Pakistani Elite Press and Public Agenda: The Case of Women Social Issues

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Abstract
This study attempts to find the correlation between the coverage of social issues of women by Pakistani elite press and the preferences of its readers regarding the coverage. The results show that Pakistani elite press has its own policy to give space and prominence by covering social issues of women in its contents and its readers are not agreed with its policy. The policy adopted by both dailies is different from each other. The News did not give more space and prominence to the issues in its coverage. The issues of murder and rape are on the top in the list of the agenda of The News. On the other hand, The daily Dawn has a policy to highlight the issues by covering them with more space and prominence. The issues of murder and women rights are on the top in the list of the agenda of Dawn. While in perspective of audience characteristics, the readers those higher in age, education, belong to social sciences, female, and married comparatively have more correspondence with the agenda of the dailies. The issues of murder, rape, and women rights have received maximum coverage by Pakistani elite press in overall coverage.
Keywords: Elite, Newspapers, Women, Social, Issues, Dawn, News

Introduction
In this present age of information, mass media is being considered as a fourth pillar of a democratic state. It is because of their primary functions and social responsibilities which they have to perform for the audiences of a society. Lasswel andWright noted the functions of the mass media: "Surveillance of the environment, the Correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment, the transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next generation, and entertainment"(James, Watson, 2003). While Denis McQuail adds another function of mass media that is "Mobilisation" which means "campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development work and sometimes religion"(James, Watson, 2003). The 'to-day mass media' is more active and responsible that it was considered earlier. There are many other 'functional responsibilities' which have been assigned and defined by the today's modern mass media scientists. If all functions and responsibilities view in a glance whatever their nature 'objective or subjective' somehow and however the functions and responsibilities of mass media fall in the first two functions and responsibilities 'bring by media to(functional) and society in responding to(responsible)' those weredefined by Lasswel and Wright in1960. Agenda-setting function is the extension of the first two functions of the mass media, 'Surveillance' and 'Correlation'. It is widely accepted that mass media have to perform their functions being a third party between the ruler and the ruled. For this purpose, mass media have to follow the primary and essential concept of objectivity to maintain their credibility among their audiences. The credibility is the root cause of their audiences' interaction and attachment with them. But beyond this view, mass media are being observed bias in different perspectives in their nature and functions. If it is in the reality anddespite of the fact to know, people still have contact to mass media to know, this kind of fact refer to mass media effects to dependency theory, developed by Ball-Rokeach and DeFluer. As we observe in the perspective of agenda-setting function of mass media that the mass media hold a position and have the ability to shape and change the "picture inside the mind", means thoughts/attitudes and beliefs of their audiences towards the "picture outside the world" means to reality or real happening in the world. Walter Lippmann, a distinguished political columnist, in 1922 noted in his book "public Opinion", that "since people had only limited opportunities to observe important events in a firsthand manner, they were dependent upon the press to provide them with information on what those events were like". (Walter, Lippmann, 1992)

Rationale of the study
This study attempts to know the correlation between the coverage of Pakistani elite press on social issues of women and the agreement level of its readers with the coverage. This study is an effort to know that how Pakistani elite press gives the coverage to the social issues of women and how its readers regard it as justify according to their personal preferences.

Rationale of the newspapers
Rationale for the selection of these two newspapers is that, both the newspapers are English language newspapers, easily available and having the vast circulation among the readers.

Daily Dawn
Dawn is the oldest and considered as the widely English language newspaper of Pakistan. It is certified by ABC Pakistan. It is published from Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad simultaneously.

Daily The News
The News is the second largest English language newspaper of Pakistan. It is certified by ABC Pakistan. It is published from Karachi, Lahore, IslamabadPakistan, New York, US and LondonUK simultaneously.

Statement of the problem
This study has focus on the social issues particularly of women and the statement of the problem is that how news media particularly newspapers considered the social issues of women important in its coverage and what the readers of these newspapers regard it justify according to the nature of the issue in their personal preferences.

