

INEXPERIENCED MEDIA ANCHORSHIP IS ADVERSELY IMPACTING THE, NATIONAL EMOTIONS, POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY INSTEAD OF CAUSING PRAGMATIC AWARENESS

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18976625>

Keywords

Talk Shows, novice anchors, diplomacy, expertise, hypothesis, techniques, emotions and propaganda.

Article History

Received: 13 January 2026

Accepted: 25 February 2026

Published: 12 March 2026

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Abstract

New millennium added new Television Channels in Pakistan which unfortunately invigorated an economic competition, thus racing for more viewership and money at any cost instead of creating much needed awareness among the masses. Almost every channel introduced the notion of Talk Shows which necessitated a hunt for the experienced and expert anchor persons. However in order to win the competition, media houses even felt satisfied to present novice anchor persons. Astonishingly such novice anchor persons tried to and are still trying to cover wide array of subject ranging from academics, religion, economy, politics, warfare, criminology, environments, international relations and even spiritualism as experts on all the subjects. This attitude of swindle experts on mosaic of subjects has not only affected the notion of awareness but has also affected the impression of such novice anchors and money minting media houses. This attitude has is supporting propaganda, hence it is not only impacting the national emotions but also the diplomacy.

INTRODUCTION

While listening, observing and evaluating various talk shows more or less on most of the Television Channels since the advent of new millennium (Huma & Emrys, 2013, p.4); it has been observed that there is a shortage of expert anchor person in various media houses due to which only a fewer individuals are employed as anchor person to coordinate a discussions on variety of subjects ranging from military conflicts, academics, religion, economy, politics, criminology, environments, International Relations and even to spiritualism. An anchor person has to be an expert as he has to coordinate a broadcast on a particular subject among various experts (English to English Dictionary, 2015). It will be pragmatic and prudent to recall the major national events at the start of this millennium which dominated the electronic media including scenarios like Kargil

Conflict between India and Pakistan from May to July 1999 and its aftermath (Peter, 2007, p.1), political turmoil in Pakistan resulting due to overthrowing of prime minister on 12 October 1999 and declaration of state of emergency on 14 October 1999 (Blue, Hoffman & Alexandre, 2008,p.3), a year of military stand-off between two nuclear rivals India and Pakistan from December 2001 to 2002 (Feroz, Ryan & Emily, 2008, p.6), disasters of Kashmir and Ziarat earthquakes in October 2005 and 2008 respectively (Naseebullah ,2012, p.7). Declaration of emergency on 3 November 2007 (Blue, Hoffman & Alexandre, 2008, p.4), anti-terrorist military operations like Zerba-e-Azb since 15 June 2014 and Baluchistan situation. It is imperative to note that during that Pakistani Scenario of military situation, anchor persons not only conducted the shows on military

affairs but also tried to cover up their limitation of war experience and knowledge about warfare. These efforts had some impression on general public as they also knew very little about such vital facets. However the efforts of inexperienced anchor persons could not develop a pragmatic influence on the international viewers and the experts on warfare. It would have been prudent to select the individuals who were experts on the subject. The anchor persons being inexperienced about this facet were not confident about the subject so they resorted to technique of asking direct and revealing questions from the experts rather than involving them in an enlightening and pragmatic discussions.

While coordinating the broadcast and carrying out the discussion about the political scenario in Pakistan of October 1999 and November 2007 the anchor persons were displaced some confidence however they had little grip on constitutional and legal issues about martial law and emergency so mostly they were unable to differentiate between the implications of martial law and emergency. However considering the above discussed limitations they could neither control the discussion nor could reach to any conclusion with a view to suggest options rather left the subject open like researchers. However as for as their efforts to cover the relief operations during Kashmir and Ziarat earthquakes are concerned, the anchor person managed to suggest a few viable and relevant recommendations.

