

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

By

Zahid Yousaf

Head/Assistant Professor Centre for Media & Communication Studies,
University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan

Abstract

This study “Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders” explores the impact of the different Television channels of Pakistan and the foreign TV channels on the people of Pakistan which form public opinion as a whole. With the development of media, the debates about the outcomes of globalization divide the world into different strata. Through this study we intended to calculate and gauge the impact of the international English speaking media in Pakistan and western hegemony of the media leads to inconsistent flow of information, also through the ways in which it was communicated within the hierarchy of the country. The survey is made to find out the influence of different media channels on local opinion leaders of Pakistan. In this study fifteen different questions were asked about their opinion regarding the research topic. People from multiple age groups, genders, professions and areas were the respondents in the survey. In this research both the public and private television channels are discussed from Pakistan moreover the international (western) news channels such as PTV world, Express, Pease, GEO, Express CITY-42, Dawn News, CBNC News ,BBC world and CNN news etc are addressed. The data gathered through the survey interpreted and analyzed by using the SPSS method. According to analysis of the data, most critics of television in Pakistan are restricted to viewing the media from this aspect-only in terms of socio-religious permissibility-but the study of television playing the role of an opinion formational mode is being based on deeper and broader perspective in the developed world. Conclusively the study finds no significant change in the attitude of the opinion leaders. The reason probably is that media is fast losing its credibility because it is being operated by a few vested interests. It has actually become an agent of powerful elites in the society. Thus, the hypothesis that foreign media will have an influence on the attitude of the opinion leaders has not been proved. The foreign media is also not considered credible by local opinion makers. It will be an agenda for the future researchers to find out the influence of global satellite media on common people who are exposed to it because of its immense glamour and reach.

Keywords: *Global TV Channels, opinion leaders, globalization, effects of media.*

1. Introduction

Mass communication differs from other forms of communication technologies. Mass media is influencing the attitudes and behaviors of the people throughout the globe. The objective of this research is to find out the relationship between media and the attitude formation process of the local opinion leaders. The study will also examine the effects of the global media and the credibility level enjoyed by them in our society, this topic is of paramount importance as cable television (CTV) is becoming very popular in Pakistan and resultantly audiences of electronic media are rapidly having an access to the global media. Private channels of Pakistani origin as well as the foreign channels are fast replacing the monopoly of the state-controlled media in Pakistan. This study aims at examining the recent developments that have taken place in this vitally important industry and their impact on the framers of the public opinion in Pakistani society.

While discussing the influence of media on society, the role and effects of television cannot be ignored. Cultivation theory, Gerbner began the ‘Culture Indications’ research project in the mid-1960s, to study whether and how watching television may influence viewers’ ideas of what the everyday world is like.

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

Cultivation research is in the 'effect' tradition. Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects, which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant.

The theorists in the discipline of mass communication emphasize the effects of television viewing on the attitude rather than the behavior of viewers. Heavy watching of television is seen as 'cultivating' attitudes, which are more consistent with the world of television programs than with the everyday world. Watching television may tend to induce a general mindset about violence in the world, quite apart from any effects it might have in inducing violent behavior. Cultivation theorists distinguish between 'first order' effects (general beliefs about the everyday world, such as about the prevalence of violence) and 'second order' effects (specific attitudes, such as to law and order or to personal safety).

News Credibility & Flow of Information:

Until the end of World War I, according to press historian Theodore Peterson, most people's views on ethics and credibility in the news was guided by "the optimistic notion that virtually absolute freedom and the nature of humans carried built in correctives for the press". In other words, citizens were assumed to be well-informed people whose free access to information could discount the lies and distortions that were common everywhere in the press.

Profit-driven news organizations are under great pressure to boost ratings by sensationalizing the news: focusing attention on lurid, highly emotional stories, often featuring a bizarre cast of characters and a gripping plot but devoid of significance to most people's lives. Most media outlets are owned by for-profit corporations and are funded by corporate advertising; it is not surprising that they seldom provide a full range of debate.

Governments almost always have an interest in controlling the free flow of information, official censorship that must be constantly guarded against. Large corporations are a more common source of censorship than governments: Media outlets killing stories because they undermine corporate interests; advertisers using their financial clout to quash negative reports; powerful business using the threat of expensive lawsuits to discourage legitimate investigations.

