Islamabad. It is an international University that offers admissions on open merit. That's why the students of this university belong to the whole world, but only Pakistani students (which represent mostly areas of the country) were involved in the study. Besides academic activities, political activities often seem in the University. There are more than 20 political parties including Jamiat Tulaba Islam (JTI), Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT), Mustafwi Students Federation (MSF), Anjuman Tulaba-e-Islam (ATI), People Students Federation (PSF) and Tehrek Students Federation (TSF) etc. runs by the students. They are mostly related or working as a sub-party or political activists for other Political Parties like Jamiat Ulama Islam (F), Jumat-e-Islami Pakistan, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf (PTI) etc. These parties are trying to mold the student's perception directly. Total 120 students were involved in this study. In which 106 respondents were find valid and 14 were invalid: 11 were female and 03 were male respondents.

**Questionnaire design:** 19 questions were included in the questionnaire. These questions were about the use of Electronic media, according to their personal observation Media coverage to Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf, their level of information about Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf, their source of information about Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf, participation in Political Campaigns, discussion about Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf in their daily life, social order of the respondent and their personal opinion about the political parties in Pakistan in shape of ranking.

**Questionnaire administration:** Questionnaires were distributed among the students randomly. After filling these questionnaires were collected back. Respondents were also interviewed and their responses were recorded according to Likert Scale and then generated a report. The responses show that how they perceive the phenomenon? SPSS version 16 software was used to analyze the surveyed data.

**Likert scale:** Likert scale is considered the most appropriate for measuring the perception of the respondents.

Their perception was measured on 5 points as below:

1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral/not clear, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human is the basic element of any society. He persuade about the things/events/development around him/her. Many factors are simultaneously affecting on his/her perception *i.e.*, society, social order, previous experience, personal exposure, association with a group and media exposure etc. in current age, TV is sharing and distributing the information in the shape of news. The impending growth in news has incited several criticisms. This study was basically conducted to investigate the relationship of TV with the public perception. This study analyzed the role of mass media in public perception about the P.T.I for this purpose educational institutes were targeted. Questionnaires were distributed among the students randomly. It turns out that youth is more supportive to P.T.I. questionnaires were then collected back with the response rate of 88.3%. spss version 16 software was used for basic demographic, correlation and regression analysis. This showed significant results in the direction of this study purpose.

**Table 1: Number of percent respondents in different age group of population (n=120)**

Age	Respondents (%)
< 20 years	20.8 %
21-25 years	72.6 %
>26 years	6.6%

**Demographic analysis:** a total of 120 questionnaires were distributed among the randomly selected population. Out of which 72.6% respondents were of 21-25 years of age. 20.8% were below the age of 20 years while 6.6% were above 26 years (table.1). Male participants were 73.6% while 24.6% were female.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis for the significant relationship between variables (n=120)**

	Mean	Standard deviation	1	2
People perception	4.2	0.783	1	
Mass media	3.9	0.84	0.76**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

**Correlation Analysis:** Table.2 shows the correlation analysis of the study, to check for significant relationship exists between variables of the study. The mean and standard deviation of people perception is 4.2 and 0.783 respectively, whereas the mean and standard deviation of mass media is 3.9 and 0.84 respectively. The value 0.76 near to 1 means that mass media has strong association with people perception.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis for the significant relationship of mass media with the People perception (n=120)**

Variables	Coefficient	t-statistics	P-value
Constant	2.3	1.84	.175
Mass media	5.3	2.43	0.042

a: dependent variable: people perception

**Regression Analysis:** Regression analysis was conducted one the basis of correlation results (Table.3). This shows that there is a significant relationship of mass media with the people perception. The p-vlaue of 0.042 which is less than the p-critical value of 0.05, means that mass media is statistically significant. The value of the t-statistics is also giving the same measure, that 2.43 is greater than the critical value of t-statistics *i.e.*, 1.96. This favors the results of p value discussed above. The coefficient value of mass media in this study is 5.3. This shows that one unit change in mass media will bring 5.3 unit change in the people perception in positive direction. Since the value 5.3 is positive.

**Conclusion:** These results favor null hypothesis which means that there is significantly positive relationship of TV and people perception. In other words, the mass media has significant impact on the public perception. This study is helpful in providing awareness about the TV exposure in different areas of Pakistan and also an understanding the importance of media organization to the political parties. Finally this study argues that actual and factual reporting of the issues and events should be practiced. This study suggests that strong analytical tools and a large sample size should be used in further research.

**Research Limitations:** The limitations of time and resources did not allow to expand the survey analysis of the study to other universities as well as unable to incorporate other factors *i.e.*, effecting people perception. Furthermore, the study was only based on prime time news headlines news channels. The results were based on the responses of educated persons (students) only; the illiterate person's participation was absolutely zero.

**Future Recommendations:** Research in the field of electronic media communication is rapidly growing in the universities of Pakistan. The researchers can explore new dimensions from this study for their own research projects. This study analyzed the effect of electronic media on public perception about politics in Pakistan. Future research can address the content analysis of electronic media and its programs (political talk shows) and its effect on public perception. The rapid growth of television channels provides a base for such research.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Riaz. (2008). *The Relationship between the Public and Print Media Agendas on National Issues in Pakistan*. Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University.
- [2] Iqbal, Z. (2011). *Mass Media, The Politics and The Politicians: A Mismatched Troika of Pakistan*. Islamabad: Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.
- [3] ICHRP. (2002). *Journalism, Media and the Challenge of Human Rights Reporting*. New York The International Council on Human Rights Policy, USA.
- [4] Gunther, & Lasorsa (1986) *Issue Importance and Perceptions of a Hostile Media*. Cambridge: Journalism Quarterly the Public, the Media and Agricultural Biotechnology. MA: CABI.
- [5] Naveed, F. (2012). *Gatekeeping in Mass Media*. Retrieved from Master in Mass Communication :
- [6] Miller, K. (2002). *Communication theories: Perspectives, processes, and contexts*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- [7] McCombs, M.E and Shaw, D.L. (1972) *The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media*. Public Opinion Quarterly, Oxford University Press