It has been observed that with a view to cover their shortcomings and to compete with the other anchor persons the inexperienced anchor persons instead of improving their knowledge about relevant facets highlighted adopted various techniques including asking of planted questions from guests during talk shows, exaggerated discussion on hypothesis rather than facts, creating hype between two guests with different views, asking indirect and superfluous questions, even enhancing their knowledge about the subject under discussion during the un desired commercial breaks through the expert guests, inviting only a fewer guests repeatedly and lastly by not concluding the talks pragmatically. Although these techniques could only influence a few less

literate minds that too for a limited time, however at large they could not influence the learned and international audience nor could suggest any pragmatic options or ideas. Apart from inducing frustration in the individuals they have proved to be time wasters for the general public; however they are minting money for the media houses. It is imperative for the anchor persons to fill at least the required knowledge gap if not up to the desired level. War and Politics are vital aspects for any nation especially a nation like us who has fought three major wars and is still fighting a War on Terror, a nation which is suffering from political and constitutional turmoil since its inception so it was obligatory for at least the anchor persons of the millennium to learn academically about warfare and politics to contribute prudent awareness since the start of millennium in Pakistani media environments.

1.1 Literature Review

Electronic news is one of the most influential information and awareness source in Pakistan where the literacy rate is awfully low. Talk shows plays a vital role in enhancing awareness among the masses on available information by analyzing it through discussions generated by the anchor persons who have criticized the cases of missing persons, Pakistan Steel Mill, rental projects, victimisation by members of the assemblies (Mozama, Kalsoom & Sadaf, 2010, p.20).

As for as the facets mentioned above in introduction very little has been pragmatically highlighted by the anchor persons. While discussing about a vital issue of Baluchistan anchors have only pointed out the negative aspects that people of Baluchistan are being oppressed by the government and army is being used as a tool to subdue them (International Media Support, 2009, p.27). Study also highlights that mostly the anchor persons do not have the true information and/or knowledge about the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and other conflict zones so the discussion never proved to be prudent (International Media Support, 2009, p.32).

A few of the anchor persons have been alleged to make money through the talk shows by supporting an individual or a party or to exploit. Details of nineteen anchor persons involved in such activities are available on the Internet (Farrukh, 2012).

In order to overcome their weaknesses and lack of knowledge a few of the anchor persons instead of taking or giving an opinion try to put the words in the mouth of a leading personality (Shahid, 2009). In few of the cases apart from asking the planted questions from a person they plan and execute a planted interview for their personal interest instead of a social or professional prudence (Khalil & Farish, 2013, p.6). It has been concluded that 79.11 per cent of talk shows are non-conclusive and direction less (Khalil & Farish, 2013, p. 11). It has also been evaluated that in 69.1 per cent cases anchor persons try to impose their own views directly or indirectly. Mostly anchor persons have failed to provide quality information.

Apart from the short coming discussed above less prudent talk shows are causing anxiety and worry in society and are source of wasting time and resources. Apart from affecting the emotions such T.V Shows are also affecting the politics and diplomacy.

1.2 Research gap

Considering the details mentioned in literature review a gap has been observed in problem introduction and literature review. About the prudence of talk shows it has already been highlighted that 79.11 per cent of these are non-conclusive and about the professionalism of anchor persons it has been evaluated that 69.1 per cent try to impose their own views instead of stressing upon the views of others. The money making attitude of some of the anchor persons, their adoption and their crafted techniques to mould the discussion to suit their personal interests have also been identified. Apart from all these short-comings the role of anchor persons has been noticeable to highlight the social issues like cases of missing persons, victimisation of common people by police, political, and executive authorities and corruption. However it has been observed that on sensitive subjects like warfare

studies, constitutional matters, legal affair, sensitive issues like Baluchistan Situation and War on Terror mostly the anchor persons possess scanty knowledge which is insufficient for a pragmatic academic discourse and prudent awareness. Such inexperienced discourse on vital facets leads to a few emotional, social, political and diplomatic implications.

1.3 Research questions

Considering the research gap it will be practical to form the research on two facets:

Question 1. How successfully the anchor persons have dealt the subjects like Kargil Conflict, constitutional, and political mayhem in Pakistan from 12 October 1999 to 3 November 2007, India Pakistan Military Crisis of 2001, Operation Zerba-e-Azb and Baluchistan Scenario?

Question 2. What have been the effects of inexperienced role of anchor persons on awareness, emotions, politics and diplomacy?

