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Examining the Role of TV Channels in Promoting Environmental Awareness Among University Students in Pakistan: A Pathway to Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

As environmental crises escalate, the need for solutions becomes ever more pressing. In current situation, media outlets play a crucial role in educating the public about environmental issues. This study investigates the role of TV channels in projecting eco-friendly content and examines how university students perceive such content. Utilizing a survey method, data was collected from 110 university students, comprising both male and female, through purposive sampling. Survey questions focused on the role of TV news channels in highlighting environmental issues. Analysis, employing t-tests and descriptive statistics, revealed that a majority of respondents believe TV channels do not allocate sufficient airtime to environmental coverage. Notably, PTV emerged as the leading channel in environmental content production. Furthermore, TV channels effectively promoted initiatives such as the "CLEAN GREEN PAKISTAN" movement and the "Adopt a Park" scheme. The study underscores the potential for TV channels to significantly contribute to environmental awareness among the masses. This research not only sheds light on media influence but also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to environmental sustainability and education.

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INTRODUCTION

Electronic media, including television, radio, and the internet, serves as a ubiquitous means of disseminating information to a broad audience (Lade *et al.*; Familusi *et al.*, 2014;

Nda and Samson, 2023). Television, in particular, holds a prominent position due to its visual and auditory engagement (Hidayat *et al.*, 2023). Its influence on societal norms and daily life is undeniable. Use of media is now considered as one of the prime component to disseminate information but sometimes also facing some challenges (Fauzi *et al.*). For example, challenges of mainstream mass media in Norway regarding the plastic waste issue in the Nordic region. Likewise, one more study underscores the gap in understanding this influence. It also emphasizes the core role of media in shaping policy agendas, and mobilizing public opinion (Schimberg, 2024). In context of Pakistan, the television industry's evolution has been significant since the inception of Pakistan Television (PTV) in 1964, marking the beginning of a dynamic media landscape (Yusuf and Schoemaker, 2013). However, there is a deficiency in broadcasting a series of environmentally-related content and it is important to address the current need for promoting context centered around environmental issues. Although, PTV was later nationalized and significantly influenced the course of television broadcasting in Pakistan. The emergence of private channels such as Shalimar Television Network (STN), ARY Digital, and GEO TV further diversified the media landscape, contributing to information dissemination and cultural promotion (Imtiaz, 2016).

However, amidst the proliferation of television channels, a disproportionate emphasis on political content often eclipses critical issues such as the environment. Given the urgency of environmental challenges, it is crucial to assess the extent to which TV channels prioritize eco-friendly content in their news coverage. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the role of TV channels in highlighting environmental issues and their impact on public awareness, particularly among university students. Understanding the influence of TV channels on public awareness and perceptions regarding environmental issues is crucial for fostering sustainable behaviors and addressing environmental challenges. This study aims to inform media practitioners, policymakers, and educators by highlighting the role of media in shaping attitudes toward environmental conservation, as well as promoting eco-friendly content in television programs.

Thus, the primary objective of the current study includes; (a) exploring how TV channels are projecting eco-friendly content in news and (b) assessing university students' perceptions of eco-friendly content in TV news. This research approach of this study is unique because content of television channels strength is evaluated for prioritizing green content over the political highlights. It also aims to understand how effective television can be in creating environmental consciousness among university students. The selected category of respondents are directly predicting the forthcoming possible changes in environmental conservation. Overall, this research play a significant role to emphasize on the role of electronic media, particularly television, in promoting environmental awareness and fostering sustainable behaviors among the viewers, with a focus on university students in Pakistan.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this research study relies on agenda-setting and framing theories. Both of the frameworks aim to explain, predict, and understand phenomena within media communication as adopted previously in studies (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007; Shah *et al.*, 2009). However, agenda-setting theory only focuses on the media's power to shape public agendas. Most of time tends to overlook the influence of non-

media factors such as interpersonal communication, personal experiences, and cultural norms. On the other hand, framing theories are influenced by journalists' perspectives, organizational norms, and societal values, leading to potential bias.

