Exploring Audience Trust in Journalism: A Comprehensive Survey Study

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Abstract

This comprehensive study explores the variables that affect media credibility and perceptions while examining the present levels of audience trust in journalism. It has never been more important to understand trust dynamics in light of growing concerns about partisanship, skewed reporting, and misinformation. We employ a mixed-methods approach in our research, mixing qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys to collect data from a wide range of participant demographics. Our objective is to determine the fundamental factors that promote trust, including accuracy, objectivity, credibility, and influence. The study also looks at the perceptions of news sources among various age groups and sociopolitical backgrounds. For this matter, 200 participants were selected on a non-random basis based in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Social Responsibility Theory was utilized to see the research study. The study explored that the usage of social media is much more than traditional media, it has also been noted that people find the news on the internet more credible. Many of the respondents feel that the influence of political interest does go into the construction of news stories, we applied chi-square to check and it has shown that the majority of them feel tremendously high. Overall, the results show that people have less trust in Pakistani media.

Keywords: Audience trust, social media, traditional media, public perception, Pakistan.

1. Introduction

Radio was the only state-owned medium for news distribution when Pakistan was founded in 1947. The state eventually came to own and control the nation's first television station in addition to newspapers and magazines throughout the following 20 years. Due to a growth in literacy rates that increased readership, privately held newspapers and magazines simultaneously expanded in number from a few dozen to a few hundred during this time. Additionally, as urbanization grew, it became simpler to distribute newspapers to a big population confined to a limited region (Khattak, 2019). Social media is still establishing its role in politics in the nation, but it also offers a platform for public discourse that holds potential. Currently, social media and the internet represent the most open forum for discussion, a fascinating opportunity for a group of people long marginalized by society sphere. Although Pakistan has limited access to the internet, it is rapidly expanding, especially outside of the urban areas. (Khattak, 2019)

According to (Abrar, 2014), following 2000 in Pakistan, the media landscape transformed as a result of the very rapid expansion of the media and the creation of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). The new TV channels broadcast content ranging from news to entertainment. As FM broadcasts proliferated, print media likewise altered their approach to address the new issues. According to (Eijaz, 2013), the entire field of information systems saw significant changes, especially with the introduction of new media technologies and the Internet. By consuming media content, one contributes to its creation. The political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of Pakistan evolved as a result of all these occurrences.

Pakistan's broadcast and internet media are likely to play an even bigger part in the politics of the nation in the years to come. The environment in which the media functions will determine the quality of its contribution and not just the quality of the media itself. Yusuf (2009) underlined that social media and the internet are other factors that have helped Pakistani people stay informed. With the launch of Facebook in Pakistan in 2006, followed by the gradual introduction of other social networking services like Twitter, Skype, and Instagram, SNS quickly gained popularity among the general public in Pakistan. According to (Masoodul Hassan, 2014), the development of mobile technology and broadband accelerated the use of social media, particularly among young people. They received new tools for communication, socialization, amusement, and information. The accessible Smartphone expanded social media use in Pakistan and made it more widely available.

Researchers have been attempting to pinpoint the factors that influence people to believe the news for more than a generation. It has been determined that readers expect journalism that is accurate, comprehensive, logical, and balanced in general. People's faith in news sources varies depending on the subject, whether it be politics, weather, entertainment, or traffic. In certain circumstances, consumers seek in-depth information and qualified sources, while in others, they prioritize entertainment. Finally, to clarify why trust is crucial, it should be noted that since people are wary of content and seek signs of credibility, they are more interested in trust-related variables and more willing to spread the word about news to their friends and family (Young, 2016). Journalists are currently experiencing a "crisis," according to academics (Zelizer, 2009). The news media's function as a source of public information has also been significantly impacted by numerous changes in the journalistic profession brought on by technology improvements, a shifting workforce, and a greater dependence on advertising revenue over the past 20 years. What is most apparent is that audiences engage with unverified rumours and outright lies as much, if not more, than they do with real, thoroughly researched information when journalism moves from the print to the networked internet arena.

