

The Role of Television Talk Shows in Increasing Youth Political Literacy

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Keywords	Abstract
Television, Talk Shows, Political Literacy, Youth, Mass Communication	<i>The primary purpose of this research study is to know how T.V. talk shows contribute to young people's political literacy. Quantitative research has been used for this study. A sample of 60 respondents was chosen who were either undergraduates or graduates studying mass communication. The age group of participants was between 17 to 30. Purposive sampling was used. Participants with mass communication backgrounds and political talk show viewers were chosen for the survey. The study's results depict that political Talk shows inflict the youth to make up their minds, and they decide at home which party to vote for the country's welfare and the best choice.</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

A political talk show is a kind of television program in which the presenter poses questions to political experts to gain insight into and resolve topical political issues. Most political talk programs have several guests, all of whom have been given the time to research and prepare for the show's subject discussion and, as a result, are experts in the discussed field. In the same way that the articles section of a newspaper is the mainstay of its readership and sales, political talk programs now significantly influence a network's viewership and popularity.

Talk programs about politics often include many experts' perspectives, piquing viewers' curiosity to find the honest answer. In a polite and informative approach, the group addresses a significant concern. Nowadays, media functions similarly to a fourth pillar of the state, which indicates that it has considerable influence in modern society. When a representative expresses doubts about the political system or proposes a solution to a pressing national or social problem on a political talk show, the idea may eventually find its way into law or, at the very least, be used by the opposition to score political points and spread disinformation about the ruling party. Talk shows on politics are a significant way for citizens to contribute to the public sphere by sharing their perspectives, offering solutions, and making their voices heard on important matters. Many people get their political information and knowledge from political talk programs. To ensure the survival of democracy, it plays a crucial role. Voting is essential to a democratic process since it reflects the people's will. When making decisions, the majority always wins; thus, every vote and every voter counts in a democratic society (Buckingham, 1993).

This study examined whether using various types of media for news consumption would influence young people's political and civic engagement through a survey of university students in Singapore- the news consumption through different platforms related to the respondents' political and civic

participation in different ways. Consumption of news through the traditional media was not significantly associated with either offline or online political participation. Instead, news consumption through the Internet and social network sites was significantly associated with offline and online political and civic engagement and political knowledge. In addition, print and Internet news consumption was found to be significantly associated with political knowledge. Implications of the findings were also discussed (Hao et al., 2014).

Talk programs have historically played an essential role in educating the public about current events and politics. Listeners are educated and equipped to create a healthy public sphere. Politics are crucial to the process of socialization. It cannot be denied that political education is a product of talk programs. Proof positive that talk shows facilitate communication between the people and their government. As a bonus, discussion programs teach viewers how to fulfill their civic duties. Talk shows serve as a conduit for public discourse, which may pave the way for policy change. Seeing as how they will be televised globally, it is imperative that all facts presented on discussion programs be verified. As a general rule, people in democracies are eager to learn more about pressing concerns in the world. Talk shows serve as a watchdog on governmental action since the public wants to be informed about government policies yet often has doubts about them. The media has to educate the public, and talk programs provide a forum for exploring the issue from several perspectives. Since Parliament is the hub of the legislative process, the people must be informed about the goings-on in both chambers of government. (Carter & Allan, 2005).

Information regarding individuals' most fundamental civil rights is crucial since every person in a democratic society is guaranteed such rights. Human rights in a democracy are discussed on talk programs. It is possible that early on in a democracy's history when its inhabitants are still getting their bearings, they will have trouble grasping the nuances of the political process. The progression and intricacy of politics may be understood with the help of talk programs. It is also quite evident that talk shows educate us on the importance of voting and the steps to take to demand our rights from public figures. The focus of every government should be its foreign policy. Discussion shows advise the government on domestic and international security (Hobbs, 2010).

