

DOCTORAL THESIS

News violence and desensitization of news viewers in Pakistan

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News Violence and Desensitization of News Viewers in Pakistan

HAQ Amrat

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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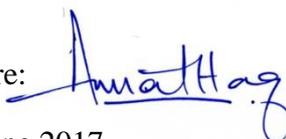
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June 2017

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work which has been done after registration for the degree of PhD at Hong Kong Baptist University, and has not been previously included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures in accordance with the University's Committee on the Use of Human & Animal Subjects in Teaching and Research (HASC). I have attempted to identify all the risks related to this research that may arise in conducting this research, obtained the relevant ethical and/or safety approval (where applicable), and acknowledged my obligations and the rights of the participants.

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Date: June 2017

ABSTRACT

Television has become the primary ‘story teller’ in our society today (Gerbner, et.al., 1986, 1994). It is an all pervasive technology that most of us aren’t even aware of in our surroundings. From airports, bus terminals, restaurants, bars to our own lounges, television is constantly passing on its message to its audience. Its role might vary from just a background noise to active information source, its presence remains constant. However television itself is not static, it is a dynamic medium with a constantly growing presence in our lives. Therefore, there remains a constant need to understand the role television plays in shaping our ‘stories’ and the current study is a short step towards understanding the role and impact of news media on the emotional responses of news viewers in Pakistan.

During the last decade there has been an exponential growth in Pakistan’s private media industry. Over 80 channels have already started with a number in the pipeline. Of these channels the most prominent are the 16 24-hour news channels which, for the first time, provided the Pakistani public multiple options for seeking news and information (previously only Pakistan Television, a state owned channel was available) – the Pakistani public is now spoiled for choice. However this growth in the media industry also resulted in the over-exposure of issues as the channels vied for viewers. Consequently the audience is regularly exposed to sensational news and content – with coverage ranging from the graphic to the mundane – as networks compete for ratings.

Observing the media’s behavior and keeping media effects research on exposure to violence in mind, the researcher was interested in seeing whether regular exposure to violence news and violent acts leads to desensitization of the audience.

The relationship between news and sensationalism is an old one, starting from the early tabloids in the early 1900s which focused on crime/violence to attract readers. The same trend can be seen in news channels in Pakistan and abroad. One main reason can be the low cost of covering and reporting a crime or act of violence. The event itself provides the reporter with images and information (no digging required!), the drama of the crisis, its aftermath and consequences provide news channels easy fodder for their news mill which needs to run 24-hours, 365 days of the year.

Therefore the aim of the present research was twofold: one, to evaluate the amount of violence/violent content that is being shown on Pakistani news channels; and two, to try and assess the impact of this content on the emotional responses of news viewers. The study also aimed to extend the desensitization hypothesis by arguing that the continued presence of the stimulus responsible for desensitization will result in audiences’ crossing the attention threshold; i.e. viewers will ignore the central issues on the media agenda and remove it from their socio-political discussions. The model further suggested that viewers will focus more on the peripheral issues rather than the primary issues in the media agenda.

The results of the content analysis clearly show that in both public and private television news violent content is the 2nd highest type of news being reported (with domestic politics being the highest type of news content across both channels). Two types of news on violence were studied: violence resulting in fatalities and violence without fatalities; with the first one have almost twice the volume of the latter type of news content.

The content analysis and the first part of the survey analysis provide the pre-requisite information for the attention threshold assumption. One, they confirm the continuous presence of a particular issue in news in large volume; and secondly, the survey analysis provides support for the presence of desensitization amongst the respondents. The tests run for the attention threshold assumption indicated that despite the presence of the issue of violence on the media agenda, it is no longer on the public agenda, and is not a part of the social discourse of the respondents with either their family or their friends.

The current research shows that heavy consumers of violent news content tend to significantly have pro-violence attitudes. They also tend to have lower levels of emotional empathy for victims of violence and higher levels of compassion fatigue. While these results were not statistically significant for the sample tested, the results show a consistently low mean, indicating negative trend for both the variables. The respondents were generally in favor of harsher punishments and greater state/military control of the country. Results of the current study indicate that heavy viewers of news media tend to be more desensitized to the violence in society. Their emotional responses are numbed down.

For a country like Pakistan, with a history of military intervention in domestic politics and governance, this is a matter of grave concern. Strong feelings of insecurity and mean world syndrome, fed on a steady diet of violent news programming, can further undermine faith in the political system – leading to greater acceptance (and at times active desire) of military sponsored or led control – a situation that is very troubling for Pakistan.

While the current analysis is a starting place, news content in Pakistan needs to be studied in greater depth. Future research needs to also focus on the wider range of news channels in Pakistan. This would help identify the effects of different variables like ownership, political affiliations, language and location on the content of news channels. In terms of the survey itself, a broader, more inclusive research in the rural and semi-urban areas of the country would provide better evidence of the effects of news violence on Pakistanis. And finally, a lot more in-depth and extensive research is needed before on the “attention threshold” model for it to be verified and its results generalized. If verified, the model will help future researchers identify why issues of audience concern are no longer getting the requisite attention from viewers, despite having strong media presence.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Television is an influential medium of mass communication in our society. People from every age group are exposed to television content. In today's technological world, means of access to television content are very much enhanced, and more and more people are getting exposed to its contents. This exposure may be directly from a television screen or through indirectly e.g. through online archive of a television drama.

Television content is an important source of information, entertainment, opinion formation as well as gratification of other needs of any individual. However, it also broadcasts content which is questionable for inducing more harm than good.

The content of television also includes incidents of violence and this seems to be increasing with the passage of time. As television organizations have to compete with each other, sensationalized and violent content is shown to become more popular among the audience, increase a program's ratings, and hence generate more and more revenue. This industrialization of television has had major consequences for the public.

1.1. Violence and News:

'If it bleeds, it leads' is one of the first lessons journalism students are taught, which is further reinforced by their industry experience. While this type of practice might have been looked down in the past as 'sensational' reporting, today's 24-hr news cycle, fragmented market and growing competition amongst media organizations for audience shares has to a great extent made this the norm.

Consequently violence/violent events of any sort are an easy news source. It provides all the elements of a news story with minimum effort on the organizations part, especially when channels are racing to break news first! In his article 'The Idiot Culture' in *The New Republic*, Carl Bernstein very clearly summarizes the situation: "*The greatest felony in the news business today (as Woodward recently observed) is to be behind, or to miss, a major story; or more precisely, to seem behind, or to seem in danger of missing, a major story*" (1992, p.22).

As a result of this race, audiences are constantly bombarded with news and images focusing on the violent news content; covering events as well as the human tragedy associated with them. Hard news, features, talk shows, human interest stories and pictures of these events have become a routine matter for audiences around the world. By watching violence everywhere people now feel that it is a common and normal thing. They feel less about the injuries or pain of the people affected. Media violence time to time depictions and presentations have made them desensitized. Even if they face bloodsheds on TV news or social networking they feel nothing, they even don't give attention towards those in distresses. Therefore, violent media contents are desensitizing common audiences, whether they are children or adults (Bushman. B. J. & Anderson. B. A, 2009).

In Pakistan, the rate on reporting these incidences is far higher due to the country's proximity to Afghanistan, involvement in the US War on Terror, military operations, domestic fundamentalism, sectarian violence, target killings, everyday crime and internal political instability. All these and more have resulted in regular exposure of the Pakistani news viewers to violence in its varied

manifestations over the last decade. The rate of violence seems to have been on the rise as the economic situation in the country continues to deteriorate due to a series of on-going crises.

Here it also needs to be kept in mind that during the last decade there has been an exponential growth in Pakistan's private media industry. Over 80 channels¹ have started with a number in the pipeline. Of these channels the most prominent are the 16 24-hour news channels which, for the first time, provided the Pakistani public multiple options for seeking news and information (previously only Pakistan Television, a state owned channel was available) – the Pakistani public is now spoiled for choice.

However this growth in the media industry also resulted in the over-exposure of issues as the channels vied for viewers. Consequently, the audience is regularly exposed to more and more sensational news and content – with coverage ranging from the graphic to the mundane – as networks compete for ratings.

Observing the media's behavior and keeping media effects research on exposure to violence in mind, the researcher was interested in seeing whether regular exposure to violence news and violent acts leads to desensitization of the audience.

1.2. News, Violence and Television

The relationship between news and sensationalism is an old one, starting from the early tabloids in the early 1900s which focused on crime/violence to attract readers. The same trend can be seen in news channels in Pakistan and abroad. One

¹ http://www.pemra.gov.pk/pemra/images/docs/stv/list_of_licences_issued_stv.pdf (Downloaded 12/12/2013)

main reason can be the low cost of covering and reporting a crime or act of violence. The event itself provides the reporter with images and information (no digging required!), the drama of the crisis, its aftermath and consequences provide news channels easy fodder for their news mill which needs to run 24-hours, 365 days of the year.

Johnson (1996) raises the fundamental question in news coverage in whether editors/channels are actually “presenting a nasty world the way it really is” or using the safety net provided by the second amendment to portray an ugly, scary, and contrived world...to boost ratings (p.202)”. This highlights the problem facing news media and viewers in Pakistan today as well: is the media actually showing what’s happening in the country or is it highlighting only that which will get their channel the highest ratings?

Another issue that is becoming a problem, especially with reference to the coverage of violence is the similarity in which such events are covered. A look across news channels during a ‘breaking news’ story clearly shows coverage of the same event, with similar commentary, footage and analysis. This consistency in news production also lessens the opinions and viewing options available to the viewers, i.e. exposing them regularly to visually and verbally similar stories (Hudson, 1992). This repetitive nature can, over time, reinforce ideas and have long term effects on the opinions and behaviors of its viewers (Comstock, 1978).

In a 2010 interview to the Media Education Foundation, George Gerbner said:

“Most of us live rather insulated lives and we don’t meet too many people of other groups, of other races, other ethnic backgrounds than our own. Most of what we know about other races, other ethnic groups, we know from television. And on television we get some very peculiar type of information.”

News channels/editors argue that they only show that which is actually happening in society, if bombings, target killing and attacks are what is happening then that is the story they'll air. However, the question is not whether these things are happening; it's whether through sensationalism and/or constant repetition they are making things appear worse than they actually are? Are they blowing it out of proportion (Johnson, 1996)?

According to the Pew Research Center (2006), 61% of all lead stories on local news, which is the primary news source for two-thirds of Americans, are dedicated to crime, fires, disasters, and accidents. So if our knowledge and vision of what the world is like is developed from television, this 61% is enough to convince us never to leave our homes for fear of the consequences.

This ability of television was called the *Cultivation Effect* by George Gerbner in 1986, claiming that the more people watch television, the more they will accept it as (social) reality. And with violence so predominant in media, especially news content, Gerbner argued that the audience starts seeing the world as a darker place than it actually is – resulting in the *mean world syndrome* (Gerbner, 1986; Gerbner et. al., 1986a).

The power of television is not restricted to its impact on viewers, but is also manifest in the way it can highlight certain issues, while completely ignoring others. As Gerbner & Gross state in *Living with Television*, “*Representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation.*” (1976, p.182)

Anything that does not make it to the television screen, especially in the news has no significant social and/or political value for the masses. It will fail to register as an event of any consequence. This is a scary thought, especially in light of the selective nature of television, particularly television news, which tends to be the primary source of information for most news consumers in third world countries like Pakistan.

1.3. Television and Media Effects

One of the main concerns throughout the study of media effects has been a fear that violence on television begets violence in real life – however, a more worrisome consequence is that of *desensitization*. The argument being that a constant exposure to violent media content makes viewers immune to it and blunts their emotional, psychological and physiological response to similar content in the future (Harris, 2009).

Psychology has used the process of systematic desensitization as therapy to cure people of their fears and phobias. However, with television and other media content the process is neither monitored nor controlled. With the assumption being that while initial exposure to graphic/violent content might be immediate, repeated exposure to similar material will dull the responses of the viewers. This will in turn reduce reaction to future violence and inhibit emotional and/or physical responses to the presence and prevention of violence.

1.3.1. Desensitization

The phenomenon of desensitization has its roots in psychology. In the 1920's, John B. Watson and Rosalie Rayner conducted an experiment on a child named

Albert, hence named the Albert Experiment. They induced fear in the child through the use of conditioning process (Harris1979). On similar grounds, another study was carried out by Jones (1924) but in reverse. In the popular ‘Little Peter Experiment’, she used direct conditioning and modeling to reduce the fear of rabbit in a child named Peter, hence popular as the ‘Little Peter Experiment’. This study paved way for the establishment of the process of systematic desensitization.

In 1958, a South African psychologist Joseph Wolpe introduced the concept of ‘systematic desensitization’ in his book ‘Psychotherapy by Reciprocal Inhibition’. He extended Jones’ study by explaining the use of systematic desensitization as a powerful behavior therapy for the treatment of anxiety and phobias. The basis of desensitization lies in the hypothesis that anxiety leads to defensive behavior (Wolpe, as cited in Bandura & Adam, 1977).

1.3.2. Desensitization and Psychology

Since the development of systematic desensitization as a behavior therapy, various researchers have employed this method in various psychological areas. These include contexts such as to cope with speech anxiety (Barker, Cegala, Kibler, & Wablers, 1970)), to reduce the fear through replicas (Wilson, 1987), decrease the fear of flying (Wilhelm & Roth, 1997; Capafóns, Sosa, & Averó, 1998), and much more. Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is a relatively recent therapy developed a decade ago to desensitize individuals to traumatic life events (Jongh, Broeke, & Rensenn, 1999). EMDR has been researched in Pakistan as well (Bilal, Rana, Khan, & Qayyum, 2015).

1.3.3. Defining Desensitization:

Numerous definitions of desensitization ranging from military use to psychology to mass communication have been given overtime. From “reduced emotional responsiveness” (Wilson and Smith, 1998) to a “decrease (almost to the point of absence) of sympathy or empathy” (Potter & Smith, 2000), both of which are “emotional mechanisms” addressing how people respond to acts of violence experienced directly or indirectly have been used to define desensitization.

Huesmann, Moise, and Podolski (1997) further break down the emotional components of desensitization. For them desensitization refers to the idea that the more an individual is exposed to violence, the more violence will come to be seen as a normal and acceptable form of behavior. This process, in turn, will increase the person’s acceptance of violent behavior. Harris (2009) has defined desensitization in similar terms, calling it a “straightforward example of classical conditioning” where exposure to media violence from the comfort of one’s own home leads to a distancing between the reality and fantasy of the violence being shown, weakening the viewer’s responses to violence itself overtime.

In 1999, Susan Moller added the concept of ‘*compassion fatigue*’ to the study of desensitization – arguing that the similarity of content in the news as well as coverage leads to a disinterest amongst viewers on a particular issue. This disinterest, according to Moller, results in boredom and a tendency to ignore similar events in the future. Another consequence of compassion fatigue appears to be lessening of sympathetic responses towards victims of violence and violent events, as well as the development of a feeling of helplessness in face of such on-going catastrophes. This further exacerbates the desensitization process.

Although the above mentioned definitions provide an overview of the concept of media desensitization, no consensus has yet to be reached about its effect on viewers. Although existing research does suggest that prolonged exposure to violence can produce a dulling of responses, both emotional and cognitive to violence and its effects. One approach towards the study of desensitization to media violence has been to examine the individual's capacity for moral evaluation (Rudy, 2009). As mentioned earlier, desensitization includes changes in both emotional and cognitive responses. Emotional desensitization can be seen as the numbing or visible lessening of emotional reactions to violent events, which would normally produce a strong emotional response in viewers; whereas cognitive changes can be seen as the acceptance of violence as the rule; instead of the exception; a decrease in empathy and strengthening of pro-violence attitudes can be seen as indicators of emotional and cognitive desensitization.

1.3.4. Desensitization and Mass Communication

In spite of the psychological origins, desensitization is an important phenomenon in relation with mass communication and media studies. Repeated exposure to media content that is violent in nature leads to a turning off of emotional reactions towards such content, thus producing desensitization (Cline, Croft & Courrier, 1973).

In the context of media, Anderson and Huesmann define desensitization as “*the process of becoming less physiologically and emotionally aroused to media violence due to extended exposure*” (as cited in Gentile, 2003).

Desensitization has been measured by calculating the physiological or emotional reaction. It occurs when there is a decrease in the physiological or emotional responsiveness of the subject. Desensitization is a key long-term effect of media violence that contributes to aggression.

1.4. Violent News, Television and Desensitization:

Over the last two decades radical changes have occurred in the mass media globally, especially in the news media. Growing in parallel with increasingly fierce inter-media and intra-media competition and commercial pressures the media industry has seen the growing dominance of the visual. Television has become the leading news medium, with newspapers only supplementary to TV's instant, live, emotional coverage. Ramonet (2000) feels that we are at a turning point in the history of information in which TV news shows have set up a kind of new equation for news, which can be summed up like this: if the emotion you feel by looking at the pictures on TV news programs is true, then the news is true.

In Ramonet's (2000) view '*Television imposes its own perversions on the other information media, beginning with its fascination with pictures. And the basic idea that only what is visible deserves to be news*' (p.5). Television thus tends to set the agenda of all news media, focusing all other media on the spectacular events on which TV itself thrives.

Unfortunately, research on news content in late 90's showed that most (54%, more than half the news stories!) of what is shown in news is based on violence, conflict and suffering (Johnson, 1996). Conflict and tragedy have always sold newspapers, and violence provides both in abundance. As mentioned earlier, in

today's highly competitive and ratings-based news media, crime, violence and tragedy of any kind provides easy, readymade news for channels at low costs.

One of the aspects that have received excessive coverage over the recent years (since 9/11) is that of terrorism. It has all the elements required for an excellent news story: drama, tragedy, violence and suffering. But even in this situation one sees a lessening of interest and a shift towards other issues in the news. This change has been attributed to the over-exposure of violence (especially terrorism) as a topic. According to Hoffman (1998) the media itself is becoming desensitized to these events. He (Hoffman, 1998) argues repeated exposure to violent content makes the editors who decide whether and where to publish a story inured to its consequences. As a result, editors are less likely to make stories about violence front page news unless something dramatic or new happens.

According to Linz, Donnerstein, and Penrod (1997) this over exposure and regular exposure to violence tends to first generate fear of further victimization amongst its viewers, but later leads to "*desensitization . . . to depictions of violence and reduced concern for its victims*".

On the other hand, there are others that worry the media is sensationalizing violence in its effort to attract an audience. Nacos (2003, 2002), for example, argues that the media has turned news into an "infotainment" industry – it is less concerned with important stories and more concerned with bloody ones.

Both the above mentioned trends are issues for concern in Pakistan's rapidly growing news industry. With over 15, 24-hour news channels vying for their share of the market, every act of violence ranging from street crime to target killings to

acts of terrorism receive immediate and extensive coverage. Channels air content that is extremely graphic in nature, live, without any warnings for viewers. There is also a growing mindset in the industry that the bigger the event the better the news story. This allows for round the clock coverage of the event, analyses, finger-pointing, human interest stories as well as political commentary on the state of affairs in the country – all in one cheap package.

1.5. Media in Pakistan - Overview

Today Pakistan is spoiled for choice in its domestic media sources; however this has not always been the case. Till 2002 the media landscape in Pakistan was limited to public television while the print media enjoyed little political freedom. Political and economic pressures were the norm to control the media content, especially news.

This all changed in 2002, when the then President, Pervaiz Musharraf, instituted a media liberalization policy. The television industry benefited greatly from this liberalization – seeing the number of channels jump from two state-controlled channels to over 60 channels airing soaps, dramas, music, political commentary and of course, news. It is notable that of all the channels on air today, 15 are 24-hour news channels. This is not to say that liberalized is equal to free - these channels still face direct and indirect political pressure and sometimes are taken off-air by the state.

CONCENTRATION OF OWNERSHIP		
Dawn Media Group	Independent Media Corporation	Nawa-i-Waqt Group
Liberal, Secular, Moderate Views	Moderate, Conservative Perspective	Right Wing, Conservative
Print media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn (Flagship) • The Star (Evening) • Herald (monthly) • Spider (monthly) • Aurora (bi-monthly) Broadcast media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn News. • City FM 89 Internet media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn.com (online) Exhibitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn Education Expo (annual) 	Publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily News • Daily Awam • Akhbar-e-Jehan (weekly) • MAG The Weekly Online Editions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jang Group • Weekly Akhbar-e-Jehan • Mag The Weekly • Daily Jang • The News International Television: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEO Entertainment • GEO News • GEO Super • AAG TV 	Print media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nawa-i-Waqt • The Nation • Family Magazine • Nadaimillat (weekly) • Phool (kids) Broadcast media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waqt News Internet media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-editions of all publications

Figure 1. Breakdown of media ownership in Pakistan²

Pakistan's media sector is highly influenced by the ownership structure. There are three dominating media groups which also have political affiliations (See Fig. 1).

While the above table in no way covers the extensive print and electronic media landscape in Pakistan, it does give a very clear idea of the distance that exists between the English and Urdu language media in the country. If one looks at the circulation and viewer numbers, the English language channels and newspapers are primarily read in urban setting and are thus geared towards these audiences. They are more liberal and serious in comparison to the Urdu media outlets, which target a primarily semi-urban and rural audience. Thus their content is more sensational and melodramatic.

² <http://www.i-m-s.dk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ims-media-pakistan-radicalisation-2009.pdf> Retrieved on: 25/07/2014

medialogic mediamonitors

Broadcasting Environment - Basic Facts

In Top 09 Urban Cities:
 Total Household - 5.7million --> 37.9 million individuals
 Total TV Households - 4.9 million --> 32.6 million individuals
 Total Cable Penetration - 4 million --> 28.2 million individuals

Total Number of Local Channels - 85

News	Entertainment	Sports	Children	Music
Geo News ARY News Samaa Dunya TV Express News Waqf TV Dawn News News1 Metro One Business Plus Aaj TV CNBC PTV News (Terr) Din News Channel 5 Royal News KTN News APNA News Vash News Sindh News Khyber News City 42 Indus News Dhoom	ARY Digital Hum TV Geo Ent Indus Vision A Plus ACS TV One PTV Home (Terr) Alite Sohni Dharti Dharti Vibe Koh-e-Noor AKN ATV (Terr) PTV National Express Ent	Geo Super Tensports PTV Sports	Cartoon Net Nickelodeon	Oxygene Aag Play ARY Music GKA Boom MTV Pakistan Oye K2 SKM 9
		Food	Movies	
		Zalqa Masala ARY Zauq	HBO Filmmax Filmazia Starlite Silver Screen Film World	
		Regional	Educational	
		Rohi TV KTN Punjab TV APNA Raavi Mehran Sindh TV PTV Bolan Waseb TV AVT Khyber Kook Kashish Awaz Sabz Baat Urooj	Value TV Health TV	
	Religious			
	Madni ARY QTV Haq TV			
			Fashion	
			Style 360	

24-Hour + News Broadcasts

Figure 2. List of TV Channels in Pakistan³

As the figure above indicates, there exists an extremely competitive market in the media sector. This has led to extensive diversification and competition amongst the channels. Instead of focusing on just the national language, channels are now targeting niche markets based on language, ethnicity, interests and socio-economic strata.

The downside of this is the sacrifice of professionalism and competence in news in favor of sensational news and programs for higher ratings and advertising. The situation is worsened by the journalists' desire to gain rapid popularity, as viewer numbers and ratings have a direct impact on the earnings of journalists and anchors in the private media industry in Pakistan.

This basically means that the media latches on to breaking news and follows it religiously, regardless of the value of the news itself. According to a 2009,

³ <http://www.slideshare.net/noumanfzal/tv-viewership-amp-monitoring-review-2011> Retrieved on: 04/07/2012

International Media Support (IMS) report “...*media sees the conflict as hot news and follows it intensely* (p.31)”. Consequently you end up with one issue dominating the news cycle, across majority of the news channels with each channel trying to outdo the other with faster coverage and presence at the scene of the event.

Just like the quality of channels themselves, the quality of the journalists working within them varies greatly as well. It ranges from excellence to sub-standard, untrained journalism. Matters are worsened by the working conditions themselves; with little job security in the news industry (except for the really big names) majority of the highly trained and educated prefer other fields as full-time professions.

There is also a very clear dearth of professional training academies and schools for journalists. While in the last few years, universities, both public and private have started media studies programs, they lack funding, equipment and faculty to produce properly trained students. Again, there is a focus on quantity rather than quality. Also, most of the new graduating students will take years to reach senior, policy/decision making positions and are unable to affect the news quality as such.

1.5.1. Terrestrial vs. Cable TV in Pakistan

Here it also needs to be kept in mind that all of the private channels mentioned so far are digital/satellite channels. They are not accessible without a cable connection or some form of uplink capability, which is costly and not easily affordable for the large segment of the population living outside urban centers.

This limits the access people have to private media in rural and far-flung areas of the country. The only terrestrial channels available in these areas are the State run and controlled Pakistan Television channels, i.e. for them the only source of television news is the state run PTV News station. Most of the information, news and analysis are state monitored and at times censored. This limits the type and amount of information a large segment of the population.

1.6. Statement of the Problem

Our exposure to television begins from infancy. It is a constant companion. While selective viewing, personal choice of content and programming comes at a later age, we become consumers of television even before we can understand the message being delivered.

In third world countries like Pakistan this is especially true. Low literacy rates, large family sizes and financial pressures have transformed television into the primary source of information, entertainment, companionship and babysitter. For most viewers it is their window to the world. While urban areas with higher literacy rates have a relatively strong presence of print media and the internet, semi-urban and rural areas are largely dependent on electronic media, especially television to fulfil their information and entertainment needs.

Consequently, television plays a major role in exposure to opinions and ideas in Pakistan. It is also the primary source of information on what is happening in the rest of the country – acting as a guide and teacher for majority of the population. In light of existing research in media effects, this can have both positive and negative consequences depending on the nature of the content being aired. This

holds particularly true for news media. News content plays a significant role in how audiences perceive the world around them. In most semi-urban and rural areas it is also responsible for world building as the viewers have little to no personal exposure to events happening outside their limited jurisdiction.

Under these circumstances, it is of vital importance to explore and identify what exactly audiences in Pakistan are being exposed to via news media; and to analyze how this content is affecting their perceptions and opinions.

Therefore, the objectives of this study were two-fold: one, to assess news and its content in Pakistan; and two, to evaluate the impact of violence and violent news on the emotional and cognitive responses of news viewers in Pakistan, i.e. to study whether the constant exposure has led to desensitization. Previous studies, as discussed later in the literature review, have focused on multiple issues and media associated with the process of desensitization; however a number of these have been hampered by the very size and scope of the research itself. The present research hopes to rectify this issue – while ambitious in scope – the researcher plans to conduct the research at the national level in order to assess whether desensitization as a process can occur on larger scales than believed previously.

The aims of the present research were twofold:

- One, to evaluate the amount of violence/violent content that is being shown on Pakistani news channels;
- Two, to try and assess the impact of this content on the emotional and cognitive responses of news viewers.

The study also aims to extend the desensitization hypothesis by arguing that once audience members become desensitized to an issue, the continued presence of the issues responsible for desensitization will result in story saturation and attention threshold effect in the audience; i.e. viewers will avoid the central issues on the media agenda and remove it from their social discourse. The hypothesis further suggests that viewers will focus more on the peripheral consequences of the original issue without addressing it directly.

Should the hypothesis prove valid, it will help identify some of the possible consequences of desensitization – not only for individual viewers – but on media and public policy narratives as well. It will help assess how and why issues which should be a part of public debate are at times removed and why the public becomes passive and non-responsive to certain debates.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review has been split into two parts. The first part addresses the conceptual framework through existing literature; while the second part of the literature review addresses the theoretical underpinnings of current research in desensitization and news violence.

2.1. Theoretical Framework:

2.1.1. Cultivation Analysis

The Cultural Indicator Project aimed to study the relationship between the amounts of time viewers spent watching television and how this affected their world view by using television exposure as the primary measure. Two groups were identified; light and heavy viewers with the argument being that those who spend more time watching TV are more inclined to *view the world through the media's lens* (Gerbner, Gross & Signorelli, 1978).

They emphasize the effects of television viewing on the attitudes rather than the behaviour 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 (Dominick, 1990). Cultivation of certain opinions develops over time – more time spent watching television results in these opinions gaining greater hold.

2.1.2. Understanding Cultivation

Cultivation is a critical phenomenon which should be understood properly.

Cultivation is not substitute of effects, but an interaction between medium and its masses. TV doesn't create or reflect beliefs but disseminates messages that create and change the ideologies of masses and helps them create their identities.

Cultivation is a time taking phenomenon, it doesn't have instant effects and on spot outcomes. Cultivation occurs with repeating and long term patterns depending on consistency. It cannot be tested with short run exposure or diverse exposure. (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

2.1.3. TV as a medium for cultivation

Cultivation studies were mainly based on TV which gives it a status of theory in mass communication wholly. Cultivation analysis was done to see that, those who watch more TV are prone to give TV (answers learned from TV world) as compared to those who watch it less. TV is a medium which is reachable for people of every class and status. It doesn't require learning or literacy. TV is a ritual that elites share with public. TV penetrates into society in such a way that it becomes reality of people for certain shared beliefs. Time changed but TV did not lose its importance in society. New technologies have improved our choices but TV is likely to stay main source of social symbol system and customs. It will create commonality in a diverse group. The cultivation study was primarily done in America with American audience under study but it is applicable throughout the world in different ways. The assertion of this study was that TV is central cultural arm of American society, instead of changing, intimidating and weakening the concept, behaviours and beliefs which are conservative, it is the

agent that extends them by maintenance. It was believed that TV has power of changing the beliefs and attitudes. TV is a force of enculturation not a mean for discerning entertainment and information. TV is free and always running which shows everything and requires no literacy. No national thing seems real if not shown on TV.