The complex problem of declining public trust and the state of media today is related to the idea of false news. Google searches for the keyword "fake news" dramatically increased in October 2016, changing from being a largely unsearched term to a hot subject (Trends, 2017). Everything from jokes to hearsay to falsehoods to deceit to propaganda now had a new name. In this study, we will be investigating the operationalization of journalistic credibility and media trust worthiness in overall journalism from a general audience. Trust in news will not include other dimensions i.e., advertising and entertainment. The other dimensions that the public applies in the evaluation of the trustworthiness of news bear much theoretical and practical relevance. Surprisingly, there is no standardized tool to measure the level of media credibility, only the trust level that was measured was through a set of questions asked from the general audience in which they would answer about how much trust they put in certain actors, TV channels or newspapers etc.

Trust in news

Long before social media, faith in the media and journalism was shaky and declining in many regions of the world. This tendency is not distinct from the general decline in institutional trust that has been observed in many nations. However, the sheer quantity and reach of false material being spread on social media in the guise of news has caused a contagion that threatens to further harm journalism's credibility. Journalists, news organizations, individuals, and open societies are all affected by this (Ireton, 2018). Everybody can be a publisher in the lightning-fast informational free-for-all on social media platforms and the internet. Citizens therefore find it difficult to distinguish between what is true and what is untrue. Extreme opinions, hoaxes, long-accepted truths, and institutions are all called into doubt. In this scenario, newsrooms compete to claim and carry out their historic function as gatekeepers whose output can contribute to the establishing of the truth (Ireton, 2018). Early research concentrated mostly on the topic of the reliability of sources in the context of persuading media messages, with credibility largely evaluated by the trustworthiness of the person who created the message (Carl I, 1951). Today, the perceived legitimacy of the news is also thought to be influenced by the news organization's reputation. The rise in the amount of news freely available has sparked concerns about

diminishing credibility and news quality, as well as the possible harm to democracy that this can create, even though faith in the news has been falling in many nations for some time. (Silverman, 2015)

All in all, we find that when individuals examine their confidence in news, they centre less around their assessments of the overall nature of individual news sources than they do on their impression of the news media climate all the more by and large and similarly significant their view of themselves. To sort out our discoveries we unite two reasonable strings from political correspondence and news-casting studies: hardliner particular openness which looks at the impact of individuals' political perspectives on their way to dealing with news (Stroud, 2010)   and society speculations of information utilization which analyzes the accounts that individuals educate themselves regarding the news all the more comprehensively (Toff & Nielsen, 2018). By connecting these two hypothetical systems this study offers a window into how news crowds decipher revealing about an unfurling worldwide occasion with political and general wellbeing suggestions. We close by investigating our discovery's hypothetical and standardizing suggestions for columnists attempting to acquire public trust for residents who highly esteem their hesitance to concede it and for researchers who look to comprehend and improve the connection between the two.

Factors Affecting Media Trust

Social and traditional media is a multidimensional and multifaceted notion. The triangle of media source, message, and receiver interacts with one another to determine the credibility of the media. It is clear that the journalist must evaluate the source in order for users to believe the information to be reliable and relevant. Additionally, the media itself contributes significantly to ensuring legitimacy. The uniqueness of each receiver or audience in this media triangle also affected the degree of message trustworthiness. Respondents' extremely diverse associations with media trust pose a key challenge for research in this area. As a result, a more recent study demonstrates that if questions are asked about trust in very specific media titles, a higher level of media trust is reported. Additionally, people have more faith in the media they consume and that reinforces their reality. The research must more clearly separate the pertinent facets of media trust given the conflicting findings of media-trust studies (Kohring, 2004). However, it's critical to identify the explanatory variables that best account for changes in media trust. The research on how media trust is conceptualized that was given is undoubtedly the most organized and thorough (Tsfati, 2013). To identify the media trust determinants at various levels of abstraction, researchers analyzed the 44-country World Value Survey. To understand the many manifestations of media trust, they also introduced micro and macro-level consequences.