Talk programs arm the public with counterterrorism knowledge and instill a sense of patriotism to fight back against terrorist threats. In Pakistan, citizens have become more politically engaged and conscious of the need for political leaders to be held accountable during the last decade. It is reassuring news for advancing the political system and providing the democratic process firm footing. For a while now, at least, it has been evident that interest in political discussion programs is steadily growing in viewership. People of all socioeconomic backgrounds are equally engaged in politics. The general public preserves the importance of voting. Pakistanis have recently voted against the two-party system and conventional leaders. The influence of political talk programs on this whole thing should not be underestimated. Two leading news channels, GEO News and SAMAA News are selected for the present study (GEO, 2023; SAMAA, 2023).

i. T.V. Talk Shows

These are top-rating talk shows like off the record, Capital talk show, Live with Nadeem Malik, etc. Capital Talk and Live with Nadeem Malik have been selected for this study.

There are several popular talk shows in Pakistan, but one of the most popular is Capital Talk. Mr. Hamid Mir, a respected journalist, hosts the show. Almost all of the attendees, including leading analysts and members of many political parties, were invited by him. Every weekday morning at 8:05, you may tune in to Geo Channel.

Nadeem Malik is a seasoned anchor who takes his responsibilities seriously. He asks penetrating questions and strives to provide the most thorough analysis possible on his show. He has set up several behind-the-scenes interviews and seeks to give the readers only reliable data. He was frequently on the streets and always conducted himself with the utmost decorum. There were several interviews with him during political Jalisas and rallies. From Monday through Thursday at 8:05 AM, you can see Live with Nadeem Malik.

1.1. Research Objectives

Research usually aims to achieve objectives, such as confirming or refuting a theory. The following are the purposes of the present study:

1. To investigate the impact of political talk programs on young people.

1.2. Research Questions

1. How important is the talk show material in shaping young people's political beliefs?
2. Could the revelation of political scandals just before an election impact the outcome?

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

The first step in learning about a subject, its methods of study, or how to angle it more effectively is to do a literature review, which entails searching for pertinent papers, media reports, web material, and archives. You must do a thorough literature review before getting off the wrong foot with your study.

Kwak & Guggenheim (2004) explores the idea that political discourse might be used to pique readers' interest. The author claims that you and your visitor have an agenda, which determines the topics you discuss and the questions you ask. The general public believes they must have reasonable grounds for doing so if they are critical of a political party. Real politics is talk politics, which can transform any circumstance by instilling a new worldview in the listeners' minds. Those who know media angling and techniques think they will ruin audience decision-making. The author explains that politicians do not only speak; they also add pertinent statistics to their discussions. They demand that all societies' political discourse expand citizens' political literacy and engagement. The public's perspective and way of thinking may be influenced by political discourse.

Vraga et al. (2015) argued that despite the growing influence of social networking sites like Facebook on young people's political participation, little is known about the elements that influence users' propensity to participate in political discourse on the platform. Twenty in-depth interviews and a survey of young people are used to investigate the influences of personality traits, political climate perceptions, and network features on the acceptance and sharing of political information on Facebook. Our findings indicate that different personalities have different

"sensitivities" to Facebook's political milieu and the possibility for confrontational political debate, which affect the propensity to post about politics.

Ekström & Östman (2015) analyze the impact of informational, interactional, and creative Internet usage on behavioral and cognitive indices of teenage democratic involvement. Online political contacts mediate the impact of informational and interactional Internet usage on political engagement. Creative creation also positively predicted online and offline political involvement but adversely predicted political knowledge. Even after controlling for self-selection and democratic involvement, the impacts remained considerable. The study's results provide unique theoretical insights into how Internet usage affects young democratic involvement.

Ekström (2016) describes that talking about politics is a common thing. Talk in political socialization has been studied in youth. The researcher examines teens' family, peer, and social media talks. The research results reveal that political discussion is socially sensitive. Politics are taboo or expected. Social discourse, disagreement, and identity discovery may happen in family and peer groups. Social media users are more reserved. Fear of face-threatening reactions is significant. According to the research, political discussion helps young people express, expose, and regulate political identities.