TV world is mixture of truth and lies, TV is not true but it is extension of those standard images that we have in mind since childhood (Gerbner and Gross, 1976). The major focus of cultivation studies was on violence portrayed on TV and its effect on audience.

2.1.4. Summary of Cultural Indicators Project

The research project named as Cultural indicators has trailed down the dramatic content since 1967, it also investigated the outcomes of growing up with TV since 1974. The programmes which people see for longest time are likely to cultivate the concept of reality for them which was studied in cultural indicators project. This project has a ground of history with guidance from theory and it is supported empirically (Gerbner, 1969, 1970, 1971). Cultivation occurs differently for different audience. People get affected differently but cultivation gives same central active influence.

Heavy viewers and light views were studied in cultivation differential scale. A small but persistent shift in cultivation of common perception may change the cultural outlook and imbalance political and social decision making without essentially altering the evident behaviour. Resonance plays a role when first hand experience is stronger. Reality of TV merges with real life and acts as a double

dose of message which increases cultivation. TV and mainstreaming is closely related. If shared meanings and suppositions are same this mainstreaming strengthens cultivation (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

2.1.5. Studying violence in cultivation

The question that arises in mind is why would violent content be produced?

Answer to which is, Violence plays major role in TV world because it's cheap to produce and is simplest form of drama to show the game of power and rule.

Violence creates fear in mind of people and they're easily manipulated. Fear is an emotion which is universal and it is very easy to take advantage of fear. Symbolic violence may lead to cultivate the threat of death and need for protection.

Violence on media had been a concern for researchers for longest time. Research on violence began with investigation of violence in network TV drama 1967-68.

Later, it was called as renewal research which secretary Weinberger named as Project Cultural indicators. The research was conducted under national institute of Mental health and included periodic study of TV programmes and concept of social reality that TV viewing cultivates in children and adults. . The findings confirmed the belief that TV is different from other media and requires new approach (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

While the study of connections between media content and aggressive actions is important, equally vital (if not more so) is the concern about how the media convince us that we live in a scary world, and thus encourage us to behave and to make decisions based on a pervasive sense of fear.

According to Chandler (2002) the cultivation effect of television viewing is one of 'levelling' or 'homogenizing' opinion. The media does not challenge the status quo; instead it supports and further reinforces the existing opinions and attitudes in society. And viewers unknowingly absorb these attitudes, at times adopting them as their own without conscious realisation of how the media is affecting them. Purpose of Cultivation

Cultivation is done with a purpose. As mentioned earlier people are manipulated with cultivation. The stories that kids are exposed to, do not necessarily come from social circle but by people from far off places, who are concerned to business only. The cultural surroundings in which a person stays, act as a by-product of selling (Gerbner, 1998). The likings and preferences of people are played upon by huge conglomerates which set out their message in the minds of common masses. With the assistance of latest technologies these messages penetrate and suck out creativity which results as reduction in diverse content. Cultivation also has political stakes and is done on purpose by governments. Cultural mainstream is shaped by ministry of culture in America with use of media as a tool. Already set and formatted programmes are aired which boost up the power structure of ruling elite. Previously, people used to go out for quest and search of knowledge now knowledge is provided at door steps but this knowledge is not necessarily what they need. TV shares images and messages giving rise to symbolic environment. With every technological advancement in which satellites and internet is included its strength is increasing. TV is imprinting dominant patterns in minds (Gerbner, 1998).

2.1.6. Cultivation as an opinionated tool

Since TV is a medium designed to cater the audience from all walks of life, the messages produced by it are more likely to be opting for a balance. Hence, content that involves political views is designed this way. There are more chances that heavy viewers of TV identify themselves as moderate instead of conservative or liberal (Gerbner ,Gross, Morgan & Signoreilli 1982,1984). Cultivation is not a phenomenon bounded by geography it is borderless. Cultivation for foreign policy became evident from a study of attitudes towards war in Persian Gulf. People who were heavy viewers of TV knew more military terms and supported war with little information about the real issues in Middle East. Specific and selective exposure to news was not as important as overall amount of TV viewing (Lewis, Jhally& Morgan ,1991). This does not mean that cultivation does not occur locally and it is planted by some outside agencies .In spite of the fact that US based programmes are watched all around the world they deliberately scheduled in the late night or day, prime time slots are dominated by local content in many countries (Guider,1998).

2.1.7. Importance of Context in Cultivation

Masses are not affected in the same way by same programme. Context in which masses see, and their social surroundings both play a key role. Hirsch (1980) argued that the material to which spectators are exposed, and the contexts in which they see different viewers, and the context in which they view, plays a major role. The TV system of a country represents its social and historical contexts in which the country was developed as well as the political economic and cultural blueprints (Gerbner, 1958, 1969). It cannot be assumed that cultivation

and patterns produced by it will be same and relevant all around the world. The concepts of social realities are different for different people. Violence does not have same meanings for everyone. Without considering the context media keeps focus on violent offences and most unusual and serious types of crime (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000). People and their past also matters. Meanings in media representations can be received and memorised by audience in different way depending upon their social contexts and previous experiences (Eschholz ,1997). Geography and race can affect in a different way. African American women watch TV more than European American women (Greenberg & Brand, 1994), but have not as much of a desire for slimness than European American women (Powell & Kahn, 1995; Rucker & Cash, 1992) and they have heavier body frame image ideals (Rucker & Cash,1992).

2.1.8. Medium and Cultivation

Though cultivation focus is on common and long lasting effects of growing up with television, TV acts as a medium as well as has institutional characteristics. This does not mean that TV is the only medium that cultivates. Cultivation is dependent upon some structural factors medium or channel is one of them others are: available number of channels, total airtime, amount of time people spend watching TV which also very important. Alongside, diversity of available content plays a major role. Variety of content does not depends upon number of channels available. One diverse and balance channel can supply to diverse audience as compared to plenty of channels of channels generating homogenous content and competing for audience (Gerbner, 1998).

Cultivation might occur through a different medium or channel. Also as discussed, social surrounding and set up plays a pivotal role. Cultivation depends upon the source from which image is taken. Watching TV, under the guidance of parents can either increase (Gross & Morgan ,1985) or decrease (Rothschild & Morgan,1987) cultivation in growing children. Those who are more closely bonded with the family are less likely to be affected by cultivation (Rothschild ,1984). Cultivation cannot be taken as a positive experience which will give good outcomes. Cultivation theory for TV must be investigated and focus should be on developing counter account as well as develop less reliance on TV and more focus on self-governance (Gerbner, 1998).

2.1.9. Cultivation and point of reference

Masses are cultivated through TV in such a way that it is not easy for them to realise what is being fed to them. A fine line that is between fact and fiction of TV, it is impossible to maintain that. People claim that they can differentiate between factual representations and fictional ones but in fact repeating lessons from TV form their world view (Hawkins & Pingree, 1982) named it cultivation of “value system”. Everyone who watches TV is being cultivated as one way or the other. The world presented to them from TV becomes their point of reference. As compared to heavy viewers light viewers of TV will gratify “mean world Syndrome” in a different way by only implying that they are looking for their protection only, they cannot trust people casually, as being aware is the need of time (Gross, et. al., 1988, Signorielli 1990)

People who watch TV, socialise less, and spend more time in front of TV. Some researchers says that, It can also be a factor that heavy television viewers spend

less time in social interaction hence they are found to be more shy, depressed and lonely as compared to non-viewers (Hammermeister, Brock, Winterstein & Page, 2005). As TV defines the real world lives for heavy viewers they had high scores on sexism scale due to underrepresentation of women on TV. They do not acknowledge the presence of women due to selected role and stereotypical manifestations (Signorielli, 1990).

The traditional gender roles are incorporated by TV and it has integrated the idea that if women bring up their children sitting at home they're the happiest (Morgan, 1982). TV develops a false world for teen agers which start living in Utopia. There are more chances that heavy viewer adolescents would want jobs in which they earn well and have high statuses but easy jobs, with long vacations and plenty of leisure time (Signorielli, 1990).

Religious background plays important role and becomes a point of reference for some people. Cohen and Weimann (2000), in their findings saw a clear pattern that people who are more religious are less vulnerable to cultivation as compared to secular and traditional viewers. The beliefs regarding mutual trust were more susceptible in secular and traditional teenagers.

Cultivation can take place through direct as well as indirect processes e.g. parents who watch more crime programmes and are exposed to high violence are more expected to warn their kids about crime in their high school years (Buselle,2003).

2.1.10. Brief History of Media Violence & Cultivation

Concern over violence in media and its effects on viewers is not a new phenomenon. It has been a concern starting from imitation of violence written

about in newspapers to excessive violence (from certain points of view) in cinema in the 1920's. Pressure on the government concerning the rising trends of violence in the media resulted in the Telecommunications Act, 1996; which required a voluntary rating system be developed by the industry itself (Torr, 2004).

A series of school shooting the late 1990's in the US shifted some focus from television to music videos and video games, especially first-shooter games. However, crimes copying movie and drama content shifted the focus back to television. The Persian-Gulf Conflict, 9/11, War on Terror, second Iraq war, all with their embedded journalists and live coverage of conflicts also added to the mix by bringing international conflict right into viewers' homes – full of special video and audio effects, without any of the fallout. All these have added to the volume and type of violence being shown on television, from digital, animated violence in video games to cartoons to fictional violence in dramas/movies to the real-world violence covered by news and current affairs programs, the viewer gets bombarded with such content across the spectrum of available programming.

Television has become a most important part of our lives. Television effects our beliefs and values but it depends on the exposure time of viewer. According to literature some of the effects that have been recorded range from heavy viewers being effected differently than light viewers (Gross & Morgan 1985). If heavy viewer is more exposed to violent content, he becomes more desensitized (Felson, 1996). Social reality of heavy viewer is different from the light viewer. Perception of Television message would be change if viewers have some social interactions also (Gross, Morgan, Signorelli & Gerbner 1982).

Cultivation effect varies on different individuals. Different genre has different cultivation effect on the viewers. Age, gender and social backgrounds also contribute in forming the reality. So demographics are the important factor in cultivation effect (Cohen & Weimann, 2000). Females are more affected by violence than male and develop distrust and fear towards the world. Heavy viewers and less educated females are more affected by the violence (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Viewers form their beliefs and attitudes according to the world shown on media and then apply it similarly in real world in similar situation (Klein & Shiffman, 2006)

Violence content remains popular in entertainment. After the advent of television, violent content is available in every home which may become the cause of crime increase in the society. But researcher states that heavy viewer of violence is more fearful than light viewers which may lead them to be victimize of violence (Felson, 1996). Now a days TV is playing important role in cultivating fear which effects viewer's mental health (Jahangir, Nawaz & Khan, 2014). Cultivation effect is different across all TV genres. Effect is based on the content type (Grabe & Drew, 2007).

While there exists a large body of research on cultivation, violence in the media has received special attention. From drama, comedy, news, music videos to video games in recent years, extensive research has been conducted on the effects of watching violence on viewers (Potter et.al., 1995; Potter & Warren, 1998; Merida & Leiby, 2001; Massing, 2001). According to Gerbner the volume of crime shown on television is almost ten times that of which occurs in the real world (Gerbner, et.al., 1986, p. 26). American surveys of violent programming, done in

the 1970s⁴ and '80s⁵, found that the level of violence on American commercial television remained constant, averaging five to six violent acts per hour in prime time and 20 to 25 violent acts per hour on Saturday morning children's programs. But these studies concentrated on conventional television and did not take into account all the material watched via newer television technologies such as cable, video and satellite services. Adding these to the mix would likely have shown the amount of violence on television to be rising. As well, none of these studies canvassed changes in the nature of the violence portrayed over the years -- for example, whether television violence had become more graphic or more callous.

The main controversy over television violence, which raged in social science circles for years, did not concern the types of studies mentioned above, which measure and compare the nature of violent programming. Rather, the real point of contention was the issue of cause and effect -- whether watching violent programming causes individuals to exhibit violent behaviour.

Although a direct, causal relationship is difficult to establish, three major American studies, spanning 30 years altogether, each found a positive correlation or link between children's viewing of violence on television and aggressive attitudes and behaviours. These studies are: a report to the Surgeon General on the impact of televised violence, released at the end of 1971; the National Institute of Mental Health's follow-up to the report to the Surgeon General, ten years later;

⁴ Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior. *Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence - Report to the Surgeon General* United States Public Health Service. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, 1971.

⁵ National Institute of Mental Health. *Television and Behavior - Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and National Institute of Mental Health, Washington, 1982.

and the 1992 report of the American Psychological Association's Committee on Media in Society.

2.1.11. Defining TV Violence

"*Television violence*" usually refers to all the violence appearing on TV screens. It includes material broadcast over the air, distributed by cable and satellite systems, and available on videocassettes and disks.

A common understanding or definition of what constitutes "television violence" could be useful in helping to examine and regulate the problem. But arriving at such an understanding is no simple matter. Should the definition include animated portrayals or only realistic depictions? Should the context in which the violence is presented matter -- for example, whether the violence is gratuitous or integral to the plot or purpose of a program, whether it is physical or verbal, or whether it is directed at people, animals or objects?

The problem with a very precise definition of television violence is that it may also be quite restrictive. The definition at one time used by media specialist George Gerbner in his research is a case in point: "*the act of injuring or killing someone or the threat of injuring or killing someone.*" Recent studies have framed violence in slightly broader terms. The National Television Violence Study (1996) funded by the National Cable Television Association in the U.S., for example, considered violence to be: "*Any overt depiction of the use of physical force -- or the credible threat of such force -- intended to physically harm an animate being or group of beings.*"

The UCLA Television Violence Monitoring Project (1995), commissioned by four major American networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC), defined violence as *anything that involves physical harm or a threat of physical harm of any sort, intentional or unintentional, self-inflicted or inflicted by someone or something else.*

Another approach is to avoid defining "violence" in finite terms, instead explaining it through examples. In Canada's case, private broadcasters' voluntary code for regulating violence on television takes this approach. The code, while it requires broadcasters to exercise caution in depicting violence, never actually defines "violence," but lists examples of potentially violent scenarios, including situations of conflict or confrontation, death and injury, street crime, and sexual assault. From the many types of definitions given for television violence, arriving at a standard definition that is comprehensive, yet succinct and unambiguous, remains a daunting task. However, for the purpose of the current study and analysis of content the UCLA Television Violence Monitoring Project (1995) was considered the closest to the study requirement and thus included in the operationalization process.

2.1.12. News Media and Cultivation

If there is one area of media that people are most likely to uncritically accept as reflecting reality rather than constructing it, that area is probably the news. People watch, read, or listen to news to find out what happened in the world that day. However, the perceived reality often diverges quite dramatically from the real world, where much more happened than can be reported in any day's news program or publication. Even the most earnest attempt to accurately and fairly

represent the day's events requires producers and editors to select which items to cover, how prominently to cover them, and in what manner to cover them. The typical daily newspaper, for example, only selects 25% of the daily wire service material to print (McCombs, 1994).

Regarding fear for crime as it is one of prime focus of cultivation crime programme genre was studied by Grabe and Drew (2007), they evaluated both news and fictional portrayals and after testing various hypothesis found out that overall little impact of cultivation was found for fiction as compared to non-fictional violence which involved reality e.g. News.

News is something that people believe is true. Local news is rich in crime stories and many studies find that more consumption of local news predicted more fear of crime (Eschholz, Chiricos & Gertz, 2003; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2004). Watching crime stories in news can cultivate a stronger fear for means world. Mostly people who watch news are more likely to rate crime as most important problem in the city (Gross & Aday, 2003). People more exposed to news are likely to develop feeling of fear more. TV news consumption generally is related to '*heightened perceptions of crime risk on both a personal and societal level*' (Romer et al., 2003, p. 99).

As can be seen from the mentioned literature, most of the research in Cultivation and Desensitization has focused on entertainment media; however a small body of research has shifted the focus to news. The argument being that while exposure to violent content in the entertainment industry results in desensitization to violence, there is still a realization of the difference between reality and fiction (Felson, 1996; Bushman & Huesmann, 2006; Emmers-Sommer & Allen, 1999). This

realization potentially mitigates the effects of cultivation and desensitization. Not all research supports this hypothesis; however this makes the limited amount of research on news, violence and its effects a bit worrisome. News is fact. Violence shown on the news is actually happening out in the real world, with a viewer well aware of this. So, while Gerbner (1978) argues that it is not wise to study news violence in isolation, nor is cultivation research complete till analysis of the volume of violence in news and its effects on viewers is studied. Unfortunately, a review of literature shows that this is exactly what has happened in communication research, with even longitudinal studies like The National Television Violence Study (1997) not including news in their calculations. This is dangerous especially for third world countries like Pakistan, where low levels of literacy make television the main source of news and information for viewers on local and world events.

There however has been a shift of focus on news and violence research. A number of studies have been conducted to calculate the volume and type of violence covered by news, especially local news (Dorfman, et.al. 1997; Romer, Jamieson & Aday, 2003; Lowry, Nio & Leitner, 2003). According to the researchers, most local television news is highly sensationalised, focusing on violence in the local community including crime and scandals. And when international events are reported, the focus is still on the most violent and tragic incidents.

This type of coverage has become more frequent as networks compete for viewers, and violent events provide easy news fodder. And, since, for many people watching news is a regular event, this leads to higher levels of exposure to 'real' instead of 'fictional' violence for viewers. As Felson (1996) states in his

analysis: “*Modelling is more likely to occur after viewing nonfiction than after viewing fiction* (p.119)”.

Reactions towards violent content and aggressive behaviour are worsened when the content is realistic in setting (Atkin, 1983). As mentioned earlier, The National Television Violence Study⁶ (1997) found that up to 51-55% of violence was set in a realistic setting; i.e. higher ‘*perception of reality*’ amongst viewers. According to Atkin (1983) this leads to higher levels of aggression and learning amongst viewers, as it has greater influence on perceptions of social reality and how bad things are out in the real world.

News also cultivates our perception and stereotypical behaviour. News also helps in shaping reality and forming our perception about outside world. Television news is the big source of violence in the society (Hoffner; et. al., 1999). Violent material on the television cultivates desensitization, in all age groups and shows the world as dangerous place. So the viewer’s perceives the world as dangerous place (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielle , 1994).

After 9/11 the news coverage of the event told that Muslims were the driving force behind it. Lett, DiPietro & Ifert Johnson (2004) argue that after September 9/11 Muslims were portrayed negatively in news media. Heavy viewers of news perceived the world outside America is violent specifically Muslims and their attitude and perception became negative.

The way in news media, people of specific colour represented, the audience perception will form. On American TV black representation is mostly as criminal

6

[https://www.academia.edu/944389/National Television Violence Study Executive Summary Editor Univ ersity of California Santa Barbara](https://www.academia.edu/944389/National_Television_Violence_Study_Executive_Summary_Editor_Univ_ersity_of_California_Santa_Barbara) (Downloaded 12/05/2014)

who makes negative viewer perception. On the other side white men representation is in positive role which cultivate positive perception in viewers mind (Dixon, 2007).

Negative representation of Africans again and again leads to negative perception. This mainstream effect forms the perception about reality through news media (Dixon, 2008). Exposure of local audience to non-local crime news doesn't have cultivation effect. Non local crime news gives feeling of security to the local viewers (Liska & Baccaglini, 1990).

If the viewers of crime news are residence of high crime area, they have much feeling of fear than low crime rate area (Doob and McDonald, 1979). Media crime news have more effect on the people who have direct experience and media opinion or point of view become more important if viewer don't have direct experience(Liska and Baccaglini, 1990)..

Crime news develops aggression in the viewer's towards the criminals and law breakers. As Reith (1999) studied that the white people have aggression towards criminals. She also find that fear of victimization do not depend on mediated crime.

2.1.13. News Media As Creating A Perceived Reality

The term media suggests that mass communication mediates between the audience and some objective reality that actually exists somewhere out there in the world. In Western culture, at least, we assume that such an external reality exists. More than with any other domain of media content, people tend to assume that news conveys objective reality to us in a clear and unbiased form. However,

news writers and producers communicate their interpretation of that world reality through both their choice of topics and the amount of coverage they give (agenda setting). News is a “*frame that delineates a world*” (Tuchman, 1978).

TV is a storytelling medium. It abhors ambiguities, ragged edges, and unresolved issues. The effect all too frequently is to impose upon an event or situation a preconceived form that alters reality, heightening one aspect at the expense of another for the sake of a more compelling story, blocking out complications that get in the way of the narrative (Abel, 1984, p. 68).

Although choices of media coverage are usually motivated from a sincere desire to present news stories to the public in the most complete and accurate way possible, there are occasional instances when the construction of reality goes beyond the bounds of what most would consider acceptable.

2.1.14. News, Violence and their Effects on Viewers’ Emotional Responses

Erica Scharrer’s study (2008) verified that those with greater exposure to violence in the news and entertainment (both electronic and print) were less disturbed by violent news stories. Their emotional responses were blunted, with viewers being less likely to find events reported in the news as violent. Here too, the researcher found that exposure to local news had greater impact on viewer’s emotional responses in comparison to national news. The study also identified two more factors responsible for desensitization, one heavy exposure to violent news content in newspapers and two heavy viewing habits in news viewers. According to the author this leads to increased acceptance of violence as the norm and

nothing special. This indicates that it is not just extreme violent programming like slasher movies which can cause emotional blunting and desensitization, but long-term exposure to violent events on the news as well.

Also a number of studies have taken a look at the impact of news on desensitization, especially on children who are considered a high-vulnerability group when it comes to exposure to violence and its effects. Ranging from young children to teenagers, research has started to focus on how much these groups are exposed to news, its violent content. Van der Molen (2004) in a special article for Paediatrics writes:

“Given the inherent realistic nature of news violence and given other researchers’ observations that television news is becoming increasingly sensational and graphic, there is reason to assume that violence in television news has the same impact on children as violence portrayed in fictional television.” (p.1772)

She (Van der Molen, 2004) goes on to argue for a broader definition of news violence, as she feels that just like exposure to fictional violence has the potential to desensitize children, news too can perform the same function. And its realistic nature can make younger viewers less inclined to sympathise with victims of violence or to even intervene in instances of violence. Another dangerous aspect of exposure of young viewers to news violence is the potential for them to identify themselves with either the perpetrators or victims. Coverage of conflicts, wars and natural disasters to smaller incidents like vandalism can add to the level of exposure for children – especially uncensored violent content which does not show the consequences of violence, only the event itself.

Aniței & Chraif (2011) further this concern over the exposure of young viewers to violence in news through their experiment studying young Romanians exposed to

aggression and graphic violence on the news. Their results show that the viewers showed higher levels of emotional satisfaction when watching violent, gory news than cultural/educational programming. The researchers go on to argue that the viewers are unaware of their own physiological responses and of the ‘step by step desensitization’ taking place. This is extremely dangerous as the viewer is unaware of the impact on their emotional responses, which, with long-term exposure, can result in development of aggressive mind-sets and the acceptance of violence as a norm in society (Aniței & Chraif, 2011).

The above literature gives a very clear picture of the impact exposure to realistic violence in the news can have on the emotional responses of viewers. These can range from feelings of fear and vulnerability to a blunting of responses in the shape of desensitization to violence. However, as evidenced here, while a large body of literature exists on violence on television, violence in news and desensitization, very little research has been conducted to study the relationship between news viewing and desensitization. It also needs to be noted here that most, if not all of the studies referenced here have been conducted in the West, little or no research has been conducted in high-risk conflict affected areas like Pakistan; as research (Althaus, 1998) points out that attention to news depends greatly on current events – and conflict (wars, natural disasters, bombings, etc.) garner greater interest in news than everyday coverage of events.

Therefore, using the existing literature as a start, the current research was aimed at establishing a relationship between exposure to news violence and desensitization in news viewers in Pakistan.

2.1.15. Defining Desensitization

Although public debate about the effects of TV violence typically worries primarily about increases in violent behavior, there may be far more pervasive attitudinal effects, especially in the area of desensitization. The basic principle here is that viewing a steady diet of violence in the media makes us less sensitive to it, more jaded, and less aroused and bothered by it. We become so used to seeing people wasted, blown apart, or impaled that it no longer particularly troubles us. For example, after seeing a violent TV show, sixth graders were less sensitive to violent images in a subsequent film than were children who had seen a nonviolent film first (Rabinovitch, McLean, Markham, & Talbott, 1972).

Desensitization is typically measured experimentally through physiological and/or attitudinal measures.

Research on desensitization has been unclear because of the inability to operationalize it properly. Not differentiating between the physiological processes leading to desensitization and the effects of desensitization have been a factor in this ambiguity.

Keeping this in mind, Carnagey, Anderson & Bushman (2007) defined desensitization as “a reduction in emotion-related physiological reactivity to real violence”. This definition also relates soundly with the psychological dimension of desensitization.

Desensitization is believed to have two components, emotional and cognitive desensitization. Emotional desensitization is described as the numbing of emotional response towards something that would have normally produced a

strong reaction in the absence of repeated exposure, whereas cognitive desensitization refers to change in belief related to violence by considering it common and likely (Funk, Bechtoldt-Baldacci, Pasold, & Baumgartner, 2004). However, major research focuses only on the emotional component.

Continuing theoretical development in cultivation and mean world has led to the assumption that exposure to regular television violence leads to desensitization in viewers. Consequently viewers become numb to the message in the content and no longer react in an expected manner either to the violent event, its victims or its consequences. In their 1986 review of literature, Rule & Ferguson argue that desensitized viewers stop reacting emotionally or becoming less aroused by future exposure to violent content on television.

Unfortunately, media researchers share no clear consensus about the meaning of desensitization. Some study it as a physiological phenomenon, some study it as an effect on emotion, some study its influence on cognition, and some study its implications for behaviour, but few even acknowledge the existence of this diversity of types of responses. Existing research (Rudy, 2006) suggests that prolonged exposure to violence can produce a dulling of response in any of these four domains—*cognition, emotion, physiology, and behaviour*—but researchers have as yet ignored the interrelations and distinctions among these types of potential responses to prolonged exposure to violence.

There remains a lack of consensus on how desensitization is to be defined. The gamut runs from focusing purely on the emotional to the cognitive. According to Wilson and Smith (1998) desensitization refers to the process by which repeated exposure to a stimulus can result in reduced emotional responsiveness to it while

according to Huesmann, Moise, & Podolski (1997) cognitive desensitization refers to the idea that the more an individual is exposed to violence, the more violence will come to be seen as a normal and acceptable form of behaviour. This process, in turn, will increase the person's acceptance of violent behaviour....Similarly, there is some evidence that a real physiological desensitization can occur.

Desensitization may be seen as a straightforward example of classical conditioning (see Fig. 3). The normal, unlearned responses to being physically hurt include pain, fear, and disgust. The first time one sees media violence, it probably evokes such negative emotional responses, due to its similarity to real violence (Fig. 3). What happens with repeated viewing of violence in comfortable surroundings is quite different, however (Fig. 9.1b). Suppose, for example, that the normal, unlearned response to sitting at home in one's easy chair is feeling relaxed and happy. When this is repeatedly paired with violence on TV and movies, vicarious violence in a pleasant home context gradually becomes associated with that situation and itself comes to be seen as entertaining, pleasant, and even relaxing.

The natural association of filmed violence and real-life violence has been weakened as the new association of video violence with recreation is strengthened. We repeatedly see violence without experiencing pain or hurt ourselves and thus the normal negative responses to it weaken. Given what we know about classical conditioning in psychology, it is unlikely that such frequent and repeated exposure to stimuli could fail to have a substantial effect. In the adolescent subculture, part of the male gender-role socialization has been for a

boy to desensitize himself so that he can watch graphic violence and not appear to be bothered by it (Harris, et al., 2000; Mundorf, Weaver, & Zillmann, 1989; Tamborini, 1991; Zillmann & Weaver, 1996; Zillmann, et al., 1986).

Demonstrating desensitization to violence thus becomes a way to impress a date.

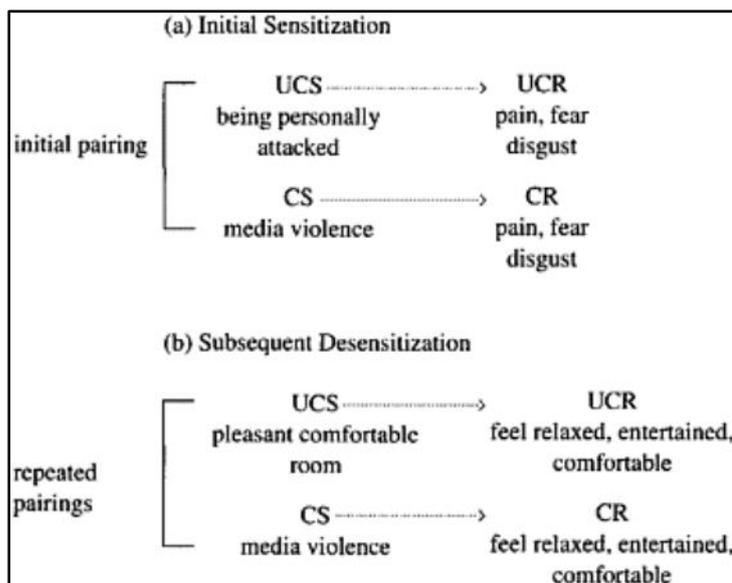


Figure 3: Desensitization as classical conditioning

2.1.16. Consequences of Desensitization

What are the implications of people becoming desensitized to violence from the media? Becoming jaded to news of war and violence will cause such stories not to bother us so much anymore. Even if we never come to actually like violence or behave violently ourselves, we may not dislike it nearly so much; it does not seem all that serious. This has important implications for behavior. For example, Drabman and Thomas (1974, 1976) had 8- to 10-year-old children watch a violent or nonviolent film and later watch younger children at play. When the younger children started to get rough, the older children who had watched the nonviolent

film called an adult sooner than did the older children who had watched the violent film, thus showing some generalization of the desensitization effect.