Rationale for selecting The Globalized Media (Cable TV Channels)

A layman's view globalization may be defined as the world entering an area bringing nations together creating McLuhan's "global village" or in an extreme case a borderless world where cultures will merge and nations will lose their identities. However there is more to globalization than to making nations closer. Globalization can be more specifically defined as a term used to describe the acceleration and intensification of economic interactions among the people, companies and governments of different nations. Is the Western media really free when it is being controlled by media barons, the governments and the military-industrial complex of the country? These "information elites" have similar cluster of interest, principally international affairs and economics. "So when American Media plays an agenda setting role globally, the effect can be to assign the degree to which international attention is focused on the issue. Governments have agendas to follow, policies to implement and plans to realize. Whether democratic or authoritarian, they are not neutral entities but represent the interest of groups dominant in society. The cable TV channels, i.e. the channels shown on cable have been selected for the purpose of the study as these channels enjoy the power of altering the attitudes of the audience. These cable TV channels, i.e. PTV, GEO, ARY Digital, Express News, BBC World News, and CNN shown on cable have been selected for the purpose of the study as these channels enjoy the power of altering the attitudes of the audience.

Rationale of the Study

We all believed that person's perception of reality is based on their belief. In today's world, many of those beliefs are in some ways formed by the mainstream media. It is therefore important that we know

what the media is presenting, and how it is done. Media is shaping our every day decisions and the more we are bombarded with information the more reasons we have to question its validity.

The media publicizes only the mainstream opinion (that was first created by a power elite and then disseminated through mobilizes).

The Pakistani society has been plagued by a history of suppression and oppression. Blanket censorship of all printed and audio-visual matter was imposed in October 1979. People were allowed to read what the state wanted them to read. Thick markers blacked out objectionable portions in the magazines and pages were torn off. The people's only source of information was local press. There were no satellite channels or Internet. The only door to the world was through radio broadcasts of BBC, VOA etc. There was stranglehold of the government on the flow of information thus keeping the people in the dark. There was only one voice that was heard "the entire press was forced...to sing in symphony with one voice, in an effort to formulate public opinion into a single mould: (Zameer Niazi, Web of Censorship). The over-dependency on the media influences the local Pakistani intelligentsia and their policies for the country. It is through this study that we aim to find how the media influences the think tank of our country.

- We attempt to reveal the circumstances in which the Pakistani national worldview came into being.
- We will try to understand the ways in which it was created and communicated from the positions of highest intellectual authority in the country.
- Through this study we intend to calculate and gauge the impact of the international English speaking media in Pakistan.
- We intend to emphasize through the study that the western hegemony of the media leads to a disproportionate flow of information.
- Powerful corporations are becoming major influences on mainstream media resulting in biased projection of issues. Hence important for us to gauge their influence on the developing nations.

2. Literature Review

There is a plethora of literature available on the topic of the study. Different scholars have treated the issues of effects and credibility of the media in a different way. Neumann's 'Spiral of Silence' study gave a rebirth to the Powerful Effects Model of Mass Communication. Similarly, Altschull's work (1984) discovered how media serves the interests of the powerful elite in the society. Bagdikian also questioned the credibility of the media. A lot of literature is also available on the relationship between media and opinion leaders. Rasul (2000) is of the view that the opinion leaders depend heavily on media for getting information and then pass on this information to various publics in their area.

Hirsch (1980) in his paper "Globalization and Mass Media Ownership- Implications and Effects" discussed the issue of media control. The paper addressed the question of mass media ownership and control from its historic roots in America to a more international setting. It raises the question of how the rules and regulations regarding mass media will change now that they are more transitional in nature. The paper also addressed how American mass media has started to shift from domestic to international control.

The McBrid (1980) report dared to propose was in which other voices could be heard. It saw essentially the 'one-way' flow of information as a problem to be reckoned with and made suggestions to make media production accessible to the world. The report cautiously and modestly proposed ways by which communication policies might be changed to create media structures that do not make people into 'others', and suggested regulatory policies that might encourage border participation in the media. It also suggested provided equipment and training to 'others' to allow them to speak for themselves (McBride report).