AGENDA-SETTING THEORY

Agenda Setting Theory is by far the most important approach that explains the influence that the media's emphasis and priority given to news have over the perception of the public about the important issues (McCombs and Stroud, 2014; Buyanza-Mwidima and Governance, 2024). It even highlights the main inserts for TV shows. from Adversity to Achievement: The Evolution of Nelson Mandela The process of accessibility reflected in cognitive realm is called "accessibility", which means that the given pieces of information are about a matter that is presently considered important or is a problem that needs immediate attention. With the accessibility of media, which has news stories and choose what to display in their screens, the perceived reality is shaped by the targeted audience about certain topics in their minds. The theory operates at two levels: the media is analyzed on the first level as a form of the influence on people's thoughts that are nearest to their hearts, and on the second level the media is looked upon as a force that shapes perceptions and attitudes toward specific issues. All in all, the choosing and defining content is the key factor that makes this theory possible and meaningful (Boydston, 2013). For example, a documentary entitled, "An Inconvenient Truth" directed by Davis Guggenheim and "The Killing Fields" by The New York Times, exposing environmental degradation caused by industrial pollution. In addition, social media campaign are playing vital role such as #BeatPlasticPollution campaign by National Geographic.

FRAMING THEORY

A development of Agenda Setting Theory, which is known as Framing Theory merely reflects the importance of how people perceive and process information for their decision-making process. The essay reveals that the media not only outlines the agenda but also decides how the present issues are perceived by the public by broadcasting facts from news each day. These frames act as containers in which the information is placed and they actually determine how much of that information is accepted by the audience and whether it will be used for decision making. The point in and out of the issue can also be said to be playing the role of frame in that it leads people to make some specific issues and discard others. Its function is to the choice making and decision making across domains either business, agricultural, and social-military.

APPLICATION OF THEORY

The nexus of agenda-setting and framing theories develops a ground coverage for this research study. This media influence theories emphasize the good role of media in shaping the public thinking and opinion. Here the focus is addressed on the manner in which TV news channels have taken it upon themselves to set the agenda and frame discussions on the harmonious relationship that exist within the context of environmental conservation. Through the media, channels provide valid definitions and create awareness. This in turn stimulates environmental consciousness and initiatives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section, covering the whole research process, includes data collection approaches as well as the devices and methods applied to confirm the consistency of the facts found. It acts as a mock framework which illustrates the problem-solving of a research study in general. This writing data collection purposes to the influence of news channels (run on main channels) in sufficing an ecofriendly environment, it also aims to understand the perception of university students in Lahore about it, Pakistan.

Research Design

The design of the research consists in an integration of diverse elements that theoretically exists in an interrelated manner. A trendy method is used to manage my research work on environmental awareness through television news channels as well as the perception of students in Lahore University.

Tools of Data Collection

The primary data collection tool is a survey, utilizing questionnaires to analyze the role of TV news channels in promoting eco-friendly environments and their impact on people's perceptions, particularly among university students of Lahore.

Survey Method

The survey method focuses on gathering information and opinions systematically. Close-ended questions are utilized in a questionnaire to obtain factual information and insights into the perceptions, understanding, awareness, effects, and behaviors of target respondents.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire consisting of 15 close-ended questions is designed to gather data on the role of TV news channels in promoting eco-friendly environments and its impact on people, specifically among university students in Lahore. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS software.

Universe

The universe of this study comprises university students in Lahore who watch TV news channels, with a sample size of 110 respondents selected for the survey.

Population

The population of this research study includes university students in Lahore who watch TV news channels. Limiting the research study to student in Lahore, was likely a strategic choice due to feasibility concerns. These feasibility concerns includes logistical ease and resource constraints.

Sampling

Purposive sampling is applied to select respondents who watch TV news channels among the university student population in Lahore, aiming to understand the role of TV news

channels in promoting eco-friendly environments effectively. This student group is specifically targeted who actively consume TV channels.

Conceptualization

Conceptualization involves defining key terms used in the research precisely. The researcher provides dictionary definitions of key terms such as "role of TV news channels in making our environment eco-friendly as perceived by university students of Lahore."

Operationalization

Operationalization defines concepts in a feasible, measurable, and beneficial manner for the research. The researcher provides operational definitions for key terms, ensuring clarity and applicability within the study.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis of this research is:

H1. TV news channels effectively highlight eco-friendly issues among university students.

H2. TV news channels dont highlight eco-friendly issues among university students.