Earlier researchers refrained from generalizing desensitization to cause fear or aggression because of poor or limited evidence (Comstock, 1976). However, the later work on this topic has proved that desensitization through media violence can in turn cause consequences for the children. The effects vary from short-term to long-term. The general resulting effects identified include:

Reduced arousal and emotional disturbance (Cantor, 2000; Huesmann et al., 2003; Walma Van der Molen, 2004)

Increased hostility (Cantor, 2000; Walma Van der Molen, 2004)

Greater possibility of violent thoughts (Huesmann et al., 2003)

Increase likelihood of future violent content exposure (Funk et al., 2004)

Increased likelihood of short-term and later long-term aggression (Cantor, 2000; Huesmann et al., 2003; Walma Van der Molen, 2004)

Greater hesitation in calling an adult for help in a problematic situation (Cantor, 2000)

Reduced empathy towards victims of violence (Cantor, 2000; Walma Van der Molen, 2004)

Decrease in helping behavior (Bushman & Anderson, 2009)

2.1.16.1. Bystander Effect

One of the consequences of desensitization is the bystander effect. Due to increased apathy towards violence, people tend to ignore violent actions and pass by victims of violence (Donnerstein et al, as cited in Strasburger & Wilson, 2016).

2.1.17. Desensitization and General Aggression Model

General Aggression Model (GAM) is primarily based on social-learning or social-cognitive theoretical framework. As its name suggests, is a comprehensive model of aggression combining together the concepts of other theories as well such as script theory, social interaction theory, excitation transfer model, and more (Gentile, 2003; Ferguson & Dyck, 2012)

GAM was comprehensively extended to include desensitization by Carnagey et al. (2007). The extended version of the model explained how videogame exposure may cause emotional desensitization and then the cognitive and behavioral effects. Thus, this tended to be the first model establishing different relationships by pointing out the causes, indicators as well as effects of desensitization.

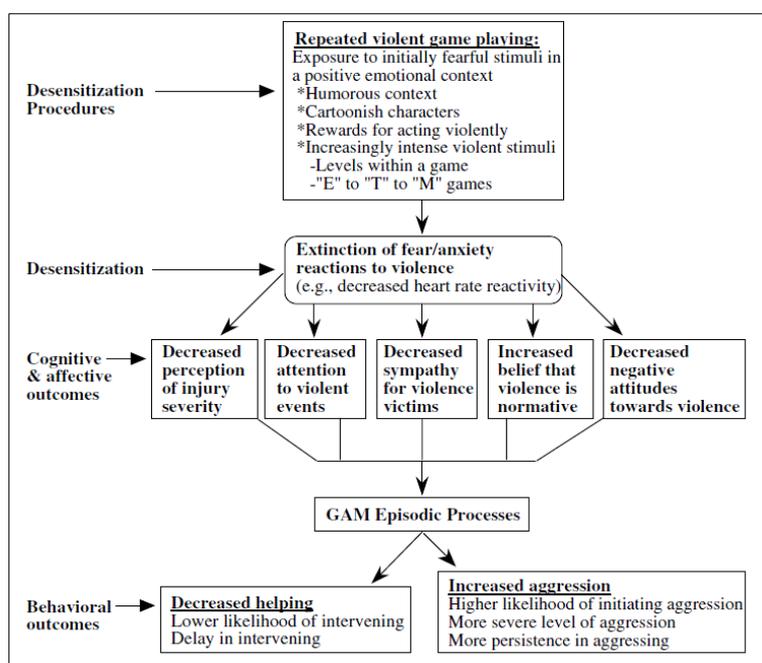


Figure 4: Media violence desensitization processes: integration of systematic desensitization, helping, and aggression models. (Carnagey et al., 2007)

The model suggested that repeated exposure to violent stimuli under positive emotional conditions leads to desensitization. Decrease in emotional arousal acts as a visible indicator to confirm the occurrence. After that, desensitization tends to show its cognitive consequences which may include decrease in attention, and negative attitude towards violence, lesser sympathy for the affected individuals, etc. These may further develop into behavioural responses such as unwillingness to help and greater aggression. The following figure depicts this model:

Thus, the concept of desensitization has gained momentum in research in the past decade or so, but it still needs further consideration and refinements.

One of the major areas of concern with desensitization has to do with tolerance of violence toward women. Male college students who viewed a series of slasher horror movies later showed less empathy and concern for victims of rape (Linz, Donnerstein, & Penrod, 1984).

Linz, Donnerstein, and Penrod (1988) measured the reactions of adult men to films that portrayed violence against women, often in a sexual context. The viewings took place over a period of several days, and comparisons of first-day reactions and last-day reactions to the films showed that, with repeated exposure, initial levels of self-reported anxiety decreased substantially. According to the results, the research participants' perceptions of the films also changed from the first day to the last day. Material that was previously judged to be violent and degrading to women was considered to be significantly less so by the end of the exposure period. Participants also indicated that they were less depressed and enjoyed the material more with repeated exposure.

Linz, et al (1988) suggested that the viewers were becoming comfortable with anxiety-provoking situations much as they would if they were undergoing desensitization therapy. Linz and his colleagues (1989) also showed that a reduction in physiological responsiveness accompanies repeated exposure to sexualized violence and that viewing violent films result in less sympathy for victims of domestic violence as well as rape victims.

In addition, Mullen and Linz (1995) demonstrated that viewers who show desensitization toward victims of violence in non-media contexts following exposure to media violence may recover sensitivity rather quickly provided they are not exposed to additional violent depictions. Their results indicated that emotional responses, self-reported physiological arousal, and ratings of the extent to which the films were sexually violent all diminished with repeated film exposure. Three days following exposure to the final film, participants in the experiment expressed significantly less sympathy for domestic violence victims and rated their injuries as being less severe than did a no-exposure control group. Five days after the final film exposure, the participants' level of sensitivity to the victims of domestic violence rebounded to the baseline levels that were established by the no-exposure comparison group.

Exposure to violence in the mass media may result in a desensitization effect in which viewers experience diminished feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of actual violence. According to Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) viewers who watch large amounts of media violence show less physiological reactivity to violence in other contexts. "In these studies, (Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, 1989; Linz, Donnerstein, & Penrod, 1984, 1988) men

exposed to so-called slasher films containing violence against women became less anxious and reported fewer negative affective reactions with repeated film viewing; they later showed reductions in physiological reactivity to depictions of domestic violence, showed less sympathy for victims of sexual violence in more realistic contexts, and judged these same victims to be less injured compared to no-exposure control subjects.”

However, Rudy (2006) found that while media violence exposure produced emotional and physiological desensitization in men, it failed to produce the same in women. The study investigated the interrelationships among these domains using television violence as a stimulus and measures from all four domains (cognitive, emotional, physiological and behaviour) as outcome variables.

Material used in the experimental conditions was taken from Sports Disasters and 24. Two experimental tapes were created; the second presented different episodes from those on the first, and in reverse order. Sports Center and The West Wing provided a control version of the violent material. A final stimulus tape, consisting of five minutes' worth of violent content from The Shield, was created for presentation to all participants. Ninety-five introductory communication students in a California university participated in this study, one at a time, in exchange for course credit. An experimenter randomly assigned each participant to one of two experimental conditions or a control condition. Participants in the no-violence condition watched the control video, participants in the low-violence condition watched one of the experimental tapes (chosen at random), and participants in the high-violence condition watched both experimental tapes (the first chosen at random, to reduce order effects), one tape in each of two research sessions. The results indicated that physiological response to violent media was the strongest

predictor of intervention behaviour, that emotional response to violent media was the strongest predictor of pro-violence attitudes, and that the influences of physiology and emotion were largely independent of the other domains. The study also found that cognitive and emotional desensitization are linked.

Regular coverage of conflict by news media is also contributing to the phenomenon of compassion fatigue which is developing rapidly amongst news viewers. Dimitrova (2006) argues that journalists author the frames within which atrocities appear. Specifically, as story-tellers, they select the relevant sources, excerpt their quotes and rank-order them in the structure of their narrative in such a way that the audience can make sense of the reported events. Furthermore, to facilitate the process of meaning construction, journalists rely on footage to represent, and emphasize the most pertinent points of their reports. Using an ethnographic content analysis (ECA) to document and interpret the meanings, emphases, and nuances of the messages produced by CNN international and domestic correspondents in the coverage of atrocities, Dimitrova gathered from the online collection of the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. Preliminary investigation of public discourse, and intensive study of the subject--important steps in theoretical sampling--revealed that the plural noun atrocities was used in a range of situations, and by a variety of speakers. CNN devoted 5 hours and nine minutes to the reporting of atrocities on the nightly news. Structurally, these appear in 32 segments. A total of 147 stories were found. References to atrocities were made in fifty-two stories, framed as diplomacy, military operation, refugees and evidence. Dimitrova argues that this repetition of an idea or news by the media leads to desensitization and compassion fatigue in the viewers – reducing their empathy with the victims of the aggression.

Another reason why mass-mediated violence needs to end is because there tends to be serious effects when it comes to children and fear of terrorism. According to Waddell (2008) children may be especially fearful that threatened or actual military action overseas will result in more personal loss and violence here at home. Children do not understand terrorism, so when they see repeated scenes of destruction and property they are terrified that they are going to be personally harmed. Children see images on television and they also hear things at school, so when they think of violence their imaginations run wild and they think of the most horrible things that could happen. Since children are not mature enough to understand the war on violence they begin to feel anger, loss of stability, confusion and most of all fear. Overall, it is evident that there is an immense amount of fear that is being portrayed because of mass-mediated terrorism. People are suffering all over the globe because of it and more importantly children are suffering. The war on violence is not going to stop, but the media can help by stopping such dramatic and horrifying images, that is spreading fear throughout the globe.

In the case of 9/11, Wohl and Branscombe (2007) found that reminders of the Sept. 11 attacks seem to dull the responsibility that Americans feel for the harm caused by the botched U.S. war in Iraq. In controlled experiments the social psychologists divided the participants in the following groups: one group was reminded of the violent attacks, while another was told about Nazi atrocities in Poland during World War II. A third group was reminded of the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The volunteers were then quizzed on their views about the Iraq war. According to their results volunteers reminded about the Sept. 11 attacks were less likely to perceive the distress the war has caused many Iraqis, and less

likely to feel collective responsibility, compared with volunteers told about the tragedy in Poland.

Wohl and Branscombe (2007) believe that when people are reminded of times they felt helpless and victimized, they become unconsciously primed to lash out -- to do everything in their power to prevent such trauma from happening again. The psychologists similarly found that Jewish volunteers in North America feel reduced guilt and responsibility for Israeli actions that cause suffering among Palestinians when they are first reminded about the Holocaust, compared with when they are reminded about the genocide in Cambodia. There is no difference in the level of sympathy toward Palestinians between groups of Christian volunteers because, again, neither the Holocaust nor the Cambodia tragedy is personal to them.

These findings are mostly consistent with previous research such as Reith's (1999) study in which men's exposure to televised crime drama significantly and positively predicted increased levels of aggression against criminals who threaten the existing order. These findings are also consistent with researchers' suggestions about the importance of examining entertainment programming as it relates to people's political and social opinions. As noted, public opinion studies have looked at the socializing influence of news media, but have paid much less attention to investigating the influence of other types of media content on political attitudes.

However not all researchers are convinced of the role of news media in the desensitization process. Hoffman and Jengelly (2007) studied media coverage of violence using an original dataset of over 1300 articles drawn from the

Washington Post between January 1, 1977 and December 31, 2004. Preliminary analysis of the articles suggests that, on average, stories on violence are getting neither more nor less prominent coverage over time. Their results suggest that concerns about media desensitization/sensationalism may not be plaguing the reporting of violence as many fear.

There seems to be little relationship between the passing of time – a proxy for the interest of editors in particular stories – and the placement of articles in the newspaper. Time is associated with a gradual increase in the article length, but this effect is small – hardly of a size that suggests there is rampant sensationalism going on in the newspaper business. An examination of front page articles tells a similar story – the percentage of front page articles has ebbed and flowed over the years, but shows no clear downward or upward trend. In short, they recommend that while much more analysis remains to be done, there is little in this first analysis to suggest that systematic desensitization or sensationalism is a problem in an important U.S. newspaper, the Washington Post.

The following sections will explore the identified variables in greater detail.

2.1.18. Empathy

The Oxford dictionary (1962) defines empathy as:

“Power of entering into another's personality and imaginatively experiencing his experiences, power of entering into the feeling or spirit of something, (especially a work of art) and so appreciating it fully”

The roots of the word ‘*empathy*’ have been traced to the German word

‘*Einfühlung*’. The term was originally translated in the field of psychotherapy.

However, Shlien (1997) argues that ‘*Einfühlung*’ is closer in relation to

appreciation; while 'empathy' is more closely related to '*patheos*', a Greek term which means '*suffering*', or '*to suffer with*', and is considered to be the root of the word '*sympathy*'.

The term empathy has been extensively studied in the fields of psychology and psychiatry. Most of the definitions and models for analysis of empathy also originate within these fields. Recent research has expanded its scope into other fields like education, teaching, nursing and interpersonal communication.

Empathy has also been analysed as a vital tool for the purpose of conflict resolution studies and practices (Frei, 1985, De Wied et al., 2007, Batson & Ahmad, 2009). According to Stepien & Baernstein (2006) it has also become a staple component in communication skills trainings for professionals working in conflict resolution areas.

Most of the studies analysed have broken up the concept of empathy into three aspects. Hoffman's (1982) three facets were affective, cognitive, and behavioural/motivational aspects, whereas Mercer et al. (2004) deconstructed empathy as an individual's ability to understand, communicate, and act. 3 other facets were given by Feshbach & Feshbach (2009): "*the cognitive ability to discriminate affective states in others, the more mature cognitive ability to assume the perspective and role of another person and the affective ability to experience emotions in an appropriate manner*"(p.85).

Another definition of empathy as given by Carkhuff (1969) defined three essential conditions for helpers in the field of psychiatry:

The ability to understand, perceive and experience the world through others.

Respecting the ability of the affectee to solve his/her own problems with the assistance of the helper.

Ensuring that the affectee is able to specify clearly what the problem actually is.

A functional view of empathy is given by Decety & Jackson (2006), who breaks down the construct in the following three elements: “1) *affective sharing between the self and other*, 2) *self-other awareness* and 3) *mental flexibility to adopt the subjective perspective of the other and also regulatory processes.*” (pp. 75)

Contemporary studies in mass communication have also revealed that experience of violence through mass media can also lead to a lessening of disturbing emotional reactions like fear and anxiety towards violence (Anderson, & Bushman, 2007; Bushman & Anderson, 2010; Carnagey, Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009; Linz, Donnerstein, & Penrod, 1988; Mullin & Linz, 1995). Such desensitization is highly significant as it may lead viewers to become deadened to the suffering of other people, i.e. “*reduced empathy for other’s pain*” (Bartholow et al., 2005). Other studies (Krahé & Möller, 2010; Bartholow, Sestir, & Davis, 2005; Funk, Buchman, Jenks, & Bechtoldt, 2003) have also reliably established a link between continual exposure to media violence and emotional empathy. Hoffman (1998) furthers the argument through the role of emphatic scripts. He argues that behavioural scripts are learnt starting from a very young age, and that heavy exposure to violent content, conflict without resolution and/or lack of significant reprisal presents a behavioural guide which limits empathy and empathetic responses.

Multiple researches have been conducted to establish a link between empathy, positive social behaviour (Eisenberg et al., 2002; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987) and non-aggression (Kaukiainen et al., 1999). Multiple studies have also been conducted on viewers' exposure to violent content in entertainment, but little has been done on studying the effects of news violence on audience's empathy levels and how lower levels of empathy affect viewers' emotional responses to violent content.

Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) argue that audience members who watch large amounts of media violence show less reactivity to violence in real-life situations as well. Therefore starting with the premise that "*exposure to violence in the mass media may result in a desensitization effect in which viewers experience diminished feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of actual violence*" the current study was aimed at understanding how exposure to news would affect television news audiences. Therefore:

H1: News viewers with higher levels of exposure to violent news content will display lower levels of self-other awareness.

Thus using the functional view of empathy given by Decety & Jackson (2004), the current study defines empathy as self-other awareness and the capacity to understand another person's experience from within that person's frame of reference.

2.1.19. Pro-Violence Attitudes:

With the media reinforcing the mean world syndrome, the fear, anger and vulnerability become a permanent fixture in a viewer's life, leading to greater

desire for protection of 'self' from the 'other'. This could take the shape of harsher punishments, longer prison sentences, acceptance of torture, acceptance of lower levels of privacy and higher levels of surveillance, etc. Therefore, the mean world syndrome results in a reduced sensitivity to the consequences of violence and the belief that violence is the norm. The sheer quantity of violence on television encourages the idea that aggressive behaviour is normal. As Morgan (2010) states:

“...a culture of meanness that has normalized and held in place a distorted sense of the world as an irrational and dangerous place, hardening us, making us less compassionate even as it makes us feel more vulnerable ourselves.” (p.19)

Numerous studies concerning the connection between positive attitudes towards violence and/or aggression and also the resulting (violent or aggressive) behaviour of respondents have been conducted. The results of these studies delineated a positive relationship between these variables.

This perception towards the event or scenario is (most likely) fashioned from previous experiences and memory. The stronger the link between past memory and perception of an incident or scenario, the stronger will be the attitude towards behaviour. Additionally, the strength of the link between past memory and perception of an incident or scenario conjointly influences the choice someone can make to behave in an exceedingly sure means.

One of the most important and effective forms of communication is the media, which include the television, videogames and news. Experiments, especially in the case of videogames have provided significant results concurring with the idea that the more young people play violent video games, the higher is their approval rating for war (Rushbrook, 1986; Krahe & Moller, 2004). They also found that

young men who are regular players of video games are more inclined to condone and accept aggression in real life (Krahe & Moller, 2004).

Another aspect of the impact of media use on consumers' emotional reactions is the "*Anesthetizing effect*". According to Funk, et al. (2004) video games, especially violent videogames generally treat violence as normal, at times there is even an element of romanticising of violence within the games. Consequently players stop seeing the actions committed by the game characters as anything extraordinary and results in a greater tolerance for violence and pro-violence attitudes.

Previous analyses have additionally studied the social-cognitive abilities of children who regularly play violent games, focusing especially on how well these children interact socially with their peers. Results indicate that there was increased hostility and higher levels of anxiety amongst participants who played videogames with higher levels of violence (Anderson, C.A., & Ford, C.M., 1986; Mehrabian, A., & Wixen, W. J., 1986).

Another common effect of watching violent content is an upsurge in pro-violence attitudes. It has been argued that people who are violent by nature will be more attracted to violent content. While this might hold true in certain circumstances (Smith, S., Lachlan, K., & Tamborini, R. (2003), other research has also shown that this relationship is two-sided. According to a number of researches in the 1990s, regular viewing of violent content can lead to an enduring hostile frame of mind, which results in negative attitudes and (at times) behaviour in social situations (Black, S.L., & Bevan, S., 1992). Other conclusions included a negative impact on children's' perception of interpersonal relations and attribution of

negative intentions to strangers. Children, who were exposed to violent content, were also more inclined to mete out harsher punishments for transgressors in comparison to kids who had played non-violent games (Kirsh, S. J., 1998; Zillmann, D., & Weaver, J. B. III, 1999).

This development of attitudes towards violence is influenced by many factors including exposure to family and community violence, as well as exposure to violence in the media. This cultivation is worse in children who grow up with violence, in comparison to adults who show higher short-term effects (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). Scripts learned at a young age stay with viewers, and if there is a constant exposure to similar content, these scripts become the basis of beliefs and opinions, especially about aggression and violence, as viewers grow older (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). Therefore, the second hypothesis concerns the relationship between exposure and pro-violence attitudes in Pakistani viewers:

H2: News viewers with higher levels of exposure to violent news content will display higher levels of pro-violence attitudes.

Increase in purchase of weapons, self-defence classes' enrolment and acceptance of harsher laws all indicate increase in pro-violence attitudes. Presence or absence of Pro-violence attitudes was identified using three concepts. Hence, for the purpose of this study the researcher argued that support for violence as a solution to conflict is a strong indicator of desensitization.

2.1.20. Compassion Fatigue:

Again taken from the field of psychology and medicine, the term compassion fatigue was used to explain the decline in sympathetic feelings of caregivers towards their patients (Maslach, 1982). However, later its scope of use extended beyond its original field to encompass a larger social phenomena – the decreasing concern of the general public towards societal issues. Recent research has established relationship between excessive coverage of conflict by the mass media as one of the reasons for this decrease – non-stop coverage of disasters and human suffering appear to have overloaded the emotional responses of television viewers (Kinnick, K. N., Krugman, D. M., & Cameron, G. T., 1996).

It is primarily through television that viewers and audiences around the globe are exposed to catastrophes and disasters – either naturally occurring or man-made. Thus television’s role in creating opinion, generating aid and fostering compassion is central to this analysis. Conversely, television, especially television news has been accused in recent times of trivialising violence and disasters to fill its 24-hours news cycle. This ‘over exposure’ to human suffering has led to a decrease in global compassion for victims of violence.

Compassion fatigue has also been listed as one of the primary reason why publics are distancing themselves from the media coverage of victims of wars, famines and other natural disaster. As Tester (2001) describes the growing phenomenon:

“Compassion fatigue is becoming so used to the spectacle of dreadful events, misery or suffering that we stop noticing them. We are bored when we see one more tortured corpse on the television screen and we are left unmoved. . . [. . .] Compassion fatigue means being left exhausted and tired by those reports and ceasing to think that anything at all can be done to help.” (pp. 13)

Unfortunately, while Lazarsfeld and Merton (1971) have raised the issue about the role news media plays in creating compassion fatigue towards social and humanitarian crises, a review of existing literature in social sciences including mass communication over the past decades reveals a very small body of research focusing on the possibly significant link between exposure to news media and compassion fatigue.

There are even fewer researches on the impact of geographical distance on viewers' emotional reactions to disasters. Therefore, using the Kinnick, Krugman, & Cameron, (1996) definition of compassion fatigue, i.e., the decreasing concern of the general public towards societal issues, this research addresses the question of effect of a consistent diet of tragedy on viewers' compassion levels in Pakistan in its third hypothesis:

H3: News viewers with higher levels of exposure to violent news content will display higher levels of compassion fatigue.

2.1.21. Desensitization:

From the above literature, a number of deductions can be reached:

While there exists a large body of work on media violence and cultivation, most of it focuses on entertainment media with a very small body of addressing violence shown in news and its cultivation effects.

The second point that can be seen is that within the body of work on violence in, majority focuses on analysing the content of news itself, highlighting the disparity that exists between the real world and the picture presented by television news.

Very little research can be found on how exposure to this content affects viewers' emotional responses.

The most consistent factor in the body of cultivation research is the importance of time spent watching television. Most, if not all research analysed, use volume of viewing television as a central variable against which to measure effects of television exposure.

Cultivation analyses in the past have tested multiple variables to comprehensively understand the effects television viewing has on viewers. Both experimental and survey methodologies have been used to examine cognitive, emotional, physiological and behavioural changes brought about in viewers through their exposure to media content. Emotional responses, though, remain one of the highest tested variables in cultivation research – especially the numbing of emotional responses; i.e. desensitization.

A review of current research shows that other than a few experimental studies focusing on re-sensitization, no significant work has been done on desensitized viewers and their interaction with news in the same or similar events of violence

And finally, one of the major conclusions through literature is that there appears to be no set definition for desensitization. Different researchers have operationalised the variable according to their needs. There are some constants though, including empathy, pro-violence attitudes and compassion fatigue. While all three are not regularly present across research, one or more regularly occur in cultivation research, as well as in research conducted in other areas of social sciences, especially psychology.

Therefore the primary questions asked in the current research were: what effect will levels of exposure have on the emotional responses of news viewers in Pakistan? Are news audiences being desensitized through their exposure to violence on television news? Will the outcomes correspond with results already seen in existing research or will the socio-political and geographical dynamics of Pakistan change the outcomes of the research? The three recurring variables (empathy, pro-violence attitudes and compassion fatigue) were used as a springboard to launch an investigation into the possibility of desensitization of Pakistani news viewers. Therefore the fourth hypothesis is based on the cumulative amount of desensitization:

H4: News viewers with higher levels of exposure to violent news content will display, overall, higher levels of desensitization.

2.1.22. Volume of Viewing and the Mean World Syndrome

An important outcome of the Cultivation Analysis is the Mean World Syndrome developed by the original's creators. The Syndrome argues that the high volume levels of violence, crime, aggression and mayhem in the mass media warps viewers' idea of what the real world is like. According to Gerbner & Morgan⁷ (2010) media induces in its viewers a sense of being constantly at risk of events around them, which in turn reinforce stereotypes and existing prejudices. This leads viewers to feel that the world is a far scarier place than it actually is.

As Morgan (2010) puts it:

“The finding that if you watch a *lot of TV* you're likely to be more afraid of violence than those who watch less TV, may help explain why so many people

⁷ http://www.mediaed.org/assets/products/143/transcript_143.pdf (Downloaded 12/05/2014)

seem to think violent crime is far worse than it actually is - a widespread misperception that started to be noticed a decade ago when crime rates began to drop.” (p.9)

In another article ‘The Scary World of Media Violence’ (1967) Gerbner, Morgan, and Signorielli argue that heavy viewers are most susceptible to feelings of vulnerability and fear ‘cultivated’ by repeated exposure to television violence.

According to Gerbner (1997), exposure to media violence from a young age results in the ‘Mean World Syndrome’. This syndrome is made up of three consequences of media violence:

One, watching a lot of television is that one comes to believe that the violence portrayed on television is normal - that everybody does it, and that it’s a good way of solving problems.

A more pervasive effect is that television de-sensitizes viewers to victimization and suffering; they lose the ability to understand the consequence of violence, to empathize, to resist, protesting.

The third consequence, and the most debilitating one, is the pervasive sense of insecurity and vulnerability.

The question then arises as to the effect or the potential effect level of exposure to violence has on peoples’ perception of their society and of violence itself; and how time spent viewing television ‘cultivate’ opinions about the real world for its viewers.

Gerbner and his associates argue that heavy viewers of violence on television come to believe that the incidence of violence in the everyday world is higher than do light viewers of similar backgrounds (Gerbner, et.al., 1986). In his article

Rethinking Media Violence (1994), Gerbner reasons that exposure to violence-laden television cultivates an exaggerated sense of insecurity and mistrust, and anxiety about the 'mean world' seen on television. In all areas of electronic media, there appears to be an over-exaggerated representation of violence; in television most prime time programs are focused on crime and crime preventions; in movies a higher body count is equated with higher ratings; while in news higher amount of violence equals more air time (Merida & Leiby, 2001).

This leads to the problem of claims by the television industry that the world is a violent place, and the media (especially news) only shows what is happening in the society. This, however, is a fallacy. Had this been true then according to Medved (1995) "*...in just 50 days, everyone in the United States would be killed and the last left could turn off the TV*" (p.157).

A number of studies have been conducted to compare violence numbers in media and the real world. All have shown that in comparison to what's shown on television, real life is much less violent and the chances of experiencing events as those shown on TV are rare for the general public (Oliver, 1994). Oliver (1994) claims that there is a huge disparity in the types of crimes shown on TV and their corresponding numbers in reality (50% of crimes reported on TV are murder, while the FBI reports that's only 0.2% of crimes reported are murders; 87% of crimes in the real world are non-violent while on TV only 13% are non-violent).

Unfortunately, heavy viewers of television are often times unaware of this difference between reality and media coverage – for them social reality itself is constructed to a great extent by television and media exposure.

This is a bigger problem for children who are growing up exposed to a constant diet of violence, both through entertainment and news media. More long-term effects have been seen in children who grow up with violence, in comparison to adults who show higher short-term effects (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). Scripts learned at a young age stay with viewers, and if there is a constant exposure to similar content, these scripts become the basis of beliefs and opinions, especially about aggression and violence, as viewers grow older (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006).

2.1.23. Proximity to violence (Resonance):

According to Tyler (1984) the geographical immediacy of any event covered by news media will affect how it is perceived by its viewers. The closer an incident is geographically, the greater the impact on viewers perception about crime and security.

Resonance proposes that people who have experiences similar to those shown on television will be most influenced by the messages they see through the media. When personal experiences of crime and violence are involved, heavy consumption of television content can result in a “double dose of the television message and significantly boost cultivation” (Gerbner et al., 1980, p. 15)

Research (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980) has also shown that directly experienced incidents play a major role in how audiences perceive the world around them. Living in an area with a higher crime rate or violence directly affects viewers’ emotional response, as it reinforces television’s message that the outside world is a very dangerous place. Connections between times spent

watching television and an inclination to maintain inflated perceptions of real-world violence are much higher when the victims of violence on television are closer to viewers in reality (Morgan, 1986).

Other studies (Shrum and Bischak, 2001) have analysed the personal experience of violence as a moderating variable, with results showing that those who have experienced violence in real-life created a “richer and more accessible representation of crime available in memory” (pp. 206) and resulted in higher levels of desensitization in comparison to those who had not experienced crime in a real-life situation. These results are consistent with the argument that proximity to violence can lead to higher levels of desensitization in viewers.

Therefore it seems rational to assume that audience members who have personal experiences of crime and violence are more likely to have readily accessible scripts and images of violence to access, and have a higher probability of interpreting this content as a representation of the real world. They are also less likely to respond compassionately to the messages received.