1.4 Research Objective

Research objective was to evaluate professionalism of the anchor persons and analyse its effects on society and diplomacy.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research design

Focused group were used to collect the data as very nature of research questions required qualitative data to be answered. As focus group elicit participants' feelings, perceptions and attitude with regard to subject (Puchta & Potter, 2004). Considering the versatility of possible replies and effects, the targeted population was divided into six groups including literates, illiterates, females, males, adults and children from aging 12 years to 50 years.

2.2 Population, sample and sample size

A purposive sampling technique was adopted and applied so as to have able and willing participants for provision of required information (A. Hansen et al., 1998, p. 268). For every group of literates, illiterates, females, males, adults and children

twelve persons were selected. In fact as per the suggestions of Morgan (1988, p.1) there should be five to eight participants in a group however considering the volume of study impact number of participants was increased to twelve per group. Keeping in view the social value of the study and its futuristic influence on coming generations' variety on groups were selected. Considering the observation about Baluchistan efforts were made to have Baluchi representation in all the groups.

2.3 Research Questioner

In order to record some of the view points and to further refine the dynamic research a questioner was also distributed to four groups instead of six. The two groups which were not included were illiterate and children group. In order to have open opinion and to keep the interest following simple and focused questions were asked:

Question 1. In your opinion what have you learned about Kargil Conflict from the anchor persons? Was it enough to formulate your opinion about the professional performance of Pakistan Army?

Question 2. In your opinion what have you learned about military standoff between India and Pakistan during 2001 and 2002 from the anchor persons and do you consider enough to formulate your opinion about the professional performance of both armies?

Question 3. In your opinion what have you learned about the role of two nations during military standoff between India and Pakistan from 2001 to 2002?

Question 4. In your views how much have you learned about martial law and state of emergency through the talk shows during October 1999 political scenario? Can you differentiate between the two?

Question 5. In your views how much you have learned about martial law and state of emergency through the talk shows during political scenario since October 1999 to November 2007?

Question 6. Do you think anchor persons generally have enough knowledge about terrorism?

Question 7. Do you think anchor persons have enough knowledge about geographical, political and social aspects of erstwhile FATA?

Question 8. Do you think anchor persons have enough knowledge about Guerilla Warfare?

Question 9. In your opinion how many anchor persons have actually visited Kohlu, Dera Bugti and other areas of Baluchistan?

Question 10. In your opinion how many anchor persons highlight positive and strong points about Baluchistan?

Question 11. In your opinion are the anchor persons professionally experienced?

Question 12. In your opinion how much these talk shows have improved the awareness?

Question 13. In your opinion how much these talk shows have affected the emotions and psychological attitude of the listeners?

Question 14. In your opinion how much these talk shows have affected the political public opinion?

Question 15. In your opinion how much these talk shows have affected the awareness about diplomatic actions and relations?

2.4. Data Extraction of Strategy

The strategy for each groups was pre-planned, which was used by everyone during all discussions, allowing the participants to converse and deliberate over the topic as per their opinion while a moderator kept seeking to extract and assess the argument, views and responses of the participants. Questions on the subject were focused and simple leading to suggestions of about additional topics (Alreck & Settle, 1995, p. 397).

2.5 Selection of Participants

While selecting the participants the foremost value was given to the facet of willingness or volunteer ship so that participants come out with frank opinion and are easy to handle. To find out the participants help from school teachers, shop keepers and a few organisational heads were sought. Initially efforts were made to make all the groups sit together however considering their commitments discussion timing were made more flexible. Discussions proved helpful for the participants to fill in the questioner.

2.6 Group Data Recording Strategy

The primary information produced by groups comprised of questioner, verbal, opinions, arguments of the participants (A. S. Hansen & Newbold, 1998, pp. 276-277). Considering the value of the discussion all the focus group sessions were audio-recorded as it is a simple, easy and inexpensive method, and it can be transcribed were condensed into brief, written reports (Alreck & Settle, 1995, p. 404). Moreover it is considered a familiar way of analyzing the group discussions (Morgan, 1998, p. 56).

2.7 Data analysis

According to their nature 'the fundamental data that focus groups produce are transcripts of the group discussions' (Morgan, 1988, p. 10). Thus, the analysis of focus group data involves the researcher's subjective process of making sense of what was discussed in the groups. Therefore, a final written report of the focus group data has been put together and discussed under the major themes and research question that took place across the full set of groups.