Another crucial factor that enables us to explain media trust is media consumption. People who regularly read news magazines seem to have a higher level of faith in the media than those who do not. (Kiousis, 2001; Cappella, 2003) Particularly, sociological research on trust has highlighted how trust develops in social relationships and contexts. Whatever we consistently do, daily, improves our perceptions of the media and fosters media trust. People's trust in the media grows stronger the more they read newspapers, watch TV, or visit news websites (Tsfati Y. &., 2013). Particularly, the impact of new media on media trust has lately been studied about the advancement of digitalization. Numerous studies demonstrate that there is a higher level of confidence in traditional media than in new media.

Interpersonal communication and first-hand experience are significant influencing factors in media intake. This element has the potential to entirely sabotage the consequences of media usage. Our faith in journalists is significantly impacted by our personal involvement in an event. Divergent views toward the media can quickly develop if the way an incident is reported differs from how we experience it (Schweiger, 2000). Then, in the study, overall societal value patterns are taken into account with economic statistics like business trends, unemployment rates, and inflation (e.g., the significance of postmodern attitudes). A significant consideration in this context is the unique characteristics of the media system, such as the population's prevailing media consumption patterns, the restrictions imposed by media regulation, and the degree of interdependence between the political and media systems. Do media systems that offer a robust public broadcasting service, like those in Central Europe and the Nordic nations, encourage media trust or not? What about media systems where watching TV or reading

newspapers continues to be significant? These characteristics, which also include the micro-aspects, can be used to explain media trust in a particular nation. They include ownership connections, media variety, and the fundamental structures and contents of diverse media systems. The micro- and macro-effects that are described in the research programmes will be modelled in the subsequent treatment for this investigation.

Problem statement

This study investigates audience trust in journalism in Pakistan. Specifically, this study has focused on audience trust in journalists and sources of information in Pakistan.

Objectives of the study

- To explore the overall trust of the audience in journalism.
- To investigate the trust levels of the audience on sources of information.
- To find out the level of trust of people in journalists in Pakistan.

Literature review

Researchers like Sung, 2000; Andrew, 2017 and Schweiger, 2000, found that media research in the 1990s changed toward social media and the news media with the advent of the internet as a source of new channels. Researchers first sought to identify the distinctions between the two media and looked into their levels of credibility. However, there is not enough knowledge concerning potential distinctions between the old and new media's credibility determinants. It has been argued by Michael, 2014 that it is clear that the introduction of new media has an impact on those already in use. It is important to note that the development of radio drew some newspaper readers to radio, and that TV quickly garnered a sizable audience.

Pakistan, with a population of 191 million, was ranked as the sixth-most populous nation in the world by the UN Information Unit in 2015 (Haque, 2013) went on to explain that Pakistan has a population that is, on average, rather young and lively, with a lot of potential and capacity two-thirds of whom are under the age of 30. Social media websites are used to communicate with friends and share information, but most importantly, young people use social network sites to pass the time in Pakistan and around the world. Recently, usage of mobile devices, the internet, and social media has increased to exceptional levels in Pakistan. According to the 2016, Pakistan Advertiser Society Report, 12 million people in Pakistan use Facebook, with half of them being between the ages of 18 and 24, social media will undoubtedly be Pakistan's most effective new media. According to research by Knoll (2011), social media is transforming the way that young people connect, and contemporary tendencies are very different from those that first emerged. Friend's gatherings have been supplanted by social media, which keeps them connected constantly, as socialization habits have changed.

According to (Stockwell, 2002), over time, news media and organizations in democratic societies have influenced how the public views the government. People have begun to rely on media to obtain information and create opinions because it has grown to be so significant in our lives. People base their opinions on information they learn from traditional media regarding governments, leaders, cultures, and nations. According to (Davis, 2000), the agenda-setting theory and the spiral of silence theory both explain and support the idea that media does affect how people see various things and topics. According to (Garrett, 2009), viewers typically use media to gather information rather than create opinions. The public's distrust of journalism is not unique to the United States. The 2020 Digital News Report published by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism found that overall, only 38% of the people they surveyed in 40 countries reported trusting "most news most of the time" (Newman et al., 2020).