In the case of Pakistan, the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan have been harder hit by events of terrorism, whereas Karachi has faced long stretches of insecurity recently. It would be interesting to see how these compare in relation to the state capital and the province of Punjab in terms of desensitization levels. Therefore, the fourth research hypothesis will focus on the geographical location of the viewers in order to assess whether proximity to events leads to higher levels of resonance and subsequently desensitization in comparison to those exposed primarily through the media.

H5: News viewers with closer proximity to violence will display higher levels of desensitization.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

The original Cultural Indicators Study was a three-step analysis which addresses institutional policies, television content, and the effects of the first two on viewers' opinions. The analysis itself focused on the 'patterns' that govern television programming and how time spent viewing television affects viewers' impression of patterns in the real world. Consequently, the following literature review had been developed to identify and understand research in the field of media content analysis, starting for the general to the more news-centric analyses.

As the current study was itself a two-pronged analysis, the literature studied was divided into two parts as well: the first, addressing television, especially news content and how it has been studied in the past, what trends have been identified, the methods used as well as the results emerging from these researches. The second part of the literature review addresses the effects of television content on viewers in general and news in particular. Most of the work in media effects research has focused on entertainment media rather than news, and therefore constitutes a large part of the existing body of research. Using this as a foundation, the current research tries to draw parallels between viewers' experiences of television news and its impact on their emotional responses. The key variables are identified, listed and explored in depth in the following sections of the research.

2.2.1. Television And Its Content

Television has become the primary ‘story teller’ in our society today (Gerbner, et.al., 1986, 1994). It is an all pervasive technology that most of us aren’t even aware of in our surroundings. From airports, bus terminals, restaurants, bars to our own lounges, television is constantly passing on its message to its audience. Its role might vary from just a background noise to active information source, its presence remains constant. However television itself is not static, it is a dynamic medium with a constantly growing presence in our lives. Therefore, there remains a constant need to understand the role television plays in shaping our ‘stories’ and that is where the cultivation analysis comes in.

Over the years a number of studies have been conducted in the US and other countries in line with Gerbner’s arguments. In order to analyse television content ranging from drama, soaps, music to news, the studies have identified recurring themes and trends in television.

Unfortunately, no such research has been conducted in Pakistan, especially on electronic news media. While a number of researches have been conducted on newspapers and magazine content, television news has remained under-analysed. This has created a serious gap in information on what is being aired by news channels in Pakistan. Consequently, the first step in understanding the relationship between news violence and its effects on viewers’ emotional responses was to study literature from similar researches conducted elsewhere. Since the focus of the current study is on news media, relevant content analyses addressing similar issues have been included.

In his original cultural indicators project, Gerbner used the Message Systems Analysis to identify recurring patterns in prime-time television drama in the United States (Gerbner, 1969a, Gerbner, 1973). Week-long samples of prime-time television programs for the period of the study were analysed to identify the core themes, characters and demographics represented. According to Gerbner (1969a), 'reliable' and 'critical' understanding of television content is the first basic step towards understanding its role in the formation of viewers' opinions.

One of the oft cited documents in studies of television content is the National Television Violence Study⁸, 1994-1997, in the United States. It gives a clear picture of the sheer volume of violence that is shown on television. According to the study, over a period of three years 58-61% of programs monitored contained violence, with 51-55% of that violence taking place in realistic settings. Up to 32% of programs contained 8 instances of violence, and 52% of the monitored programming contained lethal violence. More worrisome for its researchers was the violence conducted by attractive perpetrators (40%) and the total absence of remorse in the perpetrators themselves (74%). Keeping in mind that these figures are from 1994-1997, one can expect that the number have gone up since then, especially with the rapidly growing popularity and access to video games. According to the Entertainment Software Association (2009), up to 68% of households in the US play either computer or video games, of which almost 50-60% contains violence⁹.

8

https://www.academia.edu/944389/National_Television_Violence_Study_Executive_Summary_Editor_Univ_ersity_of_California_Santa_Barbara (Downloaded 12/05/2014)

⁹ <http://videogames.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=003627> (Accessed 12/05/2014)

2.2.2. Violence in News

The National Television Violence Study (1997) gives researchers a very clear idea about the amount of violence present in the entertainment media, however, in order to assess volume of violent content in television news one needs to take a look at a number of smaller researches that have studied this problem over time.

Levitt (2004) crime in the United States declined from the early 1990's to the early 2000's, however a look at the amount of violence shown by television news to be taking place in society seems to give lie to these figures. Big stories of crime, murder and violence were a regular staple of the news (Bennet, 2003), as Morgan (2010) put it: "*the news media in particular presenting a nightly carnival of the most terrifying stories* (p.8)." the problem is further exacerbated by the fact that most viewers tune into local news for their daily dose of information but with 61% of all local lead news stories dedicated to events of violence, exposure to violent content is the norm.

These figures do not correspond with actual crime and violence taking place in the society as FBI figures show a 12.9% decline in violent crime in comparison to 2008 figures¹⁰. Yet according to Gallup¹¹ most Americans believe that crime is on the rise in the United States overall (64%) and locally (41%). This dichotomy indicates a gap between information available and information provided to people, i.e. the media, which is responsible for this flow of information, is providing people with a picture far removed from reality through its coverage of violence in society.

¹⁰ <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/violent-crime/violent-crime> (Accessed 15/06/2014)

¹¹ <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1603/crime.aspx> (Accessed 15/06/2014)

In their 1999 study, Maguire, Sandage & Weatherby (1999) look at five-weeks of news content and the volume of violence it contains. Studying three different types of newscasts (National, big city TV and local news), violent crimes constituted 55% of news stories for national TV, 65% for big city news and 30% for local news. This coverage is out of proportion with actual violent crime figures in society.

Another study in 1996, by Johnson monitored ‘bad’ news over a period of 6 months on national, local, independent and cable news.

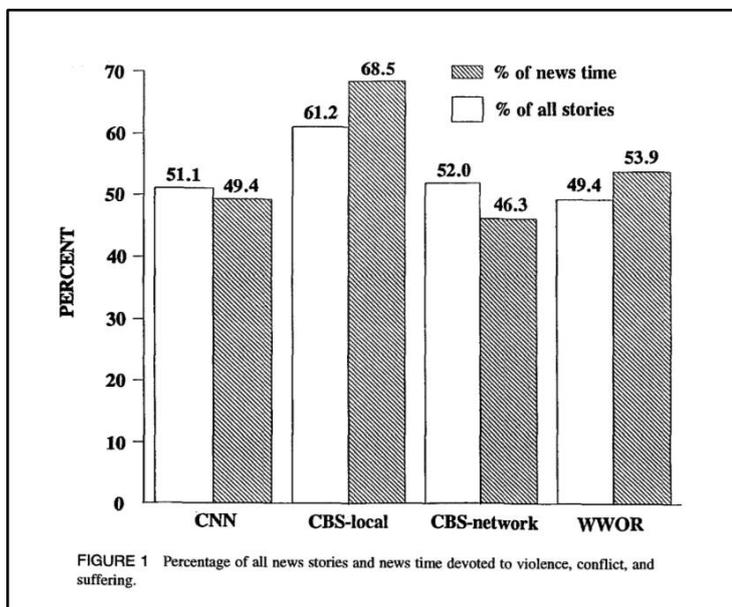


Figure 5. Percentage of all News Stories and time devoted to violence, conflict, and suffering (Johnson, 1996, p.205)

Figure 4 gives a clear idea about the high volume of violent content in news. Overall, 53.4% of all news stories over the 6-month period contained crime, violence and/or suffering. As can be seen from the given figure, the amount of time showed very similar results (54.5%). Whereas the FBI Crime Index¹² for

¹² <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/1995/95sec2.pdf> (Downloaded 17/06/2014)

1995 indicates that there was a 1.1% decline in violent crimes over the 1991-1992 periods, with an overall decline of 2.9% in total offences reported.

This trend can also be seen when it comes to reporting crimes and violence committed by teenagers and young offenders. There is a dichotomy in the number of offences committed by juveniles and young offenders in reality and the disproportionate amount of coverage they get in news. According to Dorfman et.al. (1996), youth violence is a matter of serious concern for policy makers, especially in light of the rise in school shootings across the US. Their research indicates that the way media presents youth violence may be worsening the situation instead of providing an accurate view of youth and violence.

Dorfman et.al. (1996) show that violence was the most frequent issue in the news over one week of monitoring. Almost 10% of all news stories monitored addressed both youth and violence, in which children and youth were victims in 60% and perpetrators in 40% of the news stories. Again these stories have the potential to create fear of the real world in the minds of their viewers, especially in the case of children.

As mentioned earlier, cultivation has more long-term effects for younger viewers as they are more capable of learning new scripts from the media – such exposure to violence committed in their local community, by their age mates can desensitize children into accepting violence as a normal part of everyday experiences.

The studies included above give a clear picture of the skewed presence of violence in television news. However, no such study is available for Pakistani

news channels and their content. In order to understand how viewers, especially news viewers are affected by the content they are exposed to, it is necessary to analyse the content being aired on local news channels. Therefore, the first part of this study is focused on analysing and identifying trends in Pakistani News media. The aim was to understand whether the volume of violence present on Pakistani news channels follows similar trends in comparison to those seen in previous literature and then subsequently test whether this plays a cultivating role in shaping emotional responses in real-life situations.

As mentioned earlier the research aims to evaluate the amount of violence shown in today's news media in Pakistan. Previous research shows figures of close to 50% or higher when it comes to violence, crime and conflict in television news. Therefore, the first prong of this research focused on the levels of such content in Pakistani television news and tried to compare the content shown on both the state-controlled and cable news networks.

2.2.3. Attention threshold model:

The last prong of the research focused on extending the desensitization theory. The research developed a story saturation and attention threshold hypothesis which argues that viewers who are desensitized to violence will avoid addressing the issue, despite their exposure to- as well as the significant presence of violence in the media. News viewers either consciously or sub-consciously ignore an issue in the news media. The primary cause for this can be over-exposure of the issue and desensitization of viewers to the stimulus.

One of the basic premises across communication theory and research is the desire for people to seek information and to be informed about the world around them. This can be seen clearly in multiple theories on information seeking behaviour in both interpersonal and mass communication research. Even Aristotle commented that “*all men, by nature, desire to know*” (circa 330 BC). Consequently research has remained, to a great extent, focused on “*active acquisition of information*” (Lasswell, 1948).

However, it has also been seen, in the fields of conflict and psychology, that people will actively avoid information; particularly that information which may result in emotional and/or psychological distress. In the words of Maslow (1963), “*we can seek knowledge in order to reduce anxiety and we can also avoid knowing in order to reduce anxiety.*” While he (Maslow, 1963) was addressing the issue of health information, a similar statement can be made about information seeking behaviour with reference to news and current affairs.

This is congruent with research in both the areas of news content and compassion fatigue (See sections 2.1 & 2.4.3). The model draws heavily from the work of Case, Andrews, Johnson, and Allard’s (2005) meta-analysis addressing the active avoidance of information by audiences, wherein they propose that people have a tendency to “*avoid, ignore, and/or deny information*” which causes them distress (pp.360). While this research indicates that there is work on issue-avoidance in the area of health communication, no literature could be found relating to news media use and the information-seeking behaviour patterns of news viewers.

This research seeks to address that. Therefore the research question put forward questions:

RQ1: Whether once desensitization to an issue takes place will news viewers ignore the primary narrative in favour of the secondary narrative? And will news about violence remain a priority for news viewers despite its continued presence on air?

The researcher argues that in cases where the audience is overloaded with information and news on violence and crime, they develop verbal and visual clues to help them avoid a particular issue by ignoring media reports, focusing on peripheral or unrelated topics and by removing it from their social narrative.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the impact of violence in the news media on viewers' emotional responses, multiple data collection methods were employed in this study. As triangulation can help increase internal validity of a study, it was felt that with multiple data sources a clearer picture of the situation could be developed.

Both methods used are quantitative in nature, addressing two different aspects of the study: first, the volume of violence present in Pakistani news media; and second to assess how this presence has affected the emotional responses of viewers. For the first part a content analysis spread over a period of ten years was conducted to get a larger picture of whether violence was present in Pakistani television news and if yes, what percentage of the news did it represent. The content analysis was based purely on quantitative terms, i.e. a "research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Berelson, 1952, p. 18).

The choice of tools was based on a number of previous studies on media violence (Gerbner, Gross & Signorelli, 1978; Oliver, 1994; National Television Violence Study, 1997; Dorfman, et.al. 1997; Merida & Leiby, 2001; Romer, Jamieson & Aday, 2003; Lowry, Nio & Leitner, 2003; Pew Research Center, 2006;) which have focused on the content of media in general and news in particular to calculate the rate and volume of violence being depicted in the media.

Unfortunately most of these studies are based on American media outlets and we have no clear idea of how it would translate into the location of the present study (Pakistan). Therefore, following the tradition of cultivation studies, in the first

step of this study the researcher selected content analysis as the appropriate tool for evaluation.

In the second part of the study, a national level survey study was conducted to evaluate the second part of the problem: what impact does the presence of violence in the news have on the emotional responses of viewers? While a smaller scaled study might have delivered valid enough results, the researcher felt that due to nature of the issue at hand, a national level study was required.

This was the first time such a study was being undertaken in Pakistan and looking at viewers from across the country would give a better idea of the level (or lack thereof) of desensitization in the populace. The survey data also helps understand multiple factors. Firstly, how much access does the audience actually have to multiple media sources in the country; secondly, how much time do they spend on television in general and on news in particular; and thirdly, how does this exposure to news media affect their view of the world around them.

The following chapter lays down the multiple concepts, variables and methods used for the purpose of this research.

3.1. Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the most frequently used methods for the analysis of “texts” from different mediums. Initially used for studying propaganda texts, (Lasswell, 1927), it is today one of the most commonly occurring research methods in mass communication. It has been used as a research tool to check the presence of terms, words and themes in media texts ranging from books,

newspapers, magazines, movies, song lyrics, interviews, etc. – basically most forms of communication have been studied under the lens of content analysis.

There is no single definition of content analysis – however some that are frequently used are listed below:

According to Berger (1991): “*Content analysis...is a research technique that is based on measuring the amount of something (violence, negative portrayals of women, or whatever) in a representative sampling of some mass-mediated popular form of art*” (p. 25)

William Neuman, in his 1997 book '*Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* defines content analysis as: “*A technique for gathering and analysing the content of text. The ‘content’ refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated.*” (p. 272)

While there is disagreement amongst researchers over content analysis’s predictive properties, Neuendorf (2002) argues that content analysis can play a facilitating role in identifying recurring themes in media texts – which can then be used further in audience research.

Generally content analyses can be split into two groups: Conceptual and relational analysis. While the relational analysis is tries to establish the connections amongst concepts within a text, conceptual analysis is much more straightforward. It focuses on the establishment of presence and frequency of the coded concepts within the texts under study.

Therefore, for the purpose of the current study the later form of content analysis was utilised.

3.1.1. Conceptual Analysis:

This is the more traditional format of content analysis. The chosen concept or idea is examined by quantifying its presence in selected media texts.

As the purpose of the current content analysis was to establish and quantify the presence of violence in Pakistani News Channels, the more traditional format of conceptual content analysis was deemed most appropriate.

3.1.2. Sample Selection:

At present Pakistan has 15, 24-hour news channels on air, 14 of which are privately owned news channels accessible via satellite or cable networks; and 1 state-owned 24-hour news channel PTV News, which is a terrestrial channel and is available via cable networks as well. For the purpose of this study 2 news channels were selected for analysis purposes based on viewership numbers¹³.

- GEO news
- PTV news.

As per available data 17% of total time spent watching television was spent on news by viewers. Of this, PTV News had the highest audience share of 12.3%¹⁴, with GEO News having the second highest audience share of 6.6%.

¹³ <http://www.gallup.com.pk/News/cyberletter-updated1.pdf> (Downloaded 30/07/2012)

¹⁴ Here it needs to be kept in mind that PTV is Pakistan's only terrestrial television service, for which users need no cable connections, while GEO is a satellite channel requiring a cable connection for access. And

According to Television Viewing Trends¹⁵ 7-10pm is the most popular time slot TV viewing for men, women and children. The prime time news broadcast for both PTV and GEO News is telecast during this slot (21:00-22:00hrs). Therefore, this particular broadcast was selected for analysis for the study.

Based on the selected time period the researcher had a universe of 240 months of news content (12monthsx10yearsx2channels), and a population size of 7653 prime-time news broadcasts from both news channels. Using sample size examples from previous research (Ngo, 2014) a sample of 10% was considered appropriate by the researcher as only news broadcasts were under study and variation was minimal. Subsequently systematic random samples were initially constructed using Random.org random number generator software. Using January 2003 as the benchmark, 10 months of data per channel was selected for the time period 2003-2012 (nth=12), with each month representing 1 year of the period of study.

Table 1: Initial Random Sample.

#	Months Generated ¹⁶
	Jan 2003
	March 2008
	May 2011
	September 2012
	February 2009
	April 2008
	Jan 2012
	April 2003
	December 2008
	May 2006

according data from 2012, close to 81% of Pakistan's rural areas do not have access to cable infrastructure, limiting their access to PTV only.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ List generated by Random.org, List Randomiser. Timestamp: 2013-02-20 23:13:48 UTC, IP: 43.245.11.254

However, the sample generated, while random, did not represent the longitudinal nature of the study. Subsequently, the researcher constructed the sample using non-probability purposive sampling to generate a more complete picture of content and its trends. The following months were finalised for analysis purposes:

Table 2: Final Sample for Content Analysis

#	PTV News	GEO News
	Jan 2003	Jan 2003
	February 2004	February 2004
	March 2005	March 2005
	April 2006	April 2006
	May 2007	May 2007
	June 2008	June 2008
	July 2009	July 2009
	August 2010	August 2010
	September 2011	September 2011
	October 2012	October 2012

The current study was designed to establish the presence and calculate the volume of violence in electronic news in Pakistan. The current content analysis is largely descriptive in design, as it was not conducted with the intention to establish causality. It was designed to measure the presence of variables in a purposive sample, using a code book developed based on the PEJ's News Coverage Index and the 14-item modified Deutschmann news category classification, adapted by Stempel (1985). The Index was not used in its entirety, and certain categories were collapsed and/or merged based on the current study requirements.

The 1-hour primetime news broadcast from 21:00 – 22:00 hours, from Monday to Sunday for a full calendar month, was selected for both the channels as the broadcast occurs during the same time slots. The broadcast for both channels would average between 22-25 news stories per broadcast. The average length of news stories was recorded between 155 seconds for PTV News to 148 seconds for

GEO News. There existed certain outliers based on breaking news stories which were of longer lengths and were not included in calculating averages. Here it needs to be kept in mind that the length of the news stories was not a part of the analysis for this research, but for the information of the researcher alone.

3.1.3. Unit of Analysis

A single news item was selected as the unit of analysis. As seen in previous literature (Sjøvaag, 2012), there were complications in defining the unit of analysis. Should consecutive news stories on the same issue be counted once or twice in the analysis? As the current research was conceptual in nature and concerned with the quantity of news items addressing an issue, each news item, irrespective of topic was marked separately. A total of 9172 units were analysed.

3.1.4. Coding:

The coding scheme for the current study was developed based on the PEJ's News Coverage Index and the 14-item modified Deutschmann news category classification, adapted by Stempel (1985). The original categories included:

- Politics and Government Acts: Government acts and politics at local/state/national /international levels.
- War and Defence: War, defence, rebellion, military activity, foreign and domestic.
- Diplomacy and Foreign Relations: Foreign and domestic.
- Economic Activity: Business news, wages, prices, labour, commerce, natural resources.
- Agriculture: Farming, crops, agricultural economics.

- Transportation and Travel: Including economic aspects.
- Crime: All crime, including criminal court.
- Public Moral Problems: Human and societal relations, including civil court, race relations, drugs/alcohol and domestic problems.
- Accidents and Disasters: Man-made and natural catastrophes.
- Science and Invention: Science other than health, medicine and defence related.
- Public Health & Welfare: Health, medicine, social issues, safety, welfare of children and families, marriage.
- Education and Classic Arts: Education, religion and philosophy.
- Popular Amusements: Entertainment and amusements, sports, entertainment media.
- General Human Interest: People, weather, animals, youth and "cute Children."

As the focus of the study was on presence of violence in news, the UCLA Television Violence Monitoring Project (1995), definition of violence as '*...anything that involves physical harm or a threat of physical harm of any sort, intentional or unintentional, self-inflicted or inflicted by someone or something else*' was used to develop the codebook attached.

- *Pilot Study:*

Two coders were appointed for this purpose. Both graduate students were familiar with content analysis method and coding processes and were selected based on their familiarity with the content analysis method. Detailed discussions were held initially to establish common understanding for the coders based on what the

researcher was aiming for. A pilot study based on 2 bulletins from each channel was conducted initially by the coders to establish inter-coder reliability for the variable news type, under the direct supervision of the researcher in order to ensure complete understanding of the coding categories, the aim of the research and the researcher's requirements. The initial coding was conducted based on Deutschmann's news category classification; however this did not meet the basic criteria of the study wholly. The scheme was modified and certain categories collapsed based on the coders' recommendations and the researcher's own observations during the pilot study. As the primary purpose of the content analysis was to establish the presence and volume of violence in news, five main categories of news were finalised for coding purposes.

Reliability measures ensure that any measuring procedure will return the same results when replicated. While a number of researchers argue for an alpha coefficient range of .8-.9 (Riffe et al., 2005, Neuendorf, 2002, Popping, 1988) others have argued in favour of an alpha value of $\geq .75$ (Mellado and van Dalen, 2017, Dragojevic, Mastro, Giles, & Sink, 2016, Matthes, 2009, Stein, 2009, Hoffman, 2006, Krippendorff, 2004a, Wimmer and Dominick, 2003); especially in the case of an exploratory study. As Krippendorff (2004) himself states:

“When human lives hang on the results of a content analysis..., decision criteria have to be set far higher than when a content analysis is intended to support mere scholarly explorations. To assure that the data under consideration are at least similarly interpretable by researchers, starting with the coders employed in generating the data, it is customary to require $\alpha \geq .800$. Only where tentative conclusions are deemed acceptable, may an $\alpha \geq .667$ suffice.” (p.241)

As the current study aimed at merely exploring the presence of violence on Pakistan's news channels, and given the in-built 'conservativeness' of Krippendorff's alpha, an alpha value of .77 was deemed acceptable for this study.

- *Final Coding Scheme:*

Based on the pilot test, five categories of news type were defined for analysis purposes. The final coding scheme is as follows¹⁷:

- **Violence with fatalities:** War, defence, rebellion, homeland security, terrorism, military-related issues, military use of force, crime stories, man-made accidents and natural disasters, and any other stories containing either single or multiple fatalities (deaths).
- **Violence without fatalities:** War, defence, rebellion, homeland security, terrorism, military-related issues, military use of force, crime stories, man-made accidents and natural disasters, and any other stories containing violence but with no resulting fatalities (deaths).
- **Domestic politics:** Government acts and politics at local, state and national level.
- **Foreign affairs:** foreign and domestic items dealing with official diplomacy, political issues, and foreign relations.
- **Other news:** Business and Economics, Public Moral Issues, Entertainment Industry, Science and Technology, Health and General Human Interest, and any other uncategorised news stories

3.1.5. Data Analysis

Frequencies were used to calculate the number of news stories in different categories. Comparative analysis of news content within and between the channels was conducted using graphical representation of the data. Cronbach's

¹⁷ Detailed codebook attached in Annex

alpha was used to calculate the internal consistency of the data and finally independent sample t-tests were used to compare the means between the two news channels.

3.2. Survey

A survey is designed to measure the presence of any phenomenon within a given populations. Once, the nature of the information required is decided, the researcher draws a relevant sample from the population in order to test his propositions. A complicated method, survey design requires the researcher to be fully clear on the objectives of the research and of the information she is seeking. This is only possible after getting a clear understanding of the survey methodology.

Keeping in mind the sample size, costs, and available time; the household drop off survey method was used. There were 2 main reasons for selecting this process:

There is very little research culture in Pakistan, and the chances of getting a decent response rate was considered too low to risk this.

Since the questionnaires had to be distributed in all parts of the country, it was easier to work with NGOs in place who were familiar with the locals and could get them to fill the questionnaires. This would have been harder with either mail or phone surveys.

The sampling procedures and the questionnaire design are discussed in the sections below.

3.2.1. Design

According to Sommer and Wichert (2003), every questionnaire has two main aspects: the content and the format.

3.2.2. Content:

While the content analysis answered the questions concerning the volume of violence in Pakistani news, there was also a need to assess what, if any, effect this violence had on news viewers' emotional responses. The research focuses on the extent of desensitization in news viewers, caused by repeated exposure to the same issue.

The aims and objectives of the current research impose a descriptive purpose upon the study, insofar as they lend to such questions as:

- (1) Is there a desensitization effect?
- (2) Is there a decrease in empathy towards victims of victims?
- (3) Does the audience have a pro-violence attitude?
- (4) Is compassion fatigue on the rise?
- (5) Does heavy viewing increase desensitization?

These questions, immediately correlate to the research objectives, are integral to the testing of the hypotheses and are essential for the answering of the primary research question. For this purpose survey research method was selected, as literature review showed that this was the most often used method to collect

information “about a population’s beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours” (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 1991).

A cross-sectional survey was conducted in order to assess respondents’ emotional responses. Details of the survey process are discussed below.

3.2.3. Format

A survey questionnaire can be based on either of two formats; structured or unstructured; based on the research objectives. A completely structured questionnaire was designed for the current study, as this was a drop-off survey and also because it made data collection, tabulation and analysis easier.

A survey questionnaire¹⁸ was developed to gather data on desensitization of news viewers. The instrument was divided into three main sections:

The first section made up of 8 questions focused on the viewing choices and preferences of viewers, as well identifying respondents’ use of television for information and socialization functions.

The second section of the instrument consisted of forty close-ended statements focusing on the three main variables being studied: pro-violence attitude, compassion fatigue and emotional empathy. 11 statements for pro-violence attitude, 22 for emotional empathy¹⁹ and 8 statements for compassion fatigue were developed.

¹⁸ Annex II

¹⁹ For the purpose of one of the variable, emotional empathy, the ‘first five factor-based scales’ of the empathy scale developed by D. R. Caruso & J. D. Mayer (1998) was adapted as part of the measurement as the scale is well established and is particularly relevant in terms of measurement of emotional empathy. While other empathy scales (Dymond, 1949; Kerr and

The third section of the questionnaire consisted of six close-ended questions for the collection of demographics of the sample and for other general information.

The internal consistency of the instrument was measured using Cronbach’s Alpha. First the 24 negatively worded statements were re-coded by reverse scoring and calculating an overall mean for the items.

The alpha score for all 41 items in the questionnaire was .774 (M=94.32, SD=14.29).

The table below gives a summary of the questionnaire’s content:

Table 3: Questionnaire Breakdown

Section 1: Television Viewing Information	
Television Viewing	3 questions
Information Sharing	2 questions
Problems in Pakistan	2 questions
Opinion about news	1 question
Section 2: Primary Variables	
Empathy	22 questions
Pro-violence attitudes	11 questions
Compassion fatigue	8 questions
Section 3: Demographics	
Time	2 questions
Other Demographics	4 questions

Two categories of independent variables, time spent watching television and time spent watching news were identified. Dependent variables of pro-violence attitudes, compassion fatigue and emotional empathy were studied. The questionnaire was originally constructed in English and then

Speroff, 1954), measured cognitive empathy, in the current study the researcher was more interested in emotional empathy responses as this increases its relevance in survey research where data collected is based on self-reports. As D. R. Caruso & J. D. Mayer (1998) put it: “There are several advantages that emotion-based measures of empathy have in relation to other measures. These include the appropriateness of self-report methodology to understand a person's subjective responses and the directness of the emotional approach.”(p.6)

translated into Urdu for local use. Both versions of the questionnaire are attached as Appendices.

3.3. Measurements:

3.3.1. Television Exposure:

Two levels of television viewing were used in the questionnaire in order to calculate exposure.

First, the respondents were asked to indicate total time spent watching television in a day with the options of less than 2, 2-3, 4-5, and 6+ hrs in order to calculate heavy or light viewership.

The second level of exposure measured time spent watching news per day with the options of less than 1hour, 2-3, 3-4 and more than 4 hours in a day to calculate heavy and light viewing habits with reference to news.

3.3.2. Emotional Responses:

Three measures of emotional responses, pro-violence attitudes, compassion fatigue and emotional empathy were studied in this research in order to assess whether viewers are desensitized to violence in Pakistan.

3.3.2.1. Desensitization

Numerous definitions of desensitization ranging from military use to psychology to mass communication have been given overtime. From “reduced emotional responsiveness” (Wilson and Smith, 1998) to a “decrease (almost to the point of absence) of sympathy or empathy” (Potter & Smith, 2000), both of which are

“emotional mechanisms” addressing how people respond to acts of violence experienced directly or indirectly have been used to define desensitization.

The research focused on whether heavy viewing produces numbing or visible lessening of emotional reactions to violent events, which would normally produce a strong emotional response in viewers as well as cognitive changes which can be seen as the acceptance of violence as the rule; instead of the exception. Therefore, for the current study defines desensitization as decrease in increase in pro-violence attitude and compassion fatigue with a lessening of emotionally empathetic responses.

