



Sensationalizing the News Events by Pakistani Media

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Abstract

Current study “Sensationalizing the News Events by Pakistani Media” investigates the trend of sensationalising news reporting through content analysis as tool of inquiry. The study encompasses both qualitative and quantitative approaches of content analysis technique to examine trends of sensational news reporting by television broadcasts. Geo News, ARY News, Express News and Dawn News are analyzed from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017 from 8:00pm to 10:00pm. Sensationalism is measured by taking the breaking news items as unit of analysis. The findings of the study show that Pakistani news channels are using sensational news style to gain higher ratings and viewership. In Express newscasts more sensationalism is used as compared to Geo News. The statistical test chi-square was applied to evaluate the hypothesis which gave significant value. The results provided that news channels give more coverage to the issues related to law & order and terrorism, while less coverage to news related to judiciary. Geo News is at top position to cover political issues most frequently. The results also reveal that sensationalism is lowest in Dawn News.

Key Words: News channels, Sensationalism, breaking news, high ratings

Introduction

Media is more interested in covering controversial issues and various scandals rather than public affairs. This is a worrying situation, as people follow the media when they make perception about certain public affairs. The linkage between public issues and media coverage needs to be corrected so that citizens can make the right decisions

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based on right exposure to the issue by the media. There is an old saying in the news industry “if it bleeds, it leads” that highlights the idea of sensationalism. Sensationalism is when the media puts forward the most sensational messages to titillate consumers. Elliot (2004) poses some interesting food for thought that media managers think in terms of consumers rather than citizens. Good journalism sells, but unfortunately, bad journalism sells as well. In fact, bad journalism-stories that simply repeat government claims or that reinforce what the public wants to hear instead of offering independent reporting is cheaper and easier to produce. In recent years, the concept of sensationalism has gained great popularity. Grabe et al. (2003) pointed out that content as well as form of the message has tendency to grab the attention of the audience. Some other researchers also have supported this idea by using cognitive physical theories to give extension to the concepts of Shoemaker (1996) and Davis & McLeod (2003).

Before 1990, sensationalistic news was basically discussed with reference to content of the news story. Adam (1978) argues that coverage of offense, violent behavior, natural disasters, road accidents, and mishaps with comical, emotional, outrageous, probing of the public in that particular area. It can be said that Adam did not clearly discriminated between human interest and sensational news stories rather described both as way of news presentation to attract the feeling instead of logic. Graber (1994) says television news as combination of information and entertainment which leads to level of sensation. Grabe, Zhou, Lang, and Bolls (2000) worked on tabloid news, whereas Slattery and Hakanen (1994) emphasized on human interest stories.

Uribe and Gunter (2007) describe sensationalism as “a characteristic of the news packaging process that places emphasis upon those elements that could provoke an effect on the human sensory system.”

Pinkey (2013) argues that mainstream media works to inform, shape opinion and even manipulate facts for layman instead of passing the information correctly and honestly. Moreover, the corporate news media is particularly the propaganda tool for the national and international corporate class of U.S. government. It functions to sustain the power of status quo. Media researchers argue that a few number of international media conglomerates control the mainstream media to empower and maintain the status quo (Kellner 2004; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Herman and McChesney 1997; Alger 1998; McChesney 1999; Keane 1991 as cited in Agner, 2014).

It is observed that mostly news channels use sensationalized style of news reporting. There is a trend of breaking news of matters which don't meet the criteria of news values in terms of its prominence, significance and timeliness etc. But, such minor matters are given more time and space on news channels and shown repeatedly to engrave a deep impact on the minds of people. Khan (2014) opined that Pakistani news channels largely attempt to create hype of those issues which are not important at all. Media outlets are functioning to make people pessimistic through sensationalizing the matters, which are not of public concern. Awan (2015) says that Pakistani news media is irresponsible and ignorant. It looks like media have no rules and regulations as the fourth pillar of the state. News headlines are sensationalized by putting the variety of audio-visual messages beamed. Moreover, Pakistani media is violating the ideology, ethics

and socio-cultural values of the society by putting Indian films clips in news bulletin headlines with item songs.

Zahid (2012) is of the opinion that top subject of every talk show, news or satire is criticism on political system, corruption, target killing, inflation, security collapse, poverty and so on. The central purpose of media is to create sensationalism through breaking news and distorted information to gain publicity. In words of Zahid, “ The perception of Pakistan that media has built abroad over the last few years is that Pakistan is like a jungle, filled with violence, crime, corruption, lack of tolerance and respect and where human life is the cheapest commodity.”