Social media provides a forum for young people to discuss topics that our society has long deemed taboo. Numerous blogs and discussion boards regularly post updates on important topics in Pakistan, including government policy, military operations, and socio-economic problems. (Shakeel ahmed khan, 2012) includes remarks from numerous Pakistani journalists who ridiculed social media's

role after they were made public by it. Many well-known journalists, including Ansar Abbasi and Talat Hussain, concurred that social media plays a good role in promoting freedom of expression. Talat Hussain, however, pointed out in a tweet that TV channel owners who were solely dependent on cable operators had stifled free speech. According to Berlo, 1969, academics and researchers have noted that understanding media credibility is a challenging and complex process. According to Joseph, 2006, most studies on media credibility tend to concentrate on the two fundamental elements of source and medium credibility. The majority of individuals who have a strong interest in politics and national issues normally have a negative attitude toward the new political players in the field because they are frequently worried about the legitimacy of the sources, the accuracy of the information, and other related issues.

As mentioned by the (IMS, 2009), it has been observed that some anchors and journalists in Pakistan are thought to be more reliable than others, and people value their opinions more than the opinions of others. Similar to (Syed, 2008), who said that Pakistan's media is multilingual due to the country's diverse cultures and ethnicities. In a study (Memon, 2011) on Sindhi journalists and media reputation, it was found that 61.0% of respondents thought print media was more reliable and 39% thought they trusted electronic media more. (Kiousis, 2001) found that individuals trust newspapers more than electronic or social media compared to a wide range of other venues. According to (Tasfati, 2003), Pakistani citizens utilize television the most frequently and consider it to be their primary source of information. Pakistanis are now more aware of their rights and the events and going around the world because to the abundance of private channels in the country. Similar to Marco (2010) who claimed that the media has gradually strengthened as a platform for criticism of Pakistan's government and its policies.

The mainstream news media's independence and objectivity are crucial to the advancement of any community. In Pakistan, respondents' responses to the question were repeatedly recorded by Gallup (2013). The findings aid in assessing public opinion on media regulation and control as well as public confidence in the media. A survey conducted in November 2005 produced some very intriguing findings: 52% of respondents thought that the media's objectivity was insufficient; 49% thought that journalists were untrustworthy; 53% of respondents placed more trust in small media organizations; 56% said that making money was the media's main concern; and 34% said they did not trust international media chains. Results from Gallup (2013) indicated that government influence lowers public trust in the media because it results in a lack of media independence. A survey conducted in 2007 to compare media reliance and independence revealed that 70% of respondents strongly agreed that media should be entirely autonomous, while 19% said that media should operate by laws and government directives. 11% of respondents were unsure, 15% believed that media freedom in Pakistan was excessive, 35% thought that media independence was lacking, and 50% stated that media freedom at the moment was adequate. Rehman (2014) researched University of Punjab students between the ages of 18 and 22 on the conditional influence of media and its credibility. He concluded that there is a strong correlation between media credibility and influencing political judgement. He added that the audience's ability to form opinions depends in large part on their level of faith in traditional media, society, and their social network.

The earthquake disaster was the main topic of discussion in Pakistani media on October 8, 2005. After press coverage of this tragedy, public sentiment on it has increased. Approximately 92% of people learned about this occurrence from television, 4% from friends, 3% from print media, and only 1% from radio. Most people like local television networks over international ones. This observation was made following a study in which participants were asked how they had learned of the earthquake. PTV was mentioned by 69% of respondents, GEO by 73%, ARY by 50%, Indus TV by 27%, and Aaj TV by 25%. Only 15% and 19%, respectively, mentioned CNN and BBC. While 83% of respondents claimed that radio was a poor medium for communicating breaking news, only 17% said they had gotten their news from it. Local channels place a higher value on the veracity of the news than do international ones. During the earthquake catastrophe and its aftershocks, media was delivering timely and reliable news. When asked to name an authentic news station, 75% named GEO, 59% said PTV, 43% mentioned

ARY, 38% mentioned Indus TV, and 29% responded with Aaj TV; similarly, 32% mentioned BBC and 26% CNN.