2.8 Ethical issues

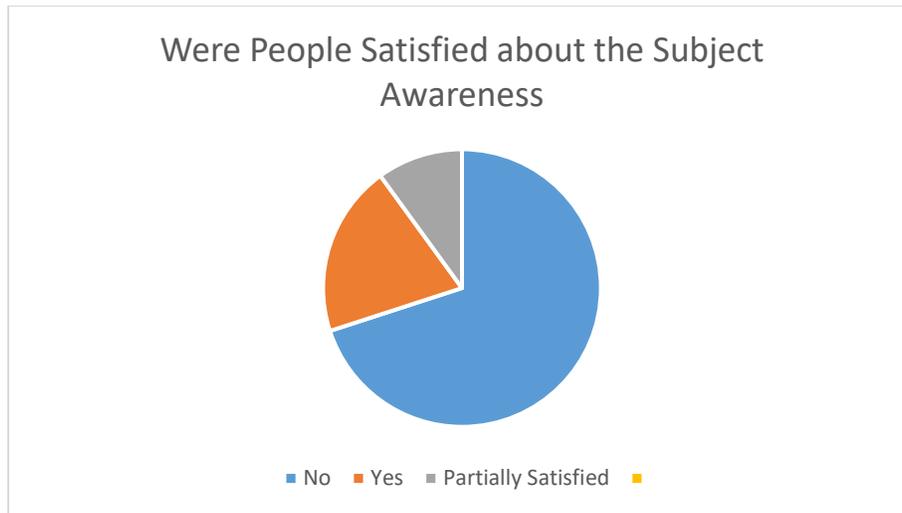
Keeping in view the value of ethics in research the anchor persons and talk shows have not been named. Moreover considering the respect of participants' prior permission for recording was sought from them. It was also assured to the participants that the information extracted from them will only be used for this study and will not be shared with anyone else without their permission.

3. Findings of the study

After deliberate group discussions with all the six groups and considering the replies of questioner from four groups' subsequent findings emerged.

3.1 Knowledge of anchor person about Kargil Conflict

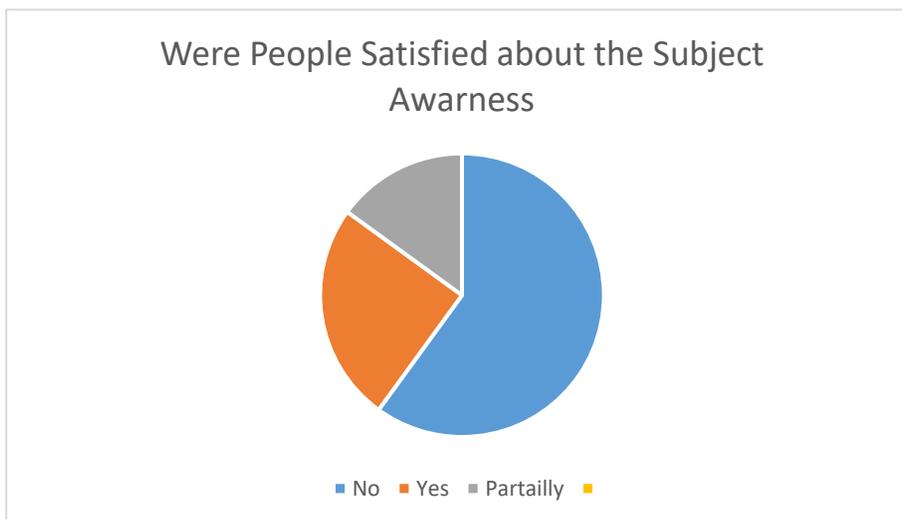
Through the discussions with all six groups and the appraisal of questioner replies it was evaluated that the masses could not learn and understand much about Kargil Conflict through the talk shows. A few reasons which were concluded for this facet have been subsequently mentioned. Firstly, it was evaluated that the anchor persons who pretended to be expert on the subject had never even visited the areas and only felt satisfied to discuss the subject on basis of fewer photos and possibly some videos which almost everyone saw through electronic and print media. Secondly, the anchor had very little demographic information about the area and its people which could have been even attained through internet very conveniently. Thirdly, the anchor persons had very little knowledge about the warfare techniques and their implications. However on the contrary millions of people those have been part of forces, associated to the forces and even related to the forces had more knowledge than the anchor persons. Fourthly, unlike many of the western anchor persons Pakistani anchor persons have no experience of an active conflict zone however they kept on dwelling through shame expertise and failed not only to create a pragmatic awareness, rather adversely influenced the impression of media and the country during a very sensitive stage of events. Fifthly, it was observed that most of the anchor persons fell prey to propaganda carried out by the adversaries. It has been concluded that this aspect could have been improved significantly by just inviting various experts from armed forces in the talk shows. However this vital and convenient method was not truly adopted for the reasons better known to anchor persons. Anchor persons could not add to understanding of the masses about a vital aspect of warfare. This vital aspect should have been highlighted in true spirit with a view to create rightful awareness.