Hypotheses
H.1: There is more likelihood that the readers of Pakistani elite press are less agreed with its coverage on social issues of women.
H.2: Those are higher in age has more agreement with newspapers agenda.
H.3: Those are higher level of education will be higher in agreement.
H.4: The teachers of social sciences group will be having greater agreement with the agenda of newspapers as compare to the other groups. (Natural sciences and Management science)
H.5: There is more likelihood that females would be having more agreement with the newspapers agenda as compare to the male teachers.
H.6: There is more likelihood that The News will be having more agreement with its readers' agenda as compare to the readers of Dawn.
H 7: The readers those are married will be more agreed as compare to the readers those are single.

Theoraticla Foundation
The study is being counducted under the theory of Agenda-Setting.

Research design
The nature of the study describes the correlation between Pakistani elite press and the agenda of the public with the time period of six years dated from 2002 to 2007. For this purpose to know, it required the appropriate tools to measure the contents of the elite press to know that how the issues have covered by it and then ask the opinions of its readers to know that how much they are agreed with the coverage of the elite dailies. This study has purpose the methods of content analysis, to measure the coverage of the elite press and survey, to ask its readers about their agreements with the elite press.

Population of the study
The population of content analysis of this study is The News (International) and the Daily Dawn of Pakistan from 1st January 2002 to 31st December 2007 for the purpose of the study. The population for the purpose of survey is the teachers of BahaudinZakarya University Multan and Punjab Group of Colleges Multan campuses.

Sample of the study
The sample of contents is every fifth Sunday after skipping four Sunday per year of each daily and each daily has a total number of ten newspapers per year. The simple random sampling is used for this purpose. This is relevant to mention here that the dates of the selected sample of contents have amended due to unavailability of them. In data presentation, chapter 4, the amended dates has labeled as (A) as mention the abbreviation of amendment. The sample of survey is the teachers those belong to Social sciences, Natural sciences and Management sciences.

Sample size
The sample size of contents is 60 newspapers from each daily. The total number of newspapers is 120 from both dailies. The sample size of survey is 100 teachers from both institutions.

Unit of the analysis

The unit of analysis is the heading of every news story about social issues of women on the national pages of the both dailies.

Categorizational construction of contents

The Categorizational construction of sample of contents is being given below as;

1. Assault
2. Suicide
3. Rape
4. Violence
5. Murder
6. Education
7. Abduction
8. Women Rights
9. Health

Characteristics of sample

The characteristics of sample of survey are being given below as;

Age   (24-51 and above)

Education (M.A/MSC, MPhil, PhD)

Subject (he/she taught)

Gender (male/female)

Marital Status (married/single)

Operationalization of variables

Here the operational definitions of the variables are given below as;

Assault: The news that contains the word 'attack' or 'assault' being used to describe the actions of the opponents will be considered in this category.

Suicide: The news that contains the word 'suicide' to describe the cause of death of woman will be considered in this category.

Rape: The news that contains the word 'rape' to describe the happening will be considered in this category.

Violence: The news that contain the word 'beat', 'disgrace' and 'violence' to describe the situation will be considered in this category.

Murder: The news that contains the word 'kill', 'murder' and 'sentences' to describe the happening will be considered in this category.

Education: The news that contains the word 'education', or 'statements' to describe the event or happening will be considered in this category.

Abduction: The news that contains the word 'abduction' to describe the happening will be considered in this category.

Women Rights: The news that uses the words or the sentences to describe the happening or event in favor to women or to talk about the rights for them will be considered in this category.

Health: The news that speaks about the health of women will be considered in this category.

Data Presentation and Results

Table No: 1

Overall coverage on the issues by Dawn

Issues	Total number of news	Total width of headings(in terms of centimeter)
Assault	6	66
Suicide	8	42.1
Rape	12	103.6
Violence	1	4.1
Murder	23	129.2
Education	7	52.3
Abduction	7	50.9
Women Rights	23	164.3
Health	1	8.2
Total	68	775.5

The total number of news are 68 and the total width heading in term of centimeter is 775.5.