3.3.2.2. Pro-Violence Attitudes:

According to the Pew Research Center (2006), 61% of all lead stories on local news, which is the primary news source for two-thirds of Americans, are dedicated to crime, fires, disasters, and accidents. So if our knowledge and vision of what the world is like is developed from television, this 61% is enough to convince us never to leave our homes for fear of the consequences. Other research has shown that a steady diet of violence strengthens attitudes in favour of violence, i.e. that using violence in response to aggression is an appropriate way to resolve conflict (Barkin, Kreiter, & DuRant, 2001).

The development of attitudes towards violence is influenced by many factors including exposure to family and community violence, as well as exposure to violence in the media. This cultivation is worse in children who grow up with violence, in comparison to adults who show higher short-term effects (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006). Scripts learned at a young age stay with viewers, and if there

is a constant exposure to similar content, these scripts become the basis of beliefs and opinions, especially about aggression and violence, as viewers grow older (Bushman & Huesmann, 2006).

Increase in purchase weapons, self-defence classes' enrolment and acceptance of harsher laws all indicate increase in pro-violence attitudes. Presence or absence of Pro-violence attitudes was identified using three concepts. Therefore, for the purpose of this study the researcher argues that *support for violence as a solution to conflict is a strong indicator of desensitization.*

Table 4: Measuring Pro-Violence Attitudes

Categories:	Questions:
Legislation on violent crimes	Locals who support militants should get the same treatment as the militants Police and army should be called in to deal with criminals and militants Special laws & punishments should be made for criminals and militants The government should give people the right to protect themselves
Coverage of violent crimes by the news media	The media is too focused on violent events, there are other more important issues in the country There is more violence now because the news media highlights it so much News reporting has made violence into an everyday event News coverage of criminals and militants gives them encouragement Pakistan is a safer place than what is shown in the news
Graphic content in news	News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of attacks There is nothing wrong with live coverage of the result of violent attacks

1 positive statement: *Pakistan is a safer place than what is shown in the news;* and 10 negative statements: were included.

Initial internal consistency of the items used to measure pro-violence attitude was calculated at .690 (M=24.56, SD=5.68). However deleting one item, *News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of attacks*, increased the internal consistency to .720 (M=21.7, SD=5.43). Finally a 10 item scale with 1 positive and 9 negative statements were used to calculate pro-violence attitude in the respondents.

3.3.2.3. Emotional Empathy:

Exposure to violence in the mass media may result in a desensitization effect in which viewers experience diminished feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of actual violence. According to Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) viewers who watch large amounts of media violence show less physiological reactivity to violence in other contexts.

Hoffman (1998) furthers the argument through the role of emphatic scripts. He argues that behavioural scripts are learnt starting from a very young age, and that heavy exposure to violent content, conflict without resolution and/or lack of significant reprisal presents a behavioural guide which limits empathy and empathetic responses. Therefore, for the purpose of the current study empathy has been defined as *the capacity to understand another person's experience from within that person's frame of reference*.

In order to evaluate the respondents' attitude towards violence the researcher adapted the 'first five factor-based scales' of the empathy scale developed by D. R. Caruso & J. D. Mayer (1998). 22 items out of the original 30-item scale were utilized.

The five-factors utilized in the current study were:

Table 5: Measuring Empathy

Categories:	Questions:
Empathetic Suffering	I feel deeply for others. I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves. If a crowd gets excited about something so do I. It makes me happy when I see people helping each other. Seeing a hurt child is very upsetting.
Positive Sharing	Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too Seeing other people smile makes me smile I feel other people's pain It hurts to see another person in pain If someone is upset I get upset too.
Crying	I don't cry easily I feel saddened by tragedy in the movies I see Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down I get emotional easily when watching a sad news story.
Emotional Attention	I believe that the best way to live is without any interference from others I don't have time to think about other people's problems I don't give others' feelings much thought I have too many problems of my own to think about others I find it annoying when people cry in public.
Feel for Others	I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel The suffering of others deeply disturbs me.

6-items were negative and were reverse coded for analysis purposes. The initial internal consistency of the 22-items used to measure emotional empathy was calculated at .686 (M=50.36, SD=8.4) which was lower than expected. However deleting one item, *my feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel*, increased the internal consistency to .721 (M=46.4, SD=8.67). The item mentioned was deleted from the final scale and a 21-item scale was used for analyses purposes.

3.3.2.4. Compassion Fatigue:

With the media reinforcing the mean world syndrome, the fear, anger and vulnerability become a permanent fixture in a viewer's life, leading to greater desire for protection of 'self' from the 'other' (Gerbner & Morgan, 2010).

This could take the shape of harsher punishments, longer prison sentences, acceptance of torture, acceptance of lower levels of privacy and higher levels of surveillance, etc. Therefore, the mean world syndrome results in a reduced sensitivity to the consequences of violence and the belief that violence is the norm. The sheer quantity of violence on television encourages the idea that aggressive behaviour is normal (Morgan, 2010).

Compassion fatigue is also known as, a term that refers to a gradual lessening of compassion over time. Journalism analysts argue that the media has caused widespread compassion fatigue in society by saturating newspapers and news shows with de-contextualized images and stories of suffering.

This has caused the public to become cynical, or become resistant to helping people who are suffering. Therefore, for the purpose of the current study compassion fatigue has been defined as *an indifference to appeals for help/assistance made by and for victims of violence.*

Table 6: Measuring Compassion Fatigue

Categories:	Questions:
Attitude towards victims	News channels should not show coverage of victims' families Presence of refugees in settled areas is going to increase the vulnerability of these areas to crime Refugees from violence affected areas are becoming a problem for local residents Once the security forces leave an area the criminals and militants will return The media makes too much of the suffering of others
Attitude towards the Media Coverage of Violence	Militancy is more of media publicity than any real problem The news shows only what is happening in the country News about violence is no longer remarkable

Out of the 8 total items, 7 were negatively phrased and were reverse coded for analysis purposes. Initial internal consistency of the items used to measure compassion fatigue was calculated at .688 (M=19.57, SD=4.0). However deleting one item, *the news shows only what is happening in the country*, increased the internal consistency to .709 (M=16.72, SD=3.78). The item mentioned was deleted from the final scale and a 7-item scale was used for analyses purposes.

3.4. Attention threshold model:

The story saturation and attention threshold hypothesis argues that viewers who are desensitized to violence will avoid addressing the issue, despite their exposure to- as well as the significant presence of violence in the media. News viewers either consciously or sub-consciously ignore an issue in the news media. The primary cause for this can be over-exposure of the issue and desensitization of viewers to the stimulus. The researcher argues that in such cases, the audience develops verbal and visual clues to help them avoid a particular issue by ignoring media reports, focusing on peripheral or unrelated topics and by removing it from their social narrative. Therefore, the hypothesis puts forward the definition that:

the attention threshold is crossed when story saturation takes place; consequently news viewers ignore the primary narrative in favour of the secondary narrative.

In order to assess whether there is in fact story saturation and an attention threshold amongst the study participants, respondents were first asked to identify issues which they felt were of primary importance in the media, next they were asked to identify (in their opinion) the main cause of the earlier identified problem. If the trend follows existing literature, the problems identified should be in line with the media agenda as identified by the content analysis.

The next step focused on identifying the respondents' narrative; i.e. the issues and topics discussed with their friends and family.

For this purpose, the survey participants were asked about whether they choose to discuss what they watch on television with either their family or their friends.

Those who responded in the positive were then asked to identify areas of discussion with both groups separately.

Table 7: Measuring Attention

Categories:	Questions:
Politics	Political parties Energy crisis Inflation
Entertainment	Dramas/stories Movies Food/cooking, Music Sports
Violence	Militancy/terrorism Crime Insecurity Lawlessness

An effort was made by the researcher to include as many areas as possible covered by the local news channels as possible.

3.5. Translation

As the original questionnaire was developed in the English language, it was translated into Urdu before field testing. In order to ensure both language and conceptual equivalence²⁰ two bilingual translators were requested to conduct the first translation from English to Urdu. Two different translators were then asked to re-translate the questionnaires back into English to see whether the equivalence was maintained during translations. At the end of which all four translators and the researcher met to go over the problem areas and re-phrase questions with ambiguities and misunderstandings.

3.6. Pre-Testing

A small pilot study was then conducted to see whether the questionnaire was fixed. Questionnaires in both English and Urdu were tested to ensure no meaning was lost in translation. A sample of 30 non-random undergraduate university students was selected to test the questionnaire. Based on their attempts, a few questions were removed and the positing of the questions redesigned (demographics were taken to the end of the questionnaires instead of the beginning as respondents felt hesitant at providing that information at the beginning of the form.)

²⁰ <http://dgim.ucsf.edu/cadc/mm/translationguide.pdf> (Downloaded 12/05/2014)

3.7. Population and Sample

According to Dillion (2000), while the sample selected may not be a complete representation of the population it should be a representation of the “*population of interest*” (pp. 211). There are two ways in which a sample can be selected: based on existing sample sizes in literature and through statistical calculations. Using both methods simultaneously, the researcher was able to identify an appropriate sample size of 1500 respondents based on both literature and statistical modelling²¹ (Rethans et. al., 1998; Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

Using the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula, the accuracy of the sample of the population can be established. A sample size of 1500 according to the formula indicates a Margin of Error of $\pm 2.5\%$ with a 95% confidence interval. This means that if a sample of 1500 is drawn from the population, the probability of a statistical variation in any other sample drawn from the same population should not be more than 2.5%.

However, since the current study was a national level survey, limitations of time and resources had a direct effect on the sampling method utilized.

3.7.1. Sample selection

A non-random quota sample was used for the purpose of this research. As the study was a first of its type in Pakistan, the researcher wanted as representative a sample as possible, however political unrest, logistics, cost and access were

²¹ <http://www.research-advisors.com/tools/SampleSize.htm> (retrieved on 10/04/2013)

prohibiting factors in this. Based on the 1998 Census²² numbers the following sample parameters were set for the study (See Table 9).

Table 8: Sample Selection - Stage 1.

Total Population of Pakistan		182,000,000	
Administrative Unit	Capital District	Population Percentage ²³	Questionnaires Per Unit
Baluchistan (province)	Quetta	4.8%	79
Federally Administered Tribal Areas* (Not Included)²⁴	Peshawar	2.3%	N/A
Gilgit–Baltistan (FAR ¹)	Gilgit	1.3%	27
Islamabad Capital Territory	Islamabad	0.6%	22
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (province)	Peshawar	12.9%	201
Punjab (province)	Lahore	53.7%	817
Sindh (province)	Karachi	22.2%	352
Totals:		100%	1500

**The FATA areas were not included in the current study due to on-going military operations in the area. Permission could not be received to travel there. ¹FAR: Federally Administered Region*

A total of 1500 questionnaires were distributed across four provinces, one semi-province and the federal capital territory. The Federally Administered Tribal Area could not be covered due to complete lack of access. At the first level the questionnaires were split based on population percentage of each included region.

At the second stage (See Table 10) the Capital Districts of each administrative unit were identified, along with their urban and rural population percentages.

Based on the numbers generated the Pakistan Haemophilia Patients Welfare Society (PHPWS) was approached to assist in distribution, filling (especially in rural areas) and collection of questionnaires as PHPWS has offices and associate organizations in all selected areas.

²² The last census conducted in Pakistan was in 1998. There was supposed to be one in 2008, but has been delayed continuously and to-date no new census has been conducted. Therefore the researcher is perform using the 1998 data for quota calculations.

²³ http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/pco/statistics/area_pop/area_pop.html (Accessed 02/05/2012)

²⁴ The 44 questions from FATA were equally distributed amongst the other 6 administrative units.

Table 9: Sample Selection - Stage 2a.

Administrative Unit	Capital District	Urban Percentage	Rural Percentage
Baluchistan (province)	Quetta	74.36 %	25.64 %
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Not Included)	Peshawar	N/A	N/A
Gilgit–Baltistan (semi-Province)	Gilgit	85.7%	14.3%
Islamabad Capital Territory	Islamabad	65.71%	34.28 %
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (province)	Peshawar	48.49 %	51.51 %
Punjab (province)	Lahore	82.44 %	17.56 %
Sindh (province)	Karachi	94.75 %	5.25 %

Table 10: Sample Selection - Stage2b

Administrative Unit	Questionnaires Urban	Questionnaires Rural
Baluchistan (province)	58	21
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Not Included)	N/A	N/A
Gilgit–Baltistan (semi-Province)	22	5
Islamabad Capital Territory	14	8
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (province)	98	103
Punjab (province)	670	131
Sindh (province)	333	19

At this point (See Table 11) convenience sampling method was adopted, and the questionnaires were filled by available and accessible respondents. 1005 questionnaires were received; of which 811 were valid, giving a response rate of 54.06% for the study. For details of valid questionnaires see Table 12.

Table 11: Valid Questionnaire Distribution by Province

Provinces	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Punjab	334	41.2	41.2	41.2
Sindh	226	27.9	27.9	69.1
KP	165	20.3	20.3	89.4
Valid Balochistan	54	6.7	6.7	96.1
GB	11	1.4	1.4	97.4
Federal	21	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	811	100.0	100.0	

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in three sections.

The first section addresses the first research question based on whether and to what extent violent news is present in Pakistani news media. A description of the sample characteristics are provided using frequency tables and descriptive stats, followed by channel-wise analysis of news content. Finally, comparative analysis of the two channels PTV News and GEO News are performed using means as mode of comparison. Graphical representation of the data is included.

The second section of the results focuses on the quantitative survey analysis. The section initially focuses on the characteristics of the data. Analyses are conducted using Frequency and Crosstabs functions in SPSS to assess whether there are any missing values, as well as identifying sample characteristics. The section then goes on to test the proposed hypothesis.

The third section of the results tests the proposed model of issue avoidance. Data was analysed using Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics, Ver. 20.

4.1. Content Analysis:

A total of 9172 news stories collected over a period of 10 months were analysed for the purpose of the study. While the time period of analysis remained uniform across both channels, the number of news stories varied. Consequently, 51% (4681) of the news stories analysed were from the private news channel GEO

News, while the remaining 49% (4491) were from the state-run news channel PTV News.

Based on the coding categories news on domestic politics in Pakistan had the highest number of news stories for both GEO (35.4%) & PTV (35.9%). The second highest category of news stories in terms of numbers contained news with violence resulting in one or multiple fatalities; with GEO recording a higher percentage at 22.5% and PTV with 19.9% of its total news content. For the third news category in terms of volume of news shown, the two channels differed for the first time – with GEO having a higher number of news stories (16.3%) containing violence (but no fatalities), while the third highest type of news shown on PTV focused on international relations (17.3%). Violence news without reports of fatalities contributed to 14.2% of the news on PTV, while the remaining 12.7% of news content was made up of soft and uncategorised news which fell in the Other category. For GEO News, international relations news made up 15.4% of the total news, with the remaining 10.3% falling in the Other category.

Table 12: Frequency Distribution of GEO News Stories

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Other	483	7.0	10.3	10.3
	DomPol	1657	24.1	35.4	45.7
	IntPol	723	10.5	15.4	61.2
	ViolnoFat	764	11.1	16.3	77.5
	ViolwthFat	1054	15.3	22.5	100.0
	Total	4681	68.0	100.0	
Missing System		2207	32.0		
Total		6888	100.0		

**Distribution based on the 5 categories of news analysed: Domestic Politics, International politics, Violence resulting in fatalities, violence with no fatalities and Other news.*

Table 13: Frequency Distribution of PTV News Stories

		Frequency	Percent Valid	Percent Cumulative
Valid	Other	569	8.3	12.7
	DomPol	1614	23.4	35.9
	IntPol	776	11.3	48.6
	ViolnoFat	637	9.2	65.9
	ViolwthFat	895	13.0	80.1
	Total	4491	65.2	100.0
Missing System	2397	34.8		
Total	6888	100.0		

**Distribution based on the 5 categories of news analysed: Domestic Politics, International politics, Violence resulting in fatalities, violence with no fatalities and Other news.*

4.1.1. Channel Analysis – Geo NEWS:

News coverage of violence resulting in fatalities remained a constant on GEO News with an average of 105.4 stories across the 10 months, with number of news stories peaking in February 2004 (125) & September 2011 (122). News coverage of violence not resulting in fatalities remained low for the months of 03’, 04’, through to 06’. However there was seen a progressive increase in coverage of such events for the month of May 07’ through to October 2012; with the number of news stories peaking at 95 for the month of June 2008.

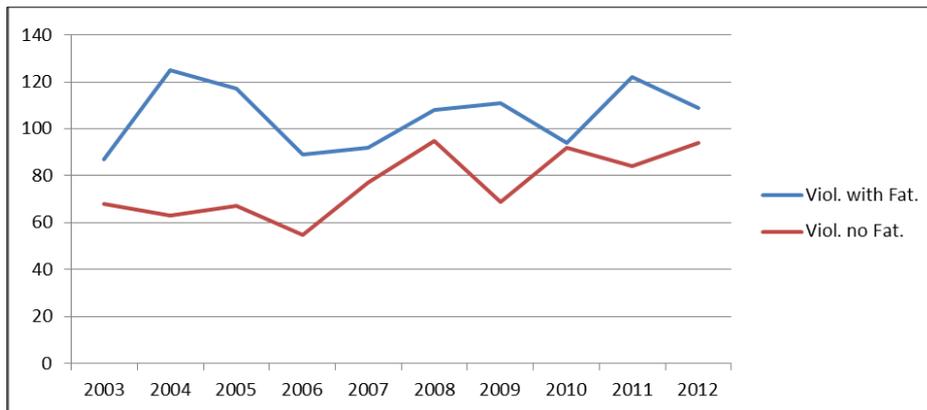


Figure 6: Violent News Distribution for GEO News channel from 2003-2013. The graph examines trends in both violent news resulting in fatalities and violence news without fatalities.

Domestic politics remained the highest covered issue in GEO News for all 10 months with an average of 165 news stories. The number of news stories peaked at 231 in July 2008 with the minimum reported in October 2012. International (M=72.3, SD=6.6) and Other News (M=48.3, SD=14.6) made up the remaining portion of news coverage.

4.1.2. Channel Analysis – PTV News:

News coverage of violence resulting in fatalities remained low on PTV News for the first 4 months (Jan-03', Feb-04', Mar-05' & Apr-06'), however there was a steady increase in the number of stories reported from May-07', peaking in 2010 (115). News coverage of violence not resulting in fatalities fluctuated during the period of study; with the maximum number of news stories covered in July-09' (81) and minimum being reported in Jun-08' (48).

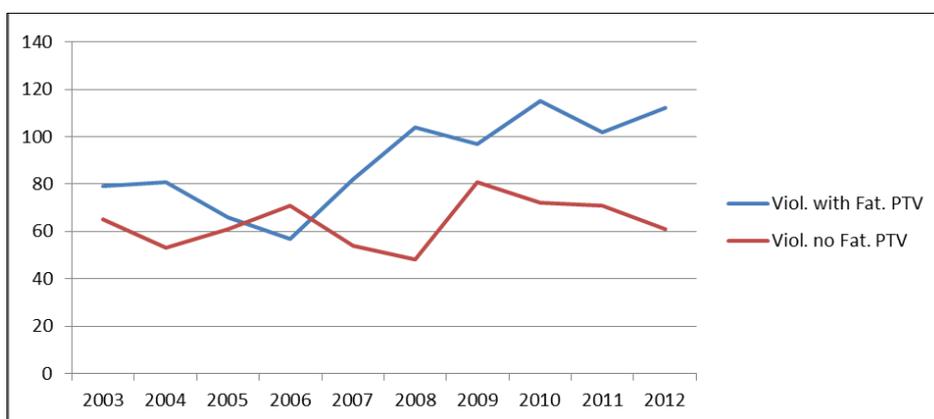


Figure 7: Violent News Distribution for PTV News channel from 2003-2013. The graph examines trends in both violent news resulting in fatalities and violence news without fatalities.

Domestic politics was the highest covered and reported issue for PTV News for all 10 months with an average of 161 news stories. The number of news stories peaked at 193 in Aug-2010 with the minimum reported in April-06' (134).

International (M=77.6, SD=16.3) and Other News (M=56.9, SD=13.7) made up the remaining portion of news coverage.

4.1.3. Comparison of News Coverage:

4.1.3.1. News Coverage of Violence with Fatalities:

As reported earlier, coverage of news containing violence resulting in fatalities remained consistent across both channels: GEO News & PTV News. However, the volume of news varied across both channels with GEO News reporting 54.1% (1054) of stories studied and PTV News reporting 45.9% (895) of the stories.

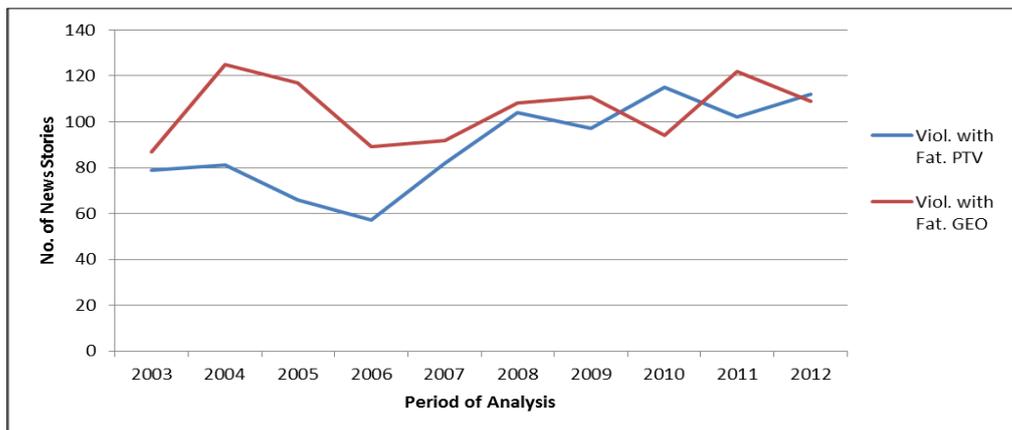


Figure 8: New coverage of Violence with Fatalities by GEO News & PTV News. This figure compares the trends of news coverage between the two channels from 2003-2013.

As the trend indicates, the volume of such news remained low for PTV from 03’ to 05’ in comparison to the volume reported by GEO during the same time period. However, during the latter part of the study period, the volume of news on violence resulting in fatalities remains almost equal for both channels.

4.1.3.2. News Coverage of Violence without Fatalities:

In the instance of news coverage of violence not resulting in fatalities, similar trend in volume of stories reported can be seen for both GEO & PTV News, with GEO airing 55% (764) of the news stories and PTV News reporting the remaining 45% (637). However, the trend of reporting varies sharply, with a spike in the reporting of such news stories on GEO News in 2008 (94 news stories), which was also the highest volume reported in this category for the study period. In comparison PTV news reported only 48 news stories, almost 50% less in comparison.

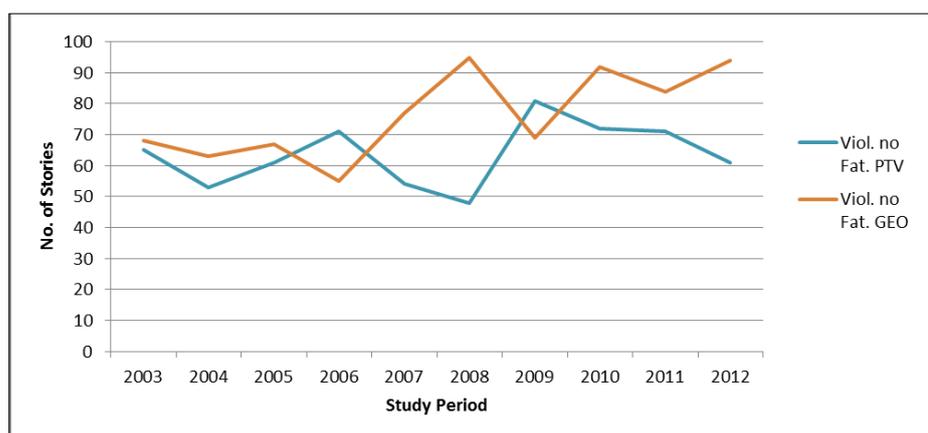


Figure 9: New coverage of Violence without Fatalities by GEO News & PTV News. This figure compares the trends of violent news without fatalities coverage between the two channels from 2003-2013.

4.1.3.3. Domestic Political News Coverage:

The volume of stories covering domestic politics was almost equal for both channels, with PTV reporting 50.4% (1614) and GEO reporting 50.6% (1657) of the total number of news stories covered in the study period. Again 2008 stands out as the outlier in the trend of news reporting, with GEO peaking its political

coverage at 231 news stories for a one month time period, whereas PTV's coverage of political news remains consistent in its pattern for the same time period.

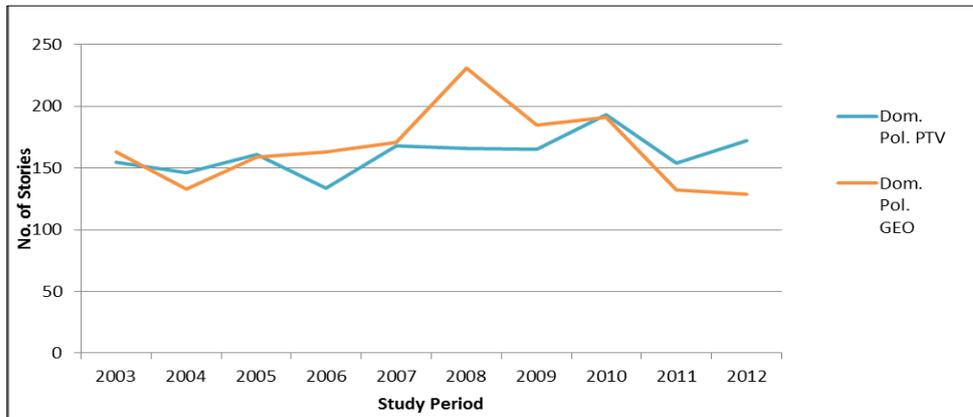


Figure 10: News coverage of Domestic Politics by PTV News & GEO News. This figure shows the trend of political news coverage for both news channels for the periods 2003-2013.

4.1.4. Summary of Content Analysis Results:

The first research question asked how much of the news shown on television in Pakistan contains violence. And whether there is difference in the amount of violence shown between public and private news channels. The aim of the current content analysis was to address this particular set of questions. As indicated from the data analysed above, violent news content has been and remains a large part of the total news shown on electronic news media in Pakistan, both for the public-state run channel as well as private news media. While individually, the two news categories (*news of violence with fatalities & news on violence without fatalities*) containing violence ranked 2nd and 3rd in number of reports, combined they formed the highest reported category of news (No. of stories 3350, 36.5%).

The only single category of news which had a higher rate of reporting was domestic political news, which was also the highest covered category in the sample period for both public and private news channels (3271, 35.7%).

These results provide a clear answer with reference to the first research question, that there is a consistent volume of violent content being aired by news media in Pakistan. And while there might be fluctuation in the number of stories air, there is no significant difference between the volume of content aired on public and private channels.

4.2. Survey Results:

Of the 1500 distributed questionnaires, 1005 questionnaires were received; of which 811 were valid, giving a response rate of 54.06% for the study.

Characteristics of the sample were analysed using non-parametric Chi-square test in SPSS to check the distribution of the survey respondents.

4.2.1. Sample Characteristics:

A total sample of 811 respondents was analysed for the purpose of this study. Out of the total 811 respondents 465 (57.3%) were male and 346 (42.7%) were female. The majority of the respondents were from urban areas, with 548 (67.6%) valid responses belonging to urban areas and the remaining 263 (32.4%) belonging to rural areas.

The average age of the respondents was in the 25-34 years category ($M=2.29$, $SD=1.050$), with an average monthly household income bracket of 21k – 41k ($M=3.12$, $SD=1.36$). The average education level of the respondents lay at the

Graduate level with 34.5% of the sample belonging to this category (M=3.81, SD=1.24).

Geographically, majority of the respondents belonged to the Punjab province with 41.2% belonging to this category (M=2.07, SD=1.190).

Table 14: Demographic Data Distribution of Sample

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	465	57.3
	Female	346	42.7
	Total	811	100.0
Age	18-24	202	24.9
	25-34	307	37.9
	35-44	200	24.7
	45-54	72	8.9
	55 & Above	30	3.7
	Total	811	100.0
Education	less than 10 years	46	5.7
	matric	89	11.0
	intermediate	135	16.6
	graduate	280	34.5
	masters & above	261	32.2
	Total	811	100.0
Household Income	less than 10k	128	15.8
	10k - 20k	161	19.9
	21k - 40k	179	22.1
	41k - 60k	173	21.3
	61k & Above	170	21.0
	Total	811	100.0

Table 15: Geographical Distribution of Sample

		Frequency	Percent
Rural/Urban District	Urban	548	67.6
	Rural	263	32.4
	Total	811	100.0
Province	Punjab	334	41.2
	Sindh	226	27.9
	KP	165	20.3
	Baluchistan	54	6.7
	GB	11	1.4
	Federal	21	2.6
	Total	811	100.0

4.2.1.1. Female Sample Characteristics:

Within the female segment of the sample, 234 (67.6%) of the respondents were urban and 112 (32.4%) belonged to rural areas. Age-wise the largest group (130, 37.6%) belonged to the 25-34 years category, with almost equal number of respondents in the 18-24 years (88, 25.4%) and 35-44 years (81, 23.4%) categories forming the second and third highest categories.

Majority of the female respondents belonged to Punjab (157, 45.4%) with Sindh (77, 22.3%) and KPK (71, 20.5%) second and third respectively.

Monthly household income listed by female respondents had a higher value than their male counterparts with the majority of the respondents in the 41k-60k & 60k & above categories (46.3%). In the education category, majority of the female respondents reported graduate level qualifications (116, 33.5%).