The study is aimed to examine the use of sensational news style by Pakistani news channels and making a comparative analysis of four leading news channels from private sector to access their news ranking order through breaking news trend and the content and form of news coverage i.e. selection and presentation of news.

The selected news channels ARY News, Geo News, Dawn News and Express News are analyzed to make inferences on empirical investigation. The time span of observation is from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017.

Breaking News/ News Alerts

Miller and Andrea (2004) defined breaking news as a news story which is unusual, containing the elements of novelty, classified as significant, branded as breaking and unpredictable happening. Raza, Sultan and Jan (2012) concluded that Pakistani Private News channels disseminate routine information as breaking news by manipulating the event to

create hype over the media. Moreover, the soft news is most frequently used to fill the air time which are often downloaded from the internet.

Literature Review

Media seems to lose its credibility due to inaccurate and sensational headlines. This type of news was first seen and was on peak at the end of the nineteenth century during the popular era of yellow journalism. Excitement arousing headlines, plenty of images, different types of corruption, delightful social events and protest against rulers was common features of yellow journalism. This brand of journalism worked for more entertainment instead of information. Today's media possess these elements and if it remains in practice in future it will diminish the credibility of the media (Jackson, 2014). Sensational press gained popularity in the late nineteenth century. Media owners, with power of corporate sector utilized their resources to increase their sell and affected the politics. Sensational news encompasses issues of the people, world affairs and the issues were portrayed in some specific way to make the audience think and perceive in a particular dimension (Lubell, 2003).

Bernstein (1992) says that sensational reporting is basically a public discussion agenda which has been adopted by the media as news and it is being promoted as a bad custom. Media sensationalism has been a subject of investigation for researchers to understand the effects of videos on children behavior since the 1920s (Blumer & Hauser, 1933; Charters, 1933). With rapid growth of television in the 1950s most of media research focused on the effects of TV sensationalism or violence in making people more aggressive. Up to now, there exist more than 400 empirical studies examining the

relationship between media sensationalism and aggression in people's behavior as consequence (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). The use of sensational news is prevailing all over the world. For instance, in the United States debate about media sensationalism went vigorous with the Carl Bernstein's concept of "idiot culture" (Bernstein, 1992).

Bouchra et al. (2016) from the University of Amsterdam conducted a study to explore how sensationalism in the news is affected by two main features of television system i. e revenue generated through commercialization and number of viewers. The study was confined to 14 television systems and 29 TV channels from 13 countries.

According to Yu -huei and Bo-zhong news channels have increased the practice of more sensationalistic reporting since 2002 regarding the personal affairs of celebrities. Some analysts explain their personal experience of news watching as "detached," as they observe the "weird sensationalism" in news programs and surprise about the linkage of showbiz stars' personal lives (Bao-yaun , 2005). Wang (2006) studied sensationalism in Taiwan television news. A content analysis of Prime-time revealed that 54 percent of the programs contain sensational components. Anchor's attention grabbing voice tone in presentation of the news was prominent element of about 66 percent programs. Moreover, ratio of emotional ingredients consist major part of 80 percent, one -third of which were disseminated in colorful and attractive graphic style. Critics of media in Taiwan have argued that the trend of business interests is the foremost motive why news channels "throw garbage at consumers " (Bao-yuan, 2005). Michael (2008) opined that sensationalism is the production of exaggeration. When a news story is overstated and disseminated repeatedly by mass

media, it tends to become public agenda. Sensationalized messages cause to create panic in the society. Most commonly news related to terrorism are major source of anxiety among the audience. It may lead to severe damages for lives of the people, particularly suffering from heart problems.

According to Esposito (1996) such trend of news presentation may lead to preplanned news events based on themes and based on amusement element. This may cause to take the news program toward dramatic, shallow presentation, quick coverage and layman language for the description of the news event which are basically about celebrities, private associations, outlook and all other glamorous aspects of social life to attract the audience attention. News reporting appears to create a pseudo-environment of its own choice, news coverage seems to develop a life of its own, showing responses to the drive produced by the media itself. Such media routines look like the product of oscillating procedures within media fabrication, constructing the coverage more reverberation of prior reporting rather than mere reflection of reality (Kepplinger, 1994).