Table No: 2

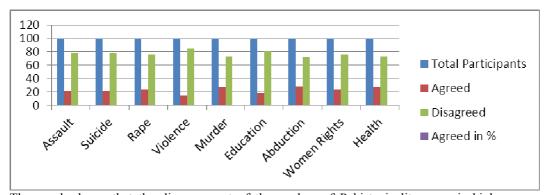**Overall coverage on the issues by The News**

Issues	Total number of news	Total width of headings(in terms of centimeter)
Assault	5	18.2
Suicide	13	35
Rape	40	159.4
Violence	11	64.4
Murder	43	168.5
Education	7	53.5
Abduction	24	65.2
Women Rights	17	131.4
Health	3	20.1
Total	163	569.6

The News received 163 number of news stories and it gave them the width of heading 569.6.cm.

Table No: 3

OVERALL AGREEMENT LEVEL

Total Participants	Agreed IN %	DISAGREED IN %
100	23	77

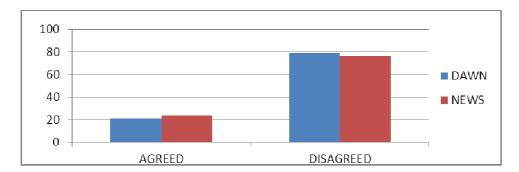| Headings	Total Participants	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed in %
Assault	100	22	78	22%
Suicide	100	22	78	22%
Rape	100	24	76	24%
Violence	100	15	85	15%
Murder	100	27	73	27%
Education	100	19	81	19%
Abduction	100	28	72	28%
Women Rights	100	24	76	24%
Health	100	27	73	27%

The graph shows that the disagreement of the readers of Pakistani elite press is higher as compare to the agreement. The issue of violence is higher in disagreement and low in agreement also in the rank of the list of issues.

Table No: 4

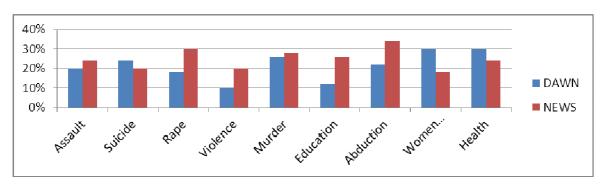| News paper	Agreed	Disagreed
Dawn	21	79
News	24	76

The graph shows that the readers of The News are more agreed than the readers of Dwan.

Table No: 5

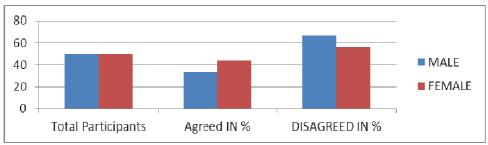**Issues wise comparison agreement of newspaper**

Headings	Dawn	News
Assault	20%	24%
Suicide	24%	20%
Rape	18%	30%
Violence	10%	20%
Murder	26%	28%
Education	12%	26%
Abduction	22%	34%
Women Rights	30%	18%
Health	30%	24%

The graph shows that The News has more agreement on the issues of assault, rape, violence, murder, education, and abduction as compare to Dawn. On the other hand, Dawn has more agreement on the issues of suicide, women rights, and health as compare to The News.

Table No: 6

Gender wise comparison of agreement of readers

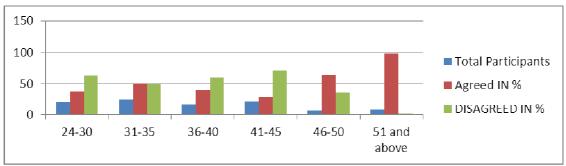| Total Participants	Total Participants	Agreed In %	Disagreed In %
MALE	50	34	66
FEMALE	50	44	56

The graph shows that females are more agreed and less disagreed as compare to males.