Overall, this research methodology outlines a systematic approach to investigate the role of TV news channels in promoting eco-friendly environments and understanding their perception among university students in Lahore.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This research is based on "The Role of TV News Channels in making our Environment Eco-Friendly" and the researcher chose a quantitative research method to get the scientific data. After that the researcher proceeded forward and completed the survey phase by getting the questionnaires filled by the university students of Lahore, the next step of the study began with evaluating the findings of the queries and accessing the gathered data. This chapter is based on the findings and the interpretations that originated from the online survey conducted by the researcher.

Socio-demographic profile of respondents

Table 1.
Frequency and Percentage of the gender of respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percent
Female	84	76.4
Male	25	22.7
Total	110	100.0

According to the results, 22.7% are male respondents and 76.4% are female respondents (**Table 1**). Respondents in the study possess a diverse range of qualifications, reflecting a spectrum of educational backgrounds and expertise. The qualifications vary from undergraduate degrees like B.com, BFA (Hons), BS, Bs (Hons), BSc, BSc (Hons), BSCS, to specialized degrees such as DNS, DPT, and Pharm D. Additionally, respondents include individuals with intermediate qualifications and advanced degrees like MS and PhD. The

prevalence of certain qualifications, such as Bs (Hons) and DPT, suggests a significant representation of respondents with in-depth academic and professional training in specific fields. Overall, this diversity of qualifications enriches the respondent pool, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter under study (**Table 2**).

Table 2.**Frequency and Percentage of the qualification of respondents**

Qualification	Number of respondents	Percentage
B.com	1	0.91
BFA (Hons)	2	1.82
BS	5	4.55
Bs (Hons)	58	52.73
BSc	5	4.55
BSc (Hons)	1	0.91
BSCS	2	1.82
DNS	3	2.73
DPT	9	8.18
Electrical Engineer	1	0.91
Intermediate	15	13.64
MS	2	1.82
Nutritionist	2	1.82
Pharm D	1	0.91

Table 3.**Frequency and Percentage of the Age of respondents**

Age groups	Number of respondents	Percentage
15-19	9	8.18
20-24	87	79.09
25-29	11	10.00
30 and above	3	2.73

Furthermore, **Table 3** shows the majority of respondents fall within the age range of 20-24, comprising a substantial 79.09% of the total respondents. This age group represents young adults who are typically university students or recent graduates, making them a key demographic for understanding attitudes and behaviors related to environmental awareness and sustainable development. Their inclusion in the study is crucial as they are at a stage in life where they are likely to be actively engaged with educational pursuits and social issues, including environmental concerns. The age group of 15-19, though smaller in proportion at 8.18%, still contributes significantly to the sample. These respondents are likely to be in their late teens, potentially high school students or early university entrants. Their perspectives can offer insights into the environmental awareness and engagement of younger individuals who are transitioning into adulthood and higher education. The age group of 25-29, comprising 10% of the respondents, represents a slightly older segment of the sample. These individuals may be in the later stages of their

university education or early stages of their careers, bringing a different perspective and level of maturity to the study. Lastly, the age group of 30 and above, while the smallest at 2.73%, still provides valuable diversity to the sample. These respondents likely include university faculty, staff, or older students who may offer perspectives shaped by their broader life experiences and potentially different levels of environmental awareness.

Respondents Insights for TV channels and their impact

The findings reveal that a substantial portion of university students surveyed either do not regularly watch TV news channels (45.5%) or are uncertain about their viewership habits (18.2%). This indicates a notable segment of the population that may not be directly exposed to environmental messaging through this medium. However, it's encouraging to note that 36.4% of respondents report being regular viewers of TV news channels. This suggests that there is a considerable audience within the university student demographic who are potentially receptive to environmental content disseminated through television platforms (**Table 4**).

Table 4.

A regular viewer of TV news channel

Response	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	20	18.2
No	50	45.5
Yes	40	36.4

Table 5.

A percentage of Respondents perceive either TV channels are creating awareness regarding environment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	39	35.45
No	31	28.18
yes	40	36.36

The findings in **Table 5** indicate a relatively balanced distribution of perceptions among the respondents. A notable proportion (36.36%) perceive that TV channels are indeed creating awareness regarding the environment. Conversely, 28.18% of respondents express a negative perception, indicating that they do not believe TV channels are effective in creating awareness about environmental issues. Furthermore, a substantial portion of respondents (35.45%) express uncertainty regarding whether TV channels are contributing to environmental awareness. This uncertainty highlights an opportunity for further investigation into the specific content, formats, and delivery mechanisms utilized by TV channels in addressing environmental topics and engaging their audience.