A further latest research relating to sensationalism in the field of the media communication is that of Uribe and Gunter (2007). They analyzed British television News in the periods 1996-1997 and 2002-2003 and reached the point that the existence of sensational aspects has fostered in both sensational and non-sensational news stuff in due course. Another finding of their study was that news items which were conventionally categorized as sensational did not essentially hold more psychologically affecting elements as compared to other news stories.

The media are often blamed for blowing the issues out of proportion and for overstated magnitude and compass of a social dilemma, e.g. street violence event (Best, 1999). Vettehen et al (2005) argue that sensational features of news are more intense in commercial television as compared to public television in the Netherlands.

Grabe, Zhou, and Barnett (2001) conducted a study to unravel the concept of sensationalism widely used for media coverage. They concluded that formal or proper news are given more coverage by television news like politics, economics, education and health as compared to non-sensational news stories. While tabloid news journalism mostly emphasized on more sensational news like crime, disaster, sex, celebrities, scandals and so on. There is abundant empirical data which indicates that exposure to sensational content has potential to catch the attention unconsciously and amplify the intensity of exposure to that that specific source of information i.e. television news for further updates and interpretations of the replicated messages regardless of the viewers' desire or gratification (Lang et al., 1995; Lang et al., 1999; Newhagen and Reeves, 1992; Grabe et al., 2003).

The mass media are in a dominant point to create apparently scattered and distinct conditions and produce which looks like pervasive process (Kielbowics and Scherer, 1986). The news media is concerned with most significant channels of magnification by framing threat messages and convey them to the people to get ready for potential possible harms (Pidgeon et al, 2003; Petts et al., 2001).

In the Netherlands researches into sensationalism were conducted over the period 1980-2004 (Hendriks Vettehen et al., 2005; Nuijten, 2007). The greater than before availability of television news seems to

have resulted in growing practice of all three sensational classifications (Nuijten, 2007). For instance, advancement in the appearance of dramatic matters (about the exciting content), a decline in short duration (sensationalistic covering) and a raise in layperson's language (dramatic storytelling) signify additional sensationalism in both public and corporate television news stories in the Netherlands. Yet, not all dimensions that were examined revealed considerable results.

Sensationalism in Pakistani Media

Although it plays a vital positive role as a watchdog, the media is criticized for sensationalism, unreliability, inattentiveness and lack of professionalism. An online survey consisted of 1,025 Pakistanis results conducted by the Express Tribune, revealed that out of a sample of 1,025 Pakistanis and overseas, 68% of respondents held that Pakistani media spreads negativity; 67% believed that the media is sensationalist in nature and 53% felt that the media is partisan i.e. sponsored by political parties (The Express Tribune, 2012).

The ratio of respondents who believed that Pakistani media is reporting the news with accountability was only 2%. Rarely responsible category obtained 38% votes while, 9% respond 'never' reported responsibly. The Pakistani news channels are in eagerness for breaking news race and being the first to report the information about an incident is at zeal in sensationalism. On international level there are definite laws and codes of ethics for journalists to practice while reporting some social crime e.g. murder cases. Publication of images and names of the victims or any other details which can identify them, are not allowed (Ahmad, 2013).

The affected people of an accident, disaster or cruelty cannot be interviewed. Similarly, the official documents like medical report of the victim is prohibited by the law (Hussain, 2013). Recently the news of a rape case of a young girl in Lahore was disseminated as core issue by the media and her name, face and detailed coverage of her medical report was on aired by news channels. She can never forget her bad image portrayed by the media even if her physical wounds have gone. Such insensate exposure is basically due to lack of professionalism by media practitioners.

Media sensationalism can also be witnessed in selection of the issues and disseminating the messages over and again. In the same manner, the intensive media coverage of outrageous challenge of 'water - car' invention by Asham captured the minds of whole Pakistan for several days. The hard and fast rules of physics, human wisdom and logics were set away to pursue the manifestation by the hosts of talk shows. The politicians played role to support the scenario of hype created by the media. The calamity of unreal invention confirmed that Pakistani news media is deprived of professionalism insight to look into situation prior to spread with overstated coverage (Ashraf & Islam, 2014).