Table No: 7

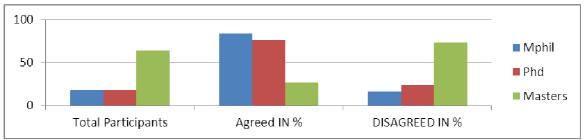| Age group	Total Participants	Agreed IN %	Disagreed IN %
24-30	21	37	63
31-35	25	50	50
36-40	17	40	60
41-45	22	29	71
46-50	7	64	36
51 and above	8	98	2

The graph shows that the readers those are low in age are less agreed as compare to the readers those are higher in age.

Table No: 8

Education wise comparison of agreement of readers

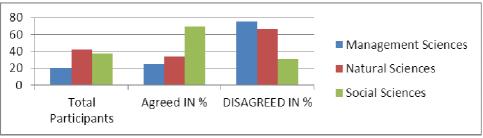| Education Group	Total Participants	Agreed IN %	Disagreed In %
Mphil	18	84	16
Phd	18	76	24
Masters	64	27	73

The graph shows that the readers those are M.Phil and Ph.Ds are more agreed as compare to the readers those are masters. While M.Phil has more agreement than Ph.Ds.

Table No: 9

Subject wise comparison of agreement of readers

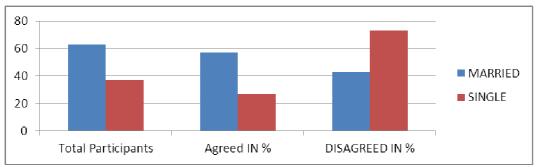| Subject Group	Total Participants	Agreed In %	Disagreed In %
Management Sciences	20	24	76
Natural Sciences	42	34	66
Social Sciences	38	69	31

The graph shows that readers those belong to social science group are more agreed as compare to other groups. (management sciences and natural sciences)

Table No: 10
Marital Status wise comparison of agreement of readers

Marital Status	Total Participants	Agreed IN %	Disagreed IN %
Married	63	57	43
Single	37	27	73

The graph shows that the readers those are married are more agreed as compare to the readers those are single.

Findings & Conclusion

This study examined the correlation of the agreement of the readers of Pakistani elite press with its coverage of the social issues of women. The data of content analysis have given in the form of tables and graphs to provide the daily practices by the elite press to cover the social issues of women in its contents and there is the collected data from survey also presented in the form of tables and graphs for give the whole picture of the study.

This study examined the seven hypotheses against the collected data by the scientific process. The results of these seven hypotheses are as below:

H: 1, The first hypothesis assumed that the readers of Pakistani elite dailies are likely less agreed with its coverage on the social issues of women. The data shows that the hypothesis is closely true in its nature because among the 100 participants there are only 23 participants are agreed with the agenda of the dailies that means there is only 23% agreement level and higher in disagreement level which is 77%. This means that the practices of social issues of women cover by the dailies are not according to the perceptions of its readers according to their preferences about the nature of the issues. The dailies lead their own priorities in placement and space given to the social issues of women.

H: 2, The second hypothesis assumed that the readers those are higher in age will be higher agreed than the readers those are low in age. The data shows that as the age is growing the agreement also going high. The age group of 24-30 that is lowest in age of the sample has 37% agreement while the age group of 51 and above that is highest in age of the sample has 98% agreement with agenda of the dailies regarding the coverage of social issues of women. The ages 31-50 between the lowest to highest have variation in their findings but when these reach at the top category of the age that is 50 and above, it becomes stable as the table and graph described in its presentation in chapter 4. The second hypothesis is true in its statement.

H: 3, The third hypothesis assumed that the readers those are higher in education will have the higher of agreement. That data shows that the readers of Mphil and PhDs have more agreement than the readers those are Masters. The readers of Masters' degree have 27% agreement and the readers those are Mphil have 84% agreement while the PhDs have 76% agreement with the coverage of elite dailies on the issues. The findings shows that the hypothesis is true when it test the agreement between Masters and Mphil/PhDs but not true when it applied Mphil towards PhDs. The table shows that the PhDs are less agreed as compare to the Mphil. Therefore the third hypothesis is partially accepted with in its agreement between the Masters and Mphil/PhDs and partially rejected with in its agreement between Mphil and PhDs.