3.2 Understanding of anchor persons about constitutional and political mayhem in Pakistan of October 1999.

Discussion results of all six groups and the evaluation of questioner replies led to the conclusion that the masses could not learn and understand much about constitutional and political mayhem in Pakistan of October 1999 through the talk shows. A few reasons which were evaluated for this facet have been subsequently mentioned. Firstly, the anchor persons were unable to understand the difference between a martial law and an emergency. Secondly they were unable to express the implications of the state of

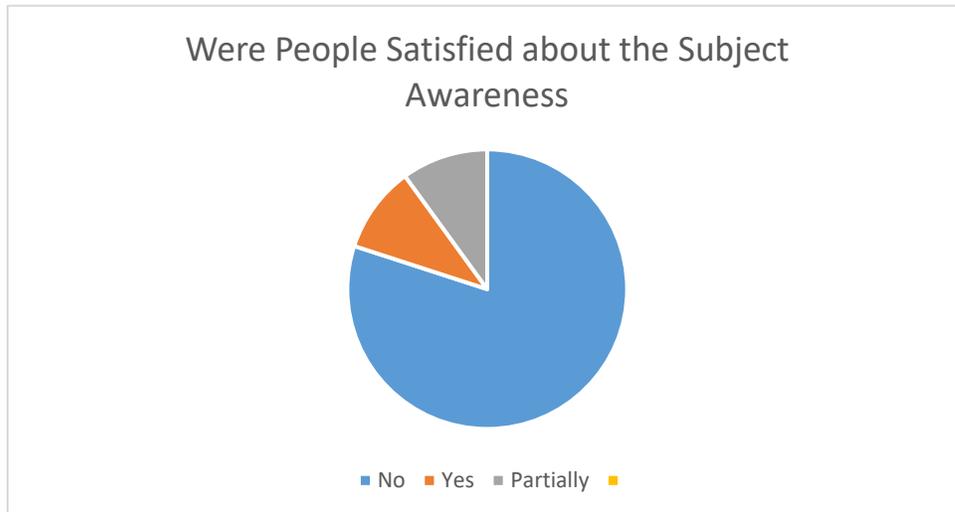
emergency so they mainly relied on legal and constitutional experts. Thirdly, the invited constitutional and legal experts expressed their thoughts mainly basing upon the political affiliations which failed the anchor persons to present impartial view and facts which added to the confusion among the masses instead of adding to much needed awareness. Fourthly, money minting media race did not allow time for anchor persons to read even a few basic provisions about the state of emergency as that would have proved much more prudent for clear understanding of masses on the subject and to cause realistic awareness.



3.3 Understanding of anchor person about India Pakistan Military Stand Off during 2001 and 2002.

Discussions and the evaluation of questioner replies revealed that the people could not learn and understand much about India Pakistan Military Stand Off during 2001 and 2002 through the talk shows. A few reasons which were concluded for this aspect have been subsequently mentioned. Firstly, the anchor persons did not learn much of the lessons from the results of Kargil Conflict and did not try to add their knowledge and understanding about the warfare. Secondly, the anchors had very little demographic information about the area and its people which could have been even attained through internet very conveniently. Thirdly, the anchor persons had very little knowledge about the warfare techniques and their implications. However on the contrary millions of masses those have been part of forces, associated to the forces and even related to the forces had more knowledge than the anchor persons. Fourthly, unlike many of the

western anchor persons Pakistani anchor persons had no experience of an active conflict zone and they kept on dwelling through shame expertise and failed not only to create a pragmatic awareness but also adversely influenced the impression of media and the country during about a very sensitive stage of events. It has been concluded that this aspect could have been improved significantly by just inviting various experts from armed forces in the talk shows. However this vital and convenient method was truly not adopted for the reasons better known to anchor persons. Anchor persons could not add to the understanding of the masses about a vital aspect of warfare. This vital aspect should have been highlighted in true spirit with a view to create suitable awareness. Considering rivalry between India and Pakistan, war history between both countries and futuristic regional and extra regional dynamic it would have been vital for the anchor persons to read the warfare as a subject like their contemporaries.