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

Atkin (1981) article discusses the effects of globalization on African countries specifically, and on non-westernized governments. It hypothesizes that communication technologies and economies are under the control of western multinationals, and with a spread of their ideologies they are posing a threat to the cultures of host countries. Wolter (1988) gives references from the past where western countries have tried to impose their values in African and non-western countries in the name of modernization, which is actually the author believes if westernization. The author believes that this kind of globalization destroys diversity and displaces the opportunity to sustain decent human life through an assortment of many difficult cultures.

Chomsky (1989) has also tried to prove the realm as media are basically trying to divert people in lighter subjects like sports or scandals or prolific personalities, while the 'real', core issues are left for the government and other powerful agencies. Furthermore the author believes that agenda's the media is setting are those influenced by big corporations.

A book consisting of a series of interviews that David Barsamian (2000) had with Chomsky between May 1998 and June 2000 and covers a wide range of topics. Noam Chomsky offers insights into the institutions that shape public mind in the service of highlight the thin line that separates information from propaganda.

McChensey (2002) has discussed how the global media system is dominated by a small number of super-powerful; mostly US based trans-national media corporations. This, according to Noam Chomsky, begun in the 1980's under pressure from the IMF, World Bank and the US government to deregulate and privatize media and communication systems. This coincided with new satellite and digital technologies, resulting in the rise of trans-national media giants.

Professor Harrison (2007) in his paper "Globalization and its effects on South Asian Societies" discusses the effects of globalization and its invasion in the traditional societies of South Asia. The author focuses the effects of globalization on India, where old cultures and traditions are being replaced by new and powerful western values. The author suggests that globalization is not entirely evil or good, it is something which has resulted from an ever increasing interaction of different worlds, which is becoming increasing popular through the wide use of the internet.

According to the New Global Public News Network, the writer tell us how during the 9/11 attacks the normal transmission of programs of all genres was cut short to carry information about the terror attacks. Post 9/11 a new strategy known as 'vertical integration' as been introduced, under which sprawling media conglomerates like AOL can not only produce news, entertainment and sports programs, but also distribute it, and simultaneously "repurpose" it. The author also believes that given the developing countries reliance on mainstream media, it is vital for the international community to increase its efforts for an independent media to promote a favorable political environment between countries.

Jabbar (2010) elieves that post 9/11 the glaring fact that has come to the front in that there is hardly any Muslim radio or TV channel that can compete with CNN, BBC etc. The author believes that these aforementioned networks are neither "Christian Global Media" nor are they always balanced or credible, particularly in coverage given to Muslim related issues. He supports these claims with examples from history. He lays the blame for this media disparity on the absence of a Muslim global media.

Shah (2004) cites Lehman takes a look into the organizational structures, administrative policy and working of the BBC and CNN. It does at no point try to make any comparisons between the two regarding their competence or effectiveness vis-à-vis the dissemination of news. It covers in extensive details the establishment of the two corporate news giants and looks towards their reportage during different strategic times in history.

A German scholar has made a comparison between the verbal and non-verbal techniques of the news casters of the BBC and the CNN over an interval of three weeks at prime time. She separates different gestures and deals with them and their specific culture and geographical meanings. The dissertation pointed out that CNN's including far more live conversations in the program seemed to support the idea of the 'live theory', and simultaneously indicated the intention of a more direct way of news-telling. The dissertation, on the other hand also showed that on BBC World the most common form of announcing a news unit was done by reporters as the recorded audio and visual materials were broadcasts as interpreting, analyzing ones they intend to do it indirectly, so the news item is a mixture of the facts and the analysis.

Avishai (2008) takes a critical look at globalization and of America's role in it. Talking about American companies and multi-nationals the author highlights their role in developing countries where they cultivate skills needed to perpetuate democracy and the rule of law. Bernard Avishai talks of the misconception in most minds that American companies dominate the global economy and are insensitive to the real cause of doing global good. He believes that the American way of work revolves around the civil society's norms of democracy, free market economy and rule of law, which are introduced abroad through multinational companies and their expansion.

Garcia and Vishwanath's (2009) article in this compilation largely link international communication to international relations, suggesting that the direction of flow of information is reflective of the prevalent power-balance on the global scene as well as of shifting balances of power and the subsequent paradigm shifts that shake up international politics from time to time.