4.2.1.2. Male Sample Characteristics:

Within the male segment of the sample, 314 (67.5%) of the respondents were urban and 151 (32.5%) belonged to rural areas. Age-wise the largest group (177, 38.1%) belonged to the 25-34 years category, with almost equal number of respondents in the 35-44 years (119, 25.6%) and 18-24 years (114, 24.5%) categories forming the second and third highest categories.

Majority of the male respondents belonged to Punjab (177, 38.1%) with Sindh (149, 32%) and KPK (94, 20.2%) second and third respectively.

Monthly household income listed by male respondents had a lower value than their female counterparts with the majority of the respondents in the 10k-20k & 20k-40k categories (43.4%). In the education category, majority of the male respondents reported graduate level qualifications (164, 35.3%).

4.2.2. Transforming Data

In order to compute the three variables: pro-violence attitudes, compassion fatigue and emotional empathy; as well as the primary variable: desensitization, the items for each variable category were computed and then recoded into the above mentioned variables for hypothesis testing purposes.

The first step in the computing process was the reverse coding of all the positive statements used in the questionnaire (it was decided to reverse code the positive statements as lower mean scores were assumed to be indicators of more positive attitudes and higher scores than the mean were assumed to be more negative attitudes), i.e., 18 positive statements were recoded out of a total of 41 statements. The initial 5-point Likert-scale used for the study ranged from 1=Strongly Agree to 5=Strongly Disagree. In the case of the positive statements²⁵, after reverse coding the scale range changed to 5=Strongly Agree to 1=Strongly Disagree.

4.2.2.1. Pro-Violence Attitudes

For the purpose of computing pro-violence attitudes, 11 statements were included in the instrument. The 1 positive statement was reverse coded. All 11 of these

²⁵ Lists of positive and negative statements is provided in the Research Methods Chapter (pgs. 64-66)

were first analysed for internal consistency, giving an alpha value of .690 (M=24.56, SD=5.68).

However deleting one item, *News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of attacks*, increased the internal consistency to .720 (M=21.7, SD=5.43). Finally a 10 item scale with 1 positive and 9 negative statements were used to calculate pro-violence attitude in the respondents.

Table 16: Final Pro-violence Scale Reliability Statistics Based on 10 Items

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.720	.728	10

The 10 items were then computed into a single variable: pro-violence attitude through Compute Variable command in SPSS in order to facilitate hypothesis testing.

Using the mean as a cut-off point, it was determined that values lower than that of the mean (M=2.17, SD=.54) were indicators of lower pro-violence attitudes, while values higher than the mean were indicators of higher pro-violence attitudes.

4.2.2.2. Emotional Empathy

22 items were developed to calculate the presence of emotional empathy in respondents. The 16 positive statements part of this variable were reverse coded. The initial internal consistency of the 22-items used to measure emotional empathy was calculated at .686 (M=50.36, SD=8.4) which was lower than expected.

However deleting one item, *my feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel*, increased the internal consistency to .721 (M=46.4, SD=8.67). The item mentioned was deleted from the final scale and a 21-item scale was used for analyses purposes.

Table 17: Final Emotional Empathy Scale Reliability Statistics Based on 21 Items

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.721	.750	21

The 21 items were then computed into a single variable: emotional empathy through Compute Variable command in SPSS in order to facilitate hypothesis testing.

Using the mean as a cut-off point, it was determined that values lower than that of the mean (M=2.21, SD=.41) were indicators of higher levels of emotional empathy, while values higher than the mean were indicators of lower levels of emotional empathy.

4.2.2.3. Compassion Fatigue

For the purpose of computing compassion fatigue, the 1 negative statement was first reverse coded. Then the 8 statements were analysed for internal consistency, giving an alpha value of .688 (M=19.57, SD=4.0).

However deleting one item, *the news shows only what is happening in the country*, increased the internal consistency to .709 (M=16.72, SD=3.78). The item mentioned was deleted from the final scale and a 7-item scale was used for analyses purposes.

Table 18: Final Compassion Fatigue Scale Reliability Statistics Based on a 7 Item Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.709	.723	7

The 7 items were then computed into a single variable: compassion fatigue through Compute Variable command in SPSS in order to facilitate hypothesis testing.

Using the mean as a cut-off point, it was determined that values lower than that of the mean ($M=2.38$, $SD=.54$) were indicators of lower levels of compassion fatigue, while values higher than the mean were indicators of higher levels of compassion fatigue in the respondents.

4.2.3. Computing desensitization:

The final variable 'desensitization' was computed through mean calculation of the three variables: pro-violence attitude, emotional empathy and compassion fatigue. Initial reliability of the 3-item scale was calculated at 0.73 ($M=6.77$, $SD=1.22$). As the Cronbach value was within acceptable levels, all three items were retained in the computation process and the final reliability remained the same as the initial alpha value.

Table 19: Desensitization Scale Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.733	.732	3

4.2.4. Regression Analysis:

Post computation, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to estimate the relationship between the variables and to analyse whether the relations are significant.

Subsequently a regression analysis was conducted to analyse whether levels of emotional empathy, compassion fatigue and pro-violence attitudes predicted the level of desensitization in the study participants.

Using the *enter* method an analysis of standard residuals was carried out, which showed that the data contained no outliers (Std. Residual Min = -1.892, Std. Residual Max = 1.917).

Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (Emotional Empathy, Tolerance = .782, VIF = 1.279; Compassion Fatigue, Tolerance = .610, VIF = 1.639; Pro-Violence Attitudes, Tolerance = .608, VIF = 1.645). In order to check whether the residual terms were uncorrelated the Durbin-Watson test was conducted. The data met the assumption of independent errors (Durbin-Watson value = 2.01).

Using the *enter* method it was found that emotional empathy, compassion fatigue and pro-violence attitudes explain a significant amount of the variance (65.5%) in the level of desensitization amongst respondents ($F(3, 807) = 511.840, p < .000, R^2 = .655, R^2_{Adjusted} = .654$). The analysis shows that emotional empathy (Beta = .358, $t(807) = 13.227, p < .000$), pro-violence attitudes (Beta = .284, $t(807) = 12.227, p < .000$) and compassion fatigue (Beta = .323, $t(807) = 13.883, p < .000$) all significantly predict desensitization.

4.2.5. Television Viewing:

In keeping with the tradition of cultivation research, the researcher was also interested in seeing whether time spent watching television and television news in particular affected viewers' emotional responses. To this end, two types of viewing patterns were identified: one, overall time spent watching television; and two, amount of time spent watching news on television.

Using the Gerbner, G. & Gross's, L. (1976) definition of heavy viewers and light viewers, the original four categories of time spent on television (less than 2 hours, 2-3 hours, 4-5 hours, and 5+ hours) as shown in Table 09 and the original categories for time spent watching news (less than 30min, 31-45mins, 46-60min, and 60+mins) were recoded into two categories of heavy and light news viewers using Mitchell & Jurkowitz's (2013) categories.

Table 20: Original Time Spent Watching TV as Reported by Respondents

Source		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Time Spent Watching TV	less than 2 hours	67	8.3	8.3	8.3
	2-3 hours	194	23.9	23.9	32.2
	4-5 hours	167	20.6	20.6	52.8
	5+ hours	383	47.2	47.2	100.0
	Total	811	100.0	100.0	

Table 21: Original Time Spent Watching News as Reported by Respondents

Source		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Time Spent Watching News	Less than 30 min	165	20.3	20.3	20.3
	31-45 min	265	32.7	32.7	53.0
	45-60 min	325	40.1	40.1	93.1
	60+ min	56	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	811	100.0	100.0	

For the first pattern of viewing, overall time spent watching television, those who watched television for less than 4 hours were labelled light viewers and those with

more than 4 hours of television per day were labelled as heavy viewers. For the second pattern of viewing, amount of time spent watching news on television, those who watched less than 45 minutes of news per day were labelled as light viewers and those who reported watching more than 45 minutes of news were labelled as heavy viewers of news.

Table 22: Recoding of Time Spent Watching TV into Heavy and Light Viewers of TV

Source		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Time Spent Watching TV	light viewers	261	32.2	32.2	32.2
	heavy viewers	550	67.8	67.8	100.0
	Total	811	100.0	100.0	

Table 23: Recoding of Time Spent Watching TV into Heavy and Light Viewers of News

Source		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Time Spent Watching News	light viewers	430	53.0	53.0	53.0
	heavy viewers	381	47.0	47.0	100.0
	Total	811	100.0	100.0	

4.3. Hypothesis Testing:

4.3.1. News and Empathy:

The first variable tested for presence of desensitization amongst news viewers in Pakistan addressed the issue of self-other awareness or empathy levels in the respondents. The researcher argued that respondents who spent more time watching news would show lower levels of empathy in comparison to those who spent less time watching news.

In order to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between heavy and light viewers of television in their levels of emotional empathy; an Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to compare the means of the two groups.

Table 24: Empathy Levels - Heavy vs. Light Viewers

Viewing	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Decision
Light Viewers	381	2.19	.424	1.65	809	.093	Rejected
Heavy Viewers	430	2.24	.400				

* $p < 0.05$.

Note: Where emotional empathy scale ranges from 1=Strongly Agree to 5= Strongly Disagree.

The test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers (M=2.24, SD=0.400) and light TV viewers (M=2.19, SD=0.424) where equal variance is assumed; $t(809)=1.65$, $p=0.093$. The above results indicate that the amount of time spent watching news on television does not affect the viewers' empathy levels. These results indicate that the time spent watching news on television does not have any significant impact on viewer's empathy levels and fails to provide support for H1.

4.3.2. News and Pro-violence Attitudes:

The second trait of desensitization analysed was the impact of time spent watching news on viewers' attitudes towards violence. The researcher argued that heavy viewers would have a higher tendency to view the world as a dangerous place and would thus show more positive attitude towards violence in comparison to light viewers.

In order to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of heavy and light news viewers towards violence; an Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to compare the means of the two groups.

Table 25: Pro-violence Attitude - Heavy vs. Light Viewers

Viewing	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Decision
Light Viewers	381	2.15	.579	1.23	809	.016	Accepted
Heavy Viewers	430	2.20	.509				

* $p < 0.05$.

Note: Where Pro-violence Attitude scale ranges from 1=Strongly Agree to 5= Strongly Disagree.

The test results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers (M=2.20, SD=0.509) and light TV viewers (M=2.15, SD=0.579) where equal variance is assumed; $t(809)=1.23$, $p=0.016$. The above results provide support for H2 and indicate that the amount of time spent watching news on television has a significant effect on respondents' attitudes towards violence, with heavy viewers having a more positive attitude towards violence in comparison to light news viewers.

4.3.3. News and Compassion Fatigue:

The third aspect of desensitization analysed was the impact of time spent watching news on viewers' level of compassion fatigue. The researcher argued that heavy viewers would have a higher level of compassion fatigue and would thus show more negative attitude towards victims of violence in comparison to light viewers.

In order to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between the levels of compassion fatigue experienced by heavy and light news viewers towards victims of violence; an Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to compare the means of the two groups.

Table 26: Compassion Fatigue - Heavy vs. Light Viewers

Viewing	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	p	Decision
Light Viewers	381	2.37	.550	1.13	809	.248	Rejected
Heavy Viewers	430	2.41	.533				

* $p < 0.05$.

Note: Where Pro-violence Attitude scale ranges from 1=Strongly Agree to 5= Strongly Disagree.

The test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers (M=2.41, SD=0.533) and light TV viewers (M=2.37, SD=0.550) where equal variance is assumed; $t(809)=1.13$, $p=0.248$. The above results indicate that the amount of time spent watching news on television does not affect the viewers' levels of compassion fatigue and thus fails to provide support for H1.

4.3.4. Volume of Exposure to News and Desensitization Overall:

In order to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between heavy and light viewers of television in their levels of desensitization; an Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to compare the means of the two groups.

The test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers (M=1.76, SD=0.482) and light TV viewers (M=1.82, SD=0.464) where equal variance is not assumed; $t(528.78)=2.834$, $p=0.057$. The above results indicate that the overall amount of time spent watching television does not affect the viewers' level of desensitization. To further explore the relationship between 'time spent watching television' and desensitization, a second Independent Samples t-Test test was conducted to

analyse whether a similar relationship exists amongst heavy and light viewers of television news.

The test results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of heavy News viewers ($M=1.82$, $SD=0.459$) and light News viewers ($M=1.73$, $SD=0.491$) where equal variance is not assumed; $t(781.63)=2.87$, $p=0.004$. The above results indicate that amount of time spent watching television news affects the respondents' level of desensitization; i.e., those who watch news for longer periods of time tend to show higher levels of desensitization. This indicates that watching violent news content has an impact on viewers' emotional responses, thus providing support for H5 that heavy viewers of violent news content are more desensitized in comparison to light viewers.

4.3.5. Proximity to Violence:

Another aspect of the desensitization debate is proximity to real-life violence; i.e. those who have either directly experienced violence or live in a violence prone area are likely to be more accepting of the violent world image portrayed by television news. Therefore H5 argues that Pakistani news viewers with closer proximity to violence will display higher levels of desensitization. Subsequently levels of desensitization of the respondents were cross-checked with their geographic location. In order to test this hypothesis the 1-Way between Subjects ANOVA was conducted.

The researcher tested whether there was a significant difference between the six provincial groups. The ANOVA test results show that there was a significant

difference between the means of the six groups [$F(6, 805)=3.06, p=0.010$]. A Tukey HSD post hoc test was conducted to identify the significant differences.

The results of the Tukey HSD test show that statistically significant differences exist between the means of the respondents from Sindh ($M=1.86, SD=0.436$) and Punjab ($M=1.71, SD=0.497$) provinces. However no significant differences can be seen between the means of respondents from Baluchistan ($M=1.76, SD=0.432$), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ($M=1.78, SD=0.507$), Gilgit-Baltistan ($M=1.82, SD=0.405$) and Federal Territory ($M=1.90, SD=0.301$). The effect size of the relationship was measured using the partial Eta Squared value.

A very small effect size ($\eta^2=0.019$) can be seen. Therefore, while the Tukey post-hoc test indicates that there exists a statistically significant difference between the means of provincial location of the respondent and their levels of desensitization, only 01.9% of the variance in desensitization values was caused by the proximity of the respondent to violence.

Table 27: Test for Calculating Effect Size of Geographical Location on Desensitization

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	MS	F	p.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3.43 ^a	5	.69	3.06	.010	.019
Intercept	689.01	1	689.00	3070.86	.000	.792
Province	3.43	5	.69	3.06	.010	.019
Error	180.62	805	.22			
Total	2748.00	811				
Corrected Total	184.05	810				

a. R Squared = .019 (Adjusted R Squared = .013)

4.3.6. Access to News:

The type and quantity of access to television news that was available to the respondents will have an impact on how they perceive the world around them. The researcher argues that the absence of the stimulus in the form of cable news

broadcast should greatly reduce the level of exposure, thus reducing the dumbing down of emotional and cognitive responses, i.e. those who have limited (state controlled terrestrial broadcast) or no access will be significantly less desensitized in comparison to their more 'exposed' brethren.

In order to test whether there is a difference between respondents with cable and without cable in their level of desensitization; an Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to compare the means of the two groups for all three sub-variables of desensitization as well as the final computed variable of desensitization.

Test results for all four conditions show that no significant relationship can be established between access to cable television and levels of pro-violence attitude [$t(549) = -1.20, p = 0.23$], emotional empathy [$t(809) = 0.729, p = 0.46$] and compassion fatigue [$t(809) = 0.003, p = 0.99$]. For the computed desensitization variable, the results remain the same, with no significant difference in the means of the with access to cable and without access to cable groups [$t(809) = -0.298, p = 0.76$].

4.4. Attention Threshold Model:

The study also aims to extend the desensitization hypothesis by arguing that the continued presence of the stimulus responsible for desensitization will result in story saturation and attention threshold effect in the audience; i.e. viewers will ignore the central issues on the media agenda and remove it from their socio-political discussions.

The first part of the current study – the content analysis – identified the primary issues in the Pakistani news media. The second part of the study helped establish

the presence of desensitization amongst the news viewers. Next the researcher aims to establish whether long-term presence of an issue in the mass media actually keeps an issue on the public agenda? Or whether saturation of same/similar stories results in viewers' crossing an attention threshold – where despite an issue remaining on the media agenda, it no longer remains on the public agenda.

In order to identify issues on the public agenda, the respondents were asked to identify primary problems or issues in the country. According to theory and the data recorded in the content analysis, politics and violence should have been the primary issues identified by the respondents respectively.

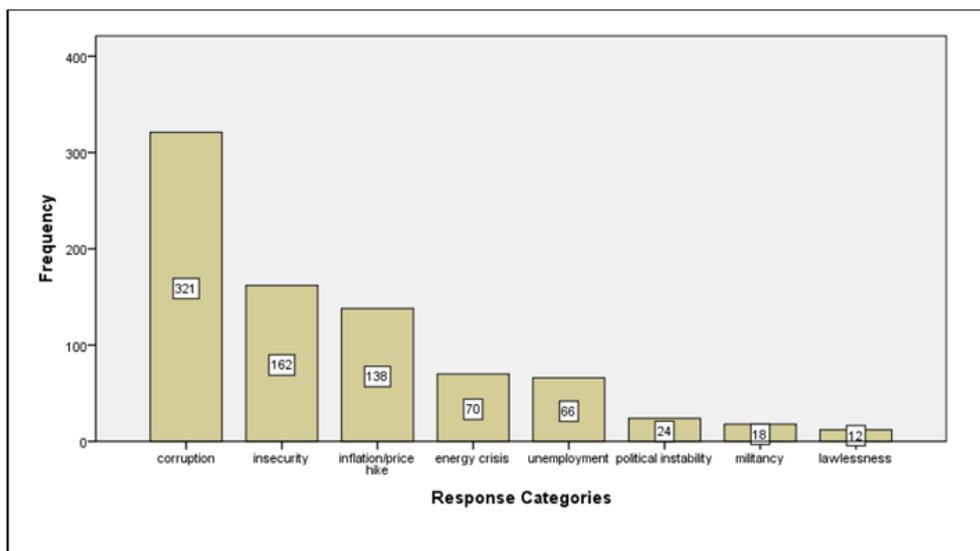


Figure 11: Issues on the Public's Agenda. Issues listed in order of Importance as Identified by Survey Respondents.

However, as the data indicates corruption (321, 39.6%) was selected as the biggest issue facing the country, with insecurity (162, 20%) a far second recording almost 50% less responses than the corruption option. Militancy (18, 2.2%) and lawlessness (12, 1.5%) recorded the least amount of responses respectively.

The second step in trying to understand the audiences' agenda was to identify what in their opinion was the underlying cause of the identified problems.

According to the responses, majority of the respondents believe that the cause for most of the problems in the country is corruption (372, 45.9%), with the energy crisis (162, 20%) and unemployment (158, 19.5%) as second and third respectively. Militancy (13, 1.6%) and lawlessness (12, 1.5%) were listed at the bottom of the list of causes of problems in Pakistan.

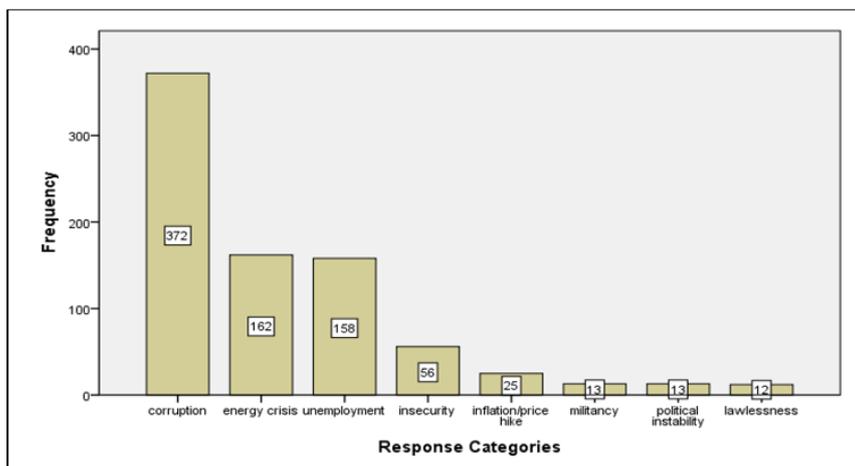


Figure 12: Cause of National Problems - Identified by Respondents. Causes listed in order of Importance as Identified by Survey Respondents.

Next the researcher aimed to identify whether media content formed a part of the social discourse of the respondents'. In order to identify this, the respondents were asked whether they discuss what they see on TV with other people. This was then later divided into two groups of people – family and friends – in order to better understand different dimensions of respondents' social discourse.

In the first case, a very small number of respondents (90, 11.1%) responded that they do not discuss what they watch on TV with other people. The majority of the survey participants responded in the positive with 358 (44.1%) participants stating

that they regularly discuss what they watch on TV with other people and the remaining 363 (44.8%) participants saying that they discuss what they watch on TV ‘sometimes’ with other people.

Table 28: TV content as part of Social Discourse in Survey Participants

Source		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Do you discuss what you watch on television with other people?	yes	358	44.1	44.1	44.1
	sometimes	363	44.8	44.8	88.9
	no	90	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	811	100.0	100.0	

Taking it a step further, the researcher decided to check whether viewing patterns affect respondents’ choice of discussing or not discussing media content with others. Both heavy & light viewers of television and heavy & light viewers of television news were analysed to identify their sharing patterns.

In both the cases the discourse choices of the respondents indicate that irrespective of time spent watching television (heavy or light), there is no clear difference between the two groups when it comes to discussing media content with others around them in terms of percentages of sample size.

An Independent Sample t-Test was conducted to check whether there is a statistically significant difference between heavy and light viewers in terms of discussion preferences. The results clearly indicate that no statistically significant difference can be seen between either group: heavy/light TV viewers [t(809)=931, p=0.352] and heavy/light news viewers [t(809)=0.518, p=0.605].

Therefore this indicates that time spent watching news and other programs does not have an impact on social discourse practises, with almost the same percentage

of heavy viewers and light viewers agreeing to discussing what they watch on TV with others around them.

In order to identify issues in social discourse 12 types of media content were identified. These included: crime, drama, energy crisis, food/cooking, inflation, insecurity, lawlessness, movies, music, militancy, sports, and politics.

Respondents were asked to select which of the above content types they discussed with either their family or friends. Positive responses were recorded with a value of 1, while options not selected as part of a participants discourse were marked as 0 by the researcher (i.e., yes=1, not selected=0). Both news content and non-news content were included in the list to ensure a holistic picture of participants’ social discourse.

The discourse was divided into two groups (family and friends) for easier handling of the data and for a clearer picture of the nature of discourse amongst different social groups.

The case of discussion with friends on media content the results were as follows:

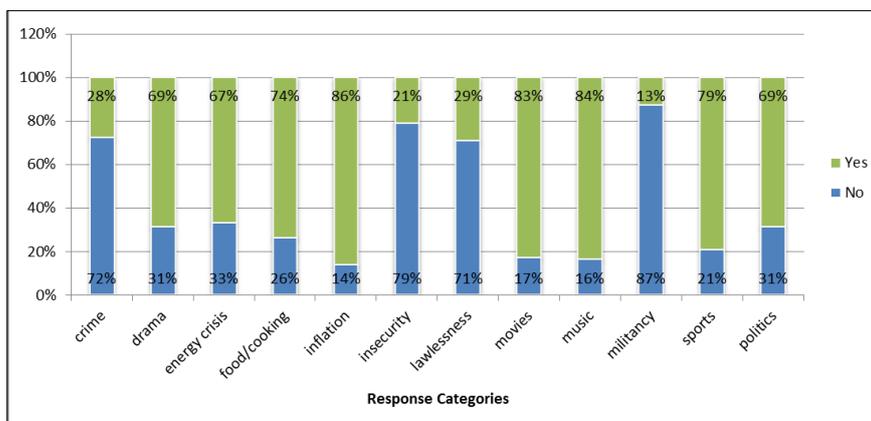


Figure 13: Types of Media Content Discussed with Friends. For each type of content, the respondents had the choice of 1=yes & 0=no.

The results indicate that respondents discuss multiple types of media content with their. The focus remains mostly on entertainment (over 80% said yes) and sports content (79% said yes), with economic concerns (over 80% said yes) as the second most discussed type of content. Militancy, lawlessness and insecurity are some of the least discussed issues. And surprisingly politics – the most heavily reported type of content – has a much lower level of positive response (69% said yes) in comparison to lighter, entertainment type of content.

In the case of discussion with family on media content the results were as follows:

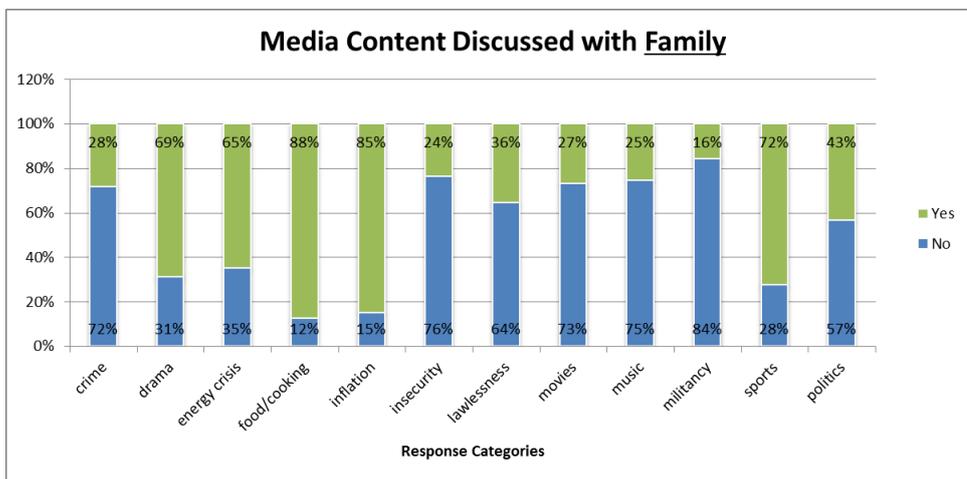


Figure 14: Types of Media Content Discussed with Family. For each type of content, the respondents had the choice of 1=yes & 0=no.

The results indicate that respondents discuss multiple types of media content with their family. Food/cooking (88%), inflation (85%) and sports (72%) were the highest discussed types of media content exchanged amongst respondents and family members. Militancy (17%) was the lowest discussed issue. Here to, politics – the most heavily reported type of content – had a much lower level of positive response (43% said yes) in comparison to other issues discussed.

4.4.1. Summary of Results:

There is a clear difference between the types of media content being discussed by the respondents with their family and their friends. While there is greater focus on entertainment and sports in discussion with friends; with family members, the respondents preferred to discuss economic issues along with sports. Food/cooking types of program content were a common content type across both social groups.

Militancy, lawlessness and insecurity remain low on the list of types of content being discussed by respondents – both with friends and family. However, the respondents were more inclined to discuss political issues with friends (69%) in comparison to family (43%). The results indicate that the respondents also chose to discuss entertainment content, like music and movies, with their friends (83% & 84%) instead of with family members (27% & 25%).

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to investigate the extent to which regular exposure to reporting of violence based news causes desensitization in news viewers. A three-pronged study was planned. In the first step the frequency and intensity of violence news in the local electronic media was calculated using the content analysis method for a period of ten months.

The second step was aimed at evaluating the extent of exposure the viewers' had to violent news content and to evaluate whether this exposure is leading towards emotional desensitization to such events and news among television news viewers in Pakistan.

The study also aimed to extend the theory of desensitization by arguing that the continued presence of the stimulus responsible for desensitization will result in story saturation and an attention threshold will be crossed by the audience. The argument being that, once the threshold is crossed; the viewers will ignore the issue of violence despite its continued presence on news media's agenda and will remove it from their social discourse. For this purpose a national level survey was executed.

The results of the content analysis clearly show that in both public and private television news violent content is the 2nd highest type of news being reported (with domestic politics being the highest type of news content across both channels). Two types of news on violence were studied: violence resulting in

fatalities and violence without fatalities; with the first one have almost twice the volume of the latter type of news content.

The survey results indicate that majority of the hypothesis tested in the direction predicted in existing literature; however the income variable did not test according to literature. Proximity was tested to check its impact on desensitization – results indicate that this also acts as a factor in desensitization process.

The content analysis and the first part of the survey analysis provide the pre-requisite information for the attention threshold assumption. One, they confirm the continuous presence of a particular issue in news in large volume; and secondly, the survey analysis provides support for the presence of desensitization amongst the respondents. The tests run for the attention threshold assumption indicated that despite the presence of the issue of violence on the media agenda, it is no longer on the public agenda, and is not a part of the social discourse of the respondents with either their family or their friends.

5.1. Findings and Implications:

While research on violence in the media and its effects on audiences has a long history, the primary focus has remained on the entertainment industry, from movies, television, radio to the internet and video games. News violence has a much more limited body of research. This is a critical concern as one of the major arguments against the desensitization theory is the ability of the viewer to differentiate between fact and fiction. News violence, however, is based on factual, real-world events and needs to be studied in greater depth in terms of its effects on viewers.

Desensitization is a complex phenomenon. It has been vastly studied in psychology as a behavior therapy for reducing fear, anxiety and phobias, and it is extremely relevant in mass communication in relation with media violence. Mass communication researchers started studying this phenomenon around 1970s. Since then, children's exposure to television violence and resultant desensitization has been studied.

Over the past decade, this phenomena has gained importance in the communication research realm. With the passage of time, the research has been improved. There is better operationalization, enhanced cause and effect relationships, and even the development of a model in relation with desensitization and media violence.

The following section expands on the results collected through data analysis. It further identifies implications of said results and aims at building connections between the results of the current study, existing literature as well as trying to infer possible future directions for cultivation research.