The owner of the media channels generously rewards journalists and political talk show hosts who manipulate to intensify the conflict between the guests to boost the channel's ratings and profits, while those who adhere to the rules and regulations of journalism, such as credibility, objectivity, and honesty, are marginalized in the profession. There is no cure for corruption, which is growing like cancer and, if not stopped in time, might kill the media business. Pakistani journalists appear to be losing credibility. On YouTube, a chat between two renowned Dunya TV anchors, Mubashir Luqman and Mehr Bokhari, was posted. In this video, the hosts interview guest Malik Riaz, a real estate magnate, and reveal all the pertinent questions and responses behind the camera. The video also demonstrated how to build the entire debate by speaking on the phone with government officials throughout the broadcast, as well as the off-air pre-planned discussion and questions to ask.

Research Question and Hypothesis

RQ.   What is the audience's perception of Journalistic credibility in Pakistan?

RH   There is a likelihood that the audience would not rate Pakistani journalism highly credible.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of social responsibility in mass media is very new; it first emerged in the middle of the 20th century and is primarily utilized by emerging in the least developed nations. The Commission on the Freedom of the Press, which occurred in the United States in 1949, gave the notion shape. It originated in Europe. In their book published in 1956, Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm formally developed the approach. It promotes complete press freedom and lack of censorship, but it should be regulated by societal obligations and outside restrictions. Additionally, the public's obligation and interference filter content. The press is considered to be for individuals and society as per social responsibility theory. The press's duties include establishing and enforcing a code of conduct, setting standards for journalism, strengthening journalism, protecting journalists, and enforcing sanctions against those who do so. So that the public receives accurate information and news that is understandable, the facts presented by the press are studied and interpreted in this manner. The researcher gets benefits from the theory of social responsibility.

Research Methodology

The qualitative approach was chosen to extract meaning from the data as the analysis developed. The goal of qualitative research is to gather data, gain insight into human behavior, and identify the driving forces behind it. These methods look at the causes, mechanisms, and locations of events, hence a limited, focused sample is chosen. Similar to how human behavior and communication styles are changing over time, qualitative methodologies are also evolving through time. Quantitative research seeks to explain a specific phenomenon or generalize data across groups of people. To assure the validity and correctness of the research, quantitative approaches are used while keeping in mind the limitations of qualitative research methodologies. When replies are recorded statistically and the researcher is unable to affect the results, quantitative research is more impartial and objective. To determine the results' and study's level of significance, statistical tests are used. A large number of participants' responses may be recorded using a quantitative approach, and it takes less time.

One of the most significant and popular methods is the survey research. Typically, survey research involves a process of questioning the chosen respondent. 200 audience members were selected as part of this study. They were questioned about the levels of trust in journalism based on some concepts. Participants were given questions based on accuracy, credibility, influence and psychological satisfaction and were asked to indicate their responses about the trust level. To get a more in-depth and better view of how they view journalism in Pakistan, the respondents were also asked about what newspapers they like to read and which news channel they like to follow or watch daily to further get

into what may influence these factors. All the questions were close-ended and it took almost two weeks to get these questionnaires filled.

Population and Sampling

In this study, the population was the general audience in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The age of respondents was categorized by age categories starting with less than 20 to 40 years and above. To acquire the most accurate results and validate findings, 200 respondents who accurately reflected the characteristics of the sample population were chosen for the study. Through the use of the survey method, it was simple to contact the actual participants and gather the necessary data. Participants completed questionnaires, and data was gathered from them using the survey method. 200 people made up the study's population, which was too big to be interviewed, thus a random sample was chosen instead. Since 200 individuals could not be interviewed in the allotted time, a questionnaire was developed, and the answers were recorded. In this study, the unit of analysis is the general audience who is a user of both social and traditional media or any media to analyze the trust level.

Research Instrument

The closed-ended survey was designed to gather information for the current investigation. This study was modified because there were other studies on media credibility already in use in various parts of the world. Strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) on a five-point Likert scale were the responses to the survey. The demographic information in the survey, which included the respondents' gender, age, academic achievement, and area of residence, was the first step in the research process.