Table 6.

Respondent's perception of channels coverage of the environment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	29	26.4
No	44	40.0
Yes	35	31.8

Table 7.

TV Channels	Frequency	Percentage
ARY News	22	20.0
Duniya News	28	25.5
Geo News	15	13.6
PTV News	39	35.5

According to survey responses, PTV News is perceived most positively in terms of eco-friendly content, with 35.5% of respondents recognizing its efforts in this regard. This suggests that PTV News is potentially viewed as a leading provider of environmentally conscious content among the selected TV channels. Duniya News follows closely behind, with 25.5% of respondents acknowledging its eco-friendly content. On the other hand, ARY News and Geo News receive lower percentages of positive perception, with 20.0% and 13.6% of respondents, respectively, recognizing their eco-friendly content. This suggests that while these channels may include some environmentally conscious content, it may not be as prominently recognized or acknowledged by respondents compared to PTV News and Duniya News (**Table 7**).

Table 8.**TV news channels time duration in coverage for environmental issues**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	38	34.55
No	48	43.64
Yes	24	21.82

Table 8 illustrate the findings reveal a notable portion of respondents (43.64%) who perceive that TV news channels do not allocate sufficient time to covering environmental issues. Conversely, There are 21.82% of respondents perceive TV news channels sufficiency to dedicate time for the coverage of environmental issues, indicating a recognition of some level of attention given to environmental topics. Additionally, a significant portion of respondents (34.55%) shows uncertainty.

Table 9.**Media Influence in Respondent's perception**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	37	33.64
No	13	11.82
Yes	57	51.82

According to the findings, a significant majority of respondents (51.82%) believe that the media does indeed influence perceptions related to environmental awareness. On the other hand, a smaller proportion of respondents (11.82%) express the opinion that the media does not influence perceptions related to environmental awareness (**Table 9**).

Table 10.**TV News Coverage of Environmental Pollution as per respondent's perception**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	24	21.82
No	42	38.18
Yes	42	38.18

The findings reveal a balanced distribution of perceptions among respondents. An equal proportion (38.18%) of respondents believe that TV news channels both cover and do not cover environmental pollution adequately. This suggests a mixed perception among university students regarding the comprehensiveness of TV news coverage on this critical environmental issue (**Table 10**).

Table 11.
Government Efforts Towards Creating an Eco-Friendly Environment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Maybe	25	22.7
No	46	41.8
Yes	37	33.6

The findings reveal in **Table 11** that a significant portion of respondents (41.8%) feel that government efforts in this regard are lacking. Conversely, 33.6% of respondents believe that the government is making efforts toward creating an eco-friendly environment. Moreover, 22.7% of respondents express uncertainty regarding government efforts to create an eco-friendly environment.

Table 12.
Do you think that "Adopt a Park Scheme" in Pakistan has been effective?

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	41	37.3
No	28	25.5
Yes	38	34.5

Table 12 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the "Adopt a Park Scheme" in Pakistan. According to the findings, a significant portion of respondents (34.5%) believe that the "Adopt a Park Scheme" has been effective. Conversely, 25.5% of respondents express the opinion that the "Adopt a Park Scheme" has not been effective. In addition, 37.3% of respondents express uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of the "Adopt a Park Scheme."

Table 13.
TV news channels promoted the "Clean-Green Pakistan" movement

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	35	31.8
No	27	24.5
Yes	44	40

Table 13 also suggests a mixed perception among respondents regarding the effectiveness of TV news channels in promoting the "Clean-Green Pakistan" movement for citizens to adopt it. While a significant proportion (40%) of respondents believe that TV news channels have indeed promoted the movement well enough for citizens to adopt it, there are also substantial numbers expressing uncertainty (31.8%) or skepticism (24.5%).

Table 14.**PM behavior analysis towards the "Clean-Green Pakistan" movement in Pakistan**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	26	23.6
No	14	12.7
Yes	65	59.1

Table 14 indicates a strong perception among respondents that the Prime Minister is indeed adapting the "Clean-Green Pakistan" movement in our country. A significant majority (59.1%) of respondents express the belief that the Prime Minister is actively embracing and implementing initiatives associated with the movement.