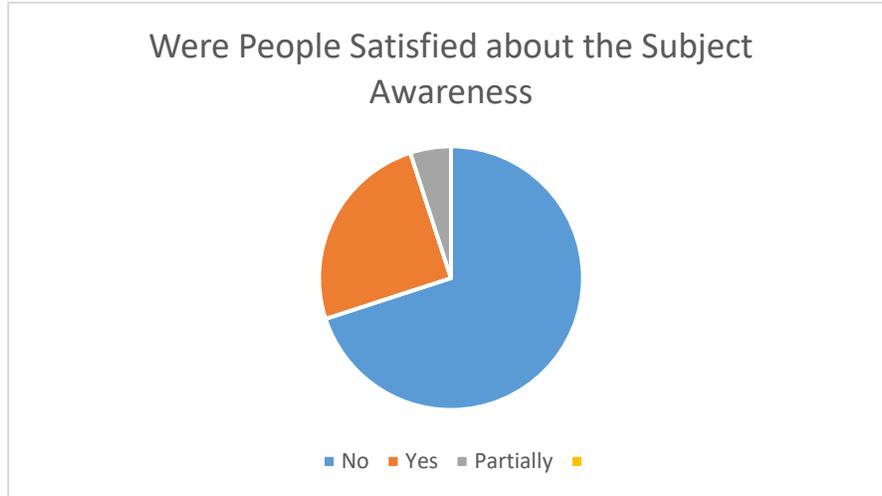
3.4 Understanding of anchor persons about the state of emergency declared in November 2007.

Through discussions among all six groups and the evaluation of answers to questioner, it was once again observed that despite the earlier disappointment which was caused due to

ignorance of anchor persons on the subject in October 1999 was once again repeated despite the gap of seven years to learn. A few reasons which were evaluated for this facet have been subsequently mentioned. Firstly, the anchor persons were unable to predict any such situation in future. Secondly, unlike their contemporaries

they did not feel the necessity to learn about this vital facet of national value. Thirdly, it appears that they were more inserted in winning the media race instead of causing a realistic awareness to form a

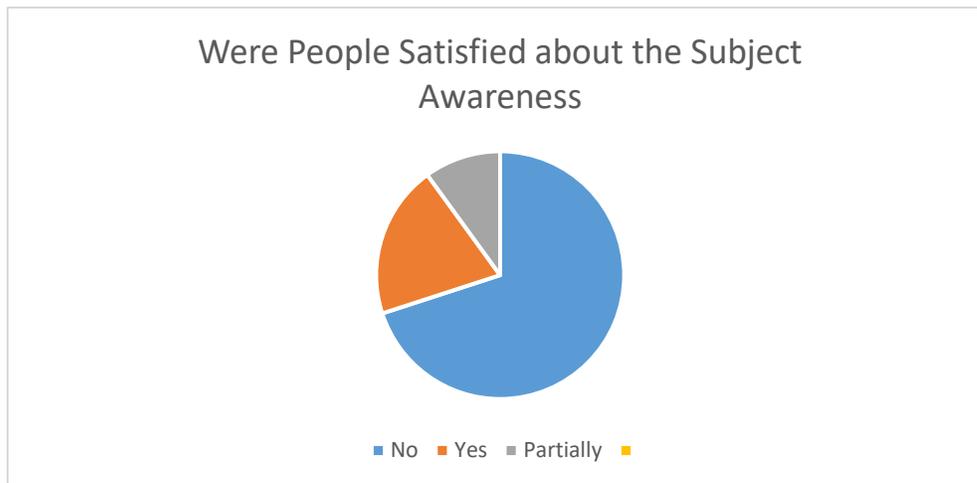
national opinion. Fourthly, the anchor persons preferred to work with the availability of scanty mosaic of information instead of conducting some research.