Earl et al. (2017) state that youth political engagement is hotly debated. Many see youth involvement via a "youth deficit" approach that thinks adults must politically socialize kids. However, youth involvement in the protest, participatory politics, and other non-institutionalized political activities show that young people are politically engaged and actively socialize. Social movement researchers have long noted the centrality of youth to significant social movements.

Genner & Süß (2017) explained that socialization is a lifelong learning process and interacting with a culture's ideals. Media influence socialization. Socialization occurs via family, school, peers, media, religion, employment, ethnicity, and politics. Socialization influences our perceptions of our community, nation, and world by shaping our standards and ideals for proper conduct and how we interact with others. Depending on age, personality, and life experiences, each agent affects people differently. Socialization includes milieus, psychosocial developmental activities, societal adaption processes, and the desire to join one or more social groups. Socialization requires regular exposure to societal norms, regulations, and values to become ingrained.

Enli & Rosenberg (2018) state that the present media trust argument is connected to media disruption and the broader lack of confidence in institutions and politicians. People trust politicians more on social media and opinion articles than talk programs and news interviews. People tend to rate politicians as more honest in the media types they most commonly consume, supporting the virtuous cycle hypothesis; young people judged politicians to be more dishonest in mainstream media than in social media. Further, people rate populist politicians as more genuine than conventional politicians and female politicians more authentic than male politicians. The results affect strategic political communication and political media reportage.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology gathers relevant information and public opinion to answer a research question. The research approach of the current study is based on quantitative research. Quantitative research gathers data in numerical form. A questionnaire was devised to collect data

and gather the information. A sample of 60 respondents was chosen who were undergraduates studying mass communication and fell into age groups 17 and 30. Purposive sampling was used, with only mass communication majors and Talk show watchers being chosen. Percentages and averages were calculated and used to illustrate the data in tables.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive analysis is used to find the findings. All question statements were put in, various variables were given, and all data provided by the respondents were filled in.

Table# 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	39	65
Female	21	35
Total	60	100

According to Table No.1, 60 respondents participated in the survey. Among 60 respondents, 21 were females, and 39 were male members.

Table#2: Education level of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelors	29	48.3
Master	31	51.7
Total	60	100.0

Table No.2 depicts that out of the 60 respondents, 29 possess a bachelor's degree, and 31 have a master's degree.

Table # 3: Which following channel often do you prefer to watch?

	Frequency	Percentage
Geo News	28	46.7
SAMA News	20	33.3
Others	12	20
Total	60	100

According to the survey results, 46.7% of respondents prefer to watch GEO news, 33.3% prefer SAMA News, and 12% favor other channels.

Table # 4: How much time do you spend watching news channels?

	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 30 mins.	19	31.6
30 m-1hour	12	20
1hour -2 hour	14	23.3
2 hour-3 hours	06	10
< 3 hours	09	15
Total	60	100.0

According to Table No. 4, 31.6 of respondents watch new channels for less than 30 minutes, 20% of respondents watch for 30 minutes to an hour, 23.3% watch for two hours, 10% of participants watch T.V. channels for 2 to 3 hours and rest 9% participants watch news channels for more than three hours.

Table 5: Why do you prefer to watch the talk shows?

	Frequency	Percentage
Content	19	31.6
Host	11	18.3
Guest panel	14	23.3
Selected issues	16	26.6
Total	60	100.0

Results of Table 5 reveal that 31.6% of respondents enjoy these talk shows because of the content of the program, 18.3% like the show because of the Host of the program, 23.3% opined that they like shows because of the Guest panel, and 26.6% opined that they like shows because of the selected issues.