After going through a vast body of literature, the researcher is of the view that studying the impact of global media on local opinion makers is extremely important due to the sensitivity attached with this topic by different scholars. Further, global media is a new phenomenon in our society and how it is influencing the attitudes of the people is a cause of concern for students of mass communication. Measuring the effects and credibility level of this media carries great importance so that new policies could be framed keeping in view the impact of global media.

3. Theoretical Framework

The following theories have been selected as theoretical framework for this study. There were many theories relevant to this research but I found the following theories as the most suitable for this study:

The Powerful Effect Model:

A number of studies seem to agree that mass communication can have powerful effects. The powerful effects model was first presented by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in her article "Return to the concept of power mass media" (1973). Her spiral of silence theory would fit under powerful effects model. Several other studies conducted by different researchers indicating that mass media have powerful effects, like Mendesohn (1973), Maccoby (1975), Ball Rokeach, Rokeach, and Grube (1984).

Spiral of Silence:

Another version of powerful effects model has been described by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (1973) a West German communication researcher. In her article "Return to the powerful mass media" she argues that the mass media have powerful effects on public opinion but these effects have been underestimated or undetected in the past due to limitations of the research. She suggested three characteristics of mass communication-its accumulation, ubiquity and consonance-combine to produce powerful effects on public opinion.

The mass media can affect the spiral of silence in three ways.

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

1. They shape impression about which opinion are dominated
2. They shape impression about which opinion are on the increase
3. They shape impression about that opinion which one can utter in public without becoming isolated. (Annex-2).

According to the Noelle Neumann willingness to speak out on the controversial issues is influenced by perception of climate of opinion. If the climate of opinion goes against a person he will remain silent. The motivating force behind this silence is the fear of isolation. Lasorsa (1991) added that the fear of hostile climate of opinion but not only the single variable where age, education, income interest in politics, level of self-efficacy are other variables which compelled a person to become silent.

The powerful effect model and spiral of silence theory would fit under powerful effects model would be used here because the media has directly affected the opinion and attitude of the audience after the exposure of certain issues and as a result audience give acceptance to some of the issues or give the denial expression to some of them as portrayed by the electronic media.

Cultivation Theory

Another theory, which discuss the powerful effects of media is given the George Gerbner and his colleagues, is the “cultivation theory” which is derived from an extensive programme of research on the effect of television on audience. Gerbner argues that television has become the central cultural arm of American society. According to him, an average viewer watches television four hours a day where as heavy viewer watches even more. He maintained that heavy viewers of television are much influenced than light viewer. In this study of “Cultivation theory” he gave the comparison of heavy and light television viewers. He conducted different surveys and verified those heavy television viewers were much more influenced by television than the light viewer. In light of the surveys Gerbner stated that: “Difference between heavy and light Television viewers show up even across a number of other important variable including age, education news reading and gender”

Paul Hirsch (1980) criticized Gerbner’s research for not doing an adequate job of controlling other variables. In response of Hirsch Criticism Gerbner revised his theory and added two concepts, “mainstream” and “resonance”.

Gerbner says mainstreaming occur when heavy viewer leads to an access of exposure across groups. In simple words the cultivation theory stated that those people who are heavy viewers of television will get more influenced and light viewers not at par. In the phase of powerful effects the information through the invention e.g. V.C.Rs, Computers, satellite and other electronic medium played an important role in influencing and leaving far-reaching effect on the behavior, attitudes and values of individuals and society.

According to the cultivation theory, it depends on the exposure of T.V, After the exposure it is obvious there are some effects of the media contents on the attitude and opinion of the audience regardless it is heavy or light viewership, because people get images and cultivates realities that effects people and the level of effects may be different that is up to the time they spend on T.V. Because media framing the realities in the minds of the audience.

3. Methodology

In view of the nature of the hypotheses and the research questions, the methodology employed in the research is Survey Method. Journalists used surveys to measure public opinion on issues that were prominent in the news. Newspaper publishers and broadcasters recognized the value of surveys to measure market shares, readership or audience sizes, and in due course public opinion about their products. However, surveys were not only used to assess media markets. Mounting a survey is no simple

matter. It is not just a matter of asking a group of people a few questions. It requires much planning and high level of skill in its administration to ensure that valid and usable data are obtained. The current chapter will not provide a detailed analysis of the mechanics and conventions of running surveys, Helpful how to do it handbooks have been published elsewhere (Babbie, 1998, Oppenheim, 1992). Instead our interest here will centre on the way survey has been used.