3.5 Anchor person’s involvement in Operation Zerba-e-Azb

It has been concluded through the discussions and answers to the questioner that despite the legacy to fight against terrorism for years the talk shows about the recent Operation Zerba-e-Azb since June 2014 were not been able to create the requisite awareness and the reasons or more and less are same which were observed during Kargil Conflict since June 1999. Firstly, even after the gap of fifteen years it was unfortunately evaluated that the anchor persons who pretend to be expert on the subject had never even visited the erstwhile FATA and only felt satisfied to discuss the subject

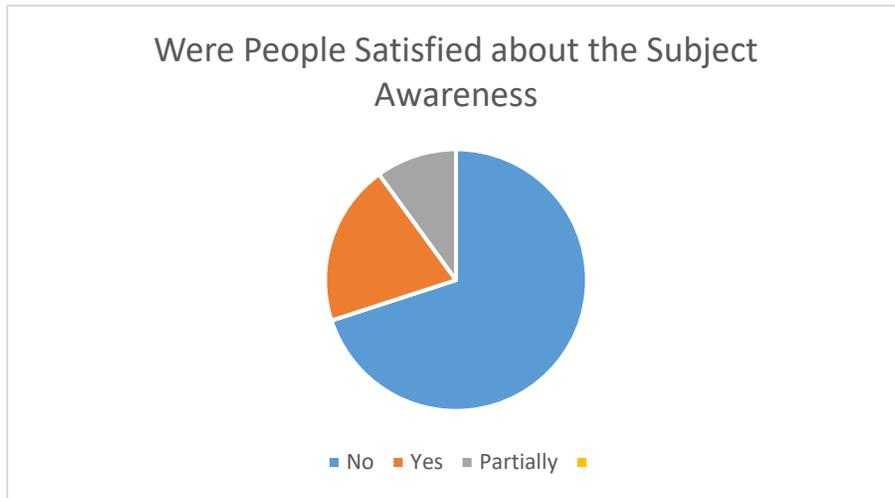
on basis of scanty information elicited through electronic and print media. Secondly, the anchors had very little demographic information about the area and its people which could have been even attained easily but they never considered it important. Thirdly, the anchor persons had very little knowledge about the warfare techniques and their implications. Fourthly, unlike many of the western anchor persons Pakistani anchor persons had no experience of an active conflict zone. It is important to realise that even after the gap of fifteen years between Kargil Conflict and Operation Zerba-e-Azb the anchor persons have not learned much.



3.6 Handling of Baluchistan Scenario by anchor persons

The anchor persons through talk shows have been depicting a bleak picture about the law and order situation of Baluchistan. Most unfortunate and sad part of it is once again the easy going style of our anchor persons who pretend to be expert about all facets without even visiting their own Baluchistan Province. Only a very few of the contemporary anchor person have visited even the provincial capital; Quetta. They conduct programme about Baluchistan merely basing upon the information which reaches them in bits and pieces and that too from various sources whose credibility is not ascertained. Unfortunately the anchor persons do not evaluate the authenticity of information and just behave like inexperienced news hungry journalists and news correspondents. These sham experts even do not have basic knowledge about the demography of the Baluchistan. Only the views of so called Baluchi politicians and authority hungry Sardars are projected without high lighting their true value in their tribes. Very little is highlighted about the self-imposed exile by the sham Baluchi political leaders. The strength of proud Baluchies against all kind of aggression since 17th century is not pragmatically highlighted. It has not been discussed or evaluated that why the Baluchies are still integrated with Pakistan despite regional and