H: 4, The fourth hypothesis assumed that the teachers of the group of social sciences are more agreed with the coverage as compare to the teachers of natural sciences and management sciences. The data supported the assumption. The teachers those belong to the group of social sciences have 69% of agreement as compare to the group of natural sciences that has 34% agreement and the group of management sciences that has 24% agreement with the agenda of coverage of the issues presented by the dailies. The fourth hypothesis is true in its statement that shows the table and graph.

H: 5, The fifth hypothesis assumed that the females are more agreed with the coverage of dailies as compare to the males. The data supported the assumption. The females have 44% agreement while the males have 34% agreement with the agenda of coverage of the dailies. It shows that the females are more agreed with the agenda of the dailies as compare to the males. The fifth hypothesis is true in its statement that shows the table and graph.

H: 6, The sixth hypothesis stated that The News is higher in agreement with its readers as compare to Dawn. The data shows that the readers of The News are 24% agreed while the readers of Dawn are 21% agreed. There is little difference between the agreements of the readers of both dailies. But the findings show that The News has more in agreement among its readers as compare to The Daily Dawn as the hypothesis assumed. The data also supported the assumption as the table and graph shows. The sixth hypothesis is true in its statement.

H: 7. The seventh hypothesis stated that the readers those are married have more agreement with the coverage of the dailies as compare to the readers those are singles. The data shows that the married readers are more agreed than the readers those are single. The married readers are 57% agreed as compare to the readers those are singles have 27% agreement. The data supported the statement of the sixth hypothesis and make it true in its statement as the table and graph presented.

All above the discussion on the findings indicate that the readers are not agreed with the practices of the dailies to cover the social issues of women. While in cross tabulation of the variables, we find that there is variation of agreement among the readers those are different in age, education, subject (sciences), gender, and marital status. These characteristics lead different perceptions about the coverage of the issues. These characteristics can be set their personal priorities towards the issues those varied in their natures. There is very important aspect of the characteristics that the coverage of the elite press is supported by only those who are higher in age, education, belongs to social sciences, females, and married. This aspect indicate that the dailies has the targeted readers those are higher in age and education, which refer to the maturity of a sense to understand the issues. The readers those have different exposure by having different sciences are varied in their preferences. It can be say that the social sciences deal these issues directly while other sciences do not. The females and married readers might be having a psychological aspect to support the coverage. The practices of the dailies are varied on issue to issue from each other. The News gave less coverage with more numbers of news. The News has overall 163 numbers of news and it gave them the width of headings 569.6 in terms of centimeters. While Dawn has overall 68 numbers of news and it gave them the width of headings 775.5 in terms of centimeters. Dawn gave more coverage with less numbers of news. This finding indicates that the readers of the elite press do not want to highlight the social issues with more prominence and space in the news coverage. This is why, The News has more agreement despite of giving less coverage to the more number of news as compare to Dawn which gave more coverage to the less number of news. This factor may involve the normative approach by the readers and the dailies also that set by the social settings in which they are. This study has different limitations from different aspects and the collected data is also not sufficient to claim that all these statements can be generalized in future. It is because there is recommended here that in future study there must take under the psychological aspects that why females are more agreed as compare to the males and so on. Furthermore, it is better to take single issue under the consideration of the study and then to ask that what media says and what their consumers think as we observed that the study examined single issue produced better picture of the results while the study that examined more than one issue produced complex results. To take a single issue is a true way to examine the correlation between the sender and the receiver. In the end, the overall result of the study shows that there is no substantial correspondence between Pakistani elite press and its readers on the social issues of women. There is obvious that news media have more agenda-setting effects on national and international issues rather than the local issues those are taken in this study. Therefore, it is said that this study did not adopt the appropriate strategy to cover social issues of women which required more sophisticated approach to look over them in news media and among the consumers also.

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