A survey is a form of quantitative research that involves asking large numbers of people questions about their behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, personality characteristics and other personal details. The questions are usually supplied with ready-made answers, although sometimes respondents are invited to provide their own replies that are transcribed verbatim by interviewers or written in by the respondents themselves. As a research technique, the survey provides a convenient way to collect moderate to significant amounts of information from a lot of people. The data are numerically coded and can be entered into a computer for simple descriptive or more complex forms of analysis. As we will see below, surveys can come in a number of different forms.

The researcher has selected personal interview technique of survey which is a widely used method. Personal interviews can take place at a research centre, in the street or in the respondent's home or place of work.

Sampling A sample is a sub-set of that total population. Samples are selected in such a way as to be representative of the population

Stratified Sampling: When the researcher knows the answers to the research question are likely to vary by subgroups, it is a method in which the population is separated into different strata and a sample is taken from each stratum Robert Groves (2004)

The researcher has used stratified sampling the known distribution of the population. Hence, if half the total populations are women, the researcher will try to ensure that half of his/her respondents are female.

Sample Size For the purpose of this study, the researcher has selected 100 opinion leaders on the basis of the Stratified sampling. The sample is divided on the bases gender between male and female. The technique used for the data collection would be interviews.

Research Questions

1. The following research questions were selected for the purpose of this study:
2. How many opinion leaders depended on global media of information?
3. How the global media did frame the opinion of the opinion leaders?
4. What percentage of opinion leaders considered global media credible?
5. What percentage of opinion leaders was influenced by the global media?
6. What did the opinion leaders like most on these channels?
7. What kind of influence foreign media exerts on national channels?

Hypothesis & Operationalization

The following hypothesis was tested for the purpose of this study:

“The cable TV media will have greater influence on the Pakistani opinion leaders as compared to International media because they will consider it more credible than the national media”.

Null Hypothesis for present study is:

“The Pakistani Opinion leaders will not be influenced by the foreign as they would be skeptical about its credibility”.

The present research hypothesis is composed of the following variables:

Independent Variables: Exposure to television

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

Dependent Variables: Effects on opinion leaders and their belief about the credibility of cable TV channels

The research hypothesis of the present study involves the following concepts:

Exposure (exposure to television the researcher means the average time daily spent on watching television)

Television

Effects (mental process through which an individual passes from an experience of being away by media content)

Credibility (belief system whereby people consider information imparted to them as believable and authentic)

Indicators

1. Taking interest in global channels Q. No. 2,3,4,5 global channels
2. Considering global channels as useful Q. No. 9,10,11
3. Satisfaction with the effectiveness of global channels Q.No. 10
4. utilization of information from these channels Q.No.11
5. Recommendation of the opinion leaders Q.No. 15

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Table 1 Watch TV	Freq	%	Table 2 Cable at Home	Freq	%	Table 3 Watch Private Channels	Freq	%
Yes	76	76	Yes	92	92	Yes	94	94
No	12	12	No	8	8	No	6	6
Seldom	12	12	Total	100	100	Total	100	100
Total	100							

Table 4 Which news channels like most?	Freq	%	Table 5 Watch Pakistan Electronic Media	Freq	%	Table 6 What time you watch TV	Freq	%
Pakistan	39	39	Yes	62	62	Regular Transmission	6	6
India	6	6	No	10	10	Morning Transmission	6	6
English	55	55	Seldom	13	13	Evening Transmission	36	36
Total	100	100	Often	15	15	Night Transmission	52	52
			Total	100	100	Total	100	100

Table 7 Which Channel do you prefer?	Freq	%	Table 8 Foreign Electronic Media Present up to date news	Freq	%	Table 9 Foreign Electronic Media Present true & credible news	Freq	%
PTV World	10	10	Yes	54	92	Yes	19	19
ARY	10	10	No	7	8	No	27	27
Peace	5	5	Up to some extent	28	100	Up to some extent	49	49
GEO	30	30	I haven't	11		I haven't compared	5	5
Express	25	25						

C-42	10	10	compared	100		Total	100	100
Dawn News	5	5	Total					
CBNC News	3	3						
BBC News	1	1						
CNN	1	1						
Total	100	100						