The sensationalistic media reporting and the competition to be first are prominent during coverage of mishaps and disasters by the Pakistani media. Bhoja Air Crash on 20th April 2012, can be taken as an example of such insensitive coverage by news channels when PEMRA issued a notice to the television channels to prohibit disseminating the images of dead bodies and interfering privacy of victims' family privacy. "Reporters from different channels chased family members

with microphones and cameras, capturing their grieving moments, not seeming to realize that this was a gross intrusion of their privacy" (Nazish ,2012).It seems as if people's tragedy is a profitable chance for the news channels to earn money.

The hype and professionally improper reporting of the occurrence infuriated the people and the social media was uploaded with the public temper and everyone approved that channels must give public the honor and esteem they ought to have.(Kasana ,2012) According to an online survey conducted by The Express Tribune took the opinion of participants if they agreed or disagreed on how the news channels covered the Bhoja Air tragedy. A noteworthy 77% of 1,247 participants differed with it (The Express Tribune, 2012).

The distraction of the news media to fill up the airtime with sensationalism also demonstrates itself in the live reporting of law enforcement operations, strictly compromising the operational necessities of law enforcement operations. The bullet-to-bullet reporting of Lal Masjid Operation, with an escalating stress on the law enforcement agencies at the dangerous stage of operation and the live reporting of Sikandar story in Blue Area, Islamabad, are the manifestations of media sensationalism, crossing the confines of informing the community. In the case of Sikandar, in spite of frequent requests by the law enforcement agencies, involvement of the PEMRA and Ministry of Information, the news channels could not be convinced to give a fifteen minute break in the live reporting of the weird drama to make possible for the law enforcement authorities to perform operation. "Overtaking the role of police, while not giving it enough space to perform and later blaming them for their

incompetence, pointless reports to keep the news running” (Zahra ‘2013), call attention to the lack of professionalism by the news journalists. Again, in the online survey performed by Express Tribune, 73% of the people disagrees the news reporting of the confrontation (The Express Tribune, 2013).

Hypotheses

H: Pakistani private news channels are sensationalizing news events through frequently disseminating the breaking news

Sub-hypotheses for the current inquiry are as following

H1: Express News presents more sensationalistic news reports as compared to Geo newscasts.

H2: The use of sensationalism is the lowest in Dawn News

H3: ARY News covers the issues most frequently in sensational way

H4: Leading news channels of Pakistan give ample coverage to insignificant issues to fill the air time

H5: In leading news channels more coverage is given to the issues related to law & order / terrorism whereas less coverage to news related to judiciary

H6: Geo News is at the top position to cover political issues most frequently

Theoretical Framework

Based on reviewed literature regarding the selected issue Heuristic Systematic Model of Persuasion is employed by the researcher. The heuristic –systematic model is a concept of persuasion that proposes attitudes may alter in two essentially diverse methods. The emphasis of the present study is on the production of sensational television news. Bardoel (1996) offered a heuristic model to explain the production of

television news. His model comprises of general aspects that could affect the ultimate outcome. Bardoel (1996) described television news as a cultural artifact which is the product of technological prospects, organizational planetary and specialized skill. Based on these factors, Bardoel developed his model regarding the television news production. Central concept is that the three aspects collectively affect the final shape and content of news story.

A Conceptual Model for Production of Sensational Television News

The basic model of Bardoel (1996) can be employed to make conceptual elucidations for modifications in sensational facets of television news. For this purpose, a more precise model must be explained. The initial stage is to define the final product i.e. sensational television news more clearly. As defined prior, three forms of sensational television news structures might be determined: arousing content, tabloid packaging and vivid storytelling. The next phase is to determine which aspects can affect the degree of sensationalism in television news. The theoretical works about the production of news carries reasons for devising descriptive aspects at two stages: the nation level and the broadcaster level.

Hallin and Manchini (2004) added that features like the format of the market, political pressure, and journalistic expertise may differ among countries. McManus (2002) pointed that a broadcaster level also must be distinguished. Public television and commercial television are two different types of broadcasters. Commercial media houses are mainly concerned with business goals rather than merely informing the public about the latest happenings and issues which may exert influence on the production of news content. The model of

Bardoel(1996) does not clearly define various factors that can influence at different steps. Therefore, the model needs to be presented into two essentially different levels. In the next section precise, empirically quantifiable variables will be developed from Bardoel's heuristic model. They will lead toward a descriptive model of sensational television news.