Table 15.**Respondents' opinions regarding the implementation of programs about eco-friendly environment**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	19	17.3
No	6	5.5
Yes	80	72.7

Table 15 presents respondents' opinions regarding the implementation of programs on TV news channels aimed at guiding people about maintaining an eco-friendly environment. According to the findings, a vast majority of respondents (72.7%) express the belief that TV news channels should indeed start programs to guide people about maintaining an eco-friendly environment. Conversely, a small proportion of respondents (5.5%) have a viewpoint indicating potential skepticism or reservations regarding the efficacy or necessity of such programs.

Table 16.**Evaluating the strength of TV news channels to launch campaigns or advertisements for making the environment eco-friendly as per respondent's perception**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	23	20.9
No	36	32.7
Yes	45	40.9

Table 16 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the adequacy of campaigns or advertisements launched by TV news channels to promote eco-friendliness in the environment. According to the findings, a significant proportion of respondents (40.9%) believe that TV news channels do indeed launch enough campaigns or advertisements for making the environment eco-friendly. Conversely, 32.7% of respondents express the opinion that TV news channels do not launch enough campaigns or advertisements for making the environment eco-friendly. This indicates that there is a notable segment of the population that perceives inadequacies or gaps in the promotional efforts of television channels regarding environmental sustainability. Moreover, 20.9% of respondents express uncertainty regarding whether TV news channels launch. **Table 17** shows the respondents' actions toward promoting an eco-friendly environment after viewing environmental content on TV news channels. According to the findings, a considerable portion of respondents (43.6%) indicate that they follow and start taking significant steps for an eco-friendly environment after watching environmental content on TV news channels. Conversely, 29.1% of respondents report that they are not very

successful for implementing any steps for an eco-friendly environment after watching environmental content on TV news channels.

Table 17.

Respondent's Action plan under media influence

Response	Frequency	Percent
Maybe	24	21.8
No	32	29.1
Yes	48	43.6

This indicates that while some viewers may be exposed to environmental messaging, they may not translate this exposure into actions. These reasons are needed to explore further what factors are not same of this group as compared to former mentioned group with a positive attitude. Moreover, 21.8% of respondents expressed uncertainty regarding whether they have taken steps for an eco-friendly environment after watching environmental content on TV news channels.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Pakistan is suffering from the most severe environmental cases that include the climate change aftermath, deforestation, and the population growth implications. These issues contribute to the rise of surge improper and high-level hospitalization, disrupted agricultural production, and affected economy. Therefore, the press, be it print or electronic, if nothing else, may do its stuff properly to sensitize the public at large about the environmental problems. The other essence is that it strives to educate people on these friendly practices towards nature. Through such study, University students in Lahore shared their perspectives about a role that could make the environment eco-friendly more and more by means of television news channels. Therefore, the current paper, in its essence, serves as a tool of bringing a new light to the diverse blindfolded views of the Pakistani nation concerning the media influence, government efforts and community engagement on environmental awareness among the university students.

A research conducted showed that TV news channels are, in fact, considered as important information providers to detail environmental issues and call for greenerland. However this needs to be noted that there are some response that can be considered as negative reactions rated by the respondents. It is advised to distribute the slots for environmental news and editorial series, that the television news channels reserves more time for the broadcast. The idea is to have various programs. Currently, TV channels put their effort into not only to educate the public about the environment problems but also the frequencies of those campaigns which promote environment-friendly habits get more and more higher.

Such initiatives are vital in overcoming conservation problems and ensuring the existence of harmony with the environment in Pakistan. Although TV news channels have positive roles in governance, it is imperative to note that the current study has some shortcomings as well. Individual researchers should certainly focus on what duty role media have in educating and modifying behaviors that relate to environment and in what extent it is effective in a diverse region of Pakistan. Lastly, the implications for practice include

prioritizing informative and educational content during prime viewing hours that can attract more audience. Likewise, incorporating programs dedicated to science, history, and critical thinking can help broaden viewers' perspectives. These programs can easily be planned by collaborating with educational experts to develop. In addition, allocating resources towards media literacy programs will also play pivotal role. Similarly, educational institutions can also integrate media literacy education into their curriculum. Based on these future trajectories, some research can be conducted to determine the peak viewing times. In this research, the researcher may conduct audience research or analyze viewership data to identify peak viewing hours. Similarly, in what grade curriculum these changes may be added, can also be one of the area of research.

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