Table 10 Influenced by foreign Electronic Media	Freq	%	Table 11 Foreign Media safeguards the interest of certain groups	Freq	%	Table 12 Which do you like most in TV Channel?	Freq	%
Yes	16	16	Yes	51	51	Business	10	10
No	37	37	No	11	11	Social Issues	25	25
Up to some extent	34	34	Up to some extent	34	34	Religious	17	17
I haven't compared	13	13	I haven't compared	4	4	Political	26	26
Total	100	100	Total	100	100	Sports	8	8
						Entertainment	14	14
						Total	100	100

Table 13 What do you like most in International TV?	Freq	%	Table 14 Any influence of foreign media on our national media	Freq	%	Table 15 There should be more private channels in Pakistan	Freq	%
Business	8	8	Yes	67	67	Yes	91	91
Social Issues	16	16	No	8	8	No	9	9
Religious	31	31	Total	75	75	Total	100	100
Political	20	20	Missing	25	25			
Sports	9	9	Total	100	100			
Entertainment	16	16						
Total	100	100						

Analysis

The present study was conducted to discover the effects and credibility of the cable TV channels and their impact on the local opinion leaders. The study found out the relationship between influence and exposure to the national and international channels. The cultivation theory served as main part of the theoretical framework along with effects approach and information theory. The hypothesis of the study was as followings;

"The cable TV media will have a greater influence on the Pakistani opinion leaders as compared to Pakistani media because they will consider it more credible than the national media"

The universe of the study consisted of eminent political leaders operative at all levels, teachers and social workers of Pakistan. A sample of 100 respondents was drawn through systematic quota sampling out of the universe. The number of respondents was kept 100 deliberately as getting hold of the opinion leaders is an up-hill task because of their busy schedule. A questionnaire was distributed amongst the respondents containing 15 questions and after getting it filed the results were tabulated with the help of SPSS. The study produced interesting revelations about the television viewing habits of the respondents. It showed

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

that the target population the course of action suggested by the Uses and Gratification Approach. The respondents were only in trusted in those channels which either pleased them or they received useful information from the channels of their choice.

As the opinion leaders are knowledge and they keep on updating their level of information, the programs related to political and social issues were found more popular than other programs. This was probably because of the dependence of the respondents on mass media for information and education. The respondents also exhibited highly selective behavior. According to the theory of selective exposure, they exposed themselves to the channels liked by them. Although, the target population viewed global media, yet, their choice had been Pakistani channels whether government owned or private. However, from this study the following results can be deducted.

Majority of the respondents are heavy viewers of television. Because of the audio-visual power of television, it has emerged as the most powerful medium of mass communication. In fact, the popularity of television has given rebirth to the Powerful Effects Model of mass communication which is also serving as a major component of the theoretical framework of this thesis.

The study also reveals cable satellite television CT is increasingly becoming popular. Almost all respondents had an access to the cable network. This shows that the days of control over electronic media are over now and the viewers have a wider choice which makes them selective.

Findings showed tremendous liking for the privately owned channels. Government controlled electronic media has lost credibility and people are turning towards other channels in order to get accurate news.

The majority of the respondents were of the view that they liked English channels for getting information. The concepts of the "reporters sans frontiers" have tremendously increased the popularity of the global channels. However, it is surprising to note that respondents do not depend on Indian channels for information. Contrary to the popularity of the Indian films, Indian news channels were rejected because of blatant propaganda against Pakistan.

Majority of the respondents viewed Pakistani channels. Language and coverage of local activities seems to be a reason. Many channels of Pakistani origin are now operative and these have put an end to the monopoly enjoyed by PTV. Because these channels show the other side-of the picture, these are occupying a large share of the viewer ship. Most of the respondents watch channels of their choice at night as per global tradition. Usually people find less time to watch TV in working hours Prime time transmission is choice of majority of the respondents because they are free at that time and secondly, because of the quality of programs.

Channels of Pakistani origin are liked more by the target audience than other channels because Pakistani channels are in a language easily comprehensible and these cover local events, these channels are liked more by the people. GEO tops the list as this channel along with being a news channel, also provides quality entertainment to the people. BBC emerged as the only foreign channel enjoying the liking of a quarter of respondents which is a sizable figure.