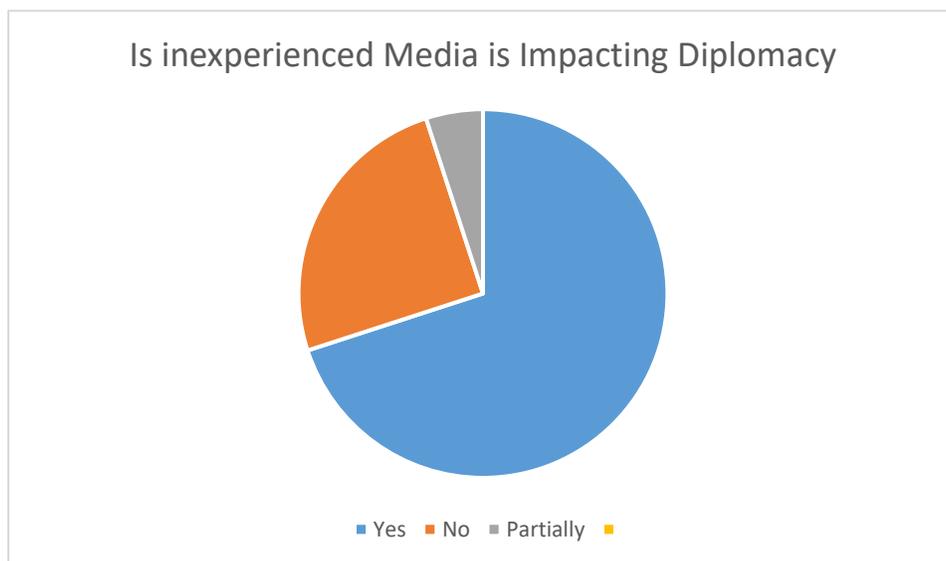
extra regional efforts since 17th century and oppressive behaviour of Sardars. Anchor persons involve only fewer persons repeatedly who highlight only one side of the story which suits their point of view. Colossal efforts being made by Pakistan Army for the social and economic development of the area have not been highlighted (Ghazi, 2013, p.3). Demand and willingness by Marri Tribe for presence of Pakistan Army has never been highlighted. Burying of the loved ones by victimised Hazra Community in Pakistani Flag has been never highlighted and any incident where a flag is torched is discussed beyond any limits. It will be imperative that if anchor persons also highlight a comparison of crime rate with other provinces of Pakistan where a few communities tried to exploit the recent political and military situation in Pakistan it was the proud Baluchies who supported the Military Situation (Mir, 2015). Considering the regional and extra regional situation it is the need of the hour for the anchor person to discuss and highlight the facets basing on reality and research rather than discussing an unauthentic information (Media Visit, 2009). Moreover unlike highlighting any incident of terrorism in other provinces name a city or precise place is mentioned, however in case of Baluchistan entire province is named instead of city, which also promotes the propaganda.



4. Effects of inexperienced anchor persons on awareness, emotions, politics and diplomacy

All the facts that have been discussed above have influenced the Pakistani society and its diplomacy. Repetitive and inexperienced attitude of the anchor persons have adverse effects on various domains of human life. During talk shows, exaggerated discussion on hypothesis rather than facts result in creating hype between two guest speakers having different views thus creating an irritating effect on the listeners which affects their emotional stability causing anxiety and tension. Asking of planted questions from guests during talk shows, creating hype between two guest

speakers adversely effects the relations between two individuals, political parties and ultimate affecting the politics. By adopting the technique of asking planted questions and their efforts of imposing their own ideas have negative effect on awareness as the masses are misled because of it. All such aspects which have been mentioned above lead to wrong political conclusions and a crafted awareness which has dominating effect on all spheres of social life and government affairs which not only have adverse effect on the policies rather it influences even the diplomatic efforts and diplomacy.



5. Conclusion

The competition focused more towards the rating and monetary benefits instead of creating much needed awareness among the masses. In order to take the lead channels are following the global paradigm, almost every channel introducing the notion of Talk Shows which necessitated a hunt for the experienced and expert anchor persons. Surprisingly such novice anchor persons tried to and are still trying to cover wide array of subjects as experts on all the subjects. However it has been observed that the anchor persons have dealt the subjects like Kargil Conflict, constitutional, and political mayhem in Pakistan from 12 October 1999 to 3 November 2007, India Pakistan Military Crisis of 2001, Operation Zerba-e-Azb and Baluchistan Scenario unsuccessfully which have influenced awareness, emotions, politics and diplomacy. Considering the adverse effects on all these facets it will be prudent to improve on the facets mentioned above so as to create better awareness, emotions, politics and diplomacy. This research will allow other researchers to find out that why Pakistani anchor persons have failed to go into the conflict zones to understand the warfare techniques like western anchor persons.

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