Findings and Analysis

Table 1 Exposure to social and traditional media

Reading newspaper	Frequency and Percentage
Dawn	(n = 58, 29.0%)
Jang	(n = 37, 18.5%)
The news	(n = 8, 4.0%)
No	(n = 96, 48.0%)
Watching TV	
ARY	(n = 79, 39.5%)
Geo News	(n = 49, 24.5%)
No	(n = 79, 39.5%)
Listening to radio	
Not at all	(n = 87, 43.5%)
Rarely	(n = 103, 51.5%)
Greatly	(n = 10, 5.0%)

Use of the Internet	
Not at all	(n = 36, 18.0%)
Rarely	(n = 6, 3.0%)
Greatly	(n = 158, 79.0%)

Table 1 is about Exposure to social and traditional media.' Most of the respondents stated that unfortunately they don't enjoy reading a newspaper. Majority of the public that said no (n = 96, 48.0%). The next table shows that whether the respondents enjoy watching television news or not. Among the 200 respondents, most of them said no (n = 79, 39.5%). The listening to radio news categories were rarely (n = 103, 51.5%). The findings show that the respondents who listened to radio news were rarely. The use of the internet table states that among the 200 respondents, the majority of the audience uses the internet greatly (n = 158, 79.0%).

Table 2 Usage of media

Hours spend on a newspaper	Frequency and percentage
Less than 1 hour	(n = 149, 74.5%)
1 hour	(n = 33, 16.5%)
2 hours	(n = 18, 9.0%)
Hours spend on TV	
Less than 1 hour	(n = 88, 44.0%)
1 hour	(n = 41, 20.5%)
2 hours	(n = 18, 9.0%)
More than 2 hours	(n = 53, 26.5%)
Hours spend on radio news	
Less than 1 hour	(n = 160, 80.0%)
1 hour	(n = 10, 5.053%)
2 hours	(n = 2, 1.0%)
More than 2 hours	(n = 28, 14.0%)
Hours spend on internet	
Less than 1 hour	(n = 18, 9.0%)

1 hour	(n = 21, 10.5%)
2 hours	(n = 16, 8.0%)
More than 2 hours	(n = 145, 72.5%)

Table 2 shows the usage of traditional and social media. The categories of the following table are less than 1 hour, 1 hour, 2 hours or more than 2 hours while the data of more than 2 hours were none. Among the recorded data, less than 1-hour respondents were more than any of the other categories. Among the 200 respondents, we asked them about the hours spent on TV. The recorded data that we found were quite surprising as most of them said less than 1 hour. Majority of the 200 respondents that have spent time on listening to radio news are less than 1 hour (n = 160, 80.0%). In the last category, where we asked respondents about their time spend on the usage of internet in which the vast majority of the respondents said more than 2 hours (n = 145, 72.5%).

Table 3 Accuracy level

Variables	Low	Medium	High	Chi-square
Journalistic accuracy	(n = 104, 52.0%)	(n = 49, 24.5%)	(n = 47, 23.5%)	(31.390, P = .000)
Accuracy of news stories	(n = 100, 50.0%)	(n = 43, 21.5%)	(n = 57, 28.5%)	(26.470, P = .000)
Accurate facts and figures	(n = 95, 47.5%)	(n = 44, 22.0%)	(n = 61, 30.5%)	(20.230, P = .000)
Overall accuracy of a news story	(n = 73, 36.5%)	(n = 61, 30.5%)	(n = 66, 33.0%)	(1.090, P = .580)

The categories of the table are low (n = 104, 52.0%), medium (n = 49, 24.5%) and high (n = 47, 23.5%) while the chi-square is (n = .000) which indicates that the people's perception about the quality of journalism in Pakistan has been rated significantly low and this significance has been rated through chi-square as well. The second category is about the extent of truth in a news story. Most of the respondents completely disagree and it has been also tested through Chi-square which is very low. The third category is about the facts and figures properly stated in a news story and among the 200 respondents, most of them disagree (n = 95, 47.5%) which is quite visible through the results of Chi-square. The question about the overall accuracy of a news story arises and the results are tested through Chi-square which indicates that the accuracy is very low.