The findings reflect that majority of the respondents are of the view that foreign channels present up to date material compared to the local channels. The reasons are obvious. The foreign channels have a strong financial standing. On the other hand, the local channels have to depend on advertisements released by a weak economy. Because of their resourcefulness, the foreign channels have their reporters deputed around the globe. It is easier for these channels to cover the events accurately and swiftly.

The findings also disclose that the influence level is lesser in case of foreign media. The respondents were only partly influenced by the coverage offered by international media to different event. However, the element of influence was there as there was significant percentage of respondents who shaped their information according to the portrayal of events by these media.

One of the findings unearthed the impact of foreign media on our national media. Majority of the respondents believe that the alien media influences the local presentation of events. An interesting finding reveals that majority of the respondents want on place due to objective coverage of events and by paying attention to the hitherto untouched subjects. More channels are helping people to frame their opinion in a more realistic way. This study reveals that opinion builders have no trust in state-run TV and they want more freedom of choice and expression.

The study found out the level of influence exerted by the cable TV channels on the opinion leaders operating locally. The researcher could not detect any significant influence on the thinking of the target audience. However, it would also be wrong to assume that the global media do not have any influence. Pakistani channels coupled with the foreign media have a deep influence on the thinking pattern of the opinion leaders. The local Pakistani channels are perceived as more credible than the foreign channels as a perception was common amongst the target population that foreign channels serve vested interests in the society. Thus, the hypotheses could not be proved and the Null hypothesis stands proved that the global media enjoy little credibility and influence than the Pakistani media.

4. Conclusion

The study found out the impact of cable television on the attitude formation of the public opinion leaders in our society. It discovered that a majority of the viewers did not believe in the content supplied by the foreign channels. Thus the hypothesis was rejected. The opinion leaders depended on national media for information, however, they also admitted the strengths of the foreign channels as far as accuracy and coverage of up to date events is concerned. This study also confirmed Garbner's theory of cultivation. People get images and cultivate realities after watching television. The theory of information and framing were also tested. Opinion leaders are dependent on media for getting information which they later on share with other people and maintain their influence in the society. Similarly, realities are constructed in the minds of the people after having an exposure to the media that frames realities .

How do the media affect audience perceptions of the real world? The basic assumption underlying the cultivation approach is that repeated exposures to consistent media portrayals and themes will influence our perceptions of these items in the direction of the media portrayals. In effect, learning from the media environment is generalized, sometimes incorrectly, to the social environment. This research confirmed this notion. Following are a few important findings of the research:

- i. Almost all respondents had an access to the cable network CTV, increasingly becoming popular. Government controlled electronic media has lost credibility and people are turning towards other channels in order to get accurate news. The majority of the respondents liked English channels for getting information. Respondents viewed Pakistani channels, language and coverage of local activities seems to be a reason because these channels show the other side-of the picture. According to the Pluralistic Approach, the freer the media, the more diverse the audience would be.
- ii. The theory of selective exposure states that people expose themselves to the channels of their choice. That's why Pakistani channels are more likely to be viewed by the majority, GEO tops the list as this channel along with being a news channel, also provides quality entertainment to the people. BBC emerged as the only foreign channel enjoying the liking of a quarter of respondents which is a sizable figure.

Global TV Channels Reinforce Attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders (An Investigation into Effects and Credibility)

- iii. The media throughout the world is facing a credibility crisis. Even a person like Jefferson, who preferred press over government had to say that whatever is printed in the pages of the newspapers cannot be believed. Therefore, the respondents in this study had remained skeptical about the credibility of the media. Half of them of the opinion leaders did not believe in the accuracy of news presented by the foreign channels. Majority of the target population considers media's role as serving interest of certain groups. Altschull (1984) is of the view that media are agents of power, "One, who pays the piper, sets the tune." Bagdikian (2005) has also expressed similar views in his work 'Media Merchants.' Many scholars belonging to the critical tradition criticize the role of the media as a lapdog of the powerful in the society. This study also highlights the dissatisfaction of the opinion on leaders with the policies of the media organizations.
- iv. The agenda of the target population according to this study seems to be the political and social issues in case of national television channels while in case of international channels, the agenda is evenly poised. People seek entertainment and pleasure in sports and entertainment programs including films on international channels. This behavior is in consistence with Uses and Gratification approach which says that people seek pleasure and information from media. Finally, it is quite natural for the opinion makers to take interest in social and political issues because that is their area of interest. An opinion leader cannot remain away from his public and in order to maintain his/her influence, he/she tries to exhibit his/her command over areas of general interest.