5.2. Content Analysis

The first step in the current research was content analysis of the public and private Pakistani news media in order to identify the type of content that is shown, as well as the portion of said content containing violence. While not at the same scale as the National Television Violence Study (1997) or the Pew Research Center study in 2006, the results indicate similarity in the trends of news reporting both in the West and in Pakistan. Violence remains the highest reported form of news across public and private news channels in Pakistan.

Two channels were selected for the purpose of the study – one from the private news media and one from the public news media. This was a deliberate choice in order to try and get maximum variation in audiences as well as news content. This was also decided with the assumption that there would be a difference in the type of content aired by the state and that being aired by private news channels.

The first research question (RQ1) was concerned with the type and amount of violence shown on Pakistani news channels; as well the need to identify whether there was a difference between the state run news channel and the private channels selected for the study.

The two channels selected for analysis purposes were the state run and controlled PTV News and the largest private news network in Pakistan, GEO News. This selection was made on the basis of audience percentage for both channels. As per available data 17% of total time spent watching television was spent on news by viewers. Of this, PTV News had the highest viewership of 12.3%, with GEO News having an audience share of 6.6%. Here it needs to be kept in mind that PTV is Pakistan's only terrestrial television service, for which users need no cable connections, while GEO is a satellite channel requiring a cable connection for access. And according data from 2012, close to 81% of Pakistan's rural areas do not have access to cable infrastructure, limiting their access to PTV only.

After identification of appropriate channels, a study period of ten months per channel was selected. In order to get a clearer picture of the type of news content aired as well as any changes taking place, the ten months of news broadcast were staggered over a period of ten years instead of just studying a single year or a single month over ten years.

There were multiple reasons for this:

Firstly, there were certain months (especially in the 2002-2006 time-periods) where military action increased or decreased rapidly (especially in the months of February and March with the launch of Spring Offensives and in the winter months with things winding down due to extreme weather conditions). Choosing these months alone would have given a skewed perspective of the amount of violence being reported.

Secondly, no one single year could be selected over all for similar reasons, i.e. there were years where active military operations were on-going in the country (Waziristan War 2004, Operation Rah-e-Haq 2007, Bajaur offensive 2008, and Operation Black Thunderstorm 2009) and years with no overt military operations; including or excluding any of these years would have resulted in an incomplete picture as well. Consequently the sample time period was selected as one month of prime-time news broadcasts for each year; starting from 2002 (this was when the first private news channel was launched in Pakistan).

Five categories of news were identified for analysis purposes: violence with fatalities, violence without fatalities, domestic politics, foreign affairs, and Other news. Out of a total of 9172 news stories aired in the twenty-month time period, 4681 (51%) belonged to GEO News and the remaining 4491 (49%) news stories were aired on PTV News.

As the results show the highest volume of news for both PTV and GEO News channels was domestic politics – however, news of events where violence resulted in fatalities was the second highest type of news in volume. News about violence

not resulting in death was the highest category of news reported by the channels. Of the two channels, GEO News and PTV News GEO had the higher volume of violent news in comparison to PTV; whereas PTV News had a higher volume in the category of domestic politics as well as international relations categories.

5.2.1. Channel Comparison:

In a head to head comparison of the volume of violent news with fatalities, GEO News, which is private news channel had a much higher volume (N=1054) in comparison to PTV News (N=895). Same is the case with other news on violent event; i.e. GEO aired 764 news stories while PTV aired 637 news stories in the same time period. This difference in coverage of events implies that the private news networks in Pakistan are more focused on events which provide sensational news in comparison to the state run channel. Another implication of the difference in coverage is a deliberate effort on part of the government to either downplay or exclude certain events from the news cycle. Here it is vital to keep in mind that GEO News is only available via a cable or satellite connection and that this facility is largely restricted to urban centers in Pakistan. On the other hand, PTV News is a terrestrial channel which is accessible in 70% of the country. Greater control on the type of content being aired by PTV News can have a strong impact on viewer's perception, especially in rural areas of the country.

As yearly analysis of the coverage of violent events by both channels shows a clear difference during the early years of the study. GEO News maintained a high coverage of violence from 2003 through to 2013; in comparison PTV News aired a much lower volume of violent content during the 2003-2005 time periods. It is only in 2007 that we see the gap in volume of news aired close between the two

channels; and remain almost consistent from thereon. A similar trend can be seen in the case of news on violence not resulting in fatalities, with the volume of news remaining higher for GEO in almost the entire time period of the study; the exception being the months in 2006 and 2009 where PTV reported higher number of such news stories in comparison to GEO News.

On the other hand, news volume for the highest aired category, domestic politics, remains mostly consistent for both channels during the study period with the only outlier being 2008 when the volume of domestic political news spiked for GEO News. A closer look at the month to identify possible reason for this showed that the increase in anti-government activities by the lawyers movement against the sitting quasi-military/democratic government. This can also be identified as the reason why similar coverage was not being aired by PTV News as it is the state run and controlled channel and does in general avoid airing content which is anti-government in nature.

The results of the content analysis are consistent with what has been reported in literature previously (Morgan, 2010; Kevitt, 2004, Bennet, 2003; Maquire, Sendage & Weathrby, 1999; and Dorfman et al., 1996). While individually the two categories of violent news ranked second and third in terms of volume, if combined their reported value becomes the highest reported category of news overall in Pakistan (36.5%); with Geo reporting a combined total of 38.8% violent news and PTV News has a combined volume of 34.1%.

The sheer volume of violence being aired on two news channels is extremely dangerous especially when keeping in mind that there are currently 15 twenty four hours news channels airing similar content nationwide. There has also been

upward trend in reporting violent news on PTV as well. With TV viewers spending an average of 17% of their total time watching Television news, this becomes very serious concern in terms of the sheer volume of exposure to violence via the news media.

5.3. Survey Results

In line with existing literature research, a survey of News viewers was conducted to assess whether and to what extent exposure to news violence affected their emotional responses to violent situations and events.

In earlier analysis of cultivation and desensitization research demographics of audiences studied appeared to have a significant impact on viewer's emotional responses as well as exposure to media content (Waddell, 2008; Dominick, 1990 and Bushman & Huesman, 2006). Gender, age, socio-economic status and educational levels of the respondents appeared to have a clear impact on their desensitization levels. Consequently, the first set of hypotheses in the current research was aimed at addressing and identifying certain segments of the news media audiences which are susceptible and /or vulnerable to violence in news media.

5.3.1. Viewing Patterns and Desensitization

Television viewing patterns are one of the fundamental analysis tools in cultivation research. Starting with the Cultural Indicators project in the 1960's to Gerbner, Gross & Signorelli's research in the 1970's through to Gerbner & Morgan in 2010, the type of content and the time spent in consuming the said content have been the building blocks of cultivation and the subsequent

desensitization research. Consequently, both these questions were made part of the current research and are addresses in hypotheses 1-5.

As both state run and privately owned channels were analyzed to calculate the volume of violent new content being aired, there was a need to assess whether the type of channel being watched had any significant impact on news viewers emotional responses. Therefore, the respondents were split into two groups based on whether they had access to cable news channels (GEO News) or whether their access was restricted to the terrestrial state run news channel (PTV News). The researcher posited that those respondents whose access was limited to PTV News would be potentially less desensitized than respondents who had regular access to both GEO and PTV News. However, when tested the results provided support for the null hypothesis; i.e., there was no significant difference between the level of desensitization between those with limited access and those respondents with access to cable news.

A look at the volume of violent content being aired by both channels gives us a reason for this lack of difference. Whereas GEO News's reporting of violence has remained consistent during the period of study with very little fluctuation over the ten months study period, a look at PTV News trends shows a different picture. Much lower volume of violence in the news can be seen for the period from 2003-2005. However, from 2006-2013 the volume of violent news content on PTV News has increased to a level similar to GEO News. This could be an indicator of why exposure to either news channel affects the emotional responses of news viewers. However, this needs to be further explored especially in terms of the content of the news stories themselves as they were not a part of the current study.

A closer look at the news content would help better identify how; if any, difference exists between the two channels.

Another factor which needs to be kept in mind is that of the 811 valid responses received, only 35% (N=284) reported that they do not have access to cable news, whereas 65% (N=527) of the respondents gave a positive reply to the question. This variance is not representative of the overall state of access to cable news in Pakistan and could be responsible for a skewed result. A broader field of respondents is required to categorically state that there is no actual difference between the effect of GEO news content and PTV News on their viewer's emotional responses.

The main thrust of the research continues with the tradition of cultivation research by trying to identify whether and to what extent time spent watching television affects viewers emotional responses. It takes a look at the respondents' total time spent watching television. Respondents were divided into two groups using precedent set in earlier cultivation research; i.e., light and heavy viewers (Gerbner et al., 1986). Respondents who spent less than four hours watching television every day were recoded as light viewers whereas those who spent on average more than four hours on television everyday were recoded as heavy viewers. In terms of number a majority of the respondents as being heavy viewers of television (N=550, 67.8%), with only 261(32.2%) reporting viewing time of less than four hours.

As the focus of the current study is news media and its effects on viewers' emotional responses, there was a need to identify the impact of time spent watching news on viewers' emotional responses as well. In line with the sixth

hypothesis viewers; who spent less than forty five minutes watching news each day were recoded as light viewers', while those who spent more than forty five minutes watching news everyday were recoded as heavy viewers. These values were assigned using the categorization created by Gerbner et al. in 1986. Post-recoding 430(53%) of the respondents were categorized as light news viewers and the remaining 381(47%) were categorized as heavy viewers of news.

Tests show that the statistically significant differences exist between light and heavy viewers of news, with heavy news viewers showing higher levels of desensitization in comparison to light news viewers. This indicates that time spent watching news content has a greater impact on viewers' emotional responses in comparison to time spent watching general programming. This furthers the argument that unlike violence in entertainment programs, violence in news has a greater impact (Felson, 1996; Bushman & Huesman, 2006). Desensitization effects of violence in entertainment media can be undermined using the "fiction argument"; i.e. that viewers are well able to distinguish between fact and fiction and will not be confused between the "real" world and the "media" world.

However, this argument falls apart in the case of new media. All news is "fact" and taken from the "real" world (Emmers-Sommer & Allen, 1999). The effects of real world violence as reported by the news media cannot be explained using the reality versus fiction argument, ergo heavy exposure to violence in the news effects viewers' emotional responses- leading to desensitization. This effect is further strengthening in countries like Pakistan where, due to low literacy rates, television news remain as the primary source of information and opinion building.

5.3.2. Empathy:

Exposure to violence in the mass media may result in a desensitization effect in which viewers experience diminished feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of actual violence. According to Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) viewers who watch large amounts of media violence show less physiological reactivity to violence in other contexts.

Multiple researches have been conducted to establish a link between empathy, positive social behaviour (Eisenberg et al., 2002; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987) and non-aggression (Kaukiainen et al., 1999). Multiple studies have also been conducted on viewers' exposure to violent content in entertainment, but little has been done on studying the effects of news violence on audience's empathy levels and how lower levels of empathy affect viewers' emotional responses to violent content.

Using the functional view of empathy given by Decety & Jackson (2004), the current study defined empathy as self-other awareness and the capacity to understand another person's experience from within that person's frame of reference and aimed at understanding how exposure to news would affect television news audiences in Pakistan.

The test results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers and light TV viewers when tested for empathy levels. However while the results were not statistically significant, the mean for light viewers still showed slightly higher levels of emotional empathy than heavy viewers. This is a worrisome result in as much that both groups show

low levels of empathy. Empathy is directly related to how we connect with one another – lowering levels of empathy can lead to “*lacking self-worth, self-love and self-awareness,*” i.e., making us incapable or unable to relate to the emotions of people around us, making us immune to their problems and needs (Ritter et al., (2011).

According to Golding (1974) empathy is a must for social order to function properly. Empathy leads to stronger relationships, altruistic behavior, and most importantly lower levels of aggression (Björkqvist, Östermana and Kaukiainenb, 2000). The low levels of empathy recorded in the current study are a sign of serious deterioration of social concern. Empathy allows us to look for non-violent solutions to problems. However, once we stop ‘seeing’ other people, and start looking at them through a lens devoid of empathy they become mere ‘objects’ and consequently unworthy of our time or attention. Any violence committed against them stops having value for the viewer. This is a dangerous trend, and can lead to the breakdown of family and social relations.

5.3.3. Pro-violence Attitudes:

Numerous studies concerning the connection between positive attitudes towards violence and/or aggression and also the resulting (violent or aggressive) behavior of media consumers, especially news viewers have been conducted. The results of these studies delineated a positive relationship between these variables.

One of the most important and effective forms of communication is the media, which include the television, videogames and news. Experiments, especially in the case of videogames have provided significant results concurring with the idea

that the more young people play violent video games, the higher is their approval rating for war (Rushbrook, 1986; Krahe & Moller, 2004). They also found that young men who are regular players of video games are more inclined to condone and accept aggression in real life (Krahe & Moller, 2004).

This development of attitudes towards violence is influenced by many factors including exposure to family and community violence, as well as exposure to violence in the media. The current study was interested in seeing whether heavy news viewers are more pro-violence in comparison to light viewers. The researcher argued that support for violence as a solution to conflict is a strong indicator of desensitization.

The amount of violence being shown on Pakistani news media is already an indication of the scale of the problem. Here it also needs to be kept in mind that while content in the entertainment industry can be rationalized away as fiction news content does not have the same flexibility. News is based on actual, real life occurrences and as the content analysis of the two news channels in Pakistan has already shown the volume of violent content is consistently high across both public and private channels. Ongoing military operations in the country, militancy and other crimes might fluctuate in volume in real life but for news media it remains the easiest form of news content and thus remains high on the media agenda.

The test results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the means of heavy TV viewers and light TV and indicate that the amount of time spent watching news on television has a significant effect on

respondents' attitudes towards violence, with heavy viewers having a more positive attitude towards violence in comparison to light news viewers.

A prevalent pro-violence attitude in society can lead to increase in purchase of weapons, self-defense classes' enrolment, and acceptance and/or demand of harsher laws. It also feeds into the cycle of violence in society, where calmer, more diplomatic voices are silenced in favor of more drastic measures to deal with social and political issues. There have been signs of this in Pakistan already, with a greater preference being given to physical violence rather than political discourse to settle national political debates. It can also be seen in the higher number of domestic violence cases being reported as well as cases of vigilantism by civilians.

5.3.4. Compassion Fatigue:

The term compassion fatigue was used to explain the decline in sympathetic feelings of caregivers towards their patients (Maslach, 1982). It is primarily through television that viewers and audiences around the globe are exposed to catastrophes and disasters – either naturally occurring or man-made. Thus television's role in creating opinion, generating aid and fostering compassion is central to this analysis. Conversely, television, especially television news has been accused in recent times of trivializing violence and disasters to fill its 24-hours news cycle. This 'over exposure' to human suffering has led to a decrease in global compassion for victims of violence. Compassion fatigue has also been listed as one of the primary reason why publics are distancing themselves from the media coverage of victims of wars, famines and other natural disaster.

Using the Kinnick, Krugman, & Cameron, (1996) definition of compassion fatigue, i.e., the decreasing concern of the general public towards societal issues, the current study questioned the effect of a constant diet of tragedy on viewers' compassion levels in Pakistan. The researcher argued that heavy viewers would have a higher level of compassion fatigue and would thus show more negative attitude towards victims of violence in comparison to light viewers.

While the study results show that while there is no significant relationship between the times spent watching news and levels of compassion fatigue, both heavy and light viewers of news showed signs of compassion fatigue. Both groups' means rate higher on the less compassionate responses than on the more compassionate ones.

According to Seu and Orgad (2014), there is a serious and growing problem of “*Cognitive distancing*” and “*Emotional disconnection*” amongst the public when it comes to disaster and humanitarian crises. This can be partially attributed to the saturation of the media with violent and disturbing images of tragedy after tragedy; natural and man-made disasters; and, acts of terrorism and violence. Over time this exposure acts as an anesthetic for our emotions; numbing us and thereby weakening the probability of an active reaction on part of civil society to future crises.

5.4. Attention Threshold Model

The third part of current research was aimed at extending the cultivation theory by arguing that continuous presence of the same and similar issue in the news media results in story saturation for news viewers, resulting in loss of attention towards

that particular issue. In turn, that issue will lose its importance in the public agenda despite continued presence on the Medias' agenda. Subsequently the issue will no longer be a part of the social discourse of media users. This stage of the cultivation theory is considered as the "attention threshold", beyond which an issue loses its audiences' attention in favor of other issues.

Certain prerequisites were identified for the "threshold" to be crossed: one, the constant, long term presence of a particular issue in the media in general and news media in particular; secondly, over exposure to similar narrative and frames for the particular issue: and thirdly, a level of desensitization in the viewers with reference to any particular issue .When these conditions are met, in principal, the issue being addressed should no longer be a part of the public agenda , indicating that " attention threshold" has been crossed. In order to test the proposed model the survey participants were asked to identify issues, which in their opinion, where of primary concern in the mass media. According to existing literature this should be the issues visible most strongly in mass media. In the case of the current research these should be domestic politics and news violence (as these were the two types of news with the highest volume with both channels analyzed). The second stage was identifying, whether the identified issues were in fact, part of the respondents' social discourse, i.e. are the primary issues on the media same as issues being discussed by respondents in their daily lives with others around them?

Consequently, for the first stage respondents were asked to identify issues which they felt were of primary importance in the news media. To explore issues in respondents' social discourse, they were first asked whether or not they actually

discuss what they watch on television with others? Those who responded in the positive were then asked to identify issues of discussion with two groups: family and friends. This distinction was made in order to ensure maximum coverage of respondents' social discourse as there are issues which are of particular interest in familial settings and others which are generally discussed amongst friends.

The first condition, i.e. presence of a particular issue in the media for a long period of time was addressed by the content analysis which listed domestic politics as the highest reported type of news, with violence and violent news forming the second and third highly reported categories of news media. Therefore, it can be inferred that political issues and violence are high on the Medias agenda. In order to assess commonalities between the Medias agenda and the public agenda, respondents were asked to identify what, in their opinion were the biggest issues facing the country?

Corruption was identified by the largest number of respondents as the primary problem in the country (N= 327, 39.6%) with insecurity as a far second (N = 162, 20%). Other problem areas identified by respondents included inflation, energy crisis and unemployment. Militancy and lawlessness were the lowest ranked issues on the respondents lists of concern with only 18 (2.2%) selecting lawlessness as major problem in Pakistan. The two top problems identified are in line with the tradition of agenda setting; i.e. both the issues identified as first and third on the medias agenda are listed as the first and second primary issues of concern identified by the respondents. However, the issue with the second highest volume (violence resulting infertilities) represented by militancy and lawlessness did not rank very high on audiences' agenda.

This indicates that audiences are well aware of the issues being highlighted by the news media in Pakistan. The question that needs to be addressed, however, is whether this awareness actually translates into ‘attention’ to the topic. Are viewers actually “talking” about the issues on the media agenda? If yes, which issues are parts of the social discourse? And if No, what reasons can be inferred from this lack of attention? What are the implications for the news media in Pakistan? In order to answer these questions respondents were first asked about their practice with reference to media content and whether they discuss what they watch with others around them. Social discourse was then divided into two groups: family and friends. Those who responded in the positive to the discussion question were asked to identify the issues / types of media content they discuss with both their families and friends.

The first step was identifying the percentage of viewers who actually discuss media content with others. According to the reported responses 88.9% (N = 721) of the respondents discuss what they watch on television with others. Of the positive responses, 44.1% (N=358) reported that they regularly discuss what they watch on television, while the remaining 44.8% (N = 363) sometimes discuss what they have seen on television with others. Only 11.1% (N=90) respondents reported in the negative, stating that they never discuss what they watch on television with others.

For greater understanding of the sample characteristics with reference to their social discourse, further analysis of their TV viewing patterns was conducted. According to the results majority of the heavy viewers reported regularly discussing media content with others. Whereas the majority of light viewers (over

50 %) indicated that they sometime discuss media content with others in their social sphere. For the negative responses there was a very little difference between the heavy and light viewers (11.8% and 9.6% respectively).

The same trend can be seen in the case of news viewing patterns, with heavy viewers of news reporting in favor of regular discussion and light news viewers preferring to only discuss issues from the news media sometimes. The gap however, is much smaller for the two groups in the case of discussing news content in comparison to overall television content. It can therefore be implied that news content has a higher probability of being part of social discourse in comparison to other types of content. However, no statistically significant difference was found between the two groups of heavy and light news viewers in terms of discussion preferences.

With the media and public agenda identified , along with confirmation of media content being part of social discourse , the researcher tested the “ attention threshold” model to check whether the issues on the media agenda were translating into actual public attention/ agenda or not? For this purpose the respondents were provided with a twelve item list of different media content (crime, dramas/stories, energy crisis, food/cooking, inflation, insecurity, lawlessness, movies, music, politics, sports, and, militancy). Containing both news and non-news content types in order to get a clearer picture of what respondents discussed with others around them. Also multiple choice options were provided to ensure that respondents had an adequate selection of media content types to identify content which forms part of their social discourse. Two

streams of social discourse were included: family and friends. Issues discussed with each group were analyzed separately.

Firstly, the reported responses were analyzed using the two types of social discourse categories in order to identify the types of issues discussed by the respondents. In the overall issues discussed with friends category: inflation, music and movies were ranked as 1st, 2nd and 3rd most discussed types of media content. With reference to news media content specifically, inflation, politics and the energy crisis were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. Violence related issues like crime, militancy, insecurity, and lawlessness were reported as issues not discussed with friends.

For the issues discussed with family members, the results followed a similar trend. Food/cooking programs, inflation and sports were ranked as the most often discussed issues overall. For issues related to news media: inflation and the energy crisis were the only two issues where over 50% of the respondents reported positively on discussion them with family members. Even politics as an issue was reported in much less numbers as a topic for discussion with family members; i.e. only 43% of the respondents reported that they discuss political issues with family members. Here too, issues relation to violent media content received very low levels of positive responses as topics of discussion with family members. Of the total responses only 28% (N=230) reported discussing crime with family members. The same situation was seen in the case of insecurity (N=193, 24%), lawlessness (N=288, 36%) and militancy (N=129, 16%).

The above responses clearly indicate that while issues in the news media are part of the social discourse, with both friends and family, they do not necessarily

reflect the same priority as the news media's agenda. In both cases it is non-violence related issues like economic problems facing the country which are part of the social discourse. Political, the highest ranked issues in volume in terms of news media content, is ranked 6th in terms of number of respondents regularly discussing it with either friends or family members. Although the actual value differs for both cases with 69% (N=556) respondents reporting that that discuss politics with their friends, while 43% (N=351) reported discussing politics regularly with family members, the trend remains similar.

For violence related issues like militancy, insecurity, crime and lawlessness, reports of discussion with either family or friends remained consistently low for both groups. Discussion with family members in lawlessness was the highest reported issue in this category with 36% (N=285) of the respondents' reporting positively on this issues. All other issues were reported at under 30% in terms of discussion topics with wither friends or family. Militancy, surprisingly, was the least discussed issue with friends (N=104, 13%) and family members (N=129, 16%).

The above results clearly provide initial support for the "attention threshold" model as issues which have been and to continue to remain heavily present on the media agenda, do not appear consistently in the respondents' social discourse. Issues of violence and violent content appear to the least "discussed" item on the public's agenda. This is contrary to its presence in the news media in terms of cheer volume and longevity. This indicates that there a disconnect between the media and public agenda, this, too, provides support for the proposed model as it indicates that the news stories ad uses being aired by the news media in Pakistan

is unable to capture the attention of the news viewers. The situation remains the same in the case of either heavy or light viewers of news. Despite over 88% of heavy news viewers reporting that media content is part of their social discourse politics and violent content remain the lowest reported issues discussed, both in the overall discussion of media content and for news media content as well.

The implication of these results is troubling. With growing desensitization and loss of attention, the “breaking news” syndrome will only worsen across news media in Pakistan, with each channel trying to outdo the others in terms of capturing audiences’ attention and numbers. More graphic, violent and sensational content could be introduced to re-capture viewers’ attention. This would lead to further desensitization, thus creating an increasingly self-perpetuating vicious cycle of violent and graphic media content, desensitization and loss of attention.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

6.1. Conclusions:

The current study was aimed at understanding the impact of news violence on viewers' emotional responses in Pakistan. While, globally, there exists a large body of research on news, news content, violence and cultivation, no such work has been done on electronic news media in Pakistan. Therefore, the current study is the first large scale content analysis of electronic news media in Pakistan. The analysis has helped identify broad trends in news content. There is clearly a strong focus on domestic political news as well as extensive cover of violent events – ranging from non-fatal crimes to larger scale terrorist attacks and military operations. While the current study only looks at the news content in broad strokes, it does highlight the excessive focus of the channels on violence and violent events. This is worrisome in nature as previous research has shown that generally the amount of violence shown on television does not correspond with real world violence (Medved, 1995; and Oliver, 1994). Thus the impression generated by the news media is of an extremely unsafe environment. This in turn can have strong impact on heavy viewers and their desensitization levels.

The current research shows that heavy consumers of violent news content tend to significantly have pro-violence attitudes. They also tend to have lower levels of emotional empathy for victims of violence and higher levels of compassion fatigue. While these results were not statistically significant for the sample tested, the results show a consistently low mean, indicating negative trend for both the variables. The respondents were generally in favor of harsher punishments and greater state/military control of the country. Results of the current study indicate

that heavy viewers of news media tend to be more desensitized to the violence in society. Their emotional responses are number down. For a country like Pakistan, with a history of military intervention in domestic politics and governance, this is a matter of grave concern. Strong feelings of insecurity and mean world syndrome, fed on a steady diet of violent news programing, can further undermine faith in the political system – leading to greater acceptance (and at times active desire) of military sponsored or led control of the country.

The study also aimed at contributing towards the theory development in the cultivation tradition through the proposed “attention threshold” model. The researcher claims that constant exposure to a particular issue leads to the audience attention shifting away from it, despite continued present of said issue on the mass media. While the results of this research provide support for the claims of the model, a lot more in-depth and extensive research is needed before the model can be verified and its results generalized. If verified, the model will help future researchers identify why issues of audience concern are no longer getting the requisite attention from viewers, despite having strong media presence. This holds especially true for debates like global warming, humanitarian crises and violence, as well as other localized issues.

6.2. Limitations:

While all possible attempts were made to increase internal and external validity of the current research and to address the issue of news violence and its possible effects on audiences’ emotional responses in Pakistan, there were certain limitation to the study which need to be recognized.

Firstly, only two news channels were studied for their news content. While they are the largest news channels in Pakistan currently, it needs to be kept in mind that there are currently 15 24-hour news channel in Pakistan of which PTV News and GEO News are but two. The selection of the two channels was made on highest viewership, but other channels (especially the local language news channels) need to be studied for their content for a holistic picture of news media content in Pakistani.

Secondly, only ten months of data per channels was analyzed to identify content trends. For a more in-depth picture, a longer analysis should be conducted. Not all possible trends can be identified in such a short period of time. Also the current study was only focused on the volume of news content. It did not address the narrative, images and frames used by the news media.

A third limitation for the study is the low response rate for the survey and the subsequent small sample size. Lack of research culture, low literacy rates and fear of providing information resulted in a 54% response rate, which was much lower than expected. Of the 1500 questionnaires distributed, only 811 valid responses were received. The process of collection of questionnaires was also very slow, hampered by cost and communication problems. While the current sample size is adequate in terms of literature support, future research using a larger and more comprehensive would provide stronger and more generalizable results.

Logistical constraints in terms of time, financial resources, and access to information and people, and travel restrictions limited the scope at which the study could be conducted.

Further the current research is based on self-reported emotional responses of the survey participants to violent content. Cognitive and physiological responses to violent news content need to be studied to get a clearer picture of desensitization in the Pakistani society.

6.2.1. Limitation of Researching Desensitization

One of the major limitations in studying the phenomena desensitization through television violence in children is methodological. Studying such effects on children in an experimental situation means exposing them to violent content, which is unethical. Especially, longitudinal experimental studies would mean exposure to violent content throughout the decades of study, which is implausible.

Due to restrictions in the experimental studies, the main methods used for data collection to study desensitization include the surveys, questionnaires and interviews, of the parents and children providing a self-report. Self-reported data is controversial for not being a true depiction of actual real life.

The main controversy associated with the concept is that there are many other factors under play in the life of a child that are affecting a child other than media violence such as parental neglect, interpersonal relationships, unusual events etc. There lies an inability to control such factors other than violence exposure which are affecting the child to establish a strong causal relationship (Calvert, 2015).

The experimental studies that have been conducted in the past are criticized for creating false environments. The artificially created laboratory settings are very different from the real-life exposure to violence. Therefore, they are considered

incapable of explaining what actually happens in real-life situations (Ferguson & Dyck, 2012; Calvert, 2015)

Some researchers have criticized existing desensitization research to be an over generalization of the findings. Autonomic responses are considered as an insufficient criteria to measure desensitization. It has great chances of misinterpretation and thus the researcher's biasness comes into play. An example given is the decreased activity being associated simply with boredom, rather than an emotional turning off (Ferguson & Dyck, 2012).

6.3. Directions Of Future Research:

While the current analysis is a starting place, news content needs to be studied in greater depth. The current analysis only addresses the volume of certain types of news aired on news channels in Pakistan. Future research needs to look at the narrative, the language and the visuals being used to frame news in Pakistan. This would provide a clearer picture of news in Pakistan. Also the current news categories were very broad in nature. Subcategories of news need to be studied and organized to better study news content. Future research needs to also focus on the wider range of news channels in Pakistan. This would help identify the effects of different variables like ownership, political affiliations, language and location on the content of news channels.