Table 4 Credibility

Variables	Low	Medium	High	Chi-square
Credibility of	(n = 107,	(n = 37,	(n = 56,	(39.310, P =

Pakistani TV	53.2%)	18.5%)	28.0%)	.000)
Credibility of Pakistani newspapers	(n = 90, 45.0%)	(n = 50, 25.0%)	(n = 60, 30.0%)	(13.000, P = .002)
Credibility of radio news	(n = 91, 45.5%)	(n = 53, 26.5%)	(n = 56, 28.0%)	(13.390, P = .001)
The credibility of internet news	(n = 71, 35.5%)	(n = 34, 17.0%)	(n = 95, 47.5%)	(28.330, P = .000)
Credible sources of information	(n = 58, 29.0%)	(n = 60, 30.0%)	(n = 82, 41.0%)	(5.230, P = .070)

The next concept is about 'credibility,' which states the credibility levels of social and traditional media in Pakistan. Among 200 respondents, majority of them feel low (n = 107, 53.2%) about the credibility of Pakistani TV channels and this has also been proved through Chi-square as well. The categories of the credibility of Pakistani newspapers are really low (n = 90, 45.0%), and we have also applied to prove that the credibility is significantly low (13.000, P = .002) in the Pakistani context. The findings of the radio news table show that the results are significantly low and have been proved through the results of Chi-square. Among the 200 respondents, the credibility of the news on the internet is extremely high (n = 95, 47.5%) and the results of Chi-square prove it. In the last category, the majority of the respondents surprisingly agree regarding the sources of information and the results of the chi-square proves them to be extremely high (5.230, P = .070).

Table 5 Influence

Variables	Low	Medium	High	Chi-square
Influence of external factors	(n = 32, 16.0%)	(n = 43, 21.5%)	(n = 125, 62.5%)	(77.470, P = .000)
Influence of commercial factors	(n = 27, 13.5%)	(n = 20, 10.0%)	(n = 153, 76.5%)	(168.070, P = .000)
Influence of political interest	(n = 24, 12.0%)	(n = 31, 15.5%)	(n = 145, 72.5%)	(138.430, P = .000)
Pluralism in Pakistani journalism	(n = 50, 25.0%)	(n = 49, 24.5%)	(n = 101, 50.5%)	(26.530, P = .000)

Among the 200 respondents, many of them feel significantly high (n = 125, 62.5%) when asked about the construction of news stories and if they are influenced by external factors. This statement has also been tested through the chi-square test. When asked about the influence of commercial factors on news

stories, the respondents felt high about and it has also been tested by chi-square which shows that they do feel significantly high (168.070, P = .000) about it. Many of the respondents feel that the influence of political interest does go into the construction of news stories, we applied chi-square to check and it has shown that the majority of them feel tremendously high (138.430, P = .000). In the last category, many of them feel high about the pluralism in Pakistani journalism and the results of the chi-square proves it.

Table 6 Social and Psychological Satisfaction

Variables	Low	Medium	High	Chi-square
Social and Psychological satisfaction	(n = 76, 38.0%)	(n = 35, 17.5%)	(n = 89, 44.5%)	(23.830, P = .000)
Satisfactory truth	(n = 102, 51.0%)	(n = 43, 21.5%)	(n = 55, 27.5%)	(29.170, P = .000)

The table below shows how respondents feel about social and psychological satisfaction. The categories are low (n = 76, 38.0%), medium (n = 35, 17.5%) and high (n = 89, 44.5%). We applied chi-square to check that the majority of the respondents feel significantly high (23.830, P = .000) about it. In the last category, among 200 respondents, the majority of them don't think that the facts and figures stated about any kind of news story on the internet are completely true.

Testing of hypotheses

Table 4 is about the audience's perception of various dimensions regarding the credibility of Pakistani journalism. As the evidence suggests and the chi-square tests reveal that except for the source credibility and the credibility of internet news, the hypotheses have been supported in all the other variables i.e., credibility of Pakistani TV (n = 107, 53.2%), (P = .000), credibility of Pakistani newspapers (n = 90, 45.0%) (P = .002) and the credibility of radio news (n = 91, 45.5%), (P = .001).