This research exposed the impact of foreign media on our national media highlights the uneven flow of communication between 'core' and 'periphery' countries. Almost 70% news flow in the world is controlled by five major news agencies situated in the West. Therefore, the powerful foreign media influences the content of the local media in all countries of the third world. Opinion builders have no trust in state-run TV and they want more freedom of choice and expression. It found out the level of influence exerted by the global satellite channels on the opinion leaders operating locally. The researcher could not detect any significant influence on the thinking of the target audience. However, it would also be wrong to assume that the global media do not have any influence. Pakistani channels coupled with the foreign media have a deep influence on the thinking pattern of the opinion leaders. The local Pakistani channels are perceived as more credible than the foreign channels as a perception was common amongst the target population that foreign channels serve vested interests in the society. Thus, the hypotheses could not be proved and the Null hypothesis stands proved that the global media enjoy little credibility and influence than the Pakistani media.

In Pakistan, most critics of television are restricted to viewing the media from this aspect-only in terms of socio-religious permissibility-but the study of television playing the role of an opinion formational mode is being based on deeper and broader perspective in developed world. Controversies and conflicts over that television operation is actually about, and how it is affecting different strata of population are raging in the West to higher levels which to most people are still hard to conceive, in Pakistan. Almost popularly different from what television could be as an opinion maker in the West, this media suffers an acute lack of credibility for having been excessively used to presenting a picture in Pakistan which is not only biased but against the public sentiments. It is taken more as an entertainment mode. And it is viewed and criticized as such more than it is evaluated in terms of its usefulness in offering information. There have been no professional surveys to determine the role of television in Pakistan as far as the information aspect is concerned. Huge piles could be gathered of printed material on "distortions" television in Pakistan has committed in presenting the culture of this country, and these writings too are not based on a thorough understanding of the role of television in society.

The study finds no significant change in the attitude of the opinion leaders. The reason probably is that media is fast losing its credibility because it is being operated by a few vested interests. It has actually become an agent of powerful elites in the society (Altschull: 1984). On the other hand the viewers are not happy with the state controlled media also. They want more channels in the private sector which could cater to their needs of entertainment and information. Thus, the hypothesis that foreign media will have an influence on the attitude of the opinion leaders has not been proved. The foreign media is also not considered credible by local opinion makers. It will be an agenda for the future researchers to find out the influence of global satellite media on common people who are exposed to it because of its immense glamour and reach.

5. Recommendations:

- In future there should be research on basis of the comparison between the exposure of the light and heavy viewers of the media channels reinforce attitudes of Local Opinion Leaders.
- People use the media contents for the promotion of their agenda to at national level case study of the Pakistan opinion leaders.
- There should a content analysis of the Local and National media which is used for the opinion leaders to alter the people's mind.
- There should be a comparison study of the national and international opinion leaders who used media for their promotional campaign.
- There should be a content analysis of national and international media contents regarding the opinion leaders.

References

- Altschul, Herbert J. (1984), Agents of Power; The role of the new media in human affairs. New York, London; Longman
- Babbie, E.1998. The Practice of Social Research. New York Wadsworth
- Chomsky, Noam. (1989). Necessary illusions: Thought control in democratic Societies. Toronto, Canada: CBS Enterprises.
- Hirsch, P. (1980). The "Scary world" of the non-viewer and other anomalies. Communication Research, 7, 403-456.
- Garcia & K. Viswanath (2009). An Idea Whose Time Has Come: International Communication History, Mass Communication and Society
unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/.../unpan015009.ht...
<http://bernardavishai.blogspot.com/2008/09/us-policy-obama-and-hebrew-republic.html>
- Robert W. McChesney and Nichols, J (2002) Our Media, Not Theirs: the democratic struggle against corporate media Seven Stories Press, 2002, paper
- Robert Groves, et alia. *Survey methodology* (2010) Second edition of the (2004) first edition ISBN 0-471-48348-6.
- Talking 'Anarchy' With Chomsky. With David Barsamian. April 5, 2000
- Harison, A (2007). Globalization and poverty: An Introduction, University of Chicago Press
- Oppenheim, A.N.1992. Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurements. London: The Falmer Press