Methodology

For this study content analysis is used as a tool of inquiry, as reviewed literature showed this method as most suitable to analyze the presence and frequency of sensational journalism using qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Universe of the Study

For this study four news channels from Pakistan were selected as the universe of the study. These include ARY News, Geo News, Dawn News and Express News. The news channels were observed from 8pm to 10pm from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017. All the news items presented as breaking news, news alerts or other content falling into the A, B,C,D or E category of sensationalism reporting was considered as universe of the study .

Unit of Analysis

For the present study, all the news items related to A, B, C, D & E categories defined by the researcher are chosen as unit of analysis. These categories comprised of news items containing sensational news reporting in terms of its content, form, tone and presentation style. All these news items were taken as unit of analysis with special reference to breaking news trend of news channels to create hype and arouse sensation among the audience, to achieve higher ratings graph.

Time Span of the Study

The time span for the present study was limited from 1stOctober 2017 to 31st December 2017 duration which all the selected news items were analyzed according to defined categories of sensational news reporting by the selected news channels from 8:00 pm to 10:00pm.

Categories of Analysis

Marrying (2014) holds that constructing a category system is central procedure of content analysis. In this study following categories are established to analyses the presence and frequency of sensationalized events by Pakistani news channels form private sector:

- A. Political
- B. Judiciary
- C. Law and order / Terrorism
- D. Crime
- E. Others

Directions for Analysis

These categories of sensational news are treated with respect to following directions

- More sensational
- Balanced
- Less sensational

RESULTS

Table 1: Statistics

	Channels	Political	Law & Order	Judiciary	Crime	Others
			/Terrorism			
Valid	878	191	231	150	153	154
Missing	1	688	648	729	726	725

Table 1 shows the total number of observations with respect to selected news channels, as there are four news channels to analyze the occurrence and frequency of sensational news reporting i.e. ARY News, Geo News, Dawn News and Express News. The table illustrates the total number of observations with respect to defined categories of sensational news items. It shows that total 878 news items were observed from all four news channels where 231 news were related to law & order /terrorism, 191 news items were about political matters, 153 news stories were related to crime, 150 news were regarding judiciary and 154 news fall into category of others which may be related to celebrity, sports, showbiz, arts and so on.

Table 2: Frequency of Channels

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
ARY News	290	33.0	33.0	33.0
Geo News	204	23.2	23.2	56.3
Dawn News	168	19.1	19.1	75.4
Express News	216	24.6	24.6	100.0
Total	878	99.9	100.0	

Table 2 shows the frequency of sensational news with respect to selected news channels that is ARY News broadcasted total two hundred and ninety 290 (33%) news encompassed to overall defined categories, Geo News aired two hundred and four 204(23.2%) news items regarding sensational news style, Express News showing two hundred and sixteen 216 (24.6%) of the total number of observations and Dawn News with least sensational news items containing one hundred and sixty eight 168 (19.1%). A valid percentage of same percentage is also stated in the table. The last table also shows cumulative percentage with respect to total number of observations in all categories and theoretical reflections.

Table 3: Frequency of Political

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More	96	10.9	50.3	50.3
Balanced	52	5.9	27.2	77.5
Less	43	4.9	22.5	100.0
Total	191	21.7	100.0	

Table 3 indicates the ratio of sensational news items with respect to category of political news. The news were treated by dividing the nature of news into three levels i.e. more sensational, balanced and less sensational. The findings showed that ninety -six 96 (10.9%) news were treated as more sensational from all the selected news channels, fifty -two 52 (5.9%) fall into balanced news items in terms of sensationalism from each of four channels and forty three 43(4.3%) were considered as less sensational in the category of political news. There were a total of one hundred and ninety one 191(21.7%) news related to politics from overall number of observations eight hundred and seventy- nine 879 (100%) of each four news channels (ARY News, Geo News, Express News & Dawn News). The table also highlights the valid percentage and cumulative percentage of the responses along with the frequency of occurrence.

Table 4: Frequency of Law & Order/Terrorism

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More	110	12.5	47.6	47.6
Balanced	62	7.1	26.8	74.5
Less	59	6.7	25.5	100.0
Total	231	26.3	100.0	

Table (4) shows the total number of observations (frequency) with respect to law & order /terrorism activity from each selected news channels along with valid percentage and cumulative percentage in the last table. The table indicates that total two hundred and thirty one 231 (26.3%) news were related to law and order or terrorism out of total

number of observations which is eight hundred and seventy nine 879 (100%) for all defined categories. One hundred and ten 110 (12.5%) news were found more sensational, sixty two 62 (7.1%) were balanced news and fifty nine 59 (6.7%) news related to law and order/ terrorism were less sensational in overall number of observations.