Discussion

This study used survey methods to collect the response of a chosen sample in order to document audience trust in journalism, the integrity of social and traditional media, and its effect on media preference in Pakistan.

This study investigated how people in Pakistan evaluated the credibility of traditional and social media. It has been demonstrated that reading the news generally increases trust in the media. First and foremost, it is crucial for people to routinely and widely consume news to foster trust in the media. Since traditional media outlets have grown, especially fast-growing private news channels, and social media, primarily Facebook and Twitter, the veracity of both outlets has been under question. It's interesting to see that as media usage rises, credibility also gradually rises. The first gender moderator of the current investigation produced some intriguing results. Although the utilisation ratio is not higher, male media users' perceptions were found to be more significant.

The second notion was the exposure to social and traditional media, the results show that the majority of the people don't even feel the need to read a newspaper or listen to radio news, instead, they prefer watching TV or using the internet for that matter. It's quite evident that media credibility is strongly linked to its exposure or usage of a certain medium, here the medium that the respondents preferred was the use of social media. Participants advocated more time on the Internet.

The use and the comparison between traditional and social media show the non-stop growth of the use of social media in Pakistan, which further breaks it down into two concepts i.e., accuracy and credibility. The recorded answers showed that the accuracy of a news story isn't always accurate and doesn't always represent the whole truth or context. They do feel credible regarding some sources of information but the accuracy is still nowhere to be found. The accuracy level remained low.

Now, comes the notion of credibility, it has been proved through the results that participants don't feel that the news they read in the newspaper watch on TV, or listen to on the radio is credible, however, they do feel that the news found on the internet is highly credible since this modern world is all about social media and how the news of every second is being updated every second on the websites, they feel that the news on the internet is credible rather than news found on traditional mediums. Those who have low trust in news are more likely to say that their main sources of information or news in general is social media, news blogs or news websites. They also feel that the news they read on the internet has a somewhat catchy touch to it rather than the news they read on traditional media. They feel that since every journalist is on every social media app these days, it gives them and the audience the advantage of continually updating their social accounts or websites when there is any kind of happening. Another element that contributes to the credibility of social media is entertainment news, celebrities and sports personalities have their profiles on social media which is also a human interest, therefore, entertainment news is also explored on social media.

The participants feel more reliable towards news that they read and gravitate more towards the facts and figures found on the internet but when asked about their social and psychological satisfaction towards those facts and figures found on the internet, a greater number of respondents said that they don't feel that strongly about those facts and figures found on the internet since everything you read on internet isn't always trustworthy and reliable. More than half of the population in Pakistan thinks that journalism is based greatly on the people's social and psychological needs. They also feel great about the concept of pluralism, they think that people belonging to different social classes, religions races etc., can live in a society together but can continue to enjoy and have different traditions and interests.

Last but not least, when it comes to influence, almost every respondent feels strongly that the news stories are influenced by external, commercial and political factors. They also think that specially political interest goes a long way in the construction of a news story and in the overall journalistic perception and journalism in Pakistan.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to explore the accuracy and credibility factors in the Pakistani context, the problem of trust has grown more complicated in a world where there are several news sources to pick from and numerous platforms to express opinions. The gender and usage factors have shown that males have higher media usage preferences than females.

The study explored that the usage of social media is much more than traditional media, it has also been noted that people find the news on the internet more credible as it has a direct relationship with the source itself, now that everyone has social media accounts. It has also been discovered that the news on the internet has been more influence and psychological satisfaction. People watch what they want to watch at the click of one button, the easy use of social media and the availability of every news on hand 24/7. On top of this, those who follow social media and online news aggregators believe that they provide easy and quick access to different news sources and a variety of news as opposed to those who follow traditional media sources.

However, it is necessary to exercise caution when determining the causal relationship between low trust in the news media and a preference for online news sources. While it is conceivable that people who have low trust in the news prefer social media sources because they actively seek out a wider variety of perspectives or a non-mainstream point of view, it is also possible that people who prefer non-mainstream sources for other reasons have subsequently grown to have low trust as a result. Those who claim to prefer social media as a news source might be doing so because they find it to be a practical

method to stay informed while engaging in other activities as well.

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