Table 6: Character assassination of any leader or party in a talk show

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	23	38.3
Agree	16	26.7
Neutral	11	18.3
Disagree	7	11.7
Strongly disagree	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

According to the results of Table 6, the majority of 65.0% of respondents agreed that talk show programs suggest deflecting the propensity regarding politics, whereas 18.3% remained neutral, and a total of 16.7% of participants did not agree with the statement.

Table # 7: Scandals are revealed just before the elections.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	21.7
Agree	11	18.3
Neutral	14	23.3
Disagree	12	20.0
Strongly disagree	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

According to Table 7, the majority of participants 40% agreed that scandals are publicized soon before elections to disrupt election outcomes; 14% of participants remained neutral, whereas a total of 36.7 % disagreed with the statement.

Table# 8: Content of political talk shows provides valuable information.

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	18	30.0
Agree	15	25.0
Neutral	12	20.0
Disagree	10	16.7
Strongly disagree	05	08.3
Total	60	100.0

Results of Table No.8 reveal that of most participants, 55% opined that political talk shows provide helpful information to their listeners, and 20% did not share their views and remained neutral. About 25% of participants did not agree with the statement.

5. DISCUSSION

Recent studies have shown that political talk programs affect voters, campaigns, and election outcomes. Sixty participants were surveyed from the field of mass communication for this research. All participants in this research were either undergraduate or graduate students in the field of mass communication.

As seen in Table No.1, out of the 60 respondents, 21 females and 39 males participated in the survey. They were all in the Mass Communication program. 48.3% of participants have a bachelor's degree, whereas 51.7% of participants have a master's degree holders. This indicates that all respondents have a higher education. Students ages range from 17 to 30 years. Table 3 shows that of those polled, around 46.7% said they regularly tune in to Geo, 33.3% to SAMA, and the other 20% to any combination of these or other channels. According to the results shown in Table 4, roughly 31.6% of respondents spend no more than 30 minutes watching these channels, approximately 20% spend between 30 minutes and 1 hour, about 23.3% spend between 1 hour to 2 hours, roughly 10% spend between 2 hours to 3 hours. Approximately 15% spend more than 3 hours. From the data in table 5, 31.6% of respondents enjoy these talk shows because of the substance, 18.3% like the programs because of the Host, 23.3% like Talk shows because of the Guest panel, and 26.6% like these shows because of the selected issues. Table 6 reveals that of those polled, 38.3% of participants highly agreed that talk show programs suggest deflecting the propensity regarding politics, 26.6% agreed, and 18.3% remained neutral. A total of 16.7% of participants disagreed with the statement. In table 7, the majority of participants 40% agreed that scandals are publicized soon before elections to disrupt election outcomes; 14% of participants remained neutral, whereas a total of 36.7 % disagreed with the statement. Results of Table No. 8 demonstrate that more than 50% of respondents found talk show material helpful in giving information, 20% remained neutral, and about 25% of participants wholly opposed the remark in question.

The media is helping the government make good decisions on policy. The press is democratizing politics by disseminating crucial information about the political system. As the researcher elaborates, the media's attempt to get young people interested in politics that have led to a rise in democracy's popularity. Information, such as which political party is performing well to be selected and which party is merely working for their gains, may be quickly disseminated to a large

audience that typically stays away from the sources of information via T.V. Talk shows. Therefore, through political talk programs, people can make up their minds, particularly the youth, while sitting at home, deciding which party to vote for to get their job done for the future and the country's welfare.

6. CONCLUSION

The number of responses directly relevant to the research question was excessive. They provide answers that are dead on. Political talk programs shape public opinion by rehashing politicians' past comments. There will be more political discussion on talk programs, and the people will be even less informed. Questions on political talk programs are crafted according to the show's topic, even if they might be posed in a very elementary fashion. T.V. talk programs covering politics frequently capitalize on the popularity of one political party without giving that party a fair shake. The results of the study depict that political talk programs inflict the youth to make up their minds, and they decide at home which party to vote for the country's welfare and the best choice.

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