Table 5: Frequency of Judiciary

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More	69	7.8	46.0	46.0
Balanced	43	4.9	28.7	74.7
Less	38	4.3	25.3	100.0
Total	150	17.1	100.0	

Table 5 shows the ratio and frequency of sensational news in the category of judiciary from each selected news channel. The table also highlights the number of observations with valid percentage and cumulative percentage. The statistical results showed that sixty- nine 69 (7.8%) news out of the total number of observations with respect to category of judiciary which is one hundred and fifty 150 (17.1%) were treated as more sensational news. Forty -three 43 (4.9%) were balanced news regarding the matters of judiciary. Thirty- eight 38 (4.3%) news from each of selected news channels fall into less sensational news items.

Table 6: Frequency of Crime

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More	74	8.4	48.4	48.4
Balanced	33	3.8	21.6	69.9
Less	46	5.2	30.1	100.0
Total	153	17.4	100.0	

Table 6 shows the number of observations (frequency) with respect to category of crime news in all selected news channels i.e. ARY News, Geo News, Express News and Dawn News. The table shows that total one hundred and fifty- three 153 (17.4%) news were related to crime

from overall observations in all categories (political, law and order/terrorism, judiciary, crime and others). Seventy -four 74 (8.4%) news related to crime were treated as more sensational, thirty -three 33 (3.8%) were balanced news stories, forty -six 46 (5.2%) news items were less sensational in category of crime in selected news channels. The table also highlights the valid percentage and cumulative percentage consequently.

Table 7: Test Statistics

Channels		Political	Law & Order /Terrorism	Judiciary	Crime	Others
ARY News	Chi-Square	2.375 ^a	21.596 ^b	9.500 ^a	3.231 ^c	8.824 ^d
	Df	2	2	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.305	.000	.009	.199	.012
Geo News	Chi-Square	6.000 ^e	6.377 ^f	3.765 ^g	10.786 ^h	15.063 ⁱ
	Df	2	2	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.050	.041	.152	.005	.001
Dawn News	Chi-Square	4.471 ^g	9.050 ⁱ	.200 ^k	4.750 ⁱ	9.813 ⁱ
	Df	2	2	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.107	.011	.905	.093	.007
Express News	Chi-Square	20.462 ^l	16.647 ^g	3.368 ^m	5.444 ⁿ	4.789 ^m
	Df	2	2	2	2	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.186	.066	.091

Table 8: Test Statistics

	Channels	Political	Law & Order /Terrorism	Judiciary	Crime	Others
Chi-Square	35.877 ^a	25.267 ^b	21.273 ^c	11.080 ^d	17.216 ^e	35.156 ^f
Df	3	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.004	.000	.000

Table 8 illustrates the chi square value and their respective significance with respect to established categories of analysis. The chi square for channels is (chi-square=35.877; p=.000) shows the significance of channels. In case of political news (chi-square=25.267^b; ;p=.000) shows its significance as the p=less than 0.05. The frequency of news in category of law & order/terrorism is (chi -square=21.273^c; p=.000) also

significance according to critical value of Pearson chi-square formula. The number of observations with respect to judicial matters is (chi-square=11.080^d ; p=.004) indicates the value is significant. Next category of crime reveals the frequency as (chi-square=17.216^e; p=.000) which declares its significance. Final category of response i.e. others demonstrates the chi-square (chi-square =35.156^f; p=.000) also confirmed the significance.

Discussion

The content analysis of four Pakistani private news channels of one year shows that they do create the hype of non-issues through framing and priming them frequently for the audience. The results show that Geo News is at the top position to break the news about political issues. ARY News is the channel presenting sensational news most frequently in general in overall categories. The results also show that Express News and Geo News are almost on the same ranking for sensationalism trend. Whereas, the Dawn News channel is using the lowest sensational news style. Most covered issue was law & order/terrorism followed by the politics and crime as significant topics. The findings showed that judiciary gained less coverage as compared to other categories of news.

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Journal of Media Studies 34(1)

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