Future research on the effects of news content, especially violent news, should address the cognitive and physiological impact of such content on viewers' emotional responses. Especially since the current research was limited to only the emotional effects alone.

Other news sources, particularly radio, needs to be included in future research as its reach is broader than that of television in Pakistan.

As mentioned earlier, electronic media in Pakistan is growing exponentially – with rapidly increasing number of national and regional channels. While news is a major part of this growth, other types of channels, including music, movies, sports and drama, are multiplying quickly as well. There is a strong need to study the amount of violence being telecast in entertainment media in Pakistan as well. A special focus needs to be programs aimed at children’s entertainment as they are the most vulnerable group in terms of violence and desensitization. A glance at locally produced children’s content shows a high volume of violence as well. This needs a closer look.

In terms of the survey itself, a broader, more inclusive research in the rural and semi-urban areas of the country would provide better evidence of the effects of news violence on Pakistanis. The districts studied in the current research are the capital districts of each province, and are thus are in a much better financial and demographics position in comparison to the more agro-based and geographically distant districts of the country. With lower levels of education and access to resources, these districts would provide a better overall picture of the state of desensitization in Pakistan.

The factor of proximity, not fully explored in the current study, can be a key variable in future cultivation research in Pakistan. It would be interesting to see how much of the desensitization displayed by respondents in because of exposure to violent content and how much is due to exposure to violence in real-world situations. This is a major concern for war affected countries like Pakistan where

certain parts of the country are in a constant state of unrest due to on-going low level conflicts.

While desensitization as a whole provides us with an overall picture, future research should take a closer look at pro-violence attitude, compassion fatigue and emotional empathy as well. Each of these variables can act as a key identifier of growing problem in the society. Drop in emotional empathy and rise in compassion fatigue needs to be studied in-depth, especially through a cross-field methodology which brings together researchers from communication, psychology and sociology to get a comprehensive analysis of the situation in Pakistani society. This can then help future researchers develop strategies and frameworks to counter growing acceptance of violence in the society, as well as help policy makers and educators plan re-sensitization programs for students and other vulnerable segments of the society.

Increasing pro-violence attitude in the society can be used as a marker for identifying at-risk segments in the society, and developing tools to minimize this increase. While television, especially news can be identified as one factor responsible for this increase other possible sources on pro-violence increase need to be identified to reverse this attitude. Increase in pro-violence attitude is especially dangerous for countries like Pakistan where easy access to arms and ammunition, weak law enforcement agencies and lawlessness can lead to actual, physical violence amongst civilians. Future research should aim at identifying contributing and possible mitigating factors for pro-violence attitudes.

While the current study provides support for the claims in the “attention threshold” model, a lot more work needs to be done to verify its validity. Issues in

broader areas of research including news, crisis communication, political communication, etc. need to be studied to check the validity of the presented model. It was also interesting to note that when social discourse was divided into two groups, family and friends, very different areas of discussion were prioritized for each group. Does this imply that the public sets its agenda according to the social group it is interacting with? And how is this selective agenda affected by their television viewing patterns? What other “social groups” can be identified for future research purposes? And what impact would they have on the discourse. All of these point towards areas of interest for future investigations in audience research.

There is also a need to explore the type of cues that audience members develop in order to assist in avoiding issues. Are these clues verbal or visual in nature? Are certain types of news stories, images and content subconsciously avoided by viewers or is this an active decision taken on story-by-story basis? While the current study looks at the overall attention threshold of viewers, a closer look can help identify the differences between the genders, ages and other demographic factors of the viewers. Is there a difference between the clues developed by males and females? How does age affect viewers’ attention threshold? Are younger viewers more likely to reach the threshold faster than older viewers? Or is the inverse more probable? Do images make better clues or are words more useful in avoiding content? All these questions need to be addressed in order by future researchers in order to validate the attention threshold model.

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APPENDIX I: CODE BOOK

News Violence and Desensitization of News Viewers in Pakistan Content Analysis Codebook and Coding Instructions

General Information

1. Coder ID:
 - a. 01 – 02 Coder ID Number

2. Channel:
 - a. 01 – Pakistan Television News
 - b. 02 – Geo News Network

3. Date of Broadcast:
 - a. DD/MM/YY

4. Sequence Number
 - a. Number the stories sequentially for each broadcast. For example, the first story you code for the January 1st, 2013 bulletin of a channel should be coded 1 for sequence number, the second story in the same broadcast is a 2, and so on. For each new day or channel, restart the sequence at 1.

Topic Categories

1. Violence with fatalities (Code 01):
 - a. Any story, irrespective of nature/origin of news, containing news of war, defense, insurgency, homeland security, terrorism (suicide bombings, bomb blasts, IEDs, school shootings), military operations (drone attacks, cross-border shelling/firing, anti-terrorist operations, collateral damage), military use of force (domestic and/or international), crime (murder, assassination, target killings), torture, honor killing, riots, and natural disasters either domestic or foreign, *resulting in either single or multiple casualties (deaths)*.

2. Violence without fatalities (Code 02):
 - a. Any story, irrespective of nature/origin of news, containing news of bank robbers, muggers, burglars, terrorists, carjackers, rapists, kidnapers (abduction), torturers, aircraft hijackers, gangsters, drug cartels, robbery, negligence, endangerment, extortion, and harassment, attempted murder, riots, violent protests and natural disasters either

domestic or foreign, and any other stories *containing violence but with no reported casualties (deaths)*.

3. Domestic politics (Code 03):
 - a. Any news story, irrespective of nature/origin of news, containing news addressing local governance, business, economic policy, education, energy, health care, lawmaking, law enforcement, money and taxes, natural resources, industry, social welfare, and personal rights and freedoms, elections, electoral campaigns, domestic policy debates, constitutional reform, agricultural programs;
 - b. Any news story in which a representative of the political government, the opposition, the bureaucracy or civil society is present with reference to the above issues
 - c. Excluding news stories already coded as 01 or 02.

4. Foreign affairs (Code 04):
 - a. News stories dealing with official diplomacy, political issues, and foreign relations, Non-Pakistani figure (e.g., foreign heads of state, foreign ministers, UN Officials, HR Groups, trade ministers), global environmental issues (global warming, ozone hole, water shortages, droughts, flooding, etc.), third party agreements and meetings (ASEAN, G8, NSG, IAEA, NATO, EU), the United Nations, foreign investments and agreements.
 - b. Excluding news stories already coded as 01 or 02.

5. Other news (Code 05):
 - a. Any news story not coded in Codes 01 – 04, including but not limited to entertainment industry, science and technology, health, family "values", social programs, discrimination, race relations, cultural programs and general human interest, and any other uncategorized news stories.

APPENDIX II: CODING SHEET

Coder#: _____

Channel: _____

Year of Broadcast: _____

For each news item use the following code to identify its type: 1=Domestic Political News, 2=Violent News with Fatality, 3=Violent News without Fatality, 4=International Relations, and 5=Other News

Date of News Broadcast	News Story Type																
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.

5. If yes, what do you like to talk about with your family (you can choose more than one)?

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a. Crime () | b. Dramas/stories () | c. Energy Crisis () |
| d. Food/cooking () | e. Inflation () | f. Insecurity () |
| g. Lawlessness () | h. Movies () | i. Music () |
| j. Politics () | k. Sports () | l. Militancy () |

6. In your opinion, what is the biggest problem in Pakistan right now?

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Corruption () | b. Energy crisis () | c. Inflation/price hike() |
| d. Insecurity () | e. Lawlessness () | f. Political instability () |
| g. Unemployment () | h. Militancy () | |

7. In your opinion, what is the primary cause of this problem?

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Corruption () | b. Energy crisis () | c. Inflation/price hike() |
| d. Insecurity () | e. Lawlessness () | f. Political instability () |
| g. Unemployment () | h. Militancy () | |

8. Do you think that news channels report the real problems facing the people?

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| a. Yes() | b. No() | c. Sometimes() |
|-----------|----------|-----------------|

FOR THE FOLLOWING TABLE KINDLY SELECT (✓) THE OPTION WHICH BEST REFLECTS YOUR OPINION:

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too.					
10.	Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down.					
11.	I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.					
12.	I believe that the best way to live is without any interference from others					

13.	I don't have time to think about other people's problems					
14.	I don't cry easily.					
15.	I don't give others' feelings much thought.					
16.	I feel deeply for others.					
17.	I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.					
18.	I feel other people's pain.					
19.	I feel saddened by tragedy in the movies I see.					
20.	I find it annoying when people cry in public.					
21.	I get emotional easily when watching a sad news story.					
22.	I have too many problems of my own to think about others					
23.	If a crowd gets excited about something so do I.					
24.	If someone is upset I get upset too.					
25.	It hurts to see another person in pain.					
26.	It makes me happy when I see people helping each other.					
27.	Locals who support militants should get the same treatment as the militants					
28.	Militancy is more of a media publicity than any real problem					
29.	My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel.					
30.	News about violence is no longer remarkable					
31.	News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of attacks					
32.	News channels should not show coverage of victims' families					
33.	News coverage of criminals and militants gives them encouragement					
34.	News reporting has made violence into an everyday event					
35.	Once the security forces leave an area the criminals and militants will return					
36.	Pakistan is a safer place than what is shown in the news					
37.	Police and army should be called in to deal with criminals and militants					
38.	Presence of refugees in settled areas is going to increase the vulnerability of these areas to crime					

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE (URDU)

مندرجہ ذیل سوالنامے کا مقصد صرف تحقیق کے مقاصد کے لئے معلومات جمع کرنے کے لئے ہے۔ کسی بھی اور تمام جمع ڈیٹا نجی اور یونیورسٹی کی تحقیق کے مقابلے میں کسی بھی دوسرے مقاصد کے لئے استعمال نہیں رکھا جائے گا۔ کوئی جواب صحیح ہے یا غلط ہے - یہ مکمل طور پر آپ کی کیا رائے ہے۔ آپ کے زیر غور ہے اور وقت کے لئے آپ کا شکریہ۔

براہ مہربانی (✓) مندرجہ ذیل انتخاب سے سب سے زیادہ مناسب جواب کو منتخب کریں۔

1. کیا آپ کو ٹیلی ویژن پر دیکھنے کے لئے پسند کرتے ہو؟

ایک. خبریں () ب. موجودہ امور () ج. تقریح () د. کھیل ()

2. کیا آپ کو ٹی وی پر خبریں دیکھتے ہو؟

ایک. () کبھی نہیں ب. کبھی کبھار () ج. کبھی کبھی () د. اکثر () ای. باقاعدگی سے ()

3. آپ کو کیا بات چیت ہے جو تم اپنے دوستوں اور خاندان کے ساتھ ٹیلی ویژن پر دیکھتے ہیں؟

ایک. جی ہاں () ب. نہیں () ج. کبھی کبھی ()

4. ہاں اگر آپ اپنے دوستوں کے ساتھ کے بارے میں بات (آپ ایک سے زیادہ منتخب کر سکتے ہیں) کیا پسند ہے؟

ایک. جرم () ب. ڈراموں / کہانیاں () ج. توانائی کے بحران ()
د. کھانے / کھانا پکانے () ای. چ افراط زر () . عدم تحفظ ()
چھ. لاقانونیت () ح. فلم () میں. موسیقی ()
. عسکریت پسندی () L () . کھیل () K. سیاست J

5. ہاں اگر آپ کو آپ کے خاندان کے ساتھ کے بارے میں بات (آپ ایک سے زیادہ منتخب کر سکتے ہیں) کیا پسند ہے؟

ایک. جرم () ب. ڈراموں / کہانیاں () ج. توانائی کے بحران ()
د. کھانے / کھانا پکانے () ای. چ افراط زر () . عدم تحفظ ()
چھ. لاقانونیت () ح. فلم () میں. موسیقی ()
. عسکریت پسندی () L () . کھیل () K. سیاست J

6. آپ کی رائے میں کیا پاکستان میں سب سے بڑا مسئلہ ابھی ہے؟

ایک. کرپشن () ب. توانائی کے بحران () ج. افراط زر / قیمتوں میں اضافے ()

د. ای عدم تحفظ () . لاقانونیت () ج. سیاسی عدم استحکام ()
چھ. بے روزگاری () ح. عسکریت پسندی ()

7. آپ کی رائے میں، ان مسائل کی بنیادی وجہ کیا ہے؟

ایک. کرپشن () ب. توانائی کے بحران () ج. افراط زر / قیمتوں میں اضافے ()
د. ای عدم تحفظ () . لاقانونیت () ج. سیاسی عدم استحکام ()
چھ. بے روزگاری () ح. عسکریت پسندی ()

8. کیا آپ کو لگتا ہے کہ نیوز چینلز میں لوگوں کا سامنا حقیقی مسائل کے بارے میں رپورٹ ہے؟

ایک. جی ہاں () ب. نہیں () ج. کبھی کبھی ()

مندرجہ ذیل ٹیبل کے لئے برائے مہربانی اس (✓) آپشن ہے جس BEST آپ کی رائے کی عکاسی کرتا ہے کو منتخب کریں:

پختہ متفق	متفق	غیر جانبدار	اتفاق	پختہ اتفاق	بیانات
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					9. خوش لوگوں کے ارد گرد ہونے کے ناطے سے مجھے خوشی محسوس رہا ہے، بھی ہے۔
					10. ان لوگوں کو جو اداس کر رہے ہیں کے ارد گرد ہونے کے ناطے میرا موڈ لاتی نیچے۔
					11. میں نے ہمیشہ میرے ارد گرد لوگوں کے جذبات کو میں ٹیون کرنے کے لئے کوشش کریں
					12. مجھے یقین ہے کہ دوسروں سے کسی مداخلت کے بغیر رہنے کے بہترین طریقہ ہے
					13. مجھے دوسرے لوگوں کے مسائل کے بارے میں میں سوچنے کا وقت نہیں ہے
					14. مجھے آسانی سے رونا نہیں ہے
					15. میں دوسروں کے نہیں دیتے بہت سوچا احساسات
					16. گہرائی سے میں دوسروں کے لئے محسوس ہو رہا ہے
					17. مجھے خوشی محسوس ہوتا ہے جب میں دیکھتا ہوں کہ لوگ ہنس اور خود لطف اندوز
					18. میں دوسرے لوگوں کا درد محسوس ہو رہا ہے۔

					19. میں محسوس کرتا ہے کہ فلموں میں دیکھتا ہوں کہ میں المیہ کی طرف سے دکھ...
					20. مجھے یہ غصہ جب لوگ عوام میں رونے لگتا ہے
پختہ متفق	متفق	غیر جانبدار	اتفاق	پختہ اتفاق	بیانات
					21. میں آسانی سے جذباتی ہو جاتا ہوں جب خبر ایک اداس کہانی دیکھ کر
					22. میں خود اپنی بھی بہت سے مسائل ہیں دوسروں کے بارے میں سوچنے کے لیے
					23. اگر ایک بھیڑ کو کسی چیز کے بارے میں بہت پرجوش ہو جاتی ہے ت
					24. اگر کوئی پریشان ہے، میں بھی پریشان ہیں
					25. یہ درد میں ایک اور شخص کو دیکھنے کے لئے درد ہوتا ہے
					26. یہ مجھے خوش کرتا ہے جب میں دیکھتا ہوں کہ لوگ ایک دوسرے کی مدد کر.

					27. عسکریت پسندوں کی حمایت مقامی افراد جو عسکریت پسندوں کے طور پر ایک ہی علاج ہو جانا چاہئے
					28. عسکریت پسندی کسی حقیقی مسئلہ کے مقابلے میں ایک میڈیا پروموشن زیادہ ہے
					29. میرے احساسات میری اپنی ہیں اور نہ عکاسی نہیں دوسروں کو محسوس کرتا۔
					30. اب تشدد بارے میں خبریں قابل ذکر نہیں ہے
					31. نیوز چینلز کے حملوں کی گرافک تصاویر دکھائے جانے سے نہیں روکا جانا چاہئے
					32. نیوز چینل 'متاثرین کے خاندانوں کی کوریج کو ظاہر نہیں کرنا چاہئے
					33. مجرموں اور عسکریت پسندوں کی نیوز کوریج ان کی حوصلہ افزائی دیتی ہے .
					34. کی خبریں کی رپورٹنگ کے روز کی تقریب میں تشدد بنا دیا ہے
					35. ایک بار سیکورٹی فورسز نے ایک علاقے میں مجرموں کو چھوڑ دیتے ہیں اور عسکریت پسندوں کے واپس آ جائیں گے

					36. پاکستان کو کیا خبر میں ظاہر کئے گئے جاتا ہے سے محفوظ جگہ ہے
					37. پولیس اور فوج میں کہا جا چاہیے، مجرموں اور عسکریت پسندوں کے ساتھ نمٹنے کے لئے
					38. ہندوستانی علاقوں میں پناہ گزینوں کی موجودگی کے جرم کے لئے ان علاقوں کے خطرے کا سامنا کرنے کے لئے میں اضافہ ہو رہا ہے
					39. پناہ گزینوں کے تشدد سے متاثرہ علاقوں سے مقامی باشندوں کے لئے ایک مسئلہ بن رہے ہیں
					40. ایک چوٹ لگی بچے کو دیکھ کر بہت پریشان کن ہے۔
					41. دوسرے لوگوں کی مسکراہٹ کو دیکھ کر مجھے مسکرانا۔
					42. خصوصی قوانین اور سزا مجرموں اور عسکریت پسندوں کے لئے بنایا جانا چاہئے
					43. حکومت لوگوں کو خود کی حفاظت کرنے کا حق دینا چاہئے
					44. میڈیا بھی تشدد کے واقعات پر مرکوز ہے، وہاں ملک میں دیگر اہم زیادہ مسائل ہیں

					میڈیا دوسروں کے مصائب کا بھی زیادہ کر دیتا ہے	45.
					خبروں سے ظاہر ہوتا ہے ملک میں صرف کیا ہو رہا ہے	46.
پختہ متفق	متفق	غیر جانبدار	اتفاق	پختہ اتفاق	بیانات	
					دوسروں کے مصائب گہرائی سے مجھے تنگ ہے.	47.
					اب زیادہ تشدد ہے کیونکہ خبر میڈیا اسے اتنا زیادہ کو اجاگر	48.
					پر تشدد حملوں کے بعد کی براہ راست کوریج کے ساتھ کچھ بھی غلط نہیں ہے	49.

51. عام طور پر، آپ کو ایک دن میں کتنا وقت ٹیلی وژن دیکھ کر خرچ کرتے ہیں؟

ایک. 2 گھنٹے سے بھی کم () ب. 2-3 بجے () ج. 4-5 بجے () د. 5-6 بجے () ای. 6 + گھنٹے ()

52. تم کتنی دیر تک کیا گیا ہے ٹی وی پر خبریں دیکھ کر؟

ایک. 1 - 2 سال () ب. 3 - 4 سال () ج. 5-6 سال () د. 6 سال سے زیادہ ()

53. عمر: () 18 - 24 () 25 - 34 () 35 - 44 () 45 - 54 (55) اوپر &

54. جنس: () مرد () عورت

55. تعلیم: () 10 سال سے بھی کم () میٹرک () ایف اے () ل +

56. گھریلو آمدنی: () نے 10,000 سے بھی کم () 10,000 - 20,000 () 21,000 - 40,000 () 41,000 - 60,000 (61,000) اور اوپر

----- شکر یہ -----

APPENDIX V: REFERENCE TABLES

Table 29: Types of Media Content Discussed with FRIENDS

Source	<i>No</i>		<i>Yes</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Row N %</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Row N %</i>
Crime	587	72%	224	28%
Drama	253	31%	558	69%
Energy crisis	270	33%	541	67%
Food/cooking	212	26%	599	74%
Inflation	111	14%	700	86%
Insecurity	639	79%	172	21%
Lawlessness	575	71%	236	29%
Movies	139	17%	672	83%
Music	132	16%	679	84%
Militancy	707	87%	104	13%
Sports	167	21%	644	79%
Politics	255	31%	556	69%

Table 30: Types of Media Content Discussed with FAMILY

Source	<i>No</i>		<i>Yes</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Row N %</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Row N %</i>
Crime	581	72%	230	28%
Drama	252	31%	559	69%
Energy crisis	284	35%	527	65%
Food/cooking	100	12%	711	88%
Inflation	122	15%	689	85%
Insecurity	618	76%	193	24%
Lawlessness	523	64%	288	36%
Movies	592	73%	219	27%
Music	605	75%	206	25%
Militancy	682	84%	129	16%
Sports	224	28%	587	72%
Politics	460	57%	351	43%

Table 31: Initial Pro-violence Scale Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Police and army should be called in to deal with criminals and militants	22.48	28.277	.254	.108	.667
Special laws & punishments should be made for criminals and militants	22.93	28.336	.324	.303	.656
The government should give people the right to protect themselves	22.67	27.865	.291	.215	.660
Locals who support militants should get the same treatment as the militants	22.45	27.838	.261	.146	.666
There is more violence now because the news media highlights it so much	22.45	28.591	.240	.146	.670
The media is too focused on violent events, there are other more important issues in the country	22.64	27.676	.330	.246	.652
Pakistan is a safer place than what is shown in the news	22.07	28.849	.146	.087	.693
News reporting has made violence into an everyday event	22.44	26.511	.380	.239	.638
News coverage of criminals and militants gives them encouragement	22.02	25.339	.411	.284	.627
There is nothing wrong with live coverage of the result of violent attacks	21.73	27.111	.226	.161	.676
News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of attacks	21.73	29.526	.058	.046	.720

**Highlighted item deleted from the final scale in order to increase reliability for the Pro-violence Attitude Scale*

Table 32: Initial Emotional Empathy Scale Item Based on 22 Items

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too.	48.71	67.261	.287	.150	.673
Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down.	48.24	65.040	.338	.184	.667
I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.	48.50	65.692	.357	.278	.667
I believe that the best way to live is without any interference from others	48.16	65.288	.262	.113	.674
I don't have time to think about other people's problems	47.28	67.878	.112	.251	.691
I don't cry easily.	47.68	67.919	.087	.175	.696
I don't give others' feelings much thought.	47.15	67.285	.126	.241	.691
I feel deeply for others.	48.26	64.230	.374	.305	.663
I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.	48.70	66.636	.311	.326	.671
I feel other people's pain.	48.55	64.722	.438	.370	.661
I feel saddened by tragedy in the movies I see.	47.97	63.595	.332	.210	.667
I find it annoying when people cry in public.	47.61	66.081	.214	.093	.680
I get emotional easily when watching a sad news story.	48.09	65.293	.298	.284	.671
I have too many problems of my own to think about others	47.30	67.231	.165	.304	.684
If a crowd gets excited about something so do I.	47.59	65.928	.246	.191	.676
If someone is upset I get upset too.	48.30	64.757	.399	.439	.663
It hurts to see another person in pain.	48.54	65.098	.430	.499	.662
It makes me happy when I see people helping each other.	48.75	66.813	.295	.373	.672
Seeing a hurt child is very upsetting.	48.73	66.983	.335	.300	.671
Seeing other people smile makes me smile.	48.59	65.591	.374	.343	.666
The suffering of others deeply disturbs me.	48.36	66.061	.307	.239	.671
My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel.	46.44	75.162	-.240	.138	.721

**Highlighted item deleted from the final scale in order to increase reliability for the Emotional Empathy Scale.*

Table 33: Initial Compassion Fatigue Scale Based on 8 Items

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Militancy is more of a media publicity than any real problem	16.83	13.067	.190	.077	.661
News about violence is no longer remarkable	16.94	13.296	.150	.060	.681
Once the security forces leave an area the criminals and militants will return	17.31	13.936	.123	.057	.671
Presence of refugees in settled areas is going to increase the vulnerability of these areas to crime	17.50	13.324	.267	.217	.635
Refugees from violence affected areas are becoming a problem for local residents	17.43	12.942	.275	.195	.626
The media makes too much of the suffering of others	17.54	13.264	.212	.111	.653
The news shows only what is happening in the country	16.72	14.352	.020	.048	.709
News channels should not show coverage of victims' families	16.75	12.347	.177	.054	.669

**Highlighted item deleted from the final scale in order to increase reliability for the final Compassion Fatigue Scale.*

Table 34: Tukey Test for Identifying Significant Relationships between Proximity and Desensitization

(I) Province	(J) Province	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Punjab	Sindh	-.150*	.041	.003	-.27	-.03
	KP	-.069	.045	.641	-.20	.06
	Balochistan	-.047	.069	.985	-.25	.15
	GB	-.106	.145	.979	-.52	.31
	Federal	-.192	.107	.464	-.50	.11
Sindh	Punjab	.150*	.041	.003	.03	.27
	KP	.081	.049	.552	-.06	.22
	Balochistan	.104	.072	.700	-.10	.31
	GB	.045	.146	1.000	-.37	.46
	Federal	-.042	.108	.999	-.35	.27
KP	Punjab	.069	.045	.641	-.06	.20
	Sindh	-.081	.049	.552	-.22	.06
	Balochistan	.023	.074	1.000	-.19	.23
	GB	-.036	.148	1.000	-.46	.38
	Federal	-.123	.110	.873	-.44	.19
Balochistan	Punjab	.047	.069	.985	-.15	.25
	Sindh	-.104	.072	.700	-.31	.10
	KP	-.023	.074	1.000	-.23	.19
	GB	-.059	.157	.999	-.51	.39
	Federal	-.146	.122	.840	-.49	.20
GB	Punjab	.106	.145	.979	-.31	.52
	Sindh	-.045	.146	1.000	-.46	.37
	KP	.036	.148	1.000	-.38	.46
	Balochistan	.059	.157	.999	-.39	.51
	Federal	-.087	.176	.996	-.59	.42
Federal	Punjab	.192	.107	.464	-.11	.50
	Sindh	.042	.108	.999	-.27	.35
	KP	.123	.110	.873	-.19	.44
	Balochistan	.146	.122	.840	-.20	.49
	GB	.087	.176	.996	-.42	.59

* $p < 0.05$ level.

Table 35: Comparison of television content discussion habits for heavy and light TV Viewers: Crosstabs

Source		TV viewers		Total	
		light viewers	heavy viewers		
Do you discuss what you watch on television with other people?	yes	Count	103	255	358
		% within TV viewers	39.5%	46.4%	44.1%
	sometimes	Count	133	230	363
		% within TV viewers	51.0%	41.8%	44.8%
	no	Count	25	65	90
		% within TV viewers	9.6%	11.8%	11.1%
Total	Count	261	550	811	
	% within TV viewers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 37: Comparison of television content discussion habits for heavy and light News Viewers: Crosstabs

Source			News viewers light viewers	heavy viewers	Total
Do you discuss what you watch on television with other people?	yes	Count	164	194	358
		% within News viewers	43.0%	45.1%	44.1%
	sometimes	Count	174	189	363
		% within News viewers	45.7%	44.0%	44.8%
	no	Count	43	47	90
		% within News viewers	11.3%	10.9%	11.1%
Total	Count	381	430	811	
	% within News viewers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 36: Regression Analysis

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
desensitization computed recoded	1.78	.477	811
Pro-violence Attitude	2.17	.543	811
Emotional Empathy	2.22	.412	811
Compassion Fatigue	2.39	.541	811

Correlations					
		desensitization computed recoded	Pro-violence Attitude	Emotional Empathy	Compassion Fatigue
Pearson Correlation	desensitization computed recoded	1.000	.673	.597	.689
	Pro-violence Attitude	.673	1.000	.419	.597
	Emotional Empathy	.597	.419	1.000	.415
	Compassion Fatigue	.689	.597	.415	1.000
	desensitization computed recoded	.	.000	.000	.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Pro-violence Attitude	.000	.	.000	.000
	Emotional Empathy	.000	.000	.	.000
	Compassion Fatigue	.000	.000	.000	.
	desensitization computed recoded	811	811	811	811
	Pro-violence Attitude	811	811	811	811
N	Emotional Empathy	811	811	811	811
	Compassion Fatigue	811	811	811	811

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.810 ^a	.655	.654	.280	2.010

a. Predictors: (Constant), Compassion Fatigue, Emotional Empathy, Pro-violence Attitude

b. Dependent Variable: desensitization computed recoded

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	120.644	3	40.215	511.840	.000 ^b
1	Residual	63.405	807	.079		
	Total	184.049	810			

a. Dependent Variable: desensitization computed recoded

b. Predictors: (Constant), Compassion Fatigue, Emotional Empathy, Pro-violence Attitude

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	-.405	.059	-6.822	.000	-.522	-.289					
1	Pro-violence Attitude	.284	.023	12.227	.000	.239	.330	.673	.395	.253	.608	1.645
	Emotional Empathy	.358	.027	13.227	.000	.305	.411	.597	.422	.273	.782	1.279
	Compassion Fatigue	.323	.023	13.883	.000	.278	.369	.689	.439	.287	.610	1.639

a. Dependent Variable: desensitization computed recoded

Collinearity Diagnostics^a

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Condition (Constant)	Variance Proportions		
					Pro-violence Attitude	Emotional Empathy	Compassion Fatigue
1	1	3.927	1.000	.00	.00	.00	.00
	2	.035	10.642	.22	.43	.15	.09
	3	.021	13.601	.00	.53	.06	.89
	4	.017	15.377	.78	.04	.79	.02

a. Dependent Variable: desensitization computed recoded

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	.62	3.22	1.78	.386	811
Residual	-.530	.537	.000	.280	811
Std. Predicted Value	-2.994	3.726	.000	1.000	811
Std. Residual	-1.892	1.917	.000	.998	811

a. Dependent Variable: desensitization computed recoded

CURRICULUM VITAE

Academic qualifications of the thesis author, Ms. HAQ Amrat:

- Received the degree of MSc in Communication Sciences from Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, August 2004.
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